

have lost the sense of religion, at least among the laity who are passionately in earnest regarding the welfare of their fellow-men." <sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that Saint-Simon acted as a great ferment, pushing the main social problem, the organisation of society, into the foreground, and treating it from many points of view, anticipating prophetically but frequently unconsciously much that has happened in social theory and practice since his time. Hardly any of the innumerable problems which now agitate social reformers over the whole world escaped his notice. Accordingly we find among his followers men of very different stamp and occupation all interested in the social problem, and concentrating their labours upon it. Under their influence the doctrine of the master, unstable, fragmentary, and inconclusive as it always was, underwent many changes, the most important of which were in the direction of an extreme Socialism or Communism, in which Saint-Simon himself certainly was not a believer. Thus we must distinguish between the doctrine of Saint-Simon himself and that of the Saint-Simonians.

Quite apart from this extreme development, one of his disciples became pre-eminent as having given systematic coherence and an important elaboration to some of the brilliant ideas which in Saint-Simon's writings are buried among a mass of collateral, disturbing, and frequently contradictory reflections. The disciple I refer to is Auguste Comte, who worked into a system two conceptions which were familiar to Saint-Simon and which

36.  
Relation to  
Comte.

<sup>1</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 24.