

THE WORKERS OF NAPOLEONIC PARIS

1800-1815

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation deals with aspects of workers' life in early nineteenth-century Paris. It is anachronistic to describe a "working class" when industrialization was little advanced, but Paris was a major manufacturing centre with a "labouring population" of more than half a million people. This included an élite of artisans and shopkeepers (the "popular bourgeoisie") and, below them, "workers" properly so-called, a heterogeneous group of jobbers, skilled and unskilled wage-earners, domestic servants and house-porters, and petty retailers and peddlers of all sorts. Only one in three adult workers was actually born in Paris; many were permanent immigrants, and there was also a seasonal work force at least fifteen-thousand-strong. An analysis of selected occupations through hospital records shows varying patterns of regional migration, which suggests that provincial loyalties reinforced occupational (as opposed

to class) solidarity.

Workers had a low standard of living, with overcrowded and insanitary housing, an unvarying diet, inadequate clothing, and generally poor health; yet statistics indicate that, compared to earlier and later years, the Napoleonic period was one of relative prosperity for most. However, poverty was always a real threat because of low wages, under-employment, seasonal unemployment, and several grave economic crises. There were usually a hundred thousand people on relief, and in times of crisis the needy far exceeded this number. Poor relief and charity were therefore important to workers, especially (but not only) to women, the aged, and those with large families. The government and philanthropists made concerted, if inadequate efforts to eradicate begging and alleviate poverty with programmes of public works, poor relief, and charity-- which they recognized as a convenient means to buttress their social hegemony. In addition, charitable schools for workers' children were used to moralize and discipline future workers.

The government also asserted control over workers with the livret (a compulsory identification booklet),

official placement offices for those seeking jobs, and an ordinance to re-establish the obsolete twelve-hour workday in construction. Workers resisted with varying degrees of success. The skilled in particular had traditions of formal and informal organization which gave them the ability to defend their interests as wage-earners. The compagnonnages (journeymen's associations), although illegal, were revived, and if they tended to divide workers into rival factions, they also served as effective labour organizations. Workers' mutual aid societies proliferated with state encouragement. It is notable that skilled workers were usually the most active in forming workers' combinations, of which the police recorded at least ninety in 1800-1814, almost half in construction. Strikes were usually offensive weapons used to win increased wages from recalcitrant employers.

Although strikes were replacing riot as a response to economic crisis, there were bread riots during the shortages of 1801-1802 and much grumbling during the grain crisis of 1811-1812. The unskilled, "marginals," and women were more likely participants than skilled workers. The government made every effort to guarantee political stability with a regular supply of cheap bread. It is

usually argued that Napoleon enjoyed immense popularity among Parisian workers, but a study of police archives has produced evidence that war and conscription, as well as a worsening economy after 1810, aroused considerable if unorganized discontent which police repression managed to contain. It was only during the First Restoration, when dissatisfaction with the Bourbons revived the underground revolutionary tradition and fused it with the cause of the deposed Emperor, that "popular Bonapartism" emerged. Patriotism solidified it during the Hundred Days, so that after 1815 Napoleon was a symbol of the revolutionary left, in sharp contradiction to the fundamental meaning of his reactionary régime.

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A NOTE ON CITATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in notes:

AAP: Archives de l'Assistance Publique
ACCP: Archives de la Chambre de Commerce de Paris
ADS: Archives Départementales de la Seine
AMAE: Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
AN: Archives Nationales
APP: Archives de la Préfecture de Police
BHVP: Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris
BN: Bibliothèque Nationale
BN Mss: EN, Salle des manuscrits
FF: Fonds Fosseyeux (at AAP)

Min.: Minister
Min. Int.: Minister of the Interior
Min. Pol.: Minister of Police
Pr.: Prefect
Pr. Pol.: Prefect of Police

The text of all laws is cited from the official Bulletin des Lois.

All police ordinances are quoted from Collection officielle des ordonnances de police, imprimée par ordre de M. le préfet de police, vol. 1: (1800-1848) (Paris, 1880).

PREFACE

My original interest in history developed out of a youthful infatuation with that colossal "world-historical figure," Napoleon Bonaparte. If I have outgrown this enthusiasm, the man and the period nonetheless continue to fascinate me. It was during my years of graduate study that social history (and the history of the working classes in particular) first attracted me. I consequently conceived the project of writing about Napoleonic workers--a contribution (I hoped) to both labour history and the social history of Napoleonic France. I began the research with a summer's visit to Paris in 1972 (some eighteen months before my comprehensive examinations) and have worked at the dissertation for almost seven years now, three of them also spent teaching in Halifax and Montreal.

In some respects the final product falls woefully short of my original ambitions, but it has grown beyond them in other ways. The writing of history is a dialogue between researcher and source material in which the

questions asked depend on the researcher's own preconceptions. He cannot always find all the answers he seeks, but he does sometimes stumble on the answers to questions which he neglected even to consider. In the process, preconceptions often change: At least this has been my own experience. For example, because there is no usable census data for Napoleonic Paris, I was unable to undertake (among other things) an examination of the structure of workers' families. Similarly, the lack of tax records precluded any analysis of degrees of wealth and poverty in the capital. On the other hand, a casual remark by Jeffrey Kaplow sent me off to the Archives de l'Assistance Publique, where a wealth of fascinating documents changed my interpretation of the working class, literally compelled me to add two new chapters (on poverty and poor relief), and also contributed valuable material to an already-planned chapter on workers' migration.

The period of research was one of constant adventure, of the mingled tedium and joy of archival exploration. The fact that I was obliged to live for two and one-half years in Paris (1974-1976)--perched six floors above the rue Léopold Robert in colourful Montparnasse--added immeasurably to the experience, for I love Paris and the Parisiens. Over

the months, I made extensive use of sources from all the major (and many of the minor) archives and libraries of Paris. The Archives Nationales provided the bulk of my documentation. This is an uncomfortable and exasperating place to work, crippled as it is by chronic labour problems (since it is appallingly under-financed by the French Government). The huissiers begrudged me the daily quota of eight cartons, and were often quite rude. I apparently became quite well known to them by reputation--a new member of the staff, seeing my name for the first time, remarked (in reference to the series of police reports): "Ah, c'est vous, l'amateur de F-sept!" The smaller archives were usually friendlier and more efficient. The Archives Départementales de la Seine, although dark and stuffy, had a helpful staff which included the marvellous Madame Felkay (now, alas, moved to the Archives Nationales) who seemed to know every dusty carton entrusted to her care and whose guidance was more useful than any dozen catalogues of holdings. The Archives de l'Assistance Publique, which, with its undersized desks, resembled a junior-high-school classroom, was a pleasant place to work with a most co-operative staff. I wish I knew them well enough to thank them all by name. The Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris was the most charming library imaginable for

research: a beautiful building with a garden (it was a sumptuous mansion during the Old Régime), it has an excellent collection of books, documents, maps, and even photographs. Whenever possible, I used it in preference to the decrepit but indispensable Bibliothèque Nationale.

The staff of the Archives de la Préfecture de Police (since moved to better quarters off the Place Maubert, which lack the atmosphere of the old rooms on the quai des Orfèvres) was unfailingly kind, although sometimes reluctant to admit to the possession of certain documents.

I must also mention the Bibliothèque de la Chambre de Commerce de Paris, where I spent a productive morning with the kind help of Monsieur Suriano, and the Archives de l'Archevêché de Paris, where I passed an unproductive afternoon (it was sacked by a mob in the 1830s) under the guidance of a kindly priest who urged me to abandon my "sociological" thesis for a parish history. Finally, during the exceptional heatwave of July 1976, I much appreciated the only air-conditioned archive in Paris, that of the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.

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patient, understanding, learned, and (in a word) gentlemanly George Rudé. Louis Bergeron, Jeffry Kaplow, Harvey Mitchell, Michelle Perrot, Albert Soboul, and Charles Tilly have all, at one time or another, been of help. One of the principal pleasures of working in France was meeting dozens of bright young scholars (many of whom, unfortunately, have since been forced to give up the profession because of the current job crisis), as well as more seasoned veterans of the archives. These are too numerous to name, but I must mention, with the deepest affection, three of them: my copains Marc Alexander, Jeremy Popkin, and Matthew Ramsey. For a year or more in Paris, we shared one another's joys and depressions while, over countless café tables, we swapped research information, debated history, politics, art, and films, and worried about our careers. I always felt behind me the support of my parents, and of loyal friends both in Montreal and Paris, among them Francie Early, Eric Heywood, Stuart Juzda, Michael Piva, and Liana Vardi.

I wish to thank The Canada Council and Quebec's Ministère de l'Éducation for doctoral fellowships which supported me, through graduate school and financed my research in France.

CHAPTER ONE

INDUSTRY AND LABOUR

Paris est la métropole industrielle de tout l'Empire français.¹

I.

Napoleonic Paris was a city of sharp contrasts. It was, first of all, the capital of an extensive Empire, the political and administrative centre of a rich and powerful nation whose armies dominated a continent. Elegant mansions housed both a haughty (and still wealthy) Old-Régime nobility, survivors of the Revolution which had destroyed their political influence, and an equally proud nobility of recent vintage, risen to power through service to the same revolution. A prosperous and self-confident bourgeoisie enjoyed the spoils of 1789, and lived in comfortable apartments furnished in luxurious mahogany, presenting daughters with rich dowries and educating sons for state administration or sending them as officers into the army. Tourists came to Paris to admire the neo-classicism of its new, stately buildings, gawk at the monuments to the Emperor's

¹Odette Viennet, ed., Une enquête économique dans la France Impériale: le voyage du hambourgeois Ph. A. Nemnich (Paris, 1947), p. 57. Nemnich wrote this comment in 1809.

military triumphs, visit the museums filled with the loot of conquered territories, and thrill to the éclat of state ceremonies and military parades. But they also saw that outside the courtyards of the rich, the filthy streets stank of garbage, while jostling crowds on foot dodged the apparent madmen who drove their carriages at breakneck speed. The stalls of hundreds of petty retailers cluttered the fine bridges spanning the Seine and the new quays along its banks. On almost every street the tourists might notice small workshops and, here and there (often within the walls of some ancient church or convent from which the revolutionaries had expelled the clergy), there were factories with modern machinery. Workers' tenements rose almost everywhere in the city, so that the splendid dome of the Panthéon, crowning the hill known as the Montagne-Sainte-Genève, looked down narrow and wretched streets which climbed the slopes; and even the Louvre Palace stood beside workshops and slums. For Paris was more than the capital of an Empire and home of an aristocracy and bourgeoisie: it had the largest concentration of artisans, workers, and indigents in continental Europe.

One Frenchman in fifty lived in Paris, a small proportion by today's standards of urbanization but at the time enough to make it by far the greatest city on the continent. France's first city was, as large as her next six cities combined: Marseille, Lyon, Bordeaux, Rouen,

TABLE 1

POPULATION OF PARIS

1789:	524,186	inhabitants
1793:	640,504	
1795:	551,347	
1801:	547,756	
1807:	580,609	
1811:	622,636	
1817:	713,966	

SOURCE: Louis Chevalier, Classes laborieuses, classes dangereuses à Paris pendant la première moitié du XIX^e siècle (Paris, 1958), pp. 208-10.

Nantes, and Lille.² Its population declined during the political, social, and economic upheaval of the French Revolution,³ and as late as 1807 there were still voices to lament the underpopulation of some quarters of Paris.⁴ Statistics, however, indicate that after 1800 (and particularly after 1807) the population grew steadily (see table 1).

²Charles H. Pouthas, La population française pendant la première moitié du XIX^e siècle (Paris, 1956), p. 98.

³See comments by the mayor of the first arrondissement, who gives the reasons for this decline in: "Situation du 1^{er} Arrondissement municipal de Paris sous tous les rapports qui peuvent intéresser l'administration générale, envoyé à la Préfecture le 22 vendémiaire an IX" (14 October 1800), ADS, VDX 2557bis, Registre des procès-verbaux des membres composant l'administration municipale du premier arrondissement. Reprinted by Lucien Lazard as "Un Arrondissement de Paris en l'an IX: 1^{er} ancien, 8^e actuel," Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique du VIII^e arrondissement de Paris 2 (1900):36-63. I wish to thank Mme Felkay of the ADS who located the original document for me, although it had never been catalogued.

⁴Reports by mayors of first, fourth, and seventh arrondissements to Min. Int., 1807, AN, F20 255.

But these figures are by no means certain. The twelve mayors of Paris (there was one for each arrondissement) generally believed that the census of 1801 underestimated the city's real population by as much as one-fifth, since the commissioners charged with calling on every inhabitant often merely interviewed the porter or principal tenant in each building and asked for the names of all other occupants.⁵ If the claim is true (and this is doubtful), it undermines all arguments concerning the rate of urban growth in Paris. Furthermore, much of the considerable increase between 1811 and 1817 probably occurred only after the Napoleonic period, when peace returned. The police, who put together the census of 1807, believed that Paris had a normal peace-time population of 659,555 inhabitants, significantly more than the number they had actually counted.⁶ It is therefore probable that while Paris did grow between 1801 and 1817, the increase may have amounted to less than the 36.2 percent which the census figures indicate.

⁵"Mémoire adressé par le préfet de la Seine au conseiller d'Etat Lacuée sur la police générale de Paris et du département de la Seine," an IX (1800-1801), AN, AF IV 1012. The mayor of the fourth arrondissement discusses the methods of census-taking in his area (he used 72 sergeant-majors in the National Guard) in a letter to Pr. Seine, 30 prairial an VIII (19 June 1800), ADS, V bis 1 D2 1.

⁶"Etat de la Population de Paris, suivant le recensement qui en a été fait par les commissaires de police en mars, avril, et mai 1807," AN, F7 4334, d. 9. Another copy in AN, F20 134.

Most of the growth was the consequence of Paris's political importance, although its economic prosperity undoubtedly contributed. Before 1789, the commercial capitalism of the dynamic port cities had dominated the French economy. Then, during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period, the ports declined, while Paris advanced to the fore.⁷ The Orléans Chamber of Commerce protested these developments in 1805:

This evil is the centralization in Paris of all branches of commerce, finance, and industry, and this is a mistake destructive of provincial trade. . . . It seems that since the Revolution, Paris has become the home of all who have profited from [France's] misfortunes. That city alone draws all the government's attentions. It is there alone that it is sought to bring together not only the [investment] capital of all France, but also all the resources that commerce provides for the increase of wealth.⁸

This economic shift involved not only the transfer of commercial capital, but also the expansion of mass-production industries. Paris was a large consumer market, and it offered a plentiful supply of labour (both skilled and unskilled) which included numerous migrants from the countryside. But rents and wages were also high and the work

⁷ Louis Bergeron, Banquiers, négociants et manufacturiers parisiens du Directoire à l'Empire, 2 vols. (Lille and Paris, 1975), 2:853-56. Viennet, Une enquête, p. 69.

⁸ "Mémoire sur la situation du Commerce et des Manufactures d'Orléans, envoyé au ministre de l'Intérieur en réponse à ses questions, en prairial an XIII-Juin 1805," Bulletin mensuel de la Chambre de Commerce d'Orléans et du département du Loiret (1898):47.

force was notoriously unstable and exigent. In the long run, such negative factors were decisive and the provinces began to develop at the expense of Paris after 1815, "as if the movement of industrialization which had carried the city between 1796 and 1810 to the rank of economic capital of the country had been only an accident," Paris thereafter remained perfectly suited to the luxury trades and to industries requiring high technical skills, but the mass-production industries were better located elsewhere.⁹

The French Revolution, or more precisely the civil and foreign wars of the period, inflicted serious damage on French industry and commerce in general.¹⁰ The Parisian economy was in sorry condition by 1800. The mayor of the first arrondissement reported, "Commerce, in our arrondissement as everywhere else, has been inactive for some time. . .," and, although his district was primarily residential, he still knew of several manufactories in it which had dismissed many workers or even shut down completely.¹¹ The

⁹Maurice Lévy-Leboyer, Les banques européennes et l'industrialisation internationale dans la première moitié du XIX^e siècle (Paris, 1964), pp. 116-17. See also, Bertrand Gille, "Les essais d'industrialisation de Paris sous la Révolution et l'Empire," in Documents sur l'Etat de l'industrie et du commerce de Paris et du Département de la Seine (1778-1810) (Paris, 1963), pp. 13-30.

¹⁰François Crouzet, "Les conséquences économiques de la Révolution, à propos d'un état de Sir Francis d'Ivernois," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 34 (1962): 187-217, 336-62.

¹¹"Situation du 1^{er} Arrondissement municipal de Paris," ADS, VDX 2557bis.

Prefect of the Department of the Seine listed a score of enterprises which had reduced the number of their employees by three-quarters since 1789, cited another score that were "absolutely without activity", and then mentioned "the hundreds of small establishments of six to ten workers, reduced to a single one or to the hands of the proprietor himself. . . ." ¹² Napoleon was unable to bring a definitive and healing peace, but political and social stability under his rule did lead to economic recovery.

There is a particularly interesting report, prepared for the Paris Chamber of Commerce in 1805, which contrasts the city's economy in the first months of the Empire with its condition before the Revolution. According to this report, it was the luxury trades which had suffered most from events and from revolutionary attempts "to level all fortunes." The suppression of noble and ecclesiastical pomp and ceremony had dealt a severe blow to the production of gold and silver braid, embroidery, and fringes. The manufacture of enamelled objects and artificial jewelry had also declined. The report expressed the hope that the recent proclamation of the Empire might revive these trades, just as carriage-making and saddle-making had begun to show renewed vigour. Other industries in the city were

¹²Pr. Seine, "Notice sur le département de la Seine considéré sous le rapport du commerce et des manufactures," an IX (1800-1801), AN, AF IV 1012.

encountering competition from new centres of manufacture. The production of silk stockings, with wide foreign markets, had been destroyed in Paris and was now the monopoly of the southern departments of France. English rivals threatened ribbon-making, which had once employed "a multitude of workers," while Saint-Etienne and Saint-Chamond in France turned out so-called "Paris ribbons." Furthermore, Germany and England challenged the former ascendancy of the Paris hat industry.

Many other Parisian industries, however, were prospering. The manufacture of silk brocades and gauze, with markets in France, Spain, Germany, and Russia, employed a large number of "the poor inhabitants" of the city. The production of fans, snuffboxes, and other fancy-goods remained extremely important: "All these objects are streams which, joined together, form a river that vitalizes the soil of the capital. . . ." Parisian jewelry and gold-work found a world-wide market that included the Americas: "this branch [is] so essential to the prosperity of the capital. . . ." Fine porcelain also had markets abroad, while cheaper pottery and earthenware met local needs. Printing was an important trade, for "all the book-lovers of Europe look to Paris." There were extensive markets for Paris-made furniture, and this trade provided work to many men. Printed cottons and wallpaper employed men, women, and children. The leather trade was important and "of great advantage for employing

indigents." Other products manufactured in Paris included gold-plated copper articles, elastic garters and suspenders, powder, starch, and playing cards. Cotton-spinning stood out among the newer industries in the capital.¹³ The Prefect of Police estimated in 1807 that "disregarding the influence of war and of temporary events" (like economic crises), Parisian industry annually turned out over 112 million francs' worth of goods.¹⁴ His figure is obviously inadequate, for he not only left out certain sectors of the economy as "non-productive" (including construction) but also failed to calculate the output of such important trades as shoe-making and tailoring. But his point is well taken: Paris was France's major industrial city.

The phrase "industrial city" immediately conjures up images of nineteenth-century Manchester or Saint-Etienne, with smoking factories, power-driven machinery, and a wretched proletariat. Nothing could be further from the reality of Napoleonic Paris. Contemporaries used the word "industry" to refer broadly to "all work done by human hands" or to "the use of machines and of certain tools to produce an artificial object for men's convenience or needs."¹⁵

¹³Notes by J.J. Rousseau, 26 pluviôse an XIII (15 Feb. 1805), ACCP, Box VII.3.7.

¹⁴Report by Pr. Pol. to Degerando, Secretary-general at Ministry of the Interior, 22 Aug. 1807, AN, F12 1569.

¹⁵Statistique générale et particulière de la France et de ses colonies, 2 vols. (Paris, n.d.), 2:67.

Most French industry was, as it had been for centuries, artisanal. The principal unit of production was the small workshop owned by a master artisan who supervised a handful of journeymen (if he did not work alone) or even the isolated worker labouring in his own apartment on order for a client or merchant. This was particularly true of the crowded central core of Paris. "There are, in the Arcis division," according to one description written in 1809, "many workshops; or rather this entire division seems to be only a single workshop divided into as many parts as there are homes or even rooms."¹⁶ The Minister of the Interior used a strikingly similar metaphor to describe the jewelry trade concentrated around the Place Dauphine,¹⁷ and the police commissioner of the Amis de la Patrie division reported that while there were many workers in his jurisdiction, there were few mills or manufactories because a large number of wholesale dealers had their orders made up by workers at home.¹⁸ Little had changed in 1848, when the Paris Chamber of Commerce observed:

¹⁶Nacquart, "Considérations topographiques et médicales sur la division des Arcis, faisant partie du 7^e arrondissement municipale de Paris, le 31 octobre 1809," Journal général de médecine, de chirurgie et de pharmacie 38 (1810):374.

¹⁷Min. Int. to Chambre de Commerce de Paris, 23 Feb. 1807, ACCP, Box VII.3.7.

¹⁸"Compte morale de la situation de la division des Amis de la Patrie, 1^{er} trimestre l'an X" (Sept.-Dec. 1801), APP, A/a 55, fol. 459-61.)

The distinctive characteristic of the manufacturing industry in Paris is the division of occupations and the splitting up of enterprises. . . . The industries which thrive in the interior of cities are those which can be divided among a large number of small contractors and jobbers.¹⁹

This was a mode of production especially suited to the manufacture of luxury items and fancy-goods, often known collectively as "Paris goods" (articles de Paris), which were the city's principal export, employing in 1807 as many as forty thousand men and at least an equal number of women and children.²⁰

A considerable number of people also worked in larger establishments, either manufactories or factories. A member of the Paris Chamber of Commerce in 1805 explained the difference between these two words. A manufactory (manufactory) made use of manual labor, with or without machinery but with no power other than human strength; a factory (usine) used machinery powered by air, water, steam (or, we may presume, animals). He added, however, that in everyday usage the distinction between the two words was often ignored, while in some localities in France the meanings had even been reversed.²¹ Manufactories (according to this

¹⁹Chambre de Commerce de Paris, Statistique de l'industrie à Paris résultant de l'enquête faite par la Chambre de commerce pour les années 1847-1848 (Paris, 1851) p. 11.

²⁰Report by Chambre de Commerce de Paris to Min. Int., 28 March 1807; AN, F12 1569.

²¹Minutes of Chambre de Commerce de Paris, 23 messidor an XIII (12 July 1805), ACCP, Registres des procès-verbaux.

definition) were far more common in Napoleonic Paris than factories. French industry lagged behind English industry not so much in machine technology as in the use of machinery and especially steam power.²² A report prepared during the Hundred Days (1815) declared that "lack of capital and low wages have worked against the perfectioning of machinery; we have scarcely more than two important establishments for the construction of large machines."²³ But this was an unduly pessimistic view. The P erier brothers, whose career began before the Revolution, owned and operated a celebrated water-pump at Chaillot and also made machinery for the textile industry, as well as steam engines; their foundry employed three hundred workers in 1807. Another manufacturer, Charles Albert, once arrested and imprisoned in 1791 as an industrial spy in Birmingham, presented the Emperor with a mule-jenny in 1807, and won official praise as "one of those mechanics who has brought the highest degree of perfection to the production of machines to spin cotton." Ternaux, a manufacturer of woollens, owned a workshop to make machinery, on the rue Mouffetard, which employed thirty workers in 1807. John Douglas produced machines to card and spin wool. These men were only the best known

²²The standard work on this subject remains Charles Ballot, L'introduction du machinisme dans l'industrie fran aise (Paris, 1923).

²³"Note adress e   Sa Majest  l'Empereur des Fran ais sur l' tat actuel de notre industrie compar    celui de l'industrie anglaise," [1815], AN, AF IV 1935.

among many.²⁴ It is highly significant, however, that Douglas also sold the equipment required to hitch horses to his machines. Parisian industry, even when mechanized, was still fundamentally dependent on human and animal power. When Peltier, owner of a spinning mill on the rue Saint-Jacques, wanted to replace his horses with a steam-engine in 1812, he met considerable opposition from neighbours who were afraid of so dangerous a contraption in their quarter --which suggests how unfamiliar Parisians were with its operations.²⁵ There were forty-four spinning mills in Paris in 1813; only one used water-power and two steam-power.²⁶ One of the Périers estimated in 1810 that in all of France there were no more than two hundred steam-engines as compared to five thousand in England.²⁷

²⁴ Jacques Payen, Capital et machine à vapeur au XVIII^e siècle: les frères Périer et l'introduction en France de la machine à vapeur de Watt (Paris and the Hague, 1969), p. 204. Pierre Leuillot, "Contribution à l'histoire de l'introduction du machinisme en France: la 'biographie industrielle' de F.-C.-L. Albert (1764-1831)," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 24 (1952):400-19. Report on Charles Albert, March 1809, AN, AF IV 963, fol. 179-80. Advertising circular for Douglas's machines, [Nov. 1807], AN, F12 513. Bergeron, Banquiers, négociants et manufacturiers, 2:593-95. Viennet, Une enquête économique, pp. 64-65

²⁵ Report by Comité de salubrité de Paris, August 1812, in minutes of the Comité, APP.

²⁶ Bergeron, Banquiers, négociants et manufacturiers, 2:547.

²⁷ Jacques-Constantin Périer, Sur les machines à vapeur (Paris, 1810).

Two documents, neither of which is wholly reliable, give some indication of the number of large industrial establishments in Napoleonic Paris. One, an undated "industrial description of France," claims to include only "manufactories properly so-called and not small workshops." Under the heading of "Seine (Paris)" it lists a wide range of industries with a total of 48,585 workers. It also gives the number of manufactories in about two-thirds of these industries: 502 manufactories in all, with 42,932 workers --an average of eighty-six workers in each. The average of course varies from industry to industry: one salt refinery employed three workers, while forty-four cotton producers employed an average of 292 workers each. But these totals seem improbable, even if we take into account the fact that they may refer to industry in the Department of the Seine as a whole. The report itself admits to "very imperfect approximations, because of a lack of a regular system of information."²⁸

A second report, prepared by the police in February 1807, is more precise. It lists 313 manufactories, and gives the owner's name and a street address, for each. It also indicates the number of workers employed in 303 of them.²⁹

²⁸ "Apperçu d'une description industrielle de la France (Ancien tableau de M. Degerando," undated but catalogued as 1804-1811, AN, F20 288.

²⁹ "Etat des manufactures et autres établissements qui versent leurs produits dans le commerce et qui supposent

Yet it, too, is not completely accurate. One substantial error in particular stands out: the report credits Richard-Lenoir with 7,900 workers in his cotton manufactory, but, according to this industrialist's own claims, in 1808 he employed about eleven thousand workers in all of France and only 1,071 of these in Paris.³⁰ Table 2 summarizes the police statistics, with the figure for Richard-Lenoir brought down to match his own estimate. (Even so, he was by far the most important employer in Paris.) Thus, according to our revised figures, 303 manufacturing establishments employed almost fifteen thousand people. This list, however, is probably incomplete. For example, a separate report by the mayor of the twelfth arrondissement mentions nine blanket manufactories in his quarter of the city, while only five of them appear on the police list.³¹ In any case, the workers in these establishments were not at all a modern factory-based proletariat. The nine blanket manufactories, for instance, employed 1,750 workers, but of these just over

un certain degré d'industrie, situés dans la ville de Paris," February 1807, AN, F12 1569. A second copy, AN, F7 4334, d. 12. There are a number of minor discrepancies between these two copies, most notably a mineral acid factory which is listed in the second but not in the first.

³⁰ Mémoires de M. Richard-Lenoir, ancien négociant, manufacturier et chef de la 8^e légion de la Garde Nationale de Paris, renfermant des détails curieux sur l'histoire de l'industrie cotonnière (Paris, 1837), p. 422.

³¹ Report by mayor of twelfth arrondissement to Min. Int., 14 May 1807, AN, F20 255. In the police list, blanket manufactories were listed under cotton manufactories.

TABLE 2
MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENTS IN PARIS (1807)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<u>Textiles</u>						
Lace, tulle, gauze	9	9	2,104	24	600	200
Hosiery	18	18	449	4	105	10
Cotton	40	39	5,623	3	1,071	80
Linen	7	7	174	8	48	22
<u>Chemicals</u>						
Mineral acids	7	6	19	1	8	2.5
Starch	13	12	18	1	2	1.5
Glue	5	5	59	2	50	2
Colours	13	12	65	1	25	2.5
Scents and vinegar	11	10	95	2	35	7.5
Refineries	3	3	9	3	3	3
<u>Clothing</u>						
Hats	18	18	413	7	60	20
Buttons (metal)	14	14	389	6	60	25
<u>Luxuries</u>						
Bronze and ornaments	13	11	611	8	200	35
Gold & silver braid	1	1	30	-	-	-
Mirrors	1	-	-	-	-	-
Gold & jewelry	20	20	473	2	80	11
Porcelain & china	22	22	1,069	8	150	25
Clocks	9	8	84	1	26	9
Wallpaper	20	20	953	6	200	25
Carpets	3	3	334	24	230	80
<u>Miscellaneous</u>						
Transparent horn	1	1	17	-	-	-
Cabinets & furniture	19	19	384	1	150	10
Earthenware pottery	3	3	9	2	4	3
Tobacco	7	6	616	4	450	45
Machinery	16	16	597	3	250	15
Tanning	10	10	129	2	25	11.5
Saddles & coaches	10	10	205	2	58	16
	313	303	14,928			

Key: (1) Total number of establishments in category.
 (2) Number for which information is given.
 (3) Total number of workers in all establishments.
 (4) Number of workers in smallest establishment.
 (5) Number of workers in largest establishment.
 (6) Median between (4) and (5).

N.B.--When the number of workers given for a manufactory is a range (e.g. 100-125), only the higher number is used in the above table.

SOURCE: All figures come from "Etat des manufactures et autres établissements qui versent leurs produits dans le commerce et qui supposent un certain degré d'industrie, situés dans la ville de Paris," AN, F7 4334 and F12 1569.

five hundred at most worked in the principal workshops; the remainder were scattered in various quarters of the capital, in the city's hospitals and homes, and even in the provinces. It is likely that much the same situation prevailed in many other establishments. A note on cotton spinning in 1811 mentions that manufacturers, in counting the number of their employees, sometimes included only those in the main workshop but at other times added in spinners who worked at home and who, in fact, often spun for more than one manufacturer.³²

Taking into account the evident deficiencies in available statistics, we can make a judicious guess that there were in Napoleonic Paris about 350 to four hundred establishments large enough to be considered manufactories or factories. These may have employed twenty to twenty-five thousand people, of whom one-third to one-half did not actually work in the central workshop. The only really modern factories, bringing together large numbers of workers and advanced machinery, were in the textile industry. Indeed, Paris was briefly under Napoleon the "cotton capital" of France. The Department of the Seine in 1812 had 10 percent of the spindles in the whole Empire, or 13 percent of the spindles within the old boundaries of France. Richard-Lenoir

³²"Manufactures: Statistique de 1811: Résultats généraux," table on filatures de coton, AN, F12 1621B.

was the prototype of an emerging class of Parisian industrialists. He took over the Bon-Secours Convent on the rue de Charonne in the faubourg Saint-Antoine and turned it into the most important textile factory in the city, putting fifteen teasel-frames in the chapel and demolishing the cells to make room for mule-jennies and one hundred weaving frames. But the ascendancy of Paris in textiles was only a temporary phenomenon based on the urban market, a close-at-hand machine industry, and the ready availability of labour (especially women and children) and of large buildings in the form of nationalized convents and churches. High wages, declining transportation costs, and the development of provincial markets later reversed the situation.³³

Table 2 clearly shows that the average Parisian manufactory was small. As the following examples suggest, even most of the larger enterprises were probably little more than a series of small workshops brought together in one place. Desarnod employed seventy or eighty men to produce stoves in 1801; his manufactory consisted of seven distinct workshops, each with a specific function, and about a dozen of his men worked outside the main

³³ David Pinkney, "Paris, capitale du coton sous le Premier Empire," Annales 5 (1950):56-60. Bergeron, Banquiers, négociants et manufacturiers, 2: chapter 8. Mémoires de M. Richard-Lenoir, pp. 247-58.

establishment.³⁴ Jacob-Desmalter owned a furniture manufactory which in 1808 employed 332 people. It was divided into sixteen separate workshops, the largest of which (to sculpt ornaments) had fewer than forty men.³⁵ Herbalin, a currier, sought permission in 1812 to open a manufactory to make polished leather boot-facings. He proposed to set up three workshops in a building he inhabited -- two on the fifth floor, where workers would apply polish to the leather, and one on the third floor to prepare the leather.³⁶

Workers in such establishments were, like their counterparts in the small artisanal workshops, skilled journeymen and in no way a machine-tending proletariat. The structure of Parisian manufacturing, with the exception of textiles, had changed little over the years. Paris was still in the pre-industrial era.

³⁴ "Réponses du Cen Desnarod aux questions à lui faites par le citoyen Maire du 1^{er} Arrondissement, au nom du Gouvernement, le 12 floréal an IX" (2 May 1801), ADS, VD6 20, d. 2.

³⁵ Denise Ledoux-Lebard, Les ébénistes parisiens du XIX^e siècle (1795-1870), leurs œuvres et leurs marques (Paris, 1965), pp. 249-51.

³⁶ Report to Comité de salubrité de Paris, 16 May 1812 in minutes, of the Comité, APP.

II

What then is the appropriate descriptive term for these workers? In the early nineteenth century as during the Old Régime, the common portmanteau word "worker" (ouvrier) referred to both artisan and wage-earner, in fact to anyone who laboured with his hands. Manual labour was in itself socially demeaning, whether the worker owned his own workshop or just worked in one for wages. We find in contemporary documents a wide range of terms beside "workers" and all of which have more or less the same vague general meaning: "the working class" (la classe ouvrière), "the labouring class" (la classe laborieuse), and "the useful class" (la classe utile)--all three of which terms were also frequently used in the plural--as well as "the little people" (le menu peuple) or merely "the people" (le peuple), and sometimes even "indigents" (les indigents) or "the indigent class" (la classe indigente). We occasionally come across tangled descriptive phrases such as "the class of people who live by labour" (la classe du peuple qui vit du produit de son travail). And what are we to make of such an apparent contradiction as "bourgeois workers" (les ouvriers bourgeois) which appears in one report and apparently describes master artisans?³⁷

³⁷ Ordonnateur de la Garde Impériale to [Min. Int.?), 20 Dec. 1813; AN, F15 2763. A chart attached to this letter notes that "L'habillement se confectionne en ville ... chez les ouvriers bourgeois."

Until the advent of industrial production created a distinct class of wage-earners in the factories (the proletariat or working class in the modern sense) social terminology was vague enough to enable a single term to embrace shopkeepers, artisans and journeymen in the traditional crafts, wage-earners in manufactories, construction workers, workers in their own homes under contract to merchant-manufacturers, unskilled labourers like porters or chimney-sweeps, and even peddlers who hawked their goods in the street. Historians of the French Revolution usually refer to these people as the sans-culottes, but there are political implications to this tag. Jeffry Kaplow, in a study of eighteenth-century Paris, calls them the labouring poor, an evocative expression which accurately suggests their social condition.³⁸ In the following pages, however, the term "labouring population" is preferred, while "working class" is carefully avoided as an anachronism, except as a direct translation of classe ouvrière in Napoleonic sources.

The labouring population may be subdivided into five general categories, each of which is by no means entirely homogeneous but does show certain common characteristics. Independent tradesmen, shopkeepers, and artisans (either working alone or employing hired labour) make up our first category. Despite nineteenth-century usage, this group is

³⁸ Jeffry Kaplow, The Names of Kings: The Parisian Laboring Poor in the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1972).

not included among "workers," as that term is used in this dissertation; it is more appropriately applied to only the four remaining groups. Our second category is the chambrelans, "home-workers" being the closest English equivalent. These are a transitional group, intermediate between independent artisans on one hand and our third category, wage-earners, on the other. Wage-earners include journeymen in the skilled crafts, workers in large manufacturing establishments, and unskilled labourers in general. Our fourth category is the horde of peddlers and petty retailers who sold goods of all kinds in the streets and markets but who had no established shops. Our fifth category is composed of domestic servants and house-porters. Although the first category of artisans and shopkeepers is of only peripheral interest in this study of workers, we must begin with an examination of their social and economic position before looking at each of the other four categories in turn.

III

The master craftsman or shopkeeper in the Old Régime was almost always by definition one of a restricted number of members of a trade guild, although there were areas of Paris, like the faubourg Saint-Antoine, which were free of guild regulation and where anyone might set himself up as a master. The self-serving monopoly exercised by masters was always resented by their journeymen, who aspired to

masterships themselves and usually found their ambitions thwarted by privilege.³⁹ After some initial hesitation, the revolutionaries swept away the guilds with the d'Allard Law of 2 March 1791, and henceforth any individual was free to practice a trade provided only that he pay for a licence.⁴⁰ This was the patente, intended not to regulate commerce and industry (as the guilds had done) but only to provide the government with a source of revenue. The cost of the licence consisted of two parts, payable annually: an imposition fixed according to the particular trade or profession for which the licence was sought and a variable tax assessed in proportion to the rent paid for business premises. Suppressed briefly between 1793 and 1795, the patente survived until as recently as 1976.⁴¹

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 36-37.

⁴⁰ Liana Vardi, "The French Guild System and its abolition during the French Revolution" (M.A. thesis, Concordia University, 1975).

⁴¹ There is no general history of the patente, with the exception of a superficial dissertation which does little more than recapitulate the laws: Jean Lafourcade, "Histoire de la patente à l'époque révolutionnaire et impériale" (Thesis, Faculté de droit et des sciences économiques de Paris, 1965). See also, Adeline Daumard, La bourgeoisie parisienne de 1815 à 1848 (Paris, 1963), pp. 18-21. The complexities of the laws are best untangled by reference to contemporary guides: Manuel des contribuables ou recueil de toutes les lois, proclamations et instructions sur les contributions directes (Paris, 1792) and Dispositions des lois relatives aux patentes de l'an VII, droits de messagerie, et de garantie des ouvrages d'or et d'argent, présentées par ordre alphabétique & de matières, avec des instructions sur le mode de leur exécution (Paris, an VII).

Any man or woman who earned an income from trade, industry, or a profession had to take out a patente. Licence-holders therefore included lawyers, doctors, merchants, and manufacturers as well as the humblest artisan or shopkeeper. Only a few occupations were exempt: laundresses, carders and spinners of wool and cotton, cobblers, tripe-dealers, and midwives: Petty retailers who hawked food in the streets were also exempt, unless they had a stall, in which case they paid only a half-fee, as did peddlers who sold non-food items. One large group of men and women did not have to take out a patente: "day-labourers, workers, and all wage-earners [toutes personnes à gages] working for another in the home, workshop, or shop of those who employ them. . . ."42 But employees who did not work under the direct supervision of their employers were another matter:

Those who work in their own homes for merchants and manufacturers, either wholesale or retail, or for individuals, even without journeymen, sign, or shop, are not considered to be workers working for another; they must be provided with a patente. . . .43

This group, freed from the patente only when the government rewrote the laws in 1844, came to be called "licenced workers" (ouvriers patentés) to distinguish them from licenced artisans and shopkeepers.

42 Dispositions des Lois:

43 Ibid.

Licensed workers included both chambrelans and jobbers (ouvriers à façon or façonniers).⁴⁴ The former were men and women who worked in their own homes, producing on the order of a merchant-manufacturer. They clearly belong among workers, and they form our second category. The position of jobbers is more ambiguous. Tribunals, in the course of the nineteenth century, defined them as artisans "who work by themselves or with the help of several journeymen or apprentices at pieces of work which they deliver immediately to the consumers who have ordered them. . . ."⁴⁵ That is to say, a tailor who made clothes at home for individual clients was a jobber; if he made them for a retail merchant or a manufacturer, he was a chambrelan. Adeline Daumard has called jobbers "wage-earners dependent on clients" (les salariés de clientèle), and has argued that they were a "worker aristocracy" unlike ordinary wage-earners because they were independent of any master, yet not really masters themselves because they lacked capital and legal status.⁴⁶ A report written about 1807 indicates that tax collectors recognized the unfairness of including most jobbers among

⁴⁴ See Mollot, De la compétence des conseils de prud'hommes et de leur organisation (Paris, 1842), p. 45: "Finally, the law of 1 brumaire an VII gives us the definition of the licensed worker; it applies this tax to, article 29, number 3, 'He who works in his own home for the manufacturers, even without journeymen, sign, or shop.' Such are in Paris all the workers called à façon, façonniers, marchandeurs, tâcherons."

⁴⁵ Daumard, La bourgeoisie, p. 14.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 70-71.

the class of licenced artisans. There were, for example, 294 jewellers à façon in Paris: "These are those who work at home and without a hall-mark [of their own]; it would be proper to exempt them from the patente. . . ." Boot-makers à façon also worked at home, but "there are some who employ many more workers than those who have a shop. We should perhaps distinguish between those who employ only one or two workers and those who employ a greater number." As for masons who hired themselves out to perform a variety of jobs: "Those who work by the day for themselves ought to be exempt."⁴⁷ It therefore makes sense to include jobbers along with chambrelans in our second category. This is all the more reasonable because contemporaries themselves did not always make a clear distinction between jobbers and chambrelans.⁴⁸

Licence-holders therefore did not form a uniform social group. This system of taxation was grossly unfair and authorities admitted that occupational categories were too rigidly defined and that the variable tax on rent did not sufficiently take into account inequalities of income

⁴⁷ "Tableau général des états, commerces, et professions exercés dans la Ville de Paris," ADS, DP2 16.

⁴⁸ As in the case of Melan-LeGuay, a goldsmith à façon who worked for a licenced artisan (and was therefore actually a chambrelan). He was fined 200 francs and expenses for working without a patente. Petition to Min. Justice, 27 June [1808?], AN, BB18 790.

among artisans and shopkeepers.⁴⁹ The mayor of the first arrondissement blamed these injustices in the law for the "efforts made by a throng of workers [sic] and merchants to avoid paying" the licence, and for all the subsequent reclamations and legal disputes.⁵⁰ Officials decided in 1805 to exempt seamstresses from the patente since these women were usually too poor to pay the tax anyway, and year after year their debts had to be written off.⁵¹ Thus, the increasing number of masters after 1791 was not a sign of general economic prosperity, nor the result of personal success. The Prefect of Police commented in 1801 that "each day sees the birth and the death of establishments which are at one and the same time the ruin of those who form them and the despair of commerce."⁵² It was argued that many who took out a licence were inadequately skilled in their trade, produced shoddy goods; and either remained in a precarious financial position or failed and went bankrupt.⁵³

⁴⁹ Guinot, "Sur le système actuel des impositions en France et particulièrement à Paris," 10 prairial an X (30 May 1802), BHVP, Ms CP 4772. "Rapport: Contributions directes, 15 germinal an XIII (5 April 1805), in "Direction des contributions: comptes-rendus", ADS, DP2 16.

⁵⁰ "Situation du 1er Arrondissement municipal de Paris," ADS, VDX 2557bis.

⁵¹ "Rapport: Contributions directes," 15 germinal an XIII (5 April 1805) and an XIV-1806 in "Direction des contributions: comptes rendus," ADS, DP2 16.

⁵² Minutes of the Conseil général du Département de la Seine, 15 germinal an IX (5 April 1801), AN, Flc V Seine 1.

⁵³ A.G.D., juge de paix, Essai sur les patentes et le commerce (N.p., an IX).

Nevertheless, many ordinary workers undoubtedly dreamed of becoming independent masters. One such man, barely literate, recounted his story in 1810:

I am a manufacturer of caps and braces. I used to work for masters, but the desire to make my wife and children happier, I ventured to take a shop and to work for myself, but I had the misfortune that everybody is better at this trade, that they sell the merchandise at a very low price, and the merchandise that I bought [was sold] at a much higher [price], putting me in the position of not being able to pay my promissory notes when they fell due. . . .

Bankruptcy inevitably followed, and he and his family fled his creditors and went into hiding.⁵⁴ In a similar vein, the Minister of the Treasury reported in 1811 that "perhaps half of today's [cotton textile] manufacturers are, strictly speaking, only weavers who have left the workshop of their masters to make themselves manufacturers when they have found men willing . . . to advance them the raw materials for two years" at a very high rate of interest. The economic crisis of 1810-1811 hit these men hard and forced many of them into bankruptcy.⁵⁵ Many established artisans and shopkeepers were no more secure. The Prefect of Police observed of Parisian shoemakers: "Most masters are hardly more fortunate [than their journeymen]; one sees many buy from day to day the single candle which provides light for two

⁵⁴Pétition by Layland to Min. Int., [1810], AN, F15 2677. This translation can convey only some of the grammatical confusion in the original, and none of the spelling errors.

⁵⁵Mollien to Emperor, 16 March 1811, AN, AF. IV 1089A.

workers."⁵⁶ A master butcher estimated in 1815 that two-fifths of the 428 licenced butchers in the capital were poor, another two-fifths were "a little less poorly off," and only one-fifth enjoyed "that honest comfort which, however, cannot yet be called wealth."⁵⁷ Adeline Daumard has called these the "popular bourgeoisie," describing them as a social group only just above the "working class" (her phrase):

Petty merchants or petty artisans whose workshop is also a retail store [boutique] are proprietors [patrons] who live off profit, which separates them from their customers, who are to a great extent workers. . . . Because it is composed of the most disadvantaged, the popular bourgeoisie touches on the people.⁵⁸

An "administrative and statistical annual" published by Allard, who worked in the tax office for the Department of the Seine and therefore had access to the official statistics, reports that in 1805 there were 39,807 holders of patentes in Paris.⁵⁹ This number does not include master

⁵⁶Pr. Pol., "Statistique des ouvriers de Paris pour ce qui concerne les arts mécaniques au 1 mars 1807," AN, F7 4334 and F12 502. Reprinted by G. Vauthier, "Les ouvriers de Paris sous l'Empire," Revue des études napoléoniennes 2 (1913):426-51. There are some errors in this published version, and some police footnotes are omitted.

⁵⁷Sauvegrain, Observations sur divers projets de l'entreprises des abattoirs par des compagnies, et projet d'une régie des abattoirs au nom et au profit de la Ville de Paris (Paris, 1815), p. 28.

⁵⁸Daumard, La bourgeoisie parisienne, pp. 216, 254-57.

⁵⁹P.-H.-J. Allard, Annuaire administratif et statistique du Département de la Seine pour l'an XIII-1805 (Paris, n.d.), table 12. There are also manuscript lists for the first, sixth, and eighth arrondissements in 1807,

bakers, of whom there were 689 in 1807.⁶⁰ There were therefore about 40,496 licence-holders in Paris, although not all of these ought to be included in our first category of independent artisans and shopkeepers. Fortunately for our purposes, Allard also printed a more detailed list which breaks down his overall figure into specific occupations.⁶¹ Professionals, such as business agents, architects, bankers, doctors, and wholesale merchants (men who were clearly bourgeois), add up to 1,638. At the other extreme were 5,778 jobbers in about fifty assorted occupations.⁶² (None of the petty retailers and peddlers who paid a half-fee even appear on the list.) Deducting these professionals and jobbers from the total leaves us with 33,080 licence-holders. Some of these were the owners of prosperous businesses and belonged to the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, but there is no way to distinguish them from poor tradesmen on Allard's list. Allowing for them, we may conclude that there were about 25,000 to 30,000 holders of the patente who belong to our first category.

AN, F20 255. The figures given for these arrondissements vary only slightly from Allard's figures for them two years previously.

⁶⁰ Léon de Lanzac de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 8 vols. (Paris, 1905-1913), 5:185.

⁶¹ Allard, Annuaire, pp. 546-52: "Tableau général, et par ordre alphabétique des différents états, commerces ou professions exercés dans la Ville de Paris, et assujettis à la contribution des patentes."

⁶² The most common professions were: tailor (1,431), shoemaker (1,199), joiner (602), locksmith (337), clockmaker (302), jeweller (294), and cabinet-maker (278).

IV

The Paris Chamber of Commerce noted in July 1805:

. . . it is easy to distinguish the workshop, that is to say the room exclusively reserved for work, from the room where the worker uses his tools beside his bed and his household furniture. This last class of workers is composed of what we call chambrelans. They make up two-thirds of the workers of Paris. . . .⁶³

The chambrelans of the Old Régime were workers without master-ships who worked secretly on their own in their rooms. As early as the fifteenth century, the Paris guilds were trying unsuccessfully to stamp out these illegal competitors.⁶⁴

The abolition of guilds in 1791 legitimized their status and by 1805 the Chamber of Commerce reported to the Minister of the Interior that because of their importance in the city's economy, it would be impossible to provide him with accurate monthly details on the state of manufacturing in Paris:

Products which are made in an establishment headed by a master [chef] form only the smallest part of industry.

Gold articles, jewelry, buttons, feathers, artificial flowers, knitted goods, hardware, fancy-goods, and a hundred other kinds of items are produced by workers en chambre who supply the merchant and the wholesaler. These observations apply above all to the city of Paris, where this kind of manufacturing

⁶³ Minutes of Chambre de Commerce de Paris, 23 messidor an XIII (12 July 1805), ACCP, Registres des procès-verbaux.

⁶⁴ Bronislaw Geremek, Le salariat dans l'artisanat parisien aux XIII^e-XV^e siècles: Etudes sur le marché de la main-d'oeuvre au moyen âge (Paris and the Hague, 1968), p. 64. Gustave Fagniez, Etudes sur l'industrie et la classe industrielle à Paris au XIII^e et au XIV^e siècles (Paris, 1877), pp. 79-80.

is extremely widespread and has an immense output since it supports an enormous population.⁶⁵

Strictly speaking, the chambrelan (and the jobber, whom we have included in this group) was not a wage-earner, since he worked on his own to fill orders. But neither was he an independent artisan, since he maintained no shop and usually relied on a merchant or manufacturer to retail his product to the consumer, and often even to supply him with tools and raw materials. He was the urban counterpart of the peasant worker in rural domestic industry.⁶⁶ He enjoyed a degree of independence that was no more than precarious at best and was more often than not wholly illusory. If the law held him subject to the patente, it seems that he often got away without paying it. Master nailers and porcelain manufacturers both complained that the chambrelans in their trades had a competitive advantage because they did not pay the fee.⁶⁷ On the other hand, many licenced

⁶⁵Chambre de Commerce de Paris to Min. Int., 13 ventôse an XIII (4 March 1805), ACCP, Registres de correspondance.

⁶⁶Marx, writing of the transition from manufacture and domestic industry to mechanical industry, noted that "The production of wearing apparel is carried on . . . on a very great scale by the so-called domestic workers, who form an external department of the manufactories, warehouses, and even of the workshops of the smaller masters." Capital, 3 vols. (Modern Library Edition: New York, n.d.), 1:515.

⁶⁷See below, notes 70 and 71. See the bankruptcy record of Pierre Antoine Bernard, 19 ventôse an XI (10 March 1805), a former merchant now described as "a worker in

artisans might on occasion become chambrelans themselves, like the boot-makers, shoemakers, and tailors "who, although licenced, also work for merchants when they are not busy working for themselves."⁶⁸ This observation serves to remind us that the lines between independent artisan, chambrelan, and wage-earner were not rigidly fixed, and that a particular individual might cross over them many times in the course of his career, depending on the flux of economic circumstances.

Documents give occasional glimpses of chambrelans at work in a wide range of occupations. In the spring of 1801, a master shoemaker gave the police a list of eighteen shoemakers and boot-makers in various quarters of the city to whom he had entrusted the materials to make a total of fifty-nine pairs of shoes and boots; they had failed to return the finished product.⁶⁹ Painters and gilders of porcelain, once they had acquired their skills in a manufactory, often set themselves up as independent producers.

porcelain à façon, not subject to the patente." ADS, D 11 U3 18, d. 1312. According to strict interpretation of the law, he certainly was subject to the trade licence.

⁶⁸"Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, AN, F7 4334 and F12 502.

⁶⁹"Déclaration des cens Lemar, Dassaux, & Benquet contre des ouvriers qui leur ont emporté des souliers," 3 floréal an IX (23 April 1801), APP, A/a 246, fol. 46-47. The same carton contains two other cases of the same kind, one also in the shoe trade (fol. 62) and another in the glove trade (fol. 265).

They bought cheap white porcelain, decorated it at home, and then sold it to retailers. Their cut-throat competition, according to a hostile reporter, resulted in meagre earnings for the chambrelans themselves and threatened the prosperity of the large manufacturers.⁷⁰ Master nailers made similar complaints about workers at home who paid no business rent or taxes and could undersell them by charging only seven instead of ten francs for a thousand nails.⁷¹ Workers in the hosiery trade frequently disliked the discipline of the workshop. They could rent a loom for four francs a month, set it up at home, and produce knitted cottons at their own pace.⁷² Sometimes, a manufacturer preferred to put his own looms in his workers' homes: "M. Abel has only one frame in his own home; the others are set up at the homes of workers à façon in other arrondissements."⁷³

Manufacturers and merchants like Abel found it to their advantage to use chambrelans because it spared them the expense of maintaining a large workshop in a city where

⁷⁰ Anonymous letter to Min. Int., Paris, 8 June 1807, AN, F12 4791. Also, Chambre de Commerce de Paris, report to Min. Int., 28 March 1807, AN, F12 1569.

⁷¹ Minute of report by peace-officers Bazin and Noël, 6 messidor an X (25 June 1802), AN, F7 3178.

⁷² "Etat des fabriques de bonneterie de coton," 1807, AN, F12 1564, d^e Seine.

⁷³ Ibid.

fuel and rent were costly.⁷⁴ The members of the Paris Chamber of Commerce enthusiastically endorsed the system as advantageous to workers as well. "This stay-at-home industry," they reported, encouraged marriage, gave wives a share in the work, trained children in a trade almost from the cradle, and strengthened family ties. The worker was also less vulnerable to the ups and downs of a single industry: "the maker of wallets works on leather equipment for the military [buffleterie], the saddler makes boots, the painter of fans or snuff-boxes tries his hand on porcelain, the producer of steel becomes a gunsmith, sword-cuttler, and so on." This was how so many workers had managed to survive the Revolution when deprived of employment in their usual trade.⁷⁵ But the optimism of the Chamber of Commerce was misplaced, for many nineteenth-century reformers considered chambrelans to be among the most miserable of French workers.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Min. Int. to Chambre de Commerce de Paris, 23 Feb. 1807, ACCP, Box VII.3.7.

⁷⁵Chambre de Commerce de Paris, report to Min. Int., 28 March 1807, AN, F12 1569. See also the similar comments by one police commissioner: "Compte moral de la situation de la Div^{on} des Amis de la Patrie, 1^{er} trimestre an X" (Sept.-Dec. 1801), APP, A/a 55, fol. 459-61: "And in my opinion this is a great advantage for the workers, because they save time and are constantly in the midst of their families, the members of which learn the trades of their fathers and mothers while helping them in their work, almost without thinking about it, so to speak."

⁷⁶Sée, for example, Paul Buessard, Le devoir: livre des académies de bienfaisance (Paris, 1840), p. 13, for his remarks on the plight of Parisian chambrelans.

There is no data available on the number of chambrelans in Napoleonic Paris, with the exception of Allard's figure of 5,778 jobbers. The remark by the Chamber of Commerce (quoted above) to the effect that two-thirds of Parisian workers were chambrelans cannot be taken seriously. When asked to produce precise statistics, the Chamber merely turned in a report on the luxury trades, according to which they employed forty thousand men and at least an equal number of women and children, many (but hardly all) of whom were chambrelans.⁷⁷ We can be sure that this category of workers was very large, and that it overlapped both our first category (licenced artisans) and our third (wage-earners). Many, perhaps even most, female workers--such as seamstresses and laundresses who usually worked at home--were chambrelans. It is really impossible to go beyond such vague generalizations.

V

Our third category was probably the largest and certainly the most important group of workers: wage-earners. These were the men and women who worked outside their homes and either sold their labour for a fixed daily wage (like construction workers) or who were paid at a piece-rate (like journeymen shoemakers who made twenty-five sous for

⁷⁷Chambre de Commerce de Paris, report to Min. Int., 28 March 1807, AN, F12 1569.

each pair of shoes which they turned out for their master). They also included unskilled men, like errand-boys or cabbies who sold their services rather than performing productive labour. Only a few of these actually earned wages in the modern sense of a fixed hourly or daily rate of pay. The individuals in this category did not form a homogeneous class with a coherent class consciousness. They included the inexperienced but sturdy provincials who came to the capital to accumulate savings during a few years' hard work as water-carriers, as well as the proud and highly-skilled coiners who described themselves as "simple workers" for the mint, earning only a low daily wage, yet also boasted of being the descendants in direct line of the same families, with no interruption or omission of generations ("qui se perpétuoit de race en race au premier degré").⁷⁸

These men and women were real people and not mere abstractions which the historian can put into convenient and permanent slots. They did not stick to a single occupation any more than they stayed in a single category. When the police arrested Philippe Cerbelot, a stonemason, for dealing in forged government bonds, they asked how he, an illiterate, came to be involved in such an affair. He replied succinctly: "I do as everyone else; when I see the

⁷⁸ Mémoire pour les ouvriers monnoyeurs, ajusteurs et tailleres de Paris, à son Excellence le Ministre des Finances (Paris, [1807]).

opportunity of earning five sols, I earn them."⁷⁹ His particular case was somewhat unusual, but many others followed his philosophy. Thus, there was Porcher, who worked all summer pushing a wheelbarrow at a construction site and during the winter worked as a turner in his home.⁸⁰ Chalot was "an assistant-baker and now a launderer."⁸¹ There was Outrequin, "paper-paster and also employing himself at the trade of turner,"⁸² while Choux, "a shoemaker by profession," worked as a porter.⁸³ Laurent, a journeyman locksmith who found himself out of a job turned to carding cotton in a factory.⁸⁴

There is quite precise information available about the number of male wage-earners. The most useful document is a report on workers (or at least the men among them) in the "mechanical arts" (arts mécaniques) prepared by the police.

⁷⁹ Interrogation of Philippe Cerbelot, 14 ventôse an IX (5 March 1801), AN, F7 6293, d. 5963.

⁸⁰ Report by secret agent "L", 18 Oct. 1813, AN, F7 6598, d. 4015.

⁸¹ Minute of report by peace officers Destavigny and Petit, 11 germinal an X (1 April 1802), AN, F7 3177.

⁸² Minute of report by peace officers Marlée and Mercier, 23 germinal an X (13 April 1802), AN, F7 3177.

⁸³ Minute of report by peace officer Labussièrre, 23 messidor an X (12 July 1802), AN, F7 3178.

⁸⁴ Minute of report by peace officers Noël and Bazin, 21 brumaire an XI (12 Nov. 1802), AN, F7 3179.

in 1807 at the request of the Minister of the Interior.⁸⁵

(We will have occasion to refer to this report in other contexts, for it includes not only data on the number of workers in each occupation but also information on their morality, character, health, and wages.) The Prefect of Police had the required statistics at his finger-tips because all males employed in the skilled trades had to register with the police, who issued them an obligatory identification booklet, the livret. He could therefore provide exact figures for the number of workers (actually the number of livrets) in each occupation. The numbers of men for each of the twelve general headings under which the Prefect grouped the various occupations are as follows:

Food and Drink:	14,262
Building:	24,148
Dress:	17,806
Furniture:	5,158
Transportation:	3,341
Wood:	1,112
Metal:	11,258
Textiles:	3,215
Leather	1,993
Printing and Paper:	4,467
Vase and Crystal:	1,485
Miscellaneous:	2,701

These add up to 90,946 men--although it is unlikely that all of these were in the capital at any one time. Many of the construction workers, for example, were migrants who came only for the building season. There is also the possibility that the Prefect of Police simply reported the

⁸⁵ "Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, AN, F7 4334 and F12 502. The addition in this report is incorrect, giving a total of 91,946 wage-earners, instead of the correct figure of 90,946.

total number of livrets issued since their institution in 1804, rather than the number still valid. On the other hand, it is true that many workers failed to acquire the identity booklet.⁸⁶

Unskilled labourers, not subject to the law on livrets, do not appear in the report of 1807. Fortunately, there are other scattered sources to fill the gap. The most important of these is a booklet prepared in 1811 by Pasquier, Napoleon's second Prefect of Police, who needed exact information readily available to satisfy the Emperor's mania for detailed statistics on life in the capital.⁸⁷ Pasquier noted that there were 229 porters in the central grain market, 2,400 in other markets, and 3,800 workers on the city's ports. The coal trade employed an additional 800 porters and 60 shovelers. Thus, 7,289 men worked as porters in 1811. The figure of 2,000 men which he gives for water-carriers must refer only to carriers à bretelles, (who transported the water in two buckets suspended from a bar carried across the shoulders), for otherwise it is too small. Another report, based on

⁸⁶See my discussion of the livret below, chapter six.

⁸⁷"Tableau statistique de diverses professions & établissements publics, dans le ressort de la Préfecture de Police, ainsi que des principales branches d'approvisionnement, avec l'indication des fonctionnaires, agents d'exécution et autres: année 1811," BHVP, Ms 35. This is a copy of the original, with no indication of the date or circumstances of its making. Pasquier explains why he needed this booklet in Histoire de mon temps: Mémoires du Chancelier Pasquier, 6 vols. (Paris, 1893-1895), 1:427.

police registers, counts 531 water-carriers à tonneaux who dispensed water from barrels on horse-drawn carts and another 1,028 who used hand-drawn carts, as well as 1,874 carriers à bretelles: 3,433 in all.⁸⁸ There were also at least 1,500 migrant labourers who worked as street-porters (portefaix) or errand-boys (commissionnaires), a group collectively known as gagne-deniers.⁸⁹ Some 3,000 cabbies drove the four-seat fiacres and the smaller cabriolets for hire in the streets.⁹⁰ Nor must we forget the rag-pickers,⁹¹

⁸⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 1 April 1811, AN, F7 3008/1, d. 4, no. 28. An earlier estimate gives the figures as 2,000 carriers à bretelles plus an unspecified number of carriers making use of 633 wagons: report by Pr. Pol., 20 Aug. 1807, AN, F20 134. Yet another source indicates that during the early Restoration there were 774 hand-drawn carts, 487 horse-drawn carts, and an estimated 1,200 carriers à bretelles: Benoiston de Chateauneuf, Recherches sur les consommations de tout genre de la ville de Paris en 1817, comparées à ce qu'elles étoient en 1789, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1821), pp. 117-18. Contemporaries seem to have had an exaggerated impression of the number of water-carriers. Mercier put the number at 20,000 in the 1780s: Louis Sebastien Mercier, Tableau de Paris, New ed., 12 vols. (Amsterdam, 1783-1789), 1:90. Another writer claimed 10,000 in 1799: Le nouveau diable boiteux: tableau philosophique et moral de Paris, 2 vols. (Paris, an VII), 2:88.

⁸⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., Dec. 1807, as quoted in J. Angot des Rotours, "Nos migrations provinciales hier et aujourd'hui," La réforme sociale, 6th series, 8 (July-Dec. 1909):450. The original document, which should be in AN, F20 435, is missing.

⁹⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 Aug. 1807, AN, F20 134. This may have been a low figure, since the report says that there were 1,212 fiacres and 1,673 cabriolets in Paris --and surely there would have been more than one cabby for each vehicle.

⁹¹ A report by the Pr. Pol., on rag-picking in Paris, 25 January 1810, AN, F12 1569, indicates only that the number of pickers who went out with hook and basket was "considerable enough." They worked for about forty contractors

chimney-sweeps, and other assorted casual labourers about whom there is no statistical information. If we estimate their number at about 1,000 there were then some 16,000 unskilled workers in Paris. This gives a total of 107,000 male wage-earners.

There were also a great many female workers. Most lower-class Parisian women had to work either to contribute to the family income if married or to support themselves if single or widowed. The records of the Hôtel-Dieu demonstrate this point: only one in ten of the women admitted to the hospital in 1807 listed herself as "without occupation" (sans état). Among single women, 97 percent gave an occupation, as did 88 percent of the widows or divorcees and 86 percent of the married women.⁹² Since at that time the ratio of adult males to adult females in the city's population was 100:120,⁹³ there were probably as many women as

and were described as "the unfortunates who day and night gather up with a hook and basket, from the piles of refuse in the streets, the scraps of old linen, cloth, fabric and paper [as well as bits of meat and bone and broken bottles] and who are paid by the day or by weight."

⁹²For source and sampling technique, see chapter two, note 42. The sample of female patients included 896 women of known marital status. (There were another 3 of unknown status.) Of these there were 270 married women (38 with no occupation), 357 single women (11 with no occupation), and 269 widowed or, rarely, divorced women (32 with no occupation). The authorities believed that many female patients were in fact prostitutes who lied about their occupations but, as I argue in chapter three, few of these would have been full-time prostitutes.

⁹³"Etat de la population de Paris, suivant le

men working in Paris. Women, however, did not carry livrets, so the police report of 1807 gives them only passing mention, with references to 12,000 seamstresses, 2,500 milliners, "many women" producing parasols, and "a large number" making passementeries or doing fancy-work (agrémentistes), as well as unspecified numbers employed at polishing metal and in the textile industry, especially spinners.⁹⁴ Two other reports give figures of 4,000 women in passementeries,⁹⁵ and 5,635 launderers, almost all of whom were likely to have been women.⁹⁶

The greater part of this female working population was composed of petty retailers and domestic servants--both overwhelmingly female-dominated occupations--or of women who could be classified as chambrelans. Many, too, probably served as unpaid assistants to husbands or fathers,

recensement qui en a été fait par les commissaires de police en mars, avril et mai 1807," AN, F7 4334, d. 9. There were 187,930 men and 226,304 women.

⁹⁴"Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, AN, F12 502 and F7 4334.

⁹⁵"Notice sur les ouvriers sans ouvrages," [1813], AN, F15 2763.

⁹⁶"Etat indicatif du nombre des blanchisseurs établis dans le ressort de la Préfecture de police," [1808], AN, F12 1569. The report distinguishes 2,218 launderers from 3,417 workers, all broken down by division of residence in Paris, but the inequalities between divisions suggest that this distinction was made somewhat erratically; in any case, it would not have been very significant in this particular profession. For a discussion of the data, see Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., 12 Dec. 1808, AN, F12 1569.

contributing with their labour to the family income yet not directly earning wages themselves. But there was also a large number who were wage-earners in Parisian workshops and manufactories. When in 1809 the Bureau Consultatif des Arts et Manufactures heard the proposition that an annual prize be offered to manufacturers who found new ways to employ women at jobs traditionally offered only to men, it responded that there was no need for such an incentive, since manufacturers were already turning to cheaper female labour wherever possible.⁹⁷ Mechanization encouraged the establishment of manufactories--and filled them with women. When a Parisian manufacturer introduced a new stocking-frame in 1811, an expert noted, "The previous variety of frame . . . was not suitable to women, which until now has made the establishment of a large enterprise of this kind impossible, given that labour is short in most manufactories."⁹⁸ The Paris Chamber of Commerce heard testimony that cotton-spinning was "all the more valuable because it does not take labour away from agriculture; it is essentially women and children who are commonly employed."⁹⁹ Most reports give only a total

⁹⁷ Minutes of Bureau consultatif des arts et manufactures, 19 Sept. 1809, AN, F12 4775.

⁹⁸ "Extrait d'un rapport fait à la Classe des sciences physiques et mathématiques de l'Institut, par M. Desmarest, sur un nouveau métier à bas imaginé par M. Etienne Favreau," Bulletin de la Société d'encouragement pour l'industrie nationale 10 (1811):136.

⁹⁹ Report to Chambre de Commerce de Paris, 12 Oct. 1808, ACCP, Registres de correspondance.

figure for workers in textile manufactories, but we do have a breakdown by age and sex for three small cotton-spinning mills in March 1806: together, they employed thirty-nine men, thirty-seven women, and fifty-five children.¹⁰⁰

Children, of course, also worked, some helping their parents while others were apprenticed at about age twelve to artisans and manufacturers. Many were simply young wage-earners, like those in the cotton mills or the seventy children (aged eight to fourteen) employed in Réveillon's wallpaper manufactory in 1797.¹⁰¹ The Directory had encouraged manufacturers to make use of children in the state-run foundling homes as one way to cut back on government expenses, and the Napoleonic authorities continued this practice.¹⁰² One arrangement of this kind was agreed upon by Antoine Bouvier and Duquesnoy, mayor of the tenth arrondissement. In January 1803, Bouvier took forty

¹⁰⁰ "Filatures de coton, an XII-1806," AN, F12 1564, d. Seine. These are the spinning mills of Dufrayer, Jarry, and Chomel.

¹⁰¹ "Tableau de l'intérieur de la Manufacture de papiers peints sise rue Montreuil," 25 Brumaire an VI (15 Nov. 1797), AN, F12 2285.

¹⁰² See F. Evrard, "Le travail des enfants dans l'industrie (1780-1870)," Bulletin de la Société d'études historiques, géographiques et scientifiques de la région parisienne 37 (April-June 1936):1-14, and Charles Schmidt, "Notes sur le travail des enfants dans les manufactures pendant la Révolution," Bulletin trimestriel de la Commission de recherches et de publication des documents relatifs à la vie économique de la Révolution (1910):198-221.

indigent children to work for him as apprentices for six years. He promised to train them as casters, printers, engravers, goldsmiths, jewellers, and mechanics, and to give them a good general education as well. He also lodged and fed them, regulating their lives on strict, military lines. When they left him, at age eighteen or twenty, he presented them each with clothes, tools, and a sum of cash. This was widely considered to be a worthy philanthropic project (as indeed it undoubtedly was, compared to the conditions of most working children), and Bouvier collected letters of reference such as one from Duquesnoy that called him "the father and friend of his pupils, whom he makes happy. . . ." ¹⁰³ There is, however, so little information available that it is really impossible to estimate how many children in Napoleonic Paris worked with their parents, served as apprentices, or laboured for wages at occupations which ranged from sweeping chimneys to tending spinning machines.

VI

It is equally impossible to give an accurate count of the peddlers and petty retailers who make up our fourth category of workers. There were first of all many women

¹⁰³ See Bouvier's dossier, AN, F12 513.

(and some men)¹⁰⁴ who sold foodstuffs in the open air. One estimate made in 1799 puts at two thousand the number of regrattiers who hawked meat in the streets and public squares of the capital.¹⁰⁵ Female hucksters were everywhere in the streets and markets. They had a special reputation for wit, spirit, and invective:

The fishwives [poissardes], that is to say, the sellers of fruit, fish, vegetables, and flowers, although fresh-faced and very pretty . . . are brusque, cantankerous, loud-mouthed, and if you do not give them what they ask for their merchandise, they give vent to remarkable insults. . . .¹⁰⁶

The streets also teemed with men and women who offered a wide variety of assorted goods and services, as well as entertainers of all kinds. There were (among so many others) strolling musicians and singers, women selling toothpicks, tinder, or salt, men selling rolls, cheeses, or sponges, cobblers, dog-clippers, blindmen hawking lottery-tickets, and fortune-tellers.¹⁰⁷ A tourist described the hubbub:

¹⁰⁴ In May 1802, the police arrested 15 "marchands de salades" who had no permit, and all but one were men: minute of report by peace officers Bazin and Noël, 28 floréal an X (18 May 1802), AN, F7 3177. In July 1808, 4 males were arrested as "vegetable hucksters in contravention of police regulations:" minute of report by 2^e Brigade de sûreté, July 1808, AN, F7 3192.

¹⁰⁵ "Précis d'observations à l'appui de la pétition des bouchers de Paris présentée au Ministre de l'Intérieur," 6 pluviôse an VII (25 Jan. 1799), AN, F11 1146.

¹⁰⁶ J.-B. Gouriet, Personnages célèbres dans les rues de Paris, 2 vols. (Paris, 1811), 1:108.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 2:235-40 for a description of these and others.

"Water, water, clothes and braids bought and sold, are, among an infinite number of others, the cries to be heard from dawn to dusk in all the streets of Paris."¹⁰⁸ It was, in the words of a haughty Englishman, "business, though of a light vagabondish kind, and of a nature adapted to a poor, sensual, loose people. . . ."¹⁰⁹

Established shopkeepers complained bitterly of these competitors who paid no rent and only a reduced licence fee, or none at all. The police tried to clear the bridges and quays which they obstructed and to see that they remained a discrete distance away from the shops, but refused to ban them entirely. Peddlers were, according to one report:

. . . an abuse which is owed to the suppression of guild masterhips, to the unlimited freedom of trade, and to the need for a crowd of individuals to earn a living, whom the results of the Revolution, the stagnation of commerce, and the war have reduced to indigence and who have no other means of support.

Moreover, the sellers of fish, fruit, and vegetables "are necessary to consumers who live far away from the market-places, and they maintain a competition which is always useful."¹¹⁰ The police may have exaggerated the novelty of

¹⁰⁸ [K.G. de Berkheim], Lettres sur Paris, ou Correspondance de M***, dans les années 1806 et 1807 (Meidelberg, 1809), p. 8.

¹⁰⁹ John Scott, A Visit to Paris in 1814, being a Review of the Moral, Political, Intellectual, and Social Condition of the French Capital, 4th ed. (London, 1816), p. 97.

¹¹⁰ Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., 12 Oct. 1807, AN, F13, 206. See also, report by Pr. Pol., 10 Oct. 1811, AN, F7 3137.

peddlers (for these had been common enough in Paris of the Old Régime)¹¹¹ but they were right to stress the poverty of these men and women, who lived on the fringes of the urban economy. The police ordinance of 3 Floréal Year VIII (23 April 1800) in fact limited permits for street-stalls to "those who are truly indigent, or to the aged, the infirm, without fortune, and the people who having no means of support are unable to rent a shop." Applicants had to show a certificate attesting to their indigence, issued by one of the bureaux de bienfaisance which administered Parisian poor relief.¹¹² In a sense, of course, all street-sellers were petty capitalists--although we ought to regard them essentially as workers. Their capital was very meagre, just enough cash to carry on their trade. They usually had to borrow it from usurers with the women pledging gold crosses or earrings as collateral. Their word was good and "they never fail to pay back on Saturday the money lent them on Sunday."¹¹³ But the interest they paid for these loans was exorbitant; according to one source, as much as 20 percent a week in the 1780s.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Kaplow, The Names of Kings, pp. 57, 77.

¹¹² Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 13 floréal an VIII (3 May 1800), AAP, FF 96, r. 3.

¹¹³ Gouriet, Personnages célèbres, 1:113-14.

¹¹⁴ Mercier, Tableau de Paris, 3:29.

Domestic servants and house-porters make up our fifth category. A Parisian journalist noted in 1810 that there were said to be 40,000 servants in the capital, but he wondered if this number included them all; had women, he asked, been omitted from the count?¹¹⁵ In fact, this figure does not appear to be too unrealistic, if it excludes house-porters. The tax rolls of 1764 list 37,457 domestic servants; divided almost equally by sex.¹¹⁶ Two figures from the Restoration period are significantly higher, but they probably included house-porters. One estimate put at 100,000 the number of servants in 1817,¹¹⁷ while according to an official census in 1826 there were 40,000 male domestic servants "of all kinds" and 50,000 female servants.¹¹⁸ A judicious guess would be that there were about 50,000 domestic servants in Napoleonic Paris. To judge from the case of the seventh arrondissement (the only one for which we have such information) with 1625 female and only 316 male domestic servants in 1807, as many as 80 percent of the total may have been women (although this does seem

¹¹⁵ Joseph Fiévée, Correspondance et relation de J. Fiévée avec Bonaparte, premier consul et Empereur, pendant onze années (1802 à 1813), 3 vols. (Paris, 1836), 3:80.

¹¹⁶ Kaplow, The Names of Kings, p. 47.

¹¹⁷ Benoiston de Chateauneuf, Recherches, p. 29.

¹¹⁸ Chabrol de Volvic, Recherches statistiques sur la Ville de Paris et le département de la Seine, 6 vols. (Paris, 1821-1860), 4: table 116.

excessive).¹¹⁹ As for the house-porters (the celebrated Concierges of Paris) there were 1829 of them (845 male and 984 female) for the 2055 houses of the seventh arrondissement in 1807.¹²⁰ If this ratio were true for the city as a whole (with about 25,000 houses), there may have been 22,250 house-porters, of whom just over one-half were female.¹²¹

VII

Historians have occasionally tried to estimate the number of Parisian workers during the mid-eighteenth century and the French Revolution. Most recently, George Rudé has advanced a figure of 350,000 people (men, women and children) in the "wage-earning population" in 1791.¹²² Such estimates can serve us as a rough guide, but the calculations must be done again for the Napoleonic period in the light of documents presented in this chapter. Although women and children are usually missing from official reports, it is useful to

¹¹⁹ Report, by mayor of seventh arrondissement to Min. Int., 19 March 1807, AN, F20 255.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Allard, Annuaire, table 12, gives a total of 25,086 houses in 1805. Benoiston de Chateauneuf, Recherches, p. 32, gives a total of 26,000 houses in 1817.

¹²² George Rudé, "La population ouvrière parisienne de 1789 à 1791," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 39 (1967):15-33. Rudé discusses earlier estimates.

know that (according to the census of 1807) Parisian women outnumbered men by 20 percent and that children numbered about 36 percent of the total adult population.

If there were 25,000 to 30,000 independent licenced tradesmen in our first category, then with wives and children this group would account for about 90,000 people. These were the popular bourgeoisie, the élite of the labouring population; below them came the workers. We have seen that among male workers there were a considerable number of chambrelans (impossible to estimate but including almost 6,000 licenced jobbers), 107,000 wage-earners, perhaps a few hundred or even a few thousand peddlers and petty retailers, and somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000 domestic servants and house-porters. Allowing for the possibility of duplication, since many who carried livrets might temporarily work as chambrelans, peddlers, or servants, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that there were 140,000 or 150,000 male workers in Napoleonic Paris. Although the number of women exceeded the number of men, this imbalance may have been somewhat offset by migrant labourers. Still, there were probably about 170,000 women in this class, the vast majority of whom worked at least occasionally. Most were chambrelans or petty retailers, but there were thousands of wage-earners as well as perhaps 40,000 or 50,000 domestic servants and house-porters. This gives us 320,000 adult workers, who may have been responsible for as many as 120,000

children: a total population of 440,000 workers and their families. These, plus the 90,000 members of the popular bourgeoisie, constituted a labouring population of 530,000. This figure may be slightly inflated, since statistics are unreliable, estimates are nothing more than educated guesses, and there is the possibility of duplication. (House-porters could also be tailors or carpenters; the wife of a licenced artisan might herself be a domestic servant.) But the figure is probably not too far from the truth, at least in the last years of the Empire, when the total population of the city approached 650,000.

CHAPTER TWO

WORKERS' MIGRATION TO PARIS

On sait en effet que la plupart des ouvriers qui exercent à Paris les professions les plus rudes, viennent de la province. Les provinces semblent retremper le sang parisien. . . .¹

I

Paris has for centuries attracted migrants from the French provinces, and it is likely that throughout most of the capital's modern history newcomers have always outnumbered native-born Parisians.² The population growth of Paris between 1801 and 1817 can be explained only in terms of an influx of immigrants, for births barely exceeded deaths during this period.³ Immigrants belonged to all classes

¹ Nacquart, "Considerations," p. 380.

² Louis Chevalier, La formation de la population parisienne au XIX^e siècle (Paris, 1950), pp. 45ff.

³ Jean Tulard, "L'immigration provinciale à Paris sous le premier Empire," Cahiers d'histoire 16 (1971): 425-31. Tulard also argues that the population growth of 160,000 people corresponds almost exactly to the excess of entries "into Paris" over departures, as recorded in police documents, in AN, AF IV 1535-1564. But these documents record entries into and departures from lodging-houses, not the city itself. The figures are therefore meaningless unless we were to assume that the population of permanent residents in lodging-houses increased by such an enormous number. Besides, it was notorious that lodging-houses rarely kept accurate registers, as required to do by the police.

of society,⁴ but both in absolute and in relative terms it was workers who predominated among them.

What percentage of the Parisian labouring population was born outside the city? Although there is no precise statistical data available for the Napoleonic period, it is possible to arrive at an approximation through indirect evidence. We know that of all adults officially registered as indigent in 1813, only about one-third (34.5 percent) were born in the Department of the Seine.⁵ These indigents did not include the "floating population" of temporary residents, since applicants for aid had to be settled members of the community. Furthermore, women, who were a substantial majority on the relief rolls, were much less mobile than men. It is therefore probable that this figure of one-third represents a maximum of native Parisians among the labouring population as a whole. In contrast, patients admitted to the Hôtel-Dieu tended to represent the more unstable elements

⁴This is obviously true for the political and social élite of nobles, generals, and government officials, from the Imperial Family down. Many of the leading bankers and manufacturers were also from the provinces: Bergeron, Banquiers, négociants et manufacturiers, 1: chapters 2-3. For the bourgeoisie at a slightly later date, see Daumard, La bourgeoisie parisienne, pp. 226-31.

⁵[Pastoret], Rapport fait au Conseil général des hospices par un de ses membres sur l'état des hôpitaux, des hospices, et des secours à domicile à Paris, depuis le 1^{er} janvier 1804 jusqu'au 1^{er} Janvier 1814 (Paris, 1816), pp. 343-48: Indigents classés par lieux de naissance. I have excluded from the base figure those indigents whose place of birth is unknown.

of the urban population, forced to turn to the hospitals because they had no families to care for them. Of adult patients admitted in 1807 who gave a Parisian address, only 28.5 percent of the males and 32.2 percent of the females were born in the Department of the Seine.⁶ We can thus reasonably assume that under Napoleon only one in three Parisian workers at most was a native of the city. Perhaps half of these immigrants came as children. An indication of this is given by Napoleonic conscription records, which show that over two-thirds of Parisian conscripts (mostly young men nineteen or twenty years-old) were born in the Department of the Seine, as compared to our estimate of one-third of the adult population as a whole.⁷

Immigrants did not come equally from all regions of France. The typical Parisian was clearly a northerner. "His hair is blond or chestnut, and his eyes blue," wrote Dr. Lachaise in 1822,⁸ and recent research has more or less confirmed the accuracy of his description.⁹ There have been

⁶For details on the source and on sampling technique, see below, note 43.

⁷Jacques Houdaille, "Migration vers les villes au début du XIX^e siècle," Population 16 (1972):297-99. Of course, some young men registered for conscription in their home departments.

⁸Claude Lachaise, Topographie médicale de Paris (Paris, 1822), p. 236.

⁹Jacques Houdaille, "Evolution de la couleur des yeux et des cheveux des parisiens depuis le début du XIX^e siècle," Population 25 (1970):1285.

several studies of migration patterns to Paris in the early nineteenth century, and all show the same general pattern.¹⁰ Provincials came to Paris from almost all of northern France: the Paris region, Picardy, the Nord, Champagne, Lorraine, Normandy, and Burgundy, Brittany being a notable exception. "Bretons hardly ever leave the five departments that make up Brittany," reported a prefect, "and I am led to believe that very few of them are to be found in Paris. . . ." ¹¹ Outside of the north, only the Limousin and Auvergne regions saw a significant migration to the capital, principally composed of unskilled labourers in the building trades.

¹⁰ For Napoleonic conscripts: Jacques Houdaille, "Les origines des parisiens d'adoption au début du XIX^e siècle," Population 25 (1970):1287-89. For domestic servants: Tulard, "L'immigration provinciale," p. 429, and his Nouvelle histoire de Paris: le Consulat et l'Empire, 1800-1815 (Paris, 1970), p. 273. For prostitutes during the Restoration and July Monarchy: Alexandre-J.-B. Parent-Duchatelet, De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris considérée sous le rapport de l'hygiène publique, de la morale et de l'administration, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Paris, 1837), 1:51-52. For Parisians who died in 1833: the research of Bertillon, summarized in Chevalier, La formation, pp. 57-58, 285.

¹¹ Pr. Côtes-du-Nord to Min. Pol., 18 March 1817, AN, F7 11926.

II

In 1807 a Parisian newspaper urged the city's water-carriers to return

. . . to their mountains, depopulated by their emigration. There they will find pastures that lack flocks, flocks that lack shepherds and arable lands that lack labourers. There they will find more resources for existence, and fewer for corruption, which, more than any other motive, makes them prefer the streets and squares of Paris to the land which saw them born.¹²

The anonymous writer of this article (evidently aghast at the swarms of "foreigners" in the streets of the capital) failed to understand the most basic fact of migration: it was the consequence of economic necessity. As many as two hundred thousand workers in Napoleonic France (about 2 percent of the active population) annually left their native departments in search of temporary work. One-half of these were agricultural labourers.¹³ The poorest regions, in particular

¹² Courrier français, 21 April 1807, quoted in Alphonse Aulard, Paris sous l'Empire, 3 vols. (Paris, 1912-1923), 3:134-35.

¹³ Georges Mauco, Les migrations ouvrières en France au début du XIX^e siècle d'après les rapports des préfets de l'Empire de 1808 à 1813 (Paris, 1932), p. 8. Mauco provides a useful summary of a set of prefects' reports (AN, F20 434-435) which are the most important source for any study of migration in this period. Unfortunately, the report by the Prefect of the Seine has recently disappeared from its carton and the staff of the AN has been unable to locate it. It is quoted at length, however, by Angot des Rotours, "Nos migrations provinciales," pp. 450-52. For an overview of migration patterns, based on these reports, see Roger Bréteille, "Les migrations saisonnières en France sous le Premier Empire: essai de synthèse," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine 27 (1970):424-41, and Olwen Hufton, The Poor of Eighteenth-Century France, 1750-1789 (Oxford, 1974), pp. 69-106.

the Massif Central and the Alps, were the major areas of emigration. The Paris region, because of its industrial and agricultural prosperity, was the most important region of immigration.¹⁴ In addition to its ever-growing demand for domestic servants and industrial workers, the Napoleonic capital required a seasonal work force estimated at between fifteen and thirty thousand men.¹⁵

Seasonal migration was as important for the provincial economy as for Paris. The Prefect of Puy-de-Dôme explained:

Not only does it bring back the savings of the workers, but for six to eight months the emigrants, fed outside the department, leave behind the food that they would have consumed. It allows the employment of workers during periods of agricultural unemployment. It makes possible work where hands are lacking and at the same time it makes use of hands that are idle.¹⁶

The Prefect of Calvados reported that men from his department went to work on the harvest around Paris, or at spinning, masonry, and other occupations within the city. "These

¹⁴ Mauco, Les migrations, pp. 18ff, 29.

¹⁵ Abel Chatelain, "Complexité des migrations temporaires et définitives à Paris et dans le Bassin parisien (XVIII^e-XX^e siècles)," Études de la région parisienne, New series, 25 (Jan. 1970):1-10. Tulard, "L'immigration provinciale," p. 26, estimates a seasonal work force of 30,000. Mauco, Les migrations, p. 29, gives a figure of 15 to 20,000. According to the Prefect of Police, in the 1820s Paris received about 30,000 temporary migrant workers annually, two-thirds of them in the building trades: Daubanton, "Rapport relatif aux entreprises de constructions dans Paris, de 1821 à 1826," in Chabrol de Volvic, Recherches statistiques, 4:46.

¹⁶ Report by Pr. Puy-de-Dôme, 28 April 1808, AN, F20 435.

annual trips become their principal resource," he noted, and should they be hindered from going, or even delayed, "they would suffer considerable loss, and one which their meagre resources would not enable them to bear, without thrusting them into poverty. . . . Most are fathers of families. . . ." ¹⁷ Stonemasons from Calvados could earn 3 francs to 3F,50 a day in the capital; they spent 1F,20 or 1F,30 and brought their savings home. According to other prefects, construction workers returned to La Manche with 200-300 francs from a season's work in Paris, and masons returned with about 130 francs to Creuse, 120-150 francs to Léman, and 250 francs to Indre. Street-porters from Cantal carried home an average of 300 francs for eight months of work in Paris, while water-carriers from Aveyron accumulated 300-600 francs for every year they spent in the capital. ¹⁸

Other immigrants, equally attracted by the economic opportunities offered by Paris, came with the intention of settling permanently. In the early nineteenth century, definitive migration was still secondary to temporary migration, but many permanent immigrants did come, seeking a better life for themselves or their families. Pierre Duval, seventy-years-old in 1807, recalled his arrival in the capital some sixty years before:

¹⁷Pr. Calvados to Min. Pol., 17 May 1817, AN, F7 11926.

¹⁸Reports by various prefects, AN, F20 434-435.

He said that being [one of] nine children, his father having left no property, he had been at first in his own region [Calvados] a cowherd to earn his living, that at the age of about ten, he came to Saint-Denis, near Paris, where he worked as he could, that he then learned to work in stone, that he made this his profession as long as he was able to work. . . .¹⁹

In contrast, Claude Devoyes was less successful. A cartwright, unemployed in his native Nancy, he came to Paris in 1809, hoping to find a job to support his wife and two children. During fifteen months in Paris, he found work for only three, and was finally compelled to beg the Minister of Justice for money to return home.²⁰

A third group of immigrants, intermediate between the temporary and the permanent, were those who came for extended periods but with the intention of eventually returning home. Thousands of young women with no formal training came from the provinces to work in domestic service. Since food and lodging were supplied, they could hope to save their wages, perhaps for a dowry. Some considered domestic service as only a provisional occupation, a stepping-stone to something better. Many, however, gave up their dreams, never went back to their native provinces, and became Parisians.²¹ Paris

¹⁹"Procès-verbal constatant l'état d'indigence où se trouve Pierre Duval qui demande son admission à l'hospice de Bicêtre," 1 Aug. 1807, APP, A/a 131, fol. 245.

²⁰Petition by Devoyes to Min. Justice, July 1810, AN, BB16 769.

²¹Abel Chatelain, "Migrations et domesticité féminine urbaine en France, XVIII^e siècle-XX^e siècle," Revue d'histoire économique et sociale 47 (1969):506-28.

was also a regular stop for skilled journeymen who undertook the Tour de France, a cross-country trip to perfect their craft skills. Many stopped for an exceptionally long time in the capital, and some in fact never returned home.²² Conscription was another important factor. As the Prefect of Police remarked in 1802 (in one of many such reports), "A number of young men of conscription-age are coming to Paris to escape the searches of the gendarmerie." They saw the large city as a refuge in which they could easily hide --surely a mistake, for Paris was the best policed city in the Empire.²³

The provincial who arrived with no advance preparations and no local contacts must have been overwhelmed by Paris. Louis Aumond, a twenty-four-year-old saddler from La Manche, told the police that he "had heard that he should be mistrustful of many people in Paris." Yet the warning was in vain, for within minutes of his entering the city, Aumond met up with a younger man who, promising to arrange a job with his uncle, managed to trick Aumond out of his money and his

²² See comments by Pr. Ain, in his report of 27 July 1809, AN, F20 434. Mauco, Les migrations, p. 12.

²³ Report by Pr. Pol., 21 prairial an X (10 June 1802), AN, F7 3830. Also, report by Pr. Pol., 11 brumaire an XII (3 Nov. 1803), AN, F7 3832. Police bulletin, 17 March 1808, AN, F7 3758. Minute of report by peace officer Grolleau, 25 April 1811, AN, F7 3198. Abel Chatelain, "Résistance à la conscription et migrations temporaires sous le premier Empire," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 44 (1972):606-25.

meagre parcel of belongings.²⁴ Women ran even greater risks. "To what dangers are the poor girls who come to Paris to go into domestic service not exposed!" exclaimed a contemporary writer. The girl who arrived with little cash and no recommendations usually found it hard to get a position. She was all too easy prey to seduction and abandonment, and many such as her ended up in the ranks of the capital's prostitutes.²⁵

But not all immigrants were unprepared. An Alsatian prefect reported: "It is rather unusual for workers from my department to go to Paris to look for work; those who undertake the journey usually have jobs assured in advance. . . ." ²⁶ Some migrants made use of inns and lodging-houses which catered to their particular trade or region. For example, in 1813 the police reported that at a certain street-corner in the twelfth arrondissement "there is a wine-merchant who feeds and lodges workers from Lorraine, especially those who repair shoes. There are about thirty in his house."²⁷ Other migrants followed in the footsteps of their relatives.

²⁴ Report by police commissioner of Champs-Élysées division, 3 floréal an X (23 April 1802), APP, A/a 130, fol. 307-8.

²⁵ Gouriet, Personnages célèbres, 1:175-80.

²⁶ Pr. Haut-Rhin to Min. Pol., 31 March 1817, AN, F7 11926.

²⁷ Police report, [Nov. 1813], AN, F7 6599, d. 4086.

The Rigal family illustrates a network of family relationships which linked Napoleonic Paris to the distant Cantal department and which evidently eased the way for migration by its members. Jean Rigal, forty-four at his death in 1803, was a water-carrier in Paris. Two of his uncles, Guillaume and Jean Rigal, were farmers (cultivateurs) in Cantal. Uncle Guillaume's son was an unskilled gagne-denier in Paris. Uncle Jean had three daughters, one married to a Parisian green-grocer and two married to farmers in Cantal. The son of one of these farmers was, like his mother's cousin, also a Parisian water-carrier.²⁸

III

Seasonal migrants worked in a wide range of Parisian trades, but it was the building trades which employed most of them. Thousands of men left their native departments in late March and early April when the building season opened, returning home only at its close in November or December.²⁹ The Prefect of Police counted 4,058 arrivals in Paris between 15 February and 25 April 1811 and "more than two thousand" during May 1809. A contemporary estimate puts at eight

²⁸ I have reconstructed this family (omitting some other members) from "Scelée apposée après le décès de Jean Rigal," 28 nivôse an XI (18 Jan. 1803), ADS, D12 U1 45.

²⁹ Reports by Pr. Calvados, Creuse, Indre, and La Manche, AN, F20 434-435. Pr. Indre to Min. Pol., 27 May 1817, AN, F7 11926.

thousand the number of stonemasons and masons who left the city in December 1813.³⁰ These figures suggest that the seasonal work force in construction may have been as large as seven or eight thousand men, about one-third the total number of workers in the industry. Police records for March 1812, when some 1,281 newly-arrived construction workers registered, indicate that most of the seasonal immigrants were masons (36.6 percent) and stonemasons (24.7 percent), but that there were also carpenters (11.3 percent), joiners (10.2 percent), locksmiths (7.7 percent), pavers (3.7 percent), roofers (3.7 percent), and navvies (2.2 percent).³¹

Stonemasons were traditionally Normans, especially from Calvados and La Manche. The former department reputedly sent 950 stonemasons a year to Paris, the latter another four or five hundred. But this contingent, although important, has perhaps been exaggerated: hospital records for 1807 show that only 27.8 percent of all hospitalized stonemasons were born in Normandy.³² There is more truth, however, in the repeated description of masons as natives of the mountainous Massif

³⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 25 April 1811, AN, F7 3835. Min. Pol. to Min. Int., 6 May 1809, AN, F15 2877-2878. "Note concernant les classes d'ouvriers les plus en souffrance," [Dec. 1813], AN, F15 2763.

³¹ Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 20 May 1812, AN, F7 6528, d. 1580.

³² "Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, AN, F7 4334 and F12 502. Reports by Pr., Calvados and La Manche, AN, F20 434-435. For this and subsequent references to hospital records, see table 3.

Central. One writer described Parisian masons in 1800, leaving the construction yards at dusk "in bands of fifteen or twenty, canvas sacks under their arms and speaking what we believe to be limousin or auvergnat but what sounds more like the primitive language of ancient peoples from the North."³³ Hospital records indicate that 45.8 percent of the masons treated in 1807 were born in the Massif Central, all but a few of these in a single department, Creuse (41.7 percent). Indeed, the massive summer emigration from Creuse was one of the most remarkable migrations in the country. Every year between late March and late October, about fifteen thousand men (over two-thirds of them masons) lived outside their native department, many of them in Paris. They left agricultural labour behind for women, children, and the old; for soil was generally poor and productivity low, while each migrant could hope to bring back as much as 130 francs in badly-needed cash. Even children might earn something-- journeymen frequently brought along a young aid or apprentice and paid his parents forty or fifty francs for a summer's work. And so, year after year, these masons trooped off in small groups under the leadership of an experienced hand, usually a small contractor or a master. Once in Paris, they lived in cheap lodging-houses, fifteen or twenty crowded in a single room, around the Hôtel-de-Ville on the Right Bank

³³ Charles Henrion, Encore un tableau de Paris (Paris, an VIII), p. 106.

or the Place Maubert and the Montagne-Sainte-Geneviève on the Left.³⁴

Water-carrying was another occupation traditionally dominated by migrant labour. Carriers à tonneaux were likely to come from Cantal or Aveyron in the Massif Central. According to a police description, "they live frugally, shun debauchery, and seem to concentrate on amassing money." Once they had acquired a sufficient sum after several years hard work, they turned their carts over to newly-arrived compatriots and returned home. Water-carriers à bretelles were more often from the North and the East, which made them more representative of the Parisian population as a whole. They stayed in the city for long periods--"it is not rare to see them grow old and die, still at their occupation."³⁵ Hospital records show that water-carriers were in fact born in most regions of France, but that a significant group came from Cantal (17.7 percent) and Aveyron (6.3 percent).

Every year some 160 young boys came to Paris from Savoy and Auvergne to work as chimney-sweeps. They worked in groups of two or three for an employer (commonly called

³⁴ Report by Pr. Creuse, 9 March 1808, AN, F20 434. Marie-Antoinette Carron, "Les migrations anciennes des travailleurs Creusois," Revue d'histoire économique et sociale 43 (1965):289-320. Henry Clément, Etudes marchaises: l'émigration (Extrait de la Réforme sociale) (Paris, 1886). Mauco, Les migrations, pp. 13, 18-21, 30.

³⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 Aug. 1807, AN, F20 134.

their "father") who paid their parents sixty francs or so for a winter season. The children had to give all their earnings to their employer, and since they risked a beating if they failed to earn enough, they frequently resorted to begging.³⁶ In 1811, the police arrested four such young beggars (aged ten, thirteen, thirteen, and fifteen) and reported:

They are in Paris under the direction of a man of forty to fifty years, who keeps them in a lodging-house and provides for their bare necessities, but who requires that every day they bring him money not only to pay for their meagre expenses, but also for what he requires for his personal needs. This man, who styles himself "father of the chimney-sweeps," mistreats them violently when they do not bring him any money and, as for himself, he passes his time in the tavern.³⁷

Fifteen hundred men, reputedly from Savoy, Picardy, Auvergne, Limousin, and the Pyrenées, worked as street-porters and errand boys. Most were unmarried and stayed in lodging-houses during their temporary residence in the capital, where they often lived and worked collectively. "They form groups on street-corners . . . made up of men from the same region. When they get along well, they maintain a common purse."³⁸ About two hundred cobblers annually came to Paris from Lorraine. Patchers of crockery, from all regions (but

³⁶ Ibid. Report by Pr. Pol., Dec. 1807, as quoted by Angot des Rotours, "Nos migrations," pp. 450-52. Mauco, Les migrations, pp. 13-15.

³⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 18 April 1811, AN, F7 3135.

³⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., Dec. 1807, as quoted by Angot des Rotours, "Nos migrations," pp. 450-52.

from Auvergne in particular), also sometimes sold small pelts and dealt in second-hand goods. Coppermiths from Cantal came to the capital for a year or two at a time; Shepherds in the Vosges mountains carved wooden animals which peddlers then displayed for sale on the bridges and promenades of Paris.³⁹ A considerable number of coal-porters and other workers on the city's ports were also temporary migrants from the Massif Central.⁴⁰ Finally, there was a host of itinerant peddlers who crossed France with "the weight of their shops on their shoulders." In Paris, according to one description, "the boulevards and the quays are covered by these wretched dealers" whose competition infuriated Parisian shopkeepers:

In general, who are the itinerant hawkers? The inhabitants of our mountains who, at times when their flocks or their unproductive agriculture does not keep them busy, devote themselves to selling manufactured articles of the smallest value; or people who, having the skimpiest resources, are obliged to travel through the world without fearing the toil, the fatigue, the intemperance of the seasons. . . .⁴¹

This was a description that might very well have been applied to thousands of other provincial labourers who (like North Africans today) flocked to Paris to work in a dozen trades and services which Parisians themselves shunned.

³⁹ Ibid. Maucó, Les migrations, pp. 65-66.

⁴⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 2 March 1810, AN, F7 3133.

⁴¹ Minutes of Conseil général de commerce, 4 Oct. 1811, AN, F12 523.

IV

The documents quoted so far describe cases of migration most evident to contemporary eyes, most notably seasonal migration. But there is another, more objective source which permits a scientific evaluation of the extent of migrant labour in various occupations: hospital records, which give the name, age, sex, marital status, occupation, Paris address, and birthplace (both department and commune) of every patient admitted. Table 3 summarizes the results of an analysis of patients admitted in 1807 to the Hôtel-Dieu, the largest hospital in Paris.⁴² But these figures are not without serious limitations; while useful for general comparative purposes, they do not represent an exact cross-section of the labouring population. First, most sick workers preferred to turn to their families rather than state institutions. Second, there is no indication in the records as to how long the patient has lived in Paris. Did he come as a babe-in-arms or an adult? Third, the Hôtel-Dieu drew its patients more heavily from central Paris than from outlying areas such as the faubourgs. Fourth, only a few occupations appear frequently enough in the records to be isolated and tabulated

⁴² Registers of admissions to the Hôtel-Dieu, 1807, AAP, 1 Q 2 74-75. There were over 12,000 patients admitted in 1807. I began with a sample of every fifth patient, from which I eliminated all soldiers, all non-residents of Paris, and the few babies born to hospitalized mothers. This gave me 945 men and 892 women, enough for general conclusions and a sufficient number of workers in certain common occupations. (These are marked with an asterisk in table 3.) For certain other occupations, I went back and combed the records for every single case.

ADDENDUM TO TABLE
COMPOSITION OF REGIONS USED IN THE TABLE



1. Seine: Department of the Seine.
2. Paris Region: Seine-et-Oise, Seine-et-Marne, Eure-et-Loir, Oise, Aisne.
3. North: Nord.
4. Artois-Picardy: Pas-de-Calais, Somme.
5. Normandy: Seine-Inférieure, Eure, Calvados, Manche, Orne.
6. Maine: Sarthe, Mayenne.
7. Loire: Loiret, Loir-et-Cher, Indre-et-Loire, Maine-et-Loire.
8. Burgundy: Côte-d'Or, Haute-Saône, Saône-et-Loire, Yonne.
9. Champagne: Ardennes, Marne, Haute-Marne, Aube.
10. Centre: Allier, Nièvre, Cher, Indre, Vienne.
11. Massif: Puy-de-Dôme, Haute-Loire, Lozère, Cantal, Creuse, Corrèze, Haute-Vienne.
12. Lyonnais: Rhône, Loire.
13. Lorraine: Vosges, Meurthe, Meuse, Moselle.
14. Alsace: Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin.
15. Jura: Jura, Ain, Doubs.
16. Brittany: Ile-et-Vilaine, Côtes-du-Nord, Finistère, Morbihan, Loire-Inférieure.
17. West: Deux-Sèvres, Vendée, Charente, Charente-Inférieure.
18. Bordelais: Gironde.
19. Gascony: Landes, Gers.
20. Pyrénées: Basses-Pyrénées, Hautes-Pyrénées, Pyrénées-Orientales.
21. Upper Languedoc: Tarn-et-Garonne, Tarn, Haute-Garonne, Ariège.
22. Lower Languedoc: Gard, Hérault, Aude.
23. Aquitaine: Dordogne, Lot-et-Garonne, Lot, Aveyron.
24. Rhône: Ardèche, Drôme.
25. Alps: Isère, Hautes-Alpes, Basses-Alpes, Montblanc.
26. Provence: Bouches-du-Rhône, Var, Vaucluse.
- Foreign Departments: All Belgian and German departments of the French Empire.
- Foreign: All foreign states not part of the Empire.

separately. The last two weaknesses could be eliminated with a more extensive sample from all Parisian hospitals over a period of several years; the first two are unfortunately inherent in the source. In addition, the presentation of results in table 3 tends to obscure some important distinctions, since by grouping departments into wider regions (a simplification which lack of space makes necessary), it fails to show origins with any precision. For instance, it indicates that both masons and water-carriers came in significant numbers from the Massif Central, but does not make clear that almost all the masons born in this region were from Creuse while most of the water-carriers were from Cantal. Also, because the samples vary in size, the 4 percent of the pavers and the .7 percent of the locksmiths born in the Centre, figures which at first glance suggest a significant difference, in fact both represent only a single individual.

Even so, the results, tentative though they may be, are extremely interesting as both a corrective and a supplement to contemporary impressions. For example, the Norman element among stonemasons although considerable was often exaggerated; it was far more important among roofers (almost two out of three) and pavers (almost a majority). Masons did come from the Massif Central, but there was a large contingent from Normandy as well. Carpenters, in contrast, show a pattern of fairly widespread recruitment with the

Paris Region, Maine, and the Loire Valley predominating. Joiners also came from many regions, but almost one in two was from either the Department of the Seine or the Paris Region. One-third of the cabinet-makers were Parisians, but a considerable number came from foreign countries (in this case Germany) or French territory bordering on Germany (Alsace). Indeed, even many of the Paris-born in this trade were probably of German descent: a glance at a list of the leading cabinet-makers of Napoleon's time will reveal the frequency of German family names.⁴³ Tailors and shoemakers came from almost all regions, which probably reflects the commonness of their skills, but there were a good many Germans and Belgians among them. A large number of hatters came from Lyonnais and Lorraine, areas where there was a hat industry. It is similarly hardly surprising that most weavers came to Paris from regions with a developed rural textile industry: Normandy, Maine, and Artois-Picardy. Some patterns, however, seem inexplicable. Why were there so many Burgundian bakers (mainly from Côte-d'Or)? Baking was furthermore the only occupation in Paris with any significant proportion of Bretons, perhaps because of the good reputation of Breton bread.

Although it would seem reasonable to expect that the basic skills of traditional female occupations would be fairly

⁴³ See Ledoux-Lébard, Les ébénistes parisiens.

evenly distributed among the women of Paris, there were also clear diversities of origin among female workers. Spinners were predominantly from regions of rural textile industry, like Normandy, Burgundy, and, to a lesser extent, Artois-Picardy, Champagne, and the Loire-Valley, yet there is no close correlation to the regions from which weavers came, Maine being barely represented. Petty retailers came overwhelmingly from Paris and its region, perhaps indicating that these women followed a family trade, or that they enjoyed the advantage of familiarity with local market patterns, especially in food. Laundresses were even more distinctly local women, as were embroiders. Only seamstresses showed widespread distribution in their origins, coming from most parts of Northern France.

Table 3 therefore raises questions which it cannot answer, and which perhaps cannot be answered at all. For specialization in particular trades was not in fact characteristic of any region as a whole, but rather of specific areas within a region, often even of specific villages. Abel Poitrineau has demonstrated this with great precision in an exemplary study of emigration from Auvergne.⁴⁴ But we are left to wonder why the inhabitants of one village chose to exercise a certain trade in a certain place: for

⁴⁴Abel Poitrineau, "Aspects de l'émigration temporaire et saisonnière en Auvergne à la fin du XVIII^e et au début du XIX^e siècle," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine 9 (1972): 5-50.

example, to send its sons as water-carriers to Paris rather than dock-workers to Marseille. Tradition (whose origins may be impossible to ascertain) is the most likely explanation, but this is too evasive an answer to be really satisfying. Only the most detailed examination of local economies can begin to provide more definitive answers, if such can be found.⁴⁵

More important from our point of view is the impact of regional traditions on Paris. The fact that so many Parisian trades bore the stamp of particular provinces must have inevitably influenced the way Parisian workers viewed each other. Printers were predominantly Paris-born while masons were often from Creuse--this must have increased the sense of solidarity among the men within each occupation while at the same time making each group look on the other as (in a very real sense) foreign. In the days before the forging of a genuine French nationality, when local customs and dialects still held sway in most parts of the country, regional differences could serve to reinforce occupational differences even within so cosmopolitan a city as Paris. Provincial origin, when it corresponded to occupation (and possibly even to neighbourhood of residence) must have worked against the development of a sense of class solidarity in the capital. These speculations are a summons to further research.

⁴⁵See the remarks made by Suzanne Delaspre, "L'émigration temporaire en Basse-Auvergne, au XVIII^e siècle jusqu'à la veille de la Révolution," Revue d'Auvergne 68 (1954):38-39..

CHAPTER THREE

STANDARD OF LIVING

Insensés! visitez les greniers des fauxbourgs, vous y verrez le véritable drame, le seul qui doive vous attendrir.¹

I

There are two possible approaches to the question of workers' standard of living. The first is to make use of first-hand accounts of life in the Napoleonic capital, written by doctors, administrators, tourists, and other contemporary observers, to present a relatively changeless picture of living and working conditions. Such descriptions, reflecting direct personal experiences, are often vivid in imagery but usually lack any statistical precision. Furthermore, these men and women frequently wrote with an eye to promoting social reform and therefore tended to emphasize the darker aspects of popular life. Yet what "hard" evidence exists confirms rather than contradicts their pessimism. The second approach is more scientific and less static--it uses statistical sources (which are unfortunately rarely available for the Napoleonic period) to trace fluctuations in wages and prices and thereby quantify the standard of living. This

¹Charles Henrion. Encore un tableau, p. 137.

chapter follows Henrion's advice (quoted above) to visit "the garrets of the faubourgs" and begins with a picture of daily life among the workers of Napoleonic Paris. What were their housing conditions like? What did they eat? How did they dress? How healthy were they? It then concludes with an attempt to draw together a few scattered statistics to give an overview of the general economic trends in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era. Was the standard of living improving or deteriorating?

II

The "vertical social segregation" of Paris before Haussman's building projects under the Second Empire is a historical cliché which is for the most part true.² Foreigners expressed their astonishment at the mingling of rich and poor not only in the same neighbourhoods but even in the very same buildings:

Instead of being in the entire occupation of wealthy and established families [the houses in the Place Vendôme] . . . are each let out in portions,-- the first floors at the rate of six hundred francs per month. . . , the attics at forty francs. Thus, those who can afford to pay three hundred and sixty [British] pounds a year for rent, share their staircases and entrances with the water-carriers, duns, and visitors of those who pay but twenty-five.³

² Lanza de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 3:160-61. David Pinkney, Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris (Princeton, 1958), pp. 8-9.

³ Scott, A Visit to Paris in 1814, p. 69.

There were, of course, exceptions to the rule. In the twelfth arrondissement, the low rents of the faubourg Saint-Marcel and the Montagne-Sainte-Geneviève (the Panthéon division) resulted in a heavy concentration of the poorest workers,⁴ while the aristocratic faubourg Saint-Germain in the tenth arrondissement was celebrated as a quarter of wealth and luxury. But few neighbourhoods had no resident workers or indigents at all, while even the poorest streets were the home of at least a few prosperous shopkeepers and craftsmen.

Housing was undoubtedly cheap for most workers, but low rents usually meant abominable conditions, as the following examples suggest. In 1802 on the rue Saint-Jacques in the twelfth arrondissement, a shoemaker and his wife paid thirty-six francs a year for a third-floor room, a gagne-denier and his wife paid fifty francs for "a room dependent on the house" and opening onto the main courtyard, while two small second-floor rooms went for eighty francs.⁵ A few years later, a married couple was paying thirty-six francs for a room at ground level on the rue Saint-Sauveur; a bourgeois visitor described it as "much smaller than a

⁴ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 15 Aug. 1807, AAP, FF 96, r. 6. L.P., Voyage descriptif et philosophique de l'ancien et de nouveau Paris: Miroir fidèle qui indique aux étrangers et même aux Parisiens ce qu'ils doivent connaître et éviter dans cette Capitale, 2 vols. (Paris, 1814), 1:80.

⁵ Minutes of three judgements by the justice of the peace for the twelfth arrondissement, 11 floréal an X (1 May 1802), ADS, D 12 U1 43.

nun's cell, and much less ventilated. I almost became sick after staying there for a few moments with the door shut."⁶ A goldsmith lived in 1813 with his wife and two children in a sixth-floor room on the rue Saint-Denis which cost him fifty-four francs.⁷ A single woman paid forty francs for a small fifth-floor room on the rue du Temple in 1809.⁸ These rents were low, perhaps lower than most, but the average worker certainly paid no more than 150 francs a year in rent. Tenants whose annual rent was less than a hundred francs were exempt from personal tax but, according to at least one official report, "lodgings at one hundred to 150 francs are usually occupied by labourers, female workers and in general by a class of individuals" who also could not afford to pay tax. In 1806 only 71,873 Parisian tenants paid more than 150 francs in rent, which means that somewhat over half the capital's tenants paid less.⁹ Table 4 gives an idea of the range and distribution of rents paid by the poorer class of Parisians. It is based on the cases of more than a hundred men and women who petitioned the Minister of the Interior for charity. Most were ordinary workers and artisans caught in the economic crisis of 1812; only a few were already in receipt of poor relief. A number among them, however,

⁶Information sheet on Coutrel and wife, n.d., AN, F15 2670.

⁷Petition by Gillet, 31 Aug. 1813, AN, F15 2672.

⁸Petition by Mlle Legrand, [Dec. 1809], AN, F15 2679.

⁹Report on Contribution personnelle et somptuaire, 23

were from the bourgeoisie or the old nobility, and now in distress: this explains the few relatively high rents of over two hundred francs. But the great majority of petitioners paid rents of under 110 francs (63.9 percent), and the rents of almost half (43.4 percent) fell between sixty and ninety francs. The median rent was eighty francs--about thirty days' work for a skilled worker or fifty days' work for an unskilled labourer.

TABLE 4

ANNUAL RENT PAID BY PETITIONERS FOR CHARITY (1812)

Rent	No. of tenants	percentage
30 francs and more	1	.7
40 francs and more	6	4.4
50 francs and more	5	3.7
60 francs and more	22	16.2
70 francs and more	9	6.6
80 francs and more	28	20.6
90 francs and more	4	2.9
100 francs and more	12	8.8
110 francs and more	0	0.0
120 francs and more	5	3.7
130 francs and more	5	3.7
140 francs and more	2	1.5
150 francs and more	8	5.9
200 francs and more	29	21.3
	136	100.0

SOURCE: Information sheets on 136 petitioners to the Minister of the Interior (mostly in 1812) taken from one of many similar cartons, AN, F15 2670.

messidor an XII (12 July 1805), in "Direction des contributions: Comptes-rendus," ADS, DP2 16. For purposes of comparison, in 1817 Parisian tenants paid a total of 179,000 rents, of which 96,000 were under fifty écus (150 francs): Benoiston de Chateauneuf, Recherches, p. 32.

Even such modest sums were difficult enough to pay regularly. Rent fell due four times a year: on the eighth of January, April, July, and October. The household which could not afford to pay often simply slipped away at night to find lodging elsewhere for another quarter.¹⁰ Any economic crisis was likely to increase the incidence of these "clandestine moves" (as the police called them). In March 1802, for example, many tenants simply moved out, leaving their rent unpaid and "pleading the extreme dearness of bread."¹¹ In 1807 twenty-four landlords and principal tenants (who sublet apartments) in the Panthéon and Plantes divisions petitioned the Minister of Justice: ". . . their houses are occupied only by people insolvent from lack of good conduct and morals, . . . and consequently the period of three months is too long a time to wait for the payment of rents." They suggested that all rents of less than one hundred francs a year be collected in monthly instalments and that tenants unable to pay be evicted immediately.¹² In 1813 "the proprietor of one of the largest houses in the capital" wrote that his tenants were all workers and

¹⁰ Jeffrey Kaplow, The Names of Kings, p. 69. Does this explain the observation that "changes of address are very frequent in Paris, especially among the indigent class"? Mayor of fourth Arrondissement to bureaux de bienfaisance, 4 June 1810, ADS, V bis 1 D2 5.

¹¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 11 germinal an X (1 April 1802), AN, F7 3830.

¹² Petition to Min. Justice, 18 Dec. 1807, AN, BB16 761.

artisans who "are almost always poor, and especially at this time because of the shortage of work; that such tenants pay their rent with difficulty. . . ." He complained of the frequency of their clandestine moves and asked that his taxes be lowered to compensate for his losses.¹³

Inside their apartments, workers undoubtedly found life cramped, uncomfortable, and unpleasant. One doctor commented on the dirtiness of the small and overcrowded lodgings in which workers lived and often laboured as well.¹⁴ Another doctor, in a breathless rush of jumbled phrases, described the worst streets in the Ouest division (tenth arrondissement) as notable for:

. . . the dirtiness of the interior of certain houses and lodgings. Public toilets not kept clean and receiving little light. . . , the stores of rag-pickers, the lair of all kinds of vermin, large families crammed together into very small rooms, badly ventilated, heated by a poorly-closed earthenware stove from which everything escapes, the smoke of leather rags that are burned there and of fats used to prepare meals that are scarcely healthful, these vapours condensed with those from dirty chamber-pots, almost always filled with fetid urine and excrement. . . .¹⁵

Chambrelans could not even escape such dreary homes for part of the day. In June 1815 city health inspectors investigated complaints that a certain Saigevin was endangering his neighbours' health with a noxious smoke from his apartment;

¹³ Le Bouteaux to Min. Justice, 7 July 1813, AN, BB16 780.

¹⁴ Lachaise, Topographie, pp. 133, 197-98.

¹⁵ Dr. Châppon, "Mémoire du M. Chappon lu à la séance du Conseil [de salubrité] du mois d'avril [1808]," AAP, FF 124.

they filed the following report:

Saigevin is a poor day-labourer who lives in a very small room which serves him as both lodgings and workshop. It is there that he and a woman, who I presume to be his daughter, work at making buttons . . . out of horn. These two persons appeared to me to be most hard-working, for during all the time that I stayed to question them they never stopped working with amazing speed. The small profit that they make from the trade obliges them to use the shavings of the buttons they produce. Consequently, they burn them in a little fireplace. . . . It is with the fire produced by this kind of fuel that they warm themselves in cold weather and that they cook their food. Undoubtedly, the odour . . . is not pleasant, but it is not unhealthy.¹⁶

Apart from these general descriptions, there is little evidence that permits a glimpse at the contents of a worker's apartment. The meagre furnishings--a mattress a table and chairs, a chest for clothes, a stove, and some cooking-pots--were rarely worth an official inventory when he died.¹⁷ We do know, however, that sleeping conditions were crowded and insanitary. One Parisian philanthropic organization was anxious to popularize a new kind of bed, made of a twill cloth drawn tightly on a wooden frame, because it was cheap, convenient, and far cleaner than the straw mattresses (usually infested with vermin) that Parisian workers

¹⁶Report to Conseil de salubrité, 15 June 1815, APP.

¹⁷I have found nothing of note among either the police records or the justice of the peace records. For typical examples, see the descriptions of the furniture of a laundress and a mason in 1790, quoted by Marcel Reinhard, Nouvelle histoire de Paris: La Révolution, 1789-1799 (Paris, 1971), pp. 407-408.

favoured.¹⁸ Also, children often shared a bed with one another, or even with their parents. The bureau de bienfaisance of Finistère division made a special purchase of mattresses for distribution to the poor so as to separate boys and girls who slept together, "which is most contrary to good morals."¹⁹

Apartments were usually cold in winter, since fuel for both heating and cooking was expensive and growing increasingly so. In 1804 it was noted that "the cost of fuel is rising to such a point that the most numerous class of society will not be able to make the expenditure."²⁰ The average price of wood in 1805 was 50 percent more than it had been in 1800, and by 1810 it was 70 percent more.²¹ It is difficult to translate these figures into terms which have meaning for

¹⁸ Journal des débats, 13 prairial an XI (2 June 1803), quoted in Alphonse Aulard, Paris sous le Consulat: Recueil de documents pour l'histoire de l'esprit public à Paris, 4 vols. (Paris, 1903-1909), 4:26. Société philanthropique de Paris, Notice sur un lit économique, (Paris, an XI). "Rapport sur un lit économique, présenté à la Société par M. le Comte de Rumfort," Bulletin de la Société d'encouragement pour l'industrie nationale 1 (an XI):159-60.

¹⁹ Bureau de bienfaisance of Finistère division to Min. Justice, 15 germinal an XII (5 April 1804), AN, F7 3160.

²⁰ "Rapport fait à la Société d'encouragement, par le C. Bourriat, sur les fourneaux économiques conçus et exécutés par le C. Siauve," Bulletin de la Société d'encouragement pour l'industrie nationale 2 (an XII):174-75.

²¹ Benoiston de Chateauneuf, Recherches, p. 136, gives the following prices but neglects to give the measurement used: 1800--21F; 1805--32F; 1810--36F; 1815--33F.

the average worker, but a philanthropist calculated in 1807, that to cook a pot-au-feu using meat worth fifteen sous (about one kilogramme), a worker might have to spend half as much again for fuel. He had invented a new stove which could cook a meal at a cost of eight or ten centimes (about two sous), and he considered this an incredibly low price.²²

An Englishman estimated in 1806 that "a kitchen fire, throughout the year, and a chamber fire for seven months, cost about six guineas [151 francs] a year. . . ." ²³ He was of course writing about a middle-class household; such an expenditure was well beyond the means of most workers.

It was possible to substitute other fuels for wood, and the bureaux de bienfaisance sometimes distributed peat to the poor, although it was difficult to light and to extinguish (and was therefore wasteful) and most recipients objected to its unpleasant odour.²⁴ Moreover, peat was useless to those who had no fireplace, and apparently many rented accommodations were without one. For this reason, the

²² Antoine-Alexis Cadet de Vaux, Fourneau-potager économique, consommant, pour la préparation du dîner d'une famille, de 8 à 10 centimes en bois, ou de 12 à 15 centimes en charbon (Paris, 1807), pp. 8, 38, 45.

²³ J. Pinkerton, Recollections of Paris, in the years 1802-3-4-5, 2 vols. (London, 1806), 1:231. I have converted pounds sterling to francs on the basis of figures given elsewhere in the book.

²⁴ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Muséum division, 2 Aug. 1815, AAP, FF 162, r. 2. Reports to Conseil général des hospices, [messidor an XII (June-July 1804)] and 25 Nov. 1806, FF 136, vol. 7, fol. 45-46 and vol. 11, fol. 734.

bureau of Théâtre Français division preferred to give away coal dust and mottes (briquettes made from spent tan) which could be used in stoves and were "the only fuel convenient for indigents who have no fireplace."²⁵ Indeed, mottes were so popular that their production was a major activity in the twelfth arrondissement, the centre of the tanning trade. Adults and children made them during spring, summer, and fall and then hawked them in the streets during the winter.²⁶

III

"The indigent," wrote Dr. Nacquart, "generally wears little; but as the apartment which he inhabits is not well heated in winter, he is not surprised in going out by the cold that reigns outside. He lacks body linen above all, [and] his clothes differ little from one season to another. . . ." ²⁷ The archives of the Paris justices of the peace hold very few inventories of workers' belongings drawn up at their deaths; those that exist and mention clothing usually sum it up as only "a few rags" in a battered chest. But there is a rare description of the clothes owned by a day-labourer who was found dead in a fourth-floor room

²⁵ Report to Conseil général des hospices, 6 nivôse an XII (28 Dec. 1803), AAP, FF 136, vol. 5, fol. 796.

²⁶ "Renseignements sur la population, commerce, et industrie du 12^e arrondissement," 1807, AN, F20 255.

²⁷ Nacquart, "Considérations," p. 379.

in the twelfth arrondissement:

Seven men's shirts, some good and some bad, two old sheets, an old frock-coat of blue cloth, an old jacket of blue cloth, an old waistcoat and an old pair of breeches of grey cloth, a pair of undershorts, a pair of lined gaiters, an old parasol of yellow taffeta.²⁸

New clothing was simply too expensive for the average worker to be able to maintain an extensive wardrobe. In 1810 a shirt cost more than the daily wage of most workers: 4F,20 for a man's shirt, 4F,00 for woman's, 3F,25 for a boy's, and 3F,20 for a girl's.²⁹ One bureau de bienfaisance spent 26F,20 to outfit a young male orphan with a pair of pants, a vest, two pairs of stockings, a tie, clogs, and shoes.³⁰ A complete set of clothes for a young girl cost 78F,90: a dress with lining and ribbons to lace it up, three shirts, two neckerchiefs, one pinafore, one petticoat and undershirt, two pairs of stockings, one pair of slippers, one pair of shoes, four handkerchiefs, a sewing kit, and, thrown in for her instruction, four religious books.³¹ Obviously, a worker's budget, already stretched to the limit by other expenses, did not allow for the purchase of much new clothing--hence the swarm of second-hand clothes dealers in the capital. There were therefore strong protests against a police ordinance of

²⁸"Inventaire après décès de Joseph Laurent Leclerc," 6 fructidor an XII (24 Aug. 1804) ADS, D 12 01 47.

²⁹Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 7 Feb. 1810, AAP, FF 96, r. 6.

³⁰Ibid. 9 May 1810.

³¹A scrap of paper, headed "Du 28 janvier 1811 pour la petite Eliza," AN, F15 2691.

1809 which forbade peddlers and old-clothes merchants to sell new or refurbished hats at bargain prices, since this was a practice "which until now has had the advantage of giving workers and the common people, who spend little on luxury items, the possibility of buying hats at a price proportionate to their financial means. . . ."32

Consequently, a good dress or a good suit of clothes was a prized possession to be cherished--and flaunted. Workers, aping the customs of the upper classes, liked to promenade in the parks and on the boulevards of the capital on holidays and warm summer evenings. An English tourist described working women who, in the morning, were "barely covered by filthy rags. . . ; yet these very people do I meet in the evening, in the public gardens, dressed in the guise of fashion. . . ."33 There can be no doubt that this was a great exaggeration, but there was (then as now) a popular French expression: s'endimancher, to dress up in one's Sunday best, "as day-labourers ordinarily do on Sunday."34

32 Minutes of Bureau consultatif des arts et manufactures, 6 Feb. 1810, AN, F12 4775.

33 James Forbes, Letters from France, written in the Years 1803 and 1804, 2 vols. (London, 1806), 1:382-83.

34 Hautel, Dictionnaire du Bas-Langage, ou des manières de parler usitées parmi le peuple, 2 vols. (Paris, 1808), 1:343-44.

IV

The worker's principal concern (and his main expenditure) was food, and changes in the popular diet are one of the best indicators of a rising or falling standard of living. According to Louis Bergeron, the three bases of popular diet in Napoleonic Paris were bread, meat, and vegetables. The worker rarely ate eggs or fowl, and butter remained a bourgeois luxury.³⁵ With the exception of meat, this was much the same as the pre-Revolutionary diet described by Lenoir, Lieutenant of Police in 1775: "The consumption of butcher's meat in Paris is not in proportion to that of flour; a considerable portion of the people eat only bread, vegetables, and cheese. . . ." ³⁶

"Le français est panivore," wrote a Parisian butcher: "The Frenchman is an eater of bread."³⁷ Bread without a doubt made up the largest part of a worker's diet, and in some cases it may have cost as much as one-half in his wages. It was calculated during the Revolution that an adult labourer ate three pounds of bread daily, while a child might

³⁵ Louis Bergeron, "Approvisionnement et consommation à Paris sous le Premier Empire," Mémoires publiés par la Fédération des Sociétés historiques et archéologiques de Paris et de l'Ile-de-France 14 (1963):226.

³⁶ Robert Darnton, "Le Lieutenant de Police, J.P. Lenoir, la Guerre des farines, et l'approvisionnement de Paris à la veille de la Révolution," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine 16 (1969):622.

³⁷ J.B.F. Sauvegrain, Considérations sur la population et la consommation générales du bétail en France (Paris, 1806), p. 87.

require about half that amount, and this estimate remained true for many decades afterwards.³⁸ But Parisians even of the poorest class, were not satisfied with just any bread; they expected the best quality white loaf. When in 1808, a time of abundance, the Prefect of Police had two thousand sacks of brown flour on hand, he could find no market for it within the city and had to send it to Saint-Quentin to be fed to the workers employed on building a canal.³⁹ Even in times of shortage popular tastes were difficult to change. During the grain crisis of 1801-1802 Napoleon suggested supplying Paris with a cheaper bread, half white and half whole-grain (bis-blanc). His advisors warned that "the habits of the class which lives by manual labour, its prejudices, and its natural dispositions, do not permit us to hope for much success. . . ." ⁴⁰ In November 1811, at the height of another serious bread crisis, when some bakers put on sale additional amounts of cheap but inferior-quality

³⁸ Albert Soboul, Lés sans-culottes parisiens en l'an II: Mouvement populaire et gouvernement révolutionnaire, 2 juin 1793-9 thermidor an II, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1962), p. 667, Benoiston de Chateauneuf, Recherches, p. 57, gives a more detailed estimate made in 1817: a child ate 6 to 18 oz. a day (depending on his age); a woman, 24 oz.; an average man, 28 oz.; but a labourer, 48 oz.

³⁹ Pr. Pol. to Min. Interior, 23 April 1808, AN, F11* 18.

⁴⁰ Minute of meeting of Conseil d'administration, 6 frimaire an X (27 Nov. 1801), in "Subsistance: Registre des opérations de l'an 10 (1802) et des suites qu'elles ont eues pendant les années postérieures," AN, F11* 3048. Two earlier experiments had opposite results. A baker on the rue d'Anjou tried without success to sell a cheaper bread, one-third brown and two-thirds white, which "being of good quality and a lower price would be more suitable to workers and the poor."

bread, they could find no new customers for it.⁴¹ It is true that after 1801 (apparently on Napoleon's orders) the bureaux de bienfaisance distributed only this cheaper bread to the poor on relief, but throughout the Napoleonic period many of the indigent preferred to add a few sous in cash to the bread-cards that they received and to get the white loaf instead.⁴²

Aside from bread, the rest of a worker's diet might vary considerably, depending on his income. Dr. Menuret described the dinner of the well-off artisan as good soup, "succulent meat," milk products, and fresh fruits and vegetables, but he also noted that the "low people" more commonly ate little meat, "the remains [débris] of animals," table scraps, root vegetables, and dried legumes.⁴³

Report by Pr. Pol., 29 fructidor an IX (15 Sept, 1801), AN, F7 3829. But two weeks later, in a similar attempt: "The workers in general have been less choosy today and the breads of the first three samples [made with a 'tough dough'] are selling well enough." Pr. Pol. to First Consul, 9 vendémiaire an X (31 Sept. 1801) AN, F7 6303, d. 6282.

⁴¹Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 9 Nov. 1811, AN, F11* 3051.

⁴²Reports by Pr. Pol., 13 pluviôse an X (2 Feb. 1802) and 9 Nov. 1811, AN, F7 3830 and 3835. In the latter report, the Prefect estimated that "more than half" the indigents who received bread-cards paid the extra cash. See also: Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 6-7 Nov. 1811 and 8 Feb. 1812, AN, AF IV 1059 and F11* 3051. Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 7 Aug. 1811, AAP, FF 96, r. 8. Nacquart, "Considérations," p. 376.

⁴³Jean Menuret [de Chambaud], Essais sur l'histoire médico-topographique de Paris, ou lettres à M. d'Aumont,

Dr. Nacquert wrote of a meal "most often composed of bread and cheese or of several salted meats." He found the fresh meat available in the capital to be of good quality, because of strict police regulation, but was somewhat dubious about the salted, spiced, and smoked meat or fish which the poor were more likely to buy. Nacquert also advocated the consumption of fermented cabbage which he believed to be more healthful than the roots and green or dry vegetables more usually eaten.⁴⁴ Yet there does seem to have been some improvement, at least in terms of a greater variety, over the diet of the Old Régime. The rapid expansion of market gardening in and around the capital suggests that the consumption of vegetables was on the increase. Parisians ate large quantities of celery root, onions, and cabbage-- this last being particularly popular among the lower classes--as well as dried peas and beans. Carrots were more rarely grown, and fruit remained a luxury item. As for the lowly potato, it was still highly unpopular in Paris (as in the rest of France), although demand was increasing, particularly when bread was in short supply.⁴⁵

professeur en médecine à Valence, sur le climat de Paris, sur l'état de la médecine, sur le caractère et le traitement des maladies, sur l'inoculation, le magnetisme animal, etc. New ed. (Paris, 1804-an XIII), p. 93.

⁴⁴Nacquart, "Considérations," pp. 375-78.

⁴⁵Bergeron, "Approvisionnement," pp. 226-29. On cabbage, see report by Pr. Pol., 29 prairial an IX (18 June 1803) AN, F7 3831. On potato, see Antoine-Alexis Cadet de Vaux, Moyen de prévenir le retour des disettes (Paris, 1812), p. 67.

Parisian workers always attached a great deal of importance to the meat in their diet.⁴⁶ One wag wrote sarcastically of "those artisans who think themselves gourmards when they serve up a pot-au-feu."⁴⁷ The Parisian ate much more meat than the average Frenchman. One butcher calculated in 1806 that each inhabitant of the capital consumed an annual average of 94 1/3 pound of butcher's meat (67 1/3 pounds of beef, 10 pounds of veal, and 17 pounds of mutton) as compared to the provincial average of only 14 1/3 pounds.⁴⁸ The Minister of Religion remarked in 1804 (with some disapproval) that the popular consumption of meat had increased since 1789:

. . . since the Revolution, meat has become almost the common food of the people. . . in the cities, [this luxury] has reached the lowest classes of citizens, as the workers, even in times of anarchy, demanded excessive wages. . . .⁴⁹

But this is certainly an exaggeration, for during the Consulate at least, meat production in France declined while demand raised prices.⁵⁰ A police report, also dated 1804, declared that meat remained too costly for the common people while cod

⁴⁶Soboul, Les sans-culottes, p. 669.

⁴⁷Almanach perpétuel des pauvres diables, pour servir de correctif à l'Almanach des Gourmards (Paris, an XI-1803), p. 18.

⁴⁸Sauvegrain, Considérations, p. 159, and statistical table between pp. 68-69.

⁴⁹Portalis to Emperor, 28 fructidor an XII (15 Sept. 1804), AN, AF IV 1058. Another copy, unsigned, in F1 1147.

⁵⁰"Observations et opinions du Conseiller d'Etat, Préfet de Police," 7 fructidor an XII (25 Aug. 1804), AN, F7 3119.

was in short supply because the war with Britain hindered fishing, forcing them to eat more vegetables instead.⁵¹ By 1807, however, the Prefect of Police could claim that meat was cheap at thirty-five to forty-five centimes a pound, and that the popular diet had consequently improved.⁵²

Louis Bergeron has gathered together statistics which confirm and expand these generalizations about meat consumption. He shows that beef consumption in Paris increased between 1789 and 1804 (although he believes that this trend began in the last decades of the Old Régime), fell during a brief period of shortage in 1804-1805, returned temporarily to the higher level, and then declined again after 1810. Mutton and veal consumption followed roughly the same general pattern. But the consumption of pork, in contrast, increased dramatically from 1804, more than doubling by 1817, so that "the popular classes from now on ate pork habitually and beef more rarely." Even so, they were now eating more beef than prior to the Revolution. Bergeron has attributed these changed dietary habits to higher income, new tastes acquired by men during military service, and the destruction of old taboos by the process of de-Christianization. At the same time, an efficient government was more

⁵¹"Réponses de M. Réal aux observations et opinions de M. le Conseiller d'Etat, Préfet de Police, sur l'approvisionnement en viande," [ca. vendémiaire an XIII (Sept.-Oct. 1804)], AN, F7 4313A, d. 22.

⁵²"Explication sur quelques observations relatives au prix de la viande à Paris," 17 Feb. 1807, AN, F7 3125.

able to assure Paris a regular supply of meat.⁵³

The usual beverage of working Parisians, especially women and children, was water, but they also drank wine, beer, cider, and eau-de-vie.⁵⁴ The cheap wines of Paris were notoriously poor in quality and often contained dangerous impurities. One writer joked that Paris offered more varieties of wine than all French vineyards together, for the tavern-keepers and wine-merchants of the capital were busier chemists than the famous Chaptal and Fourcroy!⁵⁵ Their fraud was facilitated by the popular taste for strongly-coloured red wine.⁵⁶ Wine consumption in Paris increased by more than 50 percent between 1789 and 1808, along with that of other alcoholic beverages, for this was a period of low prices. Poor grape crops and rising prices resulted in declining wine sales in 1810-1812, and the decline was even more dramatic after 1812. By the first years of the Restoration, Parisians were drinking about half as much wine as they had drunk in the best years of the Empire. In compensation, during the same period consumption of beer showed a moderate increase, eau-de-vie doubled, and cider almost tripled.⁵⁷

⁵³Bergeron, "Approvisionnement," pp. 209-16.

⁵⁴Menuret, Essais, p. 92. Lachaise, Topographie, pp. 256-61, 272-73.

⁵⁵Almanach perpétuel des pauvres, pp. 43-44.

⁵⁶Lachaise, Topographie, pp. 267-78. Nacquart, "Considérations," p. 379.

⁵⁷Bergeron, "Approvisionnement," pp. 220-22.

Coffee was a popular drink during the eighteenth century, when café au lait (coffee heavily sugared and mixed with hot milk) was sold in the streets from tin containers, at two sous a cup. The buyer drank it standing up and on the spot.⁵⁸ By 1806 coffee had become "a need, even an imperative one, down to the last classes of the people. . . ," replacing wine or eau-de-vie as a morning drink.⁵⁹ A newspaper reported that "seamstresses, lackies, and masons breakfast only on café au lait."⁶⁰ The situation began to change in 1808 when the high price of colonial products (because of the British blockade) cut down coffee consumption.⁶¹ The police took note of the lively discontent among market-women at the Halles who bitterly resented being deprived of the beverage which sustained them through many long nights at the central market.⁶² The rising consumption of eau-de-vie at this time suggests that many workers reverted to alcohol as a breakfast drink.⁶³

Benoiston de Chateauneuf, Recherches, pp. 85, 88.

⁵⁸ Mercier, Tableau de Paris, 9:76.

⁵⁹ Antoine-Alexis Cadet de Vaux, Dissertation sur le café: son historique, ses propriétés, et le procédé pour en obtenir la boisson la plus agréable, la plus salubre et la plus économique; suivie de son analyse (Paris, 1806), pp. 17, 13. See also, Mercier, Tableau de Paris, 4:90-91.

⁶⁰ Journal des débats, 1 frimaire an XIII (22 Nov. 1804), quoted in Aulard, Paris sous l'Empire, 1:400.

⁶¹ Bergeron, "Approvisionnement," p. 229n.

⁶² Undated police report, June 1808, AN, AB XIX 3374, d. 3. Police bulletin, 3 June 1808, AN, F7 3759.

⁶³ Bergeron, "Approvisionnement," pp. 220-22.

V

Contemporaries knew very well that the lower classes in nineteenth-century Paris were less healthy than the upper classes, even though the fact was not proved with scientific rigour until the Restoration.⁶⁴ Doctors speculated as to the causes but, because they had only an imperfect understanding of disease and contagion, there is today a quaint sound to much of their reasoning. They drew attention to overcrowding, dirt, and poor diet, but they also discussed weather conditions, wind direction, and bad odours.⁶⁵ For example, they argued that the polluted Bièvre River was one of the principal sources of sickness in the faubourg Saint-Marcel, until careful evaluation of the evidence in 1822 demonstrated that the river and its stench did no harm at all.⁶⁶ There is in contrast a breath of modernity in the words of Dr. Villermé who, in a pioneering study of urban health problems based on Parisian data, concluded in 1826 that "the only conditions which have an appreciable effect

⁶⁴L.-R. Villermé, 'Mémoire sur la mortalité en France, dans la classe aisée et dans la classe indigente,' Mémoires de l'Académie Royale de Médecine 1 (1828):51-98. See his Comments on Paris, pp. 80-81.

⁶⁵In addition to the medical topographies by Chappon, Lachaise, Menuret, and Nacquart, cited above, see an untitled memorandum to the Prefect of the Seine by Bruneseau, ex-inspecteur-général de la salubrité de Paris [ca. 1805-1806], AN, F8 95; and [Biron, Chamseru, Parfait, Prat, and Masson], Hopitaux civils de Paris: Bureau central d'admission: An 14 et 1806: Exposé des travaux et observations du Bureau central d'admission pendant les 3 mois de l'an XIV et l'année 1806 (Paris, 1809). The only copy of this last report is in AAP.

⁶⁶Lachaise, Topographie, p. 189. Parent-Duchatelet and

on mortality are those that accompany wealth or poverty."⁶⁷

Much of the ill-health among Parisian workers resulted directly from or was aggravated by their living conditions. The problem began with their usually small, sunless, and dirty apartments. For example, house-porters who ordinarily lived in "narrow and unhealthy" apartments, "almost always dark and humid," were frequently sick, and suffered especially from rheumatism.⁶⁸ As for the food which workers ate, Dr. Lachaise suggested that an unhealthy and irregular diet accounted for half the sickness found among the people of Paris.⁶⁹ Dr. Chappon wrote:

The use of unwholesome foods, adulterated wines, and eau-de-vie, harmful to the health of those who use them moderately, unfailingly kills those who

Pavet de Courtille, Recherches et considérations sur la rivière de Bièvre et des Gobelins, et sur les moyens d'améliorer son cours, relativement à la salubrité publique et à l'industrie manufacturière de la ville de Paris (Paris, 1822), pp. 45-46.

⁶⁷ L.R. Villermé, Rapport fait par M. Villermé et lu à l'Académie Royale de Médecine, au nom de la Commission de Statistique, sur une série de tableaux relatifs au mouvement de la population dans les douze arrondissements municipaux de la Ville de Paris, pendant les cinq années 1817, 1818, 1819, 1820 et 1821 (Extrait des Archives générales de Médecine) [Paris, 1826], p. 20.

⁶⁸ Esparron, "Rapport sur la pratique médico-chirurgicale et le mouvement des dispensaires de Paris," in Société philanthropique de Paris, Rapports et comptes rendus de la Société philanthropique de Paris pendant l'an 1814, p. 55. [Henceforth this annual publication will be cited as Soc. phil., Rapports . . ., followed by the year.]

⁶⁹ Lachaise, Topographie, p. 273.

abuse them. Rotten meat, spoiled fish, . . . and old cheese stinking of rot cause sickness. . . .⁷⁰

In addition, personal cleanliness was a luxury in a city where water had to be hauled upstairs by the bucket. Dr. Nacquart mentioned "the filth which encrusts the indigent and the worker in general,"⁷¹ and he was not exaggerating. A report prepared in 1818 tells something of the bathing habits of Parisians. The rich lived in homes equipped with private baths, while the rest of the population had to use one of thirty-seven public bath-houses in the city. These served a regular clientèle of between thirty and fifty thousand, a number limited by the cost of a bath (at least 1F,25) and the location of the bath-houses (for there was not one in either the eighth or the twelfth arrondissements, with the largest population of workers). There was always the Seine during the summer but, as numerous drownings proved, this could be a dangerous place to bathe. Otherwise, the report concluded, "the working people do not bathe," and the "habitual dirt of their bodies" contributed to the frequency of skin disease.⁷² Nor were clothes any cleaner than bodies: petty artisans, day-labourers, and the indigent wore "dirty, filthy, unsanitary linen, the permanent home of vermin"--for how could they afford to pay a laundress to wash their clothes.

⁷⁰Chappon, "Des causes principales de la dépopulation des grandes villes," 13 June 1808, AN, F13 1543A.

⁷¹Nacquart, "Considérations," pp. 484-85.

⁷²Untitled report by the Conseil de salubrité, 4 Feb. 1818, AN, F8 77, d. Hygiène publique.

and where could they wash them themselves?⁷³ Body parasites were consequently very common. Migrant workers living eight or ten to a room in lodging-houses often picked up scabies (the itch), which also spread rapidly among poor families whose members shared beds, linen, and clothing.⁷⁴

Poor health began to exact a heavy toll from birth. Although the destruction in 1871 of the records of the état civil for Paris has made it impossible to discuss child mortality with any statistical precision, there can be no doubt as to its seriousness. Dr. Lachaise estimated that the probable lifespan of a Parisian at birth was no more than eight or nine years, as compared to twenty or twenty-one years for other Frenchmen.⁷⁵ He further calculated that almost one-third (30.4 percent) of the deaths recorded in Paris during the Napoleonic period were those of children under the age of ten, and his figures do not include the many children who died in the countryside where they were sent to be nursed.⁷⁶ Children born to women who received charity from the Société de Charité Maternelle undoubtedly had a

⁷³ Antoine-Alexis Cadet de Vaux, Instruction populaire sur le blanchissage domestique à la vapeur (Paris, an XIII-1805), pp. 5, 76.

⁷⁴ Report on la gale to the Conseil général des hospices, 11 April 1807, AAP, FF 136, vol. 12, fol. 642-43.

⁷⁵ Lachaise, Topographie, p. 230. This disproportion gradually disappeared, so that at age forty a Parisian could expect to live another twenty-one years, the average Frenchman another twenty-three.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 214-17.

better chance to survive than other workers' children, yet 22 percent of these died before the age of fifteen months.⁷⁷ Dr. Chappon, in a study of the aged indigent living in the tenth arrondissement, reported that 127 women had given birth to 1,017 children, of whom three-quarters (73.1 percent) never reached puberty.⁷⁸

Doctors attributed many deaths to poor-quality milk produced by undernourished mothers, or to the neglect and mistreatment (tight swaddling-clothes were still in use) of those children given over to wet-nurses either in the countryside or "what is even worse . . . in the city, closed up in small and poorly-ventilated lodgings."⁷⁹ Dr. Chappon described poor children on the rue de la Seine as "almost all covered with pimples, scales, and scrofula; many of them die of catarrh in the winter;" and Dr. Lachaise added, "A sickly childhood often ends in death. . . ."⁸⁰ Smallpox remained a threat despite great effort to eradicate it. The bureaux de bienfaisance publicized the benefits of vaccination, set up

⁷⁷Compte rendu par l'ancien comité de la Société de Charité Maternelle, au Conseil d'Administration de la Nouvelle Société, du 25 Mai 1812 (Paris, 1812)

⁷⁸Untitled report, 6 Jan. 1808, AAP, FF 124.

⁷⁹Chappon, "Des causes principales de la dépopulation des grandes villes," 13 June 1808, AN, F13 1543A. Menuret, Essais, p. 6.

⁸⁰Chappon, "Apperçu de statistique local de la Division de l'Unité," 13 July 1807, AAP, FF 124. Lachaise, Topographie, p. 118.

free clinics, offered food baskets to indigent parents who vaccinated their children, and even tried coercion when they threatened to strike recalcitrant parents from the relief rolls.⁸¹ In 1810, the Prefect of Police enlisted curés, mayors, and police commissioners in his campaign to propagate vaccination in Paris and the surrounding communes.⁸² The mayor of the tenth arrondissement claimed that a clinic opened under his administration in March 1801 had by 1809 vaccinated twenty thousand children and cut the annual number of deaths from 113 down to 12.⁸³ But statistics show that only the smallest minority of children born in Paris ever submitted to vaccination.⁸⁴

As for adults, the Prefect of Police commissioned a special report on the health of Parisian workers from Cadet de Gassicourt. Gassicourt anticipated Villermé's findings

⁸¹Minutes of bureaux de bienfaisance of Poissonnière division, -12 ventôse an IX (3 March 1801), AAP, FF 94, 3^e liasse, r. 1; Panthéon division, 6 June, 5 July, and 1 Aug. 1810 and 24 May and 19 June 1811, FF 96, r. 6 and 8; Muséum division, 10 May 1815, FF 162, r. 2. Minutes of comité central of eighth arrondissement, 24 June 1813, FF 95, 5^e liasse. See also instructions on the distribution of five francs in kind as an incentive to parents, for 1811 and following years, ADS, VD6 354, d. 11.

⁸²See various letters, AN, F8 24.

⁸³Mayor of tenth arrondissement to Min. Int., 14 Feb. 1809, AN, F8 24.

⁸⁴Tables prepared for 1811, 1812, and 1815 show that the number of free vaccinations given in those years amounted to only 10.1, 2.7, and 2.3 percent respectively of the children born, AN, F8 24.

with the judicious conclusion that in general "the health of workers usually depends on the raw materials which they use in their work, the effort they are obliged to make and their standard of living." He pointed out, for example, that although brewers had most unpleasant jobs, "they eat well and are well-dressed because they earn substantial wages, and they are not sick." The bulk of his report, however, was taken up with the relationship between specific occupations and workers' health. Bakers suffered from catarrh, asthma, and scurvy, which he blamed on a lack of sleep because of night work, excessive heat from the ovens, and the inhalation of flour dust: "they usually die worn out between forty and fifty years old." Workers in the metal trades succumbed to metal poisoning which manifested itself gradually with colic, shaking, dizziness, and paralysis. Tailors, because of their sedentary work, were martyrs to hemorrhoids, curved spines, sciatica, bladder problems, poor digestion, headaches, and chest pains. Porters and water-carriers, who transported heavy loads, suffered from pleurisy, hernias, consumption, inflammatory fevers, apoplexy, aneurysms, and curved spines. There were very few professions conducive to good health, but among them were wood-working and construction.⁸⁵ The

⁸⁵ Cadet de Gassicourt, "Considérations statistiques sur la santé des ouvriers," Mémoires de la Société médicale d'émulation 8 (1817):160-74. Gassicourt said that he wrote the report in 1808, but he was obviously mistaken, since Dubois used the information in his "Statistique des ouyriers de Paris," written in 1807.

authorities did nothing to protect workers against the risks they ran. The Imperial Tobacco Factory, for example, which employed almost one thousand wage-earners in 1811, simply requested that forty beds be constantly held at its disposition in the Necker Hospital.⁸⁶ And the Conseil de Salubrité, which administered sanitation in the capital, was more concerned with the effects of industrial pollution on the inhabitants of the city than on the men and women who worked in the manufactories.⁸⁷

VI

In the Year II a medical topography of Paris described "the class of useful workers" as "covered with filthy and disgusting rags" and "reduced to vegetating in cramped and unhealthy dwellings," although, it continued optimistically, the Revolution was beginning to improve their lot.⁸⁸ Did this assessment prove to be accurate? If (as we have seen) a decade later most Parisian workers continued to live on the edge of poverty, improvement is, after all, relative,

⁸⁶ Directeur-général de l'Administration des droits réunis to Min. Int., 29 July 1811, AN, F15 1919.

⁸⁷ Minutes of Conseil de salubrité, APP. Dora Weiner, "Public Health under Napoleon: The Conseil de salubrité de Paris, 1802-1815," Clio Medica 9 (1974):271-84.

⁸⁸ Audin-Rouvière, Essai sur la topographie-physique et médicale de Paris, ou dissertation sur les subsistances qui peuvent influer sur la santé des habitans de cette cité (Paris, an II), p. 79.

and only precise statistical evidence can determine whether living conditions were in fact getting better, deteriorating, or simply unchanged. If their opinions on this point are worth anything, contemporaries certainly believed that the Parisian masses were better-off under Napoleon than ever before. It was commonly observed that a labour shortage, attributed to conscription, had raised wages to unprecedented levels,⁸⁹ and this was reputed to be especially true in the building trades, where public works increased the demand for labour.⁹⁰ A member of the Chamber of Commerce complained that consequently Parisian workers had fallen into the habit of what he termed "excessive consumption" (consommation abusive), and he remarked that "luxury" was common among even "the last class of society."⁹¹

The preceding pages have illustrated the "luxury" enjoyed by the average Parisian worker; however, economic

⁸⁹ Gillet, Essai sur les moyens d'extirper la mendicité du sol de la République (Paris, an X), p. 45. Anonymous memorandum on the state of France in 1804, dated Klagenfurt, 27 Jan. 1804, sent to Mgr de la Fare, agent of Louis XVIII, AN, 198 AP 4, d. 4. "Coup-d'oeil rapide sur la situation intérieure de la France," a Royalist propoganda pamphlet reproduced in police bulletin, 18 fructidor an XIII (5 Sept. 1805), AN, AF IV 1494. Report by Decretot and Richard-Lenoir to Conseil des manufactures, in minutes of Conseil, 23 Oct. 1812, AN, F12 124.

⁹⁰ Reports by Pr. Pol., 23 ventôse an IX (14 March 1801), and 7 prairial an X (27 May 1802), AN, F7 3829-3830. Min. Finance to Emperor, 26 Feb. 1812, AN, AF IV 637, plaq. S052.

⁹¹ Minutes of Chambre de Commerce de Paris, 30 floréal an XI (20 May 1803), ACCP, Registres des procès-verbaux.

historians do tell us that 1726-1817 was indeed a period of rising nominal wages in France. A moderate rate of increase prior to the Revolution accelerated after 1789, soared during the years of run-away inflation under the Directory, and, although considerably slowed by 1800, continued under Napoleon and into the first years of the Restoration, to be followed by several decades of decline. But we also know that before 1789 (and especially in the worst inflationary years of the 1790s) the rise in nominal wages was undercut by the increasing cost of consumer goods, so that real wages actually fell. By 1800, however, it seems that real wages were higher than before the Revolution and that, even though prices continued to go up, the price rise was outpaced by rising wages, so that the Napoleonic period generally was one of higher real wages for most categories of workers in France.⁹² These crude generalizations need to be refined for the case of Napoleonic Paris.

First of all, what was the level of wages in Napoleon's capital? In the year XIII (1804-1805) the Prefect of the Seine evaluated a day's work at 2F,50. This was merely an average figure to be used in calculating legal fines, but its publication caused some confusion since unskilled workers

⁹² Alexandre Chabert, Essai sur les mouvements des revenus et de l'activité économique en France de 1789 à 1820 (Paris, n.d.), pp. 186-90, 228-29. George Rudé, "Prices, Wages and Popular Movements in Paris during the French Revolution," in his Paris and London in the Eighteenth Century: Studies in Popular Protest (New York, 1971), pp. 163-97.

(manouvriers and hommes de peine) "want to receive 2F,50, while this may decrease the wages of those who earn more."⁹³ The comment suggests that the figure represented a median between the lower wages of unskilled or semi-skilled labourers and the higher wages paid to skilled craftsmen. Statistical evidence supports this contention. Table 5 shows the wages earned by a number of men who actually lived and worked in Napoleonic Paris. The unskilled earned less than one franc a day, like Bôuet, the seventy-year-old errand-boy who made fifteen or twenty sous a day, "but not every day," or Bourrey, who "turns a wheel [used] to make needles." Men working in large manufactories (and probably only semi-skilled) made somewhat more: Lafond earned 1F,50 a day in a porcelain manufactory, while Arendt earned two francs in a tobacco manufactory. Few workers made more than three or four francs a day, unless they were highly skilled--printers or locksmiths, for example. For comparative purposes, the table includes a "white-collar" worker named Bonpois, a petty government clerk who earned three francs a day.

Table 6 gives the wages of several female workers. It is striking how much lower were women's wages than men's-- fifty centimes a day appears to have been an average wage for them. Widow Despommier, who worked in a tobacco manufactory, earned only half of what a man earned there, and

⁹³ Minutes of Conseil de police, 25 vendémiaire an XIII (17 Oct. 1804), AN, F7 4311, d. 1.

TABLE 5
WAGES PAID TO MALE WORKERS. (1803-1813)

Worker's Name	Occupation	Daily Wage
1. Gillet	house-porter	0F,75
2. Bouet	errand-boy	0F,75-1F,00
3. Bourrey	wheel-turner	1F,00
4. Legniaux	shoemaker	1F,40
5. Delaplace	carder	1F,50
6. Lafond	porcelain-maker	1F,50
7. Perier	jeweller's aid	1F,50
8. Mes	water-carrier	2F,00
9. Arendt	tobacco-worker	2F,00
10. Vallés	joiner	2F,25
11. Regnard	roofer's assistant	2F,50
12. Trouba	carpenter	2F,75
13. Bonpois	clerk	3F,00
14. Lenoir	wood-sawyer	3F,75
15. Tete	cartwright	4F,00
16. Nanche	printer	4F,00
17. Romain	locksmith	4F,50

SOURCES: 1) Petition, 26 (month illegible) 1813, AN, F15 2674. 2) Information sheet, Oct. 1810, AN, F15 2686. 3) Petition, 3 Aug. 1812, AN, F15 2677. 4) Petition, 15 March 1810, AN, F15 2679. 5) Despeaux c. Delaplace, 7 messidor an XII (26 June 1804), ADS, D 12 U1 47. 6) Information sheet, n.d. but 1810, AN, F15 2691. 7) Information sheet, Oct. 1810, AN, F15 2686. 8) Mes c. Canis, 27 Oct. 1807, ADS, D 8 U1 29. 9) Petition, n.d. but 1813, AN, F15 2675. 10) Vallés c. Dourdan, 8 vendémiaire an XII (1 Oct. 1803), ADS, D 12 U1 46. 11) Regnard c. Restout, 28 fructidor an XII (15 Sept. 1804), ADS, D 12 U1 47. 12) Trouba c. Auguin, 11 messidor an XII (30 June 1804), ibid. 13) Information sheet, Jan. 1811, AN, F15 2691. 14) Lenoir c. Vincent, 7 July 1807, ADS, D 8 U1 28. 15) Tete c. Dupuis, 8 vendémiaire an XII (1 Oct. 1803), ADS, D 12 U1 46. 16) Information sheet, n.d. but 1811, AN, F15 2680. 17) Romain c. Dhivez, 17 Nov. 1807, ADSm D 8 U1 29.

TABLE 6

WAGES PAID TO FEMALE WORKERS (1809-1813)

Worker's Name	Occupation	Daily Wage
1. Widow Guilleux	lace-maker	0F, 20
2. Widow Leveque	spinner	0F, 25
3. Widow Couder	coal-peddler	0F, 30
4. Widow Chardon	house-porter	0F, 35
5. Widow Bayancourt	suspender-maker	0F, 40
6. <u>Femme</u> Viette	silk-reeler	0F, 40-, 50
7. Widow Rosier	seamstress	0F, 50
8. Widow Descourcières	cotton-cleaner	0F, 50
9. Widow Marin	book-binder	0F, 50
10. <u>Femme</u> Le Roy	needleworker	0F, 50
11. <u>Femme</u> Lyon	seamstress	0F, 50-, 60
12. Widow Sauvet	laundress	0F, 50-, 75
13. Widow Pégois	day-labourer	0F, 60
14. Widow His	house-porter	0F, 60
15. Widow Despommier	tobacco-worker	1F, 00
16. Madame Dutertre	owner of small grocery	2F, 00

SOURCES: 1) Information sheet, 16 Dec. 1809, AN, F15 2677. 2) Information sheet, 3 Jan. 1810, *ibid.* 3) Information sheet, Feb. 1811, AN, F15 2691. 4) Information sheet, 1811, AN, F15 2689. 5) Information sheet, 2 Feb. 1810, AN, F15 2688. 6) Petition, Dec. 1810, AN, F15 2686. 7) Information sheet, Jan. 1811, AN, F15 2691. 8) Petition, 4 Jan. 1813, AN, F15 2674. 9) Information sheet, 10 Feb. 1810, AN, F15 2676. 10) Petition, 11 March 1810, AN, F15 2686. 11) Information sheet, 2 Feb. 1810, AN, F15 2688. 12) Mayor of fourth arrondissement to Pr. Seine, 2 March 1813, ADS, V bis 1 D2 6. 13) Information sheet, 2 Feb. 1810, AN, F15 2688. 14) Petition, 16 Nov. 1812, AN, F15 2677. 15) Petition, Sept. 1812, AN, F15 2670. 16) Petition, 18 Dec. 1810, AN, F15 2691.

even so her one franc a day was unusually high pay for a woman; it is exceeded on the table only by the income of a small grocer who owned her own business. In comparison, female domestic servants (who were also given room and board) did quite well for themselves, with wages of 150 to two hundred francs a year.⁹⁴ Children, of course, normally, earned even less than women did. One manufacturer paid orphans thirty centimes a day to clean cotton, and in March 1812 he reduced this meagre wage by five or ten centimes.⁹⁵ In 1803 sixteen-year-old Benoit Savarin earned thirty to thirty-five centimes a day in a wallpaper manufactory,⁹⁶ while in 1810 a ten-year-old boy made thirty centimes a day sewing books.⁹⁷

These scattered bits of information may give us the range of typical wages, but they tell us nothing about the general direction of wages between 1800 and 1815. This is by no means easy to trace, for, apart from the over-all

⁹⁴For specific references to wages paid to female servants: Martin contre Delonnay, 12 nivôse an XII (3 Jan. 1804), and Guilleminot contre Delamore, 24 germinal an XII (24 March 1804), ADS, D 12 U1-47; Bize contre Leclair, 18 Aug. 1807, ADS, D 8 U1 28; bankruptcy of Mayer-Grodville, 11 messidor an XI (30 June 1803), ADS, D 11 U3 20, d. 1418; bankruptcy of Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Marville, 11 vendémiaire an XIII (3 Oct. 1804), ADS, D 11 U3 26, d. 1778.

⁹⁵Report to Conseil général, 18 March 1812, AAP, FF 136, vol. 17, fol. 441.

⁹⁶Report on Benoit Savarin, 12 ventôse an XI (3 March 1803), AN, F7 3159, d. Secours.

⁹⁷Information sheet on widow Richard, 20 April 1810, AN, F15 2680.

trend shown by wages, there were brief fluctuations depending on economic conditions." It was standard practice for employers to lower wages during periods of economic crisis; thus, in January 1807 the police reported that the only workers who still had jobs in manufactories were those hired "by rich entrepreneurs who profit from present circumstances to make considerable savings on wages. . . ."⁹⁸ In the spring of 1802 journeymen hatters won a significant wage increase after a prolonged strike, and yet in October 1803 they had to accept a pay cut, since "they have recognized that because of conditions it was impossible for their employers to do otherwise."⁹⁹ Similarly, in the summer of 1811 one man agreed to work for a porcelain manufacturer at a wage which was lower than normal; the following spring he complained that business was once again doing well and "the worker can now earn his living with assiduous labour, because of the wage increases granted by other manufacturers," but that his own employer refused to give him one.¹⁰⁰ However, fluctuations were not always to the detriment of workers. In January 1804, after a great storm, Parisian roofers were able to charge as much as seven francs a day for their services.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ "Rapport concernant les principaux genres de fabrication qui, dans ce moment, éprouvent une stagnation plus sensible dans la ville de Paris," 22 Jan. 1807, AN, F7 4311 and F12 2467.

⁹⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 23 vendémiaire an XII (6 Oct. 1803), AN, F7 3832.

¹⁰⁰ Gruyère to Min. Justice, 1 May 1812, AN, BB16 777.

¹⁰¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 nivôse an XII (11 Jan. 1804), AN, F7 3832.

It is clear enough that (despite temporary fluctuations) the general trend of nominal wages was upward. Tailors are a good example. A tailor's assistant made thirty sous a day towards the end of the Old Régime, until a strike won a wage increase to forty sous (two francs) in August 1789. The government reported a wage of seventy sous in June 1793, but this was abnormally high, during a period of economic and political turmoil. In 1800 a tailor's assistant earned five francs for making a suit (or one-half the price which the master tailor charged his client); this represented two and one-half days' labour--so that his daily wage was once more down to two francs. A heavy demand for labour at the time of the Imperial Coronation (December 1804) enabled tailors to press for higher prices and wages. A tailor's assistant was therefore able to earn seven to eight francs for a suit or 2F,80 to 3F,20 a day in 1805. (This is confirmed by the testimony of an unemployed assistant who claimed to make 2F,50 to three francs a day when working.) In 1807 the police reported that a journeyman tailor could make three or four francs a day, but most such estimates were usually optimistic. In 1814 tailor's assistants won an increase from ten to eleven francs for every suit (they wanted thirteen francs), and the rate was thirteen or fourteen francs in 1815 and fourteen to eighteen francs in 1825. Calculations of the daily wage are complicated by the fact that with changing fashions a suit took five days to make in 1825; we do not know how long it took around 1814-1815, but

if we estimate three and one-half days, the daily wages of an assistant tailor over a thirty-five-year period would be roughly as follows:

1788: 1F,50
1789: 2F,00
1793: 3F,50
1800: 2F,00
1804: 2F,50-3F,00
1805: 2F,80-3F,20
1807: 3F,00-4F,00
1813: 2F,85
1814: 3F,15
1815: 3F,70-4F,00
1825: 2F,80-3F,60

It therefore seems that between 1800 and 1804 tailors' wages increased by roughly 50 percent and that, although there was perhaps some slight rise in the next decade, they did not increase significantly again until after the fall of the Empire; moreover, this gain in 1814-1815 apparently disappeared during the decline of the Restoration period.¹⁰²

Printers are another case for which there is some data available. In 1799 printers and compositors working at the Imprimerie Nationale earned three francs a day, which matched

¹⁰²On strike in 1789: Rudé, "Prices, Wages and Popular Movements," p. 171. On wages in 1793: "Département de Paris: Marchandises & denrées, journées & main-d'oeuvre en juin 1790 et juin 1793," AN, F12 1547C, d. 2. On wages in 1800, 1805, 1815, and 1825: Rapport des délégués des ouvriers parisiens à l'Exposition de Londres (Paris, 1862), as cited in Ministère du commerce, de l'industrie, des postes et des télégraphes, Office du travail, Les associations professionnelles ouvrières, 4 vols. (Paris, 1899-1904), 2:601-02. On wages in 1804: police interrogation of François Léon, 12 floréal an XII (2 May 1804), AN, F7 6435, d. 6287. On wages in 1807: "Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, AN, F12 502 and F7 4334. On strike of 1814: police report, 16 June 1814, AN, 40 AP 8.

the rate paid by private printing houses. They were still making the same wage in 1808 when (they complained) other printing houses were paying four francs to 4F,50 for comparable work. They evidently won their point, for by July 1809 they had received a raise and could make between 3F,50 and 4F,50, depending on their classification. Four francs a day was apparently still the normal wage in printing houses two years later, in 1811.¹⁰³ Thus, printers' wages increased by at least 33 percent during the Napoleonic period and, although we do not know what happened after 1811, it is unlikely that there was a significant increase during the economic recession of 1812-1815.

But the best occupations for an analysis of wage trends are those in the building trade. First of all, in a given city at a given time there was usually a standard wage paid to most workers in each particular occupation. As one writer noted during the Empire, "there is no discussion as to the hours of work, custom alone regulates them just as it does the daily wage. . . ." ¹⁰⁴ Second, there are a number of available sources which provide information on the

¹⁰³ Report by Min. Justice, vendémiaire an VIII (Sept.-Oct. 1799); petition by printers, 12 April 1808; and wage schedule, July 1809; AN, BB4 33. Expenses of Journal de Paris, in police report, 18 Oct. 1811, AN, F18 27. Information sheet on Nanche, printer, [ca. 1811], AN, F15 2680.

¹⁰⁴ Morisot, Tableaux détaillés des prix de tous les ouvrages de bâtiment, suivant leurs genres différens et chacune de leurs espèces, 4 vols. (Paris, 1804-1806), 3:73.

standard wages paid to Parisian construction workers in certain years between 1789 and 1817. Table 7 makes use of these to illustrate the movement of wages in selected occupations in construction during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period. Unfortunately, there is no data for the critical decade 1793-1804, while different sources give inconsistent information for both 1789 and 1810. Nevertheless, there is an obvious upward trend. In general, many categories of construction workers (the most skilled) doubled their wages between 1789 and 1793, but this was not unusual in those years (as we have seen in the case of tailors). Most of these gains, however, did not endure.¹⁰⁵ By the opening years of the Empire, construction workers were still earning considerably higher wages than they had made in 1789--although one suspects that all or most of these gains were made before 1800. General labourers made only 13 percent more than in 1789, but masons earned 30 percent more, and carpenters and locksmiths about 50 percent more. There were some increases in the following years, but these appear to have been quite modest--in 1810 most construction workers made less than 10 percent more than they had in 1804-1806. Wages were no higher in 1817 and even, in some cases, slightly lower, although the information is sketchy. (It ought to be kept in mind that wage gains during the Revolution were actually

¹⁰⁵ George Rudé and Albert Soboul, "Le Maximum des salaires parisiens et le 9 thermidor," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 26 (1954):1-22.

TABLE 7

WAGES IN THE PARIS BUILDING TRADES 1789-1817

	1789(1)	1789(2)	1790	June 1790	June 1793	1804-1806	1808	1809	1810(1)	1810(2)	1817
LABOURER	1,50	1,40-1,50	1,20-1,40	----	----	1,70	----	2,00	1,90	2,00	1,90
NAVY	1,90	1,80	1,70	----	----	2,25	----	2,25	2,25	----	----
CARPENTER	2,10	2,00	2,10-2,50	2,50	4,00	3,00	3,25	3,50	3,25	3,50-4,00	----
JOINER	2,50	1,90	2,25-2,50	2,25	4,50	3,50	3,00	3,50	3,25	3,00	----
MASON	2,50	2,40	2,00-2,25	2,00	3,00	3,25	3,50	3,25	3,50	3,50	3,25
STONEMASON	3,00	2,40	2,00-2,25	----	----	3,25	3,75	3,75	3,50	3,50.	3,25
LOCKSMITH	2,50	1,90	2,00-4,00	2,50	5,50	3,75	3,25	3,50	3,50	3,00	----

SOURCE: 1789(1) and 1809: "Tableau du prix de la journée des ouvriers de bâtiments dans le cours de l'année 1789 comparés avec ceux de 1809," AN, F13 521. 1789(2) and 1810(2): Pr. Pol., "Rapport sur la proposition de fixer le prix & la journée des ouvriers," 28 March 1810, AN, F13 521. 1790: Léon Biollay, Les prix en 1790 (Paris, 1886). June 1790 and June 1793: "Département de Paris: Marchandises & denrées, journées & main-d'oeuvre," AN, F12 1547C, d. 2. 1804-1806: Morisot, Tableaux détaillés des prix de tous les ouvrages de bâtiment, suivant leurs genres différens et chacune de leurs espèces, 4 vols. (Paris, 1804-1806). 1808: S. Martin, Tarif général des prix moyens des matériaux et des journées d'ouvriers employés dans les bâtiments à Paris, suivant le cours des six premiers mois de l'an 1808 (Paris, 1808). 1810(1): Rondelet, Traité théorique et pratique de l'art de bâtir, 7 vols. (Paris, 1802-1817), 4: part 3. 1817: Daubanton, "Rapport relatif aux entreprises de construction dans Paris de 1821 à 1826," in Chabrol de Volvic, Recherches statistiques sur la Ville de Paris et le département de la Seine, 6 vols. (Paris, 1821-1860), 4:48.

higher in hourly than in daily terms, since construction workers cut two hours off their workday in 1791--see chapter six.) -

Thus, the evidence indicates that the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period was indeed a time of rising nominal wages in Paris. Extraordinary gains (nominal, and not necessarily real) made in the early 1790s may have largely evaporated with the return of economic stability, but the general trend was upward. By the first years of the Empire (1804-1805) the wages of skilled workers were at least 30 to 50 percent higher than in 1789.¹⁰⁶ The upward movement may have continued in the following years, but only at a much slower rate, perhaps even coming to a halt by 1810. Also, as the example of some construction workers suggests, unskilled workers did not fare as well as the skilled. It was, in fact, quite normal for unskilled building labourers to earn a bare minimum wage which was little affected by economic trends.¹⁰⁷ This may have been the case for other

¹⁰⁶In addition to the evidence already presented, see "Tableaux des prix comparés des salaires d'ouvriers et d'objets à l'usage d'une exploitation rurale pendant les années 1789 & 1804," AN, F20 255. This report shows that in the sous-préfecture of Sceaux (lying just outside the southern walls of Paris) joiners earned 51.2 percent more in 1804 than in 1789; locksmiths 55.6 percent more; masons and carpenters 58.5 percent more; wheelwrights and pavers 80 percent more; and blacksmiths and harness-makers 82 percent more.

¹⁰⁷Yves Durand, "Recherches sur les salaires des maçons à Paris au XVIII^e siècle," Revue d'histoire économique et sociale 44 (1966):479.

unskilled workers as well. For example, water-carriers earned two sous for every trip they made in the 1780s and they still charged the same fee in 1820.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, the porter at the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève who was awarded an annual salary of 720 francs in the Year VI (1797-1798) was still receiving the same sum twenty years later.¹⁰⁹ However, since the unskilled were only a small minority of Parisian workers, their situation does not undermine the conclusion that the general movement of wages between 1789 and 1815 was upward.

Prices were also rising throughout the period. Madame de Rémusat (wife of a leading banker) wrote in 1805: "The war, it is said, increases the price of everything; merchants use every pretext to sell more dearly. . . ." ¹¹⁰ In 1812 the Prefect of Police called for a wage increase for police commissioners because of "the progressive rise which the price of all consumer goods undergo in Paris, and which has so increased expenses in eleven years. . . ." ¹¹¹ Obviously, workers were not immune to inflation and the journeymen printers at the Imprimerie Impériale who complained about their low wages in 1808 also commented that ten years

¹⁰⁸ Mercier, Tableau de Paris, 1:90. Benoiston de Chateauneuf, Recherches, p. 119.

¹⁰⁹ AN, F17 3501-3502.

¹¹⁰ Letter, 22 September 1805, quoted by Lanzac de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 5:341.

¹¹¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 5 Nov. 1812, AN, F7 3140.

earlier the cost of living had been one-third less.¹¹²

How, then, did rising prices affect a worker's budget? Table 8 presents hypothetical budgets for four imaginary households in Napoleonic Paris. Household A is only a single man, a migrant water-carrier who has come to Paris for a few years, hoping to amass some cash savings before returning home. Household B consists of a mason and a seamstress, living together (unmarried) without children. There are four members in Household C: a carpenter, his wife (who does not work), and their two young children. Household D is made up of a journeyman tailor, his wife who is a laundress, and their three children. Family income has been estimated from the available information on average wages paid in 1804. The water-carrier is not subject to seasonal unemployment and can therefore work three hundred days a year. The mason works six days a week for only thirty-five weeks a year, since construction comes to a halt in the winter. All the other workers are employed for 250 days a year, which allows them one day a week for rest and about fifty days a year for sickness or seasonal unemployment--which is probably a minimum.

The year 1804 has been chosen as the base year for these hypothetical budgets since there is a price list of

¹¹² Petition by printers, 12 April 1808, AN, BB4 33.

TABLE 8
HYPOTHETICAL BUDGETS FOR FOUR PARIS
HOUSEHOLDS (1804)

HOUSEHOLD A

MEMBERS: water-carrier
INCOME: 750F,00 (2F,50/day for 300 days)
EXPENDITURES: 748F,00

Savings: 250F,00
Rent: 50F,00
Heat: 50F,00
Light: 10F,00
Clothes: 75F,00
Bread: 145F,00
Wine: 53F,00
Meat: 40F,00
Other Food: 75F,00

HOUSEHOLD B

MEMBERS: mason and seamstress
INCOME: 827F,00 (3F,25/day for 216 days; 0F,50/day for 250 days)
EXPENDITURES: 762F,50

Rent: 100F,00
Heat: 50F,00
Light: 10F,00
Clothes: 150F,00
Bread: 193F,00
Wine: 79F,50
Meat: 60F,00
Other Food: 120F,00

HOUSEHOLD C

MEMBERS: carpenter, wife, and two children
INCOME: 750F,00 (3F,00/day for 250 days)
EXPENDITURES: 750F,00

Rent: 80F,00
Heat: 50F,00
Light: 10F,00
Clothes: 100F,00
Bread: 242F,00
Wine: 53F,00
Meat: 80F,00
Other Food: 135F,00

HOUSEHOLD D

MEMBERS: tailor, laundress, and three children
INCOME: 812F,50 (3F,25 for 250 days; 0F,50 for 250 days)
EXPENDITURES: 813F,00

Rent: 80F,00
Heat: 50F,00
Light: 10F,00
Clothes: 100F,00
Bread: 253F,00
Wine: 80F,00
Meat: 90F,00
Other Food: 150F,00

basic necessities in that year,¹¹³ as well as evidence which permits a rough comparison of wages and prices in 1804 with those in 1789. Although bread was unusually cheap in 1804 --cheaper than it had been for fifteen years or would ever be again--this advantage was counterbalanced by the higher cost of certain other items, vegetables in particular. Each household has been assigned an appropriate rent which takes into account its general financial situation. Bread costs are easy enough to calculate with some accuracy since we know how much the average Parisian consumed each day: the water-carrier, who does heavy labour, eats three pounds a day; the mason, two and one-half pounds; and the tailor and carpenter, two pounds apiece. The women each eat one and one-half pounds a day, and we can allot two pounds to the carpenter's two children and two and one-half pounds to the tailor's three. (Household D is lucky enough to receive eight pounds of bread a month as poor relief, and thus saves somewhat on total expenses.) The budgets show the cost of this bread, at an average price of fifty-three centimes a four-pound loaf in 1804. As for meat, each male eats the Parisian average of 67 1/3 pounds of butcher's meat a year, costing forty francs in 1804. (No allowance has been made for pork or fish.) Each of the women, however, eats only half this amount, and each child only one-quarter. The budgets are rather generous with wine, allowing a hundred litres a year

¹¹³"Du 13 ventôse an 13: Etat du prix actuel des denrées, et de celui qu'elles avaient il y a 3 & 6 mois," AN, AF IV 1492.

to each man and fifty litres to each working woman. The children as well as the wife of the carpenter make do with water. Vin ordinaire cost an average fifty-three centimes a litre in 1804. The sums for other items in the budget have been calculated much more casually, in accordance with Ernest Labrousse's estimate (supported by Albert Soboul) that vegetables and other food (excluding meat) cost 15 percent of an average worker's budget, clothes another 15 percent, heat 5 percent, and light only 1 percent.¹¹⁴ The hypothetical budgets allow the unmarried water-carrier and the childless members of Household B to spend somewhat more on food and clothing than the other households. As for heat and light, it is presumed that their cost varied little with family size, and so all four budgets allow the expenditure of ten francs on light (which would buy about ten pounds of candles in 1804) and fifty francs on fuel.

Presuming that each household did not change its pattern of consumption, how much would the goods it bought in 1804 cost it in other years? It is possible to make crude calculations of the fluctuations in the price of most items (but beginning only in 1803) thanks to the research of several historians.¹¹⁵ There is, however, little evidence

¹¹⁴Soboul, Les sans-culottes, p. 668n.

¹¹⁵The price of white bread is given for every day from 1801 to 1823 by Armand Husson, Les consommations de Paris, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1875), p. 175. Alexandre Chabert, Essai sur les mouvements des prix en France de 1798 à 1820 (Paris, 1945) gives the prices (either in cash value or as an indexed

when it comes to rent, although it appears that rent did not show a marked increase during most of the Napoleonic period. Reports on property taxes in 1806 noted that "rents have not followed the rising cost of labour and building materials," and that in most quarters of the capital the rental values of houses had actually fallen since 1791.¹¹⁶ A comparison of rents charged for buildings belonging to the hospitals of Paris in Year IX (1800-1801) and 1811 indicates a moderate rise in rental value for about two-thirds of the houses and a decline for the remainder.¹¹⁷ Although it is therefore

figure) for beans, peas, and lentils (pp. 88-90), meat (p. 109), candles (p. 115), knitted stockings (pp. 194-95), and wine (p. 247). My estimates for the price fluctuations of vegetables are based on the beans, peas, and lentils; and the only figures I could find for clothing were those for knitted stockings. The fluctuations of fuel have been extrapolated from the price of wood given by Benoiston de Chateauneuf, *Recherches*, p. 136.

¹¹⁶"Travaux préparatoires des rôles, an XIV-1806" and "Contribution foncière [1806]," in "Direction des contributions: comptes-rendus," ADS, DP2 16.

¹¹⁷The rents for houses in Year IX can be found in Comptes généraux des hopitaux, hospices civils, enfans abandonnés, secours à domicile, et direction des nourrices de la Ville de Paris: Recette, dépense, population: an IX (Paris, an XIII-1805), pp. 1-11. All street addresses in Paris were changed in 1805, but it is sometimes possible to recognize these houses among those listed in 1811, when new leases were in effect. (Most leases were signed for a period of nine years.) Rents for 1811 can be found in Etat général des propriétés urbaines appartenantes aux hopitaux et hospices civils, aux indigens et aux enfans abandonnés de la Ville de Paris (Paris, n.d.), with manuscript additions, AAP, A-111/1, and "Loyers de maisons, 1811," AAP, FF 43. Generalizations about fluctuations in rent are difficult to make, as the following examples illustrate. Three houses on the rue de Bac increased in rental value by 2.7, 10.1, and 19.3 percent, while two decreased by 7 and 13 percent. On the rue de la Harpe, two increased by .3 and 2.3 percent, and one decreased by 9.4 percent. On the rue des Gravilliers, two increased by .9 and 3.4 percent, and one decreased by 1.6 percent.

possible that there were small rent increases in the last years of the Empire, it is not unreasonable to base calculations on the assumption that rents were more or less stable throughout the period.

Table 9, constructed on the basis of these shreds of available evidence, traces fluctuations in the cost of living from 1803 to 1818, with the household budgets for 1804 indexed at 100. It is immediately apparent that 1803-1809 were good years for Parisian workers--the cost of living remained relatively stable, and even dropped by about 5 percent in 1805-1806. It began to creep upward in 1810-1811, and these were followed by the disastrously expensive years 1812-1813, primarily the result of a serious grain crisis which sent the cost of bread soaring (see chapter nine). Prices dropped again in the last two years of the Empire, but the early Restoration was clearly a difficult time with a rising cost of living. The table does not (and cannot) give the indexed cost of living for 1789; however, we know from one source that the price of most consumer goods increased by 33 to 50 percent between 1789 and 1804 (while bread went up by only 20 percent)¹¹⁸--so that the cost of living must have been about 75 at the outbreak of the Revolution.

¹¹⁸"Tableaux des prix comparés des salaires d'ouvriers et d'objets à l'usage d'une exploitation rurale pendant les années 1789 & 1804," AN, F20 255, shows that just outside Paris the food consumed by a blacksmith or harness-maker increased by 33.3 percent in value, wine increased by 25 percent, beer by 84.6 percent, meat by 50 percent, firewood

TABLE 9

INDEXED COST OF LIVING FOR FOUR PARIS HOUSEHOLDS

1803-1818

	1803	1804	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818
HOUSEHOLD A	101.5	100	96.9	97.2	100.3	101.7	99.3	102.9	102.4	107.0	113.4	103.1	102.0	109.1	114.8	112.4
HOUSEHOLD B	101.9	100	94.5	94.0	98.5	102.0	98.2	103.3	101.2	107.0	118.6	103.7	102.1	110.9	118.3	116.9
HOUSEHOLD C	101.3	100	94.6	95.3	100.1	102.2	98.1	102.2	102.2	111.2	120.0	103.0	101.2	113.6	123.8	118.6
HOUSEHOLD D	101.4	100	94.0	94.8	99.4	101.4	97.2	102.3	102.2	109.6	119.3	103.1	101.5	113.4	123.4	118.6

(For composition and budget of each household, see table 8.)

All estimates are tenuous at best, yet the conclusions which emerge from them confirm the contemporary impression that workers benefitted from the Revolution and prospered under Napoleon. This was probably not immediately true, since inflation between 1791 and 1798 must have seriously undermined initial wage gains, but the nominal wage increases made between 1789 and 1804 by most categories of workers--if we exclude the unskilled--at least matched and usually exceeded the increase in the cost of living. Moreover, wages continued a slow rise until about 1810, while prices did not show any equivalent increase. The years 1812-1813 saw a reversal in the trend of improvement (particularly since the last four or five years of the Empire were marked by economic recession and unemployment) and the early Restoration, when wages declined, was even worse. So, although descriptions of their living and working conditions under Napoleon may appall us today, many Parisian workers had cause to look back on much of the Napoleonic period as a golden age of relative prosperity.

by 52 percent, charcoal by 107 percent, and items of clothing by 50 to 67.7 percent. In 1788 (before beginning an inexorable and politically explosive rise) bread cost nine sous (forty-five centimes) a loaf; it cost 18 percent more in 1804.

CHAPTER FOUR

POVERTY AND THE POOR

La classe des ouvriers utiles, celle des indigens. . . .¹

I

In 1812 the Minister of the Interior wrote that in the great cities of the Empire (he was thinking especially of Paris, Bordeaux, and Marseille) "at all times, but particularly during the rigorous winter season, a certain part of the population is without resources, unemployed, and inactive."² Of course, endemic poverty was not only an urban problem,³ but it was more visible and certainly politically more dangerous in the cities, and therefore more likely to draw government attention. Archives are consequently full of official documents which bear witness to the plight of the urban poor; yet few historians of the working class have chosen to exploit them. Scholars have preferred instead to examine other topics, such as bread

¹ Audin-Rouvière, Essai, p. 79.

² "Secours-subsistance, 1811 & 1812. Rapport à Sa Majesté l'Empereur et Roi, par le Ministre de l'Interieur," p. 87, AN, F11* 3050.

³ Olwen Hufton, The Poor of Eighteenth-Century France.

riots, labour strikes, workers' organizations, and the slow evolution of class consciousness. But poverty was an ever-present reality to the average worker in pre-industrial and early industrial society. Any attempt to distinguish a lumpenproletariat of the poor as distinct from "real" workers simply defies all evidence. This is not to say that highly skilled craftsmen did not enjoy a higher standard of living and somewhat more economic security than unskilled labourers--but workers were (for the most part) poor, and the poor were (for the most part) workers.

There are hundreds of cases which illustrate this point to be found in some twenty cartons of documents at the Archives Nationales. The Minister of the Interior, who dispensed thousands of francs a year in charity, received numerous petitions for help, most of which he turned over to aides for investigation. Their reports still survive, along with the original petitions.⁴ Most of the petitioners were workers and artisans, although a few were bourgeois or even nobles now fallen on hard times. Over and over again, the petitions repeat the same stories. There were men who held jobs but earned inadequate wages, like Jean-Claude Borey, a day-labourer with a wife and three young children, who "cannot manage to nourish and clothe

⁴AN, F15 2670-2691. I have looked at all petitions and selected for quotation only those which seem representative and credible. The investigators did not hesitate to point out inaccuracies or misrepresentation in the cases they examined.

his family with the product of the errands he runs."⁵ Other men found themselves in trouble only in exceptional circumstances. Clavet earned fifty sous a day as a copper-finisher, enough to maintain his wife and three children until there was an economic crisis in 1812 and he could find work for only two days a week.⁶ The plight of widowed or abandoned mothers was particularly moving. La femme Lejay, whose husband was a soldier stationed in Spain, looked after one child and her aged mother, and "being a seamstress, and business not going well, and moreover a woman's income not amounting to very much," she needed aid.⁷ The widow Brossier sold fruit; her husband, a carpenter, had been killed in an accident on the Pont Jéna. "The mother and the four children sleep on the same straw mattress," wrote an investigator. "Nothing is more wretched."⁸ The widow Richard, almost blind and unable to work, lived with her two young children on the six sous a day earned by her ten-year-old son who sewed books.⁹ The old, like women, were also at a disadvantage in the labour market, and if they were too infirm to work at all,

⁵Petition, 9 Dec. 1811, AN, F15 2671.

⁶Petition and attached information sheet, [27 Jan. 1813], AN, F15 2673.

⁷Petition, [1810], AN, F15 2686.

⁸Petition, 14 Oct. 1813, AN, F15 2675.

⁹Information sheet, 20 April 1810, AN, F15 2680.

then their situation was even more desperate. Glairo, a sixty-year-old construction painter with a bed-ridden wife and a young daughter to support was unable to find work for five months, since "seeing that no-one wants old workers any more, I find myself rebuffed."¹⁰ Duroux and his wife were both old and/crippled. The government had conscripted the son who once supported them and they now had to depend totally on public relief and private charity.¹¹

These few cases (selected from hundreds) demonstrate the vulnerability of the Parisian wage-earner or, for that matter, petty artisan. Economic security was simply unattainable: wages were often inadequate, and over his head continually loomed the disasters of economic crisis, unemployment, sickness, old age, and death. An official all too familiar with Parisian poverty wrote in 1816 of "the working class, where poverty, mother of mendicity, is the companion of almost all occupations."

How little can reduce a family of artisans to beggary: the sickness of the father or mother, the disappearance of a fashion, the invention of a labour-saving machine. Most families of artisans, even when employed, are assisted by charitable bureaux; if there is no work, if the head of the family dies, official support does not increase, and therefore they have recourse to begging. . . .¹²

¹⁰Petition, 10 April 1812, AN, F15 2671.

¹¹Petition, Feb. 1813, AN, F15 2674.

¹²L.P.A. Hossart, Des avantages de la mendicité bien réglée dans l'économie sociale, des inconvéniens de sa

II

Indeed, begging was, along with prostitution and child abandonment, eloquent proof of widespread poverty among the labouring population. The Napoleonic capital swarmed with beggars. Fouché, Minister of Police, commented that "Paris is devoured by this leprosy to a greater degree than the departments, and . . . it is important to find the most suitable way of wiping out this plague."¹³ The police counted 1,518 beggars on the streets of Paris in 1806, of whom, they claimed, eighty men and 218 women were actually "able-bodied loafers." This figure does not include five hundred able-bodied beggars already imprisoned, nor those beggars who came daily into the city from the rural communes surrounding Paris.¹⁴ Nor was this flow through the city gates one-way. A survey made in 1800 found 379 domiciled beggars resident in the rural communes, but more than two thousand outsiders, many of them from Paris. ~~Seine~~ ^{Vivennes} complained of about one hundred non-resident beggars who came principally from the neighbouring faubourg Saint-Antoine. Beggars from the faubourgs du Temple, Saint-Denis,

supression absolue, et de la nécessité de réformer la législation à cet égard (Paris, 1816), pp. 20-21. Hossart was a member of the Bureau de charité of the tenth arrondissement.

¹³ Minutes of Conseil de police, 1 thermidor an XII (20 July 1804), AN, F7 4311, d. 1.

¹⁴ Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 14 Feb. 1806, AN, F15 106. The Prefect advanced a larger figure of 1,200 able-bodied beggars for the whole department in 1808: "Observations," 5 Aug. 1808, AN, F7 3128.

and Saint-Martin infested nearby Villette. These last (it was alleged) were insolent and dishonest; they committed thefts, pillaged vegetable gardens, and threatened those who refused them alms.¹⁵ In contrast, beggars in the streets of Paris (perhaps because the city was well-policed) enjoyed a reputation for mild manners and excessive politeness.¹⁶

Who were these beggars? It is clear that most turned to begging only because they had no other choice. Even the police had to admit that only a small minority were "loafers." They were the old, the infirm, and the poor in general--people whose labour could not support them.¹⁷ The old were predominant among them. There is a list of fifty-one beggars in the Panthéon division in December 1799, thirty-two men and nineteen women. The list gives the ages of all but two of them: only fourteen were younger than sixty, and the median age was sixty-four.¹⁸ Most beggars

¹⁵"Tableau de la situation des communes rurales du Département de la Seine, rédigé d'après les réponses des maires et adjointes à la circulaire du 16 brumaire an 9," (7 Nov. 1800), AN, F7 7880, d. 1455.

¹⁶J.-F. Reichardt, Un hiver à Paris sous le Consulat, 1802-1803 (Paris, 1896), p. 103. Pinkerton, Recollections, 2:232.

¹⁷The report of 1806 previously cited (n. 14) breaks down the 1,518 beggars as follows: 80 able-bodied men and 218 able-bodied women; 235 infirm men, 256 infirm women; 79 old men, 94 old women; 141 blind of both sexes; 53 indigent men, 173 indigent women; and 189 children.

¹⁸Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance, Panthéon division, 29 frimaire an VIII (20 Dec. 1799), AAP, FF 96, r. 3.

were Parisians: the Prefect of Police noted in 1810 that of all beggars arrested that year in the Department of the Seine, about two-thirds had lived in Paris for at least ten years.¹⁹ They were also likely to be drawn from the lowest-paying occupations. A table giving professions previously exercised by the detainees in the poorhouse at Villers-Cotteret shows that well over half the men were simple gagne-deniers and a considerable number were water-carriers. The women were knitters, seamstresses, laundresses, and domestic servants.²⁰ Begging was not, as some contemporaries claimed, a moral problem. It was clearly a symptom of endemic poverty.

The same may be said of prostitution. There were even more prostitutes in Paris than beggars.²¹ The Prefect of Police counted between ten and twelve thousand of them in 1810. There were eight or nine hundred prostitutes who worked out of houses of prostitution, and about four hundred more who worked independently at a fixed address. The pierreuses, low-class prostitutes who plied their trade in taverns, on the ports, and in the markets (wherever

¹⁹Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., 11 October 1810, AN, F16 1046.

²⁰"Tableau du mouvement de la population et du produit des ateliers dans le Dépôt de mendicité du département de la Seine de l'an 1813," AN, F16 1046. Among the detainees on 1 Jan. 1813 were: 9 joiners, 20 shoemakers, 4 masons, 12 wig-makers, 20 tailors, 15 gardeners, 4 hatters, 51 water-carriers, 6 bakers, 252 gagne-deniers, 30 domestic servants, 180 knitters, 160 seamstresses, and 60 laundresses.

²¹This section deals only with female prostitution

workers gathered), amounted to another three to four thousand. The Prefect added to these some seven to eight thousand women who added to their income "by a quasi-prostitution," enabling them to satisfy what he described as a love of luxury.²² But it is in fact doubtful that these thousands of women resorted to prostitution for the sake of ribbons and lace; rather, prostitution was "a resource against hunger:"

. . . When work is lacking, when the first effects of industrial stagnation are felt by women, when the miserable wages of those who work are inadequate to give them the most meagre life, . . . is it astonishing that so many girls look to prostitution as a means of existence. . . ?²³

In 1836 the first truly scientific study of prostitution was published, making extensive use of Paris police records (including some from the Napoleonic period which are no longer extant). It demonstrates that Parisian prostitutes were usually daughters of artisans and workers, were born in urban centres (one-third of them in Paris), and themselves exercised typical female occupations. They were no different

although male (homosexual) prostitution did exist on a far lesser scale, and for much the same reasons. See the police interrogation of Magloire Garet, aged 18, an unemployed hairdresser who claimed that he turned to prostitution because of economic necessity. Report of police commissioner, Butte des Moulins division, 2 Nov. 1811, APP, A/a 125, fol. 34-36.

²² Report by Pr. Pol., 17 August 1810, AN, F7 3134.

²³ "Sur le dispensaire [de salubrité], 1817," BHVP, ms CP 4476. (This is one of several reports on the functions of the special dispensary charged with the surveillance of prostitutes' health.) See also similar observations by abbé Humbert, "Facilité de remédier en quelque sorte aux désordres des filles publiques," 29 July 1808, AN, F15 1918; and Charles Henrion, Encore un tableau, pp. 130-31.

from the female labouring population as a whole, until poverty drove them to become prostitutes.²⁴

Other women were forced to abandon their children. The Hospice des Enfants Trouvés handled between four and six thousand children a year in Paris during the Napoleonic period:

The children received at the foundling hospital are natural or legitimate. The abandonment of the former can in great part be attributed to moral decline, the inevitable result of popular revolution.

The second is the effect for the most part of the poverty that besets the working class in particular, in unfortunate times. . . .²⁵

Many parents gave up their child unwillingly, only as a temporary expedient, and later tried to retrieve him from the Hospice. But the administration required a thirty franc fee, repayment of all expenses incurred by the child, and a certificate attesting to the parents' good conduct (signed by a mayor) before they would consider returning an abandoned child to his family. Of all the parents who sought return of their children, only about a hundred a year could meet these stiff demands.²⁶ The authorities justified

²⁴Parent-Duchatelet, De la prostitution, 1:51, 55, 59, 63, 71-76, 96-97.

²⁵Sausseret, "Précis sur l'hospice des enfants trouvés," [1816], AN, F15 1936. One estimate is that among the children abandoned every year were about 1,400 born to non-residents of the city, who came to Paris to give birth to illegitimate children in obscurity: "Mémoire sur le nombre annuel des enfants naturels dans la ville de Paris," [1817], AAP, FF 14.

²⁶Sausseret, "Précis sur l'hospice des enfants trouvés," and the numerous petitions from parents asking that their child be returned, AN, F15 1936.

their precautions as a necessary deterrent to abuse, for otherwise poor parents would place their children in the Hospice "as a kind of boarding school" and take them out again once they could be sent to work to earn a small income.²⁷ Most abandoned children therefore remained the responsibility of the Hospice, which sent them out of the city to be nursed and raised by poor peasants attracted by a meagre cash indemnity. The children received haphazard care and were neglected as babies and overworked as they grew older.²⁸ Few survived the ordeal.²⁹ Yet the Hospice fulfilled a definite need. "Those who write against the utility of foundling hospitals," commented an English visitor to Paris, "are . . . utter strangers to the sensations which the birth of a child gives to a poor parent, and the tranquility restored by its death."³⁰

²⁷Pr. Seine to Min. Int., 1 jour complémentaire an XII (18 September 1804), AN, F15 1874A.

²⁸Frochot, Pr. Seine, "Renseignements sur les Enfants élevés, aux frais de l'Administration des hospices de Paris," [ca. 1810], AN, F15 1936. The practice was to decrease the indemnity as the child grew older and to stop it entirely at age twelve, on the grounds that the peasant could make use of the child's labour: Duchanoy, Précis de l'état actuel des hopitaux et hospices de Paris, comparés à ce qu'ils étoient avant la Révolution [Paris, 1808], p. 8.

²⁹Of 23,070 children placed in the country, 14,500 (62.9 percent) died by the age of four, most of them (79.6 percent of the dead) during their first year. Mémoire historique et instructif sur l'hospice de la Maternité (Paris, 1808), p. 113.

³⁰Linkerton, Recollections, 2:172.

III

But the most compelling evidence of widespread poverty is the public relief rolls for Paris. The number of men, women, and children officially registered as indigent, and therefore eligible for outdoor relief, fluctuated from year to year, but throughout the Napoleonic period it hovered at about one hundred thousand (see table 10). An analysis of this indigent population enables us to trace the contours of workers' poverty. Unfortunately, there was no fixed criterion of indigence, and since each local bureau de bienfaisance (there was one for each of the capital's forty-eight administrative divisions) controlled its own registers, there was room for the prejudices and preferences of each bureau to come into play. A critic of the system complained in 1803: "In some divisions it is sufficient to ask to be put on the list of poor; in several, all the rentiers and nuns are registered, although drawing state pensions; in many, they register able-bodied people, perfectly capable of earning a livelihood, who prefer a shameful laziness to a laborious but useful life."³¹ This was undoubtedly an exaggerated picture, for no-one could have lived in idleness on the meagre poor relief available. More serious, from our point of view, is the fact that until 1830 according to one authority, there was

³¹"Rapport sur les observations du Comité de bienfaisance du 9^e arrt," [brumaire an XII. (Oct.-Nov. 1803)], APP, FF 136, vol. 5, fol. 591-93.

TABLE 10
PARISIAN INDIGENTS UNDER NAPOLEON

Year	Number
1801	111,626
1804	86,936
1805	90,705
1806	94,062
1807	97,195
1808	117,703
1809	118,202
1810	121,801
1811	116,670
1812	93,886
1813	102,806

SOURCE: Duquesnoy, Rapport sur les secours à domicile (Paris, an XI), pp. 38-39. Pastoret, Rapport fait au Conseil général des hospices par un de ses membres, sur l'état des hopitaux, des hospices, et des secours à domicile, à Paris, depuis le 1^{er} Janvier 1804 jusqu'au 1^{er} Janvier 1814 (Paris, 1816), p. 349.

TABLE 11

ADULT INDIGENTS: SEX AND MARITAL STATUS

	Number	Percent
Men:		
single	5,248	8.1
married	12,288	19.0
widowers	7,240	11.2
	<u>24,776</u>	<u>38.3</u>
Women:		
single	6,053	9.3
married	14,014	21.6
widows	19,969	30.8
	<u>40,036</u>	<u>61.7</u>
Total adults	64,812	100.0

(Not included in these calculations are 1,804 individuals of unknown sex and marital status.)

no really accurate census of indigents. Until then, each bureau forwarded its own statistics to the Bureau Général des Hospices, and since these provided the basis for the allocation of funds, there was some doubt as to their credibility.³² The Bureau Général was not unaware of the problem.³³ In 1812 the Prefect of the Seine attempted to organize a general census to be tabulated on printed forms which would give the name and address of every Parisian indigent, although some of the local bureaux made excuses, delayed, and even resisted.³⁴ Yet the work was apparently completed. One indication of its accuracy is a complaint by the bureau de bienfaisance of the Panthéon division that the new statistics seriously underestimated its poor. The authorities replied that the new figures could be backed up by information from the bureau's own forms.³⁵ The figures for 1813 therefore seem reasonably dependable and it is these that are used in the following discussion.³⁶

³² Administration générale de l'Assistance publique à Paris, Renseignements statistiques sur la population indigente de Paris d'après les recensements opérés depuis l'an X jusqu'au 31 décembre 1861 (Paris, 1862), pp. 5-6.

³³ "Rapport sur le dénombrement des indigens de Paris," 31 Dec. 1811, AAP, FF 136, vol. 26, fol. 579-85.

³⁴ Circular from Pr. Seine, quoted in minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Muséum division, 22 April 1812, AAP, FF 162, r. 2. Minutes, Plantes division, 22 April and 13 May 1812, FF 96, r. 9, and minutes, Observatoire division, 4 Nov. 1812, FF 96, r. 4.

³⁵ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 20 Jan., 17 Feb., 3 March 1813, AAP, FF 96. r. 8.

³⁶ Pastoret, Rapport, pp. 334-48, prints a series of

There were 102,806 registered indigents in 1813, of whom 35,859 were listed as less than fifteen years old or merely as "children with no age indicated." Adults, then, comprised about two-thirds of the indigent population. Table 11 gives the sex and marital status of most of these adults. It is hardly surprising that almost two-thirds of them were female. Females, of course, earned inadequate wages compared to men, but we must also consider the natural reluctance of the authorities to accord relief to any man, unless he were obviously too old or too unfit for any work. That almost one-third of the adults were widows is one more reminder of the difficulties faced by a woman on the death of her husband and the loss of his wages. Yet married men and women did make up two-fifths of the adult indigent population, and it is probable that even this substantial figure underestimates the real situation. Although there is no explicit information regarding registration procedures, the reader of surviving minutes gets the definite impression that while some bureaux de bienfaisance registered both husband and wife together as indigents, others listed only one adult in the family, and this was most likely to be the woman.

It would be interesting and useful to know the size and the structure of the indigent family but, unfortunately,

tables which categorize the indigent by sex and marital status, age, occupation, and department of birth.

TABLE 12
 STRUCTURE OF INDIGENT FAMILIES: PARENTS WITH YOUNG
 CHILDREN IN PLANTES AND PANTHEON DIVISIONS: 1808

Family Structure	Plantes		Panthéon	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Widow/widower and 1 child	36	1.6	333	22.2
2 children	59	2.7	77	5.1
3 or more	69	3.1	56	3.7
couple and 1 child	547	24.9	357	23.8
2 children	666	30.3	194	12.9
3 or more	822	37.4	486	32.3
	<u>2199</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>1503</u>	<u>100.0</u>

SOURCE: Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Plantes division, 4 May 1808, AAP, FF 96, r. 5; Panthéon division, 7 May 1808, FF 96, r. 6.

TABLE 13
 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF ADULT INDIGENTS
 COMPARED TO ADULT POPULATION

Age Group	Adult Indigents	Adult Parisians
15-20	8.1 %	12.5 %
20-30	14.0 %	25.1 %
30-40	16.6 %	20.4 %
40-50	15.6 %	15.9 %
50-60	17.1 %	12.9 %
60-70	12.7 %	8.9 %
70-80	10.2 %	3.6 %
over 80	5.6 %	.7 %

(Not included in these calculations are 8,291 indigents of unknown age.)

SOURCE: Age distribution of adult Parisians is based on the census of 1817, in Chabrol de Volvic, Recherches statistiques, 4: table 53.

this kind of information is not available for 1813. We do, however, have reports made in 1808 for two of the poorest sections of Paris, the Panthéon and Plantes divisions in the twelfth arrondissement. Table 12 summarizes the information which these give concerning widows, widowers, and couples with "young children," who received public relief. The reports contain no definition of young children, but no other children of any age were registered as indigent. This suggests that older children may have been considered capable of earning their own upkeep and therefore ineligible for relief. Even taking into account this apparent omission, it is a striking fact that the average indigent family was not excessively large and overburdened with young children. It is true that about two in five families had three or more children (the average in this group being 3.1 children in Plantes division and 3.2 in Panthéon division), but one in four was a two-parent family with only a single young child. Furthermore, single-parent families were the minority among indigent families (7.4 percent in Plantes division and 31 percent in Panthéon division--with no explanation for the difference). These figures seem to indicate that while single-parent and large families, as might be expected, often turned to poor relief, even small families with potentially two adult wage-earners were not immune to poverty.

Table 13 compares the age distribution of adult indigents in 1813 with that of the city's adult population

as a whole, in 1817. Indigents as a group were obviously older than ordinary Parisians. For example, while young adults between twenty and thirty-years-old were slightly more than half as common among the indigent as among the whole urban population, the elderly over seventy were almost four times as common. It was the rare worker who had a pension of any kind.³⁷ The old therefore had to continue working if at all possible, unless they had somehow managed to accumulate adequate savings, an unlikely feat indeed. The alternative was to seek support from their children or from charitable institutions. Many of the elderly who petitioned the Minister of the Interior for aid claimed that their sons would be supporting them, had conscription not taken them away.³⁸ The bureau de bienfaisance of the poor Arcis division remarked that without its intervention the old "would be reduced to sleeping on the pavement, or at best on stairways or in attics, [and] even this supposes that they would be permitted to do so."³⁹

³⁷ One such exception were the highly skilled workers at the Gobelins Tapestry Manufactory. In 1813 the administration was paying twelve pensions, ranging from 72 to 224 francs a year, the median being about 142 francs. "Etat des sommes à payer aux ouvriers de la Manufacture des Gobelins," 1813, AN, O2 217.

³⁸ AN, F15 2670-2691.

³⁹ Report to Conseil général des hospices, 28 Dec. 1808, AAP, FF 136, vol. 17, fol. 579. On the plight of old men, see also mayor of fourth arrondissement to Pr. Seine, 20 Oct. 1806, ADS, V bis 1 D2 4.

TABLE 14
 PROPORTION OF POPULATION REGISTERED AS INDIGENT
 IN THE TWELVE ARRONDISSEMENTS

Arrondissement:	Indigent Population in:	
	1801	1813-1817
first	12.2 %	8.6 %
second	10.6 %	8.4 %
third	9.2 %	12.2 %
fourth	10.2 %	10.5 %
fifth	19.9 %	13.2 %
sixth	16.0 %	17.4 %
seventh	21.5 %	14.4 %
eighth	43.3 %	23.3 %
ninth	33.2 %	16.8 %
tenth	10.7 %	11.7 %
eleventh	15.4 %	10.9 %
twelfth	39.7 %	23.2 %
ALL PARIS	20.4 %	14.7 %

SOURCE: Calculations for 1801 are based on the figures in Duquesnoy, Rapport sur les secours à domicile (Paris, an XI), pp. 38-39. Calculations for 1813-1817 are based on the figures presented by Neyrey, "Recherches sur les moyens d'améliorer le sort des indigens de la ville de Paris," 1819, AAP, FF 170.

Table 14 shows the geographic distribution of the indigent population among the capital's twelve arrondissements. The figures for 1801 come from an official census of the indigent made in the Year XI. Those for the late Empire were put forward in a plan for the reform of the poor relief system, presented in 1819 by Neirey, an employee at the Saint-Louis Hospital. He took the number of indigents registered in 1813, increased it slightly to compensate for population growth, and compared the results to the Paris population in 1817. His calculations are really only an educated estimate but (as we have seen) there is reason to doubt the accuracy of the 1801 census as well. Despite these limitations, the figures do give an idea of the relative distribution of the indigent in the city. Indeed, a comparison of table 14 with the published maps of the distribution of the poor in 1791, 1794, and 1796⁴⁰ shows that there was little change throughout the whole Revolutionary and Napoleonic period. The persistence of this general pattern is more important than any temporary fluctuations in the absolute number of indigents. Given the uncertainties of the statistics, it would be foolhardy to conclude that poverty had decreased in some parts of the city, as a comparison of the figures for 1801 and 1813-1817 might at first seem to indicate. What is more certain is that both sets of figures clearly

⁴⁰ Reinhard, Nouvelle histoire de Paris: La Révolution, pp. 234-35, 360-63.

prove that no arrondissement in Paris was untouched by poverty: at any time, in any arrondissement, it was rare for fewer than one in ten citizens to be registered as indigent. But the western part of the city, most identified with the bourgeoisie and the nobility (first, second, tenth, and eleventh arrondissements) had the fewest resident poor, while more indigents lived in the eastern half of the city, traditionally the home of artisans and workers. The workers' faubourgs Saint-Antoine (eighth arrondissement) and Saint-Marcel and Saint-Jacques (twelfth arrondissement) were clearly the poorest of all, with at least one in four inhabitants receiving poor relief.

More striking proof of the fundamental identity of workers and indigents comes from the list of occupations exercised by registered indigents. There were (as we have seen in table 11) a total of 66,616 adult indigents, of whom 24,766 were male and 40,036 female, with fewer than two thousand of unknown sex. The list of occupations which they exercised indicates that about one-quarter of them (18,100 or 27 percent) had no occupation (sans état). Indigents employed in male occupations account for 19,019 individuals (three-quarters of the men), and those in female occupations for another 14,354 individuals (one-third of the women). (There were also 924 people who gave their occupations as "blind.") There is some problem, however, since a significant number of indigents (14,209) are listed

as being of unknown occupation. There are two possibilities here: these either had no real occupation at all, or they merely failed to give one. If we assume the latter case, it is likely that almost all male indigents and over one-half of the women (say about twenty-four thousand) had an occupation. If, on the contrary, we assume that a significant part of this group did not have any occupation at all, even then most of the men but less than one-half of the women had one. What does this mean? The male indigent was usually a worker and not a loafer or vagabond. He had an occupation, but for one reason or another, (age, sickness, unemployment, a large family) it did not keep poverty at bay. The female indigent was much less likely to be a worker--indeed, less likely than the average female in the labouring population as a whole, 90 percent of whom had an occupation (see page 42). While the authorities in charge of poor relief would tend to be more tolerant of idle women than of idle men, it is unlikely that she got onto the rolls through sheer laziness. More probably, a female indigent without an occupation had simply never acquired the skills or personal contacts necessary to find work as a spinner, laundress, market-woman, or servant. Perhaps she was the mother of a family whose husband had fallen into economic difficulty or who had suddenly been widowed. She had never expected to earn a living and now had little choice but to seek poor relief.

TABLE 15
 PERCENTAGE OF WORK FORCE IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS
 REGISTERED FOR RELIEF IN 1813

<u>Fewer than 1 %</u>	<u>Fewer than 5 %</u>	<u>Fewer than 10 %</u>
butchers	hosiers	braziers
bakers	boot-makers	curriers
carpenters	hatters	tanners
cabinet-makers	cartwrights	engravers
watch-makers	potters	hairdressers
	tinsmiths	locksmiths
	blacksmiths	stonemasons
<u>Fewer than 20 %</u>	printers	
shoemakers	joiners	<u>Over 20 %</u>
cutlers	saddlers	nailers
masons	coopers	roofers
tailors		pavers
		plumbers
		weavers
		water-carriers

Certain occupations were obviously more likely to produce indigents than others. The most common occupations of male indigents in 1813 were day-labourer (2,439), shoemaker (1,373), errand-boy (978), street-seller (822), tailor (805), navy (505), and water-carrier (465). Among female indigents, the common occupations were street-seller (2,562), day-labourer (2,439), spinner (1,162), house-keeper (985), worker in lingerie (886), seamstress (676), reeler (588) and laundress (565). The majority of indigent workers were unskilled men and women, or were those who exercised a very common skill, like tailors, shoemakers or spinners. But these absolute numbers do not take into account the size of

the work force in each trade. Table 15 presents a crude attempt to estimate the proportion of men in certain occupations who were on the relief rolls. There is unfortunately so little information concerning female workers in general, as well as men in certain unskilled occupations (like day-labourers and gagne-deniers), that none of these could be included. In any case, the results are only approximations, since, although we know the number of indigents in each occupation in 1813, the estimated work force comes from combining the number of licenced artisans in 1805 with the number of wage-earners who carried a livret in 1807.⁴¹ Even so, the general pattern is evident. With certain inexplicable exceptions, the most highly-skilled (and therefore best-paid) workers turned up among the registered indigent more rarely than the unskilled or than those in seasonal occupations, like construction workers.

It is therefore quite impossible to argue that indigents were a lumpenproletariat, a class standing distinctly apart from Parisian workers and artisans. They were rather only the most disadvantaged among Parisian workers. They were most obviously the old, the infirm, and the female. A widow was almost certain to appear among them, especially if she had children to support; but almost any women might have to appeal for poor relief because of an

⁴¹See above, chapter one, n. 61 and n. 85.

inability to support herself. The inevitable but often unexpected tragedies of workers' lives--accident or death, but also age or even the birth of a child--put many on the relief rolls. Conscription has to be included among these, for it disrupted many families. The bureau de bienfaisance of the Finistère division noted in 1805 that the army "took away this year thirty young married men, from their wives, burdened with young children" and who therefore required poor relief.⁴² A contemporary believed that between 1804 and 1813 conscription decreased the number of married men on the relief rolls while increasing the number of married women, as well as the number of widows and widowers whose sons would normally have supported them.⁴³

It is, however, striking that many registered indigents were working men and women who were not old or sick and who did not have large and burdensome families. Their earnings were simply inadequate. A Parisian doctor described them in the Arcis division of central Paris, which "the labouring class inhabits . . . almost exclusively; and among these artisans, there are many who, unable to support their families with their labour, receive relief from the bureau de bienfaisance." (Lodging-houses were also full of

⁴²Report to Conseil général des hospices, 5 nivôse an XIV (26 Dec. 1805), AAP, FF 136, vol. 10, fol. 56-56bis.

⁴³Neirey, "Recherches sur les moyens d'améliorer le sort des indigents de la ville de Paris," 1819, AAP, FF 170.

indigent workers, but these, having no permanent residence, were ineligible for relief.)⁴⁴ But registered indigents by no means included all the Paris poor. As the mayor of the fourth arrondissement wrote to the four bureaux de bienfaisance under his authority, "You know, gentlemen, that there are individuals of the most unfortunate class who are not entered on the relief rolls."⁴⁵ Low wages is one explanation for the plight of the poor (whether they were registered indigents or not), and under-employment (the lack of regular full-time work) is another. For instance, in Chaillot, according to the local bureau de bienfaisance, there were some two hundred women, each the sole support of three or four children, who worked as casual labourers on the river (femmes de rivière) only two or three days a week.⁴⁶ But even the strongest, healthiest, most highly-skilled worker with a steady, well-paying job had to fear periods of temporary poverty--from unemployment.

⁴⁴ Nacquart, "Considérations," pp. 382-83.

⁴⁵ Mayor of fourth arrondissement to bureaux de bienfaisance, 29 germinal an XIII (19 April 1805), ADS V bis 1 D2, 3.

⁴⁶ "Copie de la lettre de M. Monroy, seul commissaire à Chaillot du bureau de bienfaisance des Champs-Élysées," 23 April 1813, ADS, VD6 119, no. 4.

IV

There is always, of course, a certain number of unemployed in a work force. In 1811 the Prefect of Police estimated that at any given time in Paris about six thousand workers had no job, "either because of their laziness or as a result of various fluctuations which occur continually in the large workshops and manufactories."⁴⁷ This figure seems somewhat low, especially in light of another estimate that there were usually five to six hundred shoemakers alone looking for work (that would be about 6 to 7 percent of all workers and artisans in the trade).⁴⁸ In addition, there were seasonal factors which affected employment. Almost all trades suffered two slow seasons every year, one in the summer (July and August) and another in the winter (January and February). The only exceptions to this general pattern were the food trades, with no significant slow season, the building trades, which were very active all summer but came to a virtual halt in winter, and the printing trades, which were busiest in winter and slowest in summer.⁴⁹

It was the winter slow-down which workers most dreaded.

⁴⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 June 1811, AN, F7 3835.

⁴⁸ "Etat des ouvriers existans sans ouvrage à Paris," [May 1811], AN, F15 2877-2878.

⁴⁹ Chambre de Commerce de Paris, Statistique de l'industrie à Paris, pp. 76-78. Although this study describes Parisian industry in 1848, the structure of the economy had not changed significantly since 1815.

"The cruel season of winter" inflicted the gravest hardships on thousands of working families who had "to struggle against the rigours of cold, a decrease in wages, and the high price of food."⁵¹ Increased unemployment therefore came at the worst possible time, and the curé of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont wrote that during the winter months around the Montagne-Sainte-Geneviève,

. . . there are few houses where one does not come across the heart-rending sight of whole families dying of hunger and cold. The relief of the bureaux de bienfaisance is evidently insufficient at a time when it is impossible to find any kind of work.⁵²

The winter season began to cast its gloomy shadow from the very end of summer. "September," scrawled one indigent, "time when one has to make some small stores of oil, candle, and fuel for the winter."⁵³

Seasonal unemployment was at least anticipated. On the other hand, unemployment as a result of economic crisis was unpredictable and of uncertain duration, and its consequences were therefore all the more disastrous. It is not possible to sketch the shifting fortunes of each individual trade over fifteen years. The pattern was not

⁵⁰The phrase is taken from the petition by widow Laurent to Min. Int., 26 Dec. 1809, AN, F15 2677.

⁵¹Lachaise, Topographie, p. 213.

⁵²Curé of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont to Min. Justice, 22 pluviôse an XI (11 Feb. 1803), AN, F7 3159.

⁵³Petition by Mme de Chavigny to Min. Int., Sept. 4811, AN, F15 2690: "7bre tems ou lon fait par nécessité quelques petites provisions huille chadelle et motte pour liver."

always the same in, say, construction as in furniture, jewelry, or cotton. Construction, highly dependent on government-financed public works, was virtually immune to economic depression. Furniture was highly sensitive to the effects of war and peace, since much of its production was destined for markets abroad. Jewelry catered to the whims of the Imperial Court and the city's wealthy classes. And cotton depended on the prosperity of its major consumer, the French peasantry. There were, however, periods of general crisis which disrupted the economy as a whole, and we are well informed about them. The Consulate was not without ups and downs--in fact, it began during a period of serious economic recession and unemployment inherited from the Directory--but, on the whole, it saw improvement and relative prosperity. The most serious crises occurred during the Empire.

The exact nature of the three major economic crises experienced by Napoleonic France is still a subject of historical debate. The first of these, which extended roughly from the Battle of Austerlitz (December 1805) to the Treaty of Tilsit (July 1807), appears to have been financial in origin; it was precipitated by the state's efforts to finance the war and by a loss of public confidence in the Bank of France and the Treasury. The crisis of 1810-1811, according to historian Odette Viennet, was "the first of the periodic general industrial crises of modern France."

British blockade (which interrupted imports of raw materials), industrial overproduction, and bankruptcies as a result of speculation were all factors. The crisis of 1812-1815 was primarily financial, but it was also in part a prolongation of the industrial crisis of 1810-1811 and was reinforced by the subsistence crisis of 1811-1812.⁵⁴ However, the causes of these crises are not at issue here. It is rather their impact on Parisian industry and particularly on the city's workers which is of interest. In this respect, the consequences may be summed up in one word: unemployment.

Although the available information concerning the unemployed is very useful, the statistics must be viewed with some skepticism. Official reports often give a precise number of "unemployed,"⁵⁵ but they rarely indicate the source of the figures. Most of the calculations were probably only educated guessing. In 1811, when the bureau de bienfaisance of the Finistère division needed a list of unemployed in the quarter, it consulted the local bakers

⁵⁴ Jean Bouvier, "A propos de la crise dite de 1805: les crises économiques sous l'Empire," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine 17 (1970):506-13. Odette Viennet, Napoléon et l'industrie française: la crise de 1810-1811 (Paris, 1947), pp. 106-52.

⁵⁵ Reports usually use the terms "sans travail" or "sans ouvrage" which literally mean "without work" and therefore apply to artisans, chambrelans, and wage-earners. The phrase "en chômage" which would apply to wage-earners was more rarely used, usually for factory workers. I have translated both as "unemployed."

to find out who had recently asked for credit.⁵⁶ The Prefect of Police at the same time collected his information from placement offices and from the police commissioner charged with supervising the workers! livrets⁵⁷ (undoubtedly more reliable sources than bakers), but he also attempted a more general measurement by checking on the number of items of small value pawned during the winter and early spring. (He found substantially more items pawned in 1811 than in the same four months of 1810.)⁵⁸

There are six extant reports on the unemployed. The first of these, on the situation in February 1806, is purely descriptive. It divides Parisian trades into three groups according to the degree of unemployment they suffered. Carriage-makers, saddlers, curriers, goldsmiths, spinners, and weavers had the most unemployed. The second group included jewellers, locksmiths, cutlers, chasers, and metal-workers. The third and least affected by the crisis included hatters, shoemakers, tailors, trimmers, and porcelain workers.⁵⁹ (A few months later, in what may be considered a supplement to this report, the Paris Chamber of Commerce wrote that "innumerable workers in Paris and

⁵⁶ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Finistère division, 16 May 1811, AAP, FF 96, r. 7.

⁵⁷ Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 1 May 1811, AN, F15 2877-2878.

⁵⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 7 May 1811, AN, F7 3835.

⁵⁹ "Rapport sur les ouvriers restés sans travail,"

its faubourgs" were out of work, principally jewellers, cabinet-makers, and workers in fancy-goods and hardware.)⁶⁰

A report on unemployment in December 1810 is even more vague. The police calculated that of sixty thousand male workers in the city, twelve thousand (20 percent) suffered from the crisis. Those most hard-hit were in the luxury trades: goldsmiths, jewellers, clockmakers, and workers in fancy-goods. Only five hundred cabinet-makers had no work, and cotton factories "are snatching up workers."⁶¹

There is much better information for January 1807. The first six months of 1806 had seen a resumption of economic activity, only to be followed in the last half of the year by stagnation and then "an almost generally absolute cessation" of production. The Prefect of Police estimated that there had been 75,700 workers in Paris at the beginning of 1806; some fifteen thousand had subsequently left, and of the 60,700 remaining, 42.8 percent were unemployed. "Service workers, like those in restaurants or wineshops, had the lowest rate of unemployment: 6.7 percent. Among workers producing "necessities," such as shoemakers, boot-makers,

Feb. 1806, AN, AF IV 942. See also, report by Min. Int. to Emperor, [1806], and report by Min. Int., 12 Feb. 1806, AN, F12 513, d.2.

⁶⁰ Minutes of Chambre de Commerce de Paris, 30 April 1806, ACCP, Registres des procès-verbaux.

⁶¹ Police bulletin, 27 Dec. 1810, AN, AF IV 1512. Viennet, *Napoléon et l'industrie*, p. 119, quotes this report but makes errors in the figures cited.

hatters, tailors, and tanners, there were only 20 percent who lacked work. Their goods had a market whatever the state of the economy, although the civil and military population of the capital had fallen somewhat because of the war and the economic crisis. Construction workers, cartwrights, coopers, furniture makers, and others constituted a group making "useful items," the purchase of which could be deferred by the consumer until better times. They therefore suffered greatly. Most unemployed construction workers left the city, but there was 50 percent unemployment among furniture workers and 40 percent among those in other assorted (and unlisted) occupations. The workers making "luxuries" were in the worst situation. Jewellers, goldsmiths, and watchmakers ("no orders, no exports") had an unemployment rate of 67.8 percent, and saddlers and carriage-makers had one almost as high at 62.5 percent. The Prefect treated workers in large manufactories separately. Although there was little unemployment in cotton (because of the ban on English imports), there was 33.4 percent unemployment in porcelain and pottery, 37.5 percent in wallpaper, 50 percent in buttons, and 33.4 percent in various other manufactories.⁶²

Three additional reports--for May 1811, April 1813, and December 1813--are more readily reducible to statistical

⁶²"Rapport concernant les principaux genres de fabrication qui, dans ce moment, éprouvent une stagnation plus sensible dans la ville de Paris," 22 Jan. 1807, AN, F7 4311 and F12 2467.

form than the above.⁶³ These give both the number of unemployed and the number available for work in each occupation. These figures, regrouped to permit easier comparison, are presented in tables 16, 17, and 18. But a note of caution is in order. Each report includes only those kinds of workers who were suffering unemployment, and not the work force as a whole. There are also certain obvious discrepancies between reports. The number of locksmiths in Paris is given as two thousand in one report and four thousand in another, and there are many other unexplained variations in some trades. Moreover, female labour is not mentioned in any of the reports, with the single exception of the one for December 1813, and even here women are included only in certain trades. This is an unfortunate omission, since women suffered from unemployment at least as much as men, and the plight of a family was all the more desperate if both husband and wife were out of work. A list of the unemployed in the Panthéon division, prepared in December 1799, gives the names of 195 individuals: 109 of them were men; among the women, 29 were widows, 31 had no designated marital status, and 26 were married to men also

⁶³ "Etat des ouvriers existans sans ouvrage à Paris," [1 May 1811], AN, F15 2877-2878. Table prepared by Pr. Pol. in April 1813, as reproduced in Durand, De la condition des ouvriers de Paris de 1789 jusqu'en 1841, avec quelques idées sur la possibilité de l'améliorer (Paris, 1841), pp. 107-08. (The original document is no longer to be found in the Archives.) "Notice sur les ouvriers sans ouvrage," [Dec. 1813], AN, F15 2763.

TABLE 16
UNEMPLOYMENT IN MAY 1811

	No. of workers	No. Unemployed	Percent
<u>Construction</u>			
masons	5,000	400	8.0
joiners	3,200	800	25.0
<u>Metal</u>			
copper planishers	500	400	50.0
locksmiths	4,000	1,200	30.0
<u>Furniture</u>			
cabinet-makers etc.	2,800	2,000	71.4
<u>Luxury goods</u>			
jewellers	2,400	1,900	79.2
chasers	800	300	37.5
gilders	800	500	62.5
goldsmiths	1,000	500	50.0
workers in china	900	300	33.3
workers in porcelain	600	300	50.0
workers in fancy-goods	2,400	2,000	83.3
<u>Clothing and footwear</u>			
tailors	3,500	1,000	28.6
hatters (fullers)	1,200	300	25.0
shoemakers	4,700	2,000	42.6
<u>Textiles</u>			
workers in cotton	4,000	2,000	50.0
spinners	2,600	600	23.1
hosiers	1,800	400	22.2
<u>Printing</u>			
letter casters	200	100	50.0
wood engravers	200	150	75.0
printers <u>en lettres</u>	4,000	600	15.0
printers on fabric	800	400	50.0
<u>Miscellaneous</u>			
saddlers	900	400	44.4
carriage-makers	1,500	300	20.0
wallpaper-makers	2,000	1,000	50.0
TOTAL	51,800	19,850	38.3

SOURCE: "Etat des ouvriers existans sans ouvrage à Paris," [1 May 1811], AN, F15 2877-2878.

TABLE 17
UNEMPLOYMENT IN APRIL 1813

	No. of Workers	No. Unemployed	Percent
<u>Construction</u>			
painters	1,200	300	25.0
<u>Metal</u>			
copper planishers, casters	600	400	66.7
locksmiths, makers of edge-tools, machinists	4,000.	1,200	30.0
<u>Furniture</u>			
cabinet-makers	2,800	2,000	71.4
<u>Luxury goods</u>			
jewellers	2,400	1,900	79.0
chasers	500	150	30.0
gilders	600	200	33.3
goldsmiths	1,000	700	70.0
workers in fancy-goods	11,000	3,000	27.3
potters	900	300	33.3
<u>Clothing and footwear</u>			
tailors	3,500	1,200	30.0
shoemakers, boot-makers	5,000	2,000	40.0
trimmers	800	400	50.0
<u>Textiles</u>			
workers in cotton	2,000	1,500	75.0
<u>Printing</u>			
letter casters	200	100	50.0
wood engravers	200	150	75.0
printers <u>en lettres</u>	2,500	600	24.0
printers <u>en taille douce</u>	200	100	50.0
printers on fabric	400	200	50.0
<u>Food</u>			
bakers	1,600	300	18.8
<u>Miscellaneous</u>			
saddlers, carriage-makers	800	400	50.0
wallpaper-makers	2,500	1,000	40.0
leather curriers	900	300	33.3
TOTAL	45,600	18,400	40.4

SOURCE: Report by Pr. Pol., April 1813, reproduced in [Durand], De la condition des ouvriers de Paris de 1789 jusqu'en 1841, avec quelques idées sur la possibilité de l'améliorer (Paris, 1841), pp. 107-08.

TABLE 18
UNEMPLOYMENT IN DECEMBER 1813

	No. of workers	Unemployed	
		No.	Percent
<u>Construction</u>			
joiners	2,400	800	33.3
painters	1,000	600	60.0
carpenters	800	320	40.0
<u>Metal</u>			
locksmiths	2,000	700	35.0
<u>Furniture</u>			
cabinet-makers	3,000	1,500	50.0
joiners	600	400	66.7
<u>Luxury goods</u>			
jewellers*	2,300	1,900	82.6
gilders and casters	1,000	500	50.0
goldsmiths	800	400	50.0
pottery	600	300	50.0
workers in porcelain and crystal	1,000	800	80.0
watchmakers	500	300	60.0
<u>Clothing and footwear</u>			
hatters*	2,000	800	40.0
boot-makers	800	300	37.5
trimmers*	5,000	350	7.0
wigmakers and hairdressers	1,800	800	44.4
<u>Textiles</u>			
cotton spinners and weavers*	8,000	7,200	90.0
gauze-makers	500	350	70.0
<u>Miscellaneous</u>			
saddlers, carriage- makers, etc.	4,000	500	12.5
TOTAL	38,100	18,820	49.4

*Including women.

SOURCE: "Notice sur les ouvriers sans ouvrage," [Dec. 1813], AN, F15 2763. (There are a number of tables included in this carton, but because of discrepancies I have relied on the descriptive "Notice" for all figures.)

on the list.⁶⁴

Even with such flaws, the information in the six reports constitutes a general picture of unemployment in Napoleonic Paris at six specific moments: February 1806, January 1807, December 1810, May 1811, April 1813, and December 1813. These dates include all three of the major economic crises of the period. It is evident that the total number of unemployed could reach staggering proportions ranging from 20 percent of the male work force in December 1810 to 42.8 percent in January 1807. The workers in the luxury trades, particularly jewellers and goldsmiths, were always the worst victims, usually one-half and sometimes four-fifths of them being out of work. Ironically, such highly-skilled and well-paid workers were the least likely to be found on the relief rolls in normal times. Furniture workers suffered almost as much as those in luxuries. Textile workers did not always do badly. In 1810 their industry thrived amidst general depression, although in the last years of the Empire this prosperity proved merely temporary and unemployment figures, especially in cotton, soared. Clothing and footwear was usually in the middle

⁶⁴ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 29 frimaire an VIII (20 Dec. 1799), AAP, FF 96, r. 3. These figures may be slightly inaccurate. The only way to distinguish men from women is that the latter are marked "fe" (femme) or "Vve" (veuve). The bureau itself counted only 192 people, but overlooked three pairs of two on one line.

range, with between 25 and 40 percent unemployed. Construction workers had relatively low unemployment (some categories like stonemasons and carpenters are never or rarely mentioned), except in the winter months when the building trade was usually in the doldrums. Workers in food and drink are almost never mentioned, except for bakers in April 1813 with a low figure of 18.8 percent unemployed. No report ever mentions unskilled workers like water-carriers, porters, and stevedores; yet they, too, must have suffered during periods of economic slowdown. Thus, if it was the unskilled who showed up most frequently on the relief rolls, workers who otherwise earned adequate wages were nonetheless always vulnerable to the ravages of economic crisis. And, it must be stressed, the last years of the Empire, from 1810, were a period of almost continuous crisis.

It was popularly and ironically said of the unemployed worker: "He goes walking, cane in hand, like a bourgeois of Paris."⁶⁵ The light-hearted tone of the saying obscures the grim realities of this unwelcome leisure. Louis, a hairdresser's assistant, commented on the plight of the man "who has tramped the streets all week [and] sold his possessions for food [manger la valeur de ses effets]." He

⁶⁵ Hauteville, Dictionnaire du Bas-langage, 1:120.

added: "You see assistant hairdressers serve masons, pavers, and exercise all occupations. . . ." ⁶⁶ This, of course, was the first solution for an unemployed worker, to find a job in some other occupation like Emmanuel Condé, who ordinarily made fancy-goods, but in May 1811 worked on the docks as a stevedore unloading salt. ⁶⁷ Unemployed hatters in July 1803 laboured on the harvest in the countryside around Paris, found work with local market-gardeners, or became water-carriers. Cabinet-makers in September of the same year worked for cartwrights or as joiners in the building trade. ⁶⁸ Every winter, "the number of water-carriers . . . is swollen by masons, errand-boys, coal-porters, market-porters who, unable to live any longer at their own occupation, take this one." ⁶⁹ And there was always the army: it was not patriotism but unemployment which prompted so many enrollments in early 1814. ⁷⁰

When there was no work to be found, "some live on their savings, like the young jewelry workers" unemployed

⁶⁶ Louis to Min. Justice, 28 June 1806, AN, BB18 788.

⁶⁷ Police report, [May 1811], AN, F7 6564, d. 2501.

⁶⁸ Reports by Pr. Pol., 30 messidor an XI and 6 vendémiaire an XII (19 July and 29 Sept. 1803), AN, F7 3831 and 3832.

⁶⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 Aug. 1807, AN, F20 134.

⁷⁰ "Note particulière," 24 Jan. 1814, AN, AF IV 1043. In the first few weeks of the year, 67 men had enlisted: "Almost all were unemployed workers."

in 1806.⁷¹ This could rarely provide more than the lowest level of bare subsistence, as the police learned in 1804 from their interrogation of François Léon, a tailor's assistant:

Question: "How have you lived for the last six months when, according to your own testimony, you have had no work?"

Answer: Off the small savings I had made, eating bread when I had only bread.⁷²

Those who had no cash savings often had some few personal belongings with a small value, and the Prefect of the Seine noted:

When the people begin to lack work or when its earnings are no longer in proportion to the cost of food, at first it sells or pawns its furniture, clothes, even its tools.⁷³

The Mont-de-Piété was a municipal pawn-shop which advanced a worker or petty merchant the cash he needed at a minimal rate of interest, and saved him from having recourse to usurers, "those insatiable leeches on poverty," who charged 4 to 7 percent a month. It made loans of as little as three francs, and three-fifths of all its loans were twelve francs or less.⁷⁴ The following items and the small size of the loans

⁷¹ "Rapport sur les ouvriers restés sans travail," Feb. 1806, AN, AF IV-942.

⁷² Interrogation of François Léon, 12 floréal an XII (2 May 1804), AN, F7 6435, d. 9064.

⁷³ Prefect of the Seine to Min. Int., n.d. [ca. March 1812], AN, F15 2885.

⁷⁴ Rapport au Conseil-général du Département de la Seine, au nom du Bureau des Améliorations, sur la nécessité morale et politique de fermer les maisons de prêts (Paris, n.d.).

for which they were pledged are typical; they are taken from a list of articles pawned by workers in the Amis de la Patrie division and redeemed by the municipal government to celebrate the birth of the King of Rome in 1811:⁷⁵

1 shirt: 3 francs
2 curtains: 4 francs
1 frock-coat: 6 francs
2 printed cotton dresses: 18 francs
1 sheet: 4 francs
1 skirt: 3 francs
1 wool blanket: 3 francs

Etienne Alexandre Ballet, an unemployed mason, explained to the police how he had managed to support his family for two weeks in 1802: "He lives from what he previously earned and from the profits made by his wife who sells fruit, that moreover he receives poor relief from the Gravilliers bureau de bienfaisance." The police had just arrested him for theft.⁷⁶ It was not uncommon for unemployed workers to turn to crime. Winter inevitably meant a higher incidence of theft in Paris, for "the rigours of the season raise the number of unfortunates, increase their needs, and diminish their means of existence."⁷⁷

⁷⁵ "Secours accordés aux habitans les plus nécessiteux de la Ville de Paris à l'occasion de la naissance du Roi de Rome," AN, O2 214.

⁷⁶ Report by police commissioner of Amis de la Patrie division, 7 pluviôse an X (27 Jan. 1802), APP, A/a 55, fol. 428.

⁷⁷ "Compte moral de la situation de la Division de la Butte des Moulins pendant les trois premiers mois de l'an 10," (Sept.-Dec. 1801), APP, A/a 113, fol. 423-29.

The police reported in October 1808: "Recently there have been night-time holdups by unemployed workers with no previous criminal record."⁷⁸ In October 1809 there were several incidents when groups of men and women used force to overcome the customs agents who tried to stop their smuggling dutiable items (like wine) into Paris across the custom barriers:

They said that they had to earn a living, that they became professional smugglers when their trades were not going well; that they had children to feed. . . .

The Prefect of the Seine cautiously counselled the police against trying to repress this illegal activity at the onset of winter and in a time of high unemployment.⁷⁹ But the criminality of Parisian workers ought not to be exaggerated. The available statistics do not indicate that they formed a particularly lawless class.⁸⁰ The typical unemployed worker did not choose to live by crime. If he could not find a job, and once he had exhausted his savings and pawned his belongings, there was only one choice left him. Like the ordinary indigent, he looked to poor relief, public works, and charity.

⁷⁸ Police bulletin, 6 Oct. 1808, AN, F7 3761.

⁷⁹ "Note pour Monsieur le Conseiller d'Etat Préfet de Police," 9 Oct. 1809, and Pr. Seine to Min. Pol., 25 Oct. 1809, AN, F7 6540, d. 1768.

⁸⁰ Tulard, Nouvelle histoire de Paris, pp. 266-68. Although Tulard draws conclusions which are the opposite of mine, the statistics he presents show that workers and artisans were responsible for only 65 percent of Parisian crime, petty merchants for 10 percent, and domestic servants for 8 percent.

CHAPTER FIVE

POOR RELIEF AND CHARITY

AnmãCordant quelque cecour vous rachetere, l'avie
a une honnete enditgante.¹

The poor relief, public works projects, and private charity available in Napoleonic Paris were more than attempts to alleviate urban poverty; they were an essential aspect of political and social relations in the city. There were not only a hundred thousand indigents regularly in receipt of poor relief, but also thousands more who used government-run hospitals and homes when sick or old, ate at soup-kitchens when bread was dear, took jobs on public works when unemployed, sent their children to charitable schools for education, or accepted alms when they could survive in no other way. There were surely few Parisian workers who at some point between 1800 and 1815 did not turn to the state or to charity for help. Unfortunately, we cannot know how they regarded the aid which they took. Did they accept it thanklessly as their due? Did they take it with reluctance and even shame

¹Petition by Widow Lacombe to Min. Int., March 1810, AN, F15 2680.

(which was how contemporary philanthropists expected the "worthy poor" to behave)? Did they resent the donor's generosity, or were they truly grateful for it? The only evidence available is surviving petitions for aid, and the deferential (and often grovelling) tone of these can hardly be taken at face value.

It is much easier to ascertain the attitudes of the men and women who distributed poor relief and charity. It would be churlish to ignore genuinely disinterested sentiments, whether derived from a Christian ethic or a purely secular social conscience, but it would also be naive to overlook less idealistic considerations, especially since they were so openly expressed. ("Everywhere, it is just to come to the help of the indigent," wrote a hospital administrator, "but in large cities . . . it is also a necessity commanded by political and social interests [que la politique et l'intérêt commandent]."² He was not so much arguing that society had a choice between poor relief and popular riot; as expressing his awareness that relief and charity could be an effective social bond serving to assert and reinforce the political and social hegemony of the ruling classes. Thus, the Minister of the Interior was warned by a subordinate against giving an independent administrative council too preponderant a rôle in the distribution of relief,

²Neirey, "Recherches sur les moyens d'améliorer le sort des indigens de la ville de Paris," 1819, AAP, FF 170.

since "it is in the interest of the Government and its policy to draw to itself the gratitude of the poor and to attach to itself this considerable portion of society."³ An officer of the Société Philantropique de Paris, an influential charitable organization, addressing the membership in 1803, remarked that their free medical clinics "establish relations between those who are well-off and those who live by daily labour, in that the former provide at little cost [to themselves] an essential service and the latter are bound by gratitude."⁴ Twelve years later he explained how charity fit into his general social philosophy. Speaking of "the last class of the people, that of workers and day labourers without property," he commented:

Their happiness does not come from any particular system of government: work when they are fit; relief prudently distributed when they are temporarily destitute or sick; free instruction to enable them to work intelligently at their occupation; religious feelings which are for them an incentive to practice virtue and a source of consolation in their sorrows; that is what maintains in them a love of order, pure emotions, and submission to the laws. . . . Gentlemen, private charity is at this time the most effective way to serve the public interest. The people will be calm and content with its position; it will respect those whom talent or wealth have placed in a higher rank. . . .⁵

But if relief was both necessary and useful, it was not to be lavished on the poor. Authorities always attempted to

³Untitled and undated note, May 1801, AN, F15.1883.

⁴Report by Deleuze, 11 frimaire an XII (3 Dec. 1803), in Soc. phil., Rapports . . . an XI, p. 18.

⁵Report by Deleuze, 13 May 1815, in Soc. phil., Rapports . . . 1814, p. 18. Emphasis mine.

discern the truly deserving indigent and, wherever possible, to encourage him to be self-sufficient rather than totally dependent on the state. The views of Adrien Duquesnoy-- politician, industrialist, and administrator of poor relief-- reflected contemporary progressive thought. Duquesnoy condemned indiscriminate charity and alms-giving and instead emphasized the value of work for the indigent, for in work lay "all his morality, all his good citizenship, his independence, and his existence." Too much relief discouraged working, so that:

. . . to increase relief is to increase the poor; they accustom themselves too easily to receiving, to loafing in the hope of being nourished by the state without working; to give alms is not to do good: that is a truth that has become commonplace.

He recommended that only the very young, the old, and the infirm receive financial help. The able-bodied poor should be found jobs in private workshops or, if such jobs were unavailable, in police-supervised public works.⁶

Duquesnoy's suggestions were in fact unattainable ideals, for Parisian poverty could not be banished by providing a few jobs. Mendicity, hunger, sickness, invalidism, long-term and temporary unemployment, and all the other aspects of indigence were complex and appalling problems. The following pages recount the ways in which Napoleonic officials and private citizens tried to meet the challenge.

⁶Duquesnoy, Rapport, pp. 4-5.

No one believed it possible to abolish poverty, but there were serious attempts to give at least some help to its most wretched victims. The government sought to repress begging, to set up an efficient and effective system of poor relief, and to provide special aid and public works for the unemployed. Philanthropists created a number of organizations to care for those whom they considered the most deserving, especially women, children, the sick, and the elderly. The resources made available for these good works unfortunately fell short of what was needed, and all the efforts amounted to a series of skirmishes rather than a coordinated and coherent campaign of attack. But they were at least undertaken in a spirit of hope and zeal, with the intention of helping, uplifting, and moralizing the poor.

II

Beggars were the most visible of the poor, whose presence in the streets of Paris was considered an annoyance, an eyesore and a public scandal. The police made a distinction between begging "as a way of loafing" and begging by the old, invalid, or absolutely indigent who had no other alternative. The former was a crime to be repressed, the latter "a misfortune which calls for the greatest concern." There were state homes (hospices) for the old and invalid (principally La Salpêtrière for women and Bicêtre for men) and public works for the able-bodied.

Loafers, however, were a special case. Public works were unsuitable for feckless and unwilling labourers, who were unaccustomed to heavy work and required constant supervision, and spinning was equally impractical for female loafers. The poorhouses existed for them.⁷ The police generally adhered to the principle that "when it is recognized that an individual does not work and has no means of support, it is advisable to remove him from society, lest he turn to theft."⁸

Paris had a poorhouse which dated from the Old Régime, just north of the city in Saint-Denis. The police used it to incarcerate not only beggars of all kinds, but also criminals, prostitutes, and even abandoned children. According to investigations made in 1804, it was overcrowded (with a thousand people living in accommodations meant for six hundred), food was in short supply, the drinking water was polluted, and the kitchens were insanitary. Infectious diseases spread rapidly, and the death rate rose alarmingly whenever the resident population increased.⁹ The Minister

⁷"Observations générales sur la répression de la mendicité et projet de décret," 6 thermidor an XII (25 July 1804), AN, F7 3001, d. 4. Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., 24 Sept. 1806, AN, F15 106.

⁸Police bulletin, 2 April 1807, AN, AF IV 1499 and F7 3755.

⁹"Rapport de la commission du Conseil d'Etat, chargée de l'examen des détenus de la maison de répression à St. Denis," 13 prairial an XII (2 June 1804), and report by Pr. Pol., 6 thermidor an XII (25 July 1804), AN, F7 4341, d. 4.

of the Interior therefore ordered the construction of a new poorhouse for Paris at some distance from the city, in Villers-Cotterets in the Oise department.¹⁰ Saint-Denis was reserved for vagabonds, who were criminals under the authority of the Prefect of Police. Indigent beggars, who came under the authority of the Conseil Général des Hospices (which administered poor relief), were to be locked up in Villers-Cotterets.¹¹ Conditions were undoubtedly far better there than at Saint-Denis, but it was nonetheless still a prison.¹² The Minister of the Interior wrote in 1812 that except for the infirm, everybody could find work and that therefore "beggars must be considered as more or less at fault. . . ."

Poorhouses should therefore be considered less as asylums than as houses of repression: the beggar must fear to be locked up in them; he must be less comfortable there than men of the lowest classes of society at home. . . . he must be brought back to the habit of working by [seeing] the difference in the fate of those who work and those who do not.¹³

But repression could not eradicate begging in the capital. One writer claimed in 1811 that "the streets of Paris have

Report by Conseil de salubrité, prairial an XII (May-June 1804), AN, F16 1045. Min. Int. to Pr. Pol., 13 pluviôse an XII (3 Feb. 1804), Pr. Seine to Pr. Pol., 8 ventôse an XII (28 Feb. 1804), Pr. Seine to Min. Int., same date, AN, F15 105.

¹⁰ See the decree of 27 floréal an XII (17 May 1804), and other documents relating to Villers-Cotterets, in AN, F15 105.

¹¹ Note by Min. Int., n.d., AN, F15 1961.

¹² Untitled report by Aubrial, 25 May 1810, AN, F7 3133 and F16 1045.

¹³ Instruction sur les dépôts de mendicité (Paris, 1812).

been cleansed of that crowd of vagabonds," but then went on to admit that, forbidden to solicit alms (by the Imperial Decree of 5 July 1808), beggars had merely adopted indirect ways of attracting public attention and pity, like singing a song or holding a bawling child.¹⁴ The Prefect of Police reported that same year that there was already no more room at either Saint-Denis or Villers-Cotterets.¹⁵ The economic crisis in the last years of the Empire underlined the extent of the problem.

A home for a thousand beggars will always be far too small for the Department of the Seine; this year's scarcity [a reference to the grain crisis of 1812], by increasing the needs of the indigent class, makes us even more aware of this inadequacy.¹⁶

Beggars were only a relatively minor problem compared to the hundred thousand indigents who required poor relief. There were forty-eight local bureaux de bienfaisance (one in each division of the city) to administer the distribution of this relief. These had evolved out of the Church-organized charity in the thirty-three parishes of Old-Régime Paris, taken over by the municipal government in 1791. In 1801 the Agence de Secours which supervised the bureaux passed under the direct authority of the Conseil Général d'Administration des.

¹⁴[Jouy], L'Hermite de la Chaussée-d'Antin, ou Observations sur les moeurs et les usages parisiens au commencement du XIX^e siècle, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1813), pp. 40-41.

¹⁵Report by Pr. Pol., 22 Aug. 1811, AN F7 3136.

¹⁶"Note sur la mendicité dans Paris," [Sept. 1812], AN, F7 3688/23.

Hospices de Paris, which ran the city's hospitals and homes. A central committee was also set up in each of the twelve arrondissements, made up of two members from each divisional bureau and under the presidency of the mayor of the arrondissement. This system was unchanged until 1816, when the divisional bureaux were abolished and the arrondissement committees enlarged.¹⁷

The eight commissioners who composed each bureau de bienfaisance were responsible for keeping the rolls of deserving indigents and seeing to the distribution of relief. There was a persistent concern that loafers and cheaters would succeed in tricking the bureaux and manage to get poor relief. In a circular which it sent out in 1805, the central committee of the first arrondissement expressed its fears that large numbers of vagabonds from the provinces were putting a strain on the already insufficient funds available for Paris. It urged closer cooperation between all forty-eight bureaux, including the exchange of information on indigents who changed address within the city, in order to keep new-comers and sham claimants off the rolls. It also asked the government for more repressive measures against

¹⁷ Jean Imbert, Le droit hospitalier de la Révolution et de l'Empire (Paris, 1954), pp. 225-55. Lanzaç de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 5:1-60, 105-12. Ordonnance du Roi et arrêté du Ministre de l'Intérieur, relatifs aux secours à domicile dans Paris (Paris, 1817). The papers of the Conseil Général, which include many reports from the Agence de Secours, survive in a series of bound volumes, AAP, FF 136.

able-bodied beggars and vagabonds. Only domiciled indigents, well-behaved and of good reputation, were worthy of poor relief.¹⁸

Ordinary relief was either permanent (given year round to registered indigents) or temporary (granted to those not usually on the rolls, like the ill or the unemployed). There was also extraordinary relief. This might be divided among a large number of indigents, to compensate for an especially severe winter or an economic crisis, or it might consist of special funds allocated to a particular charity or a school for poor children. It might also be a small cash award to an individual in distress, like the twenty-five francs given to the widow of Jean Bonnet, a water-carrier who drowned in 1808 and left behind two young children.¹⁹ The minutes of several bureaux de bienfaisance are extant, and these provide an intimate picture of the day-to-day work involved in the administration of poor relief.²⁰ Each bureau met at regular weekly or monthly intervals to conduct its business. In some districts, the local indigent appeared at these sessions to present their requests in person. In others, each commissioner looked after his share of indigents and the bureau as

¹⁸Extrait du Registre des procès-verbaux du Comité central de bienfaisance du 1^{er} Arrondissement: séance du 20 ventôse an 13 (N.p., n.d.).

¹⁹Pastoret, Rapport, pp. 349-50. Report to Conseil Général, 12 Oct. 1808, AAP, FF 136, vol. 17, fol. 179.

²⁰All are in the AAP, except for the minutes of the comité central du premier arrondissement, in the ADS.

a whole made only general policy decisions. The commissioners therefore held a key position as intermediaries between the state and its poorest citizens. They were broadly representative of the Parisian bourgeoisie, with a heavy proportion of retail merchants, proprietors, and rentiers among them,²¹ and they undoubtedly brought the skills and prejudices of their class to bear on a job considered to be "honourable and irksome at the same time."²²

Bread was the principal expense of the bureaux, and the only relief which most indigents received on a regular basis. In the Plantes division, for example, the local bureau summoned the indigent every month to receive their bread cards. Thus, each indigent received at one time his cards for the whole month, which he could redeem whenever he wished at any one of three local bakeries. The bureau decided in 1809 that the aged, the infirm, and households with three or more children were entitled to twelve pounds of bread every month in the winter and other indigents to only eight pounds. These amounts were cut down during the summer, and there were some registered indigents who received no bread at all.²³ In addition to bread, the bureaux made frequent grants of

²¹There are membership lists available for thermidor an XII (July-Aug. 1804), AN, F15 2741.

²²Pr. Seine to Min. Int., [12 ventôse an XII (3 March 1804)] AN, F15 1917.

²³Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Plantes division, 7 Sept. 1808 and 19 Oct. 1809, AAP, FF 96, r. 5.

méat (usually reserved for the sick or elderly), medicine, articles of clothing (like shirts, stockings, or clogs), cots and straw mattresses, sheets and blankets, fuel in the winter, layettes for the new-born, and flour for wet-nurses to make gruel. Cash grants were rare; as one bureau was reminded, "bread, food, and clothing provide for real needs; cash distribution lacks this advantage" for money was likely to be carelessly spent by the ordinary indigent.²⁴ It was limited to monthly pensions of three francs for the blind and indigents over seventy-five and six francs for octogenarians.

The bureaux de bienfaisance provided the poor with more than ~~the~~. Aside from supporting charitable schools for indigent children (discussed later in this chapter), the most important service was medical care. There were health officers attached to every bureau and, after 1806, at least two doctors and two surgeons. They received no fees for the wearying visits which they made (as many as sixteen a day, according to the mayor of the fourth arrondissement) to the top-story flats and rooms of the indigent sick. In the tenth arrondissement, a group of doctors and surgeons organized a "committee for free consultations" which received the sick at a central clinic every Thursday, while the bureaux de bienfaisance supplied the drugs they needed. Some had

²⁴Administration des hospices to bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, in minutes of bureau, 15 May 1811, AAP, FF 96, lr. 8.

reservations about the usefulness of this kind of medical service, like the bureau of the Muséum division, which believed that care was inadequate for the seriously ill, who were better-off in the hospitals where they might get the close attention and medicines they required. There was, however, an obvious need for medical care: the bureau of the Panthéon division reported in 1808 that during a single year it had seen to the treatment of 1692 indigents in their own homes. The doctors were assisted by nuns, who distributed drugs and bouillon to the sick, although they were strictly forbidden by law from treating illness or prescribing medicine.²⁵

The bureaux de bienfaisance also issued "certificates of indigence" which were much sought after by Parisian workers, for they exempted the holder from personal taxes and burial fees. The Prefect of the Seine believed that the certificates were given out too readily, even to those who did not ordinarily qualify as indigents, but the central committee of the first arrondissement argued in 1805 that the charge for burial was "in fact far beyond the means not

²⁵ Mayor of fourth arrondissement to Pr. Seine, 19 messidor an XIII (8 July 1805), ADS, V bis 1 D2 3. Bureau de bienfaisance of Muséum division to comité central of fourth arrondissement, in minutes of latter, 24 germinal an X (14 April 1802); AAP, FF 162, r. 1. Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Plantes division, 10 Sept. 1806 and 4 Dec. 1808, AAP, FF 96, r. 5, and of Panthéon division, 7 May 1808, FF 96, r. 6. "Rapport des travaux du Bureau des consultations médicales et du Conseil de salubrité du dixième arrondissement," [ca. 1808], AN, F13 1543A.

only of an indigent in the full sense of the word, but even of a worker in difficult circumstances or with a family. . . ."²⁶ Another occasional function of the bureaux was to recruit able-bodied poor for available jobs. For instance, the call went out in June 1808 for unskilled labourers to work at the Montfaucon garbage-dump, in November 1810 for street sweepers, in July 1811 for workers to sew uniforms at a special workshop on the rue de la Harpe, and in April 1812 for tailors.²⁷

It was perhaps inevitable that the commissioners began to take an interest in the morals and religious beliefs of the indigent. In the ninth arrondissement, the four bureaux actively promoted the "restoration of morals" by encouraging civil and religious marriage among many who had formed "illicit relationships . . . in unhappy times when the principles of morality were apparently forgotten."²⁸ There were occasional charges that some bureaux discriminated

²⁶Pr. Seine, as quoted by mayor of fourth arrondissement to bureaux de bienfaisance, 22 nivôse an X (12 Nov. 1802), ADS, V bis 1 D2 2. Minutes of comité central de bienfaisance of first arrondissement, 16 floréal an XIII (6 May 1805), ADS, V bis 8 Q1 1.

²⁷Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 29 June 1808, 14 Nov. 1810, 10 July 1811, and 29 April 1812, AAP, FF 96, r. 6 and r. 8; Muséum division, 14 Nov. 1810 and 6 May 1812, AAP, FF 162, r. 2; Plantes division, 18 July 1811, AAP, FF 96, r. 9; comité central of fourth arrondissement, AAP, FF 162, r. 1.

²⁸Mayor of ninth arrondissement to Min. Justice, 25 April 1806, AN, BB16 751.

against non-Catholics or against those who did not practice their religion, and in 1803 the police commissioner of the Fontaine-Grenelle division complained: "I have no voice in the relief committee. The curé dominates it. . . ." An investigation refuted the charge,²⁹ but it is clear that the clergy and the bureaux often developed an intimate working relationship. The Conseil Général des Hospices showed its concern when it affirmed that poor relief was "due equally to all indigents of whatever religion they might be" and explicitly forbade the use of any public funds to clothe children for their First Communion.³⁰ Yet the bureau of Finistère division (which had named the curé of Saint-Médard an honorary member) chose to ignore the rule and used part of the extraordinary funds made available in 1811 on account of high prices and severe unemployment to buy clothing for young communicants in the parish.³¹

²⁹Police commissioner to Pr. Pol., 27 brumaire an XII (19 Nov. 1803) and a secret report on the case to Min. Justice, n.d., AN, F7 6379, d. 7733. A mother and daughter had attempted suicide, and rumour had it that the local bureau had refused them relief because they were not practicing Catholics. A couple of years earlier, it was said that the bureau of the Muséum division had denied relief to a man whose children were not baptised, but the results of the police investigation are not extant, AN, F7 6321, d. 6753.

³⁰Report to Conseil général, 3 floréal an XIII (23 April 1804) and decree adopted, n.d., AAP, FF 136, vol. 8, fol. 298-301.

³¹Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Finistère division, 30 May 1811 and 30 Dec. 1812, AAP, FF 96, r. 7.

Throughout the Napoleonic period, the bureaux de bienfaisance struggled to do their job with funds that were clearly inadequate for the task. In the Year X (1801-1802), the only year for which there are complete statistics available, the bureaux spent a total of 756,000 francs, which amounted to only about 6F,80 for every registered indigent.³² The commissioners of the Panthéon division, which was probably the poorest in the city, complained in 1806 that they were incapable of meeting the most basic needs of their population. Total expenditures for the division in 1809, an ordinary year with no unusual distress, amounted to a mere 5F,24 for every indigent, which included an average grant of 20.7 pounds of bread to each.³³ When economic crisis aggravated the problem, all the bureaux cried out for more money. The central committee of the fourth arrondissement reported during the grain crisis of 1801-1802 that "the long winter and the high price of grain compel poor workers to ask for relief." It was "the generally expressed wish" of commissioners in the eleventh arrondissement that allocations be doubled, and the four bureaux in the fifth arrondissement ran short of money and had to order a partial suspension of Bread distribution. Such difficulties were general

³²Duquesnoy, Rapport, pp. 39, 51.

³³Letter to hospital administrators, 19 Dec. 1806, in minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, AAP, FF 96, r. 6. The bureau spent a total of 42,000 francs and distributed 41,419 four-pound loaves of bread to 8018 indigents in 1809: minutes, 1 Aug. 1810.

throughout Paris.³⁴ In December 1805 seven bureaux pleaded the cause of "divisions whose indigent population is composed of workers whose arms are paralysed by economic conditions."³⁵ In May 1811 the Prefect of the Seine agreed to make available extra funds "above all for the relief of a class of individuals who do not usually ask for public assistance but sollicit it now because they are forced to it by the suspension of work and the impossibility of finding a job."³⁶

The government was usually ready with extraordinary relief in such circumstances, although this, too, was clearly insufficient. The Minister of the Interior granted extra funds in July 1800, but the bureau of the Panthéon division found that there were at least 1,500 people to share in its allocation of 1,200 francs, and the bureau of the Observatoire division, receiving only twelve or thirteen sous for every indigent, felt obliged to limit its extraordinary relief to

³⁴ Minutes of comité central of fourth arrondissement, 25^e ventôse an X (16 March 1802), AAP, FF 162, r. 1. Mayor of fifth arrondissement to Pr. Seine, 4 frimaire an X (25 Nov. 1801), and to Agence executive des secours, 23 ventôse an X (12 Feb. 1802), ADS, V bis 10 D2 1. Mayor of eleventh arrondissement to Conseil général, 8 nivôse an X (29 Dec. 1801), ADS, V bis 6 D2 16.

³⁵ Report to Conseil général, 5. nivôse an XIV (26 Dec. 1805), AAP, FF 136, vol. 10, fol. 56-56bis. These were the bureaux of Finistère, Observatoire, Panthéon, Montreuil, Arcis, Lombard, and Nord divisions.

³⁶ Pr. Seine, as quoted in minutes of comité central of fourth arrondissement, 11 May 1811, AAP, FF 162, r. 1.

the aged, the seriously infirm, and parents with five children under twelve.³⁷ The Emperor was more generous with a grant of 450,000 francs in March 1806. After special contributions were made to various private charities and to the aged and blind, over 300,000 francs remained to be divided among the forty-eight bureaux de bienfaisance. The government issued strict instructions on how it was to be spent: one-half on clothing and bedding to be lent (and not given) to the poor; one-fifth on bread and meat, or to be distributed in cash; one-tenth on gifts of clothing; one-tenth to redeem items pawned by the poor; and one-tenth on tools for workers who needed them. The bureaux were also reminded that there were many unemployed who could use a small capital sum to buy fruit, used linen, or other articles which they could then peddle, or required pails and shovels for jobs on public works. But how was it possible to do all this with the sum available? The poverty-stricken twelfth arrondissement received as its total share less than 50,000 francs, which amounted to about three francs for every registered indigent.³⁸ Moreover, the government was far too slow to

³⁷ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 8 thermidor an VIII (27 July 1800), AAP, FF 96, r. 3; and Observatoire division, 9 thermidor an VIII (28 July 1800), AAP, FF 96, r. 4.

³⁸ Conseil général d'administration des hospices de Paris: séance du 19 mars 1806 (N.p., n.d.) and Le Conseil général des hospices et les maires de Paris, présidents des comités centraux de bienfaisance à Messieurs des bureaux de bienfaisance (N.p., n.d.). These two pamphlets give slightly different information on how the grant was to be spent. For division of the total sum among the forty-eight bureaux, see minutes of the Conseil général, 12 March 1806, AN, F15 1962.

distribute its grant. The Observatoire division received its first installment--and this was only one-fifth of the total due it--only in early June.³⁹

The Emperor gave the forty-eight bureaux another 300,000 francs in extraordinary relief to meet their needs in 1811. In early 1812 he authorized the expenditure of an extra 100,000 francs a month, as well as a special distribution of bread, while the Empress granted 12,000 francs a month to the blind and to indigents over seventy-five, so that total expenditure on extraordinary relief in that year amounted to 888,112 francs.⁴⁰ The dynasty also marked important events with lavish shows of charity. There was a distribution of meat, fowl, and wine to celebrate the Imperial Coronation in December 1804,⁴¹ and when the Empress announced her pregnancy in late 1810, Napoleon redeemed shirts pawned by the poor.⁴² On the occasion of the birth of the King of Rome in March 1811, there was a special grant for extra bread distributions and almost 50,000 francs for the redemption of pawned "linen, clothes, blankets, tools, or other articles of primary necessity."⁴³

³⁹Minutes of the bureau de bienfaisance of Observatoire division, 3 June 1806, AAP, FF 96, r. 4.

⁴⁰Pastoret, Rapport, p. 369. Minutes of comité central of first arrondissement, 4 Feb. 1812 and 20 March 1812, ADS, V bis 8, Q1 2.

⁴¹Pinkerton, Recollections, 2:128.

⁴²Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Plantes division, 10 and 20 Dec. 1810, AAP, FF 96, r. 5.

⁴³Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Plantes division,

III

But the Napoleonic government saw poor relief as only a partial solution to the problem of poverty in the capital. While relief was for the deserving poor, the able-bodied should be put to work. The regime is still celebrated for its public works, but it also furnished spinning to women and sustained Parisian industry (and thus employment) with a programme of loans and state purchases. Employed workers were likely to be contented workers. The Prefect of Police described the Ourcq Canal as "a resource which by giving [Parisian workers] the means to survive during the winter assures that they remain calm."⁴⁴ And the Minister of the Treasury later recalled that when in 1811 a prominent cotton manufacturer (who was almost certainly Richard-Lenoir) applied for a state loan to keep his mills going, "his warnings concerning the tranquillity of a great faubourg" were an important influence on Napoleon and the police.⁴⁵

Napoleon's public works are all too often described as if they had no purpose other than job creation. Paul Brousse, a prominent politician during the Third Republic, even referred to them as "national workshops," thus drawing a

28 March and 25 April 1811, AAP, FF 96, r. 5. "Secours accordé aux habitants les plus nécessiteux de la Ville de Paris à l'occasion de la naissance du Roi de Rome," AN, O2 214.

⁴⁴ Report by Pr. Pol., 17 Dec. 1806, AN, F7 3124.

⁴⁵ Jacques Mollien, Mémoires d'un ministre du Trésor public 1780-1815, 3 vols. (Paris, 1898), 3:21-25.

parallel to the socialist experiment of 1848.⁴⁶ It is significant, however, that contemporaries more often called public works "les embellissements de Paris" (the improvements made to Paris). Napoleon did not need the incentive of hungry and potentially restless workers to undertake construction projects, for he was eager to leave his mark on the capital by building or improving streets, squares, canals, quays, palaces, markets, and slaughter-houses, and by erecting magnificent monuments to his military triumphs. But the fact remains that public works demanded labour. It appears that even before Napoleon seized power there were Parisian workers who hoped that the general, just back from campaigning in Egypt, might persuade the Directory to begin construction of a canal, which would create digging jobs for them.⁴⁷ This expectation persisted that Napoleon would assume personal responsibility for assuring them work during periods of unemployment.⁴⁸

Outdoor construction usually came to a stop at the onset of winter, but from the beginning the Consular Government took steps to make work for the unemployed with programmes

⁴⁶ Paul Brousse, Le Consulat du 18 brumaire à Iena, vol. 6, part 1 of Histoire socialiste (1789-1900), ed. by Jean Jaurès (Paris, n.d.), p. 231.

⁴⁷ Report by military police, 23-24 vendémiaire an VIII (15-16 Aug. 1799), AN, 284 AP 14, d. 2.

⁴⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 2 fructidor an XI (20 Aug. 1803), AN, F7 3831.

of quarrying, demolition, and construction. Men were also hired to clear the streets of ice and snow. These projects usually gave jobs to two or three thousand men every winter.⁴⁹ Moreover, public works became increasingly important during the Empire, even in the summertime. For example, when there was not enough work in early May 1809 for the usual influx of construction workers, a situation which led to "some slight agitation by carpenters fomented by anonymous letters. . . ." the Minister of Police sought assurances from the Minister of the Interior that public works would soon be well underway so as to provide employment and avert public disorder.⁵⁰ Thousands of men were evidently becoming dependent on government-funded construction. The following figures give the number working in and around Paris during the first week of every

⁴⁹ "Compte des opérations du Bureau central du canton de Paris pendant le mois de nivôse an 8" (Dec. 1799-Jan. 1800), AN, BB3 91. Lanzaç de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 6:325-27. Minutes of Conseil d'administration, 6 frimaire an X (27 Nov. 1801) in "Subsistance: Registre des opérations de l'an 10 (1802) et des suites qu'elles ont eues pendant les années postérieures," AN, F11* 3048. Cambacérès to Napoleon, 14, 15, 16, and 21 Jan. 1802, in Cambacérès: Lettres inédites à Napoléon 1802-1814, ed. by Jean Tulard, 2 vols. (Paris, 1973), 1:24-32. "Notes sur les travaux publics et de secours [word illegible] pendant l'hiver de l'an XI," AN, F13 715. "Du 27 fructidor an 11: Observations sur les moyens d'employer pendant l'arrière saison et dans le cours de l'hiver prochain les ouvriers qui se trouvent sans occupation," 14 Sept. 1803, AN, F13 715.

⁵⁰ Min. Pol. to Min. Int., 6 May 1809, AN, F15 2877-2878. Reply, 13 May 1809, AN, F7 6528, d. 1580. Police bulletins, 14-15 and 17 May and 30 June 1809, AN, F7 3763, AF IV 1505 and 1506, respectively. Cambacérès to Napoleon, 3 May 1809, in Lettres inédites, 2:658-59. The quotation is from Cambacérès.

month in 1813.⁵¹ They include workers engaged by the Department of Roads and Bridges and others by the Minister of the Interior on canals, monuments, and public works. There is little information on men hired by the Prefect of the Seine, but he usually employed a work force which varied from 1,500 to 4,000 men, if we can judge from scattered records for other years. Unless some projects had passed out of his jurisdiction (which is a possibility), the following totals probably ought to be increased by about 50 percent to account for them:

January	3,039	men
February	2,634	"
March	2,821	"
April	4,462	"
May	5,450	"
June	5,936	"
July	6,581	"
August	7,144	"
September	7,076	"
October	5,565	"
November	4,431	"
December	2,818	"

It is striking how many men the government employed during the summer--perhaps one-third of the city's construction workers. But during the winter, the number of available jobs, could hardly have been sufficient to meet the demand for work when so many men in so many occupations were unemployed.

It is therefore apparent that public works were of limited value as a form of relief. Most of the men hired during the summer were not native Parisians but migrant

⁵¹These statistics are compiled from the charts in AN, F13 210A-210B.

labourers who came⁵² for the building season and left with their savings in the autumn.⁵² Most construction was impossible to carry out during the winter cold and the only work available then, was usually navvying and demolition. It was difficult to provide enough of this, so that in December 1806 the Prefect of Police expressed his concern that the Ourcq Canal, which hired the able-bodied poor in summer, could not use all the professional navvies unemployed in the winter, to say nothing of other unemployed.⁵³ In any case, such work was hardly suitable for the unemployed jeweller or shoemaker, who was unused to heavy physical labour.⁵⁴ The men hired as navvies on the Saint-Maur Canal in 1811, and paid according to the amount of digging they did, could not manage to earn enough to feed themselves; yet the Emperor categorically rejected a proposal to pay them a fixed minimum daily wage.⁵⁵ Only in 1813 could navvies choose between a daily wage of 1F,25 (a low wage for a man) and a rate of 40 centimes for every cubic metre dug and loaded.⁵⁶ Nor was this sort of work particularly appealing to most men.

⁵²Pr. Seine to Min. Int., n.d. [March 1812], AN, F15 2885.

⁵³Report by Pr. Pol., 17 Dec. 1806, AN, F7 3124.

⁵⁴Report by Deleuze, 27 March 1817, in *Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1816*, p. 22.

⁵⁵Directeur-général des Ponts et chaussées to Min. Int., 21 May 1811, AN, F13 208.

⁵⁶Maître des requêtes to public works architects, 5 Jan. 1814, AN, F13 771.

Workers on the Saint-Maur Canal developed hernias² and fell ill at an alarming rate because of harsh and insanitary living and working conditions.⁵⁷

Public works employed only men. For women there was the Filature des Indigents which every year during the Consulate and Empire gave work to between two thousand and twenty-five hundred female spinners, as well as to about a hundred male weavers.⁵⁸ The spinners did not work at the Filature itself, which had its headquarters in the former Minimes Convent behind the Place des Vosges. The authorities (who doubtlessly remembered that the Filature had once been a centre of agitation during the Revolution) regarded a large workshop as "dangerous to morals, prejudicial to public peace, and requiring too many supervisors," so that even paydays were staggered to avoid large gatherings.⁵⁹ Instead, once admitted to the Filature by her local bureau de bien-faisance, the spinner put up a guarantee to cover the value of the spindle and the raw materials with which she was supplied, and then did her work at home. The guarantee usually took the form of a certificate signed by a landlord;

⁵⁷Fauché, doctor at Ivry, "Vues de santé et de salubrité à admettre pour les ouvriers du canal," [ca. 1807], BHVP, Nouv. acq. 1.

⁵⁸"Notes sur la filature des indigents 1803-1867," AAP, FF 16. Duquesnoy, Rapport, pp. 30-31.

⁵⁹Pastoret, Rapport, pp. 364-65. Reports to Conseil général, 24 ventôse an X (15 March 1802) and 26 vendémiaire an XII (19 Oct. 1803), AAP, FF 136, vol. 2, fol. 193-95 and vol. 5, fol. 558-59. /

otherwise, a cash deposit might be required.⁶⁰ She brought back the finished thread and was paid according to its quality. It was possible for a spinner to earn as much as fifty or sixty centimes a day (an average woman's wage) but most probably earned much less than even this small sum.⁶¹ The Filature deliberately set its wage-scale below that paid by private industry, in order to encourage women to find jobs elsewhere.⁶² Few women, however, relied entirely on their income from the Filature. Many worked at other occupations during most of the year and turned to spinning only when unemployed in the winter. Others took in spinning to supplement their husbands' income with work that permitted them to remain at home with their children.⁶³

While the Filature did not aim to make a profit, neither was it intended to lose money. Losses were inevitable,

⁶⁰ Minutes of comité central of fourth arrondissement, 5 ventôse an X (24 Feb. 1802), AAP, FF 162, r. 1. See the case of femme Laurent who made a cash deposit of nine francs "in lieu of a guarantee." Her investment enabled her to earn twenty-five centimes a day. AAP, FF 136, vol. 3, fol. 232.

⁶¹ Pastoret, Rapport, p. 365. The pay records are extant for the Directory and the first months of the Consulate: "Etablissement nationale de filature, Etats des dépenses," AN, F15 3609. I chose four women with unusual names from the list: Mingelle, Chabourdy, Frochot, and Hochosen. During the two months of frimaire and nivôse an VIII (22 Nov. 1799-20 Jan. 1800), they earned 10F,20, 12F,95, 13F,80, and 14F,60 respectively.

⁶² Report to Conseil général, 18 germinal an X (8 April 1802), AAP, FF 136, vol. 2, fol. 322-27.

⁶³ Pastoret, Rapport, p. 364. "Note [sic] pour M. Duquesnoy," 28 germinal an XII (18 April 1804), AAP, FF 136, vol. 6, fol. 370.

however, given the inferior quality of most of the thread produced. Many of the spinners were too unskilled or too old to do good work, since in deciding whom to admit to the Filature, the bureaux de bienfaisance which examined the applicants considered "their indigence rather than their inabilities."⁶⁴ While management complained about the quality of work, the spinners expressed dissatisfaction with their pay. In the spring of 1802 their protests over unusually low wages led to an investigation which concluded that more accurate evaluation of thread had indeed decreased the pay of the majority, although it increased the pay of a few.⁶⁵ Three years later, the spinners, angered by what they felt was arbitrary evaluation of their thread, briefly boycotted the Filature.⁶⁶ Abbé Humbert reported in 1808 that the women not only thought that they were underpaid by the Filature, but also believed that its very existence meant decreased production and lower wages in the private sector.⁶⁷ The Prefect of Police admitted that the average wage earned (which he estimated at twenty centimes á day) was hardly

⁶⁴ Pastoret, Rapport, p. 365. Reports to Conseil général, n.d. [frimaire an X (Nov.-Dec. 1801)] and 24 ventôse an X (15 March 1802), AAP, FF 136, vol. 1, fol. 379 and vol. 2, fol. 193-95.

⁶⁵ Report to Conseil général, 18 germinal an X (8 April 1802), AAP, FF 136, vol. 2, fol. 322-27.

⁶⁶ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Jardin des Plantes division, 17 pluviôse an XIII (6 Feb. 1805), AAP, FF 96, r. 5.

⁶⁷ Abbé Humbert, "Facilité de remédier en quelque sorte aux désordres des filles publiques," 29 July 1808, AN, F15 1918.

enough: "this paltry gain" was at best only a supplement to poor relief. He also commented that the Filature was of no use to beggars, who most needed the work, since "these women have no fixed residence; they do not receive public relief; they are unknown to the bureaux de bienfaisance; and nobody would want to guarantee their reliability."⁶⁸ It seems that, like public works, spinning was by no means a complete solution to poverty and unemployment.

Another closely-related programme intended for women involved the setting up of chauffoirs or foyers publics-- large heated rooms to keep them warm during the cold of winter. Men were excluded, but women and children were admitted on presentation of a card from a bureau de bienfaisance. The chauffoirs enabled women who were too poor to heat their own homes to work at sewing or spinning in comfort. If a woman had nothing to do, the administration undertook to provide her with spinning or knitting. There is evidence of the existence of this institution during the three winters of 1810-1811, 1811-1812, and 1812-1813.⁶⁹

⁶⁸Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 24 Sept. 1806, AN, F15 106.

⁶⁹Decree by Pr. Seine, 5 Jan. 1811, AN, F11 1335B. Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 9, 23, and 30 Jan. 1811, AAP, FF 96, r. 8. Minutes of comité central of first arrondissement, 11 Dec. 1812, ADS, V bis 8 Q1 2. Pr. Seine to mayor of sixth arrondissement, 7 Jan. and 8 March 1811, 8 and 12 Dec. 1812, ADS, VD4 4946-4949.

During particularly acute crises, the government went beyond public works and spinning and tried to sustain employment and to create new jobs in private industry. One method was to advance loans to manufacturers who faced imminent bankruptcy. There are isolated examples of such loans during the Directory and the Consulate, but it was only in 1807 that Napoleon decided to initiate a full-scale programme at a cost of 500,000 francs a month.⁷⁰ He explained his scheme to the Minister of Finance: manufacturers who could not sell the goods they produced might deposit them in a government warehouse as security for a loan equivalent to one-half their cash value.

The accounts that you shall give me must be restricted to this format: I have lent so much to such a factory which has so many workers because it was about to shut down. The consequence of the loan must be that the factory continues to produce. I am taking money out of the Treasury only to keep workers from losing their jobs.⁷¹

The Emperor rejected a suggestion that some of his money be lent to chambrelans for "it is the large manufactories that I wish to help. . . ." ⁷² There were similar loans made in 1811, although this time no deposit of goods was required from the manufacturers. The weakness of such a programme is evident,

⁷⁰ Charles Ballot, "Les prêts aux manufactures sous le Premier Empire," Revue des études napoléoniennes 2 (1912): 42-77.

⁷¹ Napoleon to Min. Int., 27 March 1807, Correspondance de Napoléon I^{er}, publiée par ordre de Napoléon III, 32 vols. (Paris, 1858-1870), 14:686-87.

⁷² Napoleon to Min. Int., 27 May 1807, Correspondance, 15:338-40.

for it encouraged production without increasing consumption. As a result, the government lost about one-half of the twelve million francs it spent. But then the government was not really concerned with rescuing manufacturers from economic disaster--the loans were a purely political measure to keep thousands at work and thereby to avert disorders in Paris and other large cities.⁷³

Large state purchases may have been a more effective means of boosting the economy and creating jobs. In the crisis-ridden last years of his Empire, Napoleon combined state orders with public works in a programme designed to bring down unacceptable high levels of unemployment. The Emperor instructed the Minister of the Interior in May 1811 to "take measures to assure that under no circumstances shall the police find a single worker whom they are unable to send to a workshop."⁷⁴ Consequently, the government placed orders for porcelain and fine furniture for the Imperial Palaces with ninety-eight manufacturers, each of whom signed a pledge "to make the said furniture in my workshops within a period of two or three months, employing as many workers as possible." This gave work to between 1,200 and 1,500 men in the faubourg Saint-Antoine, and orders for military equipment, like harnesses, saddles, caissons, uniforms,

⁷³Viennet, *Napoléon et l'industrie*, pp. 268-71. Mollien, *Mémoires*, 3:277-78, 302. Ballot, "Les prêts."

⁷⁴Napoleon to Min. Int., 8 May 1811, *Correspondance*, 22:173-74.

shakos, and boots, meant jobs for about 3,000 more. There were also the usual public works projects, of which one alone, the Ourcq Canal, took on 1,800 extra men.⁷⁵ By mid-June, the Prefect of Police optimistically estimated that the number of unemployed in Paris had fallen from 21,900 in early May to only 5,750.⁷⁶ Government initiative could not have been alone responsible for this turnabout, but it undoubtedly helped by stimulating the economy. The Emperor adopted a similar strategy in 1811-1812 when, as the Minister of Police later recalled, "he gave out money by the handful that winter, and . . . he paid no heed to his finances. . . ."⁷⁷ The most substantial of these programmes was planned in December 1813, when there were at least 15,000 unemployed in the capital. There is no evidence to show how much (if any) of it was actually put into effect, although we do know that the contractor for the Sèvres Road and the Saint-Maur Canal, two projects intended to employ many navvies, was unable to begin work because the Treasury was slow to advance him the

⁷⁵ Reports by Pr. Pol., 11 and 13 May 1811, AN, F7³⁸³⁵. Police bulletins, 7, 12-13, 22 May 1811, AN, AF IV 1515 and F7 3771. Reports on public works, May-June 1811, AN, F13 208. Min. Int. to Pr. Seine, 6 May 1811, AN, F14 684B. Napoleon to Min. War Administration, 2 May 1811, Correspondence, 22:159-60; to Min. Int., 5 Aug. 1811, *ibid.*, pp. 440-41; to Min. War, 7 May 1811, *ibid.*, pp. 170-71; to Grand Marshal, 7 May 1811, *ibid.*, p. 171. Ledoux-Lebard, *Les ébénistes parisiens*, p. xiii.

⁷⁶ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 June 1811, AN, F7 3835.

⁷⁷ René Savary, *Mémoires du duc de Rovigo pour servir à l'histoire de l'Empereur Napoléon*, 2nd ed., 8 vols. (Paris, 1829), 5:186-87.

necessary funds.⁷⁸ The Allies crossed the Rhine in early January 1814 and the government, which faced imminent collapse, was running short of money. Under such circumstances (and despite government fears of disorder in Paris), it is unlikely that many men were put to work.

IV

A system of state-run poor relief was not enough to eliminate the need for private charity. Although the Revolutionary governments had been suspicious of philanthropy, since they considered assistance to be within the sole jurisdiction of the state, the Napoleonic government in contrast actively encouraged it. There is, of course, no way to estimate the amount of alms-giving in Napoleonic Paris, but clearly many of the city's élite regarded the distribution of charity as an imperative social duty. Some of them took a direct personal interest in the poor whom they assisted. For instance, the widow Houard told the police how, during the winter of 1802-1803,

⁷⁸Min. Int., "Compte rendu à Sa Majesté sur les moyens d'occuper les ouvriers sans travail dans Paris," [Dec. 1813], and "Tableau des commandes à faire et des ateliers à former pour occuper les ouvriers sans travail," 24 Dec. 1813, AN, F15 2673. - Min. Int., "Compte rendu sur les moyens de venir au secours des principales villes manufacturières de l'Empire," [Dec. 1813], AN, AF IV 1062. Minutes of the Secretariat of State, decree of 24 Dec. 1813, AN, F13 771 Napoleon to Min. War, 13 Dec. 1813, Correspondance, 26:592. Directeur-général des Ponts et chaussées to Min. Int., 28 Feb. 1814, AN, F13 210B.

. . . in her extreme distress, she had a letter written to M. [Eugène] de Montmorency to ask him for help, that he sent a servant who gave her an écu worth three livres and offered her coupons for "economic soups". . . ; that a little later M. de Montmorency himself came to her house. . . .

He used the visit to inquire about her religious beliefs, but was displeased with her answers (he told her that his dog, which he had brought with him, knew more about Christianity than she did), and so he left without giving her anything.⁷⁹

Then there were others who agreed with the fictional young gentleman from the Chaussée d'Antin who remarked, "I would send several écus to the unfortunate people [of the faubourg Saint-Jacques] but I would never have the courage to visit them. I don't like to see misery."⁸⁰ For them there was a wide range of organizations through which they could channel their charity.

The Church traditionally cared for the poor, and despite the loss of considerable revenue during the Revolution, it still looked to its well-to-do parishioners to provide funds for good works. The curé of Saint-Merry, for example, maintained a fourteen-bed hospital and a charitable school and also distributed as much as forty thousand francs a year to the poor in his parish.⁸¹ The Charitable Association of

⁷⁹Police interrogation of widow Houard, 13 frimaire an XII (5 Dec. 1803), AN, F7 6379, d. 7733. See above, note 29.

⁸⁰A. Egron, Voyage aux faubourgs S. Marcel et S. Jacques par deux habitans de la Chaussée d'Antin (Paris, 1806), p. 108.

⁸¹"Note sur la lettre de Mr le curé de St. Merry," 13 pluviôse an XI (2 Feb. 1803), AN, F7 3159.

Saint-Roch parish, under the presidency of the curé, gave out bread, meat, linen, and clothing (but never cash), provided the sick with medical and spiritual care, helped pregnant women, and offered an education to children, which included training in useful trades. It also ran a workshop in which fifty indigent women worked to make clothing for distribution to the poor. The Association spent about twenty-five thousand francs a year, most of which it collected in the parish, although there was a subsidy for the school from the Conseil Général des Hospices and in 1812 and 1813 it received a small grant from the Minister of the Interior.⁸² Similar organizations existed in most parishes in the capital.⁸³ The main draw-back of Church-run charity (from the point of view of the indigent) was the insistence that recipients be good Catholics. The commissioners of the Charitable Association of Saint-Roch carefully investigated anyone who petitioned for help, and were instructed to note whether he or she had married within the Church, and had baptised any children and seen that they learned the catechism.

⁸² Règlement pour l'Association de charité formée en la paroisse de Saint-Roch de Paris, le 1^{er} avril 1809 (Paris, n.d.). "Règlement pour l'atelier de travail," [Sept. 1810]; "Règlement pour la 4^e section de l'Association de Charité," n.d.; report to Min. Int., 29 Dec. 1812; comtesse Bergon to Min. Int., 1 Sept. 1813; untitled, printed circular, 1 March 1814; AN, F15 1885A.

⁸³ For a list of such associations and a brief description of each, see Etrennes de charité pour l'année 1812 (Paris, n.d.), pp. 92-100. The editors warn that the list is incomplete. Also, Règlement des Dames de Charité de la Paroisse de la Madeleine [Paris, ca. 1814]. Henry Doisy, Les débuts d'une grande paroisse: Saint-Vincent-de-Paul-Montholon (Paris, 1942), pp. 146ff.

But the largest, most important, and most influential charitable organization in the city was a purely secular one. The Société Philantropique de Paris was originally founded in 1780, but did not survive the Revolution. On 7 November 1802 a committee set up in 1800 to distribute soups to the poor decided to resurrect the Société Philantropique. The membership included many important officials, some prestigious names of the pre-Revolutionary aristocracy, and many wealthy bourgeois. The directors were such influential men as Samuel Du Pont de Nemours, Benjamin Delessert, the comte de Pastoret, the duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, the duc de Montmorency, and Augustin de Candolle.⁸⁴ Most of these were industrialists or bankers with liberal monarchist views--their political and social outlook was distinctly "Orleanist" some three decades before 1830. The Société Philantropique continued to run soup-kitchens (discussed later in the chapter) but was also involved in a wide range of other activities. It organized clinics to give free medical consultations and drugs intended not for the registered indigent, who could rely on the bureaux de bien-faisance, but for the artisan or worker who could not sustain the expense of an illness yet felt humiliated to enter a

⁸⁴The work of some of these men for the Société is covered by: Etienne Join-Lambert, Benjamin Delessert: Son oeuvre législative et sociale (Paris, 1939), pp. 40-51; Fernande Bassan, Politique et haute société à l'époque romantique: la famille Pastoret d'après sa correspondance (1788-1856) (Paris, 1969), pp. 57-60; Ferdinand-Dreyfus, Un philanthrope d'autrefois: La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, 1747-1827 (Paris, 1903), pp. 262-65; Augustin-Pyramus de

public hospital. It publicized new inventions of use to the poor, like a bed without a mattress or a stove which used less fuel, and encouraged self-help among workers by promoting the spread of mutual aid societies.⁸⁵

There were also many smaller charitable organizations that undertook to assist one or another needy group. The women of the Société de Charité Maternelle, founded in 1784 and re-established in 1801, were interested in the plight of mothers from "united, hard-working, and well-behaved" families who might otherwise, because of extreme poverty, have to abandon their new-born babies to the foundling hospital. During a ten-year period (1801-1810), they spent over 500,000 francs to care for four thousand mothers and their children.⁸⁶ The comtesse de Carcado's Oeuvres des Enfants Délaissés placed

Candolle, Mémoires et souvenirs de Augustin-Pyramus Candolle écrits par lui-même (Geneva, 1862), pp. 106-12. It is impossible to agree with Ambrose Saricks, Pierre Du Pont de Nemours (Lawrence, Kansas, 1965), p. 320, who dismisses Dupont's work for the Société as "not of sufficient importance to deserve mention."

⁸⁵ Péan de St-Gilles, La maison philanthropique de Paris: Histoire de cent dix ans (1780-1890) (Paris, 1892). Dr. J.-F. Payen, Notice historique sur la Société philanthropique de Paris, fondée en 1780 (Paris, 1846). The best source for the work of the Société is its annual reports.

⁸⁶ G. Vauthier, "La société maternelle sous l'Empire," Revue des études napoléonienne 2 (1914):70-83. Lanzac de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 5:147-54. Compte rendu par l'ancien comité de la Société de Charité maternelle au Conseil d'administration de la nouvelle société (Paris, 1812). "Sur le rétablissement de la Société de Charité maternelle," Journal des débats, 1 floréal an IX (21 April 1801), quoted in Aulard, Paris sous le Consulat, 2:257-58. Etrennes de charité, pp. 15-58.

250 orphans in good homes or apprenticed them to manufacturers and artisans.⁸⁷ Abbé Humbert ran (unsuccessfully) the Maison de Travail de Sainte-Marthe to help unemployed women and keep them from prostitution, begging, or theft. Benefactors were asked not to contribute money, but instead to buy knitting, sewing, or embroidery made by the women who lived in the home.⁸⁸ There were probably dozens of organizations of this kind in Napoleonic Paris.

One charitable work in particular, however, merits special attention, that undertaken by Madame de Pastoret, who founded the first day-nursery in Paris for the children of working mothers. Most women had to work, and when this meant going outside the home, what was to be done with the children? The cost of someone to look after them was, at six to ten sous a day (not counting food), probably as much as the mother herself could hope to earn. Madame de Pastoret therefore proposed the establishment of one day nursery in each arrondissement of Paris, to be financed and administered jointly by the state and private donors. She herself began by opening a nursery on the rue Miromesnil on 30 August 1801.

⁸⁷Petition by administrators of Oeuvre des enfans délaissés to Min. Int., [1811]; Min. Int. to Pr. Seine, 16 July 1811; report to Min. Int., 14 Nov. 1812; treasurer of Enfans délaissés to Min. Int., 20 Jan. 1813; AN, F15 1885A.

⁸⁸Maison de travail de Ste Marthe (N.p., n.d.). "Rapport sur l'établissement formé par le S. Humbert," 26 July 1809; Humbert to Procureur-général Impérial, 28 July 1809; AN, F15 1918.

But her project failed, and she eventually transformed the nursery into an ordinary charitable school for girls. There is no convincing explanation for this outcome, but perhaps the strict admission rules (which required the mother to produce proof of her honesty, her good morality, and a permanent address, as well as to do a share of the work in the nursery) discouraged many of the neediest mothers.⁸⁹ Certainly the need for such day-nurseries was real enough. The Société Philantropique recognized this, and hoped to follow Madame de Pastoret's example, yet never did so.⁹⁰ The bureau de bienfaisance of the Fontaine-Grenelle division apparently set up a day-nursery with a grant from the government, but there is no further information on it.⁹¹

⁸⁹J.-D.-M. Cochin, Manuel des salles d'asile, 4th ed. (Paris, 1853), pp. xvii-xviii. Emile Gossot, Les salles d'asile en France et leur fondateur Denys Cochin (Paris, 1884), pp. 9-10. Comte de Falloux, "Notice sur la marquise de Pastoret," in his Souvenirs de charité, new ed. (Paris, 1890), pp. 123-93. [Madame de Pastoret], "Sur l'établissement de Chambres de dépôts pour les enfans pauvres en bas âge" and untitled, undated memorandum, BHVP, Nouv. acq. 192, fol. 419-22, 436.

⁹⁰Report by Deleuze, 21 May 1814, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1813, p. 13.

⁹¹Antoine-Alexis Cadet de Vaux, Détails d'établissements d'utilité publique formés par le bureau de bienfaisance de la Fontaine-Grenelle, sur la municipalité du 10^e Arrondissement (N.p., n.d.).

v

The distribution of soups by the Société Philantropique was one of the most important of their functions, and one which government subsidies during the last years of the Empire integrated into the state system of poor relief. The programme began in February 1800, when the bureau de bienfaisance of the Mail division opened a soup kitchen to dispense daily three hundred portions of "economic soups," known also as Rumford soups after Count Rumford who had recently popularized them in Bavaria and Switzerland. By the autumn of 1800, there were five soup-kitchens in Paris, run by an association of philanthropists who, two years later, founded the Société Philantropique de Paris, which carried on the work.⁹² The association financed its kitchens through the sale of soup-cards to subscribers, including wealthy individuals, charitable organizations, and bureaux de bienfaisance. The subscribers either distributed the cards themselves or entrusted distribution to the association. Workers and artisans who were not poor enough to receive charity, or who were too proud to accept it, were

⁹² Candolle, *Mémoires*, pp. 106-09, claims to have brought the idea for Rumford soups from Geneva to Paris. Lanzac de Laborie, *Paris sous Napoléon*, 5:137-45. Réponse du Bureau de bienfaisance de la Division du Mail aux observations du bureau de bienfaisance de la Division Poissonnière, sur les soupes à la Rumford (Paris, 22 ventôse an VIII). The Minister of the Interior and most bureaux de bienfaisance actively encouraged the spread of the institution: see minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Panthéon division, 1 and 8 ventôse and 13 floréal an VIII (20 and 27 Feb. and 3 May 1800), AAP, FF 96, r. 3.

permitted to buy the soup at ten (later five) centimes a bowl. For fear of offending the sensibilities of the indigent, there was no mention of charity printed on the cards, while the signs at the soup-kitchens said only: "Here we sell vegetable soup at two sous a portion."⁹³

The exact composition of the soup varied (according to whatever vegetables were cheapest, but the standard recipe included, water, flour made from legumes, potatoes, beans, lentils, onions, cabbage, butter or lard, salt, and spices. The preparation reduced most of the vegetables to a mush, so some firm chunks were usually added for texture and, just before serving, an ounce of cut-up stale bread went into each bowl.⁹⁴ The soup was undoubtedly nourishing, and its sponsors never failed to contrast its qualities to "those indigestible, disgusting, even harmful substances, with which a large number of unfortunates overcharge their stomachs."⁹⁵ The government was also anxious to encourage the consumption of the soups, since a man could live on three

⁹³ Antoine-Alexis Cadet de Vaux et al., Recueil de rapports, de mémoires et d'expériences sur les soupes et les fourneaux à la Rumford (Paris, an X). For an accusation that the poor were humiliated, see Amis des lois, 10 germinal an VIII (31 March 1800), quoted in Aulard, Paris sous le Consulat, 1:244.

⁹⁴ The recipe was frequently reprinted for distribution. For one version, see Cadet de Vaux, Recueil, pp. 190-98.

⁹⁵ Report by Montmorency, in Rapports et comptes rendus du Comité central d'administration des soupes économiques de Paris pendant l'an X (Paris, an XI), pp. 10-11.

soups a day, worth thirty centimes, and thus save a kilogramme of bread costing three times as much. The Prefect of the Seine believed that there were fifty or sixty thousand indigents in Paris (he excluded children and the old) "to whom vegetable soups offer a precious resource, a perfectly suitable food." There were also thousands of workers and artisans who might be induced to buy the soups, although he admitted:

. . . it is not as easy as one might think to change the diet of the people. This cannot be achieved in a few weeks. In this, as in many other matters, one must appear not to give the impulse, but to follow it.⁹⁶

In fact, Parisian workers never accepted the soups with any enthusiasm. During the winter of 1813-1814, when offered the choice, many preferred a plate of cooked beans or vegetables, which they ate with their own dearly-bought bread.⁹⁷ In the popular diet, soup was for soaking bread (which was often eaten stale); hence the reaction of those workers in Caen who in 1812 threw their free soups into the gutter, saying that they did not want it without bread, even if it was full of vegetables.⁹⁸

⁹⁶"Observations et renseignements donnés à leurs Excellences les Ministres de l'Intérieur et du Commerce par le Préfet de la Seine sur l'utilité des soupes économiques," AN, F15 2877-2878.

⁹⁷Report by Deleuze, 6 April 1814, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1813, p. 15. Two peace officers sent out to investigate public opinion in 1802 reported that they heard both praise and criticism of the soups, but that mothers were the most favourably disposed because they found that their children readily accepted them: minute of report by Bazin and Noël, floréal an X (April-May 1802), AN, F7 3177.

⁹⁸Anonymous letter to Min. Int., Caen, 12 Nov. 1812,

Table 19 shows the number of soups distributed in Paris between 1800 and 1815. There are two obvious peaks, which correspond to periods of economic crisis and high bread prices. It was at these times that the Société Philantropique and the government spared no effort to make the soups available, and that workers set aside their usual prejudices. Parisians consumed over 1.6 million bowls of soup during the harsh winter of 1801-1802, but for the next decade consumption was much less. Then the harvest of 1811 failed, and on 10 January 1812 the Prefect of the Seine informed the Société Philantropique that the government had decided to give out twenty thousand free soups a day in the capital. The Société Philantropique used state funds to put forty-two kitchens into operation within two weeks.⁹⁹ The Emperor himself was an ardent supporter of the project, and brushed aside all objections that workers might prefer to have bread with the charge that the bureaux de bienfaisance were prejudiced against the soup.¹⁰⁰ A council of ministers held on 11 March 1812 in the presence of the Emperor extended the programme to all France and concluded that thanks to economic soups, "We can boast today that no inhabitant of the

AN, F15 2877-2878. Another anonymous letter to Pr. Calvados (probably by the same man) makes a similar observation, 19 April 1812, AN, F7 6576, d. 3018.


⁹⁹ Report by Petit de Beauverger, 15 Feb. 1812, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1811, p. 27.

¹⁰⁰ Minutes of comité central of first arrondissement, 29 Feb. 1812, ADS, V bis 8 Q1 2.

TABLE 19
ANNUAL DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMIC SOUPS

Year	No. of Soups
VIII (1799-1800)	20,000
IX (1800-1801)	164,000
X (1801-1802)	1,613,199
XI (1802-1803)	456,776
XII (1803-1804)	246,266
XIII (1804-1805)	328,891
XIV and 1806 [465 days]	332,126
1807	394,979
1808	177,004
1809	127,350
1810	205,644
1811	258,335
1812	4,342,569
1813	1,972,547
1814	1,315,702
1815	484,137

SOURCE: Société philanthropique de Paris,
Rapports et comptes rendus de la Société
philanthropique de Paris pendant 1822 (Paris,
1823), p. 141.



capital suffers from hunger."¹⁰¹ This was surely too optimistic. "Twenty thousand soups a day could hardly eradicate hunger at a time when there were a hundred thousand indigent, thousands of unemployed, and many other workers unable to afford their usual bread ration. Nevertheless, almost four million soups were given away in Paris that year, and another 350,000 were sold at five centimes. The emergency distribution continued with another two million soups during the first four months of 1813, after which the programme was discontinued for the summer. It was not resumed until February 1814, for the government was short of money and preoccupied with the military situation."¹⁰²

The members of the Société Philantropique were, on the whole, satisfied with the results of their labours, although they failed to fulfill their hopes of effecting a permanent change in popular eating habits. One report tells how the grateful poor "follow us with acclamations, asking for soup-cards. They call us their saviours, their foster-fathers, etc. etc."¹⁰³ Contrasting descriptions, however, suggest

¹⁰¹ Minute of council of ministers, 11 March 1812, AN, F7 4257, d. 58.

¹⁰² Report by Dupont de Nemours, 10 April 1813, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1812, p. 10. Report by Deleuze, 6 April 1814, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1813, p. 15. "Tableau de nombres de soupes distribuées chaque mois in 1813," in *ibid.*, p. 97.

¹⁰³ Rapports et comtes rendus du Comité central, p. 12.

that the regular users of the soup-kitchens were a disorderly throng of filthy vagabonds whose drunken noise, brawling, and vomiting disgusted spectators.¹⁰⁴ The truth probably lies somewhere in-between, but one fact is clear: acceptance of the soups was limited to those who could afford nothing else and, even then, only in times of exceptional distress.

VI

State, Church, and private philanthropists were also eager to cooperate in extending the benefits of education to poor children. During the Old Régime, all parishes in Paris supported charitable schools which taught reading, writing, and catechism, and even arithmetic (although the last was considered to be "not of much use for salvation"). The Revolution destroyed these schools, since many of the teaching clergy refused the oath of loyalty to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, while militant revolutionaries attacked the "false principles" which they taught. The municipality assumed control of all parish charities in 1791, and sans-culotte activists pressed for universal civic education, but little was done. The Directory's attempt to organize primary education was also a failure, and so private charity had once again to take up the burden of providing education to the poor, as it continued to do until Guizot

¹⁰⁴ Mayor of fourth arrondissement to Société philanthropique, 12 Nov. 1812, ADS, V bis 1 D2 5. Nacquart, "Considérations," pp. 377-78.

suppressed all charitable schools in 1833.¹⁰⁵

In Napoleonic Paris, many of the bureaux de bienfaisance financed local schools out of their own funds and actively solicited the Conseil Général des Hospices for additional grants for this purpose. Philanthropists and the Church were also active in the field. For example, the Société d'Assistance Charitable founded nine schools for 1,600 students in the tenth arrondissement.¹⁰⁶ The curé of Saint-Jacques founded a boys' school, while his counterpart at Saint-Eustache set up two girls' schools and one boys' school.¹⁰⁷ In Chailot, the local curé struggled to maintain a boys' school on his own until he finally had to appeal for government funds in 1806. A girls' school flourished in his parish with contributions from the Conseil Général des Hospices, the Société Philantropique, and many individual

¹⁰⁵ Marcel Fosseyeux, "Les écoles de charité à Paris sous l'Ancien Régime et dans la première partie du XIX^e siècle," Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Ile-de-France 39 (1912):225-36. A. Gazier, Les écoles de charité du Faubourg Saint-Antoine: Ecole normale et groupes scolaires (1713-1887) (Paris, 1906), pp. 14-20. Soboul, Les sans-culottes, pp. 496-503.

¹⁰⁶ Ricatte, Rapport annuel fait, le Mercredi 23 janvier 1811, à l'assemblée générale de la Société d'assistance charitable, fondatrice des neuf écoles gratuites dans le Dixième Arrondissement de Paris, faubourg Saint-Germain (Paris, n.d.).

¹⁰⁷ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Observatoire division, 8 April 1812, AAP, FF 96, r. 4. Report to Conseil général, 8 ventôse an XII (28. Feb. 1804), AAP, FF 136, vol. 6, fol. 207-08.

donors.¹⁰⁸ Because of such efforts, the number of charitable schools in Paris increased considerably during the Napoleonic period. By one count, there were only nineteen in 1804 but fifty in 1813. (And this list apparently includes only those schools aided by the Conseil Général des Hospices, since nine others supported by private charity in the tenth arrondissement are not on it.) In 1814, when there were 69,334 children aged five to twelve in the capital city, 6,807 of them were enrolled in charitable schools.¹⁰⁹

The bureaux de bienfaisance frequently argued that schools were necessary because otherwise the children of working parents were left alone to wander the streets and to get into trouble during the day.¹¹⁰ Sometimes, too, they suggested that reading and writing were useful skills for

¹⁰⁸ Règlement pour les écoles et atelier de bienfaisance à Chaillot (N.p., n.d.), G. Vauthier, "Création d'écoles et d'ateliers de charité à Chaillot en 1809," Bulletin de la Société historique d'Auteuil et de Passy 11 (1923-1930):177. The enrollment lists for 1806-1807 for both schools are still extant, ADS, VD6 151, d. 1. There were 41 boys, aged 6 to 14½, with a median age of 8; and 51 girls, aged 6 to 13½, with a median age of 9½.

¹⁰⁹ Pastoret, Rapport, pp. 359-61. Annuaire de la Société philanthropique contenant l'indication des meilleurs moyens qui existent à Paris de soulager l'humanité souffrante et d'exercer utilement la bienfaisance (Paris, Jan. 1819), p. 90, says there were 50 schools in 1819, with 6,500 children, or one-tenth the population aged 5 to 12.

¹¹⁰ Bureau de bienfaisance of Invalides division to mayor of tenth arrondissement, 26 nivôse an XI (16 Jan. 1803), AAP, FF 136, vol. 4, fol. 71-72. Report on Arsenal division, 11 ventôse an XI (2 March 1803), *ibid.*, vol. 4, fol. 212. Report on Finistère division, 16 messidor an XI (5 July 1803), *ibid.*, vol. 5, fol. 6-7. Report on Contrat Social division, 8 ventôse

boys and girls to acquire before learning a trade.¹¹¹ But the most persuasive justification of charitable schools, in the minds of most contemporaries, was their function as institutions for the moralization and socialization of future workers. The bureau de bienfaisance of Homme Armé division stated its case bluntly:

. . . it is necessary to accustom them from childhood to a compulsory submission that molds their characters; to habituate them to the use of precious time, on which depends society's peace and happiness; and to prevent vagabondage and sloth, the unfailing source of all vice.¹¹²

At an awards ceremony in 1808, the pupils at one charitable school were told that it was not enough for them to read, write, and count; they must also show "docility; obedience to parents and school mistresses, prudence, good conduct, and love of work." Furthermore, they had to love God, and "to respect the property of others, to obey the laws of our country, and to love, honour, and respect the supreme head of the Empire. . . ."¹¹³ Duquesnoy described primary schools as,

an XII (28 Feb. 1804), *ibid.*, vol. 6, fol. 207-08. Report on Fidélité division, 23 pluviôse an XIII (12 Feb. 1805), *ibid.*, vol. 8, fol. 124. Report on Montblanc and Montmartre divisions, 20 Dec. 1808, *ibid.*, vol. 17, fol. 575. Report on Gravilliers division, n.d. [May 1810], *ibid.*, vol. 22, fol. 30.

¹¹¹ Report on Panthéon division, 29 brumaire an XIII (20 Nov. 1804), *ibid.*, vol. 7, fol. 452. Report on Arcis and Lombards divisions, 29 frimaire an XII (21 Dec. 1803), *ibid.*, vol. 5, fol. 30.

¹¹² Bureau de bienfaisance de la Division de l'Homme-Armé, Septième Arrondissement: Assemblée du 24 pluviôse an 13 (13 février 1805) (Paris, n.d.).

¹¹³ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance^o of Panthéon division, 18 Aug. 1808, AAP, FF 96, r. 6.

"schools of work," and Mathieu de Montmorency as "one of the most powerful means for the regeneration of morals."¹¹⁴

The scope of a charitable education was deliberately restricted. As one speaker told an assembly of benefactors, they did not want to produce "intellectual charlatans, dangerous to society" or "half-learned scholars without fortune" whose intrigues (he implied) were responsible for revolutionary excesses. Pupils were to learn "from books within the limits of their understanding," the basic principles of morality and religion. Simple reading, writing, and calculating skills would make the boys into "more intelligent workers and servants" or soldiers capable of winning promotion, and the girls into "good workers, good housekeepers useful to their husbands, and nothing more."¹¹⁵ Religious instruction was usually an important part of the curriculum.¹¹⁶ At times, the emphasis on religion went too

¹¹⁴Duquesnoy, Rapport, p. 20. Report by Montmorency, 11 frimaire an XII (3 Dec. 1803), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XI, p. 5.

¹¹⁵Ricatte, Rapport annuel.

¹¹⁶The printed regulations of three schools are extant. Règlement pour l'Ecole de bienfaisance de la rue des Poulies, no 210, qui est sous l'inspection des bureaux de bienfaisance des divisions du Muséum, des Gardes-Françaises et des Tuileries (Paris, n.d.) [ca. 1803]. Règlement de la Société de charité du X^ec arrondissement de Paris (Paris, 1805). Etablissements de bienfaisance du Dixième Arrondissement de Paris (Paris, nivôse an IX). While the first two regulations subject religious instruction to the local curé, the third says only: "The masters will teach the children catechism and the principles of the Catholic religion, except for children whose parents have stated in writing that they profess another

far. The bureau de bienfaisance of the Quinze-Vingt division not only reprimanded teachers for failing to take the children to mass on Sundays and holidays, but also considered means of compelling parents to see that their children practiced their religion.¹¹⁷ The police had to intervene in 1806, when the bureau de bienfaisance of the Arsenal division required children to produce proof of baptism for admission to school; the bureau was reminded that the government "calls all children, whatever their own beliefs or those of their fathers, to the precious benefits of education."¹¹⁸

There is very little information on the quality of the education which poor children received. The Société Philantropique investigated fourteen charitable schools in 1803 and reported that seven were "perfectly-run," five mediocre, and two bad. One charitable school (at Chaillot) was at the forefront of educational reform, as one of the first to introduce the system of teaching reading and writing simultaneously, in place of the more traditional method of teaching children first to read and later to write.¹¹⁹ Another significant educational innovation occurred at the very end

religion and pledge to instruct their children in it."

¹¹⁷ Minutes of bureau de bienfaisance of Quinze-Vingts division, 16 July 1813, AAP, FF 95, 2^e liasse.

¹¹⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 15 Oct. 1806, AN, F7 3124.

¹¹⁹ Report by Montmorency, 11 frimaire an XII (2 Dec. 1803), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XI, pp. 5-6, 12.

of the Napoleonic period, with the introduction of the "monitorial system" during the First Restoration. By this method, first developed in England, the more advanced students taught the less advanced, thus permitting a single master to supervise a large school. The Church and royalists opposed a system which they condemned for its lack of religious spirit and its "republican" organization of the classroom.¹²⁰ For their part, the promoters of the monitorial system were quite explicit about its merits in their eyes: the school, like society, should not be subject to a single individual; rather, "age and merit" should bring certain individuals to positions of natural authority of their fellows, as in "a workshop, a regiment, a manufactory, an administration, or a government."¹²¹ Napoleon, hurriedly embracing liberalism during the Hundred Days, ordered the establishment of a normal school to train new teachers in the system.¹²² The education given in charitable schools was thus affected by the

¹²⁰M. Gontard, "Un aspect des luttes des parties en France au début de la Restauration: la question de l'enseignement mutuel," in Société de la Révolution de 1848, Bibliothèque de la Révolution de 1848, vol. 15: Etudes (Nancy, 1953), pp. 48-63. Fosseyeux, "Les écoles," pp. 343-47. Georges Rigault, Histoire générale de l'Institut des Ecoles chrétiennes, vol. 4: L'institut restauré (1805-1830) (Paris, 1942), pp. 343-44.

¹²¹"Rapport lu à la séance générale du 10 mai 1815, par M. le comte Alexandre de Laborde, sur les écoles primaires établies en Angleterre d'après le système de MM. Bell et Landaster," Bulletin de la Société d'encouragement pour l'industrie nationale 14 (1815):119-26.

¹²²Carnot, "Rapport à l'Empereur," Moniteur universelle, 30 April, 1815.

ideological preoccupations of the political world, just as it also reflected the wider concerns of a bourgeois society emergent from a period of revolutionary turmoil and aghast at the lack of morality, religion, and discipline which it perceived among the lower orders.

It is clear that all aspects of the Napoleonic system of poor relief and charity must similarly be understood in relation to the new society evolving in nineteenth-century France. Although a detailed discussion of the trends is far beyond the modest scope of this chapter, so much in preceding pages parallels the changes which W.K. Jordan has described as taking place in Tudor and Stuart England, when "casual, undisciplined charity" gave way to strongly secular organizations set in place (by state and philanthropists) as an integral part of that "whole complex structure of institutions which undergird the liberal society."¹²³ In France, the question as to how successful these institutions were as ideological weapons can be answered only through a study of long-term developments in Paris and the country at large. We can merely note here that in the short run they did manage to attain their most basic goal of helping the poor. Yet this is a conclusion to be hedged with too many reservations, since aid (in all its forms) was so obviously inadequate in

¹²³W.K. Jordan, Philanthropy in England, 1480-1660: A Study in the Changing Pattern of English Social Aspirations (London, 1959), p. 19.

comparison to need. Despite the bureaux de bienfaisance, despite the public works projects, and despite all the best efforts of the Société Philantropique and scores of other charitable groups, thousands of Parisian workers continued to live in the most wretched and appalling conditions.

CHAPTER SIX

GOVERNMENT REGULATION

Une classe d'hommes aussi nombreuse, surtout dans les grandes villes manufacturières, toujours inquiétante pour la tranquillité publique parcequ'elle a peu à perdre au bouleversement de l'ordre social . . . doit être assujettie d'une manière spéciale à la surveillance et à l'action de la police. . . .¹

I

After reading a series of remarks on the character of Parisian wage-earners made by Dubois, Prefect of Police, Lanzac de Laborie indignantly wrote in his history of Paris: "It is not these statements in themselves that are shocking, but the tone of animosity, of disparagement, of contemptuous superiority. . . ." ² Dubois intended his comments to be an objective assessment of workers' behaviour; however, they are undoubtedly more indicative of police prejudice than anything else. Locksmiths, according to Dubois, were "the image of vulgarity," shoemakers were all drunks and thieves, and turners were "wicked, quarrelsome, rarely loyal." In some occupations, there were both good and bad men, such as

¹Min. Int. to Pr. Loir-et-Cher, 19 vendémiaire an XIV (11 Oct. 1805), AN, F12, 4648.

²Lanzac de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 6:319.

hairdressers, many of whom were "drunks, rogues, libertines, sluggards, gossips" while others were "gentle, honest, loyal" (and usually homosexual). There were a few groups, like workers in the furniture trade, who won praise for their generally good conduct, but, on the whole, the underlying theme of the descriptions was that the Parisian wage-earner was prone to immoral behaviour, public disorder, and disloyalty to his employer.³

By the 1830s and 1840s, both the police and the Parisian bourgeoisie had come to consider the city's "labouring classes" to be synonymous with its "dangerous classes."⁴ There is no evidence that this was a common attitude in Napoleonic Paris, although the spectre of mob violence raised by the Revolution was never laid to rest. Thus, a tourist was unable to forget that the market-women whom he saw in 1806 had once shown "a ferocity and an unimaginable thirst for blood,"⁵ while in 1814 a guide book urged the government to clean up the filthy rue des Boucheries (which was lined by butcher shops) with the warning: "It is dangerous to accustom the people to seeing

³"Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, AN, F7 4334 and F12 502.

⁴Louis Chevalier, Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses à Paris pendant la première moitié du XIX^e siècle (Paris, 1958). Although this controversial book demonstrates that such opinions were widely-held during the July Monarchy, it is less successful in proving that they conformed to objective reality.

⁵Berkheim, Lettres sur Paris, pp. 213-14.

blood flow."⁶ But the observations of one writer who published a satirical account of his "voyage" through the faubourgs Saint-Marcel and Saint-Jacques were more typical. It is true that he described the inhabitants of the faubourgs as "an almost uncivilized people," but he added a tribute to "these simple and industrious men who, shut up in these calm faubourgs, wear away their lives to enrich you by their painful labour."⁷ With the exception of a few short periods of political uncertainty, as in 1814 and 1815, the upper classes usually worried about disrespect more than crime, and unruliness more than insurrection.

Many blamed the Revolution for workers' indiscipline, and asserted that the remedy lay in an at least partial return to the ways of the Old Régime. Some manufacturers and prosperous artisans even called for a restoration of guilds; their primary motive was probably the wish to eliminate competition. In 1801 a group of hat manufacturers attempted to squeeze out their lesser competitors through an agreement with the master dyers to work only for them, and one (it was reported) declared at a meeting that he wanted to see the re-establishment of guild masterships at a price of ten thousand francs "to crush all those creatures

⁶L.P., Voyage descriptif et philosophique, 1:189.

⁷Egron, Voyage aux faubourgs S. Marcel et S. Jacques, pp. 16, 103-04.

[ces êtres là]."⁸ The blanket manufacturers in the twelfth arrondissement believed that guilds could guarantee the quality of blankets by doing away with small producers who (they alleged) produced shoddy goods.⁹ Wine-merchants, wall-paper manufacturers, printers, and even keepers of lodging-houses also petitioned the government for a corporate structure.¹⁰ Supporters of the guilds frequently argued that such organizations maintained discipline among workers. A master butcher, for example, shrewdly suggested after the proclamation of the Empire that "guilds are suitable to a monarchical state. . . , they help it to police the middling and lower classes of society."¹¹ There were others who also made much the same point.¹²

⁸ Minute of report by peace officers Bazin and Noël, 1 prairial an IX (1 May 1801), AN, F7 3175.

⁹ Report by mayor of twelfth arrondissement to Min. Int., 14 May 1807, AN, F7 3175.

¹⁰ Soufflot de Merey, Considérations sur le rétablissement des jurandes et maîtrises, précédées d'observations sur un rapport fait à la Chambre de Commerce du Département de la Seine sur cette importante question, et sur un projet de statuts et réglemens de MM. les marchands de vin (Paris, an XIII-1805). Petition by wallpaper manufacturers to Min. Int., March 1808, AN, F12 4647. Petition by same to Conseil général des fabriques et manufactures [Dec. 1814], AN, F12 2474A. Stoupe, Mémoire sur le rétablissement de la communauté des imprimeurs de Paris, suivi de reflexions sur les contre-façons en librairie, et sur le stéréotypage (Paris, 1806). Petition by lodging-house keepers to Emperor, n.d., and report by Pr. Pol., 2 June 1808, AN, F7 3688/23.

¹¹ Sauvegrain, Considérations, p. 215.

¹² Stoupe, Mémoire, p. 7. Levacher-Duplessis, Requête au Roi, ou Mémoire sur la nécessité de rétablir les corps de marchands et les communautés d'arts et métiers (Paris, 1817), p. 25.

In October 1802 rumours circulated among tradesmen and artisans that the government was indeed considering the restoration of guilds, and five years later equally "vague and uncertain rumours" alarmed the Paris Chamber of Commerce.¹³ Even the most determined opponents of the guild system, including the Chamber and its spokesman, Vital-Roux, saw a need for some kind of state regulation of wage-earners.¹⁴ The Conseil Général of the Department of the Seine denounced the "odious monopoly" of the guild system while, at the same time, it asked for government supervision of Parisian tradesmen ("une police des arts et métiers"), since "liberty ought not to be confused with licence, and a police for the regulation of social relations . . . has to be established. . . ."¹⁵ Oberkampf, an industrialist who produced printed cottons at Jouy-en-Josas, some twenty-five kilometres outside Paris, had made his fortune during the Old Régime because he had escaped guild control; now he too complained of "liberty and consequently the lack of discipline and reliability among workers, who drift from workshop to workshop because they are held to no apprenticeship, to no

¹³ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 ventôse an XI (11 March 1803), AN, F7 3831. Chambre de Commerce to Min. Int., 13 June 1807, AN, F12 507.

¹⁴ Vital-Roux, Rapport sur les jurandes et maîtrises et sur un projet de statuts et réglemens pour MM. les marchands de vin de Paris (Paris, an XIII-1805). Chambre de Commerce to Min. Int., 27 floréal an XIII (17 May 1805), ACCP, Registres de correspondance. Chambre de Commerce to Min. Int., 4 prairial an XIII (24 May 1805), AN, F12 2471, d. 26.

¹⁵ Minutes of Conseil général du Département de la Seine, 13 prairial an X (2 June 1802), AN, Flc V Seine 1.

commitments. . . .¹⁶

This current of thought was influential at the Ministry of the Interior. The restoration of guilds had no advocates here. (the principles of economic liberalism were too strongly held) but there were voices raised in favour of government regulation. Louis Costaz, a key official, drafted a project as early as August 1801. In some three dozen pages, Costaz castigated French wage-earners for their misbehaviour: apprentices abandoned their master at the first opportunity after acquiring their skills, even before their labour could begin to repay him for the years of instruction; wage-earners stole from their employers, formed illegal combinations for higher wages, and fought bloody brawls among themselves. He proposed a strengthening of the ban on workers' organizations and combinations, the institution of compulsory identity booklets (livrets) for wage-earners, and the establishment of placement bureaux for the unemployed.¹⁷ The Law of 22 Germinal Year XI (12 April 1803) on manufactories and workshops included most of these

¹⁶ Oberkampf to Min. Treasury, 4 March 1811, AN, 41 AQ 1.

¹⁷ Louis Costaz, Projet d'une loi relative aux manufactures et aux gens de travail de toutes professions, précédé d'une exposition des principes d'après lesquels il a été rédigé (Paris, fructidor an IX). Most of his points were reiterated by the Minister, Chaptal, in his "Rapport concernant les manufactures et les gens de travail de toute profession, 13 ventôse an X" in Moniteur, 17 ventôse an X (8 March 1802).

suggestions. The spokesman who presented the law to the Corps Législatif summed up the government's position with the comment: "Liberty was once too restricted; since then, licence has reigned unchecked." If it was true, he continued, that workers had been subject to "overly-rigorous regulation" during the Old Régime, subsequent "anarchy" (by which he meant the Revolution) had led to an "unfortunate neglect of their duties." This the government proposed to correct.¹⁸

Many who found the legislation insufficient continued to advocate the establishment of corporate bodies to regulate Parisian trades. A brief report on the subject, presented to the Conseil d'Etat in 1810, put forward four arguments in favour of corporate bodies.¹⁹ First, they would help government surveillance of urban artisans and wage-earners. The actual number of artisans, who were subject to only "the purely fiscal formality of the patente," was unknown; their morality, honesty, and professional reputation escaped police vigilance. Wage-earners also evaded police control, and employers found themselves unable to prevent strikes or to hold workers to the obligations which they contracted. Second, the proliferation of

¹⁸ Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angély, speaking on 10 germinal an XI, as quoted in Moniteur, 13 germinal an XI (3 April 1803).

¹⁹ Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angély, Rapport sur l'exercice de la profession de marchand et les arts et métiers (Paris, 11 August 1810).

independent artisans and shopkeepers since the abolition of the guilds had increased competition to the point where many tradesmen could barely make a living and there were frequent bankruptcies. Third, the consumer suffered because he had no guarantee of the quality of the goods he bought (such as the guilds had once provided) and commerce had declined because of lack of confidence in French goods abroad. Finally, "trade has no organs through which to address the administration, and the administration has no organs through which to make its voice heard." By the summer of 1810, Paris had fifteen trade associations--formal organizations of tradesmen who elected syndics or delegates to represent their interests. The occupations which had associations, and the dates on which these were established, were as follows:

bakers	11 October 1801
butchers	30 September 1802
porkbutchers	14 May 1805
wine-merchants	2 and 7 June 1808
carpenters	16 August 1808
coal merchants	10 March 1809
café-keepers	20 June 1809
masons	19 August 1809
restaurateurs	16 and 30 November 1809
cab-renters	11 January 1810
jewellers	24 January 1810
hatters	27 February 1810
brewers	10 March 1810
pavers	6 May 1810
wallpaper manufacturers	19 June 1810

Only the bakers' and butchers' associations were set up by government decree; they had an official rôle in the administration of their trades, which were under strict government regulation.²⁰ The thirteen other trade

²⁰ Jacques Godechot, Les institutions de la France sous

associations were authorized by the Prefect of Police, but were (as the Conseil d'Etat admitted) of questionable legality. We know nothing of their membership or internal structure; they were most probably nothing more than organizations of prosperous licenced artisans and manufacturers which functioned as pressure groups to bring their demands before the government. They certainly had no legitimate authority to regulate Parisian trades or wage-earners.

But if there was to be no restoration of guilds, Parisian workers did not escape regulation. Napoleon himself, in the words of one historian, "wanted to watch over workers as he did over his soldiers"²¹ and this attitude was prevalent throughout the administration. Later chapters discuss the ban on workers' associations and the repression of workers' combinations and labour strikes. Government regulation is of more immediate concern here, and the following pages deal with three aspects of it: the livret, placement bureaux, and repeated attempts to fix a longer workday in the building trade.

la Révolution et l'Empire, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1968), p. 680.

²¹Ibid., p. 667.

II

The legal requirement that all wage-earners in France carry a livret is the most notorious of all Napoleonic regulations relating to wage-earners. It was in force until 1890, and was long regarded as the outward sign of the inferior legal status of the French working class. Yet the livret did not actually originate with the Napoleonic authorities. Many of the old guilds had insisted that on leaving the service of his employer, a journeyman obtain a certificate attesting to the satisfactory completion of all his engagements. The Royal Edict of 2 January 1749 made these certificates compulsory for all wage-earners, and the Edict of 12 September 1781, which restated it, also for the first time made mention of a booklet ("un livre ou cahier") to hold the document.²² There was also a police ordinance of 1720 (renewed in 1778) which obliged a domestic servant to procure a certificate of good conduct from his employer when he left the household.²³ It is unlikely that any of these laws was effectively enforced; in any case, although never in fact repealed, they fell into disuse after 1789, until Napoleon revived them.

²²The best source for the history of the livret is an official publication of the July Monarchy which reprints the text of all relevant legislation and includes several official circulars: Notice sur la législation relative aux livrets d'ouvriers: Session des Conseils généraux de l'agriculture, des manufactures et du commerce, 1841-1842 (Paris, January 1842). See also two legal theses: Alexandre Plantier, Le livret des ouvriers (Paris, 1900) and Henri Bernard, Le livret ouvrier (Paris, 1903).

²³Kaplow, Names of Kings, p. 49.

A police ordinance dated 23 Ventôse Year XI (14 March 1803) required every journeyman baker in Paris to register with the police, who would give him a livret in which all changes of employment had to be entered. One month later, article 12 of the Law of 22 Germinal forbade any manufacturer, contractor, or master artisan in France to hire a wage-earner who did not have a livret containing an attestation from his previous employer that he had fulfilled all his obligations. The Decree of 9 Frimaire Year XII (1 December 1803) laid down further details: the booklet was to contain the name, age, birthplace, and a description of its holder. Every wage-earner had to obtain one from the mayor of his commune or, in Paris, Lyon, and Marseille, from the police. Employers were to inscribe the dates a worker entered and left their service, as well as any advances they made on wages. A worker travelling without a livret duly counter-signed by the authorities of the commune he had left was to be considered and punished as a vagabond, even if he carried a passport. In Paris, according to the terms of the police ordinance of 20 Pluviôse Year XII (10 February 1804), it was the police commissioner of the Marchés division who issued all livrets, at a fee of seventy-five centimes. A wage-earner arriving in the capital had three days to present himself before this official to have his livret counter-signed. In addition whenever a wage-earner left one employer for another, his livret had to be signed not only by both employers, but also by the police

commissioners of two Paris divisions, the one in which he had worked and the one in which he was going to work.

All these laws used only the masculine singular or plural to refer to workers; yet there was no specific clause limiting the livret to males. For several years, no one in authority appears to have considered the case of female wage-earners. Perhaps officials underestimated the extent of female employment, or perhaps they saw no need to control the generally more docile female wage-earners. But in 1812 the Prefect of the Rhône issued a decree (with prior authorization from the Minister of the Interior) that required all wage-earners, regardless of their sex, to have a livret; the number of women working in the Lyons silk industry was apparently too large to be overlooked.²⁴ In Paris, the available evidence shows only one small group of female workers subject to the livret: the director of the Imprimerie Impériale received permission in 1812 to require his female employees to carry the livret.²⁵

The government regarded the livret as essential to its efforts to control the wage-earning population. Its reasoning (and its fear) is best expressed in the words of

²⁴ Cochard, counsellor to Pr. Rhône, to Min. Int., 3 Jan. 1812; reply, 18 Jan. 1812; also a large poster to publicize the decree, 28 Jan. 1812; AN, F12 4648.

²⁵ Pr. Pol. to Inspecteur-général de l'Imprimerie Impériale, 4 Nov. 1812, AN, AJ17 2.

the Minister of the Interior. When in 1805 the Prefect of Loir-et-Cher suggested that agricultural labourers be required to carry livrets, the Minister rejected the idea in a passage which may be long, but is well worth quoting as a statement of government principles and policy:

. . . no restraint must be placed on individual liberty except such as public order and public interest compel or require.

We have not strayed from this rule in requiring workers in the mechanical trades to obtain livrets. A class of men so large, especially in the big manufacturing cities, always troublesome to public peace because it has little to lose from the overthrow of the social order, whose members can escape from prosecution and any penalties incurred by moving quickly from one place to another, often great distances away from their residence, should be subject to the special surveillance and control of the police; that was the first objective we had in view in establishing the livret.

It was also necessary to ensure that workers discharge their obligations toward their employers, and as their engagements are generally contracted for rather short periods, most often no more than several months or weeks, we thought that workers would fulfill them more loyally if they were obliged, before passing from one workshop to another, to have attestations from the master whose employment they were leaving. That was the second objective we hoped to attain by establishing the livret.²⁶

Since a wage-earner had to surrender his livret to his employer for the term of employment, he would be unable to quit a master without giving him sufficient notice. This, it was hoped, would keep a manufacturer or artisan from suddenly losing his best workers to an "unscrupulous" competitor who (especially in times of labour shortage) might offer a higher

²⁶Min. Int. to Pr. Loir-et-Cher, 19 vendémiaire an XIV (11 Oct. 1805), AN, F12 4648. The letter is copied word-for-word from a report prepared for the Minister by Costaz. The livret was never extended to the countryside: Abel Chatelain, "Le monde paysan et le livret ouvrier," Bibliothèque de la Révolution de 1848, vol. 15: Etudes (Nancy, 1953), pp. 64-71.

wage.²⁷

From the worker's point of view, the livret was at best merely a nuisance, and at worst a real shackle on his freedom. Whenever he changed jobs and (if he was a migrant worker) every time he arrived in or left Paris, he had to go to the police to have his livret counter-signed. This meant queuing up and losing time.²⁸ The police could check a worker's name in their files, and they did not hesitate to notify his employer if he had a record.²⁹ The livret also ensured that his past work record followed a worker about wherever he might go. It is true that regulations expressly forbade an employer to inscribe in it anything to the worker's discredit (although many did so nonetheless), but one Minister of the Interior suggested a way to circumvent the law; no rule forbade an employer to enter favourable comments, so that "a manufacturer's silence . . . indirectly proves . . . that the worker's services were not very satisfactory. . . ." ³⁰ Once placed in an employer's hands,

²⁷Instructions, 4 nivôse an XII (26 Dec. 1803), in Notice sur la législation, pp. 7-8.

²⁸Pr. Pol. to Inspecteur-général de l'Imprimerie Impériale, 2 Dec. 1812, AN, AJ17 2. Pasquier mentions in this letter that in general the waiting time was shortest on Friday and Saturday. The office was particularly crowded in November, owing to the departure of migrant construction workers.

²⁹Pr. Pol. to Inspecteur-général de l'Imprimerie Impériale, 4 Nov. 1812, AN, AJ17 2.

³⁰Circular, 16 Nov. 1809, in Notice sur la législation, pp. 17-18.

the livret was, in effect, hostage to his good behaviour; an employer might claim that the worker had not fulfilled his obligations and refuse to return it to him. He might even abuse his authority by declining to give it back to a worker who had found a better job elsewhere.³¹ François Léon, a Parisian tailor's assistant, was probably speaking for many besides himself when he told his police interrogators: "We are said to be free and no-one is; they want to force workers to carry livrets, [but] we used to get by very well without them."³²

The police did their best to enforce the regulations,³³ but many wage-earners managed to evade them. Public works contractors in Paris commented on the difficulty they had in forcing construction workers (especially stonemasons) to turn over their livrets. They added that since the law inflicted no penalty on masters who hired workers without a livret, many employers simply chose to ignore the whole problem.³⁴ The situation was even more chaotic in

³¹See complaints to the Min. Justice by Antoine Zäpfell, a weaver, 29 Dec. 1807, AN, BB18 790; and by Gruyère, a porcelain worker, 1 May 1812, AN, BB16 777.

³²Interrogation of François Léon, 12 floréal an XII (2 May 1804), AN, F7 6435, d. 9064.

³³The Prefect of Police directed police commissioners to make frequent visits of inspection to all shops, workshops, and manufactories: Circular on livrets d'ouvriers, 4 Aug. 1806, in Recueil officiel des circulaires émanées de la Préfecture de Police, vol. I: (1797-1848) (Paris, 1882). pp. 11-12.

³⁴Directeur-général des travaux publics de Paris to

the printing trade. Some masters insisted that their workers have a livret, while others openly flouted the law, and even hired men who had quit their previous job at short notice, leaving their livrets behind. There were workers who had a livret under a false name and others who had two and could lend one to a friend.³⁵ It was reported that "out of four thousand [printers] in Paris, there are barely twenty-five hundred who have livrets; masters, and especially the bad ones, mock the law."³⁶ Workers in the building and printing trades were more difficult to control than most, but a similar pattern of workers' hostility and employers' indifference to the regulations was probably common to other Parisian trades as well. This was certainly the situation in the provinces.³⁷

Because of the Law of 22 Germinal applied only to workers in manufactories, workshops, and construction yards,

Pr. Pol., 25 May 1811 and 10 August 1811, and reply, 1 June 1811, AN, F13 951.

³⁵ Reports on printing trade, 24 Sept. 1811, 4 Oct. 1811, and 11 May 1812, AN, F18 27. See also, Min. Justice to Inspecteur-général de l'Imprimerie Impériale, 8 May 1810, AN, AJ17 2.

³⁶ "Etat des ouvriers existans sans ouvrage à Paris," [1 May 1811], AN, F15 2877-2878.

³⁷ The Bureau consultatif des arts et manufactures claimed that in many communes "this measure [on livrets] is only partially executed, so that workers desert those manufactories which subject them to it and go to manufacturers who are less exigent." Minute of meeting of 22 Oct. 1807, AN, F12 4774. The Orléans Chamber of Commerce described similar conditions in their town: "Mémoire sur la situation du commerce et des manufactures d'Orléans," p. 54.

there were thousands of Parisian labourers not obliged to obtain a livret, like water-carriers, porters, bill-posters, gagné-denièrs, chimney-sweeps, and coal-heavers. The public authorities brought most of these under supervision with a series of police ordinances which required them to register with the police and to wear distinctive, numbered identity badges. For example, the police ordinance of 20 Pluviôse Year XII (10 February 1804), which regulated the sale of coal in Paris, imposed a badge on all coal-porters and -heavers. A man who wanted to work at these occupations had to present himself at the Prefecture of Police, armed with his passport and a special certificate attesting to his honesty, drawn up by the police commissioner of the Paris division in which he lived on the testimony of two character witnesses.³⁸ The police were shocked to discover in 1810 that despite these precautions, two coal-porters were wanted for evading conscription. They responded with an investigation of all seven hundred coal-porters in the capital, the production of a completely new set of badges, and a tightening of the regulations governing their issue.³⁹ In 1813, to ensure an even closer supervision, the police ordered the coal-porters to choose from among themselves one foreman (chef) for every hundred men, who would collaborate with the police administration. The coal-porters had to bear the cost, and each was required to contribute five centimes

³⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 2 March/1810, AN, F7 3133.

³⁹ Ibid.

a day to pay for the foremen's wages. One porter, with the appropriate nickname of Sensible ("Thin-skinned") circulated a petition against the project, until the police expelled him and two of his comrades from Paris.⁴⁰

There is very little information available for other kinds of workers who had to wear badges, but police regulation was undoubtedly as annoying to them as it was to those in the coal trade. A secret police agent reported in 1803 that "petty merchants, hucksters, day-labourers, and others" were complaining about the "constant impediments" to the free exercise of their trades:

Just recently there has appeared yet another regulation which required water-carriers . . . to wear a badge like those worn by market-porters. . . . we ought not to pass over this in silence, nor leave the police in ignorance of all these vexations, especially since they serve the interests of the enemies of celui d'en haut ("the man on high") and make him generally hated.⁴¹

When the police cracked down on newspaper peddlers in 1811, it was reported that they were all "unhappy" because they could not afford the five francs which they were charged for their badges.⁴² It must have been much easier to enforce the regulations on badges than those on livrets (since a sharp eye could always catch, for example, a bill-poster

⁴⁰ Report by Pr.^l Pol., 29 April 1813, AN, F7 3140.

⁴¹ Report by "Candide", 1 nivôse an XII (23 Dec. 1803), AN, F7 3688/22.

⁴² Report on printing trade, 23 June [1811], AN, F18
27.

who was not wearing his badge);⁴³ yet the police were unable to identify a water-carrier who dropped dead in 1811 in a customer's fifth-floor apartment.⁴⁴ This suggests that the regulations were not always rigorously enforced.

Domestic servants were another large group of workers who did not have to carry livrets. It was therefore to be expected that the police eventually sought to subject them as well to regulation. In 1810 Napoleon received a report which described the "insolence, insubordination, even disloyalty" of these men and women:

Most domestic servants no longer recognize, or at least pretend not to recognize, the duties which they contract towards their masters. In their eyes, domestic service is only an exchange of work, of service, in return for a financial remuneration, but not requiring on their part either self-effacement or the care, regard, and respect which masters have a right to expect from them.⁴⁵

Such complaints are probably as old as domestic service itself--they were certainly heard before 1789⁴⁶--but the clear implication of these remarks was (in the words of a Restoration Prefect of Police) that insubordination

⁴³ Report by police commissioner, Butte des Moulins division, 30 vendémiaire an XIII (22 Oct. 1804), APP, A/a 118, fol. 359.

⁴⁴ Report by police commissioner, Contrat Social division, 28 June 1808, APP, A/a 135, fol. 175-76.

⁴⁵ Report to Emperor, [1810], AN, AF IV 484, plaq. 3700.

⁴⁶ Mercier, Tableau de Paris, 1:100, 3:46.

resulted from "the influence of revolutionary maxims and the spirit of independence that has spread among the lower classes," and among domestic servants in particular.⁴⁷ Savary, Minister of Police in 1810, also believed that many domestic servants were convicted criminals: "There is no city in the world where one asks for less information than in Paris concerning a domestic servant who presents himself to enter household service."⁴⁸

The Imperial Decree of 3 October 1810 and a police ordinance of 22 November 1810 ordered all domestic servants in Paris to register with the police commissioner of their master's division of residence, who would then issue them with a certificate (bulletin). Any servant who failed to comply was liable to imprisonment for a term of one week to three months, and no master could legally hire a servant who did not have a certificate. Furthermore, any servant unemployed for more than one month could remain in the capital only with special police authorization.

These laws were not successful. The police delivered some fourteen thousand certificates in the last months of 1810 and a somewhat greater number in 1811, but each year thereafter the number they issued fell dramatically. Probably only a minority of domestic servants in Paris

⁴⁷Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 11 March 1817, AN, F7 9817.

⁴⁸Savary, Mémoires, 4:386.

actually registered with the police.⁴⁹ Resistance in this case came less from servants than from their employers. Registration might guarantee the reputation and honesty of a servant,⁵⁰ but on the whole, masters resented police intrusion in their households. In part, perhaps, it was a matter of decent manners: Joseph Fiévée, a journalist, found it "unthinkable that a well-born lady would consent to open a police booklet to look for a guarantee of good conduct by a girl presenting herself to enter her service."⁵¹ More important, however, was the suspicion that a registered servant was no more than a police agent in disguise. In fact, employers showed themselves reluctant to hire any servant who had obtained a certificate in conformity with the law.⁵² The police could hope to bully most wage-earners into carrying a livret or wearing a badge, but there was little to be done in the face of upper-class and bourgeois prejudices.

⁴⁹ "Etat numérique des bulletins de domestiques délivrés par année," AN, F7 9817. The figures for each year were, 1810: 14,403; 1811: 15,261; 1812: 5,197; 1813: 3,920; 1814: 1,928; 1815: 1,223; 1816: 967. These are the number of certificates issued, and not the number of individuals registered.

⁵⁰ Savary claimed that the police found 900 to 1000 individuals who were deserters from the army, escapees from prison, or in flight from the law in their own provinces: Savary, Mémoires, 4:387-89. Léonce Grasilier, "Les domestiques sous Napoléon et aujourd'hui," La nouvelle revue 59 (1923):63-68, gives no source for his statement that one-third of those who registered had had trouble with the police or been under police observation in the past. See also, report by Pr. Pol., 2 March 1811, AN, F7 3835.

⁵¹ Fiévée, Correspondance, 3:81.

⁵² Pasquier, Mémoires, 1:457. Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., Nov. 1815, AN, F7 9817. J.-V. Daubié, La femme pauvre au XIX^e siècle, (Paris, 1866), p. 113.

III

Another facet of police regulation was an attempt to control the labour market through state-sponsored placement offices. In the Old Régime, the Paris guilds had maintained a system of placement offices for those journeymen registered with them. There were also agencies known as bureaux d'adresses for domestic servants and wage-earners in trades not organized in guilds. A worker looking for a job might also make use of journeymen's associations (compagnonnages), personal contacts, middle-men who were usually keepers of lodging-houses or taverns, and certain traditional hiring places, like the Place de Grève where construction workers assembled every morning.⁵³ Although the Revolution swept away the guild offices, independent bureaux survived⁵⁴ along with all the informal means of finding work.

The Prefect of Police set up a placement office for bakers on 14 March 1803. Eleven months later, his ordinance on the workers' livret included a final clause which promised

⁵³ Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie, Office du travail, Le placement des employés, ouvriers et domestiques en France: son histoire, son état actuel (Paris and Nancy, 1893), pp. 31-52. Germain Martin, Lois, édits, arrêts et règlements sur les associations ouvrières au XVIII^e siècle (1700-1792) (Paris, 1900), pp. 149-62.

⁵⁴ In 1799, the peace officers in Paris were asked for "a general list of the offices where the workers in each profession register to find a job." "Compte des opérations du Bureau central du Canton de Paris pendant frimaire an 8" [Nov.-Dec. 1799], AN, BB3 91. There is also reference to an office for hairdressers in the minute of a report by peace officers Marlée and Mercier, 8 nivôse an X (29 Dec. 1801), AN, F7 3176.

to establish more placement offices "for those classes of workers for whom they shall be judged necessary." Ordinances issued between April and October 1804 authorized a series of offices for wage-earners in most trades, although weavers did not acquire one until 1814. By 1805 there were seventeen placement offices in Paris (three of which dealt only with bakers), each one run by a private citizen who was usually a former artisan in the trade involved, or an artisan's widow. A wage-earner who registered with an office had to pay a fee, which ranged from fifty centimes to two francs; only in the baking trade did employer and worker share the cost.⁵⁵ Some of these placement offices arranged apprenticeships and drew up the necessary legal documents, and at least one of them (for the metal trades) was also an agency for the buying and selling of businesses.⁵⁶ There were another twelve authorized offices for the hiring of domestic servants. (These were set up at an unspecified date, but it is most likely to have been in 1810.)⁵⁷

⁵⁵ There is a complete list of the offices with information on their addresses, business hours, and fees in Almanach des ouvriers pour l'an XIII de la République et le 1er de l'Empire français (Paris, n.d.), pp. 33-47. Some offices served several different categories of workers at the same time.

⁵⁶ Etrennes de leur préposé à messieurs les distillateurs, limonadiers, vinaigriers, détaillants d'eau-de-vie et de liqueurs, pâtisseries, restaurateurs, traiteurs et rôtisseurs pour l'année 1811 (Paris, 1811), p. 38. J.-A. Azur, Almanach des fabricans travaillant en matières d'or, argent et autres métaux (Paris, 1811), p. ii.

⁵⁷ Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 26 Dec. 1810. By 1815, five of these had gone out of business: Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., Nov. 1815, AN, F7 9817.

The only employers and workers legally required to use the official placement offices were bakers and hairdressers. The police insisted that public order and security justified special measures for these occupations. Bread was so important a commodity that journeymen bakers might become "in treacherous hands, the instrument for the greatest disorders." Moreover, they merited especially strict surveillance "because bakery employees have no [fixed] domicile and are for this reason less attached to society than other kinds of workers." As for hairdressers, they often worked in their clients' homes and came to know the apartments and the precious objects they contained, so that "danger accompanies them at all times."⁵⁸ Even the other placement offices may have been set up with an eye to their potential help in police surveillance. According to Pasquier, Dubois had seen them as more than mere employment agencies, for "it was hoped that all these employment bureaux would be useful to the secret police," a hope which proved to be disappointed.⁵⁹

Although the police had no legal right to suppress unauthorized placement offices, they tried their best to do

⁵⁸ "Observations et opinion du ... Préfet de Police," 12 germinal an XIII (2 April 1804), AN, F7 3024, d. 4.

⁵⁹ Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 26 Dec. 1810, AN, F7 9817. This detailed report on placement offices is reprinted by Georges Bourgin, "Contribution à l'histoire du placement et du livret en France," Revue politique et parlementaire 71 (1912):105-26.

so--and failed. Master bakers, for example, were warned by their syndics that, though they were free to hire a journeyman wherever they might find one, he must at least obtain a certificate issued by a recognized placement office; yet many bakers apparently ignored the regulation.⁶⁰ The Prefect of Police reported in 1809 that his control of the baking trade was thwarted by "clandestine placers" who were usually innkeepers, and whom he accused of exploiting clients by charging three to eighteen francs to find them jobs. "Bad characters" among journeymen made use of their services and thereby managed to evade police surveillance.⁶¹ There were also private offices, known as agences d'affaires, which found places for domestic servants and which the police were unable to shut down.⁶² The problem existed in other trades as well. For instance, in 1811 the police arrested a tool-sharpener for placing journeymen shoemakers in defiance of police regulations.⁶³ But the police were at first willing to tolerate one woman who ran an unauthorized placement office for women in the needle trades,

⁶⁰Syndics to Parisian bakers, 28 ventôse an XV. [sic] (19 March, probably 1805), in Tableau des boulangers de Paris, autorisés pour l'exercice de l'an 1814 (Paris, 1814), pp. 48-55.

⁶¹Report by Pr. Pol., 31 March 1809, AN, F7 3130. For the arrest of clandestine placers in the baking trade, reports by Pr. Pol., 29 Oct. 1806 and 10 February 1814, AN, F7 3124 and 3142.

⁶²Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., Nov. 1815 and 11 March 1817, AN, F7 9817.

⁶³Report by Pr. Pol., 21 March 1811, AN, F7 3135.

at least until she began to offer other services (like advice on investments) and to cheat her clients.⁶⁴

Most authorized placement offices were unsuccessful. Two closed almost immediately, and the rest were soon demanding that their services be made compulsory in all trades. According to the police, only the offices for butchers, grocers, porkbutchers, and tailors enjoyed a moderate activity, while those for wine-merchants, restaurateurs, jewellers, and shoemakers also proved useful. Many workers, however, (especially in the building trades) continued to hire themselves out in public squares. Others, like tapestry-workers, saddlers, and paper-workers, did not really need placement offices since they rarely changed jobs. Hatters and gauze-makers knew where to find work without recourse to an agency. And as for printers, they were too unruly to submit to any authority.⁶⁵ Servants, unless they were new to the city, preferred to find places through their personal contacts; besides, masters hesitated to hire servants who had registered in offices under police supervision, regarding them "as so many spies."⁶⁶ In general, an employer came to a placement office only when he was unable to find a worker elsewhere,

⁶⁴ Reports by Pr. Pol., 18 and 25 Feb., and 1 March 1807, AN, F7 3125.

⁶⁵ Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 26 Dec. 1810, AN, F7 9817.

⁶⁶ Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., Nov. 1815, AN, F7 9817.

and the best worker "blushes to use an office . . . which he regards as intended for newcomers or for workers with no other means."⁶⁷ It may also be that at least some workers resented the petty tyranny of those in charge of the placement offices. It is undoubtedly dangerous to generalize from a single case, but there survives an indignant letter written by a hairdresser's assistant to denounce the director of his placement office. He claimed that the director was always insulting and often brutal--he had once knocked two hairdressers to the ground. He also complained that the fees were too high, since a worker without thirty sous to pay for an "entrance card" could not use the office and therefore had to remain unemployed or work at some other occupation.⁶⁸

Police efforts to control the hiring of wage-earners thus fell far short of their ambitions. Employers and employees sometimes used placement offices and sometimes simply ignored them. Despite sporadic arrests, the police could not suppress alternative hiring practices and, in any case, lacked the authority to do so. Under the Empire, and again in the first years of the Restoration, there were several schemes for the formation of a single company with

⁶⁷"Observations et opinion du ... Préfet de Police," 12 germinal an XIII (2 April 1804), AN, F7 3024, d. 4.

⁶⁸Louis, hairdresser's assistant, to Min. Justice, 28 June 1806, AN, BB18 788.

a monopoly to place workers throughout the country. These came to nothing because the police found them to be impractical, and because they feared that one man might find himself in a position to direct the activities of three million French workers "from the depths of his office in Paris."⁶⁹ The Napoleonic placement offices survived in Paris until abolished by the Provisional Government in 1848. Napoleon III restored them in 1852, putting them under municipal rather than police authority.⁷⁰

IV

The livret and placement offices, for all their deficiencies, both outlived the régime which established them, but there was another attempt at regulation which proved a failure from the start. The police ordinance of 26 September 1806, which fixed the length of the workday in the Paris building trades, is little known and usually misinterpreted. Far from setting limits to the hours of work, as Godechot (among others) has suggested,⁷¹ it was intended to force a longer workday on recalcitrant workers.

⁶⁹ Robert Marquant, "Les bureaux de placement en France sous l'Empire et la Restauration: essais d'établissement d'un monopole," Revue d'histoire économique et sociale 40 (1962):200-37.

⁷⁰ Ministère du commerce, Les associations professionnelles ouvrières, 1:31-34.

⁷¹ Godechot, Les institutions de la France, p. 669.

Moreover, the ordinance was only one phase in a long struggle which pitted the government against construction workers, and which the workers won. What was at dispute was the most solid gain which Parisian construction workers had made during the Revolution. Prior to 1789, custom and law required from them a workday of fourteen hours in the summer (from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., but including two one-hour meal breaks) and eight to ten hours (including breaks) in the winter, depending on the hours of light. At some point--probably during the strikes in the spring of 1791--the building trades adopted a much shorter workday with no reduction in pay. The hours of work were henceforth from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. (including two breaks) in the summer, and rarely exceeded eight hours in the winter.⁷²

Under Napoleon, contractors and government bureaucrats considered the maintenance of the shorter workday a perpetuation of revolutionary anarchy. They began to press for a return to the longer day, not only in the public interest but also (they claimed) for the good of the workers themselves. Vaudroyer, a government architect, said that Parisian construction workers, "having a great

⁷² There is no evidence to indicate when the new hours were adopted, but 1791 is the most likely date. I have discounted Levacher-Duplessis, Requête au Roi, p. 25n. who seems to put the date a year or two later: "this usurpation was authorized by the National Convention, so that they might meet in the sections where they went to exercise their sovereignty at forty sous a head." For details on the workday prior to 1789, see Conseil des batimens civils to Min. Int. par interim, 7 Sept. 1809, AN, F13 521.

deal of free time and a great deal of money, spend the latter to while away the former, they are less zealous on the job, . . . a building takes one-third more time to construct than before, and it costs far more."⁷³ The Prefect of the Seine⁷⁴ concurred: "The time which he does not spend at work, he spends in dissipation or debauchery, and always to the detriment of his family."⁷⁴ More work, it was generally contended, would pay the worker more; and one anonymous official actually calculated that twenty thousand construction workers each lost three hundred hours of work every six months, for a total loss in pay of two million francs.⁷⁵ These figures are highly questionable, but, more to the point, the whole argument is patently specious. As Vaudroyer noted, although contractors might at first have to offer higher wages for a longer day, he expected that after a few months wages would fall back to the previous level. All complaints that building costs had increased since introduction of the shorter day were, in effect, arguments that workers were paid too much for too little work. The hypothetical two million francs to be gained by a return to longer hours were much more likely to enrich contractors than to find their way into the pockets of construction workers.

⁷³Vaudroyer to Min. Int., 1 germinal an XIII-(22 March 1805), AN, F13 521.

⁷⁴Pr. Seine to Min. Int., 21 thermidor an XIII (9 Aug. 1805), AN, F13-521.

⁷⁵Untitled, undated scrap of paper, AN, F13 521.

In August 1805 architects tried to speed up work on the Tuileries Palace by forcing the workers to accept longer hours; they had to give up in the face of resistance.⁷⁶

This was apparently not an isolated incident, for in February 1806 one official noted:

Several times, a return to the old hours has been attempted, but we have seen as many as several hundred workers meet together and then disperse to put a stop to work in yards where old and good labourers were peacefully at work.

He thought it unlikely that construction workers (most of whom had never worked under the old hours) would ever quietly accept modifications to a workday which had been in effect now for fifteen years.⁷⁷ The Minister of the Interior, however, was determined to legislate the restoration of the pre-Revolutionary workday, and he summoned a special council of government architects and officials to draft an appropriate law. The council met twice (on 13 and 20 June 1806), and, showing remarkable optimism, announced that it expected no serious opposition except from a handful of workers "whose habits of idleness and debauchery make them insensible to feelings of duty." It recommended simply that the police ordinances of the Old Régime regulating the workday, which had never legally been withdrawn, be restored unchanged. The council also suggested, however, that publication of the regulations be postponed until the opening of the next

⁷⁶Pr. Seine to Min. Int., 21 thermidor an XIII (9 Aug. 1805), AN, F13 521.

⁷⁷Report by Barbier-Neuville to Min. Int., 22 Feb. 1806, AN, F13 521.

building season in 1807. But the Minister, for his own reasons, chose to take action towards the close of the current season.⁷⁸

The outcome of his decision was the police ordinance of 26 September 1806. It established a thirteen-hour workday in the summer (1 April to 30 September) from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., including two one-hour meal breaks beginning at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. The shorter winter workday was to begin at 7 a.m. and continue until sunset, with a single meal break between 10 and 11 a.m. This was not a complete return to pre-Revolutionary custom, since the summer and winter workdays were extended by only one hour. There was no suggestion that higher wages ought to be paid for this additional time. Moreover, the regulation applied to all construction workers in Paris, not just to those employed in public works.⁷⁹

If the Minister of the Interior was eager for such a law, the Paris police were less confident of its success. The Prefect of Police warned (or so he later recalled) that

⁷⁸"Extrait du registre des délibérations du Conseil des bâtiments civils," 13 and 20 June 1806, AN, F13 521. Conseil des bâtiments civils to Charles Norry, 9 June 1806, BHVP, Ms CP 3413.

⁷⁹The ordinance also established a year-round workday for joiners from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. (or 8 p.m. indoors) and for locksmiths from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., with two one-hour breaks for meals in both cases.

it would prove difficult to enforce.⁸⁰ His fears were justified. The ordinance was posted over the weekend of 4-5 October, and immediately aroused the city's construction workers who muttered, according to police reports, that the authorities were treating them "like beasts of burden." On Monday morning, 6 October, the reading of the new regulations at all public works sites set off a widespread strike. In contrast, private construction continued untroubled because the contractors made no attempt to enforce the ordinance.⁸¹

This was certainly the biggest strike to take place in Napoleonic Paris--public works employed more than four thousand men, although not all of these took part--and it was probably the most bitterly fought. Some workers held out for a week, even if others resumed work within days. The police trailed agitators to their homes and arrested them in bed; the total number of arrests may have exceeded two hundred. The workers for the most part tended to blame the contractors, but someone stuck up on the Tuileries a "libelous poster" attacking the Minister of the Interior

⁸⁰Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 18 Feb. 1809, AN, F13 521.

⁸¹For course of strike, see police bulletins, 6 and 15 Oct. 1806. AN, F7 3754 and AF IV 1498; report by Pr. Pol., 10 Oct. 1806, inside bulletin of same date. AN, AF IV 1498; minutes of reports by peace officers Chabanety, Veyrat, Foudras, and Lecler, Oct. 1806, AN, F7 3188. For case of Pierre Didier Lasalle, arrested handyman, see his dossier, AN, F7 6483, d. 448. For discussions among ministers, see Cambacérès to Napoleon, 7 and 9 Oct. 1806, in Lettres inédites, 2:355-57.

and the Prefect of Police, and one worker, a handyman at the Corps Législatif, was arrested for "revolutionary remarks" ("propos insurrectionnel"). Many workers, the police reported, believed that if the Emperor had been in Paris (instead of campaigning in Prussia) he would never have permitted such an ordinance.

Official reaction to the strike was concern but not alarm. Dubois rejected the use of mounted patrols, on the grounds that these would make the workers think they were feared. Fouché, Minister of Police, disapproved of the ordinance, which he found "untimely," but he agreed with the Minister of the Interior that it would be impolitic (and possibly even "dangerous") to back down now. A compromise solution to the dispute began to emerge as early as Tuesday, when contractors and architects meeting at the Prefecture of Police said that they had never had any intention of doing away with the goûter or repas sur pierre, a traditional snack not mentioned in the ordinance. The workers, in any case, were soon trickling back to work, extremely bitter but weary of the struggle, and the strike was over by Tuesday 14 October. The workers took only a single lunch break (from 10 to 11 a.m.) as the ordinance directed, but they also stopped work between 2:30 and 3 p.m. for the traditional goûter.

Police reports thus indicate that the strike ended

in compromise; yet the workers managed to change the settlement into a victory. It is not at all clear how this happened. Five years later, a government official recalled somewhat vaguely the events of 1806:

. . . there were murmurs, meetings, and resistance to which it was felt necessary to yield because the Emperor was then in Germany at the head of his armies. The Minister of Police, as far as I can remember, suspended the execution of the decree . . . and the measure was adjourned until a more favourable occasion.⁸²

In fact, the ordinance remained legally in force⁸³ but there was apparently no attempt to execute it, presumably because of continued disobedience by construction workers. In February 1809, a new Minister of the Interior considered reimposing the ordinance. He urged the Prefect of Police to require every construction worker, on arrival in Paris in the spring, to pledge himself to submit to the regulation as a condition of his receiving permission to work in the capital. Dubois replied by pointing out the flaws in the plan. Did the government have the strength or determination to carry out the decree in the face of opposition? Would the contractors hold firm in case of a strike? And was the pledge to be demanded from the many workers resident in Paris the year round? The Minister gave in to Dubois.⁸⁴

⁸²Happe, architecte commissaire de la petite voirie, to Pr. Pol., 25 Jan. 1811, AN, F7 9787.

⁸³It is quoted as if still in force by Alletz, Dictionnaire de police moderne pour toute la France, 4 vols. (Paris, 1820), 3:125-26.

⁸⁴Min. Int. to Pr. Pol., 6 Feb. 1809 and reply 18 Feb. 1809, AN, F13 521.

This pessimism proved justified in June 1809, when work on the Arc de Triomphe was interrupted when some workers agreed to a longer workday in return for higher wages, only to encounter the violent opposition of their comrades. The authorities dropped the idea, and the Minister of Police suggested that it would be more politic to hire additional workers instead.⁸⁵

But pressure for the regulation of hours continued. A memorandum which called for the fixing of both hours and wages as a panacea to end riots, brawls, and strikes by construction workers won the approval of the Conseil des Bâtiments Civils in September 1809.⁸⁶ Contractors in masonry and carpentry petitioned for regulation in January 1810.⁸⁷ In mid-March 1810 there was a strike by carpenters working on the Arc de Triomphe during which the workers made exorbitant wage demands.⁸⁸ After the strike had been broken, Napoleon summoned a special council to meet at the

⁸⁵Police bulletin, 10 June 1809, AN, F7 3763 and AF IV 1506. Min. Int. to Cambacérès and to Pr. Pol., 9 June 1809, AN, F7 6528, d. 1580.

⁸⁶J. Rissé, "Mémoire sur les moyens de prévenir dorénavant parmi les ouvriers de bâtiments les attroupements, les rixes sur les ateliers et la cessation des travaux," 11 June 1809 and Conseil des bâtiments civils to Min. Int., 7 Sept. 1809, AN, F13 521.

⁸⁷"Extrait d'une pétition adressé à M. Conseiller d'Etat, Préfet, par les Entrepreneurs de Maçonnerie," 25 Jan. 1810, and petition by délégués et électeurs des maîtres charpentiers de Paris; 29 Jan. 1810; and Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 2 March 1810, AN, F13 521.

⁸⁸See chapter nine, and appendix 2, no. 60.

Ministry of the Interior on 28 March 1810 to make its recommendations for a definitive solution to labour problems in the building trades. Dubois reiterated his opposition to state intervention, but he nevertheless presented a decree which met the Emperor's intentions. The council finally adopted the text of a decree not only to re-establish the workday of the Old Régime but also to fix wages and to set up trade associations to control construction workers.⁸⁹ The project then went to the Conseil d'Etat,⁹⁰ where it languished for a whole year.

It was the spring of 1811 before the Conseil d'Etat considered the proposed decree, which it adopted in somewhat modified form on 22 March. The new law established trade associations for master carpenters, joiners, locksmiths, masons (who included stonemasons, plasterers, and navvies), and building contractors. Employers had to keep a register of their workers, which was to be supervised by officials of the relevant association. Every April, the Prefect of Police would fix an "average" wage to be paid during the next twelve months. The pre-Revolutionary workday (and not merely the somewhat shorter version imposed in 1806) was

⁸⁹ Untitled minute of meeting, 28 March 1810 and report by Pr. Pol. same date, AN, F13 521. Rapport et projets de décrets tendant à régulariser le prix des journées et les heures de travail des ouvriers en bâtiments à Paris (Paris, 23 June 1810).

⁹⁰ Min. Int. to Directeur-général des Ponts et Chaussées, 3 May 1810, AN, F13 521.

re-established. These sweeping measures received Napoleon's signature on 25 March 1811. Yet the decree was never actually put into effect--and indeed was never even published. A laconic note in the margin of the original (and sole) manuscript copy states only that the law, having been signed, was withdrawn by His Majesty for reconsideration "in a moment of leisure."⁹¹ Lanzac de Laborie has suggested either that Napoleon was reluctant to resurrect the guilds in the form of trade associations or that he feared workers' discontent.⁹² These are both possible explanations of his actions, but the documents are silent as to his motives.

There is yet another mystery connected with this aborted decree. Even as the Conseil d'Etat was considering the proposed law (which it adopted on 22 March), the Prefect of Police and the Minister of the Interior were discussing a possible re-issue of the unsuccessful ordinance of 26 September 1806. Pasquier, who became Prefect of Police in 1810, was, unlike his predecessor, an ardent proponent of fixed hours. On 5 March 1811 he forwarded to the Minister a petition on the subject from master carpenters and masons, lending it his complete support. The Minister subsequently asked the Director of Public Works to draw up a regulation restoring the pre-1789 hours. It was ready on 28 March,

⁹¹The signed document is to be found in AN, AF IV 4195, plaq. 4195.

⁹²Lanzac de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 6:352.

but the police postponed action, because the Prefect felt that it was too late in the year to impose a change, since the spring building season had already begun. All this seems quite inexplicable. What was the point of these efforts, since the Emperor in fact signed a decree on 25 March and then withdrew it? The Minister's proposal, it is true, did not include any mention of trade associations such as those established by the decree of 25 March, nor did it aim to fix wages. Perhaps he preferred a more limited regulation to that approved by the Conseil d'Etat (although that decree was also his work). If so, he might have persuaded Napoleon to suppress the decree of 25 March in favour of his alternative plan. But all this is pure speculation, and it is certainly strange that nowhere in the surviving correspondence between the Minister and the Prefect is there any mention of the work of the Conseil d'Etat. In any case, having decided against any action at the start of the 1811 building season, the Minister waited until December to present a decree re-establishing the pre-Revolutionary hours for the Emperor's consideration.⁹³

No subsequent action was ever taken by the government in this matter. Building contractors stayed dissatisfied

⁹³ Petition by contractors to Min. Int., 20 Feb. 1811; Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., 5 March 1811; report to Min. Int. by Bruyère, Directeur des travaux publics de Paris, 28 March 1811 (an earlier draft is dated 21 March); Min. Int. to Pr. Pol., 4 April 1811; reply, 8 April 1811; Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., 25 Nov. 1811; report by Min. Int. to Emperor, Dec. 1811; AN, F13 709. This set of documents was apparently

with the shorter workday, while their workers remained determined to beat back any attempted return to the past. During the First Restoration, some employers tried to force a longer workday on their men, who responded with a strike.⁹⁴ Once more, in 1817, the contractors presented their case for longer hours to the government.⁹⁵ But they had already lost it in 1806. The construction workers of Paris had clearly demonstrated that whatever the government's attitude, there were some regulations which they were unwilling to accept--and collective strike action enabled them to win their point.

unknown to Lanzaac de Laborie when he discussed the decree of 25 March.

⁹⁴ Police reports, 25, 28, 29 June 1814, AN, 40 AP 8.

⁹⁵ Levacher-Duplessis, Requête au Roi, p. 25.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WORKERS' ORGANIZATIONS

Brave aspirans remplies de zele
L'eun et l'autre soyez soumis
Aux compagnon soyez fidelle¹
Ce sont vos frere et vos amis

I

On 14 June 1791, Le Chapelier rose in the National Assembly to present a law. "There are no more corporations within the State," he declared; "there is nothing other than individual interest and the general interest." He accordingly condemned all organizations intermediate between the individual and the state, in particular journeymen's associations and workers' mutual aid societies. He argued that the nation alone should help the needy and that independent professional associations tended to re-establish the abolished guilds and to restore "privilege." He further attacked them as responsible for the current wave of labour agitation for higher wages in Paris. Article 2 of the Le Chapelier Law explicitly forbade citizens who exercised the same profession or occupation (whether contractors,

¹"Chayet De Chansont-nouvelle des Braves Compagnon fai par moi Benoit Droint," Angoulême, 25 Sept. 1808, AN, F7 4236, d. 10.

employers, workers or journeymen) to meet together in their common interest and elect officers, draw up regulations, or pass resolutions. Other articles (to be discussed in the next chapter) upheld "freedom to work" by outlawing labour strikes.² Le Chapelier went to the guillotine in 1794, but his law outlived him by ninety years. Napoleon added to its interdiction against workers' organizations with article 291 of the Penal Code of 1810, which banned all associations of more than twenty persons "whose intention is to meet every day or on certain days to deal with religious, literary, political or other matters" unless they obtained special police permission. This law, it must be stressed, was in addition to and did not supersede the Le Chapelier Law, which remained in force.³

Workers' organizations, however, could not be suppressed so easily. Napoleonic Paris may well have been the most policed city in Europe, yet here the outlawed journeymen's associations survived, while mutual aid societies flourished with middle-class sponsorship and police approval. Furthermore, there were customs constituting what we may call "informal" organizations since they lacked any formal structure or written regulations. The most simple of these were casual:

²Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860, 1st series, vol. 17 (Paris, 1887):210-11. See Edmond Soreau, "La loi Le Chapelier," *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* 8 (1931):287-314.

³Office du travail, Les associations professionnelles, 1:19-20.

meetings of workers gathering together to drink and to talk, as workers usually did after receiving their weekly pay.⁴

Printers, for example, regularly drank at the Mouton Tavern on the rue de la Parcheminerie,⁵ while bakers frequented the Café de la Selle, across from the central grain market.⁶

Such informal meetings were a sign of solidarity among men in the same occupation,⁷ and could, moreover, easily turn to discussion of matters of common interest--which is why the Napoleonic police were so careful to keep an eye on them.

The bienvenue ("welcome") was another old custom which survived in many workshops during the Napoleonic period. This was a traditional initiation fee which a newly-hired journeyman was expected to pay on beginning work in the shop; it usually went to buy drinks for his comrades, although printers deposited the money in the fund which they maintained for mutual aid.⁸ In June 1802 fourteen weavers drew up "a sort of decree by which they imposed diverse conditions

⁴ Report by Pr. Pol., 28 vendémiaire an IX (20 Oct. 1800), AN, AF IV 1329.

⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 9 prairial an VIII (29 May 1800), AN, F7 6252, d. 5008.

⁶ Minute of report by peace officers Boudon and Renard, 10 floréal-4 prairial an X (30 April-24 May 1802), AN, F7 3177.

⁷ See observations by Geremek, Le salariat, pp. 114-15.

⁸ Antoine-François Momoro, Traité élémentaire de l'imprimerie, ou le manuel de l'imprimeur (Paris, 1793), pp. 73-74. Momoro says the bienvenue was thirty sous.

on their comrades and fixed sums to be paid by them on entering a manufactory of workshop." The workers at Richard-Lenoir's manufactory gave a hostile reception to an emissary from the group, and the police had to disperse an angry gathering at another manufactory where there was an attempt to force two new workers to pay up.⁹ The police arrested five workers in porcelain in 1807 for mistreating a fellow worker: having already paid twenty-four francs, he refused to pay another six, so they threatened him, damaged his potter's wheel, and nailed his tools to the floor.¹⁰

The regulations that Oppenheim, a Paris jeweller, posted in his large workshop in 1809 provided for journeymen to pay the bienvenue on the Sunday following their reception into the workshop.¹¹

In addition to these get-togethers to drink, many Parisian workers frequently met in customary hiring places. The hiring places--in markets, public squares, inns, taverns, and even churches--had developed in the Middle Ages wherever there was a sizeable labour force and a fluctuating demand for it.¹² It was in effect an informal organization which

⁹ Minute of report by peace officers Marlée and Mercier, 6 messidor an X (25 June 1802), AN, F7 3178. Report by Pr. Pol., same date, AN, F7 3830.

¹⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 4 Sept. 1807, AN, F7 3126.

¹¹ "Un règlement d'atelier en 1809," in Julien Hayem, Mémoires et documents pour servir à l'histoire du commerce et de l'industrie en France, vol. 1 (Paris, 1911):137-44.

¹² Geremek, Le salariat, pp. 127-31. Fagniez, Etudes

enabled workers to consult each other and to enforce collective decisions in their common interest. For instance, locksmiths gathered every Sunday in the neighbourhood of the Temple, the old Templar fortress in central Paris. A police report describes a typical Sunday in the spring of 1803, with many journeymen and a few masters drinking in the local taverns, where they grumbled about the long workday, low wages, and high cost of living; there was even a minor brawl. It was therefore more than a labour market--it was also a holiday, and a chance to gossip and complain.¹³ Construction workers, especially masons, waited every morning on the Place de Grève, in front of the Hôtel de Ville, to be hired for a day or sometimes a week by contractors who came looking for labourers.¹⁴ In eighteenth-century Paris, construction painters met every Sunday after mass in their guild chapel at a nearby wineshop where the rue des Arcis met the quay. The Revolution swept away both guild and Church, but these assemblies continued as a weekly labour market, still known as "the chapel" (la chapelle). The market gave workers a means to control wages, for no employer dared to offer, any more than a painter dared to accept, an unusually low wage. It gradually became so powerful an institution in the course of the nineteenth century that any worker hired outside of sur l'industrie, pp. 75-76.

¹³Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 29 vendémiaire an IX (21 Oct. 1800), AN, F7 6268, d. 5440. Report by a police agent, 29 germinal an XI (19 April 1803), AN, F7 6334, d. 7064.

¹⁴Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., March 1816, AN, F7 9817.

it found himself treated as an outcast by his comrades.¹⁵ Journeymen bakers/traditionally lodged in certain inns where masters came to hire them. The prospective employer usually discovered that all residents at a particular inn had decided among themselves on a minimum wage and if he refused to meet it he was unable to induce anyone to work for him. Sometimes, too, the journeymen even manhandled a recalcitrant employer. It was no use for him to hurry on to another inn; a messenger would have sped ahead to ensure that he receive much the same reception there as at the first.¹⁶ No wonder that (as we have seen in the previous chapter) the government tried to undermine these labour markets with its authorized placement offices--and no wonder that so many workers were anxious to maintain their ancient customs and to avoid using the offices.

The compagnonnage was a traditional journeymen's association which drew members from certain skilled crafts. Its exact origins are unknown, but it probably emerged in the twelfth or thirteenth century out of religiously oriented

¹⁵ Office du travail, Les associations professionnelles, 4:319-22.

¹⁶ Chanteloup's report to the Chambre syndicale patronale [des boulangers], in J. Barberet, Le travail en France: monographies professionnelles, 7 vols. (Paris, 1886-1890), 1:394. He is here describing the situation in 1803.

confraternities. It came to the attention of public authorities in the fifteenth century for its rôle in labour disputes, and the Sorbonne condemned it in 1655 for "impious, sacriligious and superstitious practices." Thus, by the seventeenth century at the latest, the compagnonnage had appeared in its distinctive form as a formal organization of wage-earners in a particular trade, bound together by a mysterious, secret ritual.¹⁷ The compagnonnage had three general purposes. First, it defended the interests of journeymen against their masters. (It had grown up within the guild structure as a response to the increasing dominance of the master-craftsmen.) Second, the compagnonnage helped members with aid in case of sickness or accident, and it found jobs for the unemployed. Third, it was inextricably connected to the Tour de France, a traditional journey around the country during which the young journeyman could perfect his skills. Upon arrival in a strange city, the traveller could be assured of finding lodging, companions, and a job at the local headquarters of his association, the cayenne, under the benevolent care of the mère (mother) who ran it. A tailor's assistant described the route of his tour to the police in 1804: "I then left Paris three years ago; I was in Orléans, Tours, Angers, Nantes, La Rochelle, Rochefort, and Bordeaux. I spent only one year on my trip and have been

¹⁷ E. Martin Saint-Léon, Le compagnonnage: son histoire, ses coutumes, ses règlements et ses rites (Paris, 1901), pp. xvi-xvii, 13-15, 23, 31, 40.

back in Paris for two years."¹⁸

There were two rival federations of associations: the Devoir de Liberté and the Compagnons du Devoir. The former included stonemasons (known as compagnon étrangers), joiners (gavots) and locksmiths. The second federation was much larger, grouping twenty-six different crafts, among which were stonemasons (compagnons passants), joiners, (devorants), locksmiths, carpenters (bons drilles), tanners, hatters, roofers, and many others. There was also an independent association of hatters who called themselves droguins or bons enfans. Furthermore, in 1807 shoemakers learned the secret rites of the compagnonnage from a tanner and thereupon organized their own association which the others refused to recognize; they called themselves braves. The possibilities for conflict between these groups are evident. Stonemasons might be étrangers or passans, joiners were divided between gavots and devorants, hatters were split into compagnons du devoir and droguins, and there were two groups of locksmiths. All hated the shoemakers, and in every occupation members of the compagnonnage disdained those who refused to join. This was especially true of the bons drilles among carpenters, who persecuted non-members, known as renards.¹⁹

¹⁸Police interrogation of François Léon, 12 floréal an XII (2 May 1804). AN, F7 6435, d. 9064. See also Mauco, Les Migrations, p. 12.

¹⁹Martin Saint-Léon, Le compagnonnage, pp. 88-96.

The National Assembly first had to deal with the problems posed by the compagnonnage in 1790. Dupont de Nemours forwarded to the Constitutional Committee a petition sent to him and purportedly drawn up by Parisian workers. "Journeymen of all occupations" complained that the compagnons du devoir harried those who were not members and even attacked them on the public highways. They cited recent disturbances among hatters and called for an end to "this would-be corporation."²⁰ That same year, carpenters who were renards denounced the bons drilles for infringing on their individual rights by refusing to permit them to work in Paris and other cities: "They are stopped everywhere by the compagnons . . . who rob them, beat them, and even kill large numbers of them on the highways and in the cities where they stop to work."²¹ This explains Le Chapelier's impassioned denunciation of the compagnonnage as a source of trouble.

It is difficult to assess the impact of the Le Chapelier Law. Since the repression of previous centuries had failed, there is little reason to believe that one more piece of legislation was effective. At best, it merely drove the compagnonnage underground for a decade, for it began to

²⁰ Undated petition, forwarded 31 March 1790, AN, D IV 51, no. 1488.

²¹ Quoted in full by Martin, Les associations ouvrières, pp. 227-29. The original petition, dated 12 May 1790, ought to be in AN, D IV 51, but appears to be missing.

reappear in the Napoleonic period. The Paris police reported in July 1802 on attempts by journeymen joiners, carpenters and hatters, among others, "to re-establish among themselves an old custom which existed before the Revolution."²² Historians, however, have consistently discounted the importance of the compagnonnage in the Napoleonic capital. Coornaert, the leading student of the organization, has given a figure of only 358 members in the whole city, but he has misread a document which refers only to shoemakers.²³ Other police sources from 1807 mention eight hundred droguins and sixty compagnons du devoir among Parisian hatters and forty compagnons among blacksmiths.²⁴ The Prefect of Police also commented in 1807 on the considerable strength of the compagnonnage in the building trades of Paris.²⁵ Consequently, an estimate of as many as two or three thousand compagnons in Napoleonic Paris does not seem unreasonable.

Although this is a small number of compagnons compared to the larger mass of all Parisian workers, they were

²² Report by Pr. Pol., 30 messidor an X (19 July 1802), AN, F7 3830.

²³ Emile Coornaert, Le compagnonnage en France du moyen age à nos jours (Paris, 1966), p. 59. The original document is a report by Pr. Pol., 11 February 1813, AN, F7 4236, d. 5.

²⁴ Reports by Pr. Pol., 25 Sept. and 6 Nov. 1807, AN, F7 3126 and 3127.

²⁵ "Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, AN, F7 4334 and F12 502.

concentrated in a few trades where they were a constant source of ferment. Most of them were young men, and usually seasonal or temporary immigrants to the city. Police reports give the birthplace of fifty-two compagnons arrested for brawling (twelve carriers, nine shoemakers, nine hatters, eight blacksmiths, seven carpenters, and seven stonemasons) and the age of forty-eight of them. One was from the Department of the Seine and two others from the Seine-et-Oise which encircled it; all the rest were born in the provinces. They ranged in age from eighteen to thirty-five, the median age being twenty-four.²⁶ All were presumably unmarried, for otherwise they could not have been full members of the compagnonnage. Thus, in May 1813 the Prefect of Police allowed Baraky, a shoemaker expelled from Paris the previous February as a leader of the compagnonnage in his trade, to return to the city to get married, since "there is reason to believe that the exile he has just endured has led him to renounce an association of which, being married, he could no longer be a member. . . ." ²⁷ The compagnons often lived together in lodging-houses reserved for their group, as a sort of brotherhood of young, immigrant bachelors. When the police arrested Buchalet in 1809 for running an unauthorized lodging-house he won acquittal in court with the claim that he was not a lodging-house keeper. He insisted that the beds

²⁶ Reports by Pr. Pol., 21 Jan., 25 Sept., 9 Oct., 6 Nov., 20 Nov. 1807, 3 Feb., 3 March, 3 Nov. 1809, 16 Feb. and 30 March 1810, AN, F7 3125-3133.

²⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 6 May 1813, AN, F7 3141.

in his house actually belonged to the stonemasons who slept in them and who were members of a society spread throughout France; any member coming to Paris had the right to sleep there.²⁸

The compagnons maintained strict rules of secrecy concerning their organization. When in 1821 the Société Philantropique de Paris asked for information from the journeymen of the capital, they encountered a conspiracy of silence and reported that "no-one has yet been able or willing to give us positive information about the compagnonnage. It is covered with an impenetrable veil. It is probably a species of free-masonry which will always escape our investigations."²⁹ In 1813, however, the police arrested six compagnon shoemakers in Paris and seized their papers. The subsequent police report gives a glimpse into their activities. According to the police, the compagnonnage of shoemakers was "a combination against master shoemakers and against workers in this occupation who are not members of their society." It masqueraded as an association for mutual aid, while its "real goal" was to dominate the shoe-making trade. The members, all of whom were unmarried, held secret assemblies in wine-shops. Their real names were unknown, for each member took the name of a French province

²⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 3 Aug. 1810, AN, F7 3134.

²⁹ Report by Everat to the Société Philantropique, 1 June 1822, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1821, p. 69.

or city, to which he added a nickname. The headquarters of the compagnonnage was in Paris and there were branches in various provincial towns and cities. Fifteen men known as rouleurs ran the Paris branch, keeping the registers and finding work for the unemployed and for members newly arrived in the city. They also collected five sous a week from each member, which went to help anyone who lost a job or who was imprisoned for supporting the society.³⁰

Although this report is thoroughly hostile to the compagnonnage, we can see beyond it to understand the organization's strong appeal to its members. In a very real sense, the compagnons were, as unmarried and unsettled journeymen, a group apart from most of their fellow workers.³¹ The compagnonnage provided them with a sense of collective identity, with useful help in times of trouble, and even with a code of good conduct. There is proof of this collective identity in the willingness of members to uphold the honour of their faction in frequent brawls and in the multi-coloured ribbons and various passwords that they used to distinguish friend from foe. They loved to parade in ostentatious display of their loyalties.³² Mutual aid was also very

³⁰Pr. Pol. to Conseiller d'Etat chargé du 2^e arrondissement, 11 Feb. 1813, AN, F7 4236, d. 5. See also report by Pr. Pol., 11 Feb. 1813, AN, F7 3140, and police bulletin, 11 Feb. 1813, AN, F7 3778.

³¹See Chevalier, Classes laborieuses, pp. 534-53.

³²See report to Conseil de Police, March 1810, AN, F7

important: "One of the fundamental bases of their organization being to provide for the needs of their unfortunate brothers, the unemployed or sick worker, if he is a member of their society, is not exposed to [the worry of] lacking help. . . ."³³

One police official suggested that it was useless for the government to try to repress the compagnonnage unless it could offer journeymen an equally effective network of mutual aid societies and placement offices.³⁴

As for the standards of good conduct encouraged by the association, these appear most clearly in the rules imposed on residents at a cayenne: for example, there were fines for wearing a dirty shirt, going barefoot, speaking out of turn, swearing, quarrelling, or using the familiar tu (thou) to address a comrade rather than the formal vous (you).³⁵ The Prefect of Police, despite his hostility toward the compagnonnage, admitted that "it rejects immoral men. It is rare to find a thief or a poorly-behaved worker under the

4236, d. 9: "Compagnons du devoir openly display symbols. Everyone knows the ribbons in their hats and on their canes. The 'brothers' alone know the secret signs. . . In many localities the compagnons are permitted to meet, to participate . . . in certain festivities with their ribbons and streamers, and to march in order like a troop. . . ."

³³"Observations sur les associations d'ouvriers connues sous la dénomination de Compagnons du devoir," AN, F7 4236, d. 3. See also the report by Everat to the Société Philantropique, 1 June 1822, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1821, p. 69.

³⁴Report to Conseil de Police, March 1810, AN, F7 4236, d. 9.

³⁵"Règlement pour la chambre d'Angoulême approuvé d'après leur demande à Bordeaux," 25 July 1812, AN, F7 4236, d. 5.

rules of the compagnon du devoir." ³⁶

The songs composed by a journeyman shoemaker in 1808 give some idea of the sentiments which the compagnonnage inspired in an ordinary worker. His verses, which would lose too much flavour in translation, express the yearning for cross-country travel--"Voici le printemps qui s'avance/ Nous allons prendre du plaisir/ Desur les brillant tour de France;" the joviality of sharing a glass of wine with companions--"Ami, buvons tous à la Ronde/ Ne parons plus qu'à bien jouir/ Chassons loin de nous l'umeur sombre;" the sense of comradeship and solidarity--"Soit au combat ou en affaire/ Les Braves soutiendront leur devoir;" and the implacable contempt felt for rival factions--"Et toi, teneur infame/ Objet digne de blâme/ En peux nous te réduire." ³⁷

It was these factional disputes and the consequent brawls in which the traditional staff carried by the compagnons made a handy weapon which drew the attention of contemporaries. One journalist summed up the general attitude when he condemned the compagnonnage as "a corporation whose rights, justice and rules lie in the use of the staff." ³⁸

³⁶ "Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, F7 4334 and F12 502.

³⁷ "Chayot De Chansons nouvelles des braves Compagnons fait par moi Benoit Droint," Angoulême, 25 Sept. 1808, AN, F7 4236, d. 10.

³⁸ Moniteur, 17 ventôse an X (8 March 1802).

Brawls were indeed common and even purposely precipitated in the street or in taverns by taunts which often took the form of songs. (One police report mentions "those songs which are the usual prelude to brawls between the two factions.")³⁹ A typical incident occurred in June 1812 between carpenters in a cabaret called, ironically enough, Au Désir de la Paix: "Soon the tables were overturned and glasses broken. Blows with fists and staffs fell from all sides. . . ." ⁴⁰ Sometimes these quarrels reached battle proportions. In October 1809 a dispute among carpenters working on the Pont de Sèvres led both the bons drilles and the renards to seek reinforcements in Paris and the villages surrounding the bridge. A large number, variously estimated at between one hundred and five hundred men, gathered at the work site on the afternoon of Monday, 9 October, ribbons and feathers fluttering from their hats. There was some minor skirmishing between the factions before the police dispersed them. Later that same evening, a group of bons drilles threw stones at the windows of a lodging-house of renards on the rue du faubourg Saint-Martin in Paris and ripped down its sign. The next morning about one hundred men armed with staffs and rocks re-assembled for battle at

³⁹ "Affaire des ouvriers charpentiers," July 1810, AN, BB18 794; See also report by Pr. Pol., 3 Feb. 1809, AN, F7 3130, for the account of a fight between curriers and shoemakers "on the occasion of a song which the first were singing and which displeased the others."

⁴⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 2 June 1812, enclosed in police bulletin of same date, AN, AF IV 1522.

the bridge. The mayor of Sèvres, having heard that there were over five hundred compagnons, panicked and called out the National Guard. He arrived at the bridge with two hundred men and one hundred rifles, only to find that the police already had everything under control.⁴¹

There were at least twenty similar episodes in Napoleonic Paris--some were only a single violent clash, others involved a series of incidents--during the ten year period from 1802 to 1812. (There is a complete list of these, with a full account of each, in Appendix 1.) The authorities blamed these fights on the natural perversity of the lower classes: "It would be difficult for men who are poorly educated, hot-tempered and moved by an esprit de corps not to exceed the limits [of good behaviour]."⁴² But the compagnons saw their quarrels in a quite different light. Five shoemakers petitioned from Orléans in 1814, asking that indulgence be shown to

. . . the unfortunate prisoners who have committed no crime against the state, public order, the safety of persons, or morality. But there was a brawl between workers in the same occupation because of the compagnonnage, a cause which they believe to be lawful. . . .⁴³

Why did they feel that their fights were legitimate? The

⁴¹Police bulletin, 10 Oct. 1809, AN, F7 3765. Report by Pr. Pol., 13 Oct. 1809, AN, F7 3132.

⁴²Report to Conseil de Police, March 1810, AN, F7 4236 d. 9.

⁴³Petition to Duc de Duras, premier gentilhomme de la chambre du Roi, [June 1814], AN, BB18 944.

evidence suggests that at least in part these disputes were linked to the rôle of the compagnonnage as defender of its members' interests as wage-earners. Germain Martin has shown that in the eighteenth century many journeymen made economic gains not directly by strikes but indirectly by controlling the labour market through the compagnonnage.⁴⁴

Twelve of the twenty disputes involved carpenters; three, stonemasons; two, hatters; and one, blacksmiths. There was also a quarrel between carriers and shoemakers and a battle which ranged roofers and carpenters on one side and stonemasons on the other. At least some of these related to labour disputes. The efforts made by the bons drilles to dominate the carpentry trade either by compelling the renards to affiliate or by forcing them out of the cities may have been an attempt to regulate the labour market. One police report explicitly links the disturbances among journeymen blacksmiths in October 1807 (when forty compagnons tried to force three hundred fellow workers to join their organization) with a planned combination and strike.⁴⁵ Hatters of the two rival compagnonnages fought each other for six weeks in the autumn of 1807, apparently after the refusal of sixty compagnons du devoir to join in a combination for higher

⁴⁴ Martin, Les associations ouvrières, p. 149. See also Albert Mathiez, La France économique dans la seconde partie du XVIII^e siècle: Cours professé à la Faculté des Lettres de Paris (Paris, 1927-1928), p. 99.

⁴⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 6 Nov. 1807, AN, F7 3127.

wages proposed by eight hundred droguins.⁴⁶ On the other hand, there were some brawls which it seems impossible to ascribe to labour problems. For example, the fighting in January and February 1809 between carriers and shoemakers seems purely a question of rivalry. It was simply that other groups considered the shoemakers' organization illegitimate. These conflicts and the fact that the compagnonnage recruited its members only among unmarried workers undoubtedly limited the effectiveness of the associations in labour disputes.

III

Mutual aid societies potentially had a much wider appeal among Parisian workers. They were at least as old as the compagnonnage, since there were confraternities in the thirteenth century which practiced mutualism under the protection of the Church.⁴⁷ Several mutual aid societies in pre-Revolutionary Paris which met in the Eglise Saint-Laurent were probably descended from such groups.⁴⁸ In addition, as early as 1319, Parisian carriers founded a society which had no religious preoccupations at all, but

⁴⁶ Police bulletin, 22 September 1807, AN, AF IV 1501 and F7 3757.

⁴⁷ Jean Bennet, La mutualité française à travers sept siècles d'histoire (Paris, 1975), pp. 11-74.

⁴⁸ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 30 frimaire an XIV (21 Dec. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XIII, pp. 46-48.

existed only to collect funds for aiding the sick.⁴⁹ The traditions of mutualism also had deep roots among workers in certain occupations. The compagnonnage was only one example of this. Printers commonly formed an association in each workshop known as the "chapel" (la chapelle), which maintained a fund made up of contributions and fines; the money went to help sick comrades.⁵⁰ The preamble to the printed regulations of a society of hatters founded in 1809 observed that the members were merely replacing a long tradition of inefficient collections in time of need with a set of rules to make their aid "more effective, more prompt, and more certain."⁵¹

In the early days of the French Revolution, workers in many occupations organized mutual aid societies. The employees in the wallpaper manufactory belonging to Réveillon (victim of a riot in April 1789) set up a society with his approval in November 1789.⁵² Printers established the Club

⁴⁹ Fagniez, Etudes sur l'industrie, pp. 39, 290-91.

⁵⁰ Momoro, Manuel de l'imprimeur, pp. 47-48, 91, 285. Paul Chauvet, Les ouvriers du livre en France, 2 vols. (Paris, 1956-1959), 1: 435-37.

⁵¹ Quoted by Dupont de Nemours, 10 Feb. 1810, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1809, p. 24.

⁵² Règlement de la Caisse de Secours, établie le 17 novembre 1789, dans la Manufacture de M. Réveillon, et de MM. Jacquemart et Bénard, ses successeurs (Paris, an V-1797). These regulations were later reprinted under a slightly different title by the Société Philantropique de Paris: Règlement d'une caisse de secours établie le 17 novembre 1789,

Typographique the following June, which grew to twelve hundred members and even published a journal.⁵³ One group of locksmiths combined mutual aid with political education when they met on Sunday evenings "as much to inform themselves about the decrees of the National Assembly as to provide help to those among them who find themselves sick or unemployed."⁵⁴ It was probably inevitable that these societies should become involved in labour disputes. In January 1791, the municipal authorities received a denunciation of the Club Typographique as an organization of wage-earners which sought arbitrarily to regulate wages. The Club denied similar accusations in April and again in May, branding them as calumny against a simple mutual aid society.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, a prolonged labour dispute in the

dans la manufacture de M. Réveillon, et depuis le premier juillet 1791, de Messieurs Jacquemart et Bénard (Paris, n.d.). Henri Clouzot and Charles Fallot, Histoire du papier peint en France (Paris, 1935), p. 92, describe the establishment of this society as "a measure dictated as much by prudence as by philanthropy." They therefore imply that the guiding spirit of the society was Réveillon, who was attempting to appease worker dissatisfaction--but they give no source for this assertion.

⁵³ Chauvet, Les ouvriers du livre, 2:8-11, 16-17, 637-44. Club typographique: Feuille hebdomadaire dédiée à MM. les contribuables, 31 vols. (1 Nov. 1790-31 May 1791).

⁵⁴ Deputation of six journeymen locksmiths to Société des Amis de la Section de la Bibliothèque, BN Mss, NAF 2664, fol. 108-09, as cited by Isabelle Bourdin, Les sociétés populaires à Paris pendant la Révolution (Paris, 1937), pp. 119-20.

⁵⁵ Petition by Assemblée Encyclopédique to Mayor of Paris, 7 Jan. 1791, BN Mss, NAF 2654, fol. 118-21, as cited by Albert Soboul, Les papiers des sections de Paris (1790-an IV) (Paris, 1950), pp. 62-63. Club typographique: Feuille hebdomadaire 25 and 29 (19 April and 17 May 1791).

carpentry trade drew attention to the Union Fraternelle de l'Art de la Charpente which contractors claimed was the force behind the insubordination. The journeymen carpenters, while not denying that their Union Fraternelle had played a rôle in the wage negotiations, insisted that it was only an organization for mutual aid.⁵⁶ This was hardly credible, and Le Chapelier could feel justified in calling for the suppression of these societies.⁵⁷ But there was an additional reason behind the National Assembly's attitude--an ideological one. The Jacobin journalist Prudhomme expressed it best when he attacked the Union Fraternelle:

. . . an assembly which admits only men who practice the same occupation is harmful to the new order; . . . by isolating citizens, it makes them foreigners in the Fatherland; in teaching them to be concerned with their own interests, it makes them forget the common good; in a word, it tends to perpetuate that egoism, that corporate spirit which . . . is the mortal enemy of all public spirit.⁵⁸

Thus, after the passage of the Le Chapelier Law, the "one hundred societies in Paris similar to our own" mentioned

⁵⁶Pétition présentée à la municipalité de Paris par les ci-devant maîtres charpentiers, le 30 avril 1791 (Paris, n.d.). Précis présenté à l'Assemblée Nationale, par les ouvriers en l'art de la charpente, de la ville de Paris, le 26 mai 1791 (Paris, n.d.).

⁵⁷Grace M. Jaffé, Le mouvement ouvrier à Paris pendant la Révolution française (1789-1791) (Paris, n.d.), passim.

⁵⁸Les Révolutions de Paris 96 (7-14 May 1791). See also "Les grèves en mai 1791," La Cité: Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique du IV^e Arrondissement de Paris 19 (July 1906):217-20.

by the Club Typographique⁵⁹ almost all disappeared. Three decades later, one philanthropist described the revolutionaries (in somewhat dramatic terms) as "pillaging the cash-boxes of poor workers." Some societies did manage to survive, but only "with extreme" precautions: the membership fees were no longer collected in a specific location; someone picked them up at the worker's home; aid was badly distributed; it was received fearfully.⁶⁰ Members of the Club Typographique re-organized themselves under the name of the Société Patriotique des Amis de l'Humanité and, having dropped the adjective "Patriotique," continued to function with about two hundred members as one of the most successful mutual aid societies in Napoleonic Paris.⁶¹ Réveillon's workers may also have maintained their society, since they rewrote and published its regulations in 1797.⁶² But these were unusual cases. Writing in 1800, the duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt regretted that French workers had no "friendly societies" such as existed among the English working

⁵⁹ Club typographique: Feuille hebdomadaire 20 (15 March 1791).

⁶⁰ Report by Everat, 1 June 1822, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1821, p. 67.

⁶¹ Bourdin, Les sociétés populaires, pp. 129-30, describes this transformation on the basis of a pamphlet outlining the new regulations; this has since disappeared from AN, AD XVI 72. She is unaware, however, of its survival into the Napoleonic period, documented by various petitions and reports in AN, F15 1883.

⁶² Règlement de la Caisse de Secours.

class.⁶³ It may have been under his influence that the Société Philantropique de Paris (of which he was a leading member) appointed a three-man commission in the Year XII (1803-1804) to seek out any Parisian mutual aid societies which might still exist.⁶⁴

Although it initially met with suspicion, the Société Philantropique managed to establish a close relationship with the workers in Parisian mutual aid societies, acting as their advisor and protector. Only one society, a group of curriers and tanners, refused to deal with the Société Philantropique. Others willingly gave information on their activities and in some cases even submitted annual reports. The Société Philantropique contributed one to two hundred francs to any society with more than sixty members and also gave out cards for free medical treatment at its clinics. It made a meeting hall available to those societies which were otherwise obliged to hold their assemblies in taverns.

⁶³ François Alexandre Frédéric, duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Etat des pauvres, ou Histoire des classes travaillantes de la société en Angleterre, depuis la conquête jusqu'à l'époque actuelle, etc., extrait de l'ouvrage publié en anglais par Sir Morton-Eden (Paris, an VIII), pp. 7, 238. The author appears to have been totally unaware of the existence of any mutual aid societies in France. Eight years previously, a Parisian doctor had also urged the creation of what he called "civic societies" on the English model. J. Marsillac, Hopitaux remplacés par des sociétés civiles, qui assurent aux artisans, dans le cas de maladies ou d'afflictions humaines, tous les secours physiques & moraux (Paris, 1792).

⁶⁴ Report by Everat, 1 June 1822, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1822, pp. 66ff. Candolles, Mémoires, p. 110.

Furthermore, commissioners visited various manufactories and workshops in the capital to address the workers and advise them on how to draw up the best regulations for a mutual aid society, although they left the workers free to compose their own rules as they wished. The Société Philantropique also made an effort to seek out mutual aid societies in the provinces and to encourage the formation of new ones. It continued to play this rôle for some twenty or thirty years, its influence peaking in the early 1820s. But gradually Parisian workers found that they no longer needed this protection and became increasingly resentful of bourgeois interference. They loosened and then broke the ties that had once served them so well. It was a sign of working class maturity.⁶⁵

The Société Philantropique regarded its activities as more than a simple impulse of disinterested charity. It clearly saw mutual aid societies as a moralizing influence which might shape the character of workers all the more effectively because the social pressure for good behaviour came not from above but from a worker's friends and comrades: "One is a better father and a better husband so as not to show

⁶⁵The best source for the work of the Société Philantropique is its annual reports. See also Jean Bennet, La mutualité au temps de Napoléon I (Paris, 1970) and, especially, Octave Festy, "La Société philantropique de Paris et les sociétés de secours mutuels (1800-1847)," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine 16 (1911):170-96.

oneself a bad member."⁶⁶ The Société Philantropique believed that participation in mutual aid societies taught workers to practice economy, save for the future, control their passions, live an orderly life, shun gambling, drunkenness, and gluttony, and, in the words of Dupont de Nemours, "look for pleasure where nature has put it, . . . in the noble and pure satisfaction of being upright men."⁶⁷ Dupont also drew a connection between mutualism and the needs of a free economy. These societies, he argued,

. . . are an indispensable institution in populous and advanced nations, where the extreme competition between workers makes wages very low and requires the habit of accumulating small savings and of making wise arrangements for mutual aid to prevent periods of unemployment, which are unavoidable, from bringing desolation to a multitude of families. . . .⁶⁸

The attitude of the Napoleonic authorities, and of the police in particular, was more ambivalent. They feared, of course, that mutual aid societies would turn to labour agitation and the organization of strikes--not unreasonably, given the events of 1791. The Prefect of Police, therefore decided in 1806 that henceforth all new societies formed in Paris should have no more than ten members in the same

⁶⁶ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 6 pluviôse an XIII (26 Jan. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports . . . an XII, p. 99.

⁶⁷ Report by Deleuze, 8 nivôse an XIII (29 Dec. 1804), in Soc. phil., Rapports . . . an XII, pp. 20-21. Report by Dupont de Nemours, 30 frimaire an XIV (21 Dec. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports . . . an XIII, pp. 50-51.

⁶⁸ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 31 Jan. 1808, in Soc. phil., Rapports . . . 1807, pp. 25-26.

occupation. Only two years later, however, (and for reasons which we do not know) he changed his mind and agreed that a society might be composed predominantly of workers in a single occupation, provided that, for form's sake, it admit a few members in other occupations.⁶⁹ The Prefect also required every mutual aid society in the city to register with the police, submit a copy of its regulations, and inform them of the time and place of every meeting.⁷⁰ Peace officers kept an eye on these meetings, and the reports they turned in were all quite reassuring.⁷¹ There is no indication that any society participated in a labour dispute. As for politics, the rules of most societies specifically outlawed all discussion of a political nature. The Société Philantropique observed with satisfaction that even during the turbulent Hundred Days (1815) Parisian mutual aid societies steered clear of political agitation.⁷² Fouché, Minister of Police, could write confidently in 1810: "When . . . meetings take place on set days and in a fixed place,

⁶⁹ Report by Everat, 1 June 1822, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1821, p. 76.

⁷⁰ Reports by Dupont de Nemours, 11 Feb. 1809, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1808, pp. 21-22; and 10 April 1813, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1812, p. 13.

⁷¹ Only the minutes of some of these reports survive in the records of the peace officers. These usually indicate that the meeting was calm, the participants were well-behaved, and the discussion did not go beyond the functions of the society. The first such recorded surveillance is in the minutes of reports by Chabanety, July 1807, AN, F7 3190.

⁷² Report by Deleuze, 6 April 1816, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1815, p. 18.

and under municipal surveillance, these societies do not appear to present any danger."⁷³ Indeed, one trend of thought in police circles was that mutualism ought to be encouraged as an alternative to the clandestine compagnonnage.⁷⁴

The Ministry of the Interior was wholly favorable to the diffusion of mutualism and helped spread the message to the provinces. Champagny, Minister in April 1806, sent a report by the Société Philantropique along with an enthusiastic circular of his own to all department prefects.⁷⁵ His successor, Cretet, continued this policy, although he was also careful to stress that mutual aid societies had to stand on their own. When the printers of the Société des Amis de l'Humanité asked for a government subsidy, he called their goals "infinitely praiseworthy," but turned down their appeal: "It is in the nature of these establishments to support themselves. Otherwise they are worth nothing."⁷⁶ The Conseil Général des Hospices showed its confidence in the Amis de l'Humanité by asking them to name

⁷³Fouché to Pr. Gironde, 20 April 1810, AN, F7 4236, d. 2.

⁷⁴Ibid. Also, report to Conseil de Police, March 1810, AN, F7 4236, d. 9.

⁷⁵Circular, 22 April 1806, and acknowledgments from prefects, AN, F15 106.

⁷⁶Cretet to administrators of Société des Amis de l'Humanité, [1808], AN, F15 1883. The comment quoted is not from this letter but is penned in the margin of a report presented to the Minister by Garnier, Procureur Impérial, in the same carton.

four journeymen printers to receive a pension under the terms of a master printer's testament of 1768.⁷⁷

IV

Because mutual aid societies were so open in their dealings with the government and with the Société Philantropique, we are much better informed about them than about the more secretive compagnonnage. Many societies even published their regulations and the rules of eight active in Paris between 1800 and 1815 are extant. One of these is the society of workers at the wallpaper manufactory formerly belonging to Réveillon, while the other seven are all groups of printers.⁷⁸ The reports of the Société Philantropique, which make occasional references to the regulations of other societies, suggest that these eight are representative. All the mutual aid societies were democratic, holding general assemblies of their members two or four times a year to elect officers, hear reports on the management of the society, and admit new members. All members in rotation had to serve as

⁷⁷ Report to Conseil général, [ca. Feb. 1806], AAP, FF. 136, vol. 10, fol. 199-202. See also report, June 1807, *ibid.*, vol. 13, fol. 210-211.

⁷⁸ Règlement d'une caisse de secours établie le 17 novembre 1789, dans la manufacture de M. Réveillon. Règlement de la Société des Amis de l'humanité (Paris, an XIII-1805). Règlement de la Société de secours mutuels, séante à Paris, établie le 20 ventôse an XII (Paris, 1806). Règlement de la Société officieuse, établie à Paris en avril 1808 (Paris, 1808). Règlement de la Société des arts graphiques établie le 1 mai 1808 (Paris, 1817). Association de

"visitors," whose duty it was to visit the sick and to distribute aid. Candidates for membership needed two members to sponsor them and were accepted into the society by majority vote. They could be neither too young nor too old, but were usually aged between about twenty and forty-five. They also had to be healthy and of good morality. A new member paid an affiliation fee (twelve to thirty francs seems to have been standard) and thereafter there were monthly contributions of between one and two francs. There were, in addition, cash fines for failing to attend meetings, refusing to accept office, neglecting one's duties as visitor, or falling behind in contributions. Membership entitled a worker to benefits in cases of sickness, retirement, and death. A member sick for more than one week, except when this was the result of drinking, brawling, or debauchery (like venereal disease), received a daily benefit usually equivalent to his monthly contribution. This was reduced after several months and, if the illness persisted, the worker was eligible for his pension for the duration. All other members received a pension on reaching seventy. Its value varied from one society to another, being as low as six francs a month in one and as high as seventy-five centimes a day (about twenty-three francs a month) in another. There was also usually a death benefit of thirty to one hundred

bienfaisance mutuelle formée en janvier 1809 (Paris, 1819).
Société prévoyante de secours mutuels, fondée le 20 mai 1809,
et séante à Paris (Paris, 1818). Convention de la Société
typo-bibliographique et de secours mutuels (Paris, 1815).

francs to cover burial expenses, and the society often promised to send a deputation to the funeral. Most societies permitted a widow to succeed her husband as a non-voting member of the society if she wished to continue the monthly contributions.

Some mutual aid societies included rules which were peculiar to them alone. At Le Sourd's tobacco manufactory each worker contributed thirty centimes a week to a mutual aid society and Le Sourd added another fifteen centimes for every employee.⁷⁹ The workers at Richard-Lenoir's cotton manufactory paid a fine of five centimes, to be added to their society's funds, every time they were late for work or were found idle on the job.⁸⁰ Two societies gave a modest sum of money--fifty francs in one case, thirty francs in the other--to a member conscripted into the army. He could re-join the society on his return to Paris, if he remitted the money.⁸¹ Another society required all members to help procure work for unemployed members.⁸² A society composed entirely of female workers did not give benefits for the time lost from work through childbirth, but it paid for any illness

⁷⁹ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 11 Feb. 1809, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1808, p. 27.

⁸⁰ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 30 frimaire an XIV (21 Dec. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XIII, p. 49.

⁸¹ Festy, "La Société philanthropique," p. 178n.

⁸² Report by Montmorency, 28 Jan. 1807, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XIV-1806, p. 19.

resulting from pregnancy. As a precaution, it usually admitted only older women.⁸³

Sickness and unemployment were the two greatest threats to the economic stability of a mutual aid society. A third problem, the expense of pensions, was much less immediate. Some societies had pensioners, but relatively few workers were likely to reach the age of seventy and, in any case, this drain on funds did not have to be faced until several decades after a society's establishment. Sickness was far more serious, since it took the contributions of thirty members to make up the benefits paid to one sick member for a month. A society simply could not afford much illness and some were more vulnerable in this respect than others. For example, in 1811 only fourteen members out of 153 in a printers' society received sick benefits (9.2 percent), while there were forty-three sick out of 128 members in a hatters' society (33.6 percent), and thirty-four out of seventy-four members in a society of stevedores (47.2 percent).⁸⁴ Roofers had such a reputation for crippling accidents that most societies refused to admit them and they had to establish their own.⁸⁵ Even a successful society was likely to have

⁸³ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 31 Jan. 1808, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1807, pp. 24-25.

⁸⁴ Report by Beauverger, 15 Feb. 1812, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1811, pp. 21-22.

⁸⁵ Descamps, "Sur les couvreurs et sur une société de secours mutuels qu'ils forment dans la ville de Paris,"

TABLE 20
 BUDGET OF THE SOCIETE DES AMIS DE L'HUMANITE
 (YEAR IX-1807)

(All receipts and expenses are expressed in francs and centimes.)

	Total Receipts	Total Expenses	No. of Pensioners	Cost of Pensions	No. of Sick	Sick Benefits
Year IX	1584,80	1122,50	12	369,45	22	901,00
Year X	1431,60	953,03	9	428,53	16	534,50
Year XI	1496,40	1169,81	8	304,81	41	865,00
Year XII	1485,80	1349,46	5	212,08	31	1069,50
Year XIII	2160,50	1203,05	5	223,25	24	750,25
Year XIV/1806*	3170,00	2563,97	6	442,00	40	1593,91
1807	2554,50	2345,54	7	430,00	30	1477,41

*100 days of Year XIV and all of 1806.

SOURCE: All figures are taken from a report by Garnier, Procureur Impérial, to Min. Int., 26 Oct. 1808, AN, F15 1883.

some difficulty meeting demands on its treasury. Table 20 reconstitutes the budget of the Société des Amis de l'Humanité, with 192 members (almost all printers) in 1808, for a seven-year period. The available figures are evidently inaccurate, since in some years the cost of pensions and sick benefits actually exceeds total expenses (which is impossible), but they do show clearly that even a normal rate of sickness and a few small pensions could eat up almost all of a society's receipts. Printers were a relatively healthy group with good earnings. The economic situation of most other societies, composed of less fortunate workers, must have been far more precarious.

Unemployment could push a society into distress, since it forced members to drop out or at least to suspend their contributions. The effect was amplified in a society made up of workers in a single occupation or (more dangerously) from a single manufactory. A lack of work compelled employees of the Périer brothers at Chaillot to disband their society in 1805, although they later revived it.⁸⁶ The harsh year 1813, which combined high rates of sickness and unemployment, caused difficulties for many societies.⁸⁷ And 1814 and 1815

Annales d'hygiène publique et de médecine légale 12 (1834):81.

⁸⁶ Reports by Dupont de Nemours, 6 pluviôse an XIII (26 Jan. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XII, p. 103; and 30 frimaire an XIV (21 Dec. 1805), in Rapports ... an XIII, pp. 45-46.

⁸⁷ Report by Deleuze, 21 May 1814, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1813, p. 19.

took an even heavier toll as many members, who were unable to pay their dues, had to quit their societies, while the societies drained their cash reserves in order to meet obligations to pensioners and the sick.⁸⁸ The Société Philantropique often found itself called upon to rescue societies on the verge of insolvency. It therefore felt justified in urging a reform of regulations, advocating in particular a broadly-based membership drawn from as many occupations as possible in order to minimize the hazards of occupational diseases or of economic crisis in a single industry. But most societies continued to be based on a single occupation. The Amis de l'Humanité, for example, voted to admit men who were not printers, yet remained predominantly a printers' organization.⁸⁹ In 1822 the Société Philantropique argued that experience had proved that contributions were set too low and benefits too high, and it decided to deny its help to any society which persisted in maintaining unreasonable regulations.⁹⁰

Despite such difficulties, the number of mutual aid societies increased fairly steadily throughout the Napoleonic

⁸⁸ Reports by Deleuze, 13 May 1815, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1814, p. 15; and 27 March 1817, in Rapports ... 1816, p. 22.

⁸⁹ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 6 pluviôse an XIII (26 Jan. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XII, p. 97.

⁹⁰ "Instructions générales sur la manière de bien ordonner la recette et la dépense dans un établissement de secours mutuels," in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1821, pp. 237-46.

period. According to the annual reports of the Société Philantropique, there were twenty-eight societies in Paris in December 1805, fifty-seven in February 1809, sixty-four in February 1810, "more than seventy" in February 1811, and "about eighty" in February 1812. There was a decline to "more than sixty" in May 1814 (probably because of the economic crisis), but there were "more than eighty" again in May 1815, and as many as 138 societies in June 1822.⁹¹ This last report is particularly interesting because it gives valuable information on all societies existing at that time. Seventeen of them were established before 1800, ten in the period 1802-1805, two in 1806-1807, and further thirty-two in the six-year period 1808-1813. Many societies founded in the Napoleonic period had probably disappeared by 1822, so this is by no means a complete record of all of them, but it does suggest that an initial proliferation of societies under the Consulate and early Empire was cut short by the tighter police regulations of 1806-1807. The real spread of mutualism occurred under the more relaxed police régime initiated in 1808.

⁹¹ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 30 frimaire an XIV (21 Dec: 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XIII, p. 48. Report by Dupont de Nemours, 10 Feb. 1810, in Rapports ... 1809, p. 26. Report by Deleuze, 23 Feb. 1811, in Rapports ... 1810, p. 14. Report by Pastoret, 15 Feb. 1812, in Rapports ... 1811, p. 14. Report by Deleuze, 21 May 1814, in Rapports ... 1813, p. 19. Report by Deleuze, 13 May 1815, in Rapports ... 1814, p. 13. Report by Everat, 1 June 1822, in Rapports ... 1821, pp. 237-46.

This report shows, too, that in spite of the exhortations of the Société Philantropique only eleven of the societies had a diverse membership. There were twenty-six, by far the largest group, made up predominantly of printers and workers in related occupations. The tendency of printers to establish such organizations had been evident from the start and was probably the result of their literacy and education.⁹² Stevedores, porters, and dockworkers had nineteen societies, but many of these were really "little guilds" of workers who shared the monopoly of work at a certain port or market and who were under strict police regulation.⁹³ There were thirteen societies of textile and clothing workers, six of these being organizations of hatters, who had a special need for mutual aid because of the unhealthy nature of their work.⁹⁴ Jewellers, goldsmiths, and watchmakers had eleven societies; construction workers, nine; workers in the wood crafts, five; and workers in leather, five (three of these being groups of shoemakers and bootmakers). There were also numerous societies representing miscellaneous occupations. Only a handful had a membership that was exclusively female and indeed it was unusual for any

⁹² Report by Dupont de Nemours, 31 Jan. 1808, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1807, p. 26: "They are more educated; they are familiar with books; most of them know how to think."

⁹³ Report by Everat, 1 June 1822, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1821, p. 75.

⁹⁴ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 11 Feb. 1809, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1808, pp. 18-19.

society to admit women, except the widows of members.⁹⁵ The trend was clearly for societies to draw members from a single occupation. The workers, out of a sense of craft solidarity, preferred it that way.⁹⁶

We can only infer the precise social composition of these mutual aid societies. The Société Philantropique always discussed them as if they were composed entirely of wage-earners, and certainly the small size of contributions and of benefits is clear enough evidence that they appealed mainly to wage-earners or the poorest artisans. But there must have been independent artisans in at least some, and probably most, of the societies. One particular society, established in 1823, seems just like any other, yet a glance at its printed list of members shows them to have been generally contractors and master artisans in various trades, and not wage-earners.⁹⁷ It is even more difficult to judge the degree of real independence enjoyed by these societies. The readiness with which they submitted to the tutelage of the Société Philantropique suggests a willingness to take their lead from the bourgeoisie. However, this can also be

⁹⁵ Jean Bennet, L'admission des femmes dans les associations de prévoyance jusqu'à la fin du XIX^e siècle (Etampes, 1954).

⁹⁶ Report by Everat, 1 June 1822, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1821, p. 76.

⁹⁷ Règlement de la Société de secours-mutuels de la Bonne Union, créée en 1823, et réorganisée en 1825 (Paris, 1825).

explained by their need for a protector to intercede on their behalf with government and police, and even to give them financial support when it was required. The Société Philantropique insisted that mutual aid societies were the creation of their own members, and Dupont de Nemours delighted in regulations which, he said, were drawn up by uninstructed workers "directed simply by an instinct of prudence, a sentiment of generosity, and the usual degree of reason that God refuses to no thinking mortal."⁹⁸ He praised in particular the rules of the Amis de l'Humanité as the work of ordinary printers although (according to him) they read like that of some thoughtful man of letters.⁹⁹

But at least some mutual aid societies were not as autonomous as Dupont suggested. Men who worked in a large manufactory could hardly have organized without the approval, and probably the supervision, of their employer. The society of men working for Jacquemart and Benard, wallpaper manufacturers, may have been "founded by simple workers" as the Société Philantropique claimed; what is more certain is that it submitted its rules to these employers for their approval.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 30 frimaire an XIV (21 Dec. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XIII, p. 41.

⁹⁹ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 8^e nivôse an XIII (29 Dec. 1804), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XII, p. 96.

¹⁰⁰ Société philantropique de Paris to Min. Int., 30 vendémiaire an XIII (22 Oct. 1804), AN, F15 3963.

Another similar case was a society of stevedores, founded and presided over by a certain Revel, identified as a public functionary; the society's success was attributed to his wisdom and skillful management.¹⁰¹ There was a society of roofers, dating from 1815, which owed its establishment to M. Lehasle, "proprietor," who remained an honorary member.¹⁰² An extreme example was a carefully regulated society set up in the Imprimerie Impériale by the Imperial Decree of 28 January 1811; the administration withheld 2 percent of employees' wages to finance the benefits.¹⁰³

While perhaps two or three thousand Parisian workers were active in the compagnonnage, and these were usually unmarried migrants, Dupont de Nemours estimated that 2,520 "heads of families" belonged to mutual aid societies in 1805, and there were 10,350 members in 1822.¹⁰⁴ Most of these were undoubtedly skilled workers, but there were a number of groups of unskilled labourers as well. For instance, the Amis de l'Egalité was a society of water-carriers and errand-boys,

¹⁰¹ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 11 Feb. 1809, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1808, pp. 22-23.

¹⁰² Descamps, "Sur les couvreurs," p. 82.

¹⁰³ "Extrait des minutes de la Secrétariat d'Etat," Decree of 28 Jan. 1811, AN, AD XIV 10. "Projet pour la formation d'une Caisse de Secours en faveur des ouvriers de l'Imprimerie impériale," signed 28 Jan. 1811, AN, AF IV 519, plaq. 4034.

¹⁰⁴ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 30 frimaire an XIV (21 Dec. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XIII, p. 52. Report by Everat, 1 June 1822, in Rapports ... 1821, p. 83.

with ninety-one members in 1805. Since many of them were illiterate, they kept their books with a system of crosses and bars instead of figures, so that all could verify the accounts.¹⁰⁵ The existence of these mutual aid societies is clear evidence of the ability of Parisian workers to create and to maintain their own organizations in their own interests. The compagnonnage was outlawed and mutualism was carefully supervised, and yet these two movements (along with all the informal workers' organizations) are vivid evidence of occupational solidarity, especially strong among traditional craftsmen. By their example and their experience, members made an important contribution to the development of a more conscious and more highly organized working class in the course of the nineteenth century.

¹⁰⁵ Report by Dupont de Nemours, 30 frimaire an XIV (21 Dec. 1805), in Soc. phil., Rapports ... an XIII, p. 46.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LABOUR DISPUTES

Mes Camarades, Vous êtes invités de vous trouver Samedi 8 courant à 4 heure chez Mr Chevet traiteur à la Courtille pour affaire qui vous concerne. Salut et accord. Ce 8 Xbre 1810.¹

The real attitude of employer and employee toward each other is by no means easy to ascertain. The predominant social ideals of Napoleonic France were heavily imbued with paternalism. In the contract which he signed with each apprentice, a manufacturer named Bouvier promised "to treat him in all things the way a good father treats his children."² A contemporary described the sorrowful workers at the funeral of one of the Périer brothers in August 1818, "who came to soak with their tears the grave of him who had been their friend, their support, their father. . . ."³ A book written for the instruction of domestic servants gave the following

¹Manuscript circular addressed to hatters. There are five copies in BHVP, Ms CP 5200.

²"Copie du formulaire des brevets des élèves de M. Bouvier, passés le 1^{er} germinal an XI" (22 March 1803), AN, F12 513.

³Payen, Capitale et machine à vapeur, p. 242.

advice: "The domestic servant owes his masters the same respect that a son owes his father. . . ." "For the domestic servant, the entire world is the house in which he serves. . . ." Should he begin to neglect the obedience and devotion which he ought to show, he was called upon to remind himself of "whence he came, [and] what he was before entering a good house," and to contrast his own comfort with the lot of his relatives in other occupations--poorly clothed, badly nourished, and forced to work at hard labour for low wages.⁴ It is unlikely, however, that most workers shared this romanticized view of labour relations. For example, this comment (with a quite different tone) appears in a petition by the mothers of several Parisian girls, apprenticed to the Périer brothers to work in their spinning mill in the Loiret department, who complained of harsh treatment, uninterrupted toil, and the dangerous machinery to which their children were exposed:

And it is thus that a poor woman, be she the most honest person in the world, is sometimes the victim of her unfortunate lot; . . . we put all our confidence in sieur Périer, [who] is robbing us of our maternal rights and reserves all the advantages for himself, leaving us not the least benefit.⁵

⁴J.-Ch. Bailleul, Moyens de former un bon domestique, ouvrage où l'on traite de la manière de faire le service de l'intérieur d'une maison, avec des règles de conduite à observer pour bien remplir ses devoirs envers ses maîtres (Paris, 1814), pp. 166, 252-53.

⁵Petition by Christine Gendre and Toussaint Olivier, on behalf of "twenty-three or twenty-five other mothers of families," to Min. Justice, Feb. 1810, AN, BB18 790.

Relations were probably easier and more informal between master and journeyman in the small workshop than between large-scale manufacturer and wage-earner. At the Imprimerie Impériale, which employed over one hundred printers, inspectors patrolled the workshops to prevent "useless conversations and all other distractions." The men hated them as spies and did not hesitate to chatter and "to kill time" behind their backs. The workers were held to a strict schedule and could not leave the building, except for dinner, until the end of the day.⁶ In 1809 Oppenheim, a Parisian jeweller, printed and posted in his workshop a set of regulations which his thirteen journeymen were obliged to sign. There were deductions from pay for lateness or absence, and a worker could not leave the workshop for more than five minutes without Oppenheim's consent. No visitors were permitted in the workshop during the workday. There was a ban on discussion among the men, since this might lead to workers' combinations and strikes. On arrival in the morning, the men had to "greet each other, hang up their hats, and behave honestly and with decency."

Article 15 warned:

It is expressly forbidden . . . during work to entertain the journeymen by gestures or other means, to play any game whatsoever, to eat, to sleep, to tell stories or jokes, to enter the kitchen at any time, to sing aloud, to swear, and generally to do anything that might annoy M. Oppenheim and the journeymen.

⁶J.F. Baudoin, Mémoire et projet du règlement concernant l'administration de l'Imprimerie Impériale (Paris, 1808), p. 2.

In return, Oppenheim promised his employees two annual dinners, at which he gave out the bonuses and wage increases which he thought they deserved.⁷ Such detailed regulations were the exception, but even the smallest producer felt the need to keep an eye on his workers. A master cabinet-maker in the faubourg Saint-Antoine included among the losses which contributed to his bankruptcy in 1806 those "relating to workers whom I was unable to supervise, as I was continually called away [on business]."⁸

Labour disputes were by no means uncommon, and Conseils de Prud'hommes existed in many parts of France to settle them. The Emperor created the first of these for the Lyons silk industry in 1806, and by 1815 there were Conseils de Prud'hommes in thirty-one French cities. They functioned as boards for the conciliation and judgment of disputes and also to enforce the various laws relating to industry. Manufacturers and "licenced workers" elected representatives to sit on the councils; ordinary wage-earners, who carried the livret and not the patente, did not take part in the elections. Paris, although it was the country's major industrial centre, did not get a Conseil de Prud'hommes until 1844.⁹ When polled for their opinions by the Chamber

⁷"Un règlement d'atelier en 1809."

⁸Bankruptcy of Portman, 24 June 1806, ADS, D11 03 36, d. 2328.

⁹There is no good study of the Conseils de Prud'hommes,

of Commerce in 1809, some Parisian manufacturers favoured the establishment of a council in their city, but the majority felt that one was unnecessary. They considered that the police were effective enough in settling wage disputes and, at the same time, exercised a useful surveillance over wage-earners, while the local justices of the peace had proved competent to conciliate and judge differences between employers and workers or wholesalers and master craftsmen. The Chamber added in its own report on the subject that a single Conseil de Prud'hommes was probably unworkable in such a large city with so wide a variety of industries. It would be unable to handle all the cases quickly enough, nor could its members be sufficiently expert in all branches of Parisian industry.¹⁰

The twelve justices of the peace (there was one in each arrondissement) dealt with what Richard Andrews has called "the points of chronic tension in the life of any community." First instituted in 1790, the justice of the

but see L. Houdart, "Les Conseils de Prud'hommes, institution napoléonienne," Institut Napoléon: Recueil de travaux et documents (1941):17-23, and Chester P. Higby and Caroline B. Willis, "Industry and Labour under Napoleon," American Historical Review 53 (1947-1948):465-80. There is a complete list of Conseils, with the date of their establishment, in Claude-Anthelme Costaz, Histoire de l'administration en France, de l'agriculture, des arts utiles, du commerce, des manufactures, des subsistances, des mines et des usines, 2 vols. (Paris, 1832), 2:256-57.

¹⁰ Minutes of Chambre de Commerce de Paris, 6 Sept. 1809, ACCP, Registres des procès-verbaux. Chambre de Commerce de Paris to Pr. Pol., 14 Sept. 1809, ACCP, Registres de correspondance.

peace settled by judgment or conciliation cases involving sums of less than a hundred francs, like conflicts between landlord and tenant over rent or disputes between employer and employee over wages.¹¹ The tendency of the justices to favour the propertied middle class was the consequence of both their own predispositions and the bias of the Civil Code (1804), which was clearly weighted against the wage-earner.¹² Article 1781 was particularly important: in cases of disagreement with his employee, an employer's word had to be accepted by the courts. A typical application of the law occurred in October 1807, when Jean Pierre Colombel claimed that the widow Guichard owed him for three days' work in her restaurant. Guichard insisted that Colombel had worked for only two days and that, moreover, she had already paid him the six livres due him. The justice of the peace had no choice but to rule in her favour.¹³

But the wage-earner did not always lose his case. It is, in fact, quite surprising how often he won by default,

¹¹Richard Andrews, "The Justices of the Peace of Revolutionary Paris, September 1792-November 1794 (Frimaire Year III)," Past and Present 52 (August 1971):56-105. Nicole Felkay, "Notes sur les fonds des justices de paix, 1791-1830," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 42 (1970):530-37. Gocechot, Les institutions, pp. 148-50, 617.

¹²Albert Tissier, "Le Code Civil et les classes ouvrières," in Le Code Civil, 1804-1904: livre du centenaire (Paris, 1904), pp. 71-95.

¹³Guichard contre Colombel, 6 Oct. 1807, ADS, D 8 U1 29.

when an employer summoned before the justice of the peace simply failed to show up. For example, Jean Baptiste Bignon, a mason's assistant, won 22F, 80 which he claimed for twelve days' work, because the master who had employed him failed to appear at the hearing.¹⁴ Also, disagreement over suitable wages for a particular job was usually settled by reference to expert arbiters appointed by the justice. For example, Jacques Arbaret, a journeyman joiner, demanded 337 francs for the furniture that he had made for a merchant cabinet-maker, but the latter refused to pay him in full. "Since the parties are in disagreement as to the facts and have made no written contract stating the different prices of the furniture made. . . ." the justice submitted the dispute to a trustworthy master joiner who could assess the furniture's true value.¹⁵ Marion, a journeyman locksmith, asked for fifteen days' wages at 2F, 25 a day owed him by an employer. He could prove that he had worked for fifteen days (which the master denied) but not the wage agreed upon. The justice ruled that the work was worth 1F, 80 a day, or twenty-seven francs in all.¹⁶ In another case, a justice of the peace showed the wisdom of Solomon in giving the benefit of doubt to the wage-earner; he ruled that a master mason had to pay

¹⁴ Bignon contre Ogé, 17 July 1807, ADS, D 8 U1 28.

¹⁵ Arbaret contre Gosselin, 7 April 1807, ADS, D 8 U1 28.

¹⁶ Marion contre Legardeur, 9 and 12 thermidor an XII (28 and 31 July 1804), ADS, D 12 U1 47.

Girault, his assistant, the 1F,80 which he claimed, "since the plaintiff has proved that before going to work for the defendant, he earned 1F,75 a day and the defendant cannot prove that the plaintiff consented to a wage lower than this. . . ." ¹⁷ On the other hand, Jean Mirandon, a worker in passementeries, complained to the Minister of Justice that his case had received an unfair hearing before the justice of the peace of the eighth arrondissement. Mirandon produced a letter at his hearing which proved that a manufacturer named Ponceton lured him from Saint-Etienne with the promise of a job paying 4F,50 to five francs a day. But Ponceton dismissed Mirandon shortly after his arrival in Paris, and refused to pay him more than three francs a day for the work done. The justice ordered arbitration (which Mirandon found unsatisfactory) and refused to accept the letter as evidence with the comment that "this letter was only a rag and it was impossible to base a decision on it." ¹⁸ Only an in-depth computer study can provide a broadly-based analysis showing the general patterns in such disputes, but these few examples are typical of the cases involving labour relations that came daily before the justices of the peace.

The police also played an important rôle in the settlement of labour disputes. The livret was under police

¹⁷Girault contre Picard, 16 thermidor an XII (4 Aug. 1804), ADS, D 12 U1 47.

¹⁸Petition by Jean Mirandon to Min. Justice, 24 Feb. 1812, AN, BB16 776.

jurisdiction and any conflict between master and wage-earner over a livret had to be conciliated by one of the forty-eight police commissioners in Paris. If he failed to reconcile the parties, the matter went to the Prefect of Police for a decision.¹⁹ The fragmentary records of the commissioners, which still survive in part, show no trace of this aspect of their functions.²⁰ In contrast, there are police documents which testify to the activity of the Prefect of Police in defending the interests of employers. There were, first of all, various police ordinances to be enforced. Those of 23 Ventôse Year XI (14 March 1803) and 25 Brumaire Year XII (17 November 1803) required bakers and butchers respectively to give advance notice before quitting a master. In 1810 Marie Etienne Lecler, a butcher's assistant, left his master, who was sick in bed, without any notice and without even bothering to ask that his livret be returned. The Prefect of Police put him in prison for two weeks to make an example of him.²¹ The ordinances of 12 Germinal Year XII (2 April 1804) and 4 September 1806 forbade the hairdresser's assistant who left one master to find work with another, or even to set up his own business, within a distance of two divisions from his former employer. So, when Léonard Cullier

¹⁹Police circular, 4 Aug. 1806, in Recueil officiel des circulaires, 1:11-12.

²⁰APP, series A/a.

²¹Report by Pr. Pol., 16 March 1810, AN, F7 3133. See also report by Pr. Pol., 10 March 1809, AN, F7 3130.

opened his own hairdressing shop in 1808, just down the street from his previous master's shop on the rue du Bac, the police imprisoned him for one week.²² There were similar penalties imposed on assistant wine merchants who violated the ordinance of 7 Floréal Year XII (27 April 1804) by failing to leave fifteen-wineshops between their old employer and their new one, or who opened their own wineshop within a distance of 390 metres. These laws were evidently intended to keep a good worker from luring away his master's customers.

The police also reinforced an employer's authority by taking action against disloyal or troublesome workers, as numerous incidents show. Joseph Herman, an eighteen-year-old apprentice tailor, ran away from his master in 1812 because "he claims that the latter has not taught him anything for a year. . . . He also complains that he was badly fed. . . ." The police imprisoned Herman until he agreed to return to work.²³ Bourrelier, a weaver, refused to finish the piece of fabric that he had begun and insulted his employer when she refused to give him back his livret. He said that the raw materials supplied him were defective, but his employer denied it. The police put him in prison for a

²² Report by Pr. Pol., 6 May 1808, AN, F7 3128. See also reports by Pr. Pol., 10 Sept. 1806, 23 Feb. 1809, and 6 June 1811, AN, F7 3124, 3130, and 3136.

²³ Report by Pr. Pol., 17 Feb. 1812, AN, F7 3139.

week.²⁴ The Director General of the Imprimerie Impériale called on the police in 1809 to arrest two printers guilty of "insubordination and grave insults" toward a supervisor.²⁵ And the Prefect of Police informed a Parisian bourgeois that "ordinarily I follow the course of sending out of this city domestic servants who do not behave as they should."²⁶ As these examples suggest, the police (not unexpectedly) acted like policemen and not conciliators. This was true above all in cases of workers' combinations and strikes, where their principal function was to enforce the legislation which outlawed them.

II

When Le Chapelier denounced workers' organizations before the Constituent Assembly in June 1791, the problem of labour unrest was very much in his mind. "It is necessary," he said, "to go back to the principle that it is for free agreements between one individual and another to set the daily wage of each worker." Article 4 of the Le Chapelier Law therefore declared any deliberations or agreements among either wage-earners or employers tending to fix wages to be

²⁴ Report by Pr. Pol., 28 March 1811, AN, F7 3135.

²⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 10 Feb. 1809, AN, F7 3130.

²⁶ Pasquier to M. Bourboulon St. Edme, 12 Nov. 1811, in a letter attached to another letter from Mme de Villard to Min. Justice, AN, BB16 775.

"unconstitutional" and in violation of the principles of "liberty and the Declaration of the Rights of Man." Article 8 made any unlawful assembly "against the free exercise of industry and labour" punishable as sedition.²⁷ The terms of the Law of 22 Germinal Year XI (12 April 1803) were even more explicit. Article 6 banned any combination by employers which aimed "unjustly and abusively" to lower wages. Article 7 outlawed combinations by workers seeking to blacklist certain workshops, to interfere with the established hours of work, or "in general to suspend, to impede, or to increase the wages of labour." The penalty for employers who violated the law was a considerable fine (one hundred to three thousand francs) and one month in prison, but they were guilty only if acting "unjustly and abusively," adverbs which were left undefined. Workers, whatever their motives, faced a sentence of three months in prison. Articles 414 to 416 of the Penal Code of 1810 retained much of the wording of this previous law, but it also significantly increased the penalties for wage-earners. The leaders of a workers' combination henceforth risked a prison sentence of two to five years, after which they were still subject to police surveillance for another two-to-five-year period.

The modern French term for a labour strike, une grève, was just coming into use during the Napoleonic period, although it was not common until toward the end of the

²⁷Archives parlementaires, 27:210-11.

nineteenth century. (It appeared in Littré's dictionary for the first time in 1863.)²⁸ A police report from 1805 is probably the first document to use grève, in reference to a work stoppage by stonemasons. The report specifies that this was the workers' own term, but two later police reports from 1812 also use the word without qualifying it as a workers' expression.²⁹ Grève is almost certainly derived from the Place de Grève in Paris, which unemployed construction workers used as a hiring place. The word therefore implied a free business transaction in which the wage-earner simply withdrew his labour from one employer and offered it again for sale to another. The more commonly used term "combination" (coalition) was broader in meaning and also more sinister. It applied to any collective deliberation by workers (or for that matter by employers) whether or not they actually went on strike to support their demands. There were overtones to the word which suggest not the free exercise of human rights but rather a pernicious conspiracy against the public interest. The law banned combinations--and not merely the labour strikes which sometimes resulted from them.

But how effective was the law in practice? It is first of all likely that most workers' combinations went unreported

²⁸ Georges Lefranc, Grèves d'hier et d'aujourd'hui (Paris, 1970), pp. 10-11. C.H., "Grève," Les études sociales et syndicales 12 (Jan. 1956):15.

²⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 6 prairial an XIII (26 May 1805), AN, F7 3833. Reports by Pr. Pol., 18 June and 13 Aug. 1812, AN, F7 3139.

to the police. A small artisan who employed only a few journeymen might well hesitate before turning to legal repression which could permanently damage relations with his men and even mark him out for retaliation. In other cases, having lodged a formal complaint with the police, an employer might prefer not to follow it up with prosecution. For example, a building contractor appeared before a police commissioner in March 1802 to declare that three journeymen carpenters had quit work when he refused to give them a raise and had subsequently prevented the men he hired to replace them from carrying out their jobs. The three carpenters admitted stopping work, but they denied threatening the new men. The contractor agreed to accept their explanation and consented to their release, "enjoining them to be more prudent in the future. . . ." ³⁰ In October 1805 the police arrested four men as leaders of a weavers' strike. The manufacturer for whom three of them worked wrote to the police that he considered these men to be "disorderly and violent," even "dangerous," and that he no longer wished to employ them; yet he also asked for their release. ³¹ Mame, a celebrated printer, refused to name to the police the five or six men who had led a strike against him. He would not even dismiss them, since (he said) they were all family men

³⁰ Report by police commissioner of Roule division, 21 ventôse an X (12 March 1802), APP, A/a 234, fol. 260.

³¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 23 vendémiaire an XIV (15 Oct. 1805), AN, F7 3122.

with children to support.³²

The police themselves did not follow the letter of the law. They were in particular tolerant of employer's combinations. Indeed, the trade associations which they authorized were in effect permanent combinations. In 1810 the Prefect of Police annulled an agreement by seventy-one master hatters which established a wage schedule--apparently not because it violated the law, but because of the threat of disorder on the part of their workers.³³ He had taken no such action nine years earlier, when the master hatters formed a similar combination, although a close watch was kept on them.³⁴ Some weavers petitioned the Prefect in June 1815, accusing Parisian cotton manufacturers of a combination to lower wages. He declined to intervene, merely passing the matter on to the public prosecutor's office for study.³⁵ In contrast, repression was usually swift and severe when it came to workers' combinations, no matter how small. The police often arrested leaders and "agitators," which almost always intimidated the rest of the workers into giving up their demands. Sometimes there was no need to make arrests; an officer might simply

³²Police report, 3 May 1811, AN, F18 27.

³³Police bulletin, 27 Oct. 1810, AN, AF IV 1511.

³⁴Minute of report by peace officers Bazin and Noël, 1 prairial an IX (21 May 1801), AN, F7 3175.

³⁵Pr. Pol. to Min. Pol., 20 June 1815, and Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., n.d., AN, F12 1560.

give the recalcitrant workers a lecture on their duties and persuade them (undoubtedly with warnings as to the consequences of a refusal) to return to work. There were, however, times when the police, for unexplained reasons, stood aside and let events take their course. This happened, for example, during the prolonged dispute between master hatters and their journeymen which disrupted the Parisian hat trade for six weeks in the spring of 1802.³⁶ But such restraint was exceptionally rare.

The Prefect of Police preferred to punish the workers he arrested by administrative detention rather than by sending them before the courts for prosecution. He usually held them in prison for one to four weeks and afterwards, if they were of provincial origin, often expelled them from Paris. This was as heavy a sentence as the courts were likely to impose.³⁷ Records indicate only two occasions (during the Napoleonic period (although there may well have been more) when Parisian workers went before a tribunal charged with taking part in a combination. In July 1810 nine leaders of a stonemasons' strike went up for judgment;

³⁶See Appendix 2, combination no. 12.

³⁷In 1810, the Tribunal de police correctionnelle at Versailles condemned five strikers to one month in prison and three others to two weeks. On appeal by the prosecutor, the Cour de justice criminelle increased these sentences to one of three months, four of one month, and four of two weeks. (This adds up to eight prison sentences in the first decision and nine in the second.) Pr. Seine-et-Oise to Intendant des bâtiments, 15 and 26 June 1810, AN, O2 228.

we do not know the court's verdict.³⁸ That same summer a tribunal inexplicably acquitted and even awarded damages to a group of journeymen carpenters who had struck when their employer refused to dismiss the foreman, who belonged to a rival compagnonnage.³⁹

Obviously, the laws were never completely effective in preventing combinations and strikes. It has been possible to draw up a list of ninety workers' combinations formed in Paris during the fifteen years from 1800 to 1814. The reports explicitly indicate that fifty-eight (or about two-thirds of them) involved a work stoppage or the boycott of a workshop to support demands. Many of the others probably also involved strikes. The list, along with a brief description of each combination, is printed in Appendix 2. Table 21 breaks down these combinations according to workers' occupations and the issues in dispute. (The figures in the table add up to ninety-one combinations, because carpenters and joiners joined in a common strike in 1814.) The list is clearly incomplete, since it is drawn almost entirely from police reports. There are gaps in police archives and, in any case, there must have been many minor combinations which did not draw the attention of the police. However, these ninety combinations do provide enough material for a study of the patterns of labour protest in Napoleonic Paris.

³⁸Police bulletin, 22-23 July 1810, AN, F7 3768 and AF IV 1509.

³⁹Police bulletin, 21 Sept. 1810, AN, AF IV 1510.

TABLE 21

WORKERS' COMBINATIONS IN PARIS 1800-1814

	Major issue involved:						TOTAL
	wage increase	wage decrease	hours of work	compagnonnage	other	uncertain	
<u>Construction workers:</u>							
Not specified or general	2		2		1		5
Stonemasons, -sawyers	13		2			5	20
Carpenters	11	1	1	1			14*
Masons	3						3
Joiners	2						2*
TOTAL	31	1	5	1	1	5	44
<u>Others:</u>							
Hatters	7	1				2	10
Printers	4		1				5
Weavers	4	1					5
Tinsmiths	2		1				3
Wood drawers	3						3
Furniture makers	2						2
Tawers	2						2
Bakers	1						1
Bargemen	1						
Blacksmiths	1						
Blanket-makers	1						
Brick-makers	1						
Coopers	1						
Copper turners	1						
Glovers		1					
Lamp-lighters	1						
Locksmiths	1						
Marble workers					1		
Nailers						1	
Noodle-makers	1						
Saltpeter workers	1						
Tailors	1						
Tanners	1						
Tobacco workers	1						
TOTAL	38	3	2		1	3	47
TOTAL	69	4	7	1	2	8	91

*One combination involved both carpenters and joiners.

III

Workers in certain occupations were far more likely to take part in combinations than others. The police considered construction workers to be among the most troublesome: "An agitator proposes disorder and immediately all feel that honour requires them to join him." They described hatters as "always ready for combination, violence, trouble," and as particularly unruly when on strike. Weavers were said to stand out by virtue of their "arrogant claims and unbounded insolence toward the manufacturers." Combinations would be even more frequent among them were it not for the strict workshop regulations enforced by their employers. As for printers: "There exist no workers more insubordinate, more disposed to combination and to tumult than they are."⁴⁰ These observations are supported by the statistics presented in table 21. Construction workers, especially stonemasons and carpenters, account for almost one-half the total number of combinations, although this preponderance may be exaggerated by the fact that strikes in public works were the most likely to attract police attention. Among other trades, hatters head the list, followed by printers and weavers. There are almost thirty trades in the table, but this does not mean that there were no combinations among workers in other occupations. It is highly improbable that shoemakers, for instance, never participated in a single

⁴⁰Statistique des ouvriers de Paris," 1 March 1807, AN, F7 4334 and F12 502.

combination. Their absence from the list can be explained by the fact that they worked in hundreds of small workshops where a disturbance was apt to be ignored by the police.

Those wage-earners most likely to participate in a combination had two general characteristics in common. They were skilled men working in artisanal trades--this was true even of weavers, who were by no means as yet an unskilled machine-tending proletariat--and they shared traditions of formal and informal organization. Their skills gave them bargaining leverage in any dispute, while their traditions gave them a framework for formulating demands and organizing a combination.

Combinations began with workers talking together, usually on the job or in a tavern. The police considered the bringing together of large numbers of construction workers on a single worksite to be one of the principal causes of frequent combinations in the building trades.⁴¹ The master butchers argued against the establishment of central slaughterhouses in Paris on the grounds that their scattered assistants would come into frequent contact and general insubordination, including combinations for higher wages, would almost inevitably result.⁴² Oppenheim's

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² "Mémoire sur les inconvéniens des abattoirs généraux à Paris," July 1814, AN, F7 4340, d. 16. The Prefect of

regulations warned his journeymen jewellers that all combinations were forbidden and that "to this effect, those who are found in discussion [during working hours] will be dismissed immediately."⁴³ For the same reason, the police kept an eye on the usual gatherings of workers in the streets and public squares of the city. But it was in the tavern that workers conceived and planned most of their combinations, for drinking places played a key rôle in their social life. Time and time again the tavern crops up in police reports: there the workers discussed their grievances, held strategy meetings, and came to drink after going on strike. The police once arrested a wine-merchant as the instigator of a carpenters' combination: "Since these workers habitually go to his place for a drink, he has a direct interest in their earning more."⁴⁴

The compagnonnage split workers in many occupations into rival factions, but it also gave members the experience of collective action as well as a sense of professional solidarity. Stonemasons, carpenters, and hatters--the most strike-prone workers in Paris--were also those most actively involved in the compagnonnage. The authorities regarded compagnons as perpetual conspirators against their employers;

Police had used similar arguments in a report, 7 brumaire an XIV (29 Oct. 1805), AN, F7 3122.

⁴³"Un règlement d'atelier," p. 139.

⁴⁴Report by Pr. Pol., 27 prairial an IX (16 June 1801), AN, F7 3829.

according to the Minister of Justice, one of their main goals was to set their own wages.⁴⁵ The Prefect of Police believed that they admitted only unmarried men to their organization since only single members were free to quit work or even to abandon a city at a moment's notice.⁴⁶ The relation between mutual aid societies and workers' combinations is more problematic. The societies obviously might be tempted to take part in labour disputes and their treasuries might be used as strike funds, but in the Napoleonic period mutualism was too closely supervised by the police and too much under the tutelage of employers and philanthropists to pose much of a danger. Mutual aid societies may have had an indirect influence on labour activists, but it was easy enough to refute accusations of their direct participation in strikes.⁴⁷

This is not to say that either the compagnonnage or mutual aid societies caused strikes. However, the evidence permits the inference that they did contribute to the organizational techniques used in workers' combinations. While many combinations were spontaneous outbursts of protest, there are a number of incidents which show that workers in many trades had the ability to organize and to coordinate a

⁴⁵ Report by Min. Justice, 20 Dec. 1809, AN, AF IV 968, no. 175.

⁴⁶ Report by Pr. Pol., 11 Feb. 1811, AN, F7 4236, d. 5.

⁴⁷ Report by Everat, 1 June 1822, in Soc. phil., Rapports ... 1821, p. 77.

strike with some sophistication. Formal meetings were sometimes called, as when, in December 1810, the police intercepted a circular addressed to the journeymen hatters working in several manufactories and inviting them to meet in a certain restaurant "over a matter that concerns you."⁴⁸ A few months later, a similar letter invited about forty glovers to come to a restaurant in the faubourg Saint-Martin. The police arrested and interrogated those who showed up; they admitted discussing a wage decrease which three manufacturers had recently introduced, as well as the possibility of establishing a fund to help those among them who might find themselves unemployed (presumably as the result of a protest strike).⁴⁹ The men in one workshop might also call on fellow journeymen from outside to back them up in a dispute. For example, a master tawer complained in 1804 that a number of unknown men had entered his shop and asked "with an air of authority" how much he paid his employees. They then demanded that he grant a raise, and, when he refused, his own workers asked for their livrets back and withdrew with the strangers. Since the police arrested one of the tawer's own men as author of the strike, they evidently believed that the intruders were acting in concert with the strikers and by

⁴⁸Police bulletin, 11 Dec. 1810, AN, F7 3769 and AF IV 1512. Five copies of the original circular, addressed to workers at five different manufactories, lie unidentified in a box of miscellaneous police reports, BHVP, Ms CP 5200. The circular is quoted at the head of this chapter.

⁴⁹Report by Pr. Pol., 28 April 1811, AN, F7 3835. Police bulletin, 28-29 April 1811, AN, F7 3771 and AF IV 1515.

some prior arrangement.⁵⁰ One further incident is very revealing. In 1806 a journeyman nailer named Retrouvé nursed some grievance against a former employer. Determined to cause trouble, he showed this man's workers a letter which ordered them "in the name of the society" to quit work. Retrouvé later admitted that he himself drew up the letter at a meeting with three friends in a tavern. "The society" was apparently pure fiction and, as it happened, one with no effect because the other nailers simply ignored it.⁵¹ But the point of the story is that Retrouvé's letter was intended to be credible. Nailers had no compagnonnage nor, as far as we know, any mutual aid society. Yet the idea of a secret organization directing them to go on strike was conceivable; it had entered into their experience and their consciousness as wage-earners.

⁵⁰ Minute of report by peace officer Bazin, 15 pluviôse an XIII (4 Feb. 1805), AN, F7 3184.

⁵¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 29 April 1806, AN, F7 3123.

IV

At least seventy-three of the ninety combinations on the list (or 82 percent) involved a dispute over wages, and while the point at dispute in eight others is unknown, it probably also involved wages. (In two of these strikes workers demanded shorter hours as well as higher wages-- although table 21 does not show this.) Defensive strikes were the exception, but there were four cases in which workers resisted a cut in wages and another four combinations were in defence of traditional hours of work. Indeed, the largest strike in Napoleonic Paris was the strike by construction workers in October 1806, during which wage-earners fought the police ordinance which increased their hours of work. (It has been described in some detail in chapter six.) The most significant motive for combination, however, was clearly the desire for higher wages.

Figure 1 presents all ninety recorded combinations chronologically along a line divided into years and months. It also shows fluctuations in the price of bread (which was the main component of the cost of living for a worker) for fourteen of the fifteen years. The clusters of combinations which appear here, when considered in the context of other evidence, suggest a pattern largely determined by economic factors. The most favourable occasion for workers to seek higher wages was at a time when their labour was in demand because of a good business cycle or a special building

project. A sudden increase in the cost of living also provided an urgent impetus to wage demands. The two factors were independent of each other, but a conjuncture between rising prices and a high demand for labour caused an intense wave of agitation, while the effect of high prices was considerably checked if it coincided with an economic depression.

Public works were particularly vulnerable to strikes, especially during the busy summer months when labour was scarce or at times when government architects and contractors were anxious to finish a job before a deadline. As the police noted during one such strike, the workers abandoned the construction yard and "demanded, as they are in the habit of doing under pressing circumstances, an exorbitant [wage] increase."⁵² The authorities put the blame on the contractors for not handling their men with more severity: "If the construction workers are difficult it is because they are spoiled by their [high] wages and the deference they are used to."⁵³ But contractors were in an awkward position, caught between government pressure on one hand and scores of angry, stubborn, and much-needed workers on the other. A carpenters' strike at the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile in 1810 is typical

⁵² Report by Pr. Pol., 28 fructidor an XII (15 Sept. 1804), AN, F7 3119.

⁵³ Baron de Gerando to Min. Int., [June 1809], AN, F13 206. See also, Chalgrin to carpentry contractors, 8 July 1810, BHVP, Ms CP 4346.

of these incidents. It is also of special interest because in this case the workers pushed their demands to such unusual extremes that they exhausted the patience of the authorities and brought down on themselves swift and firm reprisals. The occasion for the strike was provided by the government's decision to erect a wood and canvas replica of the triumphal arch then under construction, in time for the entry into Paris of Napoleon and the new Empress, Marie-Louise, on 2 April 1810. It was 7 March before the contractors began the project, and they pledged to complete the scaffolding within nine days. The very next day, the four hundred carpenters employed on the job returned from their morning break (which they had used for discussion) and demanded that their daily wage be raised from four to nine francs. The contractors consulted hastily with the Ministry of the Interior and then announced their capitulation. Work progressed untroubled until Sunday, 11 March, when the group of carpenters entrusted with the scaffolding (others cut the wood for it) demanded a special arrangement, whereby two hundred men would be paid a lump sum of thirty-six thousand francs to do the job. Chalgrin, the architect in charge, considered this a costly proposition, but he consented. There was a minor interruption of work on Tuesday, 13 March, when these carpenters feared that more than two hundred had been put on the job, until Chalgrin reassured them by distributing numbered cards. The locksmiths at the worksite demanded their own pay raise on 15 March; they must have been less

essential to the job, since Chalgrin fired them and hired replacements. Work was by now falling well behind schedule. Then, at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, 17 March, a piece of wood broke loose from the scaffolding and fell on seven men working below, killing one of them. Coincidentally, bad weather stopped work that day and the men, upset by the accident, spent the afternoon drinking and talking in near-by taverns. Those carpenters who had been cutting wood at nine francs a day concluded that their job was dangerous, and they therefore demanded even higher pay. According to Chalgrin, the demands amounted to as much as twenty-four and thirty francs a day. They had gone too far. Sunday morning at 7 a.m., the Inspector-General of Police arrived at the site with twenty-four peace officers and one hundred troops, who rounded up the workers. He read out to them a proclamation by the Prefect of Police: "You have abused the goodness of the government. . . . It is time to end such abuses. You shall earn no more than four francs a day." Some men resisted, and the police arrested six carpenters for making threats and throwing rocks. Most, however, submitted, and work continued peacefully, albeit under the watchful eye of a small detachment of soldiers and police.⁵⁴

These incidents at the Arc de Triomphe suggest how quick construction workers could be to seize upon a favourable

⁵⁴This is the best documented strike in Napoleonic Paris. See Appendix 2, no. 60.

opportunity to increase their wages. As figure 1 shows, there were combinations and strikes in construction every summer--almost every single one of which involved men on public works--with the number increasing dramatically after 1808, during a boom period for the Parisian building trades.⁵⁵ Alain Faure, who has studied Parisian strikes between 1830 and 1834, has found that "the strike was . . . a movement of 'prosperity.'"⁵⁶ This was also clearly the case two and three decades earlier, and not only in the construction industry. For example, the police reported in June 1800:

Commerce becomes more active; workers are busy and in great demand. Consequently, they ask that their wages be increased. In many cases, they have been. The requests are made without disorder and without meetings.⁵⁷

The following November, the police noted that workers in the faubourg Saint-Antoine were all employed but were still poorly paid; they predicted that the end of hostilities would set off wage demands.⁵⁸ Austria and France in fact signed the Treaty of Lunéville in February 1801 and within three

⁵⁵The amount of building stone brought into Paris gives us some idea of the activity of the construction industry: 1809-1813 appear to have been especially busy years. See Tulard, Nouvelle histoire de Paris, p. 185.

⁵⁶Alain Faure, "Mouvements populaires et mouvement ouvrier à Paris (1830-1834)," Le mouvement social 88 (July-Sept. 1974):55.

⁵⁷Report by Min. Pol., 5 messidor an VIII (24 June 1800), AN, F7 3701.

⁵⁸Report by Min. Pol., 25 brumaire an IX (16 Nov. 1800), AN, F7 3702.

months the Prefect of Police was reporting on agitation among Parisian wage-earners: "It is certain that a hand, as yet invisible, is seeking to stir up the workers." He suspected "an English committee" making clever use of Royalists, priests, and even enragés!⁵⁹ It is obvious, however, that there was no conspiracy at work, but only Adam Smith's hidden hand of economic laws. The coming of a continental peace--which became general when a treaty was signed with England in October 1801--signaled a revival of French industry and commerce. Prosperity brought strikes in its wake. And, in this case another factor also came into play: bread prices began to rise.

Michelle Perrot, in her outstanding analysis of strikes after the Franco-Prussian War, has found no correlation between strike activity and a rising cost of living. She has argued that the worker was generally unaware of slow changes in his real wage, since he "spends what he earns; what he knows is his nominal wage. . . ." Only the "trauma of rocketing prices, and notably of food prices," precipitated collective action--and this was more likely to be a market riot than a strike.⁶⁰ The evidence from the Napoleonic period does not contradict the broad lines of Perrot's thesis, although it is not quite true that workers were

⁵⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 22 floréal an IX (12 May 1801), AN, F7 3829.

⁶⁰ Michelle Perrot, Les ouvriers en grève: France 1871-1890, 2 vols. (Paris, 1974), 1:130-31.

totally indifferent to the creeping inflation characteristic of the Napoleonic period, as these remarks taken from a petition by printers at the Imprimerie Impériale in 1808 show:

It was ten years ago that the daily wage was fixed at three livres.⁶¹ At that time, primary necessities cost one third less; they have since increased to today's prices, but wages . . . have remained the same. . . .⁶¹

But, on the whole, Napoleonic workers, like their children in the 1830s and their great-grandchildren in the 1870s, asked for raises when they saw their labour in demand because of economic prosperity and not because they felt the effects of slow inflation over many years. Real wages became an issue only when prices shot up too quickly to be ignored, most especially during bread crises. There were two critical periods in this respect: 1801-1802 and 1812-1813.

The period from May 1801 to September 1802, during which bread prices were unusually high, was also a period of unusual strike activity: there were twelve recorded combinations in fifteen months. Moreover, during the eight months that a four-pound loaf cost an extraordinary ninety centimes (from 22 November 1801 to 20 July 1802) there were six strikes, none of them in the construction industry. The workers in a tobacco factory in the Hôtel Longueville won a wage increase of five sous, "in view of the high cost of

⁶¹ Petition by printers, 12 April 1808, AN, BB4 33, d. 5.

bread," in late November 1801. The following February, hatters in two manufactories went on strike for higher wages and their success seems to have prompted another hatters' strike which shut down almost all the manufactories in Paris for six weeks in April and May. Tanners at one manufactory won a wage increase in March, there was a combination by printers at the Imprimerie Nationale in April, and nailers went on strike in June. Police reports specifically link these events to the high cost of bread.⁶²

There is additional evidence that many other workers also considered collective action. The police reported in July 1801 that workers in the faubourg Saint-Antoine were thinking of demanding increased wages but that their employers threatened to shut down rather than give in.⁶³ There were rumours in the spring of 1802 of a general movement for higher wages by locksmiths and other workers "with hammers"

(à marteau).⁶⁴ At the same time, the Prefect of Police noted that "different classes of workers are harassing the contractors or manufacturers to obtain a wage increase."⁶⁵ That police records do not list any actual combinations emerging from this general agitation does not necessarily

⁶²See Appendix 2, nos. 9-14.

⁶³Report by Pr. Pol., 14 messidor an IX (3 July 1801), AN, F7 3829.

⁶⁴Minutes of reports by peace officers Bazin and Noël, germinal-prairial an X (March-May 1802), AN, F7 3177.

⁶⁵Report by Pr. Pol., 2 floréal an X (22 April 1802), AN, F7 3830.

mean that none were formed.

The period of high bread prices in 1812-1813 offers a sharp contrast, for there appears to have been no significant outbreak of strikes. Yet this may be an illusion, the result of inadequate documentation, since the Prefect of Police wrote in January 1812:

In a vicious circle, while some have no work, those who do are demanding higher wages, owing to the increase [in the cost] of bread. The masters, however, have generally held firm, and wages have not yet gone up.⁶⁶

His words suggest a considerable number of unreported combinations, or at least a great many individual requests for wage increases. But there is also the general economic climate to be taken into account. Unlike 1801-1802, these were years of severe economic depression and unemployment. High prices coincided with a faltering economy, hardly the most propitious circumstances to win raises.

The short and intense spurt of strike activity between June and November 1814 bears some resemblance to that in 1801-1802. Bread prices were not unusually high, at sixty-five centimes a loaf, but the cost of other "primary necessities" like meat, wine, vegetables, oil, soap, and wood was climbing.⁶⁷ The inflation coincided with a moderate revival

⁶⁶ Report by Pr. Pol., 29 Jan. 1812, enclosed in police bulletin, AN, AF IV 1519.

⁶⁷ Police bulletins, 27 Aug., 16 and 26 Sept. 1814, AN, F7 3783 and F7 3836; and 31 Oct. and 16 Nov. 1814, AN, F7 3784 and F7 3837.

of manufacturing and public construction, coming with the return of peace.⁶⁸ There is also some evidence that the government of the Restoration was more indulgent than the Napoleonic régime in its reaction to labour disputes.⁶⁹

V

Striking workers had two enemies: the police and their own poverty. Employers knew that time was their ally, bringing all but the most recalcitrant employee into line:

. . . experience has proven that whenever a difference has arisen between master and worker, . . . the worker is brought back to consciousness of his duties by the need to work.⁷⁰

If he lacked patience, the employer could always rely on the police. It is no wonder that so few strikes lasted for more than a day or two, and that so few were won by the wage-earners. Even so, persistent labour unrest and recurring strikes bear witness to at least some degree of labour militancy and solidarity among Parisian wage-earners. One socialist historian has gone so far as to describe them, with more optimism than accuracy, as "a proletariat already

⁶⁸Police bulletins, 6 Aug. and 23 Sept. 1814, AN, F7 3783 and F7 3836; and 19 Nov. 1814, AN, F7 3784 and F7 3837.

⁶⁹The Director General of Police refused to intervene against a combination of tailors, on the grounds that it involved only private and not public interests. Police report, 15 June 1814, AN, 40 AP 8.

⁷⁰Gillet, manufacturer of tulle, to Min. Pol., Brussels, 2 Jan. 1809, AN, F12 509-510.

conscious of its class interests, making an effort to improve its wages, prepared to organize combinations in defence against capitalist exploitation."⁷¹ This is improbable. Outside of textiles, there was no significant industrial capitalism in Napoleonic Paris. There is no evidence at all that striking workers saw their demands in terms of a class struggle with their employers. Workers sought to wrest higher wages from masters because they were needed or because bread prices were high. They did not regard their gains as permanent, especially in the construction industry where they would last only for the length of the building project, and they certainly were not trying to alter the distribution of profit or wealth in society. This does not mean that workers had no conception of the value of their labour nor any pride in their work. Journey-men carpenters, even when unemployed, shunned work at low wages because to take it would be, in their expression, "to spoil their hands" (se gêter la main).⁷² But we do better to talk of solidarity rather than class consciousness, which is an anachronism in the early nineteenth century.

The strongest bond of solidarity among strikers was their common goal. Even so, there were almost always workers

⁷¹Henri Turot, L'Empire de 1807 à 1815, vol. 6 part 2 of Histoire socialiste (1789-1900), ed. by Jean Jaurès (Paris, n.d.), p. 546.

⁷²"Notice sur les ouvriers sans ouvrage," [Dec. 1813], AN, F15 2763.

willing to break ranks with their comrades and to continue working, or outsiders prepared to accept employment replacing the strikers. This usually resulted in threats and often actual acts of violence by the strikers; the intimidation of men who did not join a combination was commonplace. When, in the course of a carpenters' strike in 1804, the participants placed a tuft of tricoloured ribbons in their hats, it was not a mere gesture of bravado: it enabled them to distinguish friend from foe.⁷³ But violence or threats of physical retaliation were not always necessary. When the hatters who worked for Danloux-Dumesnil went on strike in 1800, they summoned their foreman to appear before them at a tavern just down the street from the workshop. According to a police report on the incident, "they enjoined him to stop work, seeing that they had banned the complainant's shop to all hat-finishers, and warned him that if he continued to work they would prevent him from entering any hat manufactory in Paris." One loyal worker wanted to stay on the job but, as his wife told the police, he dared not, for should Danloux ever later dismiss him, his comrades would see to it that he never find work elsewhere.⁷⁴ These threats, unless they were mere bombast, imply a great degree of solidarity not only among workers in a single workshop but

⁷³ Report by Pr. Pol., 14 germinal an XII (4 April 1804), AN, F7 3832.

⁷⁴ Reports by police commissioner of Amis de la Patrie division, 17 and 26 brumaire an IX (8 and 17 Nov. 1800), APP, A/a 55, fol. 41 and 48.

among those in the same trade as well. Such solidarity was more likely to be found among men already bound together by ties of compagnonnage, like hatters, than among, say, watchmakers or navvies. Regional loyalties may also have reinforced occupational solidarity. During one strike, the police took note of the militancy of stonemasons, "almost all Normans."⁷⁵ Some of the most strike-prone workers, like construction workers, printers, and weavers, belonged to occupations with distinct patterns of regional recruitment (as we have seen in chapter two).

It often happened that a direct appeal to occupational solidarity was successful in winning support for a strike. For instance, in 1804 stonemasons persuaded the men hired to replace them to refuse to work as well.⁷⁶ During the great construction strike of October 1806, work resumed at the Panthéon after four days' stoppage; then, the stonemasons received an impassioned appeal for their support and along with many other workers, they rejoined the strikers. The note which won them over, written by a semi-literate and almost incomprehensible in parts, translates roughly as follows:

Brothers and friends, stonemasons, we invite you with all our strength to maintain our dinner hour as established and not to let yourselves be

⁷⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 10 Oct. 1806, enclosed in police bulletin, AN, AF IV 1498.

⁷⁶ Report by Pr. Pol., 5 prairial an XII (25 May 1804), AN, F7 3832.

corrupted by fine promises. This invitation comes from your comrades at the Louvre, the Etoile, the quai du Louvre, the Palais Bourbon, the rue de Rivoli, the Place Vendôme, the quai Bonaparte, the quai de la Cité, the Jardin des Plantes, the Pont Austerlitz, who depend on you to maintain our rights. This will fulfill our desires and bring an end to our movement.⁷⁷

This same strike, however, also gives a good example of the limits to workers' solidarity. It may have been the most widely supported strike in Napoleonic Paris, yet it was by no means as general as we might expect. The strike (it may be remembered) was a reaction against a police ordinance which altered the hours of work in construction. Navvies and certain other workers under contract to whom the new regulations did not apply apparently did not join their comrades. At the Austerlitz Column in Place Vendôme all 115 men abandoned the site on Monday morning, but in the course of the day some forty of them returned to work--all but the stonemasons. Twenty of the stonemasons showed up for work the following day, but they quit again on Wednesday, expressing their "good intentions" but claiming that they feared vengeance by other stonemasons should they stay on the job. At the Palais des Beaux Arts there was no interruption of work, although masons and pavers talked of quitting on Saturday, after pay.⁷⁸ Such behaviour hardly suggests an overwhelming sense of class consciousness.

⁷⁷ AN, F13 205, d. 41.

⁷⁸ There is a jumble of scrawled notes written by the supervisors of various worksites, in *ibid.*

It is, of course, evident that some men were more eager to incite and to take part in strikes and combinations than others, but it is difficult to draw up a list of labour militants. Dominique Olivier, a weaver arrested as a strike leader in October 1805, was probably such a man: he had been arrested once before, in June 1802, for trying to force some new workers to pay the bienvenue.⁷⁹ He apparently had a strong sense of craft traditions and a determination to defend them. Girardot, who led a strike by wood drawers in May 1808, may have been another militant; the police considered him to be a "bad character," for they had arrested him twice before for disrupting the ports.⁸⁰ There are a few similar examples to be found, and there are also reports of incidents caused by individual workers attempting unsuccessfully to bring their comrades out on strike.⁸¹ Only one woman, a hatter, was ever charged with taking part in a combination (there is, in fact, no other record of female strikers) and she, too, was evidently a militant. The police considered her a leader of the agitation and noted that she threatened her employer with a knife.⁸²

⁷⁹ Minute of report by peace officers Marlée and Mercier, 6 messidor an X (25 June 1802), AN, F7 3178. Report by Pr. Pol., 23 vendémiaire an XIV (15 Oct. 1805), AN, F7 3122.

⁸⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 5 May 1808, AN, F7 3178. Police bulletin, 10 May 1808, AN, F7 3759.

⁸¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 26 prairial an XI (15 June 1803), AN, F7 3831, gives two examples, one a nailer and another a hatter.

⁸² Report by Pr. Pol., 29 April 1813, AN, F7 3140. Police bulletin, 11 May 1813, AN, F7 3779 and AF IV 1528.

But we really know very little about such people and even less about their thoughts and beliefs. No minutes of their interrogations by the police survive, and we therefore have little more than lists of names of men arrested for combination, and usually labelled as instigators. But were these really the strike leaders, or merely the loudest voices or the most disorderly participants? Or were they just the unlucky ones caught in a police roundup or seized because, for one reason or another, they caught the eye of a police officer?

Most modern historians accept the thesis that labour militancy first emerged not among the proletariat of the industrial factory system but out of the artisanal world, with its pride of craft skills, strong sense of occupational identity, and long traditions of association and mutualism. The behaviour of workers who organized combinations in Napoleonic Paris does not differ markedly from that of the preceding century or of the decades which followed. Combinations and strikes were not unknown in the Old Régime, although they were less common, and they were very similar in cause, nature, and organization.⁸³ The basic structure

⁸³ M.J. Flammermont, Mémoire sur les grèves et les coalitions ouvrières à la fin de l'Ancien Régime (Paris, 1894). Funck-Brentano, La question ouvrière sous l'Ancien Régime, d'après les dossiers des prisonniers par lettres de cachet (Paris, 1892). Marcel Rœuff, "Les mouvements populaires," in H. Bergmann et al., La vie parisienne au XVIII^e siècle: Leçons faites à l'École des Hautes Etudes Sociales (Paris, 1914), pp. 263-92.

of the workers' movement in fact remained unchanged throughout the first half or more of the nineteenth century, until modern industry became more and more important, beginning in the Second Empire.⁸⁴ If there was an upsurge of strike activity after 1789, this was mainly the result of the abolition of the repressive guild system and not of any changes in economic conditions or in the structure of industry and labour. It seems in retrospect, therefore, that the Napoleonic period does not mark any significant stage in the evolution of labour disputes in France.

⁸⁴Peter N. Stearns, "Patterns of Industrial Strike Activity in France during the July Monarchy," American Historical Review 70 (1964-1965):371-94.

CHAPTER NINE

THE PEOPLE'S BREAD

. . . la tranquillité de Paris se trouve essentiellement liée à l'abondance des approvisionnements, et sur-tout au prix modéré du pain. . . .¹

I

If the French Revolution taught the nation's rulers anything, it was that a regular and cheap supply of bread was the price of political stability in the capital. Grain, Napoleon wrote in 1802, is "the only matter in which the government must always favour the proletarians against the propertied classes. Otherwise: . . . revolt by the people."² Paris, moreover, demanded special attention:

It is unjust that bread be kept at a low price in Paris when it is expensive everywhere else, but that is because the government is there, and because soldiers do not like to fire on women who come to wail at the bakers' doors with children in their arms.³

During the Old Régime, the government exercised a tight

¹Bureau Central du Canton de Paris to Min. Int., 7 nivôse an VIII (28 Dec. 1799), AN, F7 7703, d. 60..

²Napoleon to Melzi, 8 July 1802, as quoted in J. Christopher Herold, ed., The Mind of Napoleon (New York, 1955), pp. 100-01.

³Napoleon in conversation with Baron Gourgaud on St. Helena, as quoted by Lanzac de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 5:157.

control over the trade in grain and flour, and after a brief interlude of economic liberalism, circumstances compelled the Revolutionary government to revert to this policy, first with a series of intermediate measures and then with the Draconian Maximum Laws of September 1793. The Thermidorians lifted economic controls in December 1794 at the same time that they also dismantled the apparatus of revolutionary dictatorship.⁴ Napoleon permitted free trade in grain during most of his reign. Parisian bakers were responsible for finding their own supplies and often made purchases in person at distant markets. This decreased the importance of the capital's central grain and flour market (the Halle aux Bleds et Farines) which had formerly held a monopoly of sales. However, the government did contract directly with a major wholesale merchant to guarantee that the Halle was always well-stocked and to maintain a reserve in case of shortage. In 1807 Napoleon conceived the further scheme of building a huge government storehouse to hold a reserve supply of two million quintals of grain, although construction did not actually begin until 1812. The Emperor was clearly moving toward state intervention. He replaced the independent contractor with a government agency (régie) in 1810; and in October of that same year he took the first

⁴The best study of controls and the popular movement remains Albert Mathiez, La vie chère et le mouvement social sous la Terreur (Paris, 1927).

steps toward setting up the Conseil des Subsistances, a special council to supervise grain provisions across France. So the apparatus for government regulation was already in place before the grain crisis of 1811-1812 which forced the government to extend its powers.⁵

While the grain trade remained free, the bakers of Paris chafed under government controls. Prefect of Police Dubois was a determined advocate of police regulation in this matter and his arguments were underscored by a serious bread crisis in 1801-1802. The Consular Decree of 19 Vendémiaire Year X (11 October 1801) created a bakers' trade association to facilitate supervision. All bakers henceforth required government authorization to practice their trade. They had to deposit a guarantee of fifteen to sixty sacks of flour in a central warehouse and to maintain a personal reserve as well. No baker could close down his shop without six months' prior notice to the police, nor reduce his normal daily production without their permission. The immediate impact of the law was to force the smallest and least prosperous bakers out of business and to reduce the number of bakeries in Paris to 601.⁶ This was not appreciated by most Parisian workers, who found the small

⁵Louis Passy, "Napoléon: l'approvisionnement de la ville de Paris et la question des subsistances sous le Consulat et l'Empire," in his Mélanges scientifiques et littéraires, vol. 3 (Paris, 1896):1-112. Bergeron, "Approvisionnement."

⁶Lanzac de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 5:163-73.

bakeries in the faubourgs to be the most willing to extend weekly credit to their customers.⁷ The authorities, however, believed that fewer shops and less competition would reduce production costs and consequently the price of bread.⁸

Parisian workers had been calling for government control of bread prices since the early days of the Consulate.⁹ The government now responded, asserting a right to set the price of the standard four-pound loaf of first-quality white bread. It showed little sympathy for the problems of bakers and was not above bullying them into holding the line on prices, often insisting that the bakers themselves ought to suffer a financial loss rather than raise prices. When in September 1801 the bakers of the Temple division petitioned for higher prices, the Minister of Police replied: "My conduct in this case has been prescribed by the government and it is impossible for me to accede to the bakers' petitions. . . ." ¹⁰ In November 1810, informed that some

Passy, "L'approvisionnement," pp. 8-9. The texts of all relevant laws and ordinances are reprinted in Tableau des boulangers de Paris.

⁷ Inspecteur-général de police to Min. Pol., [ca. 8 frimaire an X (29 Nov. 1801)], AN, F7 6307, d. 6401.

⁸ See letter to all bakers from their syndics, 19 Oct. 1807, in Tableau des boulangers, pp. 66-72. (The government was once more reducing the the number of bakeries.)

⁹ Report by Min. Pol., 17 prairial an VIII (6 June 1800), AN, F7 3701.

¹⁰ Min. Pol. to Pr. Pol., 14 fructidor an X (1 Sept. 1802), AN, F7 7895, d. 3451 S4.

bakers were cutting back production because they were losing money, the Prefect of Police warned that "if they continue, I will find myself compelled to deal severely with them."¹¹ He even told bakers in September 1811 that since they had made considerable profits in previous years, they could now afford to sustain losses.¹² Decisions as to bread prices were so important that on occasion they were left to the Emperor himself.¹³

Officials had good reason to keep so close a watch on bakers and their bread. "The provisioning of this city, [which is equivalent to] supplying fourteen armies, causes a continual state of alarm and dreadful worries."¹⁴

Memories of Revolutionary shortages, hunger, and even starvation were still fresh, and both panic and fury were likely to be the first reactions to rising prices. Twice during Napoleon's fifteen-year reign the spectre of famine haunted Paris, when the harvests of 1801 and 1811 were unusually poor and grain prices sky-rocketed. On both occasions the government took action to ensure that the

¹¹Pr. Pol. to police commissioners, 17 Nov. 1810, APP, A/a 73, fol. 327.

¹²Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 21 Sept. and 5 Oct. 1811, AN, F11* 3051. Report by Pr. Pol., 17 Sept. 1811, enclosed in police bulletin of same date, AN, AF IV 1517.

¹³Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., 26 Sept. 1810, ADS, 4.AZ 795.

¹⁴Sauvegrain, Considérations, p. 190.

capital had bread and, high as the price might go, it was always higher still in the provinces. This was because the government subsidized the bakers by selling them flour from the reserve below cost, spending in this way 15.5 million francs in 1801-1802 and 14.4 million francs in 1811-1812.¹⁵

Paris therefore never lacked bread, and there is some irony in the fact that in times of crisis bread sales in the city actually increased. This was in part the result of hoarding by consumers,¹⁶ but principally because the inhabitants of villages around the capital came into the city to buy cheaper Parisian bread, while many residents of Paris illegally exported it. Thus, in March 1812, Parisian bakers, who normally used only thirteen hundred sacks of flour a day, were baking up to fourteen or fifteen hundred sacks.¹⁷ The Prefect of Police reported: "There is now everything to gain from transporting [bread] from Paris to the surrounding communes, so that everyone joins in this trade." Parisians carried bread out of the city as a favour to friends, or often to sell it. Restaurants and pot-houses outside the city's customs barriers bought their supplies within the walls. Workers employed at public works or in

¹⁵ Lanza de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 5:182, 280.

¹⁶ Report by Min. Pol., 24 fructidor an IX (11 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3702.

¹⁷ Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 5 Oct. 1811, AN, F11* 3051. Pasquier, Mémoires, 1:498. See also, reports by Min. Pol., 23 and 27 fructidor an IX (10 and 14 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3702.

workshops in the suburbs began to take bread with them to work, sometimes crossing through the city gates five or six times a day, each time claiming that the bread they carried was for their own meals. The police tried to stop this clandestine export and confiscated contraband, which they gave to the bureaux de bienfaisance for distribution to the poor; but their task, hardly an easy one in any case, was immeasurably complicated by the coming and going of so many wagons loaded with produce for the Parisian market.¹⁸

Their experience made the Parisian police acutely aware that there was a psychological dimension involved that was far more important than objective reality. They knew that fear of bread shortage was deeply-rooted in the popular consciousness, that fear and consequent rumour led to panic, and that panic might bring disorder in its wake. A minor incident occurring in May 1802 in the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal can serve to illustrate the danger. Chedieu Lamosandière learned from her baker that she would have to wait a half-hour for bread that was still in the oven; mistrustful of this excuse, she made a fuss and drew a crowd, which the local police commissioner dispersed with a warning and the added assurance that there was no lack of flour.

¹⁸ Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 14 and 30 April, 12 May, and 16 and 30 June 1812, AN, F11* 3053. For measures taken at the barriers, see Min. War to Min. Pol., 26 June 1812, AN, F7.6579, d. 3110.

Yet, he reported, (only a short time later:

I was not little surprised . . . to meet at the end of the street near the market this same woman who was addressing all whom she met, telling them that there was no bread at the bakeries and that the promise which had just been given her was as untrue as the one given her yesterday.

This time the commissioner arrested her and charged her with "intending to raise a riot."¹⁹ We could dismiss her outburst as hysterical and irrational, but to do so would be to ignore Lamosandière's own perspective. She acted out of fear (and there was certainly an irrational element in it), but she was also convinced that her demands conformed to basic social justice: bakers (and the authorities) were morally obliged to offer bread for sale.

E.P. Thompson has argued that historians must analyze the food riot not as an irrational mob action, but rather within the context of popular notions of legitimate market practices and the prevailing community consensus, or what he calls the "moral economy" of the poor. A food riot is not merely an almost automatic response to actual hunger; it is an expression of moral outrage--a social protest against the violation of fundamental popular beliefs.²⁰

¹⁹ Report by police commissioner of Butte des Moulins division, 9 a.m., 1 prairial an X (21 May 1802), APP, A/a 115, fol. 2.

²⁰ E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," Past and Present 50 (February 1971): 76-136. He defines the moral economy as "a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations, of the proper economic functions of several parties within the community. . . ." (p. 79).

Thompson is an English historian, but his analysis is also applicable to France. George Rudé has shown that in the course of the typical grain and bread riots of eighteenth-century France, the crowd justified its violence in terms of a traditional "just price" which it was usually willing to pay. Indeed, it often claimed to be rioting with the consent of the king and the public authorities.²¹ By their own efforts to control prices and supplies in the interests of the masses, authorities (even when they repressed outbreaks of violence) must have appeared to be in accord with the popular conception of the government's duty to assure the availability of bread at reasonable prices. The government penalized grain producers and bakers--so is it any wonder that the masses tended to believe that a price rise was often the work of hoarders, speculators, and unscrupulous men who wished to exploit the poor? If the government failed to fulfill its duties (as conceived by the people), it too might find itself called into question. There was therefore always an implicit political dimension to bread riots. The police reported that when, in October 1800, "agitators" tried to stir up the people of Paris, they dwelt on "the high price of bread, candles, and other

²¹George Rudé, The Crowd in History 1730-1848 (New York, London, Sydney, 1964), especially chapter 1. See also, his two articles: "La taxation populaire de mai 1775 à Paris et dans la région parisienne," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 28 (1956):139-79; and "La taxation populaire de mai 1775 en Picardie, en Normandie, et dans le Beauvaisie," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 33 (1961):305-26.

items of primary necessity" as the issue most likely to win them support: "According to them, the government should ceaselessly ensure that the most common articles of consumption should be the least expensive. . . ." ²²

II

Government concern was not misplaced. The bread crisis of 1801-1802 demonstrated how easily a subsistence crisis could rekindle social and political tensions and how precarious was public order in Paris. The police generally regarded sixty centimes as the highest desirable price for a four-pound loaf of white bread. ²³ On 6 May 1801 the price went up to sixty-five centimes, on 8 September to seventy, on 23 September to eighty, on 16 November to eighty-five, and on 22 November it reached a ceiling of ninety centimes; the price did not begin to fall again until 20 July 1802, and even then it dropped very slowly, touching sixty centimes again only in June 1803. ²⁴ As early as May 1801, the police noted discontent in the markets and the streets and quoted people as saying: "What's the use of

²² Report by Min. Pol., 3 brumaire an IX (25 Oct. 1800), AN, F7 3702.

²³ The Prefect of Police observed in August 1804: "In short, as long as the price of bread in Paris does not exceed 12 sol's, there is nothing to fear. . . ." Minutes of Conseil de police, 29 thermidor an XII (17 Aug. 1804), AN, F7 4311, d. 1.

²⁴ For bread prices between 1801 and 1823, see Husson, Les consommations de Paris, p. 175.

peace if, far from having abundance, our distress becomes even worse."²⁵ Such muttering continued throughout the summer, but only in September, when Paris began to run short of bread, did discontent become threatening and hostility to the government overt.

Relations between bakers and customers rapidly deteriorated. One man, finding no white bread left at a bakery on the rue aux Ours, threatened the baker: "The people are dissatisfied with you; you are making them die of hunger: but be careful, we will fall upon you, and perhaps very soon." On the rue Saint-Antoine, a baker reportedly insulted the customers queuing at his shop, calling them a "dissolute mob" ("crapule") and even daring to strike two women.²⁶ Some blamed the government for allegedly tolerating the hoarding and export of grain, but most people denounced the bakers and the dealers in flour. Customers suggested that cutting the heads off one or two bakers would strike fear into the rest.²⁷ A police agent reported that on 10 September there were disorderly gatherings at the doors of the bakeries, and that

²⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 12 floréal an IX (2 May 1801), AN, F7 3829.

²⁶ Report by Min. Pol., 23 fructidor an IX (10 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3702. Police report, 24 fructidor an IX (11 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3053, d. 1.

²⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 24 fructidor an IX (11 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3829. Report by Min. Pol., same date, AN, F7 3702.

. . . those who took away a piece of bread at the higher price, as well as those who could not get any at all, lay the blame at the government's door, and in general I overheard invective against the government.²⁸

On Friday, 11 September, customers began to line up at the bakeries in the poorer quarters of Paris as early as 4 or 5 a.m. A crowd forced bakers in the Indivisibilité division to open shop at 5 a.m. Anxious customers fought among themselves at a bakery on the rue Montmartre while at another, on the rue Neuve des Petits Champs, a woman caught in the crush had her arm broken. Workers in the Arcis division threatened the police commissioner and "they went so far as to say that they would have bread if the bakers were guillotined." A crowd pillaged a bakery in the Halle au Bled division. In the Butte des Moulins division men and women stopped a wagon loaded with bread and divided the supply, although they paid the driver the full price. A baker in the Jardin des Plantes division was less fortunate when a group of women stopped and robbed him as he carried bread to his regular customers. The police did their best to disperse these gatherings which, they noted, were usually caused by women spreading panic.²⁹

²⁸Police report, 24 fructidor an IX (11 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3053, d. 1.

²⁹Report by Pr. Pol., 24 fructidor an IX (11 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3829. Report by Min. Pol., same date, AN, F7 3702.

Early in the morning of Saturday, 12 September, market-gardeners returning home from the central market came across customers queuing peacefully at a bakery on the rue Frépillon. Without provocation, they began to call the customers "Jacobins" and accused them of stirring up trouble. The residents in neighbouring houses (whose conduct suggests that they were middle-class) joined in the harassment and doused the line with water.³⁰ Disturbances continued throughout the day. A flurry of unfounded rumours swept through the capital: that cavalry was protecting the grain market, that the faubourgs were on the point of insurrection, and that workers had begun to rip down police proclamations. These were all untrue, but symptomatic of the tension. Panic-stricken customers rushed to the bakeries. A crowd on the rue Saint-Martin forced entry into one shop and bought up the last batch of bread. Another shop was looted on the rue aux Ours. A crowd pillaged two wagons loaded with bread in the Saint-Jean market. According to one report, women who were "Jacobin harridans" from revolutionary times ("anciennes tricoteuses des Jacobins") tried to stir up the crowds but were insulted for their past. The police were alarmed by

³⁰ Report by military police, 25 fructidor an IX (12 Sept. 1801), BN Mss, NAF 2720, reprinted by Charles Villay, "La question du pain à Paris en l'an IX," Revue historique de la Révolution française et de l'Empire 5 (1914):158-59. Conflicts between the gardeners, as producers of food, and Parisian workers has a long history: see Arlette Farge, Délinquance et criminalité: le vol d'aliments à Paris au XVIII^e siècle (Paris, 1974), pp. 201-09. The gardeners would, of course, have little reason to remember the Revolution and price controls with any fondness.

the serious political implications of the riots. They took note of ominous remarks: "We lost one King because of hunger; hunger will bring us back another," and "It's like 1794; we have to pay a call on the Prefect."³¹ It is unclear from police reports whether or not there were more disturbances on Sunday, 13 September. The Minister of Police described a number of incidents, but some of these bear such close resemblance to events which took place on the Saturday as to suggest that his report may have been misdated.³²

In any case, the disorder was over by Monday, 14 September, for there was sufficient bread in the capital to meet demand; yet public anxiety over its price persisted. Bakers knew that prices would have to go even higher, and their comments contributed to the tension.³³ The public blamed bakers and speculators, but did not spare the shortcomings of government policy which (it was alleged) tolerated the export of grain. Memories of fixed prices under the Revolutionary Maximum Laws were revived, while Royalists tried to arouse sympathies for a restoration. Napoleon's popularity inevitably suffered. Reports by secret police

³¹Police report, 25 fructidor an IX (12 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3053, d. 1. Report by Pr. Pol., same date, AN, F7 3829. Police Bulletin, same date, AN, F7 3702.

³²Police bulletin, 26 fructidor an IX (13 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3702.

³³Reports by Pr. Pol., 29 fructidor and 5e jour complémentaire an IX (16 and 22 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3829. Police bulletin, 28 fructidor an IX (15 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3702.

agents were explicit on this point. "Buonaparte [sic] is generally loved," one agent wrote cautiously, but the people believed that prefects of border departments had tricked him and were allowing grain exports. Another declared that "the indigent class" was grumbling against the government and quoted popular sentiment: "Bread prices were once fixed, why not now? The government is shutting its eyes on a matter of utmost importance." Yet another noted succinctly: "Public opinion is not at all favourable to the government."³⁴ The military police reported that "Jacobins" were saying that "Bonaparte is very good as a military commander, but not as a ruler."³⁵ The police heard children playing in the street sing the Carmagnole and other revolutionary songs.³⁶ The workers in a blanket manufactory on the rue Mouffetard considered a petition asking the First Consul to reduce bread prices. When they gave up the idea, several women (perhaps recalling the March on Versailles in October 1789) remarked that their husbands were cowards.³⁷ On 22 November, the day on which a loaf of bread reached its highest price at ninety centimes, the Prefect of Police wrote: "Anxiety

³⁴ Reports by secret agents, two dated 2 vendémiaire and two 3 vendémiaire an X (24 and 25 September 1801), AN, F7 3688/21.

³⁵ Report by military police, 25 fructidor an IX (11 Sept. 1801), BN, Mss, NAF 2720.

³⁶ Report by Pr. Pol., 29 fructidor an IX (16 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3829.

³⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 5 vendémiaire an X, (27 Sept. 1801), AN, F7 3830.

among the working class is great and there is a noticeable cooling of its affection for the government."³⁸ There were rumours of an imminent insurrection, and one evening in the faubourg Saint-Jacques women leaving the bakeries shouted that the government ought to be lynched because of the high price of bread: "Le pain à 18 sols, le Gouvernement à la lanterne."³⁹ Someone chalked on the walls of the Louvre, "Long live Louis XVIII, we'll have bread at ten sous," and in the Cour du Carrousel, "Long live Louis XVIII, give us bread." Another poster urged: "Let us take up arms and exterminate this scoundrel who governs us and makes us die of hunger."⁴⁰ A foreign observer reported that there were not enough police officers to rip down all the hostile posters stuck up in the city and that "many busts of Bonaparte are thrown into the river."⁴¹

³⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 1 frimaire an X (22 Nov. 1801), AN, F7 3830.

³⁹ Min. Pol. to Pr. Pol., 8 frimaire an X (29 Nov. 1801) and report by Inspector-General of Police, n.d., AN, F7 6307, d. 6401. The latter was nevertheless most reassuring: "... the hotheads of the sections who, during the Revolution, influenced the popular movement are calm or under careful surveillance."

⁴⁰ Reports by Pr. Pol., 2, 8, and 9 frimaire an X (23, 29, and 30 Nov. 1801), AN, F7 3830. Report by police commissioner of Beaubourg division, 9 frimaire an X (30 Nov. 1801), APP, A/a 73, fol. 7.

⁴¹ Cobenzl to Colloredo, Paris, 15 Dec. 1801, in comte Boulay de la Meurthe, Documents sur la négociation du Concordat et sur les autres rapports de la France avec le Saint-Siège en 1800 et 1801, 5 vols. (Paris, 1891-1897), 4:451-52.

Rumour is a form of popular expression that indicates social attitudes and fears. In late November 1801 rumours in various quarters of Paris had it that other parts of the city were troubled by sedition and mass demonstrations, which was untrue.⁴² In December there was talk in Paris of insurrection caused by high bread prices in Lyon, throughout the Midi, and in Marseille (where, it was claimed, the Prefect had been killed), Macon, Dijon, and Châlons-en-Bourgogne.⁴³ In the spring of 1802 these imaginary riots occurred closer to home--in Poissy, Soissons, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Versailles, Rouen, and Etampes--and the mayors of the last two cities reportedly died at the hands of the angry crowd. There were equally false rumours of disturbances within the capital itself.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, it was said in the provinces "that Paris was in disorder, and people were killing one another there because there was no bread."⁴⁵ These stories are very significant, for they bear witness to tensions in Paris and, even more important, they suggest that the population had not forgotten past insurrections and their effect. The lynching of the mayor of Rouen, according to the current rumour, had brought down the price of

⁴² Report by Pr. Pol., 9 frimaire an X (30 Nov. 1801), AN, F7 3830.

⁴³ Reports by Pr. Pol., 15, 17, and 27 frimaire an X (6, 8, 18 Dec. 1801), AN, F7 3830.

⁴⁴ Reports by Pr. Pol., 18, 19, 23, 29, and 30 floréal an X (8, 9, 13, 19, 20 May 1802), AN, F7 3830.

⁴⁵ "Compte moral de la situation de la Division de la

bread in that city--was this not an implicit justification of crowd action?

Although there were no riots in the capital after September 1801, bread prices remained high and there was continuing political dissatisfaction. On 22 April 1802 a couple of peace officers were stationed at the central market to supervise the unloading of bread, "for fear that some troublemakers might urge the people to pillage the carts."⁴⁶ There was some panic in mid-May, when bread was bought up so quickly that there was hardly more to be had by 9 a.m. This caused grumbling and threats but no serious disorder, since people could see carts loaded with flour circulating in the streets and arriving at the bakeries.⁴⁷ A Royalist agent gleefully reported in June that the mass of Parisians "asks only for rest and bread, cries famine, and loudly blames the Government for the public misery." The authorities suspected that troublemakers were using the issue to stir up the people to vote against Napoleon in the approaching referendum on the consulship for life.⁴⁸ A police report on public opinion at this time claimed that while

-Butte des Moulins pendant le mois de prairial an 10," (May-June 1802), APP, A/a 115, fol. 61-66.

⁴⁶ Minute of report by peace officers Lecler and Gallet, 2 floréal an X (22 April 1802), AN, F7 3177.

⁴⁷ Minutes of reports by peace officers Bazin and Noël, 29 and 30 floréal an X (19 and 20 May 1802), AN, F7 3177.

⁴⁸ Report by a Royalist agent, 10 June 1802, in comte Remacle, ed., Bonaparte et les Bourbons: Relations secrètes

most people were in favour of the lifetime consulship, "in groups gathered on streetcorners" and near the posters . . . there are complaints about the price of bread, and it is said that a decrease would make the head of the government much more surely cherished and loved."⁴⁹ In September 1802 a market-gardener, "pretending to be an imbecile or madman," passed a number of times through the faubourg Saint-Martin and attracted laughing crowds as he walked along crying out: "Bonaparte is a good boy, Long live Bonaparte. He does not make us eat expensive bread. We are as happy under his reign as fish on dry land (comme un poisson sur la plaine Saint-Denis)."⁵⁰ Sarcasm had taken the place of rioting; the crisis of 1801-1802 was over.

III

Bread was plentiful and relatively cheap for almost a full decade afterwards. Then the harvest of 1811 failed. By October, bakers began to run short of bread before evening, which renewed popular fears of another serious crisis. Cooked potatoes went on sale in the central market--"something that happens only in times of scarcity [of grain]"--and rice,

des agents de Louis XVIII à Paris sous le Consulat (1802-1803) (Paris, 1899), p. 32.

⁴⁹ Minute of report by peace officers Bazin and Noël, 23 floréal an X (13 May 1802), AN, F7 3177.

⁵⁰ Report by a secret agent, 4 vendémiaire an XI (26 Sept. 1802), AN, F7 6323, d. 6823.

an occasional substitute for wheat, rose sharply in price. The police arrested several men and women for threatening bakers and for making subversive remarks.⁵¹ There was much reason for discontent that winter. The flour available was often of very poor quality, and sometimes made out of dried vegetables.⁵² "Hunger extinguishes many prejudices," one writer remarked; "one becomes accustomed to a bread of oats, beans, peas, and hempseed; the capital has known no other for some time now."⁵³ Peace officers received instructions in early 1812 to watch for "individuals who dare to make subversive speeches that may arouse feelings" and to keep an eye on workers as they left their workshops, in case they should make remarks about rising bread prices.⁵⁴ The Prefect of Police reported on 30 January that "uneasiness is spreading to all classes and all persons." Bread had just reached a price of eighty-five centimes a loaf and the people, whose financial difficulties were already acute, feared even higher prices. (In fact, the

⁵¹ Reports by Pr. Pol., 9 Oct.-9 Nov. 1811, AN, F7 3835. Police bulletins, 11 Oct.-16 Nov. 1811, AN, F7 3773 and AF IV 1518. Cambacérès to Napoleon, 3 Nov. 1811, Lettres inédites, 2:837-38. Pasquier, Mémoires, 1:500-01. See also minutes of Conseil des subsistances, Sept. through Nov. 1811, AN, F11* 3051.

⁵² Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 8 Feb. and 23 June 1812, AN, F11* 3052 and 3053.

⁵³ Antoine-Alexis Cadet de Vaux, Moyens de prévenir le retour des disettes (Paris, 1812), p. 151.

⁵⁴ Minute of report by peace officer Grolleau, 28 Jan. 1812, AN, F7 3200.

price went up to ninety centimes on 6 March 1812 and stayed there for thirteen months.) The bakers stopped extending credit to their customers and even started to call in debts. "The employed worker, who is himself paid only once a week, is thus in the greatest financial difficulty, and even more so the unemployed worker or the one who has work for only two or three days a week."⁵⁵ Since the bakers in the workers' quarters of Paris were also usually the poorest in the trade, they were the least able to sustain losses due to the high cost of flour. They therefore had to cut back their production, which decreased the available supply of bread in Paris.⁵⁶ They also sometimes fraudulently decreased the weight of their loaves. The police at first turned a blind eye to this trick, until popular anger became so aroused that it did not spare the administration. The police were in a dilemma for if they took action against these bakers and prosecuted one or two as examples, it could not fail to incite popular passions against the bakers--with possibly dangerous results.⁵⁷ There were also complaints that bakers were making more "luxury" bread, since the price of this more

⁵⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 30 Jan. 1812, enclosed in police bulletin, AN, AF IV 1519. See also, minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 21 Dec. 1811, AN, F11* 3052: "... in the neighbourhoods inhabited by the workers, [there are] many complaints about the lack of work which increases a great deal the inconvenience of expensive bread."

⁵⁶ Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 25 Jan. and 1 Feb. 1812, AN, F11* 3052.

⁵⁷ Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 3 March 1812, AN, F11* 3052.

expensive loaf was not fixed like that of the common white loaf.⁵⁸

The extent of popular hostility against the bakers is evident from the comments made by men and women arrested by the police in 1811 and 1812 for causing disturbances. A cabinet-maker in the faubourg Saint-Antoine denounced both bakers and police commissioners, saying that "they were plotting together and were all thieves."⁵⁹ A day-labourer refused to pay for a small loaf of bread and tried to run off with it. He evidently did not consider himself to be in the wrong, for he denounced the baker who tried to stop him.⁶⁰ A woman called a baker "a wretch and a thief, saying that his shop should be pulled down."⁶¹ Such threats of popular vengeance were very common. A joiner and a female button-maker threatened a baker on the rue Saint-Denis with lynching.⁶² A laundress in the faubourg Saint-Antoine told a baker that "had she the strength, she herself would hang him at his door as an example."⁶³ A young shoemaker's

⁵⁸ "Etat de situation des subsistances à Paris," 17 March 1812, AN, AF IV 1059.

⁵⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 16 April 1812, AN, F7 3138.

⁶⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 12 March 1812, AN, F7 3138.

⁶¹ Police commissioner of Panthéon division to bureau de bienfaisance of the division, 23 June 1812, in minutes of the bureau, 24 June 1812, AAP, FF 96, r. 8.

⁶² Report by Pr. Pol., 31 Oct. 1811, AN, F7 3137.

⁶³ Report by Pr. Pol., 6 May 1812, AN, F7 3138.

assistant was more subtle (and also more menacing) when he denounced those bakers who ran short of bread and then "took note in a booklet of the street numbers of their houses."⁶⁴

The situation became critical with the arrival of the spring of 1812. By mid-April, customers were besieging bakers' shops from daybreak, especially in the faubourgs. The bread supply was sold out within one or two hours of opening.⁶⁵ Paris was nevertheless far better off--and far more tranquil--than the provinces. There was a serious flare-up of disturbances in the countryside and some of the provincial cities.⁶⁶ The most dangerous of these incidents was a market riot in Caen, on 2 March 1812. The local authorities repressed it with exemplary brutality and a court martial inflicted severe punishment (which included eight death sentences) on the leading participants.⁶⁷ But the government also responded with a policy intended to reassure the masses and guarantee grain supplies through a

⁶⁴ Report by Pr. Pol., 31 Oct. 1811, AN, F7 3137.

⁶⁵ Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 14 April 1812, AN, F11* 3053.

⁶⁶ Richard Cobb, The Police and the People: French Popular Protest, 1789-1820 (Oxford, 1970), pp. 112-17. F. L'Huillier, "Une crise des subsistances dans le Bas-Rhin (1810-1812)," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 14 (1937):518-36. P. Léon, "La crise des subsistances de 1810-1812 dans le département de l'Isère," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 24 (1952):289-309.

⁶⁷ Gaston Lavalley, Napoléon et la disette de 1812: à propos d'une émeute aux Halles de Caen (Paris, n.d.). See also, Cobb, The Police and the People, pp. 112, 114-15, who

strict regulation of the market. The decrees of 4 and 8 May 1812 in effect restored the Revolutionary Maximum Laws. They forbade all speculation in grain, required dealers and farmers to declare their holdings, limited buying and selling to the open market, and gave the prefects power to impose a fixed maximum price in their departments.⁶⁸ Initially greeted with enthusiasm by "the lower class of consumers," the decrees were in fact inefficiently enforced and probably drove many producers to conceal their supplies. Almost two-thirds of the prefects thought the decrees were unnecessary.⁶⁹

In Paris that spring, the consequences of the grain crisis were far less dramatic than in the provinces. The authorities believed that a major contribution to the peace of the capital was "the abundant aid which is being distributed to the indigent by order of His Majesty [which] is

stresses the political implications of the riot, in which the crowd made open reference to 1789 and the Year II and a group of conscripts joined in the disturbances. Cobb is in error on one major point: there could hardly have been rumours of Napoleon's death in Moscow, since the invasion of Russia began only in June.

⁶⁸H.-F. Rivière, Précis historique et critique de la législation française sur le commerce des céréales et des mesures d'administration prises dans les temps de cherté (Paris, 1859), pp. 97-98.

⁶⁹"Secours-subsistances, 1811-1812: Rapport à Sa Majesté l'Empereur et Roi, par le Ministre de l'Intérieur," AN, F11* 3050. For a highly critical treatment of Napoleonic policy, see Vincens, "Notice sur la cherté des grains de 1811 à 1812," Journal des Économistes 6, (Aug.-Nov. 1843): 224-45. Vincens makes the point that government intervention aggravated the crisis.

a great relief to the unfortunate class."⁷⁰ There were some arrests (twenty-four between early March and early July) but no serious disturbances of the kind that broke out in 1801. The danger point came only in late June. On 23 June the police noted "a sort of crisis," with agitation among the crowds at the bakery doors, although there was no real disorder. There were also rumours that the government would bring in bread rationing to limit every Parisian to one half-pound a day: they were unfounded.⁷¹ The crisis began to ease by early July, when "generally everyone finds his bread."⁷² Prices remained high for many months, yet there were no reports of political dissatisfaction or of criticism of the government. It is hard to know how to interpret this fact. Was it sycophantic police reporting? Were people simply satisfied that the government was doing its best? Or was it that the Emperor seemed far more solidly in power in 1812 than he had been in 1801?

⁷⁰ Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 10 March 1812, AN, F11* 3052.

⁷¹ Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 23 June 1812, AN, F11* 3053. See also the special reports on subsistence enclosed in police bulletins, 15, 25, 26, 27, 28-29, 30 June 1812, AN, AF IV 1523.

⁷² Minutes of Conseil des subsistances, 7 and 14 July 1812, AN, F11* 3053.

IV

Bread riots and strikes are two forms of response, to high prices. George Rudé (among others) has argued that each of these is characteristic of a distinct stage of economic development:

In the early [pre-industrial] phases food riots predominate, and these occur more frequently in villages and market towns than in cities. . . . But with growing industrialization and working-class organization, . . . the strike tends to take over and the food riot tends to recede into the background.⁷³

Napoleonic Paris straddled the two economic phases--modern industrialism had made its appearance (especially in textiles) while, as yet, most production remained artisanal in structure, even if it was integrated into a capitalist economy. This perhaps helps to explain the reaction of Parisian workers to the two bread crises they faced. There was definitely a strike movement in 1801-1802, and probably some labour trouble in 1811-1812 as well (as we saw in chapter eight). There was, at the same time, a series of popular disturbances in the first period--including bread riots in September 1801--and potentially dangerous agitation in the second period. None of this, to be sure, was as serious as the disorders over bread which occurred in the course of the French Revolution. Between 1789 and 1795 the bread issue coincided (and became merged with) political

⁷³ George Rudé, "The 'Pre-Industrial' Crowd," in his Paris and London, p. 18. See also E.P. Thompson, "Moral Economy," p. 79.

questions. This explicit political dimension was more or less missing in the Napoleonic period, although there was some political dissatisfaction expressed in 1801-1802, when the Consulate was still a young and untried régime. In any case, the authorities did their best to buy off or repress discontent, dispensing charity with one hand and arresting grumblers with the other.

There is unfortunately no documentation that makes possible even the most superficial analysis of the men and women who took part in the riots of September 1801. We do, however, have the names and occupations of nine people arrested and imprisoned for causing disturbances at bakeries in late October 1811 and those of another twenty-four similarly charged between March and July 1812. Nineteen were men: three day-labourers, two water-carriers, a market porter, a port worker, a labourer, a weaver, a tailor, a wine-merchant, a cabinet-maker, a mason, a joiner, a furrier, a shoemaker, a pit-sawyer, a launderer, and a coachman. Fourteen were women: two food retailers and a fruit merchant, two day-labourers, a dealer in second-hand lingerie, a glover, a button-maker, a brace-maker, a shoe-black, a laundress, a mason's aid, a former noblewoman (who was also the widow of a tailor and now worked for a liquor merchant), and a woman of unidentified occupation. Most of these people were identified as wage-earners rather than independent artisans. At least half the women were

married.⁷⁴ These were individuals who had not engaged in collective action and therefore cannot be called a crowd. But there is no reason to believe that they were not typical of those Parisians most upset by the high bread prices and the most likely to take part in mass protest. Moreover, as a group they closely resemble the food rioters of 1792 and 1793, described by Rudé as "servants, porters, and other unskilled or general workers rather than journeymen of the traditional crafts," and many of whom were women.⁷⁵

The evidence may not be overwhelming, but it does tend to suggest that the men and women who took part in bread disturbances were not drawn equally from all categories of Parisian workers. Participants were generally unskilled labourers and petty retailers, who held weak positions on the periphery of the urban economy--and most female workers clearly fall into the class of "marginals." Journeymen in the crafts and even workers in the manufactories, whose skills gave them some bargaining power in the market economy,

⁷⁴ Reports by Pr. Pol., 31 Oct. and 7 Nov. 1811, 12 March, 16, 23, and 30 April, 6 and 8 May, and 2 and 9 July 1812, AN, F7 3137-3139. These reports apparently do not include all those arrested. I have found reference to one other woman, the widow Durand, a convicted thief of unknown occupation, living with a shoemaker: police commissioner to bureau de bienfaisance, Panthéon division, in minutes of the bureau, 24 June 1812, AN, FF 96, r. 8. There are also occasional names in reports from the Prefecture of Police for the spring of 1812, AN, AF IV 1560.

⁷⁵ George Rudé, The Crowd in the French Revolution (London, Oxford, New York, 1959), p. 183.

were more likely to demand higher wages than to pillage a bakery. Had journeymen joined the agitation, the two bread crises might have had far graver consequences for the government. We have seen in the previous chapters that they had organizational abilities, and we will see in the following chapters that they also had a degree of political consciousness. These factors might have made a significant difference if brought into play. However, insurrections over bread were a thing of the past in Paris and the large urban centres.

CHAPTER TEN

POPULAR POLITICS AFTER BRUMAIRE

La nature fait des Jacobins et la police des citoyens:¹

I

By 1800, the liberty trees planted in the capital with such high hopes during the glorious days of the Revolution were dying: "The air of Paris seems not to agree with them."² Thus nature parodied the political world and, as the reactionary character of the new regime became increasingly apparent, the coincidence did not escape the sharp Parisian wit.³ For Napoleonic France was as complete a police state as possible before the twentieth century, and nowhere was this more true than in Paris, once the centre of sans-culotte

¹Phrase used by Beugnot in a report dated 1805, cited by Etienne Dejean, Un préfet du Consulat: Jacques-Claude Beugnot (Paris, 1907), p. 35.

²Dawson Warren, The Journal of a British Chaplain in Paris during the Peace Negotiations of 1801-2, ed. by A.M. Broadley (London, 1913), p. 30.

³Report by peace officer Bazin, prairial an XII (May-June 1804), which quotes a current witticism: "que l'arbre de la liberté périra par l'écorce (les Corses)." AN, F7 3182. Also Pr. Seine to mayor of first arrondissement, authorizing the removal of a dead liberty tree from a public square since it might cause remarks, 26 floréal an VIII (16 May 1800), ADS, VDX 2557bis.

political agitation in the Year II. Here during the Revolution the sans-culotte movement (which drew its militants principally from the class of independent artisans and shopkeepers) voiced the hopes, fears, and demands of the Parisian masses, not only in the debates and resolutions of sectional assemblies and clubs, but also in pamphlets and newspapers. Under Napoleon, however, there was no possibility of such open expression of opinion, particularly of opinion out of favour with the government. To put it quite simply: there was no longer a popular movement, and the historian interested in its remnants must pick his way through thousands of police reports. The people were no longer speaking directly to the historian, but only through the police.

The police paid careful attention to every manifestation of public opinion. Vigilant agents noted what graffiti was chalked on walls, mingled with workers as they talked in the city squares or drank in the taverns, eavesdropped on women shopping at the bakeries, and chatted with journeymen in their workshops.⁴ They made extensive use of informers⁵ and they investigated (and sometimes paid for) the denunciations

⁴See, for example, the assignment carried out by peace officer Labuissière in pluviôse an XIII (Jan.-Feb. 1805), AN, F7 3184: ". . . every morning at daybreak, a round of all the streets of the two divisions under my surveillance, to rip down (if any are found) incendiary placards and posters. . . . Every evening . . . rounds in the cabarets, cafés, dance-halls, public squares around the street-singers, in order to hear if troublemakers are making speeches tending to make the government and its head hated."

⁵One agent, Chambellan, reported on Louise Moreau, a lodging-house keeper, "with whom I have formed a friendship,

which they often received.⁶ Police activity produced thousands of reports, many of which have survived and form an invaluable historical source. However, it is one to be used with caution, for agents, out of self-interest, tended to pad their reports with exaggeration and pure speculation and freely to mix fact with imaginative fantasy. High police officials were not unaware of the problem, which the Director General of Police described to Louis XVIII in these terms:

It is not difficult for the police to gather information, but it is difficult to catch hold of the truth amidst so much effort to conceal it and so many schemes to distort the simplest facts.

[One must have] a deep understanding of a class of subordinate agents whose trade since the Revolution has been to frighten and deceive in turn the governments which have trusted them.⁷

The conscientious historian must heed the warning, since any attempt to determine workers' political and social attitudes

with the intention of making her useful to me, because of her relations with all the poissardes and generally everything that goes on in the central market. . . . She will be one of my most vigilant sentinels. . . ." Report, 3 Dec. 1814, inside police bulletin, 23 Nov. 1814, AN, F7 3784.

⁶One man, a former soldier, received twenty-four francs for denouncing a tailor for "dreadful remarks" against the Emperor in a tavern. Police report, 21 vendémiaire an XIII (13 Oct. 1804), AN, F7 3119. It was not unusual for personal hatreds to motivate denunciations. In 1810, a shoemaker was reported to the police for remarks against the Emperor by two women living on his street, but their denunciation proved to be the result of a long-standing quarrel. Police report, AN, F7 6552, d. 2158.

⁷Report to King, 17 June 1814, AMAE, r. 336. See similar comments in letter from Fouché to Dubois, floréal an VIII (April-May 1800), AN, F7 6244, d. 4966.

during the Napoleonic period is almost wholly dependent on police sources.

In a recent study of Babouvism, R.B. Rose has urged historians to consider the question of whether between 1800 and 1830 there was "a discontinuity in the developing political and social consciousness of the workers of the Paris faubourgs."⁸ This chapter and the following one attempt to give at least a partial answer to the question. But there is an important caveat to be introduced at this point: within the context of popular politics it is quite impossible (and useless) to distinguish between wage-earners and artisans. Their political interests usually ran parallel throughout the Revolution, and continued to do so until after the Paris Commune of 1871. It may be clear in hindsight that the demands of the popular movement (essentially for a democratic and decentralized society of small producers) were primarily to the benefit of independent artisans and petty tradesmen. At the time, however, this was not readily apparent to wage-earners, who tended to absorb the ideology and follow the leadership of, say, the master locksmith or the local wineshop keeper. It would be anachronistic to describe a distinct "working-class" political consciousness, and, for that reason, the term worker is used in this chapter in the broadest sense of the word.

⁸R.B. Rose, Gracchus Babeuf, The First Revolutionary Communist (Stanford, Ca., 1978), p. 328.

II

Historians have generally agreed that Napoleon enjoyed an immense popularity among the French masses and most particularly among the workers of Paris. Alphonse Aulard wrote:

He was popular in the factories and workshops, and the labouring population of the faubourgs Saint-Marceau and Saint-Antoine admired and loved him far more than they had ever admired Marat and Robespierre.⁹

Aulard was a "radical" (in the sense used during the Third Republic) but his interpretation has been shared by historians across the political spectrum. Paul Brousse lamented, in the *Socialist History* edited by Jean Jaurès, that the "proletariat" was "fervently Bonapartist, passionately chauvinist."¹⁰ Albert Vandal, on the Right, declared that the Parisian "working class" had "given itself heart and soul to the Consul and would never detach itself from him."¹¹ These observations have been reiterated often enough to be considered commonplace.¹² Few historians have even bothered to examine

⁹ Alphonse Aulard, The French Revolution: A Political History 1789-1804, trans. by Bernard Miall, 4 vols. (London and Leipzig, 1910), 4:254.

¹⁰ Brousse, Le Consulat, p. 225.

¹¹ Albert Vandal, L'avènement de Bonaparte, 16th ed., 2 vols. (Paris, 1907), 2:500-01.

¹² Lanzac de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 6:317-19. Félix Ponteil, La chute de Napoléon I et la crise française de 1814-1815 (Paris, 1943), pp. 38-40. Georges Lefebvre, Napoleon: From Tilsit to Waterloo, trans. by J.E. Anderson (New York, 1969), pp. 199-202. Maurice Guerrini, Napoleon and Paris: Thirty Years of History, trans. by Margery Weiner (London, 1970), pp. 275, 290. Tulard, Nouvelle histoire de Paris, p. 411.

signs of opposition to the régime or have ventured to suggest that its apparent popularity is a misconception based on unreliable documents. Richard Cobb is one of the few to do so--and he has been particularly hard on the Napoleonic police: "The police are no longer reporting on the people, they are thinking for them, and thinking right."¹³

But Napoleon's police were never quite as sycophantic as Cobb has suggested. They in fact never took the love and loyalty of Parisian workers for granted; hence their policy of careful surveillance. Any potential opposition was to be ruthlessly crushed. Disarmament by the Thermidorians and the Directors had been the first step, for "an unarmed sans-culotte was politically a non-being."¹⁴ Napoleon's police made certain that Parisian workers remained unarmed. There was an especially close watch on locksmiths, whose skill in metal-work might be put to use in the production of pikes, the traditional weapon of the Parisian crowd.¹⁵ Even when the foreign enemy was at the gates of Paris in 1814 and again in 1815, the authorities refused to arm Parisian workers, for

¹³Cobb, The Police and the People, p. 56. See also Jean Vidalenc, "L'opposition sous le Consulat et l'Empire," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 40 (1968): 472-88, and Louis Bergeron, L'épisode napoléonien: Aspects intérieurs 1799-1815 (Paris, 1972), pp. 95-118.

¹⁴Cobb, The Police and the People, p. 131.

¹⁵See correspondance between Min. Police and Bureau central, Sept. 1799, AN, F7 7660, d. 13; report by an agent, 16-17 vendémiaire an VIII (8-9 Oct. 1799), AN, F7 3688/20; interrogation of Etienne Blanchet, journeyman locksmith, 9 thermidor an XII (28 June 1804), AN, F7 6373, d. 7619.

fear that they "could just as well turn against the Government as fight for it."¹⁶

In the aftermath of Thermidor the police developed a policy of mass arrests, usually directed against the same core of known militants, to deprive the popular movement of any possible leadership. The Napoleonic government continued the practice.¹⁷ The arrests following the assassination attempt of 3 Nivôse (24 December 1800) are well known,¹⁸ but were not the only instance of a purge. In the spring of 1813 the police expelled more than one hundred men and women from Paris, a precaution justified by defeat abroad and economic crisis at home. The list of victims included royalists and liberals, as well as former revolutionaries, and ranged from aristocrats to poor wage-earners. Some of the exiles were guilty of nothing more than a revolutionary past, while others had recently spread "false and alarming" news or manifested a "spirit of opposition to the government." At the same time, many others were put under close surveillance, like Vaugrand, a forty-five year old stevedore,

¹⁶ Pasquier, Mémoires, 1:200.

¹⁷ Richard Cobb, "Note sur la répression contre le personnel sans-culotte de 1795 à 1801," in his Terreur et subsistances 1793-1795 (Paris, n.d.), pp. 170-210.

¹⁸ Michael J. Sydenham, "The Crime of 3 nivôse (24 December 1800)," in J.F. Bosher, ed., French Government and Society 1500-1850: Essays in Memory of Alfred Cobban (London, 1973), pp. 295-320. Jean Destrem, Les déportations du Consulat et de l'Empire (d'après des documents inédits) (Paris, 1885).

described as "a strong and vigorous man capable of leading the unruly," and Henriot, a fifty-year-old tinsmith who had participated in the September Massacres of 1792 and was now considered "very dangerous and [who] knows many bad characters capable of striking a blow [against the government]."¹⁹

These men were not being punished for any actual offense but only because they might take part in sedition or riot.

Riot, demonstration, and insurrection were hardly likely in such repressive conditions. Nor was workers' conspiracy much more than a chimera, even if both police and militants believed in it. The only plot to overthrow Napoleon which came anywhere near success was Malet's failed coup d'état in October 1812, and this was a purely military affair, in which Malet persuaded some of the Paris garrison that the Emperor was dead on a Russian battlefield. The ineptitude of most so-called conspirators is evident from a plot which the Prefect of Police claimed to have uncovered in September 1803. Etienne Blanchet, a thirty-six year old journeyman locksmith with a moderately radical past (he had been a member of the Civil Committee of the Panthéon section) confessed to his part in a conspiracy to raise the workers of Paris on 1 Vendémiaire Year XII (22 September 1803). He testified that Pierre Dufayet, a painter in the building trade, had told him how "a great blow would be struck against the Tuileries,

¹⁹"Exilés de Paris, 1813-1814," AN, F7 6586, d. 3544.

the tocsin would be rung, the general alarm be beaten, and everyone would gather in the sections. . . . " Blanchet's own contribution to the plot was apparently limited to the remarks that on the rue du Bac (where he lived) there were five hundred people ready to rise against Bonaparte and that he knew of two locksmiths' shops where pikes were being made that could be used in the insurrection. The uprising never took place, according to Dufayet, because of "division among the leaders." The police responded by arresting a score of men, although the connection between them seems tenuous at best: an army officer, a "fiery anarchist," a bookseller and several peddlers accused of selling subversive pamphlets, as well as a number of artisans and journeymen. Some of these were once members of the Club de la rue du Bac, one of the more advanced Jacobin groups under the Directory, but one was a royalist. Many of the alleged conspirators did not even know each other, yet the police denounced them all for "plots against the government, woven in shadowy meetings."²⁰

The expression of opposition to the government generally took the form of gestures by isolated individuals rather than collective action. The police made frequent arrests for seditious comments, since workers "in the taverns are not in the habit of hiding what they think"²¹ and cheap wine

²⁰ "Affaire de la Pétition au Tribunal & de la Société d'union morale ou Invisible," AN, F7 6373, d. 7619.

²¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 13 frimaire an IX (4 Dec. 1800), AN, F7 3829.

undoubtedly loosened many tongues; "truth always lies at the bottom of the glass."²² Most of the men and women arrested were intoxicated at the time, but the police believed that "when a person makes such remarks while drunk, one can presume that he shows what he thinks when he is cold sober."²³

Indeed, the police were extremely strict and often took seriously remarks that, hardly seem worthy of notice. For example, in November 1804 they arrested a hairdresser for denouncing France's form of government. He denied the charge, but admitted to complaining that the Emperor did not wear an old-fashioned powdered wig which would revive the fashion and improve his business. He was already suspect because he had belonged to a popular society during the Revolution and, even worse, he now refused to cringe before the arresting officer: "I am not a conspirator, I don't meddle in anything, but I have my opinions. . . ." The authorities expelled him from Paris.²⁴ There were others perhaps more deserving of punishment.

A butcher's assistant told customers in a wineshop at the Halles that Napoleon had lost the confidence of the French army, which would refuse to obey should he order an invasion

²²Police bulletin, 6 March 1815, AN, F7 3785.

²³Report by police commissioner of Butte des Moulins division, 3 germinal an XII (24 March 1804), APP, A/a 120, fol. 13.

²⁴Report by Pr. Pol. on François Gaspard Bazin, 28 brumaire an XIII (19 Nov. 1804), AN, F7 3120. See also his dossier, AN, F7 6454, d. 9505.

of England.²⁵ A waiter discouraged conscripts from enlisting, telling them that "only cowards and idiots would go to fight for such a man [Napoleon]."²⁶ It would be tedious to recount the details of scores of similar cases (and usually the police reports fail to indicate what exactly the suspect said), but they continued to occur throughout the Napoleonic period.

The scrawling of graffiti and the posting of handwritten placards on the walls of Paris was another means frequently used to express discontent. It is obviously impossible to know much about the individuals who scrawled their anonymous denunciations, but, most, to judge from their barely-literate style and very poor handwriting, were uneducated workers or artisans. As for their motives, there is the testimony of a tailor's assistant arrested for this very crime:

Question: Who induced you to write these and to post them?
Answer: Nobody. It was my own idea. My aim was to make it seem that the people shared my opinion.²⁷

Three seditious placards found by the police in May 1811 are typical of the range of styles--from vulgar to witty--and of the various political opinions expressed in this way. One

²⁵ Report by Pr. Pol. on Pierre Pintril, 21 fructidor an XII (8 Sept. 1804), AN, F7 3119.

²⁶ Report by Pr. Pol. on François Lalande, 18 March 1807, AN, F7 3125.

²⁷ Interrogation of François Léon, 12 floréal an XII (2 May 1804), AN, F7 6435, d. 9064.

was a crude social critique which, referred angrily to the incipient bread crisis: "Dammit! Shall we die of hunger? While there are so many who devour the property of others. . . ." A second, in a more humorous vein, reminded Parisians of their revolutionary determination in October 1789 and somewhat obliquely called the mounting war casualties to public attention: "We have been to fetch the Baker and the Baker's wife; we must go to fetch the Butcher." A third singled out Empress Marie-Louise (niece of Marie-Antoinette) for abuse: "She has come to reign over the ashes of her aunt."²⁸ Rumour was yet another way to express and spread discontent. For example, it is possible to gauge popular dissatisfaction in 1811-1812 from the exaggerated rumours of military disasters in Spain, of an impending general European war, or of Napoleon's intended flight from the bread riots expected in Paris.²⁹ The police therefore listened to all rumours circulating in the capital,³⁰ and spreading false news, even without any malicious intent, could be as serious an offence as denouncing the government.³¹

²⁸Police report, 18 May [1811], AN, F18 27.

²⁹Police reports, 8 July and 9 Sept. [1811] and 8 Jan. 1812, AN, F18 27. The rumours were being spread by printers dissatisfied with the régime because new regulations had decreased the number of printing shops in Paris (to facilitate censorship and government control) and thus caused economic distress.

³⁰See, for example, report by Pr. Pol., 29 Nov. 1810, which shows great concern over the rumours (attributed to a plot) then circulating in Paris, AN, F7 3134.

³¹Marie Noisette, femme Mazard, a fruit-merchant

III

Discontent, however, is not quite the same as political opposition. There is some evidence of ideologically-motivated opposition to Napoleon, but it is very rare, especially after the early years of the Consulate. Indeed, it would almost seem that the French Revolution was no longer part of the popular consciousness, and only the most occasional evocations of it in popular speech prove that it did in fact live on in many memories. During the bread crises of 1801-1802 and 1811-1812, we have seen that angry customers often threatened bakers with lynching or the guillotine. The same rhetoric was heard in 1808 when an old woman, resident in the Hospice des Incurables and infuriated with a supervisor, denounced the home's regulations, "using those great expressions familiar in '93, of despotism, of unjust restrictions, etc."³² In another incident, a lamp lighter in 1812 threatened a police commissioner that "at the first revolution to break out in the quarter, he would be the first to be strung up."³³ But these kind of remarks were few and far between, and even revolutionary songs almost disappeared. They were, of course, proscribed, and

married to a labourer in the building trade, was arrested and imprisoned merely for repeating rumours she had heard. Report by Pr. Pol., 2 Sept. 1808, AN, F7 3129.

³² Report on Marie Elizabeth Petit, widow Collet, Feb. 1808, AN, F15 1918. The authorities expelled her from the home, but Madame Mère (Napoleon's mother) intervened on her behalf.

³³ Report by Pr. Pol. on Michel Allard, 12 March 1812, AN, F7 3138.

to sing even the Marseillaise was enough to make oneself the object of police suspicion.³⁴ An Englishman later recalled that during twelve year's residence in Napoleonic Paris he had never heard the Marseillaise sung and he caught the strains of the more inflammatory Ça Ira only once, "in passing an obscure wineshop near the Place de Grève."³⁵

But if the revolutionary tradition was silent, it was not dead. Its revival in 1814 and 1815 (to be discussed in the following chapter) is clear enough proof that it had merely gone underground. But how was it transmitted across the twenty years that separate Babeuf from the First Restoration? The only possible answer is that the men and women who witnessed the Revolution continued to cherish its memory and passed it on to the younger generation "through conversation within the bosom of the family," as a "republican workman" remarked several decades later.³⁶ Richard Cobb has stressed the key rôle played by widows of revolutionary

³⁴Some drunken porters who strolled along the quays singing the Marseillaise were placed under surveillance. Report by Pr. Pol., 18 germinal an XI (8 April 1803), AN, F7 3138.

³⁵A Narrative of Memorable Events in Paris, Preceding the Capitulation, and During the Occupancy of that City by the Allied Armies, in the Year 1814, Being Extracts from the Journal of a D tenu, who Continued a Prisoner, on Parole, in the French Capital, from the Year 1803 to 1814 (London, 1828), p. 3.

³⁶Quoted by Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, "The Evolution of the Jacobin Tradition in France: The Survival and Revival of the Ethos of 1793 under the Bourbon and Orleanist R gimes" (Ph.D. dissertation, Radcliffe, June 1952), p. 89.

martyrs in raising a new generation of avengers.³⁷ François Léon, the tailor's assistant interrogated by the police for posting seditious placards, was apparently the son of political radicals.³⁸ Another interesting case to illustrate this point involved two joiners from the faubourg Saint-Antoine, a father and his eighteen-year-old son, who were arrested twice in 1815 for insulting clergy and King.³⁹

These ideological problems are complicated by the fact that the Napoleonic régime cannot be considered the antithesis of the revolutionary tradition. Napoleon had to acknowledge the revolutionary principle of popular sovereignty, even if he drew its teeth and limited its expression to the occasional plebiscite; and his foreign policy was the culmination (if also the exaggeration) of the nationalist and militaristic strains inherent in Jacobinism and sans-culottism. This is what Lord Macauley meant when he wrote: "The government of Bonaparte, though not a free

³⁷ Cobb, The Police and the People, pp. 169-71.

³⁸ According to the police interrogation of his friend and accomplice Auguste Sornet, 15 floréal an XII (26 April 1804), AN, F7 6435, d. 9064.

³⁹ Police reports on Lapanne or Lapalme, père et fils, 20 April 1815, AN, F7 6628, no. 465, and 24 July 1815, AN, F7 3206. On the first occasion they shouted before the Church of Sainte-Marguerite, "Down with priests, the curé is a Vendéan who should be hanged, the Church should be set on fire and burned down." On the second they came to the attention of the police for shouting ceaselessly against the King and the Royal Family and for remarks "tending to arouse tempers and incite civil war."

government, was a revolutionary government."⁴⁰ It was possible for a fervent revolutionary of the Year II to become an equally enthusiastic Bonapartist, and many men at all levels of society easily made the transition, while others held to their former convictions or simply withdrew from political life. These ambiguities can be illustrated at the popular level by the example of the Vainqueurs de la Bastille, those participants in the insurrection of 14 July 1789 whose rôle had received official recognition. They were typical of the sans-culottes who made up the revolutionary crowds of Paris,⁴¹ and it is therefore of some interest to examine their attitude toward the Napoleonic régime.

The Vainqueurs appear in police reports of the period relating to two petition campaigns. In 1803, according to one police agent, twenty-one Vainqueurs signed a petition which demanded work for the unemployed and fixed prices to control inflation; the agent described the petition as insolent and insulting, since it implied that but for the French Revolution and the patriots who had made it, Bonaparte would not be in power. A second agent, while agreeing that the petition contained "objectionable phrases," reported only that it was a request for financial compensations promised

⁴⁰Thomas Babington Macauley, Napoleon and the Restoration of the Bourbons, ed. by Joseph Hamburger, (New York, 1977), p. 68.

⁴¹Rudé, The Crowd in the French Revolution, pp. 57-59, 180.

to the Vainqueurs by the Constituent Assembly and never paid.⁴² In 1804 several Vainqueurs petitioned for admission to the Legion of Honour as a reward for their past service to France. This time they composed their petition with "prudence and circumspection," and they took care to exclude from their meetings anyone known for "turbulent or criminal agitation."⁴³ But the Chancellor of the Legion did not welcome their overtures and at least some of the Vainqueurs responded with ill-chosen remarks suggesting that they were still the men they had been in 1789 and that they would not forget those who now spurned them. Their campaign ended ingloriously in a tavern brawl, after a Vainqueur publicly boasted that he and his comrades would avenge the insult and "show that they alone had made the Revolution and that they were still patriots." The workers drinking in the tavern denounced them as "drunks, shop looters, etc." and chased them from the place. Other workers were overheard to comment that if the Vainqueurs were given the ribbon of the Legion

⁴² Reports by police agents, 4 fructidor an XI (22 Aug. 1803), AN, F7 6360, d. 7443. See also report by Min. Justice, same date, AN, F7 3704.

⁴³ Police bulletins, 30 messidor, 4 and 7 thermidor an XII (19, 23, and 26 July 1804), AN, F7 3746 and AF IV 1490. Report by Pr. Pol., 27 thermidor an XII (15 Aug. 1804), AN, F7 3001, d. 5. Report by Pr. Pol., 9 thermidor an XII (28 July 1804), AN, F7 3119. Reports by a police agent, 7 and 15 thermidor an XII (26 July and 3 Aug. 1804), AN, F7 6436, d. 9140. According to the police, of 980 men originally recognized as Vainqueurs, only sixty-three still lived in Paris and not all of these were involved in the petition campaign.

of Honour, they would rip it off them.⁴⁴ There was apparently one more petition to the Legion in June 1805, but this, too, led nowhere.⁴⁵

"If pedigreed sans-culotte militants like the Vainqueurs were confused as to the appropriate attitude for a revolutionary to adopt toward the new régime, it is no wonder that the Parisian masses were not generally hostile to Napoleon on ideological grounds. Except for a few who lamented the disappearance of the sans-culotte movement (and it had been thoroughly crushed by 1795), there was no reason at first to see in Napoleon anything but the saviour of the nation and the Revolution. There is little doubt that the Directory was immensely unpopular in the autumn of 1799 and General Bonaparte in contrast very popular indeed. The workers of Paris believed that the Directory meant continued war, conscription, and economic distress, while the conqueror of Italy and Egypt seemed to promise a final victory.⁴⁶ Even

⁴⁴ Reports by Pr. Pol., between 6 thermidor and 28 fructidor an XII (25 July-15 Sept. 1804), AN, F7 3832. Police report, 1^e jour complémentaire an XII (18 Sept. 1804), SHVP, Ms CP 5199.

⁴⁵ Joseph Durieux, Les Vainqueurs de la Bastille, (Paris, 1911), pp. 9-10.

⁴⁶ See in particular the reports by the military police. There is one set, covering the period from 19 thermidor an VII to 15 frimaire an VIII (6 Aug.-6 Dec. 1799), in the Siéyès papers, AN, 284 AP 14, d. 2, and another set covering the shorter period from 1 vendémiaire to 19 brumaire an VIII (23 Sept.-10 Nov. 1799), ADS 4 AZ 226. There is also a mass of interesting reports by secret police agents, AN, F7 3688/20. For an overview of workers' dissatisfaction with

before he returned from the East, Napoleon was "this hero who, it is said, would have ended the war a long time ago."⁴⁷ A police agent describing Paris on the morrow of his arrival reported that all the workshops and manufactories in the faubourg Saint-Antoine were empty because all the workers were in the taverns: "We sing, they said, of the triumph of our armies and the arrival of our Father, our saviour Bonaparte," under whose command "we are certain to conquer and to bring back peace. Then we will no longer lack work and Republican France will become the centre of trade and the cross-roads of all nations."⁴⁸ After the coup d'état, according to the police, Parisians looked forward eagerly to a new constitution, whatever form it might take, provided only that the new government guarantee peace and prosperity, that it not be as extravagant as previous régimes, and "that the head [of government] not bear the name of king and not be of the Bourbon house."⁴⁹

Some of the popular hope may have turned sour when the anticipated benefits failed to appear. Within a month

the Directory, see Edmond Soreau, "Les ouvriers en l'an VII," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 8 (1931):117-24.

⁴⁷ Report by military police, 13-14 vendémiaire an VIII (5-6 Oct. 1799), AN, 284 AP 14, d. 2.

⁴⁸ Report by secret agent, 22 vendémiaire an VIII (14 Oct. 1799), AN, F7 3688/20.

⁴⁹ Reports by military police, 7-8, 9-10, 10-11 frimaire an VIII (27-28, 29-30 Nov. and 30 Nov.-1 Dec. 1799), AN, 284 AP 14, d. 2.

of the coup, agents reported cries of "Down with Bonaparte, Shit on Siéyès," as well as the singing of "homicidal" (that is, revolutionary) songs. Discontent was especially acute in the faubourg Saint-Marcel where unemployment had increased since 18 brumaire.⁵⁰ There was also evident dissatisfaction with the political settlement. Printers, unemployed because of new censorship regulations, were avidly listened to when they criticized the government and remarked that the First Consul's decision to live in the Tuileries proved that "a new tyrant had seized sovereign power to establish there . . . the seat of new crimes."⁵¹

It is impossible to determine whether the more substantial constitutional changes of 1804 won popular approval. There is, however, a note of pessimism in the report of one police officer that the proclamation of the Empire was greeted on the side-walks and in the taverns with "general cheerfulness" but that "despite the silence" at the moment of the proclamation . . . everyone was no less filled with the most heartfelt satisfaction."⁵² There were at least some workers who held pronounced opinions against the break with republicanism. The police arrested François Léon,

⁵⁰Police reports, 4 and 12 frimaire an VIII (25 Nov. and 3 Dec. 1799), AN, 284 AP 14, d. 4.

⁵¹Report by police agent, 5 pluviôse an VIII (25 Jan. 1800), AN, F7 6237, d. 4749.

⁵²Minute of report by peace officer Bazin, 1 messidor an XII (9 June 1804), AN, F7 3182. Emphasis mine.

a young tailor's assistant, after they found subversive placards in his possession, one of which referred to Napoleon as "Monsieur the little corporal, by the grace of imbeciles Emperor of the French." Léon explained:

I am very republican. They told me that the First Consul was going to be Emperor and that did not suit me at all. He puts shackles on everything, he is ruining commerce, and he does nothing but evil. Bonaparte has never been more than a conspirator himself; he was very lucky to succeed at Saint-Cloud. . . . We are said to be free and no-one is. . . .⁵³

Similarly, Pierre Mangiot, a joiner, remarked on 22 May 1804 that "Bonaparte was a beggar [gueux] who didn't deserve to be named Emperor."⁵⁴ A few days later, the police arrested Pierre Mallet, a fifty-nine-year-old errand boy, for the comments which he made in a tavern. According to one witness, he was so drunk that he could hardly stand when he said that "Bonaparte is a rogue, a Corsican scoundrel; he has robbed and tricked all of France, and he isn't worthy to be Emperor."⁵⁵

Other evidence suggests widespread concern over the broader implications of the constitutional changes. Writing

⁵³Police interrogation, 12 floréal an XII (2 May 1804), AN, F7 6435, d. 9064. See also report by Pr. Pol., 15 floréal an XII (5 May 1804), AN, F7 3832, and 30 thermidor an XII (18 Aug. 1804), AN, F7 3119.

⁵⁴Police report, 2 prairial an XII (22 May 1804), AN, F7 6440, d. 9161.

⁵⁵Report by Pr. Pol., 2 thermidor an XII (21 July 1804), AN, F7 6434, d. 8972.

about the Legion of Honour (created in 1802 but definitively organized only in 1804), a police official commented:

The working classes are suspicious of this honorary distinction and believe that it augurs the re-establishment of feudalism. In vain are they told that the membership oath calls for the maintenance of liberty and equality under the law. They reply that where there is an Emperor and princes, those decorated with crosses are knights, and that these knights, once they are large landowners, will want to have vassals.⁵⁶

A police agent reported on rumours that the new monarchy would be financed by heavy taxation, including the gabelle, the hated salt-tax of the Old Régime. The people, he warned, were muttering that "it wasn't worth the trouble of making the Revolution and killing so many people to have the same taxes back again." They added that the deputies and generals were villains "for having tricked the nation."⁵⁷

But dissatisfaction of this kind, grounded in devotion to the Revolution and popular gains that it had brought, rarely appears in police reports. Agents noted the ideological discontent of a handful of "anarchists" and Jacobins, but made it clear that the issues which influenced public opinion were more immediate to everyday life. The Minister of Police was therefore probably right when he wrote in 1807:

⁵⁶ Report by Piis, Secretary General of the Prefecture of Police, 28 messidor an XII (17 July 1804), AN, AB XIX 3374, d. 3.

⁵⁷ Report by police agent, 8 frimaire an XIII (29 Nov. 1804), AN, F7 6455, d. 9586.

One would be deceiving oneself to believe that the mass of the population was not indifferent to all political ideas. . . . The Emperor is everything for the mass of the nation. . . .⁵⁸

There was certainly some political opposition to Napoleon among Parisian workers, but the vast majority obediently accepted the régime. What did arouse popular passions, however, and what eventually undermined their loyalty (whether sponaneous or enforced) were economic crisis and, especially, endless war.

IV

In late November 1805, only a few days before the Battle of Austerlitz, a Parisian newspaper commented: "The workers, employed and well paid, know nothing of the war except our victories, and speak of peace without feeling the need for it."⁵⁹ It is undoubtedly true that military victories (and in particular those won during the early Consulate) were tremendously popular. For example, news of Marengo (14 June 1800) set off exuberant celebrations in the capital, and when Napoleon made his triumphal entry into the city, the faubourg Saint-Antoine illuminated "right up to the rooftops" while workers filled the streets

⁵⁸Police bulletin, 20-21 Sept. 1807, AN, AF IV 1501.

⁵⁹Journal de l'Empire, 1 frimaire an XIV (22 Nov. 1805), quoted by Lanzaç de Laborie, Paris sous Napoléon, 6:318. This silly remark is frequently cited as evidence of the indifference of Parisian workers to questions of war and peace, for example by Tulard, Nouvelle histoire de Paris, p. 411.

"at midnight as at noon," dancing for joy.⁶⁰ But it was not militarism or chauvinism which prompted their enthusiasm; in the words of a worker, "It's because this victory will bring peace!"⁶¹ Only six months after these scenes of loyal jubilation, a street singer whose song urged the youth of France to enlist in the army and support the First Consul fell victim to the fury of a crowd of market-women at the Halles, who insulted him and pelted him with mud, all the while complaining bitterly that "the continuation of the war was prolonging the general suffering and depriving parents of their children."⁶²

During the fifteen years from Year VIII to the end of 1814, the government conscripted 16,647 Parisians--less than one-third of the 52,231 eligible young men. Death took 25 percent of them, and another 28.3 percent were made prisoner.⁶³ The toll does not seem especially heavy for so large a city as Paris, but the burden fell unequally on

⁶⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 3 messidor an VIII (22 June 1800), AN, AF IV 1329. Report by a police agent, 13 messidor an VIII (2 July 1800), AN, F7 6227, d. 4681. Vandal, L'avènement, 2:438.

⁶¹ Quoted by Vandal, L'avènement, 2:438.

⁶² Report by Min. Pol., 12 frimaire an IX (3 Dec. 1800), AN, F7 3702. Report by police agent Gonchon, 29 frimaire an IX (20 Dec. 1800), AN, F7 3688/21.

⁶³ For statistics on conscription: Chabrol de Volvic, Recherches statistiques, 3: table 70. For casualties: Jacques Houdaille, "Pertes de l'armée de terre sous le premier empire, d'après les registres matricules," Population 27 (1972):33.

different social classes and this caused sharp resentment. Workers complained in 1799 that the rich were all thieves who ought to fulfill their patriotic duty as much as the poor, but that while some could afford to buy their way out of military service, "workers, fathers of families, are obliged to march off [to war]."⁶⁴ Money could always buy a fraudulent medical discharge. The police arrested six medical examiners in July 1803 for selling false certificates of disability to conscripts and soldiers.⁶⁵ In 1807 they arrested a medical student who blew a powder into the eyes of his clients, which caused inflammation and might get them a medical exemption. The clients (who were generally petty artisans and tradesmen, or their sons) paid him sums ranging from twelve hundred to three thousand francs for this service.⁶⁶ But the most reliable way to escape conscription was to pay a substitute to take one's place. Rates fluctuated, but it is evident that the purchase of a substitute was well beyond the means of a simple worker. Indeed, it was poor workers and artisans who became other men's replacements in order to earn money for their own use or for

⁶⁴ Report by a police agent, 2 floréal an VII (21 April 1799), AN, F7 3206, d. 3126. Report by military police, 27-28 vendémiaire an VIII (19-20 Oct. 1799), AN, 284 AP 14, d. 2.

⁶⁵ See dossier of reports on Bouquereau, Galoppin, et al., thermidor an XI (July-Aug. 1803), AN, BB18 70.

⁶⁶ See dossier of reports on Joseph Teisseire, June-July 1807, AN, BB18 71. This includes an interrogation of Teisseire and statements by eight of his clients.

their family. The son of a chimney-sweep took forty-four hundred francs to serve as a substitute in 1807 because, according to his father, he saw no possibility of escaping conscription himself and "he wished in the case of his death to leave me a compensation for the loss." In another tragic case, a soldier discharged after fifteen years' service could not find work as a cartwright. Since he was the sole support of his aged mother, he consented to serve as a substitute for three thousand francs, rejoined the army on 26 March 1814, and was killed only four days later under the walls of Paris.⁶⁷

The most dramatic evidence of popular opposition to conscription is afforded by the numerous occasions on which crowds rioted to free arrested conscripts, or those whom they believed to be such. This was a growing problem in the last days of the Directory.⁶⁸ In September 1799, for example, only the presence of a large military guard dissuaded the crowd in the garden of the Palais Egalité (Palais Royal) from helping a conscript who had broken free from his guards. The onlookers muttered that compelling conscripts to leave for the front was like leading them to slaughter.⁶⁹ A few

⁶⁷ Information in these cases comes from a group of petitions by the concerned parties, AN, BB18 73.

⁶⁸ Report by a police agent, [fructidor an VII (Aug.-Sept. 1799)], AN, F7 6220, d. 4198.

⁶⁹ Report by a police agent, 6 vendémiaire an VIII (28 Sept. 1799), AN, F7 3688/20.

weeks later, when the police came to arrest a conscript working at a bakery on the rue des Moinceaux, workers in the vicinity and water-carriers at a nearby fountain rioted to the cry of "his cause is just," freed the prisoner, and forced three police agents to beat a hasty retreat. They boasted openly of their exploit the next day.⁷⁰ Similar incidents continued to occur throughout the Napoleonic period. Only ten days after Napoleon's coup d'état, a crowd estimated at two hundred assaulted the men escorting a captured deserter through the Palais Egalité gardens at 1 a.m.⁷¹ In May 1800 an arrested thief, escaping from his captor at the very door of the Conciergerie Prison, called out for help: "Save me, citizens, I am a conscript, save me!" A crowd beat up his pursuer and chased a second police officer to his home, which they then attacked with rocks.⁷² A similar ruse created a disturbance at the Saint-Martin market the following August and only the timely arrival of troops saved the police

⁷⁰ Minister of War to Minister of Police, 27 vendémiaire an VIII (19 Oct. 1799), AN, F7 6222, d. 4399. Reports by military police, 10-11 and 11-12 vendémiaire an VIII (2-3 and 3-4 Oct. 1799), AN, 284 AP 14, d. 2.

⁷¹ Report by military police, 28-29 brumaire an VIII (19-20 Nov. 1799), AN, 284 AP 14, d. 2. The Paris police denied that any such incident had occurred, but because of a misunderstanding they had apparently investigated the wrong district: Bureau central to Minister of Police, 6 nivôse an VIII (27 Dec. 1799), AN, F7 7694, d. 1. In fact, the original report by the police commissioner of Butte des Moulins division still survives, APP, A/a 108, fol. 287.

⁷² Police report, 19 prairial an VIII (8 May 1800), BN Mss, F. fr. 11361.

from serious injury.⁷³ On 3 September 1800 the police escorting a cartload of eleven prisoners along the rue Saint-Martin heard workers in the shops lining the street comment loudly that "if this were a load of conscripts, they would free them, that they had been promised peace, etc."⁷⁴ There are additional reports of crowds freeing prisoners on 7 September 1800, in July 1801 in the faubourg Saint-Martin, in May 1803 at the Carrefour Buci, and in June 1803 in the rue Montblanc. The Prefect of Police, recounting another episode in March 1807, noted that "these sort of events recur frequently." And, indeed, they continued to happen: in May 1808, in November 1810, in August 1811 (when men and women working at the Jacobin Market rushed to the defence of the son of one of them), and finally in January 1813, when over two hundred market-women at the Halles took part in a similar riot.⁷⁵ Although the total number of these incidents may not be impressive, police comments suggest that they were frequent, which may mean that many others went unreported.

⁷³Police bulletin, 3 fructidor an VIII (21 Aug. 1800), AN, F7 3701.

⁷⁴Police bulletin, 17 fructidor an VIII (4 Sept. 1800), AN, F7 3701.

⁷⁵Police bulletin, 20 fructidor an VIII (7 Sept. 1800), AN, F7 3701. Report by Pr. Pol., 1 thermidor an IX (20 July 1801), AN, F7 3829. Reports by Pr. Pol., 21 floréal and 9 messidor an XI (11 May and 28 June 1803), AN, F7 3831. Police bulletin, 6 March 1807, AN, F7 3755. Report by Pr. Pol., 13 May 1808, AN, F7 3128. Police bulletin, 23 Nov. 1810, AN, AF IV 1511. Report by Pr. Pol., 15 Aug. 1811, AN, F7 3136, and police bulletin, 9 Aug. 1811, AN, F7 3772 and AF IV 1517. Report by Etat-major général de Paris, enclosed in police bulletin, 9 Jan. 1813, AN, AF IV 1525.

It is not possible to present a social analysis of the participants, but most riots took place in workers' neighbourhoods. Moreover, police reports sometimes make specific mention of workers and artisans from shops in the vicinity of the incident, and several reports single out water-carriers and market-women.

In contrast, there was no violence at the annual meetings for the selection of conscripts from among those eligible; this was most likely the result of adequate security measures. The only serious disturbance occurred in late November 1802 during the drawing of lots in the sixth arrondissement. The conscripts present in the meeting hall demanded that troops be withdrawn from the premises and when this was refused, they barricaded the courtyard of the building. Dragoons were required to break in and subdue the rioters: there was one death besides a number of injuries and twenty-three arrests.⁷⁶ To avoid further disturbances in a quarter of the city where (according to one official description) young men were "strong and unruly because the greater part are workers," the police thereafter held the selection meeting outside the arrondissement.⁷⁷ Two years

⁷⁶Police report, 10 frimaire an XI (1 Dec. 1802), AN, BB3 95. Royalist secret agents made much of this incident, which they saw as symptomatic of widespread public anger over conscription; they reported eight or ten dead and fifty wounded. Remacle, Bonaparte et les Bourbons, p. 198.

⁷⁷"Note pour Monsieur Désmarét," [ca. 4 ventôse an XIII (23 February 1805)], AN, F7 6456, d. 9684. The anonymous

later, when selection fell just after Carnival, the young men of the faubourgs Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin, (also workers' neighbourhoods) allegedly planned to show up in female dress or disguised as old men.⁷⁸ They apparently meant this demonstration in good humour (and it in fact never occurred), but it is suggestive of the association of festival and revolt in French popular tradition.⁷⁹

Young men were more likely to try to evade the draft than to riot against it. Evasion, of course, does not necessarily imply political opposition to the régime. Asked why he failed to submit to the laws on conscription, a journeyman clockmaker replied simply, "Because I don't fancy it; moreover, I have never been a soldier nor do I desire to be one."⁸⁰ But there is a political dimension to the comment of another draft evader who remarked to his comrades in 1805 that "if we had all done like him, Bonaparte would still be in Egypt."⁸¹ At about the same time, the police investigating

agent who wrote this letter locates the disturbance more specifically in the Gravilliers division, "which, two years ago during the drawing for conscripts, was in full revolt."

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Reasons of Mésrule," in her Society and Culture in Early Modern France (Stanford, 1975), pp. 97-123.

⁸⁰Interrogation of Jean Bideault by police commissioner of Amis de la Patrie division, 2 floréal an VII (21 April 1799), APP, A/a 53, fol. 198.

⁸¹Anonymous letter to Min. Justice, 10 prairial an XIII (30 May 1805), AN, BB18 70.

reports that an evader was hiding out in an abandoned quarry on the outskirts of Paris reported that the local population was uncooperative "because the government is not loved, on account of conscription." Some young men remarked that they would not give the man away were he the King of England himself.⁸² It is significant that during the First Restoration the police found that among one group of construction workers the few supporters of Louis XVIII were young men of conscription age.⁸³

It is evident that Parisian workers were not indifferent to the sacrifices which war required of them, and the police were well aware of this. In November 1802 the Prefect of Police noted widespread complaints about the severity of conscription: "Working-class women make the most fuss."⁸⁴ In May 1803 he reported that there was growing fear of a new war which would mean (people believed) more taxes, higher prices, increased conscription, and a decline in industry and trade.⁸⁵ In June 1804 the public was alarmed by the impending general European war, and the people hoped that Napoleon would come to terms with England and avert it.

⁸²Police report, [ca. vent6se an XII, (Feb.-March 1804)], AN, F7 6406, d. 7961.

⁸³Police report, 3 Oct. 1814, AN, F7 3145.

⁸⁴Report by Pr. Pol., 2 frimaire an XI (23 Nov. 1802), AN, F7 3831.

⁸⁵Reports by Pr. Pol. 22 and 26 floréal an XI (12 and 16 May 1803), AN, F7 3831.

"Malevolent persons" insisted that summer that war would be "the result of too great an ambition, and the interests of the people are not taken into consideration, nor the evils from which they suffer, which cannot fail to increase."⁸⁶

Rumours of peace in February 1805 led to great rejoicing among the people of Paris and, that same month, the lists of conscripts posted in the city were all ripped down during the night.⁸⁷ Reports of this kind continued to come before the Emperor right up to the time of his abdication in 1814.

Even repeated Imperial victories did not allay public fears. After the Battle of Eylau (1807), a placard stuck up in the faubourg Saint-Honoré and written in a semi-literate style criticized the Arch-Chancellor for celebrating the victory:


Tomorrow 15 March, Fb St. Honoré, Maison Marboeuf, the Arch-Bugger Cambacérès gives a ball for Napoléon's wife, in celebration of the more than 40,000 killed in the Battle of Eylau the 8th February.⁸⁸

After Wagram (1809), an agent wrote that "in general this great victory does not have much of an effect on the feelings of the people," who showed more concern about the "complete lack of trade" and who believed that there would be "war

⁸⁶ Reports by Pr. Pol., 13 prairial and 7 fructidor an XII (2 June and 25 Aug. 1804), AN, F7 3832.

⁸⁷ Reports by Pr. Pol., 12 and 25 pluviôse an XIII (1 and 14 Feb. 1805), AN, F7 3833.

⁸⁸ Police report, 18 March 1807, AN, F7 6487, d. 623.



without end as long as His Majesty reigns."⁸⁹

The disastrous military intervention in Spain was an Imperial "Vietnam" that galvanized public opposition to the war effort. A long police report written in September 1808 shows how immediate an impact the Spanish war had on popular opinion. It indicates that "the multitude" was very much concerned with the course of events there, although very reserved about expressing their opinions, "a rational fear" given the existence of police spies. But at the Café Préjean, frequented by "the people," the management often put on short plays, and recently passages making reference to "the hero who lives in the Tuileries, [and] the defenders of the Fatherland" which, at one time, would have been loudly applauded, were left to pass in silence. Even more alarming, a group of lower-class women was heard to denounce the government. One said, "The Jacobins are not yet dead; there still remain a few who will wake up when it is time to give us back liberty;" and the men around them reportedly listened with approval.⁹⁰ The police began to arrest individuals who grumbled or spread wild rumours that the French Army in Spain was perishing of hunger and thirst, but these stories continued to circulate for many years.⁹¹ Far from

⁸⁹ "Notes," July 1809, AN, F7 6540, d. 1773.

⁹⁰ Police report, [9 Sept. 1808], BHVP, Ms CP 5200.

⁹¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 10-11 Sept. 1808, inside police bulletin, AN, F7 3760. Police bulletin, 13 Sept. 1808,

diminishing, such expressions of popular feeling increased with time. For instance, in May 1811 someone stuck up posters in the faubourgs Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin: "In the last six months alone, 400 thousand Frenchman have been sacrificed in Spain. Vengeance."⁹²

In May 1812, a placard found in the town of Daumartin (Seine et Marne) urged Frenchmen to "rally to the brave men of the faubourg [Saint-] Antoine" and rise against Napoleon, the "monster" and "tiger."⁹³ The unknown militant who wrote it was overly-optimistic, for there was no sign of impending insurrection in the faubourgs of Paris. General Malet's attempted coup d'état, an audacious venture which almost toppled the Imperial government, took place early in the morning of 23 October 1812 with no popular participation whatsoever. Although Malet had some vague connection with the mysterious "philadelphes"--underground conspiratorial cells established and coordinated by Buonarroti--the Babouvists probably had little to do with the plot. Buonarroti had some ~~partisans~~ in the French army among men dissatisfied with Napoleon's rule and favourable to the

AN, AF IV 1503. Cambacérès to Napoleon, 3 July 1809, in Cambacérès, Lettres inédites, 2:685-87.

⁹²Report by Pr. Pol., 16 May 1811, AN, F7 3835.

⁹³Procureur-général de Paris to Min. Justice, 16 May 1812, AN, BB3 145, no. 2449-A4.

Constitution of 1793, but there is no evidence of any following among Parisian workers.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, there must have been some former sans-culotte militants eager for a successful coup, and one of these actually sent the Empress an anonymous letter expressing regret at Malet's failure and warning:

No, no, the day of vengeance is not far. The fall of the monster--starver--monopolist--exterminator will bring back abundance, bread at ten sous, sugar and coffee at twenty sous and will put an end to the flow of Blood which inundates the earth.⁹⁵

And as a precaution, the Prefect of Police ordered an intense surveillance of Parisian workers to ascertain their attitudes toward the plot and to find out if there was any attempt to stir them up against the government.⁹⁶

The police had real cause to worry about the state of public opinion. The Empire in its final years was beset by disastrous military reversals abroad and severe economic crisis at home. There must have been many wage-earners to agree with Jean Guillaume Lacroix, a hatter in a shako

⁹⁴Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, The First Professional Revolutionist: Filippo Michele Buonarroti (1761-1837), (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), pp. 34-35. V. Daline, "Napoléon et les Babouvistes," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 42 (1970):417. Arthur Lehning, "Buonarroti and his International Secret Societies," International Review of Social History 1 (1956):119-21. See also, police interrogation of Joseph Guillaume, Geneva, 10 Nov. 1812, AN, F7 6501, plaq. 3, fol. 247.

⁹⁵AN, F7 6501, plaq. 9, fol. 601-02.

⁹⁶Minute of report by peace officer Grolleau, 2 Nov. 1812, AN, F7 3702.

manufactory, arrested in April 1812 for commenting that "things were going badly and the world was suffering and complaining."⁹⁷ Nor were small tradesmen any more content.

When asked by the police in October 1812 whether he was satisfied with business conditions, Gabriel Leproux, who kept a small bar on the rue des Petits Champs, replied:

"I am unhappy, like everybody. I have twenty-two francs in expenses a day, and often I do not earn my expenses."⁹⁸

An unusual incident which occurred on 12 February 1813 seems symptomatic of this growing discontent. On that day, as Napoleon rode through the faubourg Saint-Antoine, a group of locksmiths went to the window of their shop to watch him pass. Suddenly, one of them by the name of Solavin dashed out, accosted the Emperor, and, seizing hold of the bridle of his horse, mumbled twice: "You're headed for disaster. [Tu cours à ta perte.]" Then, pale, trembling, and sick from fear, he fled back to the workshop, where his fellow workers teased him, his employer's wife upbraided him, and, the next day, his employer dismissed him. Solavin subsequently vanished and the police were never able to locate him. His employer afterwards commented that he could not understand how such a quiet and ordinarily well-behaved young man "who is naturally silent and who never spoke of

⁹⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 10 April 1812, AN, F7 6581, d. 3281.

⁹⁸ Police interrogation of Gabriel Leproux dit Romain, 25 Oct. 1812, AN, F7 6500, plaq. 2, fol. 174.

government matters, could bring himself to such an act of madness."⁹⁹

By the spring of 1813, the Prefect of Police was reporting on the extent of workers' economic difficulties and their consequent discontent. He estimated that perhaps one-third of them were unemployed and noted that "feelings are heating up, and in broad daylight they post insulting placards against the Emperor."¹⁰⁰ An Englishman later recalled: "Ever since the battle of Leipsic [October 1813], when Bonaparte's fall seemed inevitable . . . the walls of the Tuileries were daily placarded with jeux d'esprit--acrostics--puns and sarcasms of every description."¹⁰¹ In November 1813, a police agent express his concern about unemployed workers who spent their mornings drifting from tavern to tavern, complaining of their plight; he suggested that police officers be posted in the taverns to scare off any troublemakers.¹⁰² Other reports show the spread of false news and alarming rumours throughout the capital, while in

⁹⁹Statements by Nicolas Dupont and Pierre Roger, 17 Feb. 1813, AN, F7 6588, d. 3618. See also, report by Pr. Pol., 17 Feb. 1813, enclosed in police bulletin, AN, AF IV 1526.

¹⁰⁰Report by Pr. Pol., 4 April 1813, quoted in Durand, De la condition des ouvriers, p. 107.

¹⁰¹Memorandums of a Residence in France, in the Winter of 1815-16, including remarks on French Manners and Society (London, 1816), p. 347.

¹⁰²Report by a police agent, 6 Nov. 1813, AN, F7 6599, d. 4063.

the faubourg Saint-Marcel people circulated anonymous letters insulting the Emperor and stuck up seditious placards.¹⁰³

One agent remarked that while the recent mass arrests of former revolutionaries had frightened many out of talking politics, unemployed workers were less hesitant than others to voice their complaints.¹⁰⁴

On 6 January 1814 Paris learned that the Allies had crossed the Rhine. Napoleon immediately formulated a plan to recruit the city's unemployed into the army (while providing the families of those enrolled with financial assistance), but the response was negligible.¹⁰⁵ The mood in Paris was far from the spirit of determined resistance which had swept the city in 1792. Now the population alternated between hope and despair, with a growing sense of panic. The middle classes feared an enemy assault which would deliver up their property to pillage, but they (and the government) were almost as much afraid of popular insurrection and looting.¹⁰⁶ The workers, facing worsening

¹⁰³ "Extrait des rapports," [Nov. 1813] and "Note," [14 Nov. 1813], AN, F7 6599, d. 4086 and d. 4089, respectively. On increasing number of placards, see General Hullin to Min. Pol., 22 Nov. 1813, AN, F7 6600, d. 4118.

¹⁰⁴ "Notes," 14 Nov. 1813, AN, F7 6600, d. 4109.

¹⁰⁵ Georges Bourgin, "Les ouvriers et la défense nationale en 1814," Revue des études napoléonienne 10 (July-Dec. 1916):55-65.

¹⁰⁶ Reports by Pr. Pol., 7 and 10 Feb. 1814, AN, AF IV 1534. Duc de Conégliono to Min. Pol., 10 Feb. 1814, AN F7 4290, d. 35.

economic conditions and terrified by news of the approaching Cossacks, were no less demoralized. A series of vivid reports by the Imperial Public Prosecutor gives a day-to-day account of public opinion at this time. Peace was the universal hope and when, on 11 February, there were rumours that the preliminaries had been signed, "people kissed each other in the Halles, in the markets, in the shops." News of victory was not enough. When reports of the Battle of Champaubert reached Paris on 12 February, "one heard people say that if the Emperor were once victorious, he would no longer want to make peace." The Prosecutor commented: "On hearing the remarks made among the people, one is tempted to believe that secret agents are stirring up public opinion and seeking to turn it against the Emperor." The cry of a market-woman, who saw wagons of wounded soldiers on the rue St. André des Arts, is an eloquent and concise expression of the prevailing temper: "That's the fate that awaits us all; everybody will perish."¹⁰⁷ It is no wonder that when Paris capitulated on 31 March 1814 its inhabitants sighed with relief. There were no demonstrations in favour of Napoleon.¹⁰⁸ The Empire at its fall was discredited.

¹⁰⁷ Reports by Procureur impérial de Paris, 11, 12, and 24 Feb. 1814, AN, AF IV 1042, d. 4. (The whole series covers the period from 31 Jan. to 24 Feb. 1814.)

¹⁰⁸ Henri Houssaye, Napoleon and the Campaign of 1814, trans. by R.S. McClintock (London, 1914), pp. 493ff.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE EMERGENCE OF POPULAR BONAPARTISM

Français de tout rang, de tout âge, rallions-nous à la voix sacrée de la patrie et du chef immortel qui nous guide. . . . Donnons encore à la ligue impie des rois, l'exemple des vertus civiques; aux nations opprimées le signal de la vengeance des peuples.¹

I

When the First Empire collapsed in the spring of 1814, it had few staunch supporters left. Marshals, ministers, and state officials of all ranks deserted the Emperor, while Paris (like the country at large) seemed resigned to enemy occupation and the imposition of some new political régime. Yet, a mere fourteen months later, the Hundred Days closed in a very different atmosphere. On the evening of 21 June 1815, Napoleon, decisively defeated at Waterloo and under attack in the Chamber of Deputies, discussed the question of abdication as he strolled with Benjamin Constant, one of his most constant and most outspoken liberal critics, in the gardens of the Elysée Palace. The two men heard shouts from the street; a crowd of men (Constant later wrote), "mainly

¹Adresse des fédérés parisiens à tous les français (Paris, 17 March 1815). This is certainly misdated and was probably published in May.

belonging to the indigent and laborious class," had gathered in the avenue de Marigny to acclaim the Emperor:

You see that, he told me, I never showered those people with wealth and honours. What do they owe me? I left them as poor as I found them.²

This sudden popularity, which appalled Napoleon as much as it bemused him (for he abdicated rather than consent to arm such followers), persisted for decades. One historian has recently written: "The [Parisian] crowd in the French Revolution of 1830--and before and after that revolution--was, in a word, Bonapartist. . . ." ³

What was the source of this devotion to the Emperor and the Imperial cause? There is no proof that Napoleon enjoyed such deep and widespread popularity before 1814, and, on the contrary, we have seen evidence that war, conscription, and economic crisis aroused considerable opposition among the labouring population of Paris. At best, the Napoleonic régime won acceptance. The government called on the masses to exercise their sovereignty in rigged plebiscites, but it wanted loyalty and submission, not clamorous support. The banning of the Marseillaise was symptomatic of the political climate, for Napoleon was always reluctant to whip up popular enthusiasm--which

² Benjamin Constant, Mémoires sur les Cent-Jours, ed. by O. Pozzo di Borgo (Lausanne, 1961), p. 199.

³ Edgar L. Newman, "What the Crowd wanted in the French Revolution of 1830," in John M. Merriman, ed., 1830 in France (New York and London, 1975), p. 30.

smacked too much of Revolutionary politics--even on his own behalf. Only during the Hundred Days, just as he sought to win over the middle classes with a refurbished and liberal constitution, did he court the favour of the French masses--something which he would have disdained to try before. In one of history's more piquant ironies, the man who exiled Jacobins and harried the remnants of the sans-culotte movement reappeared in 1815 as "Emperor of the faubourgs." In the words of one royalist, he swapped his Imperial diadem for the Phrygian cap.⁴ Popular Bonapartism (as we may call this political phenomenon) was therefore distinctly new; Napoleon emerged as an idol revered by Parisian workers only after his first abdication. The roots of popular Bonapartism lie not in 1800-1814, but rather in the period of the First Restoration and the Hundred Days, when the Revolutionary tradition combined with the Imperial cause to give a new twist to the Napoleonic legend.

II

Already deposed by the Senate, Napoleon abdicated at Fontainebleau on 4 April 1814; two days later, the Senate called Louis XVIII to the French throne. The public authorities were sanguine about the new régime's chances for success. Peace, they predicted, would restore economic

⁴Gallais, Histoire de la Révolution du 20 mars 1815, ou cinquième et dernière partie de l'histoire du 18 brumaire et de Buonaparte (Paris, 1815), p. 161.

prosperity and full employment, and thereby win over Parisian workers.⁵ In any case, as the Director General of Police argued in October 1814, Napoleon had reduced "the working classes" of Paris to the rôle of mere passive spectators of political events, who cared only about earning their livings. This "egoism" and "servile obedience" forced on them by fifteen years of dictatorship "are for the [present] government the strongest guarantee of civil peace, which is complete in the capital."⁶ Yet, in penning these lines the Director General glossed over many disturbing incidents which agents brought daily to his attention, and which he himself included in regular reports to Louis XVIII. Police documentation of the state of public opinion in Paris in 1814-1815 is abundant--indeed, the information is probably more complete for these two years than for the whole Napoleonic period prior to 1814. The reports (as usual) often contradict each other on points of fact, and some are optimistic in tone while others reek of pessimism, but on the whole they indicate that there was very little support for the King among Parisian workers and artisans. They record, in great detail, an abrupt end to those times of "servile obedience"

⁵ See undated, untitled report from 1814, AN, Flc III Seine 29, quoted by Adolphe Schmidt, Tableaux de la Révolution française, publiés sur les papiers inédits du Département et de la police secrète de Paris, 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1870), 3:509, who attributes to it a date of 7 June 1814. Also, "Considérations sur l'esprit public du 3^e arrondissement," 19 May 1814, BHVP, Ms 1010, fol. 185.

⁶ Report to King, 6 Oct. 1814, AMAE, r. 340.

which had so pleased the police, the unmistakable resurgence of the Revolutionary tradition, and the appearance of popular Bonapartism.⁷

There was really no pragmatic reason for Parisian workers to reject the Restoration, for in political terms it was certainly less repressive and more liberal than the Napoleonic régime. But the Bourbons were more than another ruling house--they were a symbol. The re-establishment of a Bourbon monarchy was an insult to the Revolutionary tradition and, in effect, a denial of the French Revolution. Parisian workers simply could not accept that the family which they and their fathers had toppled in 1792 was now set back on its throne, and this deeply-felt hostility was apparent to observers from the earliest days of the Restoration. For instance, on 6 April 1814 Chateaubriand's sister complained in her diary of the insolence that "the rabble" showed to monarchists. It was impossible, she wrote,

⁷The most useful police reports are those by the Director General of Police (first Beugnot and then Anglès) --who combined the duties of the former Minister of Police and Prefect of Police--which were sent almost daily to the King. There is a complete set, from 22 April 1814 to 22 March 1815, in AMAE, r. 336-345. The shorter period from 17 May to 5 December 1814 (Beugnot's tenure of office) is covered by another set in Beugnot's papers, AN, 40 AP 8-13. At the turn of the century, two editors (apparently each unaware of the other) published excerpts from these reports. Eugène Welvert, ed., Napoléon et la police sous la Première Restauration d'après les rapports du comte Beugnot au roi Louis XVIII (Paris, n.d.) is based on the documents in the AN. Georges Firmin-Didot, ed., Royauté ou Empire: La France en 1814 d'après les rapports inédits du comte Anglès (Paris,

for anyone wearing a white cockade to walk safely through the faubourgs of Paris; and posters announcing the publication of her brother's pamphlet in favour of the Bourbons were smeared with excrement.⁸ This enmity did not slacken in the following months.

The most persistent and dangerous source of ferment were veterans of the Napoleonic wars, whether retired from active service or still in the army. They clung, stubbornly to their anti-Bourbon and pro-Napoleonic sentiments, and grumbled continually about the poor treatment which they claimed to be receiving from the government. As the Director General of Police admitted in October 1814, the régime was simply incapable of winning over the army.⁹ Soldiers mixed with workers in the streets and the taverns, where they spoke endlessly of Napoleon and recalled with pride "the days when they marched from victory to victory."¹⁰ They made flamboyant

n.d.) used the AMAE. The latter attributes Beugnot's reports to Anglès, who was his subordinate before himself assuming office, and all reports do certainly seem to have been written by the same man.

There are also police bulletins, July 1814-October 1815, AN, F7 3783-3786 (with duplicates for July-November 1814, AN, F7 3836), and various miscellaneous police reports in F7 3688/23 and 3688/24, F7 3143-3146, and AF IV 1934.

⁸Jacques Ladreit de Lacharrière, ed., Paris en 1814: Journal inédit de Madame de Marigny, augmenté du Journal de T.-R. Underwood (Paris, 1907), pp. 69-70. See also A Narrative of Memorable Events, p. 136.

⁹Report to King, 6 Oct. 1814, AMAE, r. 340.

¹⁰Reports to King, 20-21 May, 1-3 and 19 June, 25 Sept., 6 Oct., 11 Nov., and 17 Dec. 1814, AMAE, r. 336-342. Police bulletins, 5 and 28 July, 6 Aug. and 15 Nov. 1814, AN, F7 3783-3784. Minister of War to Director General of Police,

demonstrations of loyalty to the dethroned Emperor, as when early one December morning four drunken men from the Paris garrison fell on their knees before the Arc de Triomphe in the Place du Carrousel and cried out "Vive l'Empereur!"¹¹

Similar demonstrations were common among ordinary workers as well. Two examples (among many) are the following incidents, which both occurred on 29 September 1814: a drunken carter walked along the Seine crying out "Vive Napoléon!" and a cotton worker in the Jardin des Tuileries refused to remove his cap when the King passed by. The police arrested both men and suggested that severe punishment was in order to prevent such disorders from becoming too frequent.¹² It was not at all unusual for drunken workers to sing songs in praise of the fallen Emperor and the Marseillaise, too, could be heard "on all sides."¹³ Placards appeared frequently on the walls of the capital, insulting the King, lauding Napoleon, or calling for work and bread.¹⁴ People also showed an acute interest in Napoleon's activities on Elba and speculated on the possibility of his return from

29 July 1814, AN, F7 6623, no. 114-A.

¹¹ Report to King, 3 Dec. 1814, AMAE, r. 342.

¹² Report to King, 29 Sept. 1814, AMAE, r. 339.

¹³ Report to King, 31 Jan. 1815, AMAE, r. 341. Police bulletin, 20 Jan. 1815, AN, F7 3784. Police reports, 20 Aug./2 Sept. and 26 Aug./2 Sept. 1814, AN, F7 3144.

¹⁴ Report to King., 1 Feb. 1815, AMAE, r. 344. Police bulletins, 1 July, 19, 22 and 31 Aug. 1814, AN, F7 3783.

exile. It was even rumoured that Louis XVIII was smuggling wagon-loads of silver out of France in preparation for his own flight abroad.¹⁵ But the most alarming remarks were those which explicitly recalled the execution of Louis XVI. For example, Choquet, a grain merchant, declared that there were still "many individuals who led the [last] King to the scaffold, who would do as much for this one."¹⁶ And Mallefer, a shoemaker, said "we should do to the fat pig [Louis XVIII] what we did to his brother and make him look through the lunette [of the guillotine] to see if Napoleon is coming back."¹⁷

The roots of the discontent were ideological (the Revolutionary tradition), but also economic. The economic crisis of 1814-1815 had unavoidable political repercussions, aggravating tensions and increasing dissatisfaction with the Bourbons (although this was hardly fair, since it was inherited by them from the previous regime). As ten Parisian construction workers insisted, in a petition signed in May 1814:

. . . if the workers, that useful and respectable class, were employed, all these murmurs of misery would cease, gaiety would reign, and the wise and beneficent government would be blessed, and all the

¹⁵Police bulletin, 17 Aug. 1814, AN, F7 3783.

¹⁶Police bulletin, 19 Aug. 1814, AN, F7 3783.

¹⁷Police report, 10 March 1815, AN, F7 6624, no. 580-A.

partisans of the tyrannical government which has just fallen would be forever annihilated. . . .¹⁸

Instead, there was a general decline in wage levels in the summer of 1814,¹⁹ with predictable results. An engraver named Langlé and his wife kept a bust of Napoleon in his workshop and, according to the police, "these two individuals complain that since the arrival of His Majesty, the workers have had their wages reduced by a half."²⁰ The wages of workers in Richard-Lenoir's cotton mill in the faubourg Saint-Antoine had also fallen by one-half, "which causes them to contrast the past to the present."²¹ Parisian carpenters believed that their masters had bribed the King to permit a cut in their wages and an increase in their working hours.²² The government's failure to pursue Napoleon's public works projects made the situation even worse. The Minister of the Interior himself noted that it was "impolitic" not to continue works "to which the last government had accustomed the people of the capital."²³

¹⁸Petition, 30 May 1814, AN, F13 637A.

¹⁹Reports to King, 3-5 July, 1 and 10 Aug. 1814, AMAE, r. 337-338. Police bulletins, 1 and 27 Aug., 2 Sept., and 10 Oct. 1814, and 27 Jan. 1815, AN, F7 3783-3784.

²⁰Police bulletin, 19 July 1814, AN, F7 3783.

²¹Police report, 6 Sept. 1814, AN, F7 3143. See also police report 5/14 Sept. 1814, AN, F7 3144. Richard-Lenoir and his employees had already drawn police attention in April and May 1814, AN, F7 6862, d. 4783.

²²Petition by "four hundred carpenters," [April or May 1815], AN, F13 950.

²³Min. Int. to Min. Finance, 10 Nov. 1814, AN, F3 II Seine 39.

Unemployed Parisian workers complained bitterly,²⁴ and to many of them Napoleon's return in March 1815 was primarily a guarantee of reopened public works and full employment.²⁵

Public opinion placed the blame for the economic crisis on the shoulders of the new régime and called for immediate remedial action.²⁶ Several times in the spring of 1814 groups of workers gathered before the Tuileries to demand bread and work.²⁷ On one such occasion, on 10 May, an assembly of about 150 men in the Place du Carrousel was dispersed by the National Guard, but not before there was some talk of staging a greater demonstration of twenty thousand men, and a few hot-heads urged setting fire to the Tuileries, while others merely expressed regret for the Napoleonic régime. It was rumoured that some of the demonstrators had called out beneath the King's windows, "Long live Napoleon!" and demanded "work, money, or death."²⁸

²⁴Police bulletin, 8 July 1814, AN, F7 3783.

²⁵Police reports, 29 and 31 March, and 1 and 3 April 1814, AN, AF IV 1934. See also petition by nine journeymen carpenters welcoming Napoleon's return but expressing disappointment at his failure to put orders reopening public works into effect, AN, F13 637A.

²⁶Police bulletins, 12 and 22 July 1814, AN, F7 3783.

²⁷Vitrolles to Anglès, 12 May 1814, AN, F7 6862, d. 4783. The letter does not indicate how many times these demonstrations had occurred.

²⁸Anglès to Pasquier, 10 May 1814, AN, F7 6606, d. 21. Reports by police agent Hus, 12 and 13 May 1814, AN, F7 3688/23.

The police arrested thirteen men at a similar "riot" on 20 May, and found (they claimed) money in their pockets; they therefore suggested that the demonstrators were not really workers at all, but paid agitators or soldiers in disguise.²⁹ The accusation is almost certainly unfounded.

If economic crisis sharpened ideological opposition to the Restoration, it did not cause it. The Bourbons were doomed to some measure of unpopularity, but rumour, chance, and, above all, their clumsy policies aggravated the situation. It was generally believed in Paris that Louis XVIII was determined to undo the Revolution. In November 1814, for example, there were rumours that he had ordered the restitution of all confiscated land, sold as well as unsold, to the emigrés, in addition to repeated predictions that the Royal Family would prove costly to the state. (Napoleon, it was said, had let foreigners shoulder the financial burden of maintaining his relatives.)³⁰ Parisians resented the Allied armies which had defeated them and briefly occupied the capital; their departure in late May 1814 was celebrated in words and song with "a coarse but frank patriotism."³¹ But the Bourbons, of course, were inextricably linked with the foreign enemy, and especially with what some workers called

²⁹ Report to King, 20-21 May 1814, AMAE, r. 336.

³⁰ Police bulletin, 2 Nov. 1814, AN, F7 3837.

³¹ Report to King, 31 May 1814, AMAE, r. 336.

"their beloved country, England."³² Given the popular mood, the government should have gone out of its way to allay fears. Instead, its religious policy seemed to confirm the worst suspicions.

By the Napoleonic period the Roman Catholic Church had lost its hold on the minds of most Parisians and was especially weak among male workers and artisans. Unbelief had begun to take root among French urban workers in the course of the eighteenth century, and anti-clericalism (although not necessarily anti-religious sentiment) was an integral part of the Revolutionary tradition, reaching its most extreme expression in the de-Christianization movement launched by the enragés.³³ The Restoration government therefore got off to a bad start with the law of 7 June 1814, which banned most Sunday work: manufactories, workshops, and most shops had to close. (Napoleon had rejected a similar law with the comment that since men had to eat on Sunday, God obviously intended for them to work on that day as well.)³⁴

³²Police bulletin, 11 Nov. 1814, AN, F7 3837.

³³François-André Isambert, Christianisme et classes ouvrière: jalons pour une étude de sociologie historique (Tournai, 1961), pp. 142-43, 153. On lack of religious belief under Napoleon, see Cobenzl to Colloredo, Paris, 28 April 1802, in Boulay de la Meurthe, Documents sur la négociation du Concordat, 5:568-70; royalist police report, 6 June 1802, in Remacle, Bonaparte et les Bourbons, p. 24; observations by Pr. Seine, an IX, under heading "Cultes," AN, AF IV 1012; remarks by Dubois, curé of Sainte-Marguerite, in report to King, 29-30 Jan. 1815, AMAE, r. 344.

³⁴Victor de Marcé, "Napoléon I^{er} et la semaine de quarante heures," Revue politique et parlementaire 177

Workers resented the regulation--and not only because it caused them to lose a day's wages, since many preferred to take off Monday as a holiday. Shopkeepers were equally enraged at interference with their business hours.³⁵ When shopkeepers on the rue Saint-Honoré resisted efforts to close them down one Sunday in July, the gendarmerie had to be called in to support the police.³⁶ The government's religious policy also ran into trouble on 12 June 1814 when, for the first time since the Revolution, it authorized Corpus Christi processions to take place outdoors. The National Guard used force to compel everyone in the street to kneel as the host was borne by. The next Sunday, at the steps of Saint-Roch Church, a crowd hooted the procession and, pelting it with mud and whatever else came to hand, routed the priest and his flock. There were apparently similar disturbances in other parishes of the capital.³⁷

An abbé from Toulon reported on 1 July 1814 that everywhere in Paris the common people were speaking out against the King, his ministers, and the Church. He recounted a

(Oct.-Dec. 1938):196-213.

³⁵Avis à tous les négocians, fabricans, marchands de vin, limonadiers, marchands d'eau-de-vie, maîtres de billard, cochers, charretiers, étaleurs, colporteurs, ouvriers de tous métiers et professions, hommes de journée et commissionaires, sur la défense d'ouvrir les boutiques et de travailler les dimanches et fêtes (Paris, n.d.), pp. 5-6.

³⁶Journal de Paris, 18 July 1814, as quoted by Tulard, Nouvelle histoire de Paris, p. 380.

³⁷A Narrative of Memorable Events, pp. 197-98.

conversation (which he claimed to have overheard) in which a young man of twenty-five denounced "the King who puts a bloody priest [un Jèan-Foutre de calotin] at the head of his ministry, who gives millions to the priests, who amuses himself by staging mascarades with processions, etc." The malcontent added ominously that "the Place de la Révolution [site of the Revolutionary guillotine] still stands."³⁸ The police noted a few weeks later that the workers of the faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marcel "speak endlessly of Bonaparte who, they say, did not support the priests."³⁹ In September, workers gathered on the quai de Gesvres were heard to complain that the priests were seeking to regain their ancient prerogatives from the King.⁴⁰

The intensity of this anticlericalism was made clear in January 1815, when the curé of Saint-Roch refused to allow burial services within his church for Mademoiselle Raucour, a Parisian actress. Despite his interdiction, on 17 January a crowd estimated at several thousand people forced the funeral convoy to proceed to the church and to bring the body inside. The police suspected that the actress's will, which

³⁸ Abbé de Bellon to abbé de Montesquieu, 1 July 1814, AN, Flc III Seine 29. The "bloody priest" referred to was Montesquieu who, while not actually prime minister, was Minister of the Interior and in effect the King's personal representative in the Council of Ministers.

³⁹ Police bulletin, 20 July 1814, AN, F7 3783.

⁴⁰ Report to King, 22 Sept. 1814, AMAE, r. 339.

left two thousand francs to the parish poor, had something to do with the disturbance, an observation which suggests that the crowd was made up of workers. About a hundred people gathered at Saint-Roch the next morning to look over the damage, and the police arrested four: a medical student who said that the curé ought to be hanged, a health officer who called the curé a thief, a tailor who suggested that the curé be put on bread and water for ten months, and a book peddler who declared that the curé deserved death. When the curé of Saint-Roch came to the faubourg Saint-Antoine to visit Dubois, curé of Sainte-Marguerite, people insulted him in the street. Dubois remarked that "one can hardly believe how much his conduct in the affair of Mlle Raucourt has excited disapproval among the common people, to whom even the name of this actress must have been completely unknown." Priests throughout the city became objects of scorn and insult. A group of young ecclesiastics who went skating on the frozen Ourcq Reservoir at La Villette were mocked by a crowd which showered them with snowballs, rocks, and cries of "Down with the calotins!" The Director General of Police made light of the political implications of these events, but he could not deny the strength of popular anti-clericalism:

. . . it is not a Bonapartist or anti-Royalist outrage. It is the most extraordinary explosion of popular hatred of the clergy. . . . The excitement has reached the faubourgs with remarkable speed. Loud curses and swearing are to be heard everywhere.

However, the government was inevitably implicated and there were rumours that the curé of Saint-Roch had not made his

decision without prior consultation with the King.⁴¹

It was inevitable that because of their common opposition to the Bourbons, Bonapartism and the Revolutionary tradition were drawn together in men's minds. There are many cases that illustrate the phenomenon. Pasque, a boot-maker, used to declaim against Napoleon when he was drunk; now he declaimed in his favour.⁴² Rocher, a shoemaker's assistant, evaded conscription and denounced Napoleon before 1814, but now he openly spoke out against the King and hoped for the imminent return of the Emperor.⁴³ Beguin, the man reputed to have put the Phrygian cap on Louis XVI's head on 20 June 1792, was now an ardent Bonapartist.⁴⁴ Fréché, a shoemaker with strongly-held republican views, "did not like Buonaparte when he ruled, and now he praises him." He hoped for Napoleon's return because he saw it as a potentially revolutionary act which "would lead to further events."⁴⁵

Of course, not all republicans converted to Bonapartism. Juvenot, an "anarchist" during the Revolution, now caretaker

⁴¹ Reports to King, 17, 18, 20, 24, 29-30 Jan. 1815, AMAE, r. 343. Police bulletins, 18, 23, and 25 Jan. 1815, AN, F7 3784.

⁴² Police report, 21 Jan. 1815, AN, F7 6624. no. 405-A.

⁴³ Police bulletin, 26 Aug. 1814, AN, F7 3783.

⁴⁴ Police bulletin, 15 Nov. 1814, AN, F7 3784.

⁴⁵ Police report, 3/10 Sept. 1814, AN, F7 3144.

at the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, predicted a popular insurrection against the King, but added that "it's not in Bonaparte's favour that we want to incite the people," and that "the people will be content to hear the Republic proclaimed, having never been happier than under it."⁴⁶ Perin, "one of the blood-thirsty terrorists of September 1792," said, "That madman Bonaparte has fallen; we have now to overthrow the King." He agreed that such a venture needed the support of the army, which he recognized as being Bonapartist, but he believed that "we will bring them to reason when that imbecile [Louis XVIII] is no longer in power."⁴⁷ Yet the hostility of such men to the Bourbons only worked in Napoleon's favour. As the Director General of Police recognized:

Every movement, every disorder, every agitation, in France will be to his advantage, whatever those who hate and fear him may say or think.

The Republic, the Regency, or Bonaparte are more or less all the same thing since, so long as he lives, he is the inevitable successor to any government which is not the legitimate one.⁴⁸

It is highly improbable that any of the discontent had reached a high enough pitch to spark a Parisian insurrection, even an unsuccessful one. If the workers and artisans were clearly unhappy with and suspicious of the government, they lacked both leadership and a coherent political programme--

⁴⁶Police bulletin, 8 Oct. 1814, AN, F7 3784.

⁴⁷Police bulletins, 10 Sept. and 8 Oct. 1814, AN, F7 3783-3784.

⁴⁸Report to King, 16 Oct. 1814, AMAE, r. 340.

and the liberal bourgeoisie which was to supply these in July 1830 and again in February 1848 was as yet relatively satisfied with the constitutionalism of Louis XVIII (embodied in the Charter) and unconvinced of the viability of any other political alternative. The only focus for popular discontent was Napoleon, and he was defeated and in exile. Then, on 7 March 1815, the government informed Paris that Napoleon had escaped from Elba, landed in France, and was marching on the city. The very next day, a police informer who went through the capital to gauge public reaction to the news reported:

We heard with indignation that the majority of the people, petty merchants and others, got a fiendish pleasure from announcing the return of this ravenous tiger who will once again cover France with blood. Some said, we will rush to his side, others said that if he had no refuge, I would give up my own bed to him with pleasure.⁴⁹

In fact, public opinion may not have been quite so unanimous. The Director General of Police was much more reassuring when he informed the King that many workers (the women above all) feared a renewal of war and a deepening of the economic crisis because of Napoleon's return. But when many employers, concerned about an uncertain future, began to lay off their workers, "the unemployed . . . use this as a pretext to rail against the court and to speak highly of Bonaparte."⁵⁰ The

⁴⁹ Daniel Deglon, "Mémoire qui a pour but de donner des renseignements pour ce qui concerne la sûreté de l'état," 8 March 1815, AN, BB3 161.

⁵⁰ Reports to King, 8, 9, and 12-13 March, 1815, AMAE, r. 345.

police arrested a number of individuals who flaunted their Bonapartism, including a tailor's assistant who ripped down royal ordinances which denounced Napoleon and a cook who, on hearing reports of Napoleon's defeat by royal troops, cried out that they were nonsense.⁵¹ A young hatter could not contain his joy and exulted: "That's our corporal who is returning, he's my father, I will serve him until death. We'll have our turn and we'll make the royalists dance."⁵²

Suddenly the authorities could no longer discount the possibility of a popular insurrection.⁵³ A strange incident involving Dubois, curé of Sainte-Marguerite, gives some sense of the mood of a nervous city in these last days before Napoleon entered Paris. As Dubois later recounted events, on 15 March the confession of a repentant conspirator informed him of a plan to sound the tocsin one midnight, rouse the faubourg Saint-Antoine, and carry out a "frightful and crazy" plot. Although the dramatic story of a last-minute confession sounds suspect, subsequent events are documented by other sources. The alarmed curé had a flyer printed for distribution throughout the faubourg on the morning of the 16th. It called on all his parishioners to support the Bourbon cause and warned them not be misled as

⁵¹ Report by police commissioner of Butte des Moulins division, 17 March 1815, APP, A/a 125, fol. 140.

⁵² Denunciation sent to police commissioner of Réunion division, 17 March 1815, APP, A/a 73, fol. 379.

⁵³ Report to King, 14 March 1815, AMAE, r. 345.

in the past by "a crowd of foreigners and strangers." It also summoned them to hear Dubois speak that evening in his church. The text of his lecture does not survive, but we know that he reminded his audience of their duties to King, Fatherland, and Church, and that the assembly broke up after a heartfelt cry of "Long live the King!" The police, fearful that that the impetuous curé might use the occasion to initiate a White Terror, kept an eye on the meeting, which they found quite peaceful. The faubourg as a whole was equally quiet, for National Guard patrols saw nothing alarming to report, perhaps because a cold rain kept groups from gathering in the streets.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Aux ouvriers, artistes, maîtres, contremaîtres et propriétaires des diverse manufactures du faubourg Saint-Antoine. [And] Lettre à M. Bigot de Préamenau explicative de l'Avis aux ouvriers du faubourg Saint-Antoine, écrite le 5 mai (Paris, n.d.). These two titles were published in May 1815 in a single pamphlet. The first is a copy of Dubois's flyer. The second is his explanation as to how he came to write it, and also an attempt to excuse his actions to the Napoleonic authorities. For details surrounding his speech, see a report by Gilbert de Voisins, commander of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth arrondissements, 17-18 March [1815], ADS, 4 AZ 296. (The archives have misdated the report as written in 1814.) The contents of the speech (and the weather) are mentioned in a report to the King, 17 March 1815, AMAE, r. 345.

III

There was, as it happened, no insurrection, and not even a battle for Paris. Louis XVIII simply slipped quietly out of the city in the early hours of 20 March 1815 and that same evening Napoleon arrived triumphantly at the Tuileries. The Hundred Days had begun. This second, very short reign of the Emperor was quite different from his first. If the man himself, for all his disclaimers, was essentially the same tyrant, political realities had changed. John Hobhouse, Lord Broughton, an Englishman resident in Paris during part of this period wrote a series of exceptionally perceptive letters to explain the situation to his compatriots. He urged Britain to recognize the re-established Empire, since France no longer desired European hegemony (he doubted that even the French Army would be willing to carry war beyond the Rhine) but would most certainly insist on her right to choose her own government, free from foreign intervention. Napoleon symbolized this independence, and had consequently "rallied the pride and self-love of France around his person. . . ." "Napoleon did not remount the throne by virtue of his previous popularity. . . ." On the contrary, he now sought to consolidate his position by recognizing the popular sovereignty he had always disdained:

The Emperor is now the man of the people--the people are at the head of his ministry--the people compose his army--his cause is that of the people--and finally, it is against the people, more than against Napoleon, that the allies are now in arms.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ John Hobhouse, The Substance of Some Letters Written

The temper of Paris during the Hundred Days recalled the heady days of the French Revolution. Dozens of pamphlets rolled from the presses with a strident rhetorical tone straight from the Year II. Troops on review marched to the stirring strains of the Marseillaise and the Ça Ira.⁵⁶ Workers from the faubourgs gathered regularly beneath the windows of the Tuileries to acclaim the Emperor, although royalist sympathizers insisted that they were nothing more than a clique paid in cash for their applause.⁵⁷ One centre of Bonapartist agitation was the café Montansier in the Palais Royal, where "a tribune was erected as in the times of the revolution,--and male and female orators made the place echo with vive l'Empereur, et la liberté!"⁵⁸ This fervour sprang from the same source which moved the former Girondins to come out in support of Napoleon; according to a recent study of these politicians:

More than an act of adherence to the Imperial government, their rallying to Napoleon in 1815 was an act of revolutionary fidelity and a rejection of

by an Englishman Resident at Paris during the Last Reign of the Emperor Napoleon, 2 vols. (London, 1816), passim. The quotations are from 1:181, 205, 214.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 1:207.

⁵⁷ Helen Maria Williams, A Narrative of the Events which have taken place in France from the Landing of Napoleon Bonaparte on the First of March, 1815, till the Restoration of Louis XVIII (Cleveland, 1895), p. 74.

⁵⁸ John Scott, Paris Revisited in 1815 by way of Brussels, including a Walk over the Field of Battle at Waterloo, 2nd ed. (London, 1816), p. 282.

the Old Régime. By this impetus which carried them towards Napoleon they expressed their almost visceral hatred of feudalism and clericalism.⁵⁹

To be sure, there was something staged or second-hand in this revival of old enthusiasms. It calls to mind Tocqueville's celebrated description of the participants in the February Revolution of 1848, who were too self-conscious in their parodying of the gestures and slogans from an earlier revolution; they had the mannerisms down to perfection, but the original warmth was somehow missing.⁶⁰ Thus, when a Parisian student attended a "popular assembly" (modelled on the popular societies of the Year II) which met on the rue Saint-Honoré, he was disappointed to hear the president address the audience as "Gentlemen" instead of "Citizens," and to find that the debate concerned nothing more urgent than the drafting of a patriotic address to the Emperor. On another evening, he was thrilled to learn that at the café Montansier a bust of Napoleon had been adorned with a Phrygian cap; rushing to the café, he discovered that this revolutionary gesture was nothing more than rumour.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Jacqueline Chaumié, "Les Girondins et les Cent Jours: Essai d'explication de leur comportement par leurs origines géographiques et sociales et leur passé politique (1793-1815)," Annales historiques de la Révolution française 43 (1971):361.

⁶⁰ Alexis de Tocqueville, Recollections, trans. by George Lawrence, ed. by J.P. Mayer and A.P. Kerr (New York, 1970), p. 53.

⁶¹ E. Labrettonnière, Macédoine: Souvenirs du Quartier Latin, dédiés à la jeunesse des écoles: Paris à la chute de l'Empire et pendant les Cent Jours (Paris, 1863), pp. 230-31.

Napoleon himself was uneasy with the revolutionary energies which he had unleashed, for they might prove a double-edged sword. Hence his ambivalent attitude toward the fédérés, a Parisian workers' militia formed in May. Their programme was simple: according to their manifesto, they stood ready to defend French honour, liberty, and the cause of the people, which is "inseparable from that of our immortal Emperor." They called on all Parisian men not already enrolled in the National Guard (which was predominantly middle-class) to prepare themselves to defend the capital under any commanders the Emperor might designate: "We offer our arms to the Emperor. . . . We ask to be armed and organized," And they adopted as their rallying cry, "Long live the Nation! Long live liberty! Long live the Emperor!"⁶² The significance of the militia was made clear by one pamphleteer, who described the honour that Napoleon paid to the Parisian faubourgs by his review of the fédérés as simple "justice" which was "owed them" as reparation for the "outrage" of Germinal and Prairial 1795, when the Thermidorians crushed the sans-culotte movement.⁶³ In fact, if Napoleon could not avoid reviewing the fédérés--they paraded before him, some twelve-thousand strong on Sunday,

⁶² Les habitans, les ouvriers des faubourg Saint-Antoine et Saint-Marceau à leurs concitoyens, leurs camarades (Paris, 10 May 1815).

⁶³ M., Sergent-Major au 1^{er} régiment d'infanterie de ligne, Quand on parle des faubourgs S. Antoine et S. Marceau, nous sommes pas au bout du rouleau (Paris, n.d.).

14 May--he took care not to give them arms. Those who wanted a musket had to buy one at nineteen francs, a heavy sum for a worker.⁶⁴ "He behaved in this instance like an ally of the continental monarchs," one writer later commented.⁶⁵ The middle classes made the fédérés the butt of their sarcasm,⁶⁶ but humour could not hide the fear behind their contempt. Marching workers, armed or not, were reminders of the days of sans-culotte supremacy, and their very existence may have discredited the Emperor in certain circles. In May 1815 the police arrested an employé for making hostile remarks about Napoleon and for "having called the inhabitants of the faubourgs who joined the fédérés rabble. . . ."⁶⁷

It is of course impossible to know how the popular movement might have evolved had the Empire lasted for more than three months; however, it is probable that Napoleon would have managed to contain and eventually to repress it.

⁶⁴Hobhouse, Substance of Some Letters, 1:209-11.

⁶⁵J. Peuchet, Mémoires tirés des archives de la police de Paris, pour servir à l'histoire du monde et de la police, depuis Louis XIV jusqu'à nos jours, 3 vols. (Paris, 1838), 2:313-14.

⁶⁶Tulard, Nouvelle histoire de Paris, p. 394, quotes a song ending with the couplet, "If enemies fall into our hands, I swear they won't be clean." Even nastier was a caricature (in my personal collection) showing Napoleon, his clothes covered with bugs, telling his son, "These aren't lice, they're fédérés."

⁶⁷Report by police commissioner of Butte des Moulins division, 17 May 1815, APP, A/a 125, fol. 160.

As it happened, the Battle of Waterloo, fought and lost on 18 June 1815, gave a different direction to the course of events. The Emperor left the battlefield and rode directly to Paris, where he arrived early on the morning of Wednesday 21 June; news of the defeat had preceded him by about half a day. On the evening of the 21st, as we have seen, workers demonstrated their support outside the Elysée Palace, where Napoleon had taken up residence, but the liberal Chamber of Deputies elected during the Hundred Days was implacably hostile to the Emperor. After twenty-four hours of uncertainty and tension, Napoleon made his decision and abdicated at noon on Thursday, 22 June 1815.

Abdication did not put a stop to popular demonstrations. All afternoon groups continued to form in the garden of the Palais Royal, in public squares, and along the boulevards and the Champs-Élysées. By 8 p.m. some six thousand people had gathered in the avenue de Marigny behind the Elysée and there were repeated cries of "Long live the Emperor!" while mothers lifted up their children to catch a glimpse of Napoleon walking in a remote corner of the garden. An alarmed Prefect of Police directed the National Guard to prevent any more such incidents on the morrow.⁶⁸ At about the same time, there was an unusually heavy attendance at the café Montansier whose clients sang rousing patriotic

⁶⁸ Report by Pol., 22 June 1815, BHVP, Ms. 1013, fol. 144-45.

songs and cried out, "Long live the Emperor, or death!"⁶⁹ These demonstrations continued on Friday. Groups began to form as early as 6 a.m. on the rue de Rivoli to read copies of Napoleon's proclamation of abdication, posted during the night. They reacted with shouts of "No, no abdication! Long live the Emperor! It's treason. . . ." In the Place Vendôme a crowd knelt before the monument to Napoleon's great victory at Austerlitz and swore to die for the Emperor. Unemployed workers gathered on the quays spoke of nothing but the abdication and they expressed their fears of another Bourbon restoration. A column of fédérés threw the authorities into panic as it marched from the Elysée to the Palais Royal, the shops along its route closing their shutters as it passed along the street. In the evening the fédérés held a tumultuous meeting in a hall on the rue Grenelle-Saint-Honoré which resounded with their patriotic rhetoric.⁷⁰

Tension remained at fever pitch for days to come. Napoleon left the capital on Sunday 25 June, but any discontent was still likely to turn into a Bonapartist demonstration. For instance, on the morning of 27 June workers employed on the city's fortifications and who were

⁶⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 23 June 1815, AN, F7 3688/24.

⁷⁰ Two reports by Pr. Pol., 23 June 1815, AN, F7 3688/24. Police report, 24 June 1815, AN, AF IV 1934. Letter from Parisot to Mathieu de Montmorency, n.d., BHVP, Ms 1022, fol. 2-3.

owed two days' pay staged a protest; three hundred of them, parading their supervisor in a carriage, marched through the faubourg Saint-Marcel to the Hôtel de Ville, shouting "Vive l'Empereur!" along the way.⁷¹ There were also the fédérés to worry about--the nucleus of a potential insurrection. It is true that they had insufficient arms, but there was a large store under municipal control and the police feared that it was inadequately protected against pillage. The fédérés openly threatened anyone they considered a royalist, and they suspected the loyalties of the bourgeois National Guard which sought to keep them under control.⁷² A series of disturbances revealed popular fears of another imposed restoration. A family that prematurely decorated their carriage with white flowers and cockades were held up by a crowd which denounced them as "traitorous royalists," attacked the carriage with stones, and almost succeeded in lynching the father.⁷³ Hobhouse described the reaction of Paris on 4 July to rumours that the government had surrendered the city to the Allies:

I have just heard that the whole national guard are put under arms. Single musquets have been heard in various parts of the city . . . and parties of men are running through the streets, shouting "Vive l'Empereur!" . . . The movement began at three o'clock, when many groups formed in the gardens and streets,

⁷¹Report by Pr. Pol., 27 June 1815, and report by police commissioner of Quartier Saint-Marcel, same date, 11 a.m., AN, F7 3688/24. Police report, 27 June 1815, AN, AF IV 1934.

⁷²Police report, 27 June 1815, AN, AF IV 1934.

⁷³Williams, A Narrative, p. 179.

listening to harangues and denunciations.⁷⁴

Despite the objections of Parisian workers, political realities dictated that France turn once again to Louis XVIII. The King re-entered his capital on 8 July 1815 and the Hundred Days were over. But popular Bonapartism was far from dead. In the following months, scores of workers, men and women in every sort of occupation, were arrested for seditious remarks and actions. Among them were many members of the National Guard who refused to don the white cockade, an apprentice hosier who cried out "Long live the Emperor!" on the rue du Temple, a joiner who threatened to murder any foreign troops billeted on him, and a cutler who "tore out his hair on learning about the surrender of Bonaparte to the English."⁷⁵ Some gestures of opposition were amusing, as when a hosier named his dog Louis XVIII. But a stevedore assumed a more dangerous stance when, sharpening an axe, he told a bystander, "This is for your Louis XVIII, for you and for all the royalists."⁷⁶ And no one surpassed a female bookseller in invective; it was reported that she openly expressed her disappointment that no Allied soldiers had been billeted at her home as she was therefore unable to entertain and then poison them. She also said: "Yes, I love Bonaparte

⁷⁴ Hobhouse, Substance of Some Letters, 2:126-27.

⁷⁵ See numerous police reports from July and August 1815, AN, F7 3028.

⁷⁶ Police report, 18 Oct. 1815, AN, F7 4222, no. 52.

and hate the Bourbons. If the Duchesse d'Angoulême were bound on a scaffold and sentenced to have liquid lead poured into her veins, I would climb onto the scaffold and do the job myself."⁷⁷

The kind of devotion which Napoleon could henceforth evoke is best represented by Le Roi, a cotton worker, who regularly remarked "that he knows only God and the Emperor."⁷⁸ Although we cannot discount the consequences of a deteriorating standard of living after 1815 (see pages 126-27), which must have made the Napoleonic period seem (in retrospect at least) like a golden age for workers, the primary cause of popular Bonapartism was undoubtedly ideological. The events of the First Restoration and the Hundred Days were crucial because it was at that time that Bonapartism fused with the Revolutionary tradition, so that "Long live Napoleon!" became a battle cry of the political left for at least the next twenty-five or thirty years, until challenged by the spread of Republicanism in the 1840s. This is the significance of a police report which describes a political demonstration by Parisian workers in June 1820:

The troublemakers forced all whom they met to cry "Long live the Charter!" to which they added "Long live the Charter, that's long live liberty! Long

⁷⁷ Reports by police commissioner of Cité division, 20-21 July 1815, APP, A/a 133, fol. 333-37.

⁷⁸ Police report, 16 May 1816, AN, F7 6862, d. 4783.

live the nation!" These cries were accompanied by the, even more reprehensible cries of "Long live the Emperor!"⁷⁹

The Napoleonic legend had become a revolutionary spectre haunting Europe.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Report by Pr. Seine, 11 June 1820, quoted in Schmidt, Tableaux, 3:528.

⁸⁰ J. Lucas-Dubreton, La culte de Napoleon 1815-1848 (Paris, 1960). Newman, "What the Crowd Wanted." Robert-Pimienta, La propagande bonapartiste en 1848 (Paris, 1911).

CONCLUSION

. . . si haut que parle la poudre à cette époque, elle ne doit pas nous empêcher de prêter l'oreille aux gémissements timides du prolétariat, de connaître les maux dont il souffrit, de savoir, autant que de rares documents le permettent, ce que lui rapportait de bien-être la gloire napoléonienne.¹

This dissertation is one more contribution to an extensive and expanding literature, for French labour history is definitely a "growth industry." Scores of historians, both French and (as the French persist in calling us) "Anglo-Saxon," keep on busily producing a seemingly endless and ever-widening stream of books, articles, and conference papers which trace the emergence and development of the French working class. If the present study has produced no conclusions likely to upset the accepted wisdom in the field, it does offer a detailed description of workers in one particular (and special) city at a critical time in their history, when the French Revolution had brought the eighteenth century to a dramatic end, while nineteenth-century industrialism was yet to initiate the economic changes that would fundamentally remake French society. Parisian workers under Napoleon

¹Turot, L'Empire de 1807 à 1815, p. 440.

were poised to begin the long and painful evolution to modern proletariat. It is therefore important to consider the content of the last eleven chapters within the context of the nineteenth century as a whole, and to present (as the French say) bilan et perspectives--"a balance-sheet and perspectives."

It is strikingly apparent that the political consciousness of Parisian workers in 1815 was far more highly developed than their social consciousness. However, this is not to say that they had independent political goals. The sans-culotte movement of the 1790s left a living heritage of radicalism, but it was strongly petty-bourgeois in orientation, with an ideological content shaped by the artisans and shopkeepers who emerged as leaders of the masses during the Revolution. Having enjoyed the briefest period of autonomy during the Year II, this radicalism was henceforth, with rare exception, little more than a force d'appui for the Jacobin middle-class or, even the more moderate liberals; this was "the alliance of frock-coat and blouse" which toppled the monarchy in 1830 and again in 1848. (June 1848 marked the decisive break between the allies.) The key point is that Parisian workers were aware of and interested in political events, and that they were prepared on occasion to stage demonstrations and even to fight and die for political ideas. True, they were passive throughout the Napoleonic period--although we must

not overlook the very real manifestations of discontent-- but the Restoration and the Hundred Days revived old passions and gave them renewed force.

How much had changed since the Old Régime! Mercier, writing a mere decade before the Revolution, remarked that the common people of Paris were not the stuff of which republicans were made: ". . . they disperse at the sight of a gun-barrel; they break into tears in the presence of a police officer; . . . it's a king for this rabble."² But the French Revolution turned them into political activists, and though Napoleon did his best to put the genie back into the bottle, he failed. For all his hatred of the mob, Napoleon could not dissociate himself from the Revolution. Once, taunted by Napoleon for his regicide past, Fouché reminded the Emperor that his vote for the death of Louis XVI was the first service he rendered His Imperial Majesty. The Parisian workers and artisans might well have said--as in fact the Vainqueurs de la Bastille dared to suggest on one occasion--that they were his servants even earlier, when their insurrection began a series of events that no-one could have anticipated. In battling for the Revolution they transformed not only French society and the French state, but themselves as well. They became political beings, beginning the long process that led them and their descendants to 1830, 1848, 1870, and on to the

²Mercier, Tableau de Paris, 1:33. Also, 3:57, 6:51.

development of republican and socialist organizations, as the battle shifted from the streets to the electoral arena.

In contrast, the years of revolution did not bring into existence any new social consciousness among Parisian workers. Revolutionary and Napoleonic legislation, based for the most part on liberal principles of laissez-faire, opened the way for the modernization of the French economy, but the immediate consequences were minimal in terms of industrial development. The artisanal mode of production and concomitant forms of social relations and the paternalist ideology of the small workshop remained predominant for many decades to come. It is important, of course, that the guilds were abolished, but the state stepped in to replace guild regulation--which had been weak and limited to the cities (indeed, in Paris to only certain quarters)--with uniform and universal laws that relegated wage-earners to inferior legal status and facilitated control and surveillance over them in the name of law and order; and these regulations were now enforced by an oppressive and relatively efficient police bureaucracy. So, although mastership was henceforth accessible to any worker who cared to take out a trade licence, the employer's hand was actually strengthened by the Revolution.

There was some resistance to authority by workers, and this was sometimes even successful. Yet combinations and strikes under Napoleon show much the same pattern as those of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and the compagnonnage, mutual aid societies, and other informal organizations into which workers grouped themselves all had roots stretching back into the mediaeval period. But if the structure of workers' organizations was the same as before 1789, their number grew considerably. And if strikes were no different in kind, they occurred with greater frequency. This may indicate that workers were more aware of their interests as wage-earners in opposition to their employers; it does not prove that there was a qualitative change in their perceptions. In any case, it is impossible to draw any sweeping conclusions on the basis of fifteen years. It is enough to say that whatever the state of their consciousness Parisian workers were showing a growing willingness and ability to defend their economic interests.

Yet was this equally true of all Parisian workers?

They were by no means a homogeneous group: what, after all, did a domestic servant, a chambrelan tailor, and a stonemason have in common? Certainly they earned wages (in one form or another) but their primary identification was most probably with their occupation, their family, their region of origin, perhaps even their neighbourhood of

residence in Paris--and not with their class. Our discussion of workers' organizations and strikes is not relevant to any "working class"--indeed, the term is anachronistic in Napoleonic Paris--but only to one part of the working population: the journeymen and wage-earners in the traditional crafts. This is hardly surprising to anyone familiar with French labour history, for it is now commonly recognized that labour militancy appeared first not among the proletariat of the large industrial establishments, but rather among skilled workers who felt threatened by the process of industrialization. They, alone had the sense of community (which is somewhat different from class consciousness), based on centuries of tradition, which enabled them to resist their employers.

This suggests that it might prove fruitful to deal with Parisian workers in terms of a "bipolar" model that distinguishes between the skilled and the unskilled as two opposite ends of a spectrum. There is much evidence in the preceding pages which points in that direction. The skilled were more active in labour protest than the unskilled, they earned better wages (and probably benefitted more from the rising standard of living of the Napoleonic period), they were somewhat less vulnerable to poverty, and they showed patterns of regional recruitment quite distinct from those of the unskilled. On the other hand, there is no proof that the unskilled were more passive

politically than the skilled (although we may suspect this to have been the case). Nor ought we to underestimate the significance of workers' poverty which, despite some variation in degree, was an experience shared by most workers, for even the skilled were frequent victims of unemployment. Jeffry Kaplow has described a "culture of poverty" common to the workers of eighteenth-century Paris --and this phrase could well have served as the title for at least the first half of this dissertation.

Only more detailed studies can begin to clarify the situation of Parisian or French workers at this time. The kind of documents that these would require simply do not exist for Napoleonic Paris. How can we analyze marriage patterns without the état civil, or family structure without the census? The justices of the peace kept records which are so useful for understanding the world of the artisan and the shopkeeper, but these contain little that relates to the common wage-earner. "Scientific" rather than "impressionistic" history is possible only by going beyond the Napoleonic period to make use of sources from the rest of the nineteenth century. And would this be of any significance without complementary studies of other cities and towns in France?

It is still far too soon to expect any definitive book on "the making of the French working class." A

complete picture can emerge only after decades of more research by many historians, perhaps working in teams to make maximum use of the archives. Indeed, such a final study may never be possible because it might have to encompass too many exceptions and contradictions. The more one examines French workers in the nineteenth century, the more one is struck by the incredible diversity of their conditions and their experiences. Generalization is difficult, perhaps even impossible--and maybe the greatest generalization of all is the very concept of a working class.

APPENDIX 1

COMPAGNONNAGE DISPUTES 1800-1814

The following list provides a sketch of all brawls between journeymen of rival compagnonnages which occurred in Paris or its environs during the Napoleonic period. The documentation for some of these incidents is extensive, but for others there is little more than a passing reference in one police report. The list omits a number of recorded brawls for which the reports suggest no cause. Some of these may have been precipitated by a dispute over the compagnonnage.

1. Hatters: 12-16 September 1802: approx. 15 arrests

There was a series of disputes and brawls "between the hat workers called compagnons du devoir and those called bons enfants, because the compagnons want to work throughout France while the others do not have the right." On the evening of 13 September, some fifty or sixty journeymen gathered on the rue du Cimitière Saint-Nicolas to do battle, but the police dispersed them.

2. Carpenters: 27 December 1803: 1 arrest

A drunken brawl between carpenters, "for reason of what they call le devoir," left one journeyman injured on the rue du faubourg Saint-Martin.

3. Carpenters: 17 June 1804: 17 arrests

About eighty journeymen took part in a battle between drilles (compagnons du devoir) and renards (non-affiliated journeymen) at 11 a.m. in the faubourg Saint-Martin. "They ventured to enter the shops and to lay hold of all the tools which fell into their hands, such as staffs, hammers, etc." to use in their fight.

4. Stonemasons: January 1807: 6 arrests

There was a series of violent brawls between passans

(compagnons du devoir) and étrangers (devoir de liberté). The police arrested two instigators in early January and another four on about 21 January.

5. Carpenters: 24 August 1807: 1 arrest

At 11 p.m. "at the entrance to the faubourg Saint-Martin," the armed guard suppressed a fight among journey-men carpenters armed with staffs.

6. Hatters: 31 August-9 October 1807: 14 arrests

On 31 August two hatters who were bons enfants quit Vouillant's workshop on the rue des Menestriers when he refused to dismiss two compagnons du devoir. Two days later at a wineshop, the two hatters and their comrades threatened the two compagnons. There was a slight disturbance between the rival associations on 6 September. On 16 September at 11 p.m. twenty gavots (bons enfants), armed with sabres and staffs, gathered in the rue Poirier to attack their rivals at David's workshop. The police made a number of arrests and reported that the feud was very serious. On or about 9 October a journeyman almost sparked a brawl when he taunted a master hatter who had once belonged to a rival association in a tavern on the rue des Vieilles Etuves.

7. Blacksmiths: 25 October 1807: 9 arrests

On 25 October a large number of blacksmiths armed with staffs pursued five others from the rue Rochecouart to the rue du faubourg Montmartre. There were a number of other disturbances about this time, caused by the compagnons du devoir (who numbered about forty in Paris) who wanted to compel three hundred non-members to affiliate.

8. Carpenters: 14-16 November 1807: 5 arrests

There were several brawls between compagnons du devoir and renards in the faubourg Saint-Martin.

9. Carpenters: 7 August 1808: 2 arrests

About thirty compagnons du devoir pursued a renard and threw rocks through his window, injuring him.

10. Shoemakers and Curriers: 22-23 January and
27 February 1809: 21 arrests

There were brawls on 22 and 23 January at an inn on the rue du Cadran and elsewhere in Paris between curriers belonging to the compagnons, du devoir and shoemakers known as braves. The cause was "a song which the former were singing and which displeased the others." The police made twenty arrests. A month later the police made one arrest on 27 February when they broke up a gathering of curriers who were trying to provoke the shoemakers into renewing the dispute.

11. Stonemasons, Roofers, and Carpenters: 2 April 1809:
15 arrests

There was a battle on the rue Saint-Antoine on the evening of Sunday 2 April between stonemasons on one side and roofers and carpenters on the other. About sixty journeymen armed with staffs and bottles took part. The stonemasons were étrangers, while the roofers and carpenters belonged to a rival federation, the compagnonnage du devoir. A stonemason was seriously injured and the police ordered the instigators to pay him 174 francs in damages.

12. Carpenters: 14 May 1809: 1 arrest

A drunken journeyman carpenter, belonging to the drilles, provoked a group of renards, and even assaulted one of them, on the rue du faubourg Saint-Martin. The police intervened before the incident could spark a more general brawl.

13. Carpenters: 9-10 October 1809: 60 arrests

A dispute between compagnons du devoir and renards working on the Sèvres Bridge led to a huge battle at the bridge, with carpenters coming from Paris to support their comrades. There were subsequent incidents within the city as well. (For a more complete description, see the text of chapter seven.)

14. Stonemasons: 26 October 1809: 1 arrest

Police arrested one compagnon du devoir for provoking a brawl among stonemasons working on the Saint-Michel Bridge, some of whom were étrangers.

15. Carpenters: 5 February, 1810: 2 arrests

There was another brawl between drilles and renards at the Sèvres Bridge.

16. Stonemasons: 30 March 1810: 2 arrests

Two stonemasons threatened and then assaulted a third, who belonged to a rival association, to force him to leave the construction site where they were working together on the Reserve Granary.

17. Carpenters: 1 June 1810: 1 arrest

At the workyard of Lacasse, a master carpenter, a drille assaulted a renard, which would have sparked a general brawl but for police intervention.

18. Carpenters: 7-10 July 1810: 8 arrests

The foreman at the workyard of Seigneuret, a master carpenter, at the Vaugirard Barrier, was a compagnon du devoir; all his workers were renards or compagnons du liberte. On 7 July one worker disputed an order given by the foreman, and later insulted and assaulted him in a tavern where they were eating their two o'clock dinner. The next day a delegation of his workers demanded that Seigneuret dismiss the foreman. He refused. On Monday, 9 July, the workers abandoned the yard and Seigneuret hired four compagnons du devoir to replace them. The following day two renards, who had not been working for Seigneuret, showed up and insulted the new workers, attempting to provoke a fight. The police intervened and arrested the renards who had quit work and charged them with taking part in an illegal combination.

19. Carpenters: 10 July 1810: 15 arrests

In June the contractor for the Sèvres Bridge hired a group of renards, which prompted a protest on 3 July by the compagnons du devoir working on the site. On 10 July a group of renards came from Paris, on the pretext that they were seeking work, and insulted two compagnons. The police heard that "they had come to help the renards exterminate the drilles." They intervened and arrested fifteen men.

20. Carpenters: 1 June 1812: 5 arrests

There was an afternoon brawl in a tavern between compagnons du devoir and renards.

Sources:

¹ Report by peace officers Thibout and Yvrie, 25 fructidor an X (12 Sept. 1802) and by Bazin and Noël, 27, 28, and 29 fructidor an X (14, 15, and 16 Sept. 1802), AN, F7 3178. Report by Pr. Pol., 27 fructidor an X (14 Sept. 1802), AN, F7 3830.

² Report by Pr. Pol., 6 nivôse an XII (27 Dec. 1803), AN, F7 3832.

³ Reports by peace officer Bazin, 29 and 30 prairial an XII (18 and 19 June 1804), and by Marlée and Mercier, 29 prairial an XII (18 June 1804), AN, F7 3182. Report by Pr. Pol., 29 prairial an XII (18 June 1804), AN, F7 3832.

⁴ Reports by Pr. Pol., 4 and 21 Jan. 1807, AN, F7 3125. Police bulletin, 24 Jan. 1807, AN, F7 3755.

⁵ Report by peace officer Bazin, 24 Aug. 1807, AN, F7 3190.

⁶ Reports by Pr. Pol., 11 and 25 Sept. and 9 Oct. 1807, AN, F7 3126-3127. Police bulletins, 8, 18, and 22 Sept. and 1 Oct. 1807, AN, AF IV 1501 and F7 3757.

⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 6 Nov. 1807, AN, F7 3127. Police bulletin, 30 Oct. 1807, AN, AF IV 1501 and F7 3757.

⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 Nov. 1807, AN, F7 3127. Police bulletin, 17 Nov. 1807, AN, AF IV 1501 and F7 3757.

⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 19 Aug. 1808, AN, F7 3128. Police bulletin, 24 Aug. 1808, AN, F7 3760.

¹⁰ Reports by Pr. Pol., 3 Feb. and 3 March 1809, AN, F7 3130. Police bulletins, 29-30 Jan., 7 Feb., and 8 March 1809, AN, F7 3762.

¹¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 7 April 1809, AN, F7 3130. Police bulletins, 4 and 13 April 1809, AN, F7 3763. Police report, 3 April 1809, BHVP, Ms CP 5200.

¹² Report by Pr. Pol., 19 May 1809, AN, F7 3130.

13 Reports by Pr. Pol., 13 and 20 Oct. 1809, AN, F7 3132. Police bulletins, 10, 12, 19, and 25 Oct. 1809, AN, F7 3765. Three undated police reports, BHVP, Ms CP 5200.

14 Report by Pr. Pol., 3 Nov. 1809, AN, F7 3132. Police bulletin, 8-Nov. 1809, AN, F7 3765.

15 Report by Pr. Pol., 16 Feb. 1810, AN, F7 3132. Police bulletin, 18-19 Feb. 1810, AN, F7 3766.

16 Report by Pr. Pol., 30 March 1810, AN, F7 3133. Police bulletin, 4 April 1810, AN, F7 3767.

17 Report by Pr. Pol., 1 June 1810, AN, F7 3133.

18 Police bulletin, 12 July 1810, AN, AN IV 1490 and F7 3768. "Affaire des ouvriers charpentiers," 24 July 1810, AN, BB18 794.

19 Report by Pr. Pol., 13 Sept. 1810, AN, F7 3134. Police bulletins, 12 and 14 July 1810, AN, AF IV 1490 and F7 3768. "Affaire des ouvriers charpentiers," 24 July 1810, AN, BB18 794.

20 Report by Pr. Pol., 11 June 1812, AN, F7 3139. Police bulletin, 4 June 1812, AN, AF IV 1522 and F7 3775. Report by Pr. Pol., 2 June 1812, enclosed in police bulletin, AN, AF IV 1522.

APPENDIX Z

WORKERS' COMBINATIONS IN PARIS

1800-1814

The following list includes a brief description of all workers' combinations (coalitions)--whether or not they involved actual strikes--for which there is archival evidence. There were undoubtedly many other combinations which have left no trace in the documents.

1. Lamp-lighters 3 July 1800

Four hundred lamp-lighters went en masse to demand back pay from the contractor responsible for lighting Paris, and they threatened to stop work unless they were paid. The Prefect of Police "took all measures within his power . . . to see that this does not happen again."

2. Hatters ca. 7 November 1800

Journeyman hatters blacklisted the manufactory of Danlou-Dumesnil (we do not know why) and successfully intimidated those workers who wanted to remain on the job.

3. Joiners and Cabinet-makers mid-April 1801

There was some agitation for higher wages by joiners and cabinet-makers in the faubourg Saint-Antoine, but employers held firm. It is unclear whether or not there was a work stoppage.

4. Hatters early May 1801

Journeyman hatters asked for higher wages, "and after some discussion, they resumed work."

5. Noodle-makers 12 May 1801

Workers at eight manufactories which produced noodles

and vermicelli (employing about two hundred people) threatened to quit work unless given higher wages, and a workday shorter by two hours. Employers refused to give in.

6. Carpenters

12 June 1801

The journeymen employed to prepare for the celebration of 14 July demanded double their usual wages and went on strike. The police sought out the leaders, arresting one, and by 16 June all men had returned to work.

7. Carpenters

13 August 1801

Forty carpenters preparing for the national exposition at the Palais National des Sciences et Arts went on strike, demanding six francs (instead of four francs) a day in wages as well as a shorter workday (from 6 a.m. to only 6 p.m.). On 15 August the police arrested seven leaders and many journeymen went back to work on 17 August. A report dated 3 August indicates that all were peacefully back on the job by then.

8. Construction workers

23 October 1801

Workers making preparations for the official celebration of the anniversary of the coup d'état of 18 Brumaire demanded higher wages. The police kept an eye on "firebrands," but the contractors agreed to pay a wage which the police considered "a bit too high."

9. Tobacco workers

ca. 29 November 1801

Workers in the large tobacco manufactory in the Hôtel Longueville demanded a wage increase "in view of the high cost of bread." They received twenty-five centimes more a day, and "order was soon re-established."

10. Hatters

15 February 1802

Workers for two manufacturers who produced on contract for the army demanded a wage increase of ten centimes for every cap they made, because of high bread prices. One gave the increase, but the other refused and all but three of his workers left him and found jobs elsewhere.

11. Tanners

17 March 1802

There were reports of a general combination among tanners for higher wages, but apparently it was only the workers in a single manufactory who threatened to quit if not given higher wages. They earned less than tanners working for other employers. They won their demands on 23 March.

12. Hatters

8 April 1802

Journeymen hatters demanded an increase of between 12½ and 25 centimes for every hat that they made, because of the high price of bread. Three manufacturers shut down on 8 April 1802 rather than give the raise, and by 13 April a majority of Parisian manufacturers had followed their example. Some reopened a few days later, but most awaited a collective decision. The workers were still holding out on 15 May, working on other jobs or as independent producers, although three manufacturers (who employed a total of one hundred men) had given in. Employers reached an agreement with their workers and called them back on 17 May.

13. Printers

21 April 1802

Workers at the Imprimerie de la République demanded higher wages. Meeting with refusal, twelve of them quit work. The police arrested four.

14. Nailers

23 June 1802

According to the Prefect of Police, nailers demanded a wage increase amounting to 2½ centimes more per pound of nails, a rate already paid in some workshops because of the high cost of living. However, two peace officers reported that the master nailers wanted to reduce wages, and to pay only 12F,50 per thousand nails instead of the 15 francs which they had granted earlier because of high food prices. The masters drew up a wage proposal on 25 June, signed by all employers, and submitted it to the Prefect of Police for approval. There is no further information available.

15. Carpenters

6 August 1802

Forty workers demanded higher wages and quit work on the Pont du Louvre. They persuaded other carpenters on the Pont de la Cité and the Pont du Jardin des Plantes to join them. The police arrested two leaders and work resumed the next day.

16. Marble workers

6 September 1802

Marble workers blacklisted the workshop belonging to Madame Bocciardy, whose husband had been murdered by a worker who was condemned to twenty years' imprisonment for the crime. The police arrested two ringleaders.

17. Stonemasons

9 September 1802

The stonemasons working on the Pont des Arts (or Pont des Quatres Nations) quit work at noon when they were refused a wage increase of twenty-five centimes a day. The police arrested nine of them the next day.

18. Hatters

ca. 15 September 1802

The journeymen hatters of the Saint-Denis quarter showed "some symptoms of mutiny" when denied a wage increase. The police made arrests and apparently put an end to the movement.

19. Blanket-makers

6 April 1803

Several blanket-makers met together in a wineshop to discuss joint action to win higher wages. A few of them dissuaded the rest, but the police continued their surveillance of the workers.

20. Hatters (dyers)

9 April 1803

On being refused a wage increase by the master hatters the dyers quit work in the morning. The police made several arrests and the rest returned to work that afternoon.

21. Hatters

ca. 15 May 1803

There were demands for higher wages and threats of strike action by some hatters, but several (who had been punished eighteen months before for an attempted combination) dissuaded their comrades.

22. Carpenters

26 July 1803

Journeymen working for Lacasse, on the rue du faubourg Montmartre, met together and demanded a wage increase. They threatened to strike, but when Lacasse held firm, they showed up for work the following morning.

23. Carpenters

1 August 1803

There was some talk among the fourteen hundred men making gun-boats at the Invalides of demanding higher wages. A few of them, who had been paid on the previous day, refused to work and spent the day drinking. The police arrested two of them and the others gave up their strike.

24. Bakers

10 September 1803

Some journeymen bakers having joined the army, others decided to take advantage of the labour shortage to demand higher wages. They went on strike, but the police made several arrests and they returned to work.

25. Tinsmiths

15 December 1803

Forty tinsmiths met in a tavern to form a combination for higher wages. The police kept an eye on the leaders, and no strike action followed.

26. Coopers

20 January 1804

Wine merchants at Bercy and in the faubourg Saint-Antoine refused demands for higher wages made by coopers. There were some quarrels, but no interruption of work.

27. Carpenters

3 April 1804

There was "a sort of agitation" among journeymen carpenters. Many of them did not work on Monday, 3 April, and decided not to return to the job without a pay increase. Their meeting places in the Ouest division were closely watched by the police, and police officers spoke to them and "brought them to reason." They resumed work on Tuesday morning.

28. Hatters

3 April 1804

There was also "a little effervescence" among hatters who proposed the formation of a combination, but the police watched them closely.

29. Stonemasons

23 May 1804

Men working on culverts near the Tuilleries Palace

quit work when they were refused a wage/increase of twenty-five centimes a day. The contractor hired men to replace them, but the strikers persuaded these to join them. They resumed work two days later.

30. Stonemasons

ca. 12 June 1804

Workers constructing sewers at two sites near the Tuileries Palace went on strike when refused a wage increase. The police kept them from interfering with men hired to replace them. The situation was reportedly peaceful a few days later.

31. Carpenters

ca. 15 September 1804

Carpenters at several sites demanded higher wages. At the Eglise Métropolitaine they asked for ten francs instead of the four francs a day they received. The police restored order with three arrests.

32. Tawers

late January 1805

Several tawers entered a workshop owned by Rodot and demanded that he raise the wages of his workers. Upon his refusal, his employees quit work. The suspected leader left Paris.

33. Locksmiths

2 April 1805

The locksmiths working for Cornu, at his spinning mill on the rue Saint-Victor, demanded higher wages. The police arrested the ringleaders and put an end to the movement.

34. Masons

ca. 10 April 1805

There was "a kind of insurrection [sic!] and combination" for higher wages but the police report gives no further details.

35. Stonemasons

7 May 1805

Workers at the Louvre Palace refused to work an extra two hours a day, even when offered an increase of one-sixth in their daily wage. They quit work and tried to persuade comrades at the Tuileries Palace to join their strike. The police restored order the next day.

36. Stonemasons

26 May 1805

Stonemasons decided on Sunday, 26 May, not to resume work on Monday and to demand higher wages. The police took action to prevent the execution of the project.

37. Printers

26 August 1805

Leclerc, a master printer, was unable to persuade his journeymen to work on Mondays. On 26 August he tried to intimidate them by shutting down one of his four presses and dismissing two men. The workers on the other three presses immediately went on strike. He hired eight new men the following day, but his old employees, along with sixteen other journeymen, prevented the new men from working. The police arrested two leaders and imprisoned them for two weeks.

38. Weavers

7 October 1805

Cotton manufacturers agreed to decrease the wages of their workers. Several weavers went on strike and tried to persuade others to join them, or else to contribute twenty centimes a day to a strike fund. According to the police, there were plans to hold a meeting of six hundred men the following day, but the arrest of four instigators put an end to the disorders.

39. Stonemasons

16 June 1806

The stonemasons working on the Imperial Palace (the Tuileries) demanded a wage increase from 3F,50 to 3F,75 a day. "Upon refusal, they put down their tools and withdrew one by one so as to avoid the appearance of a combination." The police made two arrests and planned to maintain surveillance of "those places where it is presumed with reason that these workers will meet in the evening."

40. Construction workers

6 October 1806

A police ordinance increasing the length of the workday in the building trades set off a general strike among most men on public works. The strike ended after a week with an apparent compromise, but the ordinance quickly fell into disuse. (See chapter six for full details.)

41. Stonemasons

ca. 14 March 1807

Stonemasons working on the Tuileries demanded a wage

increase of seventy-five centimes more a day, but the contractors agreed to only fifty centimes. A number of men quit work, but made no attempt to interfere with those who continued on the job. Within a few days most of the strikers had returned.

42. Stonemasons

6 June 1807

The 126 stonemasons working on the Louvre Palace put forward their demand for a wage increase. When they were refused, they left their jobs. Most found work elsewhere, and two weeks later they had not yet returned to the Louvre.

43. Carpenters

17 June 1807

The carpenters working on the Louvre Palace followed the stonemasons' example and also left their jobs when refused a wage increase. "The two groups of workers appear to have reached an understanding and to have acted in concert. They have held no meetings, however, and one sees no more than three of them together [at one time]."

44. Stonemasons,

4 August 1807

The stonemasons at the Louvre Palace demanded an increase in their wages of twenty-five centimes, which would bring them up to four francs a day. When this was refused, 150 men quit work on Tuesday morning.

45. Weavers

late September 1807

There was a movement of "combination and indiscipline" among weavers in the faubourg Saint-Jacques. This was the result of attempts by one weaver to persuade others to quit their employers, apparently at the instigation of his own master, who was offering higher wages.

46. Blacksmiths

27 October 1807

There was some agitation for higher wages among blacksmiths, and this was apparently linked to the compagnonnage. The police restored order within two days by making eight arrests.

47. Printers

ca. 5 February 1808

Five workers at a printing shop belonging to Chaigneau quit work when they were refused a wage increase. The police arrested one man as the instigator and also for insulting and hitting several printers who would not join the strike.

48. Carpenters

2 May 1808

The carpenters working on the Louvres and Tuileries Palaces went on strike when refused a wage increase on Monday morning. The police arrested twenty-five of the most mutinous who had threatened those who did not join them, and this apparently broke the strike by the end of the week.

49. Wood-drawers

2 May 1808

The wood-drawers who worked on the quai Saint-Bernard demanded a wage increase and quit work. The police arrested the strike leader and put the workers under surveillance. They returned to work at the old rate of pay on the next morning.

50. Wood-drawers

23 May 1808

The workers who loaded wood at the Port de la Grenouillère demanded three perches of wood in addition to their usual wages and quit work when their demand was refused. The police arrested three ringleaders who threatened comrades who continued working. The police feared that workers elsewhere on the river were prepared to follow their example.

51. Stone-sawyers

5 June 1808

All but eight workers for a contractor building the sewers on the rue Pinceau quit work, apparently only for a single day. The police report gives no cause for the strike.

52. Stonemasons

1 July 1808

Informed that eleven hundred to twelve hundred stonemasons at the Louvre and Tuileries planned to demand a wage increase and go on strike, the police arrested five of the leaders and prevented it.

53. Construction workers

8 June 1809

There were disturbances at the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile when the contractor extended the hours of work, giving an increase in wages. The police at first reported a strike, but the Director of Public Works claimed that only a few men had attempted to stir up trouble when most accepted the new schedule. The police ordered a return to the shorter workday.

54. Stonemasons

ca. 15 June 1809

The police arrested a stonemason at the Temple de la Gloire for having "incited his comrades to insubordination and revolt, urging them to quit work and to raise their wages." He also insulted and threatened those who refused to join the strike.

55. Saltpeter workers

ca. 11 August 1809

The police imprisoned three men working for Murat; a saltpeter merchant, who quit work when they were refused a wage increase and who threatened those comrades who would not join them.

56. Joiners

5 September 1809

There was "insubordination" in the workshop of the Académie Impériale de Musique when two joiners persuaded several of their comrades to quit work. The police arrested and imprisoned the two leaders. Their report gives no cause for the strike.

57. Tinsmiths

ca. 1 October 1809

The police arrested two tinsmiths who attempted to incite their comrades to resist a manufacturer who altered their hours of work to begin at 7 a.m.

58. Carpenters

20 November 1809

The workers preparing the Hôtel de Ville for a ball went on strike when the contractors refused to maintain a wage increase previously accorded. The next morning two hundred of them gathered in the taverns around the Place de Grève. The Inspector-General of Police came to speak to them and managed to persuade them to return to work.

59. Stonemasons

18 December 1809

Some of the stonemasons working on the façade of the palace of the Corps Législatif went on strike when the contractor altered their hours of work. Those who did not participate were threatened by the others, and the police arrested two ringleaders.

60. Carpenters

8 March 1810

The workers putting up a replica of the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile for the entry of Napoleon and Marie-Louise into Paris demanded and won a wage increase amounting to nine francs and more a day. Ten days later, after a fatal accident, they claimed that the work was dangerous and demanded even higher wages. Swift police intervention restored order on 18 March and reduced wages to four francs. (For a more complete description of the strike, see chapter eight.)

61. Carpenters

ca. 18 May 1810

About twenty carpenters working on the Pont Jéna went on strike when the contractor refused to increase their wages from 3F,50 to five francs, a raise which he had already given to carpenters working on the Champ de Mars. The police arrested two men for threatening those who refused to join.

62. Construction workers

20 June 1810

Workers on the Pont de Sèvres quit work because they had not been paid for six weeks. Some of them found jobs elsewhere.

63. Carpenters

9 July 1810

Journeymen working for a master named Seigneuret, and who were all renards (unaffiliated with a compagnonnage) demanded the dismissal of their foreman, a compagnon du devoir, after a quarrel between him and a disobedient worker. When Seigneuret refused, they quit work and threatened the new workers whom he hired. The police arrested eight men and sent them for trial; the court acquitted them and ordered the foreman to pay them damages. (See Appendix 1, no. 18.)

64. Stonemasons

ca. 22 July 1810

The men constructing a grain storehouse on the boulevard Bourdin went on strike, for reasons which the reports do not specify. The police arrested nine ring-leaders and the keeper of a lodging-house where they lived.

65. Weavers

13 August 1810

The weavers employed by Peltier in his manufactory on the rue des Urselines went on strike for higher wages, gathering to drink in the taverns of the faubourg Saint-Jacques. The police took action against the leaders and re-established order.

66. Hatters

ca. 27 October 1810

Seventy-one master hatters agreed on a wage schedule for their workers. The journeymen opposed it, and many of them stopped work in protest. The Prefect of Police annulled the schedule and ordered the masters to restore order. Appeased, the men returned to work.

67. Glovers

28 April 1811

Forty glovers met in an eating-house in the faubourg Saint-Martin at 9 p.m. on a Sunday. The police arrested, interrogated, and then released them. "It appears from their consistent answers that three manufactories having lowered wages . . . , they wanted to confer on their common interests. And to establish a common purse to help the unemployed among them." (This was most probably an attempt to organize a strike fund.)

68. Printers

30 April 1811

Forty journeymen working for Mame demanded to be paid four francs per thousand sheets, instead of 3F,75. They stopped work for two days when he refused the raise. They even charged Mame before the local justice of the peace, who advised them to return to work. They did so.

69. Stone-sawyers

14 May 1811

The men working on the Chateau-d'eau, on the boulevard Bondy, knowing that the contractor was in a hurry to finish the job, demanded an increase in their wages. Fifteen quit work when this was refused.

70. Stonemasons

5 August 1811

The men working on the Temple de la Gloire stopped work on Monday 5 August (we do not know why). Most returned to work on Thursday, the remainder on Friday. The police credited the severity which they had "recently" shown toward strikers at the Palais de la Bourse with intimidating these stonemasons. There is no other record of any strike at the Bourse.

71. Towers

ca. 16 April 1812

The men working for Berger, master tower on the rue Mouffetard, went on strike for higher wages. The police arrested three of them for threatening Berger and those who refused to join them.

72. Masons

9 June 1812

Workers on the slaughterhouse at Grenelle quit work when they were refused a wage increase of twenty-five centimes a day. The local police commissioner persuaded all but fifteen of them to return to work, and the arrest of five leaders made the others go back.

73. Stonemasons

30 June 1812

The men working to construct a grain storehouse abandoned the site. There is no other information on this strike.

74. Stonemasons

3 August 1812

Journeyman working on the Pont de Sèvres went on strike for higher wages. The police arrested three leaders.

75. Printers

Mid-August 1812

Most of the printing houses in Paris had their work interrupted "by their workers' misconduct." The police "noticed an agitation among them, a close agreement: they all quit work at the same time; they want to fix their own wages and to be paid in advance."

76. Masons

2 November 1812

More than eighty masons working on the slaughterhouse

at Roule went on strike for higher wages. The police arrested three leaders.

77. Bargemen

10 December 1812

Bargemen who worked on the Seine demanded higher wages on account of the cold weather. When they were refused, they attempted to deal directly with the wine-merchants. The police arrested seven men.

78. Hatters

14 April 1813

The employees of Bellecoq, master hatter on the rue des Tournelles, went on strike for higher wages. The police arrested a man and a woman, the latter being considered "really the author of the combination." She made threats with a knife in hand.

79. Wood-drawers

3 May 1813

The men who drew wood out of the river and loaded it at the Port de la Rapé demanded several perches of wood in addition to their usual wages. They stopped working when this was refused. The police considered "these kinds of combinations are very dangerous, in that they are planned in secret and they can compromise the service of the ports, the interests of trade, and, consequently, the provisioning [of Paris]."

80. Brick-makers

20 August 1813

The police arrested two men who worked in (a brick manufactory at La Garre (just outside the walls of Paris) and who quit work when refused a wage increase.

81. Stone-sawyers

13 November 1813

Workers on the Saint-Germain market formed a combination for higher wages. The police arrested one man as the instigator.

82. Tailors

ca. 15 June 1814

Journey men tailors, paid ten francs for every suit they made, demanded thirteen francs from the master tailors. After several days of agitation, the masters agreed to raise the rate to eleven francs. The police were at first neutral

but then fearing that the insubordination would spread to workers in other occupations, they intervened and threatened the strikers.

83. Carpenters and joiners 25 June 1814

The principal master carpenters and joiners of Paris decided to lengthen the workday of their men, with no increase in pay. Most workers refused to obey and threatened any who did so. There is no information as to the eventual outcome, but the workers must have won.

84. Stonemasons ca. 28 June 1814

There was a strike by stonemasons, for reasons which the police reports do not give. The police arrested the most mutinous workers and most others returned to the job.

85. Construction workers 10 July 1814

Workers on the Palais Royal refused to work for 2F,50 a day. The contractors recalled them the next day and agreed to pay 3F,25.

86. Weavers 12 September 1814

Weavers in the faubourg Saint-Jacques quit work when they were refused a wage increase of five centimes for every ell of cloth woven. They returned to work the next day when the manufacturers agreed to adopt a new uniform wage schedule.

87. Tinsmiths ca. 19 October 1814

The police attempted conciliation in a dispute between master tinsmiths and their workers over wages. They summoned the principal masters and the leaders of the wage-earners to a meeting. There is no further information.

88. Copper turners ca. 20 October 1814

A group of turners met in a tavern in the faubourg Saint-Antoine to plan their strategy for winning a wage increase. It was proposed to beat up any men who refused to join the strike. The police broke up this meeting without encountering any resistance, but agitation continued for several days afterward.

89. Weavers

ca. 22 October 1814

The weavers of the faubourg Saint-Antoine joined together in an attempt to win higher wages. The police threatened to arrest their leaders if any meetings were held.

90. Cabinet-makers

ca. 4 November 1814

There was some agitation among cabinet-makers (and also mahogany sawyers who worked with them) in the faubourg Saint-Antoine for increased wages. However, no meetings were held and there was no work stoppage.

Sources:

¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 14 messidor an VIII (3 July 1800), AN, AF IV 1329.

² Reports by police commissioner of Amis de la Patrie division, 17 and 26 brumaire an IX (8 and 17 Nov. 1800), APP, A/a 55, fol. 41 and 48.

³ Reports by Pr. Pol., 29 germinal an IX (19 April 1801) and 22 floréal an IX (12 May 1801), AN, F7 3829.

⁴ Report by Pr. Pol., 22 floréal an IX (12 May 1801), AN, F7 3829.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Reports by Pr. Pol., 24, 25, and 27 prairial an IX (13, 14, and 16 June 1801), AN, F7 3829.

⁷ Reports by Pr. Pol., 25, 26, 28, and 29 thermidor and 12 fructidor an IX (13, 14, 16, 17, and 30 Aug. 1801), AN, F7 3829.

⁸ Reports by Pr. Pol., 1 and 5 brumaire an X (23 and 27 Oct. 1801), AN, F7 3830.

⁹ Report by a police agent, 8 frimaire an X (29 Nov. 1801), AN, F7 6307, d. 6401.

¹⁰ Minutes of reports by peace officers Bazin and Noël, 26 and 30 pluviôse an X (15 and 19 Feb. 1802), AN, F7 3176.

¹¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 27 ventôse an X (18 March 1802), AN, F7 3830. Minutes of reports by peace officers Bazin

and Noël, 30 ventôse and 1 and 2 germinal an X (21, 22, and 23 March 1802), AN, F7 3176 and F7 3177.

¹² Reports by Pr. Pol., 28 ventôse and 3 floréal an X (19 March and 23 April 1802), AN, F7 3830. Minutes of reports by peace officers Bazin and Noël, 18 and 23 germinal and 3, 25, and 29 floréal an X (8, 13, and 22 April and 15 and 19 May 1802), AN, F7 3177.

¹³ Report by Pr. Pol., 2 floréal an X (22 April 1802), AN, F7 3830. Minutes of report by peace officers Marlée and Mercier, 1 floréal an X (21 April 1802), AN, F7 3177.

¹⁴ Reports by Pr. Pol., 5 and 6 messidor an X (24 and 25 June 1802), AN, F7 3830. Minutes of reports by peace officers Bazin and Noël, same dates, AN, F7 3178.

¹⁵ Reports by Pr. Pol., 18 and 19 thermidor an X (6 and 7 Aug. 1802), AN, F7 3838.

¹⁶ Report by Pr. Pol., 19 fructidor an X (6 Sept. 1802), AN, F7 3830. Police report, 21 fructidor an X (8 Sept. 1802), AN, BB3 94.

¹⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 22 fructidor an X (9 Sept. 1802), AN, F7 3830. Minutes of reports by peace officers Thibout and Yvrie and Destavigny and Petit, 23 fructidor an X (10 September 1802), AN, F7 3178.

¹⁸ Gazette de France, 1 jour complémentaire an X (18 Sept. 1802), quoted in Aulard, Paris sous le Consulat, 3:254-55.

¹⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 16 germinal an XI (6 April 1803), AN, F7 3831.

²⁰ Report by Pr. Pol., 19 germinal an XI (9 April 1803), AN, F7 3831.

²¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 27 floréal an XI (17 May 1803), AN, F7 3831.

²² Report by Pr. Pol., 8 thermidor an XI (27 July 1803), AN, F7 3831.

²³ Report by Pr. Pol., 13 thermidor an XI (1 Aug. 1803), AN, F7 3831.

²⁴ Report by Pr. Pol., 24 fructidor an XI (11 Sept. 1803), AN, F7 3831.

²⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 24 frimaire an XII (16 Dec. 1803), AN, F7 3832.

²⁶ Report by Pr. Pol., 30 nivôse an XII (21 Jan. 1804), AN, F7 3832.

²⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 14 germinal an XII (4 April 1804), AN, F7 3832.

²⁸ Reports by Pr. Pol., 14 and 15 germinal an XII (4 and 5 April 1804), AN, F7 3832.

²⁹ Reports by Pr. Pol., 5 and 7 prairial an XII (25 and 27 May 1804), AN, F7 3832.

³⁰ Minutes of reports by peace officer Bazin, 4, 5, 9, 10, and 16 messidor an XII (23, 24, 28, and 29 June and 5 July 1804), AN, F7 3182.

³¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 28 fructidor an XII (15 Sept. 1804), AN, F7 3119. Police bulletin, same date, AN, F7 3746.

³² Minute of report by peace officer Bazin, 15 pluviôse an XIII (4 Feb. 1805), AN, F7 3184.

³³ Report by Pr. Pol., 13 germinal an XIII (3 April 1805), AN, F7 3833. Police bulletin, 14 germinal an XIII (4 April 1805), AN, AF IV 1493. Minutes of reports by peace officer Lecler, 14, 15, and 16 germinal an XIII (4, 5, and 6 April 1805), AN, F7 3185.

³⁴ Minute of report by peace officer Petit, 20 germinal an XIII (10 April 1805), AN, F7 3185.

³⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 24 floréal an XIII (14 May 1805), AN, F7 3121. Police bulletins, 21 and 26 floréal an XIII (11 and 16 May 1805), AN, AF IV 1493. Jotted notes on the cover of a police dossier, n.d., AN, F7 6458, d. 9780. See also police bulletin, 5 Aug. 1807, AN, F7 3756 and AF IV 1500.

³⁶ Report by Pr. Pol., 6 prairial an XIII (26 May 1805), AN, F7 3833. Police bulletin, 7 prairial an XIII (27 May 1805), AN, AF IV 1493.

³⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 23 fructidor an XIII (10 Sept. 1805), AN, F7 3122. Police bulletin, 24 fructidor an XIII (11 Sept. 1805), AN, F7 3750.

³⁸ Report by Pr. Pol., 16 vendémiaire an XIV (8 Oct. 1805), AN, F7 3834. Reports by Pr. Pol., 23 vendémiaire and 7 brumaire an XIV (15 and 29 Oct. 1805), AN, F7 3122. Police bulletins, 18 and 24 vendémiaire and 8 brumaire an XIV (10, 16, and 30 Oct. 1805), AN, F7 3751 and AF IV 1495.

³⁹Police bulletin, 16 June 1806, AN, F7 3753 and AF IV 1497. See also police bulletin, 5 Aug. 1807, AN, F7 3756 and AF IV 1500.

⁴⁰Police bulletins, 6 and 15 Oct. 1806, AN, F7 3754 and AF IV 1498. Report by Pr. Pol., 10 Oct. 1806, inside police bulletin of same date, AN, AF IV 1498. Minutes of reports by peace officers Chabanety, Veyrat, Foudras, and Lecler, Oct. 1806, AN, F7 3188. Assorted undated notes scrawled by supervisors at various worksites, AN, F13 205, d. 41. Dossier on Pierre Didier Lasalle, handyman at the Corps Législatif, AN, F7 6483, d. 448. Cambacérés to Napoleon, 7 and 9 Oct. 1806, in Lettres inédites, 2:355-57.

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⁴⁵Report by Pr. Pol., 9 Oct. 1807, AN, F7 3127.

⁴⁶Police bulletin, 30 Oct. 1807, AN, F7 3757 and AF IV 1501.

⁴⁷Report by Pr. Pol., 5 Feb. 1808, AN, F7 3127. Police bulletin, 7-8 Feb. 1808, AN, F7 3758.

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⁵⁰Report by Pr. Pol., 1 June 1808, AN, F7 3128. Police bulletin, 5-6 June 1808, AN, F7 3759.

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⁵³ Police bulletin, 10 June 1809, AN, F7 3763 and AF IV 1506. Min. Int. to Cambacérès and to Pr. Pol., 9 June 1809, AN, F7 6528, d. 1580. Pr. Pol. to Min. Int., 8 June 1809; Cambacérès to Min. Int., 8 June 1809; reply, 9 June 1809; AN, F13 206.

⁵⁴ Report by Pr. Pol., 16 June 1809, AN, F7 3131. Police bulletin, 20 June 1809, AN, F7 3763.

⁵⁵ Report by Pr. Pol., 11 Aug. 1809, AN, F7 3131. Police bulletin, 18 Aug. 1809, AN, F7 3764.

⁵⁶ Police bulletin, 19 Sept. 1809, AN, F7 3764.

⁵⁷ Report by Pr. Pol., 20 Oct. 1809, AN, F7 3132.

⁵⁸ Police bulletin, 22 Nov. 1809, AN, F7 3765. Two police reports, one undated, one of 21 Nov. 1809, BHVP, ms CP 5200.

⁵⁹ Report by Pr. Pol., 29 Dec. 1809, AN, F7 3132. Police bulletin, 20 Dec. 1809, AN, F7 3765. Undated police report, BHVP, ms CP 5200.

⁶⁰ This is the best documented strike in Napoleonic Paris. For the supervisor's log book, with daily entries during the period of construction, see BHVP, ms CP 3432. See also an abridged version entitled "Journal des ouvriers charpentiers;" Chalgrin (public works architect in charge) to Min. Int., 19 March 1810; decree by Pr. Pol., 18 March 1810; AN, F13 206. Copy of agreement signed by contractors, 7 March 1810; Chalgrin to Min. Int., 11 March 1810; Chalgrin to contractors, 14 March 1810; Inspector General of Police to Chalgrin, 17 March 1810; Chalgrin to Min. Int., 17 March 1810; BHVP, ms CP 4346 (Papiers Chalgrin). Report by Pr. Pol., 23 March 1810, AN, F7 3133. Police bulletins, 18-19 and 20 March 1810, AN, F7 3766. There is an article published on this strike, based primarily on the log book but with minor inaccuracies in its account: Jean Lorenzi, "Une grève parisienne en 1810," Miroir de l'histoire 59 (Dec. 1954), 743-45.

⁶¹ Report by Pr. Pol., 18 May 1810, AN, F7 3138. Police bulletin, 23 May 1810, AN, F7 3767.

⁶² Report by Pr. Pol., 17 Aug. 1810, AN, F7 3134. Police bulletin, 23 June 1810, AN, F7 3767.

⁶³"Affaire des ouvriers charpentiers," 24 July 1810 AN, BB18 794. Police bulletin, 12 July 1810, AN, F7 3768 and AF IV 1490.

⁶⁴Police bulletins, 22-23 July and 9 Aug. 1810, AN, F7 3768 and AF IV 1509.

⁶⁵Police bulletin, 15-16 Aug. 1810, AN, F7 3768 and AF IV 1509.

⁶⁶Police bulletin, 27 Oct. 1810, AN, AF IV 1511.

⁶⁷Report by Pr. Pol., 28 April 1811, AN, F7 3835. Police bulletin, 28-29 April 1811, AN, F7 3771 and AF IV 1515. Minute of report by peace officer Grolleau, 28 April 1811, AN, F7 3198.

⁶⁸Report by Pr. Pol., 16 May 1811, AN, F7 3136. Police report, 3 May 1811, AN, F18 27.

⁶⁹Report by Pr. Pol., 14 May 1811, AN, F7 3835. Police bulletin, 15 May 1811, AN, F7 3771 and AF IV 1515.

⁷⁰Reports by Pr. Pol., 5 and 7 Aug. 1811, AN, F7 3835. Police bulletins, 8 and 9 Aug. 1811, AN, F7 3772 and AF IV 1517.

⁷¹Report by Pr. Pol., 16 April 1812, AN, F7 3138. Police bulletin, 25 April 1812, AN, F7 3775 and AF IV 1521.

⁷²Report by Pr. Pol., 18 June 1812, AN, F7 3139. Police bulletins, 25 April 1812, AN, F7 3775 and AF IV 1522-1523.

⁷³Minute of report by peace officer Grolleau, 30 June 1812, AN, F7 3201.

⁷⁴Report by Pr. Pol., 13 Aug. 1812, AN, F7 3139. Police bulletin, 22 Aug. 1812, AN, F7 3776.

⁷⁵Police report, 12 Aug. 1812, AN, F18 27.

⁷⁶Report by Pr. Pol., 12 Nov. 1812, AN, F7 3140. Police bulletin, 24 Nov. 1812, AN, F7 3777 and AF IV 1523.

⁷⁷Report by Pr. Pol., 17 Dec. 1812, AN, F7 3140. Police bulletin, 26-27 Dec. 1812, AN, F7 3777 and AF IV 1524.

⁷⁸Report by Pr. Pol., 29 April 1813, AN, F7 3140. Police bulletin, 11 May 1813, AN, F7 3779 and AF IV 1528.

⁷⁹Reports by Pr. Pol., 10 June and 22 July 1813, AN,

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81 Report by Pr. Pol., 18 Nov. 1813, AN, F7 3142. Police bulletin, 27 Nov. 1813, AN, F7 3781 and AF IV 1532.

82 Police reports, 15 and 16 June 1814, AN, 40 AP 8.

83 Police reports, 25, 28, and 29 June 1814, 40 AP 8.

84 Police report, 28 June 1814, AN, 40 AP 8.

85 Police bulletin, 12 July 1814, AN, F7 3783. Police report, 11 July 1814, AN, 40 AP 9.

86 Police reports, 13 and 14 Sept. 1814, AN, 40 AP 11.

87 Police report, 19 Oct. 1814, AN, 40 AP 12.

88 Police reports, 20 and 22 Oct. 1814, AN, 40 AP 12.

89 Police report, 22 Oct. 1814, AN, 40 AP 12.

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This extensive collection provided the bulk of material for the dissertation. It would be simply impossible to list every carton which I consulted during the course of my research--I must have examined well over a thousand cartons in virtually every modern series in the archive. The most important of these were the F series (general administration), the AF series (state papers), the BB series (Ministry of Justice), and the AP series (personal papers donated to the Archives).

But it was the F7 series--a treasure trove of police documents--which provided the backbone of this study. In addition to many other cartons of important police reports, I found the following sets of particular usefulness, and they deserve special mention:

1) Although the reports made daily by the peace officers who patrolled Paris do not survive, the officers submitted monthly accounts listing the reports, and these minutes often contain a summary of the information in them: F7 3170-3206.

2) The Prefect of Police submitted daily reports to Napoleon, but these are unfortunately missing for 1806-1810 and 1812-1813: F7 3829-3837. Excerpts from some of them have been published by Aulard in Paris sous le Consulat and Paris sous l'Empire.

3) Every week between 1804 and 1814, the Prefect of Police also sent a group of reports, called feuilles de travail, to the Minister of Police: F7 3119-3142.

4) The Minister of Police submitted daily reports (called police bulletins) to Napoleon. There are three sets of them; F7 3701-3735, F7 3746-3786, and AF IV 1490-1534. The third set contains the actual copies read by Napoleon, to which other interesting reports (as well as

manuscript comments in the margin) were often added. It is unfortunately incomplete, since Napoleon apparently lost some copies during his campaigning, and must be supplemented by bulletins from the other sets. The first of these contains rough drafts, the second final copies. Hauterive has published excerpts from the bulletins for 1804-1810 in La police secrète du Première Empire.

5) The most fascinating police documents are those in a series known as Affaires Politiques: F7 6139-6606. These are the files of the political police under Desmarests and they contain reports on all kinds of incidents, as well as dossiers of men and women arrested or kept under surveillance for political reasons.

Archives Départementales de la Seine

This is a diverse collection of documents which has proved extremely useful. The papers of the twelve justices of the peace of Paris (1791-1830), although not entirely complete, are the most important; however, I made only limited use of them, since they are concerned more with craftsmen and shopkeepers than with workers. There are also many other important documents here which relate to economic life (like the records of bankruptcies) and to the administration of Paris, including fragments of the papers and correspondence of the mayors of the twelve arrondissements (VD₂ series).

Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris

These archives were mostly destroyed in the burning of Paris in 1871, but some of the papers of the forty-eight police commissioners survived the conflagration. Although these are particularly rich for the period of the Revolution (and have been mined by Cobb, Rudé, and Soboul), they are less complete (and less interesting) for the Napoleonic period. Still, these papers (series A/a) were of some use and are frequently cited in this study. The minutes of the Conseil de Salubrité de Paris (with no call number) can also be found here.

Archives de l'Assistance Publique de Paris

This is a large collection of books, pamphlets, and manuscripts relating to the history and administration of public assistance in the capital. I cannot list all

the documents which I consulted, but the most useful were the minutes of several of the forty-eight bureaux de bienfaisance in the Fonds Fosseyeux. There are many gaps --and the surviving minutes are of unequal value--but the following divisions are represented for all or part of the Napoleonic period: Panthéon, Observatoire, Jardin des Plantes, Finistère, Contrat Social, Brutus, Poissonnière, and Muséum. There are also the registers of the comité central de bienfaisance of the fourth arrondissement. (The registers of the comité central of the first arrondissement are in ADS, V bis 8 Q1 1-2.) I also found many interesting reports in the papers of the Conseil Général des Hospices (Fonds Fosseyeux 136).

Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris

In addition to its vast holdings of books, pamphlets, and prints, the library has a useful collection of manuscripts and documents. I found several assorted letters and memoranda of historical importance, as well as two cartons of scattered police reports from the Napoleonic period (ms CP 5199-5200).

Archives de la Chambre de Commerce de Paris

I consulted the minutes and correspondance of the Chamber of Commerce for the Napoleonic period (bound in two series of registers), as well as several reports in Box VII.3.7.

Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères

The only documents which I found of interest here were the daily reports to Louis XVIII from the Director General of Police during the First Restoration (22 April 1814-22 March 1815). These are neatly bound in a series of volumes: Mémoires et documents, France, registres 336-345. (There is another set, which breaks off after 5 December 1814, AN, 40 AP 8-13.)

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