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ECONOMIC LITERATURE IN FRANCE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

IN an article which I contributed seventeen years ago to an American review¹ on economic teaching in France, I regretfully concluded that economic science, so brilliantly inaugurated in France by the Physiocrats, had not maintained the level which might fairly have been anticipated for it. I concluded, however, with the hope that the nineteenth century would not close before the ancient tree had put forth new blossoms, and the Physiocrats had lived again in descendants worthy of them.

That hope has so far not been realised. The nineteenth century has given place to the twentieth, without bringing any renaissance worthy of the name. We have looked in vain, these last fifteen years in France, for instance, for any new school making a stir in the world like the Austrian school, or for any individual achievement as masterly as those of Professors Marshall and Schmoller, or for an enthusiasm in the study of pure economics rivalling that manifested in the American universities.

This is no evidence of the lack of distinguished economists in France. It only goes to show that the causes of the relative sterility in the scientific output of France during the latter half of the nineteenth century are, unfortunately, still operative, and also that the new elements, which suffer us to augur better things for the future, have not yet produced their effects. I shall try here, not so much to give a complete biographical review of French economic literature of to-day, as to point out the different currents among which we may distinguish the economic movement of our country, and which might prove more or less baffling to a foreigner.

¹ "The Economic Schools and the teaching of Political Economy in France," *Political Science Quarterly*, 1890, vol. 4.

I

The centre, the nucleus, the temple of economic science in France has long been "l'Institut." This it is which has maintained intact, during the whole of the nineteenth century, against every wind of adverse doctrine and the Germanic invasion, the pure traditions of the French "Liberal School." Quite recently even, in one of the Saturday weekly *séances*, and by the mouth of certain of its most authoritative members, it has declared its loyalty to the old flag.¹

It has lost many eminent members during the last ten years: Courcelle-Seneuil, Léon Say, Maurice Block, Baudrillart, Juglar. And there are doubtless differing shades in the opinions held by the eight members actually composing the economics section,² and yet greater differences between them and their predecessors in that section. They are more or less hostile to intervention, to protectionism, to socialism. Regarded, however, from some distance, these shades of difference become merged in a remarkable unity of tone.

This much may nevertheless be said, that, from the point of view of method, a certain transformation has taken place, in that the majority of the members of the Institute have professed their adhesion to the realistic school. Not all have retained the stern opposition of the *doyen* of the Liberal School, M. de Molinari, who for sixty years has valiantly upheld the doctrine of absolutely free trade, and who has so long lived in Paris that, in spite of his Belgian nationality, we may claim him as a Frenchman. At over eighty years of age he has just published his twenty-sixth book, *Questions Économiques à l'Ordre du jour* (1906).

For the most part they remain faithful to the Liberal theory, not, they say, through any *a priori* principles, but because observation of facts daily proves its truth. This categorical affirmation finds notable expression in a book published

¹ M. Paul Leroy Beaulieu says, "We protest against such appellations as 'Orthodox School' and 'Classical School.' We claim only the honour of calling ourselves 'the Liberal School.'"—*Report of the Academy of Moral and Political Science*, 1906, p. 103.

² MM. Levasseur, Frédéric Passy, P. Leroy Beaulieu, Stourm, de Foville, Cheysson, d'Eichthal, Beauregard, and among the "free" members, the economists, MM. Rostand and Villey. Among foreign correspondents there are only two who belong to the Institute, M. Luzzatti, as free member, and M. de Molinari, as corresponding member.

last year by a newly-elected member of the Institute.¹ MM. Leroy Beaulieu and Levasseur have frequently given expression to it.

It is precisely this method which has inspired the most noteworthy book published by a member of the Institute in the middle of this last decade, viz., *l'Histoire des Classes Ouvrières et de l'Industrie en France*, in four volumes, by M. Levasseur.² Quite recently the Société d'Économie Politique, of which M. Levasseur is president, celebrated both the completion of his great work and the jubilee of his membership of the Society by presenting him with a medal engraved with his portrait, and this device, which is nothing if not true: *nihil in studiis intentatum reliquit*. The motto is eminently suitable for a professor who has lectured, simultaneously and with equal success, on political economy, statistics, economic history, and economic geography. We may also quote his *L'Ouvrier Américain* (2 vols., 1898), the results of investigations made *in situ*, and to the accuracy of which the Americans have rendered tribute; and also the little book on *La Monnaie*, written by M. de Foville, a work in which this gifted statistician, ex-director of the Paris Mint (Hôtel des Monnaies), has successfully rediscoursed on a theme which seemed to have been exhausted by such illustrious economists as Michel-Chevalier and Stanley Jevons.

M. Leroy-Beaulieu has published no new book since his *l'État moderne* of 1890. For that matter he has been fully occupied in revising the numerous fresh editions of his earlier works which have become classics. M. Stourm is similarly engaged on his well-known books on taxation and the Budget.

Beyond the books we have just quoted, the literary production of the Institute has not been at all prolific during the last few years. This is not owing to enfeebled activity in its members, least of all in the veterans, but because it spent itself in action rather than in meditation, partly along lines of social work,³ partly in journalism or politics.⁴ This is, after all, a very general tendency among French economists and one that is obviously little favourable to the advance of the science. But it is not easy for anyone to resist the tendency, still less so when one belongs to the Institute and is pressed on every side.

¹ M. d'Éichthal, in *La Formation des richesses et ses conditions sociales actuelles. Notes d'Économie politique*.

² The first edition appeared, in two vols., in 1867, but the book has been entirely rewritten.

³ *E.g.*, MM. Cheysson and Frédéric Passy, the venerated apostle of the Peace movement.

⁴ *E.g.*, MM. P. Leroy-Beaulieu and Beauregard.

But the influence of the Institute on economic literature is not limited to the productions of its members. It reaches far beyond that. This little group of the economic section of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences should be conceived as a central area surrounded by two concentric circles, that of the *candidates*, then that of the *laureates*.

The circle of candidates consists of those who aspire to become, at some time or other—it may be only at the close of their life—members of the Institute. Now there are few Frenchmen who can mix in economics, literature, research, or art, without cherishing the dream of “belonging to the Institute.” It is not because this position involves any great pecuniary advantages,¹ but in the public eye it does bestow an indisputable brevet of science which is a crown to fame already won, and a good substitute, if it be not yet won. And those who aspire to be members must evidently hold ideas more or less in common one with another. The Institute is a company recruited by co-option, as are scientific societies generally, but with this difference from learned societies in other countries who themselves designate the individuals they judge most worthy to do them honour, that the Academy only votes for those who have canvassed for those votes by a visit in person to every one of its members—forty visits, that is, for the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences. And as it seldom happens that a candidate gets in the first time, he has to repeat his campaign at every fresh vacancy, it may be five or six times, it may be for the remainder of his life. This convention, which at first sight seems somewhat humiliating, is explained historically by the fact that the Academy used to be, and wishes to remain, a “salon,” where there is conversation but not disputation, a gathering of pleasant company, where each person is safe to meet only his own set. It is easy to see that this tradition is sufficient to keep away all who might threaten to import a discordant note into this concert.²

¹ The members of the Institute are entitled only to 1,200 francs, besides which there are allowances for attendance of different amounts, the average total of which does not exceed 600 francs annually. Professors advanced in years have the advantage of their year of age-limit being postponed from 70 to 75.

² And generally speaking, it is a point of honour with the Institute to maintain its reputation as the guardian of sound doctrine. At the annual meeting, a few years ago, of the Academy of Moral and Political Science, M. Dareste, the President, defined the functions of the Academy as follows:—“Torches are these lit to guide those who walk in darkness, to bring back into the right road those who have gone astray, to suffer no wastage of force and to make all efforts converge to one goal. There is in sooth no lack of goodwill, and free inquiry is open to all; but what

This "set" gravitating about the Institute is a little world of some dimensions, comprising many economists of distinction. Among these it is fitting that we name M. Colson, engineer and Conseiller d'État, author of a *Cours d'Économie Politique* in four volumes, the first of which appeared in 1901, and the last of which is yet to come. It is the most important treatise of political economy published in the French language since those of MM. Cauwès in 1881 and Leroy-Beaulieu in 1896. M. Colson also belongs to the Liberal school, but if his duties in the greatest administrative council of the Republic have not made a State Socialist of him, they have at least kept him out of extreme Liberalism. In other respects the book derives great practical value from the author's high competence in questions of administration, especially in railway matters. Besides this, M. Colson, having studied mathematics as an engineer, has been able to give a summary exposition of the essential propositions of the mathematical school of economists. This had not yet been done in any didactic treatise of political economy written by a Frenchman.

Mention may further be made, among academicians *in spe*, of M. Octave Noël, author of an *Histoire du Commerce de la France*, of M. Liesse, who has published an interesting work on *Le Travail*, and, more recently, one on *La Statistique*, and also of MM. Neymark, Raffalovich, and Raphael Georges Lévy. The last three have devoted themselves more especially to financial questions. There is also M. de Rousiers, author of several books, notably *Le Trade Unionisme en Angleterre* and *Les Syndicats industriels de producteurs* (*i.e.*, Trusts), not to mention many others who are not yet established as candidates, but whose turn is to come.

Besides these, there is, as I have said above, the group of *lauréats*, that is to say, of those who have competed in some one of the numerous subjects set each year by the Academy and have obtained a prize. These are mostly younger men, though some there are who enter for these prizes at no matter what age. It is needless to enumerate them here, and we will only mention the books written by M. Pierre Leroy-Beaulieu,¹ son

wrong moves, what failures, what collapse was not prevented by the presence of the Academy showing the way to go!"

¹ The reader must guard against the mistake, often made abroad, and even in France (recently in this very Journal), of confusing this gentleman with his father; Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, or with his uncle, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, director of the *École libre des Science, Politiques*, and author of a fine work on Russia (*L'Empire des Tsars*). Not that this confusion has at all hindered the success of his books.

of the well-known economist, and by M. André Siegfried, son of the deputy and ex-Minister of Commerce. These gentlemen have gone round the world and gathered material for several descriptive works, the former having written on the new Anglo-Saxon expansions and on "The United States in the Twentieth Century," the latter on "Democracy in New Zealand" and on Canada. These books have been very well received.

Outside the zone of those who are directly connected with the Institute, the Liberal school has remained the ruling spirit also in certain learned societies, especially in the *Société d'Économie Politique*, to which we have already alluded. This was founded nearly sixty years ago, and its annals constitute the most complete repertory of the history of the Liberal school of economics in France. A frequent contributor is M. Yves Guyot, an economist well known in England as the author of a number of works of an ultra-individualistic character.¹ He is the only one among the leaders of the Liberal school who has voluntarily remained outside the Institute.

The school is dominant, moreover, in some of the leading newspapers—*Le Temps*, *Les Débats*, *La Revue des Deux Mondes*—through which it exercises a very positive influence on the wealthy and educated public, on the upper middle class. And its influence, one may say, is no less felt in the *École libre des Sciences Politiques*, with MM. Stourm, Cheysson, de Foville, &c.²

Finally, and it may be to complete this study in outline of those circles governed by the Liberal school, it would be fitting to name the *Musée Social*. And yet there might be room for doubt on this point. It is true that its Director, M. Mabillean, the leader and indefatigable spokesman of the French "Mutualist" movement, is a candidate for the Institute, and again, that among its most influential officers are two members of the Institute, MM. Cheysson and Georges Picot. On the other hand, several of the leading members of the staff of the *Musée* belong rather to the Catholic school of Le Play, and there is a clearly accentuated tone of interventionism in their publications. It would, for that matter, be inconsistent to find an institution like this founded expressly for the propagation of works of social reform, mutual aid, co-operation, trade-unionism,

¹ The last one published (1908) is *Les Conflits du Travail et leur Solution*.

This school, founded in 1872 through the individual initiative of Boutmy, attracts a number of students from France and other countries, who are training themselves for administration and diplomatic careers.

workmen's dwellings, hygiene, and protection of labour, professing strictly the doctrine of *laissez-faire*. To say the truth, the *Musée Social* has, so far, guarded well its scientific independence, and shown an open door to all who, without distinction of schools, are endeavouring, in the words of its programme, "to ameliorate the material and moral situation of the worker."¹

The numerous group of economists following the school called Le Play, the centenary of which was celebrated last year, approximates so far to the Liberal school that, of some among them, M. Cheysson for instance, it is difficult to say to which they more properly belong. The Le Play school is distinguishable from the Liberal school only in its being more earnestly occupied about moral laws, more actively concerned in the matter of social reforms (the title Le Play gave his principal work, *La Réforme Sociale*, is well known), and in its stricter application of the method of observation. But it makes common cause with the Liberal school in opposing State Socialism as well as all other Socialistic denominations, and in exalting self-help. For that matter the Le Play school has split in two. One section, with the review *La Réforme Sociale* as its organ, has strongly conservative tendencies, and strives especially to uphold family, paternal authority, and the home.² The other, having as its organ the review *La Science Sociale*, and as its leader M. Demolins, well known by his book *La Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons* and several other works, not inferior in brilliancy, but less unrestrained in paradox.³ This latter section has carried to its furthest issues the idea, now quite ancient, of the influence of climate and geographical position on the whole economic, political, and social development of nations. And it has fashioned to its own uses a nomenclature and a system of classification of social phenomena, to which it at-

¹ The *Musée Social* was founded in 1894 through a donation of the Count de Chambrun. Over and above its double monthly publications, the *Annales* and the *Mémoires et Documents*, it has produced, either directly by the pen of its staff-leaders, or indirectly by the lectures and "missions" it has organised, a great number of books. We need only mention those by M. de Seilhac, *Les Syndicats ouvriers et Bourses du Travail* (1902) and *Les Marins-pêcheurs* (1899); those by M. de Rocquigny, *Les Syndicats agricoles et leur œuvre* (1899) and *Le Proletariat rural en Italie* (1904); that by M. Martin St. Léon, *Le Compagnonnage*; that by M. Merlin, *La Participation aux Bénéfices* (1898), and his very useful *Guide Social à Paris* (1906); that by M. André Sayou, *La Crise Allemande de 1902* (1903); and that by M. Benoit Levy, *La Cité Jardin* (Angleterre, 1904; États-Unis, 1905).

² One of its leading representatives who died some ten years ago was Claude Jannet, author of *Le Socialisme d'État et la Réforme Sociale* (1890) and *Le Capital, la Spéculation et la Finance* (1892).

³ As, for instance, one of the most recent:—*Les routes forment les peuples* (1901).

taches a degree of scientific importance that is somewhat exaggerated.

Le Play, as we know, inaugurated in 1856 the monograph of working-class families, according to the budget of their expenditure and income, which has become a method of investigation now generally employed in all countries. The publication of these monographs has gone on regularly ever since under the auspices of the Société d'Économie Sociale, and they number at the present day upwards of a hundred. But we also owe some excellent books to this method of detailed observation; for example, M. du Maroussem on *La Question Ouvrière* (1892, 1898), a very graphic monograph on the different forms of Parisian industry, especially home industry and large shops; also M. Bureau's *Le Contrat de Travail* (1902) and *Le Paysan des Fjords Norvégiens* (1906); and again, M. Blondel's *L'Essor industriel et commercial du peuple allemand* (3rd ed. 1900), which has had a well-deserved success; and perhaps also M. Bellom's great work on *Les Lois de l'Assurance ouvrière à l'étranger* (three vols. 1892-1900), although its tendency is more in favour of State action than is that of the Le Play school.

II

The Faculties of Law and the Institute are the two opposite poles of economic science in France. But the former is of recent date. It may be said to date only from 1878, an epoch when instruction in political economy received official standing in the Faculties of Law, and was included in the programme for the examination of bachelor of laws. This instruction, at the outset, was limited to a single course of Faculty lectures for one year, but it has gradually been extended, at first by the institution of a doctor's degree in economics, which has come to rank side by side with the old doctorate of laws, its curriculum including not only political economy but also the cognate studies of finance, labour legislation, rural economy, &c., and then, quite lately, by the inclusion of political economy in each of the three examinations for "licence," and the creation of a proportionate number of lectures. So that, at the present day, in the Law Faculties, political economy or its cognate studies are taught by about forty professors to about 8,000 students, all of them future barristers, magistrates, civil servants, deputies, or professors. Here, then, is a very considerable force. The

Law Faculties have almost a monopoly of economic teaching; ¹ outside them only a very limited number of courses are given, where there are none but voluntary students. These courses are, for the most part, in the hands of economists of the Institute, or of those who aspire to become such.² But no one can teach in a Faculty of Law who has not taken his degree of doctor of laws, that is, has not studied law for five years. And, as I have just said, political economy has only recently received a place in the curriculum of these examinations, so that, with the exception of the junior professors of political economy, who have learnt something of the subject, all the other older men had learnt nothing but law down to the day when they began to teach economics. Consequently, they have all been imbued with the spirit of jurisprudence. They have learnt to study and regard civil laws rather than natural laws; they are more inclined to have recourse to the legislator and the State than to put faith in *laissez-faire*.

Besides this, there has always been an antagonism, from the outset, between the economists of the Institute and those belonging to Faculties of Law, and this has been manifested by lively attacks proceeding from both sides. The first to set fire to the powder was M. Cauwès, then and still professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Paris, when he published in 1879 his *Précis du Cours d'Économie Politique*.³ This book made a sensation among economists, not only because the author declared himself a Protectionist, but especially because, following the example of the German school, then little known in France, he rejected all dogmatic methods, all inquiry into permanent and universal laws, and studied before everything national economy and legislation. In 1883 the publication of the *Principes d'Économie Politique* by the present writer, and, in 1887, the

¹ Where we say Faculties of Law, other nations would say "the Universities." The Law Faculties, in France, are a part of the Universities, but they form very distinct and autonomous sections, having no relations with other faculties, that is to say, with those of Arts, Science and Medicine.

² We may mention the courses held at the Collège de France (by MM. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu and Levasseur), at the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, the École des Mines, the École des Ponts et Chaussées, the École libre des Sciences Politiques, and at some schools of commerce. In the Faculties of Arts (which form part of the University) there is no course of political economy, but only some courses of sociology, and one course at the Sorbonne (the Faculty of Arts in Paris) on the history of social doctrines, given by M. Espinas.

³ The work was in two volumes, but the 3rd edition (1893), entitled *Cours d'Économie Politique*, and containing, besides an exposition of principles, an analysis of economic legislation, numbers four bulky volumes. Although this last edition is now exhausted, the author has not brought out a later one.

founding of the *Revue d'Économie Politique*, as the organ of the professors of economics in the Faculties of Law, with the avowed programme of reaction against the doctrines of the optimist Liberal school, and the propagation of foreign, especially German economic schools,¹ completed the rupture.

Nevertheless, it would not be correct to say that the rupture was absolutely general. Some of the Faculty professors have remained loyal to the Liberal school. Two of them have recently been made members of the Institute: M. Villey, professor at Caen, author of several works, and M. Beauregard, professor in the Law Faculty at Paris, at present member of the Chamber of Deputies, and editor of a journal of political economy *Le Monde Économique*, which is almost a facsimile of M. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu's *L'Économiste Français*. Other, less pronounced, adherents of the Liberal school are M. Souchon, professor of rural economy in the Law Faculty of Paris University, author of well-written and well-substantiated books, one on *La Propriété paysanne* (1899), another on *Les Cartels agricoles en Allemagne* (1903), and also some other younger professors, who have as yet only contributed to periodicals. These professors are members of the Société d'Économie named above, and took part last December in a discussion on the best method of teaching political economy.

But the majority of the economists included in Faculties of Law must be considered as "interventionists," to about the same degree as the German professors who used to be called socialists of the chair, and who now go by the name of the Realist school. They have taken an active share, during recent years, in elaborating labour legislation, especially through the Association for the Legal Protection of Labour, founded at Paris in 1900, and now made international in its scope. M. Cauwès is president of the French section.² His general secretary is M. Jay, professor of industrial legislation in the Faculty of Law at the University of Paris, and author of several pamphlets on the organisation of labour, as well as of a book entitled *La Protection légale des Travailleurs*. M. Jay is a thorough State-Socialist, and goes so far as to wish to see a minimum wage fixed by law. M. Pic, professor in the Faculty of Law at Lyons,

¹ This propaganda of foreign methods of economics, too little known as it is in France, has been augmented by the publication of translations of the best works in the *Bibliothèque Internationale d'Économie Politique*, published by MM. Giard et Brière. Professor Marshall's treatise of political economy has just been translated for it by Sauvaire Jourdan, professor at Bordeaux.

² He has just been succeeded by M. Millerand.

author of a bulky treatise on industrial legislation (2nd ed. 1903), is a rather less pronounced Radical.

The evolution of industry and its influence on the condition of the workers forms the object of some learned studies, among which we should mention that of M. Aftalion, professor of law at Lille, *Sur la Fabrique et le Travail à domicile dans l'habillement* (1906).

The most noteworthy book which has been produced by the economists' teaching in Faculties of Law during the present decade, the book which perhaps best gives the characteristic features of that teaching and the true average opinion held in the universities, is that set forth by M. Bourguin, professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Paris, *Les Systèmes Socialistes et l'Évolution Économique* (1st ed. 1904, 2nd ed. 1905), a book written in excellent if somewhat severer style than is usually found in French works. In the first part the author summarises the different solutions of the social problem which have been propounded. In the second part he inquires, through an examination of facts and figures, how far economic evolution seems to confirm or contradict these solutions. The conclusions he arrives at are not Socialistic, inasmuch as he believes in the permanence of individual property and of the wage system. They are not even in favour of State-action, for he denounces the vices of State Socialism, and even declares "it can render the most police-ridden country uninhabitable to political non-conformists." But they are, for all that, quite democratic, and at the same time very scientific.

Social and labour questions have proved so absorbing to the French professors that they have rather neglected the other branches of political economy, especially pure economics. It is a little humiliating to think that in the country of Cournot he has as yet no successors, or, worse still, that his sole successor, Walras, should have had no chair provided for him and have been compelled to become an exile and go to teach, from 1870 to 1900, his fine mathematical theorems of economic equilibrium at Lausanne, the result being that many are ignorant of his true nationality, and credit Switzerland with the honour of his name and his doctrines. M. Walras, who lives now in philosophic seclusion on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, at Clarens, has always ascribed his expatriation and the banishment of his doctrines to the intolerance of the Institute. When he saw with pleasure economic teaching in France made part of the Faculties of Law, he hoped that they would prove a favour-

able soil for the study of pure economics. This hope has thus far not been realised. It is easy to understand why. As I have said already, the economists of the Law Faculties were more or less imbued with a legal spirit, and more attracted by practical and actual questions than by abstract speculations on marginal utility or the curves in supply and demand. In these they thought with suspicion that they could smell a revival of classical and Manchester doctrines. Besides, not one of them had ever learned mathematics.

It should also be remembered that the instruction given by the professors in the Faculties of Law has perforce to be adapted to the subjects prescribed for examination. Now there is no provision made in these for tests in mathematical economics, or even in pure economics, there being no practical object to be gained in these studies by the budding lawyers and statesmen whom the Law schools are concerned to train.

Nevertheless, the situation is not quite hopeless. There may not yet be courses of pure economics in our universities, but there is, in every Faculty of Law, a course on the history of economic doctrines, and that is the gate by which the theories of the Austrian school are beginning, if slowly, to make their entry. In this teaching the history of the French mathematical school of economics will necessarily have a place, and then neither Cournot, nor Dupuit, nor Walras will be forgotten. Even now it is evident that the courses of historical doctrines are among those most eagerly taken up by the younger professors, and most keenly relished by students.¹ And the latter select the subject for their doctor's theses mainly from this historical field. The French have ever been captivated by doctrines. This branch of instruction has not yet borne its full fruits, but there is already a goodly crop of monographs on earlier economists, the last that on *Robert Owen* (1907), by M. Dolléans, recently elected professor in the Faculty of Law at Lille, who is now preparing a history of Chartism.

Possibly, too, the study of pure economics may find its way in by other gates than the Faculty of Law; for instance, by the Faculty of Science, if ever this be made to include a chair of mathematical economics, or, it may be, by some special school. Thus M. Landry, professor in the "annexe" to the Sorbonne

¹ We have already some books on the general history of doctrines, viz., by M. Rambaud, professor at the Catholic University of Lyon, by M. Espinas, professor at the Sorbonne, and by M. Dubois, professor in the Faculty of Law at Poitiers, of which one volume only has been published.

entitled the *École des Hautes-Études*, has already started on this way by his book on *L'Intérêt du Capital* (1904), which is occupied with the discussion of Böhm-Bawerk's theory.

The absence of works on pure economics is not the only deplorable gap in our economic literature. The study of facts and of institutions is not represented in anything like the extent which its importance demands, and falls far behind the corresponding literature in Germany, and even in England. A young lady student, who has recently come from Scotland to study some points in the economic history of France, has been telling me of her disappointment at what she found. And yet it is not that France lacks eminent historians. But it is partly due to an incredible mistake made in drawing up the programme for law examinations. Economic history has been forgotten, the result being that there is no chair, even in Paris, specially devoted to that subject! Hence our professors never have to teach it, and works published on this subject must be sought for outside the Faculties of Law.¹ We may, nevertheless, place on the active list of those Faculties the books of M. Germain Martin, professor at Dijon, on *La Grande Industrie sous Louis XIV et sous Louis XV* and on *Les associations ouvrières du XVIII^e siècle* (1901), as well as that by M. Bry, professor at Aix, *Histoire industrielle et économique de l'Angleterre*.²

Questions of international trade, money, and banking, once so much debated, are now somewhat laid on the shelf in our universities. They are taught, of course, but they do not evoke many books. They are to be found rather among the works put forth by students of the Law Faculties and candidates for professorships. We may mention *Le Fédéralisme économique* (1901), by M. Paul Boncour, now chief secretary (*chef du cabinet*) under M. Viviani, the Socialist Labour Minister, a book in praise of trade unions and even suggesting their being vested with semi-legislative powers; also *La Concentration des Banques en Allemagne*, by M. Depitre (1906), *La Question monétaire contemporaine*, by a group of jurists (1905), *La Théorie de la Monnaie*, by M. Aupetit (1902), &c.

¹ Beside Levasseur's masterly work on *L'Histoire des classes ouvrières* and that by M. Noël on *L'Histoire du Commerce*, which I have already quoted, I ought to mention the series of studies in the history of prices by M. le Vicomte d'Avenel, which have been appearing during the last twelve years, especially *La Fortune privée à travers sept siècles* and *Paysans et ouvriers depuis sept cents ans*; that by M. Hauser, professor at Dijon University, *Ouvriers du temps passé*, and that by M. Lichtenberger, *Le Socialisme et la Révolution Française*.

² A young author, M. Mantoux, has recently written an excellent book on the same subject, *La Révolution industrielle en Angleterre au XVIII^e siècle*.

In spite of this list, which could easily have been extended, the conclusion will no doubt be drawn that the scientific output in the French universities, within the field of economics, is inferior to that of the German universities. And yet the French professors have more time at their disposal for writing; they are only required to give eighty lectures annually (forty or forty-five only in the case of the professors who prepare for the *doctorat*), while their colleagues over the Rhine give twice or thrice as many.

There are several reasons for this deficit in production. One there is I should like at the outset to eliminate, believing as I do that it is incorrect, and inasmuch as it has nevertheless been put forward in the *ECONOMIC JOURNAL* by Professor Cohn,¹ and, previously, by Professor Pareto in his writings. They say that the independence of French university professors over against public authority leaves much to be desired. Nevertheless, I know of no teaching professor who has ever been dismissed for the opinions he has taught. For that matter the Government could not do it without the professor's defence having been heard before the Higher Council of Public Instruction; and this would lead to a scene to which no minister would care to expose himself. At Paris there are professors who are openly Socialists; there are some who, in spite of the Franco-Russian alliance, have taken part in meetings against the Tsar of Russia whenever the news came of a fresh massacre in that country. In the Faculty of Law there is an ultra-Catholic professor teaching the higher validity of the religious marriage ceremony as compared with the civil procedure, and who has written and spoken against the Act of separation of Church and State. When his attitude was reported to the Chamber of Deputies, a ministerial letter of rebuke was addressed to him. This intervention of Government was no doubt to be regretted; still, it was not an action of a nature to compromise indepen-

¹ In the article "Political Economy in Germany" (Dec. 1905, p. 607), Professor Cohn says:—"There is a whole world of difference between the independence of a German Professor and the Dean of the Faculty of Law at Bordeaux, for instance, who was deposed by a stroke of the pen, because he had spoken in favour of Dreyfus." The suspension of M. Stappfer (he was Dean of the Faculty of Arts, not of Laws, but that doesn't matter) was certainly a very deplorable action, which can only be explained by the crazy state into which France, and indeed the whole world, had got over that famous affair. Nevertheless it was as *Dean* that M. Stappfer collided with the authorities, and *not in his professorial functions, which were left untouched*. He carried on the duties of his chair as before. It was only from the functions of a Dean which do not come under a scientific category, but are purely administrative, that he was suspended.

dence of his function. Far more precarious is the position of the professor at some American universities, where the chair has been founded by the liberality of some millionaire not prepared to see his dollars used to foster subversive doctrines! Troubles in this way have not infrequently arisen.

While, however, French professors enjoy a sufficiency of independence over against the Government, they have not unfortunately an equal degree of independence in their educational curricula. At the end of each session, namely, there is an examination, the subjects of which are fixed by rules of administration. Even where the curriculum allows great freedom to the professor—as is the case with examinations in political economy, especially in final examinations—the professor shapes his course no less according to examination requirements. And that professor has the largest classes and the most success who trains his pupils to do best in their respective examinations. These are, for a course of instruction termed “higher,” very deplorable conditions; for a course can only rightly be so called which is based on freedom for the teacher and disinterestedness in the students. Now there is hardly any course in a French university, at least in a Faculty of Law, possessing this double character: that is to say, which binds no obligation on the professor and no sanction on the listener.¹ Here, then, in our opinion, is one of the reasons for the superiority of German universities and for the admirable variety in their instruction. That is a blossom which opens in the luxury of liberty, whereas each of the French courses has to climb and hook on to a stick fixed in the ground like a kidney-bean pole.

There's another inferiority—the method of appointment. In France no one can teach in the university, with rare exceptions,² unless he has passed through the narrow gate of a *concours d'agrégation*, or fellowship examination, which takes place every two or three years. The administration takes care to hold open for competition only so many appointments as are indispensable for the needs of instruction—that is, only such as fall vacant through the death or resignation of any of the actual staff, or are rendered necessary through the instituting of new courses.

¹ In the Faculty of Law at the University of Paris, out of 40 courses of lectures, there are only *two* which are free, that is to say, outside the examination curricula: those of “statistics” and of “comparative social economy.”

² Anyone, even if he have not graduated in law, may be authorized to conduct a “free” course in any Faculty, but permission is rarely sought. And such courses are very thinly attended, simply because, as stated above, the motive of the examination is lacking.

There are sometimes thirty candidates for three places. Hence there is a very severe process of selection. But the victors in this struggle for life are not necessarily those who are the most gifted from the scientific point of view, or the deepest or most sagacious thinkers. They are oftener the more brilliant intellects or the best speakers. Nearly all the tests, or at least the decisive tests, are exclusively *viva voce*; written work, assuming that the young candidates have already written anything, go for nothing in the decision.

To take an instance :—a young man who had been fascinated by mathematical economics and had written a remarkable thesis on the theory of money (it has been referred to above), expounding and applying the theories of Walras and Jevons, has recently twice failed to pass in the *concours d'agrégation*. Disappointed, he has turned his energies into another channel. So that, it may be, our schools of economics have lost the opportunity of filling up a gap which we have just now been deploring. M. Walras was deeply grieved at the result. In Germany things would have gone very differently. That young amateur in pure economics would have started a course of teaching as a “privat docent,” and if he had been successful, either in attracting students to his lectures, or in his published writings, he would have been promoted to the rank of extraordinary professor, and then become ordinary professor. I am well aware that this method of university appointments is not without drawbacks of its own, but, from the point of view of scientific production, it seems to me far more stimulating.

III

Beside those two centres of scientific activity, the Institute on the one hand, the Faculties of Law on the other, there are several others, whose influence is limited to narrower circles.

There is, first, Socialism, or rather Collectivism, for that is, at the present day, almost the sole form of Socialism, the old French Socialist schools having now no followers, and anarchism having barely more than one representative (I speak of literary production), namely, M. Jean Grave.¹ Socialism is far from playing in French literature the part it plays in politics and the social movement. Nevertheless, its scientific output during recent years has made great progress. The Socialist leaders in

¹ *La Société mourante et l'Anarchie* (1897).

the Chamber (MM. Jules Guesde and Jaurès) have put all their energy into the fight, but, in the matter of books,¹ have confined themselves to publishing some of their lectures and newspaper articles in book form. There are, however, two interesting reviews: *La Revue Socialiste*, founded by Benoît Malon (he was more a Socialist of the older French school), now edited by M. Fournière, a so to speak individualistic Socialist, and *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, edited by M. Lagardelle, the standpoint of which is entirely Marxist. It vigorously defends Marxism against the Neo-Marxists, but chiefly represents "le socialisme syndicaliste,"² that is to say, Socialism which seeks support in labour only, rejecting political action, State intervention, and even the co-operation of "intellectuals." Its chief contributor is M. Georges Sorel, the most prolific and most personal penman of active Socialism in France. No one has displayed a more ferocious vigour against any and everything bourgeois—although M. Sorel is himself a bourgeois, and even decorated with the Legion of Honour—and yet more especially against every religious or even merely moralising tendency. His acrid irony has spared none of his contemporaries, even among the Socialist ranks. From his writings, which are very diffuse and entirely critical, it is very difficult to draw up any sort of programme: the principal is his *Introduction à l'Économie moderne* (2nd edit. 1907). But they all contain some strong, original, spicy thinking on all the questions of the day, especially on economic evolution, on the function of revolutions and strikes, on the future of trade unions, on the use of violence as a factor in social progress, on truth and error in the doctrines of Karl Marx, and what not besides.

Among Collectivists who are not of the Marx school we must also mention M. George Renard, author of a book, *Le Régime Socialiste* (1898), which is probably the best descriptive exposition of a possible future society under a Collectivist régime. It is practically the same as Schaffle's famous little book, but written with greater detail.

As yet Collectivist Socialism has not penetrated into the

¹ By M. Jaurès:—*L'Action Socialiste*, 1899 (3rd edition); *Études Socialistes* (1901). He has also published, in collaboration with some other Socialists, an *Histoire Socialiste de la France depuis 1789*, nine volumes of which have already appeared.

² "Trade-unionist Socialism" would not accurately represent this term. It does not mean a moderate Socialism, but is on the contrary essentially revolutionary, inasmuch as it rejects parliamentary action, and counts on class conflict and universal strikes.

Faculties of Law. There are, nevertheless, some among the younger professors who go beyond State Socialism, and incline towards what is called juridical Socialism—that is to say, towards a new conception of law in general, of property, of inheritance, and of contract—a conception which, so far from being conservative, is destructive, rather, of all these institutions. For instance, it believes it possible to expropriate legally without indemnification. Abroad the recently deceased professor, Anton Menger, was an eminent upholder of this view; but it is gaining ground in France in the Faculties of Law, and more among professors of jurisprudence than among those who teach economics.¹ Collectivism has entered the university by another door, by that, namely, of the École Normale Supérieure, through which pass nearly all those youths who later on become professors of art or science. It appears that the professor of German language in this school, M. Andler; and the librarian, M. Herr, have been strongly drawn to German Socialism, to that of Bernstein rather than to that of Marx. And they have exercised a great influence on successive generations of students frequenting their lectures, and now, in their turn, teaching in lycées or in universities. M. Andler is a scholar deeply imbued with the scientific spirit, and in his principal work, *Les Origines du Socialisme d'État en Allemagne*, reveals the qualities and, to some extent, the defects, of the German methods he knows so well.

The school called “Solidariste” joins hands with Socialism in the fight with Individualism and competition, and aims at the abolition of the wage system. But it is not in favour of abolishing private property. It is content to declare, in virtue of the law of solidarity, that all private property is in a way mortgaged for the good of society, or rather for the disinherited members of society. Such is the central idea in M. Léon Bourgeois's book, *La Solidarité* (1894). And it is, more or less, the economic programme which the party called Radical is committed to when it comes into power. This programme has been discussed in two series of lectures by different professors at a private school called “Hautes Études Sociales.” They have been collected in two volumes:—the first is theoretical, *Essai d'une Philosophie de la Solidarité* (1902); the second is more practical, *Applications Sociales de la Solidarité* (1907). Solidarity

¹ This young school has so far published no books, but it has spoken in several interesting pamphlets, viz., *L’Affirmation du droit collectif*, par M. Emmanuel Lévy (1903), and many review articles. See, on this subject, an article in the *Revue d’Économie politique*, 1906, “Le Socialisme juridique,” by M. Hitier.

has also formed the subject of a report laid before the Institute, followed by a long discussion, in which it came in for some rough treatment.¹

France has also her Christian Socialism, or, rather, as the school itself prefers to say, her Social Christianity; but its influence is very limited, and its programme of a very moderate nature.

Within the Roman Catholic Church, "social Christianity" has as its organ the review, *L'Association Catholique*. It confines itself to demanding an economic and even political organisation, founded on professional association or trade unionism, but exacts from its unions sentiments of good will towards the employers, and moral, social, and religious virtues which, if exercised, would put them at the opposite poles to existing unions. Social Catholicism in no wise aims at the abolition of the wage system, and cherishes respect for property and inheritance. It only approximates to Socialism in its attacks on capitalism, on large limited liability companies, and at times even on interest, which it would like to see controlled, if not abolished.

Some ten years ago there was a group of young abbés, far more advanced than this, and disposed to go all the way with Socialism in their efforts to rally people around the Church. But the movement was a failure, being disallowed by Pope and bishops, and repudiated by the district of the Socialists themselves. Notwithstanding it has not long ago been resuscitated by a young Catholic layman, M. Marc Sangnier, of great piety and gifted with seductive eloquence. M. Sangnier goes from town to town to convert the people to a republican and democratic Christianity, with an economic programme which is ill-defined, but which involves the abolition of the wage system. The movement, which is making way among the more educated Catholic youth, has its own organ, the review named *Le Sillon* (the Furrow), and has brought out a number of tracts, but as yet no work of general exposition.

On the side of the Protestant denominations there is also a social movement which has given birth to an "Association pour l'étude des questions sociales." Its organ is a monthly review, *Le Christianisme Social*. In this movement there is an Extreme Left, composed of enthusiastic young pastors, inspired by the

¹ See the *Compte-rendu de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques*, 1906, and the little book of M. Bouglé, *Le Solidarisme*, 1907.

example of the American ex-pastor, Herron, who go so far as to be Collectivists and even Communists, while repudiating the materialistic character of Marxist Socialism. And it is not a little curious that among them should be a son of M. Frédéric Passy, the well-known orthodox economist, and M. de Biville, a professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Caen.¹ They have as their organ a newspaper called the *Avant-Garde*. The majority, however, of the Association holds by the "solidarist" programme, which has been described above, and, for a solution of the social question, is satisfied with a generalisation of co-operative association, embracing the whole of the economic organisation as conceived by the Rochdale pioneers. This is not surprising when it is known that the Association has for president M. de Boyve, one of the leaders of the co-operative movement in France.

To complete this review of the movement in economic studies, the movement in works on the cognate science of Sociology should be taken into account. But this would involve further increase of bulk in a review which, if incomplete, is already heavily loaded. We must limit ourselves, therefore, in this field to a few brief references, recalling to the reader the most interesting, if now slightly antiquated, work by M. Espinas on *Les Sociétés animales*, and the well-known books on *La Division du Travail* (1892), by M. Durkheim, in which, the title notwithstanding, the economic aspect is kept in the background because the subject of the work is the Sociological division of labour, considered as the foundation of Sociology, and even of morality. Then there are the works of M. Tarde, recently deceased, *Les Lois de l'Imitation* (1890) and *La Psychologie Économique* (1903), as well as that by M. Bouglé on *La Démocratie devant la Science* (1905). There are also some periodicals, a *Revue Internationale de Sociologie* and the *Annales de l'Institut*, both edited by M. René Worms, and *L'Année Sociologique*, edited by M. Duskheim.

Let us add, in conclusion, that a great number of publications of an entirely documentary character, but only the more valuable for that, have been issued by the Office du Travail (depending formerly on the Ministry of Commerce, now on the Ministry of Labour). More than forty volumes on labour asso-

¹ A report of one of these discussions on Collectivism will be found in the volume of Transactions of the Association's latest Congress, held last year at Geneva, vol. 12 of Congress reports.

ciations, hygiene in workshops, statistics of wages and strikes, labour insurance, &c., have already been published.

We see then, that, in spite of some lacunæ, the economic literature of France is fairly abundant and very much alive. The deficiency does not lie in books or periodicals; nor does it lack in grip on public attention. It is precisely living "actuality," for that matter, that authors and public go after, much more than science. And since, at the present moment, labour questions and social reforms are topics of "actuality," everything else is more or less put in the second rank. On the one side we see a confused medley of agitating State-advocates (*Étatistes*), "solidarists," socialists, revolutionaries or religionists—all those who deem that, in an oft-repeated formula, "something must be done." On the other side there is the rally round "*l'Institut*" of those who would uphold against all attacks the sacred principles of individual enterprise, property, and free competition. Even the Universities, refuge of study from the noise and dust of public places, are moved by the tumult without.

After all, there is great excuse for these preoccupations in times so agitated and in an environment so full of strife as that of French society at the beginning of the twentieth century. When the house is on fire, action comes easier than contemplation. It must, nevertheless, not be forgotten that these are not the conditions most favourable to the blossoming of science. There are scientific theories which, like lovely crystals, can only take shape and develop in an environment of calm and sheltered from shocks. Where political economy is used as a weapon, whether to attack or to defend the existing order of things, where it is harnessed in the service of party, it necessarily loses the attributes essential in every science—those attributes which British economics possess in so eminent a degree, and which we can but contemplate with envy—serenity and unity.

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