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THE EMERGENCE OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY FRANCE:  
THE MELUN BROTHERS AND THE CHILD LABOR LAW OF 1874

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## ABSTRACT

In the midst of a war, from the center stage of the Industrial Revolution, and at the birth of a new republic, twin brothers laid a foundation for children's rights in France. Armand de Melun and Anatole de Melun's accomplishments were realized with the enactment of the Child Labor Law of 1874. This thesis shows the role of the brothers as quintessential actors in the emergence of children's rights in France. In a time when children were undervalued and subjected to harsh labor conditions, the Melun brothers gave a voice to the innocents. Armand de Melun worked to establish charities providing aid to children, veterans, the elderly, and, in general, the working class. Devoting his life to social work, he promoted awareness. Anatole de Melun was the president of the Melun Committee which fought for the bill proposed by deputy Ambroise Joubert to be moved to law. The Melun brothers challenged the standing children's rights and social legislation in France.

The thesis explores the brothers' activism and its effects from their birth in 1807 to the enactment of the Child Labor Law of 1874. It examines Armand de Melun's commitment to children's rights prior to the 1874 law and analyzes the social, political, and economic environment during which Anatole de Melun spent his time on the Melun Committee. Evaluating the debates that surrounded the law, the law itself, and the progress established after the law, I argue for the importance of children's rights activism. My thesis illustrates that the brothers' work contributed to the Child Labor Law of 1874, the catalyst for effective children's rights in France.

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## **Introduction**

Today “childhood” refers to a separate stage of life. Based on the declaration of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), children are those under 18 years of age. Today children are widely recognized as requiring a specialized setting to allow them to grow, learn, and imagine. Only by protection of those first 18 years is childhood believed able to survive and blossom. In France today, children are afforded this protection and safeguarding of their childhood. These ideals, however, did not form only after France’s embrace of the CRC. Rather, they evolved from decades of debate and conflict. When France published the *Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen* in 1789 and the *Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne* in 1791 by Olympe de Gouges, there was no mention of the child in either document. The idea of childhood and children having far different needs had not been conceived. It was not until the Third Republic in France that children were given a status of innocence and a need for protection. In the Third Republic, in the wake of a war and in the full swing of the Industrial Revolution, children’s rights emerged. Because many helping hands contributed to this progress, it is debatable who should ultimately be acknowledged for the advancement of children’s rights. This thesis focuses on the key players in the emergence of children’s rights during the Third Republic. The purpose is to understand the major political, economic, and social shifts in the country. This is not the analysis of one success story, but two. Special attention is given to Armand Marie Joachim de Melun and his twin brother Anatole Louis Joachim de Melun as the preeminent activists of children’s rights due to their political, religious, and social affiliations. The Melun Committee, created for the

adoption of the 1874 law, was a catalyst for the emergence of effective children's rights laws in France.

This thesis explores the brothers' background, Armand de Melun's involvement in the Social Catholic Movement and his charity work, Anatole de Melun's role on the Melun Committee and the exactement of the *Loi des 25 novembre 1872, 10 février 1873, et 19 mai 1874: Sur le travail des enfants et des filles mineurs employés dans l'industrie* (Child Labor Law of 1874). The thesis shows they were the fundamental activists responsible for the successful emergence of children's rights. This thesis is based on previous work by several historians, including Lee Weissbach's 1989 book, *Child Labor Reform in Nineteenth-Century France: Assuring the Future Harvest*, Rachel Fuchs 1984 book, *Abandoned Children: Foundlings and the Child Welfare in Nineteenth-Century France* and Sylvia Schafer's 1997, *Children in Moral Danger and the Problem of Government in Third Republic France*. As an original contribution, the thesis also draws on the memoirs written by Armand de Melun himself and the debates from the Assemblée Nationale. It concludes that the history of children's rights in France in the 1870s demonstrates the importance of both the Melun brothers and the Child Labor Law of 1874. The 1874 law was a child labor law that had a broader impact because child labor is connected to children's rights, education, and the regulation of moral abandonment. The 1874 law thus enabled laws in different aspects of children's rights to emerge. Although the law focused on children's employment, it was essential in creating awareness, conversation, and protection for children in all aspects of children's rights.

The 1874 law was not France's first child labor law, but it offered necessary corrections to a previous law. In the 1830s, a group of industrialists travelled to Paris from Mulhouse multiple times calling for action to protect children in the workforce (Weissbach, 1989, 268). Mulhouse, a

center of cotton textiles, “grew from hardly a village to a large modern city” (Dunham, 1955, 188). People were quickly moving into the city trying to fit big families into relatively small spaces, resulting in quite terrible living conditions. The working conditions were not any better since most factories had been transformed from churches and other buildings which were not intended to be factories. The working conditions were described as “too terrible to be endured” (Dunham, 1955, 192). Despite these claims, there was controversy behind the industrialists’ appeals. Enforcing stricter labor practices would mean risking the opposition of disgruntled factory owners, as well as distressed struggling families needing the income from their child’s labor. The reason for the initial calls for child labor laws was a “humanitarian sentiment” (Weissbach, 1989, 268). People were interested in generally helping children and bettering their young lives by allowing them to be released from the obligation to work under terrible and often dangerous conditions.

The first official child labor law was passed in 1841, “*Loi du 22 mars 1841 relative au travail des enfants employés dans les manufactures, usines ou ateliers*” (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 9). Laurent Cunin-Gridaine, the minister of commerce, first introduced the bill into the Chamber of Peers in January of 1840 (Weissbach, 1989, 68). He argued specifically for the localization of child labor laws explaining that factories, children, and temperature/climate all require specialized laws. Some of the initial reaction to the introduction of the bill was that the harsh conditions it referenced were exaggerated (Weissbach, 1989, 63). Then, as the idea of protection for children progressed, related debates were heard. The first debate, which was part of Cunin-Gridaine’s argument, concerned whether child labor should be an issue examined at a national or at the local level. There were arguments presented that children in different areas of the country had different capacities for work. In the midst of arguments, a committee was established to work on studying and presenting information on child labor (Weissbach, 1989, 64). One of the key advocates was



Charles Depin, the acting secretary of the Chamber of Peers' Committee. "Dupin was destined to become one of the most important champions of child labor reform France would ever see" (Weissbach, 1989, 65). He was the member who proposed the committee's report to the Chamber of Peers. He argued many of the same points Anatole de Melun would argue 30 years later as the president of the Melun Committee.

One of the reasons the 1841 law set the foundation of the 1874 law was because the initial arguments to create better child labor practices reappear in 1874. In the course of developing the 1841 bill, activists brought up the issue of military potential (Weissbach, 1989, 65). Children were the members of society who would eventually grow up to protect the country. If they were not safe and healthy, France would have no future as a powerful nation. This point of low natality rates and need for a strong military was one that resurfaces in the debate surrounding the Child Labor Law of 1874. In the century before this, moral abandonment and obligations to care for children were questioned. According to Rachel Fuchs, "The eighteenth century witnessed the expansion, consolidation, and centralization of institutions for receiving and maintaining the increasing numbers of unwanted children" (Fuchs, 1984, 9). With the increased number of children lacking parental care, and facing domestic violence, the question of who was responsible for the child became essential to the children's rights debate. In the case of child labor, the question posed was who is to blame: parents or factory owners. Rachel Fuchs argued that, in the 1870s and 1880s, the rights of the government's protection of the child held more weight than those of their parents. "Officials and reformers viewed the state as protector of the weak, the victims of society-the children" (Fuchs, 1984, 49). This statement is significant to the children's rights debate because it depicts children as being weak, and needing help and guidance. This shift proves that children were starting to be seen as an age group with different needs. They were the victims because they

did not have a voice in the society that governed them. These values and understanding of children developed as children's rights bills were passed. It was after the 1841 law that these ideas took precedence in society.

Ultimately, the 1841 law included 13 separate articles. It comprised a minimum age for employment at 8 years old, and it prohibited children under 12 years of age from working more than 8 hours a day. Those 12 to 16-year olds were restricted to a maximum of 12 hours of work each day. The children were required to take breaks during work and were prohibited from working at night, on Sundays, and on holidays. An education requirement stated children under 12 must attend school (Weissbach, 1989, 81). Furthermore, children were required to have a livret to identify their name, age, place of birth, and record of school days and hours (Weissbach, 1989, 81). The law created an administration to work towards implementation. This administration was allowed to add regulations to the bill such as including more types of establishments, raising minimum age for certain types of work and shortening the work day (Weissbach, 1989, 81). Any and all provisions would be in the interest of the child. Regulations included in the bill were required to be posted in pertinent facilities. Lastly, there were supposed to be factory inspectors, but this part was not regulated and they were not assigned a salary. At this time, there were 150,000 child laborers in French factories, amounting to 12% of the workforce (Weissbach, 1989, 81).

The similarity of the 1841 law and the later 1874 law was partly due to the common influence from the same social activist, Louis Blanc. Blanc was "France's most prominent advocate of state involvement in social welfare," who voiced his opinions on the failures of the 1841 law (Weissbach, 1989, 108). During the 1848 provisional government Louis Blanc was the chairman for the Luxembourg Commission, created to address problems facing the working class. In 1841, he believed the country needed a "change in the relationship between labor and capital"

(Weissbach, 1989, 76). This signifies that the country would not be willing to enact substantial children's rights laws until the labor force would be recognized as an asset to the country. Even if in 1841 the country was not stable enough for a law as extensive as the 1874 law, the 1841 law was critical in helping build a base for children's rights. The time had not yet come for France to make a dramatic shift in the treatment and understanding of children and their childhood. Its unsuccessful nature was proven in a rare factory inspection. The inspector wrote, "5 filles de 16 à 21 ans employées à travail de nuit" (Lambin, 2002, 49). This was one of the many violations against children the inspector wrote about in his report. Another crucial violation was that none of the children had their *livrets* nor were the factory regulations for children posted anywhere, keeping children and families unaware of abuse and malpractice (Lambin, 2002, 49).

Inspectors' reports, such as the one above, proved the ineffectiveness of the 1841 law. The Child Labor Law of 1874 was necessary in supporting the continuous fight for children's rights in France. It proved that, in the right environment, it is possible to enact a law that will effectively change the future for children in France. As Sylvia Schafer wrote, quoting Jacques Bonzon, "Happy children have no history." She then continued: "[B]ut poor children, abandoned children, they do" (3). The reason there is a history to study, the reason this issue is relevant, the reason the Melun twins are quintessential actors in effectively establishing children's rights, is because children were suffering. It is imperative now to understand the history of reform because unhappy children still live around the world. Histories of children suffering have not ceased. In order to understand what it takes to change children's rights, it is imperative to study past successful social movements. It is critical to grasp what it takes to transform society's views of a specific age group, to understand what role principal actors played, and what kind of law it takes to change children's rights. Armand de Melun, Anatole de Melun, and the Melun Committee were a part of a larger

social movement to change children's rights in France. Their success can help the world understand now what is necessary to enact change for children's suffering. Armand's social work and Anatole's involvement with the Melun Committee helped establish the Child Labor Law of 1874 which challenged society and allowed for the successful emergence of children's rights.

## Chapter 1

### Social, Political, & Economic History

Armand de Melun and Anatole de Melun succeeded in creating the Child Labor Law of 1874. This achievement laid a foundation for children's rights in France. To fully understand their accomplishment, it is necessary to understand the social, political and economic climate of the time. Armand and his twin brother, Anatole, were born in 1807 and the law was enacted in 1874 ("Deuxième République Assemblée Nationale Législative"). In this chapter, the society (1870-1875) in which the Child Labor Law draft was turned into law will be examined. What was happening in the society that allowed the establishment of the Melun Committee and the design of the Child Labor Law of 1874?

The country entered and exited a war with Prussia, saw the Industrial Revolution take hold of major French cities, and faced the daunting task of constructing a government that could withstand any revolutionists. The Third Republic (1870-1940) became the longest republic France has seen to this day. It was constructed on the shoulders of societal, political, and economic changes. The support from society was essential to the success, circumstances, and support Armand and Anatole had in their children's rights quest.

#### Social History

France in the 1870s started out with an increase in "public awareness of France's low natality rates" (Schaefer, 1997, 45). This meant that France began to place a higher importance on the lives of children. Children symbolized a strong country and support for France in case of a war. Children were the future and with low natality rates, a larger emphasis was placed on their

prosperity. Families were encouraged to have more children, and abandoned children were no longer viewed as a problem but as beloved members of society (Fuchs, 1984, 50). Due to children taking a more meaningful role in society, a need grew for protective institutions.

Leisure also increased in French society during this time. Along with it came many advancements in social life. Social lives swiftly jumped from the private to the public sphere. Seventeen years prior to 1870, Georges-Eugène Haussmann was employed by Louis Napoleon III to transform Paris, a city of wooden buildings and above ground sewage disposal into the vast boulevards and symmetrical road system that are seen in Paris even today (Alvarado). His advancements allowed for the growth of the city and French culture. A significant part of the new Parisian scene were the French salons. Armand was known for frequenting salons and had separate encounters with many “celebrities” of the time. Political salons were common in 1860s, often working to separate the political parties (Kale, 2006, 7). For a short period, they became a form of political expression. The salon of Madame de Valon was where President Marie Joseph Louis Adolphe Thiers met with friends and coworkers. Other salons had different political associations. However, political salons did not last within French society as artistic, literary, and musical salons did. Salons also played their part with social classes. Many Parisian salons were owned by duchesses, and princesses (Kale, 2006, 5).

The accessibility to Paris by people living nearby expanded rapidly. The capital of France developed into a site of art, industry, and opportunity. “French society in 1870 thought of itself in terms of nobles, bourgeois, workers, and peasants” (Sowerwine, 2001, 6). The social classes that once separated people in work and family became part of the public sphere. For children, that meant that orphans were often not attended to and disregarded. Rachel Fuchs wrote the book *Abandoned Children: Foundlings and Child Welfare in Nineteenth-Century France*, which

examines the way lower class children were often abandoned with no support from the government until the Third Republic became more aware of these issues. At the same time, 600,000 people from surrounding provinces pushed their way into the city limits of Paris with the aspirations of finding jobs, getting a taste of the new culture, and being part of the rapidly expanding understanding of what this peaceful time meant for French citizens (Sowerwine, 2001, 5). Along with the expansion of Paris and city limits in general, accessibility to education was extended across France.

According to Robert Anderson, “France was one of the first countries to have a national system of secondary education run by the state” (121). This was significant because it showed that France was progressing towards children’s rights early on. In 1802, Napoleon established lycees. With a “a remarkably modern air,” these schools were standardized through administration and curriculum (Anderson, 1971, 121). From that point on, education progressed in various ways. For example, education in rural and urban areas grew immensely. For children in rural areas, there was greater access to education. Due to the “density of population” with an influx of people moving into the towns and cities, education was more attainable in the cities as well (Heywood, 2002, 204). In general children in both settings had an easier time accessing education available for them.

As more schools started opening, the curriculum changed simultaneously. Throughout the nineteenth century, education started having more “nationalist content” (Heywood 2002, 204). Education also placed a focus on “order and economy” (Heywood, 2002, 203). As far as what type of schools were available, it was not until the 1880s that France saw free and obligatory education for all children. In the meantime, the Catholic Church had set up schools during the renewal of the Ancien Régime (Heywood, 2002, 62). During the mid-nineteenth century, it was easier for religious schools to be set up (Green, 1990, 156). There were not as many restrictions

on them from the state. These schools however were erratically distributed throughout France meaning they were not available for all of France's children. "By the late 1870s, few children in France escaped the classroom entirely" (Heywood, 2002, 287). Many children had some access to education, but one of the remaining barriers was work. Due to working long hours and into the night, were not able to attend school. This issue was one that got addressed in the Child Labor Law of 1874.

### Political History

The beginning of the 1870s was marked by Ambroise Joubert's first attempt to correct the failures of the 1841 Child Labor Law (Weissbach, 1989, 181). Before becoming a member of the Melun Committee, he introduced an improved version of the 1841 Child Labor Law in 1871. The provisional Assemblée Nationale, that he stood in front of proposing his bill, was the one governing France. It was from that moment through 1875, a year after the 1874's bill completion, that the political history of France will be investigated.

On September 4th, 1870, the Third Republic commenced. However, it did not bring a sense of security. The Franco-Prussian War had started and finished in time to be classified as an event in the Third Republic. The war started when Napoleon III heard a threat about the Spanish crown being handed to the cousin of the King Wilhelm I of Prussia, Leopold Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (Sowerwine, 2001, 14). The position of France between the two nations caused worry for France's future and stability. Napoleon III's reaction was to send King Wilhelm I a telegram, warning him of the repercussions of this decision. The telegram was considered as intimidation, and the already existing tensions turned into a deadly war (Sowerwine, 2001, 14). The official start date of the war



was July 19, 1870. Both France and Prussia entered the war without alliances. Even so, the Prussian troops forced the previous French Head of State and current general, Napoleon III to surrender in under a year (Sowerwine, 2001, 15). This war actually played a part in children's rights because "In the aftermath of the war, children were used as a metaphor of the victim and helpless beings, just as France felt during the war with Prussia" (Schaefer, 1997, 48).

Paris was instantly encompassed by demands for a new republic (underlying desires for a monarchy restored), and contempt for France's decision to end the war. The armistice France agreed to sign with Otto Von Bismarck was extremely controversial due to sentiments of a win still being plausible (Sowerwine, 2001, 14). Against the wishes of many Parisians, the government upheld the wish for a new republic with elections. The new assembly yielded results of one third of the deputies having "genuine titles of nobility" (Sowerwine, 2001,16). It was with this majority monarchist assembly that they elected Louis Adolphe Thiers. Originally an orleanist, during his time as head of the nation, he began to consider himself a republican (Sowerwine, 2001, 27).

In 1871, at seventy-four years of age, Louis Adolphe Thiers, former minister of Louis Philippe, was voted Chief of Executive Power of the French Republic by the Assemblée Nationale (Kyte, 1944, 129). He was not given the title of President, in the case that the monarchy regained power. With a new leader of the state, and the end of a war, France was left defeated and depleted. They emerged from the war with a loss of pride, resources, and human life. All of the future of France was handed to Louis Adolphe Thiers who instantly found himself surrounded by defiance against his leading style. His claim to fame came during the height of peace agreements and restoration plans. Heavy handed decisions pertaining to money, land, and pride had to be made. France lost territory in Alsace, parts of Lorraine, 5 billion gold francs, and was also forced to allow Prussian troops to march through Paris (Kyte, 1994 130).

The end of the peace agreements, brought peace only in the conflict between countries, but sparked a wave of outrage called the Paris Commune (Tombs, 1996, 430). A country left starved and weakened now had its capital encompassed by one of the bloodiest weeks in French history. The 21st to the 28th of May of 1871 was known as “*Semaine Sanglante*,” bloody week (Sowerwine, 2001, 21). The Commune was a product of the Parisians having different sentiments about the peace agreement than the surrounding provinces of France. The Franco-Prussian war and Paris Commune were important in bringing the lack of children’s protection to light. According to Sylvia Schaffer in her book, *Children in Moral Danger and the Problem of Government in Third Republic France*, “the living memory of the Commune added yet another layer to the concern about children’s moral and physical development, motivating so many of the protective endeavors of the early Third Republic” (46). The enactment of the Child Labor Law of 1874, along with the Roussel Law of 1874 which gave more extensive protection to infants and regulated wet-nursing, were results of the push to further children’s rights (Fuchs, 1984, 57). Their timing was aided by insecurity in France.

After 54 days of the Paris Commune, France entered into a period so “peaceful” that many refer to it as the *Belle Époque*, lasting from 1871 until 1914 which brought the beginning of World War I. Thiers addressed the Chambre des députés with his *Message à l’Assemblée* in regards to his wish for the future peace of France:

“La France ne veut pas vivre dans de continuelles alarmes: elle veut pouvoir vivre en repos, afin de travailler pour se nourrir, pour faire face à ses immenses charges; et si on ne lui laisse pas le calme dont elle a indispensablement besoin, quel que soit le gouvernement qui lui refusera ce calme, elle ne le souffrira pas longtemps!” (qtd. In Duclert, 2014, 103)

This speech illustrated was a plea for peace and allowance of a new government to have the ability to grow. Thiers did not last long after the Commune and was replaced by Patrice de MacMahon in 1873. Behind Thiers' downfall, assembly deputies vied one last time for a restored monarchy. Duc de Broglie, the royalist, was elected the Prime Minister by MacMahon giving the monarchist one final chance to take back the government (Sowerwine, 2001, 29).

### Economic History

Since before the 1870s, the Industrial Revolution significantly impacted France. "France was one of the first countries to follow England on the road to industrialization, and it became one of the major industrial nations of the nineteenth century" (Weissbach, 1977, 268). The Industrial Revolution took shape in the form of factories. Since factories mainly used steam power and machinery, more women and children were employed (Heywood, 2002, 5). This kind of employment in the mills has been shown to affect the child's development. As early as the 1820s and 1830s, cases of terrible working conditions for children in factories were reported. Arthur Louis Dunham wrote that conditions had been described as "too terrible to endure" (192). The occurrence of children working in factories with long hours, in dangerous conditions was not a new phenomenon for the 1870s. In the book, *Histoire* par Jean-Michel Lambin, as mentioned previously, there was an inspection completed where the children were working into the night. The inspection proved the ineffectiveness of the 1841 Child Labor Law. Another way children were noticed during the 1870s was because they could be seen begging for money or living on the streets after being abandoned (Heywood, 2002, 1). The state had little responsibility for the child's well-being. In 1872, the population of France was 1.8 million with concentration in the major cities

(Sowerwine, 2001, 4). With industry and city growth, poorer citizens were being forced to the outskirts of cities, including children (Sowerwine, 2001, 4). As a result, the economic shift in France led to children being forced into different spheres of society. Due to children living on the streets and the population growth, children became more visible. At this point, they could not be ignored any longer.

## Chapter 2

### The Melun Brothers

#### Childhood and Family History

Armand de Melun and Anatole de Melun were at the center of the children's rights debate because of their family, which gave them their noble ancestry, access to education, religious beliefs, and political aspirations. These advantages afforded them the opportunity to be deputies of the Assemblée Nationale. The advantages began with their noble lineage connecting them to the House of Bourbon and the Ancien Regime. The House of Bourbon was a royal house who ruled France for many years as part of the Ancien Regime. The Ancien Regime was the ruling power over France before the French Revolution. During the French Revolution, King Louis XVI was guillotined along with his wife, Marie Antoinette. They were the first royals to be executed and their death came to symbolize the end of the monarchy. After this, the parties such as legitimist, orleanist, and royalist emerged, all directed toward the recovery and reestablishment of the monarchy (Sowerwine, 2001, 16). It was significant that in the death of the monarchy, the power of the nobles did not die along with it. The nobles found their voice in politics under various political parties and continued to carry the memory of the monarch and the nobles' power in society (Sowerwine, 2001, 16). Looking this far back into the Melun family leaves gaps in their history. As far as historians know, in the 13th century, there was the consecration of a marriage between Messire Joachim de Melun, field marshal of King Louis XIII, to Françoise de Dillon de la Bescherelle (Baunard, 1881, 1). Before this moment, it was hard to trace the Melun name.

According to Louis Baunard, there was a legend that the first Melun ancestor was Gaulois Aurelian. He was significant because he helped facilitate Clotilde's marriage with King Clovis who worked to bring Christianity to France (Baunard, 1881, 1). Whether or not these legends are true, it was known that the Melun family were all nobles and most were devout Catholics. In the twins' immediate family was their grandfather, Count de Melun. Count Melun had been introduced to King Louis XV, a member of the House of Bourbon, by a relative, the Duke of Gesvres (Andigné, 1961, 21). Count Melun was one of the last remaining ancestors with the Melun name. He lived and died after meeting the King somewhat off the grid and his name and heritage was forgotten. It was not until the brother's father, Vicomte de Melun vigorously reviewed his family archives, that it became impossible for people to dispute his blood as a member of the Melun family (Andigné, 1961, 21).

Years later, on the same day at the beginning of the nineteenth century, twin brothers entered the world. Born in the Castle of Brumetz, in the department of Aisine, the two brothers were a part of a long line of aristocrats with links to the Ancien Regime (Baunard, 1881, 1). Armand and Anatole were born on September 24th, 1807 by the parents Vicomte de Melun and Amélie de Faure. The twins' births were followed by sisters: Leonie, Amelie, and Mathilde (Baunard, 1881, 21). The mother of five was seen as the head of the house and played an influential role in the development and education of the children. Armand described his mother as “pleine de distinction, d'une éducation au-dessus de son sexe.” Armand also wrote fondly about his brother showing the immense bond they shared. As in their birth, their lives, remained connected in their fight for children's rights. In Armand's memoirs he wrote, “Ma vie est sa vie.” They associated themselves with one another. “Ce n'est pas Anatole et Armand, lui et moi, c'est nous.” At twenty, Armand began writing of his formative years growing up alongside his brother in his memoirs,

which was described by Louis Baunard as “le crayon de sa vie”(vii). During their childhood, they attended the same schools and were afforded the same education. The identical twins, in the midst of sharing their appearances, invoked an abundance of confusion throughout their lifetime (Andigné, 1961, 21). They were taught at home until the age of seven. At that point, there were sent to their first secondary school in Paris. During their time in school, they were described as cheeky and mischievous (Adam, 1898, 6). Their first years in school were during Cent-Jours, the return of Napoléon from his exile in Elba. Needless to say, their years in school faced a period of instability and uncertainty in France. Nonetheless, they still chose to cause turmoil and chaos on their own. According to L’Abbé Adam, “leurs espiègleries formeraient une longue chronique” (6). They were playful and focused on laughs rather than studying. After causing trouble in their first boarding school, they were sent to board at the house of M. de Stadler who continued their schooling (Adam, 1898, 6). When their trouble did not cease, they two boys were sent to another boarding school where they were formally introduced to religious instruction. They were supervised by l’Abbé Gallard who became Archevêque de Reims, as well as l’Abbé de Salinis, Futur Archevêque d’Auch, and l’Abbé de Scorbiac. L’Abbé Adam wrote, “La première communion fut véritablement pour le jeune Armand une révélation de la vie et une transformation de tout lui-même.” (Adam, 1898, 6). The religious experiences Armand had as a youth shaped his adulthood. Both boys were raised Catholic but it was not until their attendance at school that they had their first communion in the Catholic Church. The school they attended was called Sainte Barbe, which later became Rollin College (Adam, 1898, 7). Apart from introducing them to their personal religious journeys, Sainte Barbe was also a school that granted them more access to science and arts. After their schooling, the brothers established themselves in Paris where they immersed themselves in the Parisian culture (Adam, 1898, 6). They lived together in Paris, each

taking time to pursue their own forms of higher education. While living in Paris, their parents hired a servant from their home to take care of them (Adam, 1898, 6). Catching up with society in its Belle Époque manner, as true aristocrats, they each grew by expanding their thoughts within their selective schools. Even with their strikingly similar looks, their interests varied and as Anatole went to military school, Armand pursued law.

### Armand de Melun's Beginning

Not long after the brothers established themselves in Paris, the rest of the family came to join them. While Anatole became a more effective activist in his old age, Armand exemplified his foundation in social welfare and children's rights early on. While in Paris, Armand found himself distracted by his family's presence but still managed to pass his law degree exam (Adam, 1898, 8). He soon took his place at the Paris Bar. Thanks to the new bishop, he was appointed to the court of Besançon but declined the offer. Instead he took time to visit Anatole at military school. It was during his time there that the two brothers again were able to spark confusion, which led to Anatole nearly being expelled (Adam, 1898, 8). It was not long after that Armand left and went to Besançon where archbishop Mgr de Rohan had been waiting for him. During his time there, he attended religious parties and celebrated religious holidays. It was his choice to leave after witnessing the death of a fifteen-year-old girl. In her death, Armand was facing the emotions of a grieving family (Adam, 1898, 8). Returning to Paris, he witnessed the 1830 revolution, the destruction of the streets of Paris as well as the reconstruction under Haussmann. His time in Paris was essential for his growth within philanthropy. In 1828, *Amis de l'enfance* was founded by Armand's mother and a small bookshop owner who met to strategize ways to provide assistance



to orphans (Adam, 1898, 22). The main goal of the charity was to educate young boys living in poverty. Armand chose to become a part of the charity and quickly had a commanding voice which incited disagreements (Adam, 1898, 22). It was during this time and slightly before that Armand had taken to embracing popular French culture. "Armand de Melun par sa naissance et sa condition se trouvait mêlé à la haute société" (Adam 1898, 14). Armand began to frequent salons in Paris where he met some of the greatest celebrities of the time. He met Villemain, Sainte Beuve, Louis-Adolphe Thiers, Camillo Benso di Cavour, Alexis de Tocqueville et plus. Then one day, he met Madame Anne Sophie Swetchine, possibly the most influential of them all (Adam, 1898, 14). She was an outspoken Christian who often professed her faith in the salons. People were generally attracted to Melun and his demeanor according to L'Abbe Adam (14). Madame Swetchine and Armand found each other and created a respectful and affectionate relationship. In Armand's memoirs, he addressed their constant exchange of knowledge.

"Si je partais pour la campagne, elle me faisait ma provision de livres, tirait de sa bibliothèque ceux qui pouvaient le plus m'intéresser, y insérait toujours à la première page quelques pensées de religion et d'amitié, me faisant promettre de lui rendre compte de mes impressions dans des lettres qui n'attendaient jamais leur affectueuse réponse." (qtd. in Adam, 1898, 15).

They were equal partners in their abilities and intelligence. It was because of Madame Swetchine's influence that Armand found himself in his first volunteer position. Madame Swetchine knew of a nun, Sister Rosalie, who was famous for her charity work (Adam, 1898, 16). Armand asked if he could meet her and Madame Swetchine sent him off with a letter to the "quartier des pauvres," Quartier Saint-Médard, where Rosalie worked. He details this experience in his memoirs and explains what it was like to experience poverty first hand in France.

“Je m'achemine vers le pauvre quartier Saint-Médard, non sans un certain battement de cœur, excité par la curiosité et aussi par la nouveauté du monde que j'allais voir et la tristesse des spectacles qui m'attendaient. Il me semblait que j'allais entrer dans une grande salle d'hôpital, assister à toute espèce d'opérations et rester stupéfait devant de si grands maux et de telles misères....tout était nouveau pour moi: le quartier, le bureau de bienfaisance et aussi la vie et les fonctions des sœurs de la Charité. On n'apprend pas tout cela au collège; je ne m'en occupais guère en faisant mon droit, et depuis que je connaissais Madame Swetchine, je m'étais surtout attaché à la grandeur théorique de la religion; j'avais plus parlé qu'agit” (Adam, 1898, 17/18).

Due to his upbringing, Armand had not previously been exposed to poverty. His eye-opening visit with Rosalie was in the winter of 1837 to 1838 and while there, she assigned Armand with different tasks to help take care the people of the neighborhood (Adam, 1898, 19). His main task included delivering bread, meat, and wood. While working, Sister Rosalie would tell him everyone's individual experiences, the suffering they'd endured, and the hope they still had (Adam, 1898, 19). His time working with the individuals facing poverty gave him a chance to focus on the type of charity work he would pursue. One of the most paramount entries in his Memoirs are his chronicles on the importance of children.

“Quels que soient, dit-il, les torts d'un peuple ou d'une époque, la génération nouvelle, au moment de sa naissance, est en dehors de la dépravation générale et ne sait rien du mal de ses pères. L'âme de l'enfant est une page blanche, et tout atteinte qu'elle est de la tache originelle, elle est apte à recevoir l'impression de la vérité et de la vertu. C'est par l'enfance que Dieu rend les siècles corrigibles et les nations guérissables. C'est par elle qu'il fait pénétrer l'innocence dans le monde comme par le malheur le repentir. Lorsque vous voulez

rendre à un peuple les croyances, les habitudes qu'il a perdues; lorsque vous cherchez à réformer ses mœurs, à régénérer sa vie, ne vous effrayez ni de ses refus, ni de sa persévérance dans le mal; ne vous découragez pas si vos efforts ne triomphent point de son obstination et de son endurcissement. Il y a là des petits enfants qui ne repoussent rien, n'ont de parti pris contre personne, croient à toutes les paroles, espèrent en toutes les promesses et tendent leur cœur à quiconque leur ouvre ses bras. Dieu les envoie aux familles les plus perverses, pour laisser au bien quelque chance auprès d'elles; il les confie à la charité pour les consoler des mécomptes du présent et leur ouvrir les portes de l'avenir ” (Adam, 1898, 21).

His concept of children being born as “une page blanche” demonstrated a new wave of thinking and viewing children. He gave them back their innocence. By mentioning childhood, he indicated an awareness of development and the life of a child being separate from those of an adult. His description of the children allowed them to be the solution to the problems facing the world. He gave them the power to make changes to those suffering but as well to pave the way for the future. In this section of his memoirs, he gave the world his justification, motivation, and determination to protect the children of France. While both brothers worked to protect children, they had political values that aligned them with another group.

By way of family tradition, Armand and Anatole were considered social legitimists during the Third Republic (Moon, 1921, 18). Legitimists were defined by social activism during the Third Republic (Bernard, 2009, abstract). Their support was in the monarchy as an entity supported by heritage. It was the passing of the legitimacy of a ruler from father to son. It was not until the mid-nineteenth century however that legitimists officially took on the title. They were in favor of reconstructing the Bourbon Monarchy (Tombs, 1996, 65). The name lasted until 1883 when their

last hope for restoration was lost. As the last Bourbon heir died, the legitimist name and its goals for France died with him (Tombs, 1996, 65). During both Armand and Anatole's time as members of the Assemblée Nationale, legitimists held some of the seats and there was still the hope for a monarchy restored (Tombs, 1996, 427). Being a legitimist often related to nobility as well. When the work on the Child Labor Law of 1874 started, France still was socially divided by class even in the wake of a new republic. The nobles did not let go of their titles' meaning or position in society as they did their dreams of a restoration. However, there was a decline in nobles because they had to prove their name and its legitimacy. This allowed for the opportunity to arise where people could invent their own names, which was why the brother's father was forced to go to extensive lengths to prove the authenticity of the Melun family name (Adigné, 1961, 21). The brothers continued their work under this name as it gave them needed recognition and prestige. If nothing else, this recognition allowed them access to higher education, which in turn brought them to the center of this thesis.

#### Armand de Melun's Political Beliefs

Armand's political beliefs stemmed from his religious background and his upbringing. He approached his time as a politician vying for "social legislation [as] a protective measure" (Moon, 1921, 47). He had a desire to protect all human kind by working with charities and on bills supporting maternity, hospitals, orphans, and the elderly. Due to his interests, he advised France to appoint a Minister of State for Social Services (Moon, 1921, 47). It was his belief that government had the right to intervene in the lives of its citizens. This position was conceived to provide needed protection. In general Armand believed in government intervention and its ability to protect its citizens.

### Anatole de Melun's Political Beliefs

Less is known about Anatole's beliefs since he did not write memoirs, as did Armand. But Anatole had similar beliefs to Armand during his time as a deputy of the Assemblée Nationale. As president of the Melun Committee, he supported social legislation. As a government employee, he wanted the government to intervene in the affairs of the child and to become a third guardian to the child. This represents his belief in social legislation.

### Where Death Parts

Anatole lived to 1888, 11 years past Armand ("Deuxième République Assemblée Nationale Législative"). Throughout their lives, they both found themselves connected and vying for children's rights. They were activists who gave a voice to the children. They worked together and apart to create a base for children's rights where the Child Labor Law of 1874 was able to emerge. Their lives were intertwined throughout their youth and into their careers of adulthood. Their brotherly bond kept them together in their careers, aspirations, and love for one another. It is not just one of their stories that needs to be told, but both. They died with the accomplishment of having ignited the fire together to engulf France in widespread children's rights.

## Chapter 3

### Social Catholic Movement

Before the 1870s, when Anatole de Melun worked on the Child Labor Law, there was already support for children's rights and regulations on child labor. This foundation was created by Armand. He helped start the wave that Anatole rode in 1874. It is critical to start with Armand's story and understand his accomplishments.

Religion was deeply intertwined with Armand's life. His family, life's work, and motivations were rooted in the foundation of a Catholic faith. As mentioned in the previous chapter, his religion brought him to his first job working in the neighborhood of Saint-Médard with Sister Rosalie (Adam, 1898, 19). It was through his connections to the Catholic Church that Armand found himself with opportunities and contacts in his life. The Catholic Church acted as a network for Armand. It allowed him to meet and work with several significant people involved in social rights' movements. He referenced religion when talking about his childhood in his memoirs. He explained that he frequently attended mass with his brother, Anatole. In his memoirs, when mentioning his brother, he wrote "to each other we acted, as it were, a guardian angel" (The Catholic Literary Circular, 1881). In his salon days, he met with Madame Swetchine in 1835 who acted as a spiritual guide. He wrote,

"Above all, I was edified by the deep religious feeling of that great Christian, by her utter abandonment to the will of Providence, by her sincere detachment from the world, as if she already belonged to Heaven before ascending to it" (qtd in The Catholic Literary Circular, 1881).

In the sentiments shared by Armand about his brother and Madame Swetchine, it is apparent how closely he held his Catholic faith to his heart. His words help us understand how these meaningful relationships further developed his connection to his faith which then led him on his path toward children's rights activism.

Catholicism was important in Armand's life because it became intertwined with his political goals, making it essential to his success. Through his connection to the Catholic Church, Armand was one of the leaders of the Social Catholic Movement. "Armand de Melun was one of the great French pioneers of Catholic social thought and action, along with Frédéric Ozanam, Montalembert, and Albert de Mun" (Neill, 1962, 395). He was incredibly influenced by and influential to the Social Catholic Movement, allowing him to further his success with children's rights.

"Social Catholicism represents the endeavors of the French Catholics to adjust modern society to two new facts of the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution and the democratic revolution," as explained by Meriam (1921, 601). The Social Catholic Movement was fashioned as a response to the political, economic, and social changes in France. One of the first Social Catholics was Jean-Paul-Alban Villeneuve-Bargemont who wrote *Economie politique chrétienne* in 1834 (Weissbach, 1989, 33). His focus was on labor and the treatment of workers. He asked for a more "humane attitude" toward workers and believed solving this issue would explain the world's misery. Villeneuve-Bargemont "saw children as the most unfortunate victims of economic inequality but also those most susceptible to relief" (Weissbach, 1989, 33). His sentiment of targeting and focusing support on children is extremely interesting because, while it may have been true that children were "those most susceptible to relief," the amelioration of those terrible working conditions was not a reality at the time (Weissbach, 1989, 33). He wrote *Economie*

*politique chrétienne* before the first child labor law in 1841. These expressions of a desire for change from a Social Catholic as early as 1834 show that they were visionaries and leaders who were not reflecting on existing child labor laws. The early Social Catholic leaders saw children as the most vulnerable. However, at the time Villeneuve-Bargemont developed his ideas, there was not any government aid for children that would protect them from the horror accompanying the many industrial jobs they faced. Villeneuve-Bargemont wrote an account of the atrocities he experienced in the factories. Children, he said,

“remain on their feet sixteen to seventeen hours a day, thirteen hours of which are spent in a closed room, with hardly a change of station or attitude. That is not work, a task, it is torture; and it is inflicted upon children of from six to eight years, underfed, poorly clad, obliged to walk, at five in the morning, the long distance to the factories and then to walk back at night, exhausted” (qtd. in Moon, 1922, 9).

He wrote an early account of a Social Catholic’s perspective on the treatment of children in harsh labor conditions. This account is useful for appreciating the base upon which Armand was built his own ideas. Villeneuve-Bargemont was noted as one of the first social Catholics but the Social Catholic Movement was dated to later in the nineteenth century. R. S. Meriam dates the movement to 1872 when Count Albert de Mun, later named “father of the Social Catholic Movement,” along with a few other Catholics, founded Catholic Workingmen's Clubs in Paris, Lyon, and other French cities (25). After three years, in 1875, there were around one hundred and fifty clubs established in France. “The party got its Social Catholic character from Count Albert de Mun, organizer of the Catholic workingmen's clubs, advocate of labor legislation, social insurance, and Catholic guilds” (Meriam, 1921, 601). Although 1872 was the start of the movement, Villeneuve-Bargemont as



well as others had been developing the ideas supporting the Social Catholics much earlier than 1872.

For example, Frédéric Ozanam was a conservative Social Catholic who led by a “sense of moral obligation” (Fuchs, 1984, 37). He founded the *Société de Saint Vincent-de-Paul*, one of the best known Catholic social welfare groups. This took place during the July Monarchy in the 1830s and 1840s. *Société de Saint Vincent-de-Paul* was commemorated because Saint Vincent de Paul was the patron saint of abandoned children (Fuchs, 1984, 37). According to Rachel Fuchs (1934), there was a growing population of abandoned children and shifting views on those children. In the Nineteenth century women who had children while married were considered good people, and were accepted by society (Fuchs, 1984, 38). However, unmarried women who had children were “sinners.” Abandoned children were often born out of wedlock. Liberal Catholic reformers saw the best option was for the child to be separated from the mother because the “immoral” mother would corrupt the innocence of the child (Fuchs, 1984, 44). It is crucial to note that these reformers were not only seeing an innocence in the child but also demonstrating a strong will to protect children. There was an emphasis on the family being the most crucial unit in a “healthy society” (Fuchs, 1984, 37). Therefore, children needed to belong to families to be protected. Because the family institution was central for both the Church and the movement, children were viewed as essential pieces of a family by Catholics. People in the church began to speak out about the abuses children faced. Social Catholic philosopher, teacher, and administrator, Joseph-Marie de Gérando, spoke in favor of child labor reform (Weissbach, 1989, 53). Gérando spoke out about the role parents and manufacturers had on the abuse of the child.

“The development of industry in certain countries has produced a great demand even for very young children who are employed in manual labor that requires neither much vigor

nor much intelligence; but the avarice of certain manufacturers abuses the strength of these little creatures; they are exhausted by fatigue; they are left time neither for school, nor for the rest; hardly enough to eat a hasty morsel or take hurried sleep...Their health suffers as much as their character and education. Yet the pressing want of some parents, the cupidity of others, and the lack of foresight in many deliver up these young creatures to this fatal regimen” (qtd. In Weissbach, 1898, 53).

He was not the only person to speak out against child labor and abuse. Cardinal de Croy, archbishop of Rouen, said:

“Open your eyes and look! The parents and masters of these young saplings demand that they bear fruit in the season of flowers...Poor young children!.....May the law hasten to extend its protection over your existence, and may posterity read with astonishment on the face of this oh so self-contented century” (qtd. in Weissbach, 1989 53).

The Cardinal de Croy, archbishop of Rouen, called for action and played on the emotions of his listeners. He wanted the country to feel distressed about the misfortune of children; he wanted legislation resolved to protect children. His demand for empathy was something that evolved in the Social Catholic Movement. It was created to address the need for change, the need for there to be a different story for the children to tell, one without suffering, and helplessness.

### Politics and the Social Catholic Movement

Armand was not only able to immerse himself in this struggle for the children but to organize the struggle through political action.

“During the mid-1840’s, Melun had emerged as one of the most influential leaders of Social Catholicism...He had organized a national society, and a journal to promote charitable endeavors, and he had initiated a number of projects aimed at ameliorating social conditions. Despite his devotion to voluntary philanthropy, however, he was prepared to support the intrusions of government controls where the welfare of factory children was concerned” (Weissbach, 1989, 106).

Armand, unlike some of the other Social Catholics, was deeply involved in politics. Based on his knowledge, work with orphans, and role as a representative for the Social Catholic Movement, he built a platform for social legislature. While examining the movement’s role with the government, it is important to contrast Armand’s activity with the 1820s and 1830s, when the church had not addressed child labor. Institutions like the one started by Frédéric Ozanam for youth were some of the first connections created between the church and aid of the youth. While it was not a call for government action, it was essentially a “Band-Aid” to help the suffering youth. Then moving into the 1840s, Catholics “were eager to ensure the Church played a role in helping the poor, to maintain influence in society and ‘moralizing’ the masses” (Tombs, 1996, 179). In 1849, Armand was given a chance to truly bring politics and religion together under the administration of Adolphe Louis Thiers, who would later become the first president of the Third Republic. During the 1840s, Melun was on the opposing side of Thiers in the debate for social legislation (Moon, 1921, 45). The conservatives were divided by those opposing social legislation and those who supported it (Moon, 1921, 45). Armand nonetheless asked for the Assemblée Nationale to set up the Committee on Public Assistance and was able to persuade a majority of representatives to agree to the committee (Moon, 1921, 46). By 1863, there were 4,721 mutual aid societies with 676,000 members in total (Tombs, 1996, 180). The late nineteenth century saw a push from Armand and others to consider

the Social Catholic Movement and what it would be able to offer society. He was “devoted to the concept of government regulation and private philanthropy working in tandem” (Weissbach, 1989, 114). Armand acknowledged that it would take both the Assemblée Nationale and the work of the Social Catholic Movement to be able to accomplish a successful social revolution. It was beneficial to him to include both as separate entities that would need one another in order to thrive in society.

“Under the July Monarchy, a number of individual Social Catholics had been among the most ardent supporters of child labor reform, under the Second Republic, Social Catholicism had become enamored of social legislation through the influence of Armand de Melun” (Weissbach, 1989, 157).

His voice was heard and clearly held sway within child labor reform. In the Assemblée Nationale there was division among Catholics. They split into Conservative Catholics whose main intention for involvement was to bring back the Old Regime, and Social Catholics who involved themselves in the foundation of a social revolution under a democracy or socialist government (Weissbach, 1989, 57). In 1871, when Ambroise Joubert’s bill was proposed, the Assemblée Nationale had mostly conservative and catholic deputies. More specifically there were legitimists, such as Armand who “...stressed the importance of ‘natural’ elites, intermediary bodies, and local government where it was possible to insert the influence of clergy and landowners” (Tombs, 1996, 66). The goal was to incorporate influence from the Catholic Church in all aspects of the nineteenth century French life. Armand in his career was inspired by the political benefits a close relationship to the church could bring. Political involvement by the Catholic Church held the most weight in Armand’s accomplishments.

In a broader look at religion and theology, the nineteenth century saw a push for religion to be incorporated into more French institutions. Politically, economically, and socially, religion

was constantly working behind the scenes to gain support and effect improvements in favor of religious movements. Economically, “[t]he French nineteenth century... witnessed the second and inverse movement: it shows how religious thought, dissatisfied with the evolution of the economic situation, strongly criticized the economic theories of the time and tried to change them” (Faccarello 2014, abstract). Religious thought worked its way into the economic study of France and proved to be a force willing to argue with emerging thoughts that contradicted religious study. Socially, religion found itself becoming deeply involved in education at a higher level than before. In education, theology became an option to pursue in higher education.

“The dawn of the nineteenth century found theology’s inclusion amongst the other traditional faculties of the university (medicine, law, and philosophy)—and the continued existence of universities themselves—cast into doubt across Europe. By the century’s twilight, though, theology had taken pains to establish itself as a modern, critical, rigorous science on par in some sense with the natural sciences” (Purvis 2017, abstract).

The combination of education and theology, allowed for it to be considered as having the same importance as natural sciences. It was an essential relationship that held religion and education together. “For theological education, the nineteenth century was one of the most creative and tumultuous periods in the history of Christian thought” (Purvis, 2017). Theology gave French society a chance to think about where religion fit into the child’s society. Allowing thought to grow relating religion to education could help Armand in his quest to create awareness on the injustices occurring in France.

## Armand de Melun's Life Works

Catholicism played an invaluable role in Armand de Melun's life, influencing many of the charities he started and many of the pamphlets he wrote. He was also influenced by his family and the political climate during his life prior to stepping into his integral role. Before enacting the Child Labor Law of 1874, he was consumed with aiding France's lack of social legislation. A lot of what is known about Armand now is thanks to the memoirs he left and his correspondence with Madame Swetchine (Cornudet, 1877, 31). Le comte Le Camus said, "l'influence maternelle et prépondérante de madame Swetchine, à laquelle se joignit bientôt celle de la Sœur Rosalie, lui engagea dans la voie de la charité et des œuvres" (x). The two women had an influence on Armand in his life and writing. Armand de Melun began writing his memoirs, originally intended for his son Joseph, when he lived in Bouvelinghem with his wife, Marie de Rochemore (Le comte Le Camus, 1891, v). They lived together in Bouvelinghem at the beginning of the 1870s. His wife played a large role in his life and he helped her with charitable endeavors in Bouvelinghem (Le comte Le Camus, 1891, xiv). His wife was there while he endured a great deal of loss in his family. In 1845, he faced the death of his sister Blanche, followed by his other two sisters, his father, and then tragically his son in 1872. His son's death caused him to break from writing his memoirs for a brief time.

He used his memoirs to detail his relationships with his brother, family, and Madame Swetchine. Since Armand's own death in 1877, the memoirs have provided a guide for those who have written about his life, trying to piece together his many works and accomplishments. As previously mentioned, Armand de Melun began his charity work with Sister Rosalie in 1837-1838 (Adam, 1898, 19). After his work with Sister Rosalie, he began to form his own social and political

societies to help with the social welfare of France. His work with children's rights was a lifelong effort to help children and the impoverished in French society.

“On oublie si vite en France et à l'heure présente, qu'il n'est sans doute pas inutile de rappeler aux jeunes générations ce que fut Armand de Melun; quelle action il exerça de 1840 à 1878 en faveur des classes déshéritées et souffrantes; de quelle auréole faite d'estime, de reconnaissance et d'admiration son nom fut alors universellement entouré” (Le comte Le Camus, 1891, vii).

He left the world with a memory of him as a charitable man, committing his life to other's well-being for many years. In 1841, he created le *Manuel des Oeuvres des charité de Paris* (Cornudet, 1877, 32). A year later in 1842, he created the *Comité des Oeuvres* (Moon, 1921,18). In 1845, he founded the *Annales de Charité*, a journal focusing on “state responsibility to alleviate want as a general obligation rather than through individual charity” (Gargan, 2003, 482). This journal went through a series of names and was called the *Revue d'économie chrétienne* and then after that it changed to the *Contemporain*. Child labor was an issue often discussed extensively in the journal. In 1847, Armand founded the *Société d'économie charitable* (Cornudet, 1877, 28). This particular charity was directed at discussing ways to remedy issues the poor and children were facing. Armand gathered a group of elite men to study “questions sociales et charitables au point de vue rigoureusement chrétien” (Cornudet, 1877, vii). A year later he founded the *Société Internationale de Charité* taking not a single moment to rest. This work brought him directly in the middle of politics. In 1848, he was elected to the Assemblée Nationale (Le comte Le Camus, 1891, vii). His charity work did not stop there. “Les enfants, les ouvriers, les pauvres honteux étaient l'objet de ses constantes préoccupations” (Le comte Le Camus, 1891, vii). His commitment was not to the government but to society, to the people, and mostly the children. Another society he was involved

in was the *Société des amis de l'enfance*, where he served as the secretary. This society was to work with young apprentices in France and labor practices with apprenticeship (Le comte Le Camus, 1891, vii). He never took a break from his mission. In 1861, he signed on to work with a small weekly newspaper, *Messenger de la charité* (Cornudet, 1877, 29). This became part of his project with the *Société des publications populaires* where he frequently tried to recommend books and readings. Both helped him promote education about children's rights and other social issues. He worked with many people in need, including wounded soldiers. He became the vice president for *La société de secours aux blessés militaires* (Le Comte Le Camus, 1891, viii). This was one of the last organizations he was involved in during his lifetime. However, one of the last pushes for children's rights, helped him push Anatole directly onto center stage for the enactment of the Child Labor Law of 1874. A year before a new bill was proposed to replace the 1841 bill, "Armand de Melun, for instance, published a lengthy article in *Le Correspondant* in 1869 calling for new factory legislation, for public support of the law, and for the goodwill and cooperation of entrepreneurs" (Weissbach, 1989, 178). This discussion as well as others that had arisen during the time urged Charles Louvert, the Minister of Commerce, to bring the 1867 child labor bill back into question (Weissbach, 1989, 178). These actions led to the start of the debate on child labor in the Assemblée Nationale, Ambroise Joubert's 1871 proposal, and Anatole serving as president of the Melun Committee (Weissbach, 1989, 178).



## Chapter 4

### The Tallon Report

#### Anatole de Melun's Story

During the 1870s, Armand de Melun continued fighting against child labor. However, he was impeded as he faced personal challenges brought on by his son's premature death. In his absence, Anatole de Melun's story became more central. Anatole followed a similar path as his brother, until their separation at college. While Armand attended law school, Anatole pursued military school. After military school, Anatole was sent to Antwerp where he "s'y distingua par son intelligence et sa bravoure" (*Notice sur Le Comte Anatole de Melun*, 1888, 6). While Armand de Melun was in Antwerp and war was raging, he wrote of his family's feelings of desperation. In the loss of Anatole's physical presence his family felt fear and helplessness.

"Pendant deux mois, écrit Armand, nous n'eûmes plus de paix le jour, ni sommeil la nuit. Les lettres même les plus rassurantes, ne parvenaient qu'à peine à nous tranquilliser; car depuis leur départ que d'événements terribles avaient pu se passer. Enfin, après deux mois d'angoisses, le télégraphe annonce qu'Anvers vient de rendre! (qtd. in *Notice sur Le Comte Anatole de Melun*, 1888, 6).

Anatole's time in the military weighed heavily on the family and in particular Armand who previously wrote of the deep connection they shared. Armand mentioned their correspondence and how he would relay messages from Madame Swetchine to Anatole. Armand shared his own inspiration with his brother often as referenced in a letter to Madame Swetchine, they "[profitent]

ainsi tous deux de votre parole,” (*Notice sur Le Comte Anatole de Melun*, 1888, 8). As Armand was inspired to begin charity work with Sister Rosalie, Anatole was motivated to begin his political career. In 1843, he became president of the Lille Committee for the Defense of Catholic Interests. Most importantly, he was vice president of the *Commission du travail des enfants dans les manufactures* (*Notice sur Le Comte Anatole de Melun*, 1888, 19). On this committee, he worked on the implementation of the 1841 child labor law and was able to see why it was unsuccessful. Although Anatole’s career developed in different ways than his brother, he was still able to be involved early on in the discussion of child labor. His experiences would be able to help his legitimacy in the Assemblée Nationale. Having worked with children and labor practices, he could provide his own base of knowledge, allowing him to be an intelligent and trustworthy representative of child labor. The reason both brothers’ stories are important in this history is because of the depth and reach of their efforts. In 1849, on the same day Anatole was elected a deputy in the North, his brother Armand de Melun was appointed to the department of Ille-et-Vilaine (*Notice sur Le Comte Anatole de Melun*, 1888, 19). They had both found a path to the political stage. A quote that certainly holds true to their ambitions being united was written by an unknown member of the Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul.

“Voilà donc, écrivait ce dernier, voilà les deux jumeaux arrivant tous les deux le même jour à l'Assemblée, chacun d'un bout de la France, l'un comme Flamand, l'autre comme Breton, pour marcher vers le même but et sous le même drapeau” (*Notice sur Le Comte Anatole de Melun*, 1888, 19).

It became apparent the twin brothers were united by far more than their appearances; they had found unification through their life purposes and goals for France. As legitimists, grasping at their nobility, France was important to them. It was a country in which their ancestors were rumored to

trace back to the first king of France, King Clovis. They had been raised to be Frenchman supporting their country, their faith, and each other. These allegiances fed into their commitment to the welfare of France and the welfare of the children of France. Anatole was more invested in politics and the aid he could provide. From 1849 all the way to 1876, two years after the 1874 Child Labor Law, he worked as a representative of “les électeurs du Nord” (*Notice sur Le Comte Anatole de Melun*, 1888, 20). His efforts did not go unrealized. Although, there is less written recognition of Anatole, than his brother, Armand, he did establish an extensive and vitally important law for the well-being of children. While many of his years were spent working with the Assemblée Nationale, the most impactful years for children’s rights were from 1871 to 1874. The moment Ambroise Joubert proposed his revised child labor bill, the Melun Committee was established. The Melun Committee consisted of Anatole as the president, and members: Eugène Tallon, Lefébure, De Beauvillé, Cordier, Jamme, Dauphinot, Balsan, Lecamus, Ricot, Ambroise Joubert, Steinheil, Paul Morin, Le vicomte de Bonald, and Max-Richard (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 14).

The Melun Committee came to symbolize a culmination of many efforts to end abusive child labor practices. In 1871, after the war with Prussia had ended, Ambroise Joubert proposed a new child labor bill on June 19th. The bill stated that children under fourteen could not work more than 6 hours a day, no child under 10 was allowed to work in any factory or workshop, the bosses were required to either give the children primary education or make sure they attend primary schools, if any of the laws were broken the bosses were subjected to a fine from mandated inspections (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 13). From this bill emerged the Melun Committee. The members would expand this bill and create a report for the Assemblée Nationale, *Rapport de M. Eugène Tallon: Sur le projet de loi présenté par la commission*, (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 13).

## The Tallon Report

On May 11th, 1872, the Tallon Report was submitted to the Assemblée Nationale in a quest to prove the need for a new child labor law. Eugène Tallon, secretary of the Melun Committee and spokesperson for the new bill, presented the report. This report built a foundation proving to the government a need for a new bill. In the debates that would ensue, the arguments created by the children's rights activists can be seen clearly in the Tallon Report, which represented the role of the Melun Committee in the strides toward the enactment of the 1874 law. The Tallon Report was split into 9 sections detailing the reasons for a new bill and the concern for the children of France. In the first section of the bill, the 1841 law was highlighted as the preexisting law needing to be improved. "La loi de 1841 est devenue insuffisant par la réserve ou la négligence qu'on a mise à son exécution" (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 108). The law was not executed or regulated in a way that allowed it to succeed. This was well known but the true basis of the report was from "la proposition de la loi de M. Joubert" in 1871 (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 107). The committee was created for the purpose of examining this proposition and the probability of its success if turned into law. In the first section of the report, there was an emphasis on the Industrial Revolution and how child labor was an outcome of an industrialized society. As the report examines the causes of child labor, it points to industry as the enemy.

"En peu d'années et par les efforts progressifs du génie inventif, l'industrie est parvenue non-seulement à briser ses anciennes entraves, mais elle a asservi les forces de l'homme à son action" (*Tallon Report*, 1882, 107).

To say it enslaved the forces of man provides a specific blame, creating a division between the Melun Committee and industrialists who exploit child laborers. The industrial revolution affected children and women specifically because it established a larger job market. Society changed from

men consuming the workplace to it becoming a place for all. The report asked some hard questions about this shift. It clearly meant there was a need for a reevaluation of children's rights and their protection. "Comment n'eût-on pas voulu mettre à l'abri de la destruction la jeunesse de la nation, son espoir, menacée dans son germe?" (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 107). From the beginning, there was a call to action with rhetorical questions demanding who will be the protector of these innocents. 1841 was not the last year before 1874 that conversations, and even a proposal arose. In 1850, there was another proposal mentioned in the report. There was a committee appointed by the Chambre de Pairs to examine salaried inspection of the industries in which children were working, but it was disrupted by political instability (108). Even though this attempt failed, others succeeded. In part of the Tallon Report's attempt to win support for social legislation protecting children, it mentioned the prior success of surrounding nations (108). Speaking directly to France's lacking where other countries have already thrived, the report mentioned England, the United States, Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium (109). These comparisons are particularly essential to their side of the debate because as previously mentioned, France had recently lost a war with Prussia, making the country weak. There was already tension between the nations and the well-being of the citizens due to their potential soldier capabilities. In 1833, and 1844, Great Britain passed laws including regulations protecting working children, including that children ages eight to thirteen could not work more than half a day to be able to attend school (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 109). In this section, there was a specific reference to France's other neighbors' legislation. In Germany for example it said:

"L'Allemagne de son côté, depuis longtemps attentive à toutes les mesures qui pouvaient ranger sous ses drapeaux de nombreux soldats n'a pas hésité à régler rigoureusement

la travail des enfants: en Prusse plusieurs dispositions législatives régissent cette matière”

(*Tallon Report*, 1872, 110).

Germany's focus on children was aimed at creating a stronger army (110). Germany being seen as an enemy to whom France lost territory, made these comments in the report more impactful. If Germany was protecting their children from harsh labor conditions and had a stronger army, France needed to reevaluate itself for the protection of the nation. After mentioning Germany, the report mentioned Switzerland, Great Britain, the United States, and Belgium's accomplishments. Switzerland helped to regulate age in correlation with industry; age limits of 12, 13, and 14 were set based on the type of work children were required to accomplish (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 110). In both France and Great Britain, the laws passed included women and regulations on women's work. For example, in Great Britain, children from ages thirteen to eighteen, and women of all ages were only allowed to work a twelve-hour workday with breaks (109). In a later section, the inclusion of women in the 1872 report was related to the need to keep women healthy in order to support their home and family (108). The health of a child was in the hands of the mother and therefore they need to be available, and in a state fit enough to care for their children. Another reason the report discussed adding women was because of how detrimental it can be to the child's early health and development if separated from their mothers at an early age (108). All of the necessary steps were taken to provide evidence of a progressing world for children's rights that was leaving France in the past. If France wanted to continue as a powerful country with an industrialized society, its children's rights needed to be reevaluated.

In the Melun Committee's research, they chose to include the study of how social classes played a role in child labor, specifically referencing working class families and their need for labor laws. On the other hand, privileged class families had the “luxury” of worrying about children's

rights. The report did not include data to prove how many children were working based on their class but it did show how many unemployed children there were across France. Under the 1841 law to the date of the report, there were 7,959 establishments subjected to regulations within the law. Within those 7,959 establishments, there were 99,212 children employed. The establishments subjected to the law included 9,938 establishments employing 26,503 children (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 112). To add to the numbers, they included a statement from M. Maurice, *Inspecteur du travail des enfants*, to explain the conditions he witnessed in factories. By doing this, they hit on every aspect possible to explain how many children were facing these unimaginable working conditions.

“Dans ces ateliers on est particulièrement offensé du défaut de propreté et de l'absence de toutes conditions sanitaires ; une industrie, notamment, recèle de navrantes misères, celle des loueurs de force. Cette industrie consiste en une série d'ateliers divisés en petits compartiments où les machines sont mises en mouvement par un moteur commun. Là des enfants racolés au hasards sont entassés pêle-mêle et employés à de pénibles travaux” (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 112).

One of the major concerns was lack of sanitation in the factories. In addition to improving sanitary conditions, they requested raising the minimum work age to ten years old. Referring back to their collected data, the report justified this request because it had little impact on factory owners and working-class families as children from eight to ten years of age made up only 8% of all working children (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 113). This was important because it helped build the base that made increasing the minimum age for child laborers a plausible action for the Assemblée Nationale.

To accompany the committee's wishes directly referencing labor, they included a section called *Instruction Primaire* (117). This section was vital not only for the report but for what the

1874 law would encompass. The committee also recognized that no child labor law could stand alone but must be accompanied by education regulations. In the section in the report, what was interesting about asking for education requirements was that they placed this duty in the hands of the children's bosses. "Elles ont pour but d'astreindre les patrons à veiller à ce que les enfants fréquentent les écoles et justifient, à un certain âge, qu'ils ont acquis l'instruction primaire" (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 117). They wanted the owners and managers to have an incentive to send students to school. They even suggested setting up schools in factories, making education more accessible for children and efficient for employers (107). In general, education of child laborers would benefit the whole society. This section in the report was one of the most necessary because it proved that child labor laws include all aspects of the child's life. Other than working to save children from harsh labor conditions potentially detrimental to their health, it also aimed to educate them, and to allow mothers, as previously stated, more time and energy to focus on their children. This report, which became the basis of the 1874 law, helped provide the Assemblée Nationale with an understanding of how beneficial a new law would be for the children and future of the nation.

In the last two sections of the report, the focus was on how the new regulations were to be implemented, outlining all of the desired articles for the new law. One of the major problems with the 1841 Child Labor Law was the lack of enforcement for new regulations. To address this, the report narrowed in on what the inspections would look like and how they would run. This was a key component to the success of the Child Labor Law of 1874. It brought the effort of protecting children out of the private sphere and into the public where the government and paid inspectors were responsible for the well-being of children (Schafer, 1997, 61). This marked the beginning of a shift in those taking responsibility as guardians of the children. This was evident in the report



because they asked the government to be in charge of regulating inspections and hiring employees to perform the inspections.

“Art. 16. Pour assurer l'exécution de la présente loi il sera nommé deux inspecteurs généraux et quinze inspecteurs divisionnaires. La nomination des inspecteurs sera faite par le Gouvernement sur une liste de présentation dressée par la commission supérieure ci-dessous instituée, et portant trois candidats pour chaque emploi disponible. Ces inspecteurs seront rétribués par l'Etat” (*Tallon Report*, 1872, 108).

The inspections were the beginning because they required a system imposing penalties against those not in compliance with the laws. The last section of the report covered penalties they requested for those who broke the child labor law (120). In Article 25, anyone found violating the law was to be brought before “le juge de paix” and subjected to a fine (122). These steps of inspection and penalties show the thoughtfulness of the report and how it was prepared to respond to any problems that could arise in regards to the law. They essentially created a new system of enforcing the laws they were proposing. This report was the work of the Melun Committee and its members, and after debate and modifications within the Assemblée Nationale, it became the Child Labor Law of 1874.

On November 25th, the committee proposed the first version of the bill itself. “L'Assemblée nationale a voté le 19 mai 1874, la loi sur l'emploi des enfants et des filles mineures dans l'industrie” (Baudry, Tallon, Maurice, 1875, 1). A little over two years after the report was released, the 1874 law was finally enacted. Yet the question remains about what debates took place in those 2½ years. Why did it take years from when it was first proposed in 1871 to the time of the report, to May, 19th 1874? 1874 was a significant year for children's rights, but that would be

impossible to understand without the knowledge of why it was held back for 2½ years before becoming a law.

If children's rights are ever going to change in the future, the world needs to understand what forced them to change in the past. "Eighteen seventy-four was in fact a signal year for child protection under the Third Republic" (Schafer, 1997, 48). This next chapter answers why this year was a paramount year for Anatole and his committee to make the change.

## Chapter 5

### Debates and the Enactment of the Child Labor Law of 1874

The Child Labor Law of 1874 was debated on three separate occasions in order to produce the law enacted on May 19th, 1874. This law gave France's children access to rights they are afforded today. France faced many challenges to see this bill become a successful law. According to Timothy B. Smith in "The Ideology of Charity, the Image of the English Poor Law, and Debates over the Right to Assistance in France, 1830-1905," the presidency of Patrice de MacMahon was one that "prided itself over the absence of a national commitment to public assistance" (1015). The Republic under MacMahon was not one that favored bills like the one Ambroise Joubert proposed (Smith, 1997, 1015). The activists needed to be up for a fight, or in this case, years of debating.

The Child Labor Law of 1874 emerged from the failure of the 1841 law. It was created to be a corrective bill providing laboring children safety, security, and access to education. In the process of rewriting France's child labor law, there were over 2½ years of debates that gave a platform to voices from all of France's political parties. Questions, discussions, and solutions that evolved from three separate debates over the 1874 law, act as evidence exemplifying the steps of creating a law that would finally provide protection for the children. One unquestionable impetus of this law was the tireless activism of those who acted as a voice for the children. This law would not have gotten any traction if it was not for Armand's social and charity work to start creating awareness, and Anatole de Melun and his fifteen members fiercely fighting to give Armand de Melun's ideas a platform. It was in their work that France's children were recognized. By taking the time to analyze the debates and highlighting key moments, it is clear the amount of effort, time, and precision that went into this law. After this chapter, it will be obvious this law was the

quintessential law for the emergence of children's rights in France and it was thanks to those dedicated activists who made it a reality by constantly speaking up.

### **First Debate**

The first debate took place on November 25th, 1872 (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 73). It was introduced as an opportunity for the Assemblée Nationale to discuss the proposition given by Ambroise Joubert. He was also given the floor in this first deliberation to speak first.

“Messieurs, l'ouvrier, pour soutenir la grande lutte du travail, a besoin d'un bras solide, d'un cœur honnête et d'une intelligence ouverte. Le législateur doit donc, dans la mesure du possible, s'efforcer de développer les forces physiques, morales et intellectuelles de la classe ouvrière” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1872, 232).

Asking the deputies to get in the mind of a laborer and see the issues they face, Joubert attempted to establish a relationship between the Assemblée Nationale deputies, many of whom as previously mentioned, held nobility status. There was a disconnect between the working-class citizens and the men in the Assembly. Anatole and Armand were examples of this as they were from a wealthy family and attended private boarding schools and universities. Not many of the deputies came from working class families who helped their families through manual labor. In Joubert's speech, he asked deputies to step outside of their lives as he explained the daily experiences of a working-class family. Then Joubert drew their attention to the struggles of the child. In his discourse, he talked about the importance of l'enfance (232). Recognizing childhood as a period of time separated from adulthood helped him build his case for a revised child labor law. In the debates, minimum age to allow children to work was a heated topic and often centered around the single

year between twelve and thirteen. Essentially, childhood was a concept that became a central theme of the debates. Joubert saw an importance in childhood by allowing the child to have time to develop not only physically but intellectually. If they could not protect childhood, then they could not safeguard humanity. “...Je pense que nous serons tous d'accord ; car une même pensée nous unit tous, l'amour de l'humanité et un ardent désir d'améliorer le sort des classes laborieuses” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1872, 232). Did the deputies of the Assemblée Nationale not want to be a part of bettering humanity?

Humanity, in this case, included children as the future but also the well-being of women, caretakers of the children. Joubert and the committee included women in the law as the mother of the developing child. In this part of the debate, it was Joubert's opinion that along with the law including restrictions on children working at night, women should not be working at night either. He referred to their absence from the home as “la destruction de la famille” (235). The belief was that without mothers at home, the family structure would essentially fall apart. Joubert referred to the loss of a mother at home to be associated with abandonment and sadness. The women's health was necessary because of how it affects the child's health.

“Les femmes s'épuisent à mener une pareille existence; elles vieillissent avant l'âge, et les enfants auxquels elles donnent naissance sont malingres et se ressentent toujours de l'hygiène déplorable de leur mère.” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1872, 235).

If a mother was unhealthy, the child will also be in a state of poor health and hygiene. For unmarried women, their safety was included in the bill because it pertains to all women and Joubert explained the risk of more potentially dangerous situations arising with women walking home at night. After his few remarks with women's roles in the bill, he finished his statement with hopes for the bill.

“Notre loi, je l'espère, contribuera à cette œuvre de progrès, et quand, plus tard, nous serons rentrés dans la vie calme de nos provinces, au milieu des populations qui ont mis un jour en nous leur confiance, soyez sûrs que nous verrons notre loi comprise et respectée par elles; les enfants d'aujourd'hui, devenus des hommes, se souviendront de la loi du 24 novembre 1872 ; ils comprendront la sagesse des mesures qui les auront protégés, et ils ne manqueront pas d'avoir un bon souvenir pour notre Assemblée. Ce sera pour nous la meilleure des récompenses, car la plus douce joie en ce monde c'est la reconnaissance de ceux qui soutirent, quand on a pu leur faire un peu de bien.” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1872, 235).

Joubert said that this law was created to improve France forever. Noting that people would remember this law proved his awareness that there would certainly be more laws protecting children in the future. This law certainly was not the last but, because of the circumstances, one that would influence future legislature. The law was to be remembered as changing history. These sentiments at the end of Joubert's speech kicking off the debates were opinions about the overall goals of the bill and were not communicated in a debatable way. This section of the debates was extremely important because, as the first speaker, creator of the bill and member of the Melun Committee, he was completely invested in these issues. He was the one who could most completely articulate the goals of the Melun Committee and the hopes for the outcome of this bill. After hearing from him, it was then necessary to listen to supportive and opposing voices from the base that Ambroise Joubert cemented in the first moments.

Louis Blanc followed by delivering a discourse full of ideas highlighting the altruism that went into the bill as well as its potential failures. An important part of the debates was to either share or not share your support with other representatives. Louis Blanc gave his approval of the

bill with slight modifications. Giving his own opinion, he shared that the bill seemed to come from a place of goodwill: “le projet de loi est un généreux effort vers le bien” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1872, 235). It was noted that the efforts were in the best interest of the public, excluding the specific interests of industrialists, factory owners, and those utilizing child labor. In Louis Blanc’s speech, he referred to those interests. “Lors du débat auquel donna lieu la loi de 1841, il y eut des voix qui s’écrièrent : « Prenez garde, vous allez frapper l’industrie ! »” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1872, 237). Using the 1841 law as a reference point, the fear of unstable industry was still present with the elimination and reduction in child labor. With a loss to the labor force, production would drastically decrease, which would affect their competitiveness in the foreign market. Louis Blanc treated it as the mechanical effect in which restrictions on child labor could lead to even more than not being a global competitor, but, because of companies not able to sustain themselves, workers’ wages would fall and working-class families would be in a situation even more damaging to their health and security (237). Something with good intent originally had suddenly turned into the collapse of the working class and the French industry. His point helped demonstrate that any changes to the current situation of child labor could change more than the lives of the children. Louis Blanc proved that, while this discussion was about children, it was going to ultimately affect many aspects of France’s economy, social structure, and political climate. This acknowledgement of the possible effects of the law are important because not only did it demonstrate the need for debates and discussion over each and every issue but it also helped prove the value of children and their childhood. If changing children’s rights had the potential to affect many other parts of society, then children must hold some power as a vital population within humanity. These were important precedents in the debates proving this law was important and

would always be relevant because children and their safety were and are essential to society as a whole.

Another key moment in the debate was when Eugène Tallon referred to the 1841 law just as Louis Blanc did. Since the 1874 law was built upon how inadequate the 1841 law was, it was often used as a reference point (“*Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale*,” 1872, 238). Thanks to Eugene Tallon and Maurice Gustave, there is a translated chart, included at the end of this chapter for reference, which compares the articles in both laws (454). It helps to understand exactly what each article outlined and how the members of the *Assemblée Nationale* were able to use it as a reference. Eugène Tallon called into question the law of 1841 and its inability to be effective.

“Mais pourquoi là loi de 1841, si utile dans son principe, est-elle restée inefficace, et pour quoi nous trouvons-nous aujourd'hui dans la nécessité de procéder à l'élaboration d'une loi nouvelle?” (“*Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale*,” 1872, 238).

First, the law of 1841 was limited in the number of child workers and places of work to which it pertained. The industries the law reached needed to be expanded as there were factories not included in the law. The ones that were included in the 1841 law dealt with extremely hazardous working conditions such as frequent fires and mechanical engines. Eugène Tallon not only alluded to how limited this law was but as well as how it was difficult to enforce. There were necessary changes to be made to enhance and better the 1841 law's foundation.

Other than those in support of the bill, the first debate included those hoping to add or change the bill to suit their aspirations. Throughout the debates, there were not many deputies who openly opposed the entirety of the bill, yet the debates centered on the specific details of the bill. For example, in these first debates, M. Toulain proposed an addition to the bill.



“Eh bien, je viens demander à la commission de vouloir bien ajouter que dans ces commissions locales le préfet devra, autant que faire se pourra, introduire deux éléments industriels qui me paraissent absolument nécessaires, c'est-à-dire des patrons et des ouvriers. Et voici pourquoi j'indique cette adjonction: C'est que le rapport lui-même a été obligé de constater en face de quelles difficultés on s'é tait trouvé, lors de l'application de la loi de 1841.” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1872, 241).

M. Toulain even mentioned that these additions were to help fix the mistakes of the 1841 law. He was criticizing the fact that the Melun Committee had not yet collected data from the industrialists, including the bosses and workers in the factories (241). Would they not be considered essential players in understanding? This comment launched him into a dialogue about organizing local committees. Local committees could receive information right from the industries and as they changed, these local committees would be able to give the Assemblée Nationale updates. He aimed for a smaller impact from the government in the lives of the people, giving them the chance to organize and adapt themselves. It was after his speech that the deputies asked to extend the discussion of the bill for a second deliberation. The motion to extend was accepted and the deputies met up for the second deliberation to continue discussing the child labor bill.

### **Second Debate**

The second deliberation took place on January 22nd, 1873 (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 93). It was held to continue the debate of the child labor bill proposed by Ambroise Joubert. In this deliberation, the deputies explored in more detail certain aspects of the bill they wished to see changed. The key components of this deliberation were the debate that arose over regional and

religious demands, Anatole de Melun's presentation of his own counterproposal to the bill, and whether the minimum age should be twelve or thirteen.

Early in the debate, Monsieur Leurent brought up a point concerning interests of the central government versus regional interests ("Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale," 1873, 269). This is a key point because it needed to be decided who would have the power to oversee the enactment of the law. Did the law need to be adapted to each region? Would it have been more beneficial for the children to be under regional or federal laws? These are questions that would fundamentally change the law and its enactment in each region. Monsieur Leurent spoke on behalf of the le département du Nord.

"J'ai donc raison de dire que le département du Nord est le plus intéressé de tous les départements de la France dans cette loi. Je dois ajouter que nul n'est plus soucieux de la voir appliquée d'une manière régulière, que nul n'est plus convaincu de son efficacité. Je vous en donnerai cette preuve: c'est qu'avant 1841, c'est nous qui avons demandé la loi sur le travail des enfants dans les manufactures; c'est nous qui en 1842, l'avons appliquée en France; c'est nous qui avons donné les fonds nécessaires pour subventionner un service d'inspection, et c'est nous qui depuis dix ans, venons demander avec une grande insistance que la loi de 1841 soit modifiée dans le sens indiqué par la commission, sauf quelques applications de détail." ("Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale," 1873, 269)

M. Leurent drew attention to the fact that the le département du Nord had been asking for new legislation and had worked to fund previous inspections. He acted as the speaker for this region and also asked that, "tous les ateliers, à quelque industrie qu'ils appartiennent, et quel que soit le chiffre des ouvriers, tombent sous le coup de la loi" ("Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale," 1873, 269). When speaking he referenced only the needs of his region and did not speak to those of the

entire country. This was important because it helped move the discussion toward the larger issue of whether children's rights should be handled regionally or nationally. After proposing this question, his intentions were immediately questioned because as the *Assemblée Nationale* met to discuss this issue, they were approaching it nationally. It was the goal of the *Assemblée Nationale* to determine the best solutions for France's children and industries as a whole. M. Eugène Tallon did not hesitate to call M. Leurent out on what he felt were biased sentiments. Referencing M. Leurent, he said, "Il s'est plus placé dans ses observations au point de vue de la région industrielle du Nord qu'au point de vue des intérêts généraux de l'industrie française." ("Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale," 1873, 273). This showed that children's rights were a national issue and would be dealt with as such. It would have been a waste of time to investigate the specific needs of industries in different regions because that would have meant losing focus on the intention of the bill: to help the children. This section in the debate showed that the question should have been raised as to whether the issue would have been better addressed on a local/regional level. However, once the answer became clear that it was an issue that should be regulated nationally, then those debating the issue had to look at the bill with an understanding of the needs of the entire nation. Thanks to M. Leurent, it was clear that France needed to approach this issue in this manner.

The question of what role the government would take as guardian to the child was also important. As in any legislature dealing with children's rights and their needs, it is important to understand how much of a parental role the government will fulfill. Due to changing hours and ages of children being permitted to work, family income and dynamics were affected. With this encroachment on family life, the government needed to assume some responsibility for the child and their activities during their time not working. Eugène Tallon talked about this issue and the lengths the law could go without encroaching on, "la volonté et à l'autorité paternelles" ("Annales

De L'Assemblée Nationale," 1873, 273). There was a line that needed to be drawn at which the government was taking responsibility for the well-being of the child without taking away parents' authority. Ambroise Joubert believed that this law would encourage more families to send their older children to work in factories as conditions improved. These improvements would be protecting them from overworking (277). This section of the debate again proved how involved children's rights laws were and are in all aspects of life. As previously mentioned, this law had the potential to change not only France's economic stability, but family life as well. The problem was that deputies had different ideas about how to approach this comprehensive bill.

Religion played a role in these different approaches. For example, in a previous chapter, Armand and Anatole's Catholic faith was mentioned, and Christianity is referenced in this section of the debates. When debating, M. Eugène Tallon stated that Christianity was the dominant religion of the French people. Then a voice called out, "Dites la religion catholique!" ("Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale," 1873, 277). Religion certainly was not a focus in the debates, but it did draw attention to biased behavior or any deputies acting in the name of the church. It was not until 1905 that France officially established state secularism, but the church was not directly involved in voting on this law. Even though religion was not as important, Anatole's voice was a major part of the debates. He was essential to the success of the Child Labor Law of 1874.

#### Anatole de Melun's Role in the Second Debate

Even though he served as president of the Melun Committee, Anatole de Melun actually presented and then retracted a counter-proposal to the Assemblée Nationale (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 269). This represented his involvement and tenacity to create the best law possible. His

presence in the second deliberation was much more apparent. Anatole revealed his own involvement in the enactment of the law of 1841 as well as playing a role in the enforcement of it.

“Pendant vingt-cinq ans j'ai eu l'honneur d'être membre et même président de la commission chargée, dans le département du Nord, de faire appliquer la loi de 1841. Cette commission n'a pas obtenu tout le succès qu'elle aurait désiré et que peut-être elle méritait. Cela n'a pas tenu à son zèle: l'insuccès est dû à l'imperfection de la loi de 1841, que nous cherchons à corriger aujourd'hui, et aussi à des circonstances particulières que je n'ai pas besoin de rappeler ici, mais j'ai le droit de dire qu'aucune commission n'a fonctionné avec plus de suite et de persévérance.” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1873, 280).

He worked with the law of 1841 and saw its inability to be successful which made him one of the best candidates to give his opinion on the current state of social legislation and the most effective articles moving forward (*Notice sur Le Comte Anatole de Melun*, 1888, 19). During his time with the floor, he lectured about focusing on the interests of working class families. It was natural for a large family to need the income of more than the adults to cover living expenses for all. Due to this need for a larger income to support a family, the reduction of hours for children needed to be largely discussed.

“Un ouvrier qui a trois ou quatre enfants en bas âge à nourrir par son seul salaire, doit s'imposer une grande gêne. Il est donc naturel et juste que le jour où il peut faire travailler sans graves inconvénients ses enfants, il cherche à trouver dans leur salaire un adoucissement à sa famille” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1873, 280).

The point that Anatole made allowed the Assembly not only to think about the family unit but the economic status of France. If a portion of children were taken out of the workforce, then the salaries that the parents and older children were making would need to be adequate enough to

support the family. Ambroise Joubert brought up the point that two children each working half a day could actually make more money than one child working all day (279). This law was not designed to hurt struggling families, but to find a better way to support working class families without having their young children working. Anatole saw the law as having two goals: “préserver le corps de nos jeunes ouvriers d'un travail excessif qui les énerve, et protéger leurs âmes contre un danger plus grand encore, le danger de l'ignorance qui menace de les abrutir” (280). The goals were solely focused on the children, but the children were part of the family - a family they were relying on for survival and safety. It was in the interest of the family that Anatole asked the Assembly to consider raising the minimum age for children to work a half day to twelve. The minimum age was a huge portion of this debate and Anatole defended twelve years as most appropriate.

“Et dans l'intérêt même de l'enfant que nous voulons tous protéger, il en doit être ainsi. A l'âge de douze ans, son développement physique a besoin d'une nourriture plus substantielle. Comment voulez-vous que le père de famille puisse la lui procurer si, justement, il ne voit pas le salaire de son enfant croître avec ses besoins?..Je vous engage à accepter l'amendement qui propose de fixer à douze ans l'âge auquel l'enfant pourra travailler pendant la journée entière” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1873, 280).

Anatole felt passionately that twelve years of age should be the minimum, but there was a small majority against this belief who favored thirteen.

## Age of the Working Child

One of the reasons for opposing thirteen as a minimum age was what children would do with that year in between. They would have been in school from the age of seven to twelve, but then what would they do in the year between twelve and thirteen? The Melun Committee represented the age of thirteen originally, but, after debate, lowered their position to twelve. Anatole expressed his concern that it would encourage vagrancy and for children to take to the streets, causing more danger than the factories themselves. This put the Assemblée Nationale in the difficult position to decide whether twelve was too young to work, or decide if working was the safer option. Anatole's opinion was not isolated. M. Cordier expressed that if a child was working half the day and attending school the other half, the child would choose to forego school, ending back up on the streets (277). In both situations, the fear was giving the child too much freedom, allowing them time during which they could potentially cause trouble. On the other hand, M. Rapporteur expressed his belief in children of twelve not being morally ready to handle working in this capacity.

“Nous ne croyons pas qu'à ce moment le développement physique de ce petit être soit suffisant pour qu'il supporte impunément une pareille fatigue. Nous pensons que dans cette période de douze à treize ans il y a encore des précautions à prendre pour le développement moral de l'enfant, et qu'il est bon de lui laisser le temps nécessaire pour compléter son éducation civile et religieuse. Tel est notre sentiment.” (“Annales De L'Assemblée Nationale,” 1873, 282).

He was not alone in voicing this opinion. The 1841 law actually prohibited children under the age of twelve to work for a whole day. Therefore, some Assemblée Nationale members expressed that

would not make sense for them to lower that age to 11. It would be in everyone's interest to move forward from the 1841 law.

The Assemblée Nationale also looked at more hazardous work like mining which some believed should require a higher minimum age (282). This introduced another question regarding child labor legislature. Should the bill include different regulations for different types of work? Should it recognize that some work is unequivocally more dangerous than other types of work? This challenge made it difficult for legislators to decide how detailed the law needed to be. Could they outline every type of work along with acceptable ages for that work? If that was the case for this law, the debates would have lasted longer than 2½ years. It was not feasible for them to make detailed requirements for every type of employment. Unfortunately, it had to be more ambiguous than that which meant it could not always be enforced. However, the recognition of this ambiguity and the decision to define age groups to different jobs was part of fully addressing the child labor issue. It illustrates the depth of the bill and debates surrounding it. The debate over eleven, twelve, and thirteen years was a large portion of the second debate. No detail was overlooked. At the end of this part of the debate, it was brought to the attention of the deputies by M. Prétavolne that this law was not one specifically dealing with children but women as well, bringing the floor back to a point Ambroise Joubert brought up in the first deliberation (287).

### **Third Debate**

The last deliberation took place a day before the bill was voted into law (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 365). It was important to have finalized and voted on the different articles of the law. Throughout the last deliberation, they invested time specifically examining each article. Once they



voted on one, they moved onto the next. For example, President Buffet would bring up an article, they would vote, and then he would declare, “L'article 5 est donc maintenu tel qu'il a été adopté” (389). At this point, many of the articles were being adopted, but the debate between twelve and thirteen years of age continued, and any law discussing the minimum age was set aside until the end of the deliberation. They started the deliberation on May 18th and ended up extending it to May 19th. Anatole de Melun asked for the extension as members started talking about Article 16 which he called the foundation of the law. Article 16 was the first article under the inspection section and outlined how the inspections would be completed. This was important because it was known that 1841 lacked in completing inspections and following through with punishments. In the end, the law was written to have fifteen divisional inspectors elected and paid by the government. The third deliberation lasted two days in total and was the final push to the finalize and enact the Child Labor Law of 1874. Thanks to these final discussions, the law fundamental to the emergence of children’s rights in France was completed.

### **Child Labor Law of 1874**

The law was enacted on May 19th, 1874 (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 365). When it was finally completed, it consisted of 10 sections : Age d’Admission - Durée du travail, Travail de nuits, des dimanches, et jours fériés, Travaux souterrains, Instruction Primaire, Surveillance des enfants - Police d’ateliers, Inspection, Commissions locales, Commission supérieur, Pénalités, and Dispositions spéciales (445). It contained thirty-two articles within the ten sections and was signed by Louis Buffet while Patrice de MacMahon was acting president of the Third Republic. The articles of the bill are included in the table below comparing the 1874 law with its predecessor law

of 1841 (Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 454). In short, the law helped expand the facilities that were covered by the 1841 law, twelve was chosen as the minimum age for employment, and night work was regulated. While this law helped improve child labor policies in the late nineteenth century, it also faced adversity. It was criticized for not addressing some of the same issues the 1841 law faced. A main complaint was that it was still not extensive enough and left out children working in small shops, agriculture, or the entertainment industry. It also faced problems with inspection and enforcement. According to historian, Lee S. Weissbach, “implementation was still just as hard as it was for the 1841 act” (202) However, he proceeded to mention the “support and acceptance” that the law later gained. Just as renowned artists are not always celebrated during their lifetime, this law made a lasting impact on the people of France that was not fully recognized at the time.

“Thus, the child labor issue had crucial implications for the entire legislative, social, economic, and even intellectual history of the nation, no less than it had important implications for thousands of individual children who grew up in nineteenth-century France” (Weissbach, 1989, 271).

The issues debated affected children in France then and continue to affect them now. Not only did the issues affect the children themselves but the entire climate of France. This law helped establish a pattern of thinking about children, helped prove the importance of social legislation, and, most importantly, it returned childhood to children.

“Eighteen seventy-four was in fact a signal year for child protection under the Third Republic” (Schaefer, 1997, 48). Two other laws were enacted that year which targeted the well-being of children. The first focused on “employment of children by traveling performers and “professional” beggars” and the second was about “regulating the structure and practice of wet nursing” which was enacted December 23rd, 1874. (Schaefer, 1997, 48). Due to the Child Labor Law of

1874 being enacted, along with these other laws within the same year, France's government proved its commitment to children and their well-being. All three sent a message to the people that children were an important concern to the government. Even if the Child Labor Law of 1874 was not as successful or implemented to its full potential, the conversations that occurred during the debates gave the world a complete understanding of the many concerns of child legislation and their effects. The Child Labor Law of 1874 was quintessential because it united children's rights activists from different political parties for social legislation. People came together for children. "Today [they have] the right to have a real childhood before being harnessed to work, and the workshop has now been made human" -Suzanne Touren (qtd. in Heywood, 2002, 6).

### Progress Achieved by the New Law

The table below compares the improvements made by the law of May 19, 1874 to that of 1841 law; at a glance, it shows the extent of progress made by the new law

Table 1

1841 Law	1874 Law
Article 1: limits implementation to mechanical or continuous-fire factories and to workshops of 20 workers.	Article 1: Generalizes the application of the law to all industrial work, extends it to apprentices, underage girls up to 21 years old and to women for underground work.
Article 2: Age of entry, 8 years; working time up to 12 years, 8 hours.	Article 2: Fixed, depending on the situation, the age of admittance to 10 years or 12 years.
From 12 to 16 years, work day is 12 hours between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m.	

<p>Article 3: Children under 13 years of age are prohibited from working at night.</p> <p>Exceptions for accidental cases.</p> <p>Article 4: Children under 16 are forbidden from working on Sundays.</p> <p>Article 5: Obligation of education up to 12 years of age.</p> <p>Article 6: Livret surveillance.</p> <p>Article 7-8: Refer to Public Administration Regulations as an extension of the law, and to measures of the police and security.</p> <p>Article 9.</p> <p>Article 10: Commitment to established inspectors.</p> <p>Article 12: -Penalties, - Jurisdiction of the justice of the peace. -Fines 15 francs - in cases of repeated offence, 16 to 100 francs.</p> <p>Article 13: Transitional measures.</p>	<p>Article 3: From 10 to 12 years, stipulates the working hours to 6 hours.</p> <p>After 12 years, to hours with a break.</p> <p>Article 4: Children under 16 years old are forbidden from working at night without exception and underage girls.</p> <p>Article 5: Children under 16 and underage girls are prohibited from working on Sunday, even for cleaning the workshop.</p> <p>Article 6.</p> <p>Article 7: Prohibits underground work for children under 12 years old, underage girls, and women.</p> <p>Article 8: Required that up to 15 years old, there is evidence of acquired education to be eligible for admission to full time work.</p> <p>Article 9 &amp; 10.</p> <p>Articles 11 à 15: Precisely determine the measures of hygiene, police, and safety to be taken in the workshops.</p> <p>Articles 16 à 24: Establish a particular inspection paid by the State; local committees and a superior committee, to ensure the execution of the law.</p>
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	<p>Articles 25 à 29: Replace the jurisdiction of the criminal courts to that of the justices of the peace.</p> <p>Add to the penalties the poster and introduction; they affect public education through fines.</p> <p>Article 30: Extends the application of the provisions of the law to apprentices.</p> <p>Article 31: Facilitates the application of the law by reserving a period of one year as the statute of limitations for its adoption in the workshops.</p>
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(Tallon, Gustave, 1875, 454, 455) Translated by Emily Bickle

## Chapter 6

### **Conclusion: The Effects of the Child Labor Law of 1874**

Armand de Melun and Anatole de Melun fought for children's rights and made an impact on France. Armand proved to society the importance of charity and gave citizens an outlet to be charitable. He worked tirelessly to help children, seniors, veterans, and more. While Armand was dealing with the death of his son Joseph, Armand's brother, Anatole, became the president of the Melun Committee and began to fight in Armand's place. Together, the brothers brought children's rights to the people and the government. As Armand wrote in his memoir and as mentioned in chapter 2, "Ma vie est sa vie." They built upon the efforts of one another and changed not only societal views on children and childhood but the political climate of France and its responsibility to the children. Anatole was a leader for the Child Labor Law of 1874 and after this time, children's rights in France blossomed. Children continued to hold an importance in society proven by the laws that emerged after 1874. Education expanded rapidly under the influence of Jules Ferry, medicine and doctors for children found a new importance, and the state took on the responsibility to protect neglected children. Even now, France has strong children's rights that reflect historical laws from which the current laws were built.

Starting in the 1870s and 1880s, education found a platform and had the public's ear. There were a "series of laws and regulations passed between 1881 and 1886 that created in France for the first time a highly centralized system of free public primary education which was both compulsory and secular" (Bergen, 1986, 271). Their laws and regulations were conceived and implemented under Jules Ferry, elected as Minister of Public Instruction on September 23, 1880 (Bergen, 1986, 273). These education laws, known as the Jules Ferry Laws, stayed intact until the 1940s. On June 16, 1881, Jules Ferry helped pass a law to make primary school free (Duclert,

2014, 781). Then on March 28, 1882, primary school became obligatory (Duclert, 2014, 781). On October 30, 1886, education was secular in public schools (Duclert, 2014, 782). Some policies Jules Ferry implemented in schools included teacher training and exams to eliminate inequality (Nord, 2011, 48). Jules Ferry helped break down the school system to give all religions, genders, and classes access to education. One of the biggest differences he made was in the lives of girls. “Starting in the 1880s education was seen as a necessary for girls as well as boys” (Hutton, 1996, 187). He brought gender equality into education.

“The 1870’s and 1880’s witnessed a change in attitudes in which the importance of children was reaffirmed, stress placed on the values of doctors and science...” (Fuchs, 1984, 49). Medicine, doctors, and science in general that could help protect the lives of children became more important. This is evident in the Roussel Law of 1874 which dealt with wet nursing. The law specifically regulated nursing to protect infants (Fuchs, 1984, 57). In 1877, there was an influx of doctors practicing in the countryside which helped bring healthcare outside of the cities (Fuchs, 1984, 57). This meant that children in the country working in agricultural jobs would have access to medical attention. Doctors were even paid according to how many children they visited in a year. In 1886, children had unrestricted access to hospice care. In general, science began to play a key role in the protection of children (Fuchs, 1984, 57). Not only was it evident that the government wanted to protect the children already present, but they also advocated for families to have more children (Fuchs, 1984, 50). Because of a population growth in Germany, there was pressure for an increase in population in France. This worked in favor of children as people became more concerned with the well-being of the child. There was a growth in appreciation for literature concerning children and their upbringing (Hutton, 1986, 183). Due to the government’s apparent role in the lives of the

children, the question needed to be asked about how much control the state would have over the life of each individual child.

According to Rachel Fuchs, the rights of the government surpassed those of the parents. (49). During 1889, there were debates over the law of July, 24 1889 about who would be responsible for neglected or abandoned children (Fuchs, 1984, 58). This law concluded that if the child was in danger, a judge could take away parental rights. The judge would then decide who would be granted guardianship of the child. The law stated that if parents, “compromise either the security of the health and morality of their child,” they are unfit to be parents (Fuchs, 1984, 58). The decision reflected the shifting views about children. They were now seen as innocent, weak, and in need of care. This meant the government had no choice but to become a third guardian for children, a sentiment that still exists in France today. The laws established during the end of the nineteenth century founded a base for children’s rights to prosper.

The laws that emerged in the nineteenth century and the Child Labor Law of 1874 narrate the story of France’s children. The laws laid the foundation for children today. France has not only created its own legislation dealing with children’s rights, but also has signed every single significant treaty dealing with human rights ("Children's Rights: France"). They have extensive laws dealing with children’s health and social welfare all the way to child labor and exploitation. The laws in place in contemporary France are built from the laws of the Third Republic.

Today, children under the age of 16 are not allowed to be employed ("Children's Rights: France"). This is a significant change from the foundation in that the current law moves away from the original gender gap in the primary laws. However, the idea is still the same. There was a difference between work hours for boys and girls. When children gained more rights so did women, and the new child labor law restricts children of either gender to be working under the age



of 16 ("Children's Rights: France"). Laws expanded to include new technologies, such as children working on television or radio. These jobs are monitored to ensure the child is still able to develop and receive an education. One of the last major laws against child labor is that children under 18, while they may work, are limited to the number of hours they can legally complete. They are limited to no more than seven hours a day and thirty-five hours a week to prevent them from overworking ("Children's Rights: France"). These laws are important in determining France's general protection of children and can help gauge how the Third Republic allowed for the emergence of several current, extensive laws.

Today, children under six years of age receive "free and mandatory preventive health services in a widespread network of thousands of health-care facilities" ("Children's Rights: France"). This idea of the government overseeing the health of the child from an early age can be traced back to the 1874 laws when the state assumed a role as a primary caregiver to children in France. This law represents the state's commitment.

In addition to health care and protective services in place by the government, there are also "back to school allowances" which help low income families afford some of the expenses associated with the beginning of the school year ("Children's Rights: France"). These measures allow for families to not only reap the benefits of having their children in school, but also have the means possible to get them what they need at the beginning of each school year.

Education was another right that emerged from the late nineteenth century. Primary education has been compulsory since 1882. Children in France must attend school between the ages of six and sixteen. Children are not required to attend preschool, but it is encouraged and made "widely available" to children ("Children's Rights: France"). Today primary education starts at five years and secondary education is seven years. In order to show the impact of these laws, in

a population of 60 million, 12 million students were enrolled in primary and secondary public and private schools in 2005-2006 ("Children's Rights: France").

Each law served a purpose then and contributed to a foundation for rights in France today. Thanks to activists Armand de Melun and Anatole de Melun and their commitment to children in a time when they were not valued, children are free to experience their childhood today. The 1874 law has been adapted and changed but it represents the first steps toward protection for laboring children. It can be marked in history as the turning point for children. To understand how children's rights can emerge, this law and these men exemplify how to strive for success.

Social welfare policies in France and worldwide are indebted to the Melun brothers. Armand de Melun devoted his life to charity. From an early age he volunteered and helped then establish charities supporting people from every stage of life. Anatole de Melun worked with the 1841 law and was directly influenced by its failure to protect children. Afterwards, he became president of the Melun Committee represented in the debates for the Child Labor Law of 1874. The law's versatility allowed it to influence education, moral abandonment, and healthcare for children. The enactment of the Child Labor Law of 1874 set a tone for the environment within the government and the bills they would be willing to address. While there are many factors that influenced the brothers, the most important factor was the children themselves. The children are the story - a story of suffering terrible working conditions, life on the streets, being forgotten and neglected. The children provided the impetus for the fight.

This thesis has examined two men whose work advanced children's rights. The success story outlined in this thesis can be considered evidence for the future in other countries. The story confirms that it is possible to challenge and transform children's role in society. Armand de Melun and Anatole de Melun proved that activists have the ability to inspire and forge transformations

on views on children, their innocence, and importance. The Child Labor Law of 1874 proved that one law can affect the lives of children and encourage the production of other social protection laws. These specific cases should be an example for activists and nations today of what is necessary to enact change. This piece of history is a part of a larger social movement necessary around the world.

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# Academic Vita of Emily Bickle

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## EDUCATION

### **The Pennsylvania State University**

May 2018

University Park, Pennsylvania

Bachelor of Arts in Global & International Studies, with a Human Rights focus

Bachelor of Science in French and Francophone Studies, Applied French option

Minor in Spanish

### **Paterno Fellows Program, College of the Liberal Arts**

Honors Program including advanced academic coursework, ethics study, and leadership/service commitment

### **Study Abroad Programs: Brighton, England & Montpellier, France**

Summer 2016, Spring 2017

- Resided with a host family to strengthen language skills, understand the French culture
- Attended 5 French classes taught solely in French
- Expanded my knowledge of British culture by taking a class and exploring museums in London and Brighton
- Served as a student ambassador for the University of Sussex and volunteered at the Education Abroad Fair

## COMMUNITY SERVICE EXPERIENCE

### **Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance MaraTHON**

University Park, PA

Volunteer

Fall 2017

- Raised \$6303.36 as Independent Dancer Couple and danced for 46 hours to support the Four Diamonds Fund which supports families with a child battling cancer, and cancer research
- Fundraised with spaghetti dinners, merchandise sales
- Contacted possible/past donors with letters and thank you notes

### **Global Brigades**

University Park, PA

Alternate Fundraising Chair

Fall 2016-present

- Serve on executive board to organize events to fundraise brigade trips to Ghana, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama

President for the Human Rights Brigade

Fall 2016

- Organized bi-weekly meetings, and fundraisers
- Collaborated with students on a human rights' brigade to Panama
- Worked with a family concerning their legal issues, held open legal clinics for the community of Yaviza, and prepared a charla to educate students ages 11-13 on their right to a life free from violence

### **National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week Committee**

University Park, PA

Committee Member

Fall 2016, 2017

- Initiated/Hosted two Poverty Open Mic Nights where students shared poems/ songs about poverty
- Participated each week in a meeting and created fliers to market the events

## LEADERSHIP & WORK EXPERIENCE

### **Penn State's Wilderness Orientation Programs**

State College, PA & White Mountains, NH

Member of Logistics Team

Summer 2017

- Coordinated students' forms, food, gear, and arrival to and from the airport

Backpacking Leader

Summer 2015, 2016

- Supervised eight freshmen with a co-leader on two separate week-long backpacking trips

### **Student Conservation Association with the United States Forest Service**

Minturn, CO

Wilderness Ranger Intern

Summer 2017

- Served as part of a wilderness ranger team to remove trees from the trail, completed solitude monitoring, practiced Leave No Trace principles, and learned about conservation of the forests

### **Recreation Parks Tourism and Management 330**

University Park, PA

Classroom Mentor

Spring 2016

- Aided professor in the RPTM 330 class by leading reading discussions to keep students engaged, managed a group through an interactive project by delegating jobs and establishing guidelines, and created and taught a lesson plan with seven other mentors for an hour-long class

### **Global Engagement & Leadership Experience**

University Park, PA

Participant

*Spring 2016*

- Participated in a global engagement conference to learn about other cultures as well as share my own
- Created open communication and cultural understanding between international and domestic students

**The Center for Global Studies**

University Park, PA

Intern

*Fall 2016*

- Corresponded with other interns to publish a monthly newsletter about the center's events, marketed the center's lectures and developed a lesson plan for sixth graders about global citizenship and taught the lesson to two sixth grade classes

#### SKILLS

- Advanced in French
- Proficient in Spanish
- CPR Certified
- Wilderness First Aid Certified
- Leave No Trace Camping
- Digital Photography

#### ACADEMIC AWARDS

- Dean's List
- College of Liberal Arts Enrichment Funding (Summer 2016, Spring 2017)
- Schreyer Honors College Grant for Study Abroad