

off my shoulders. The fact was that they did not believe they were making any important misstatement, for though they knew that I had held an official position at Peking, they could not conceive that it was independent of the Chinese government; they simply thought that I and the other men employed with me in the legation were regular T'ung-shih, or agents in the pay of the Chinese to facilitate the transaction of business, the presentation of tribute from our people. This is the opinion of nearly all Chinese as regards foreigners; for them foreigners are but frontagers of the great empire, of the Chinese world, and tributaries of the emperor. I have often been questioned in China as to the form of government in my country, and when I replied that our sovereign was changed every four years, that his title was Pi-li-shih-tien-te (the best transcription our treaty makers have been able to coin for the word President), and that he had a council of about four hundred members, they expressed astonishment that there was still in the world a people sunk in such savagery.

But to return to the Mongols. We remained in the Narim Valley for five days, during which time snow fell heavily (we were then in the first days of May), so that they doubted whether we could cross the Nomoran Pass

again for some days to come, and Dowé, my new guide, proposed that we should try the Hato Pass, a little to the east of it. This road was very rocky, but a little snow was usually found on it at this season of the year. The Dsassak did his best to make me stop a few days longer with him, sending me every day a big bottle of *arak*, and *tarak*, or sour milk, by the bucketful; but even these luxuries had not the power to delay me, and on the 5th of May I broke up my camp and moved about fifteen miles in the direction of the Hato Pass, which we did not cross until the third day after leaving Narim, as snow had again fallen on our way up to it. I found this pass a great deal easier and lower than the two others I had crossed in this range; its altitude is 15,290 feet, and there was hardly any snow on it. The descent on the south side was extremely steep though short, and we soon found ourselves near my old camp, some ten miles east of the Alang-nor. And now began the most fatiguing portion of my whole journey, across the desert tableland and far beyond the sources of the Yellow River, amid snow and piercingly cold winds, with starving horses, the sickening effects of the rarefied air, and the constant fear of falling in with some party of Golok, the Bedouins of northern Tibet.

*W. Woodville Rockhill.*

## THE MEMOIRS OF TALLEYRAND.<sup>1</sup>

INTRODUCTION BY THE AMERICAN MINISTER TO FRANCE.



TALLEYRAND has been dead fifty-two years. Within two months the first volumes of the memoirs he left are to be issued. He himself forbade their publication till thirty years after his death, and at that date his literary executors found a further postponement necessary. He was thought to be the depository of more secrets than any other man of his day, with greater power over the reputations of more men, living and dead. Naturally these memoirs were long awaited with a singular mixture of curiosity and alarm. Not the least element of the absorbing interest which still attaches to them arises from the desire to see how much of the piquancy and flavor of a famous man's recollections may evaporate in half a century.

The career these memoirs portray was and remains unparalleled in modern Europe for

length and variety of distinguished service. Beginning with Louis XVI., from whom he received his first appointment, and from whom he went later with a letter to the king of England, Talleyrand served in all eight known masters — besides a great number of others who were at one time or another said to have him secretly in their pay. He became President of the Constituent Assembly which organized the French Revolution. He was sent to London on a secret mission with a passport from Danton. He was Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Directory, under the Consulate, under the Empire, under Louis XVIII., and under Louis Philippe. In diplomatic skill and success contemporary public opinion held him the first man of his period — that is to say, for half a century the first man in Europe. As to real influence on affairs, it is doubtful if any minister since can be said to have exerted as much, with the exceptions only of Bismarck and Cavour. Even they did not cover so wide

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a range, or deal with such a bewildering variety of negotiations, extending over so great a time, and furthering the views of so many masters.

Sir Henry Bulwer has a phrase that, in a way, measures him: "He was the most important man in the Constituent Assembly after Mirabeau, and the most important man in the Empire after Napoleon." But to gage fairly his extraordinary public life it must be remembered that he held place and gained in power for forty years after Mirabeau's death; and that he had been one of the leading men of France before Napoleon was heard of, and remained a minister and an ambassador of France long after Napoleon had eaten out his heart at St. Helena.

Yet, in spite of his amazing career, his countrymen have not been generally disposed to speak well of him. Napoleon called him a silk stocking filled with filth, and on occasion addressed the same epithet directly to him. Chateaubriand said of him: "When Monsieur Talleyrand is not conspiring, he is making corrupt bargains." Carnot said: "He brings with him all the vices of the old régime, without having been able to acquire any of the virtues of the new one; he has no fixed principles; he changes them as he does his linen, and takes them according to the wind of the day—a philosopher, when philosophy is the mode; a republican now, because that is necessary in order to become anything. To-morrow he will declare for an absolute monarchy, if he can make anything out of it. I don't want him at any price." Mirabeau called him "this vile, base trickster"; and again wrote: "It is dirt and money that he wants. For money he has sold his honor and his friend. For money he would sell his soul—and he would be right, for he would be trading muck for gold." The very member of the Assembly who secured his recall from exile, Chénier, wrote of him:

This letter of the Abbé Maurice proves to me that after having been anarchist and Orleanist, and not having been Robespierreist only because Robespierre would n't have him, he has now become a partizan of the Directory. This limp-foot, without respect for his bishopric, is like a sponge, which sucks up every liquid into which it is dropped, but, unlike the sponge, he never gives anything back. Here he is, recalled from exile yesterday, and proposing proscriptions for to-morrow. If the Directory wants blood, look out for your head; Maurice will not refuse it.

Modern French writers, while, of course, less passionate, have been apt to agree in admitting his extraordinary venality, his treachery to his chiefs, and his lack of veracity. Lamartine admired him, but Louis Blanc was as severe as the bitterest of his contemporaries. Guizot said he was a man of the court and of diplo-

macy—not of government; that he was indifferent to means and almost indifferent to the end, provided he found in it a personal success. And, to quote but one opinion not coming from his countrymen, Gouverneur Morris said of him: "This man appears to me polished, cold, tricky, ambitious, and bad."

Few men, indeed, spoke well of him. Towards the close of his life, when he was Ambassador in London, an attack was made upon him in the House of Lords by the Marquis of Londonderry. The Duke of Wellington offered a spirited defense. "He had held official relations with M. de Talleyrand in most critical periods. Never had he encountered a man more vigorous and skillful in protecting the interests of his own country, or one more upright and honorable in his attitude towards other countries." Talleyrand was found the next day reading the report of this debate with tears in his eyes; and he said to his visitor, "I am all the more grateful to the Duke, since he is the one statesman in the world who has ever spoken well of me."

The evil in a public man's life is apt to attract wider attention than the good, and certainly no exception to the rule has been made in Talleyrand's favor. Yet, taking his career from the records of his countrymen prior to this issue of his own memoirs, what an extraordinary picture is presented! Here are a few of the lines in it:

A profligate priest, who owed his start in life to an ill-flavored joke about the immorality of Paris, made in the drawing-room of Mme. du Barry, the king's favorite.

A bishop who was forced into the public journals to explain that the money he had recently made in gambling was not won in gambling-houses, but in clubs; and that it was not so much as reported—being only thirty thousand francs, instead of six or seven hundred thousand.

A confidential friend of Mirabeau, who was accused of poisoning him.

A minister, and for years the intimate, of Napoleon, and yet accused of a plot to assassinate him.

A great statesman whose enormous and continuous receipt of bribes from the beginning to the end of his long career is unquestioned.

A trusted Minister of Foreign Affairs who, while in office under the Directory, thwarted their measures and plotted for the *coup d'état* of Napoleon; who, while in office under Napoleon, intrigued with the emperors of Russia and Austria to defeat his plans, and plotted for the return of the Bourbons; who, while in office under Louis XVIII., plotted for his overthrow, and for the accession of Louis Philippe.



The Constituent Assembly forbade his return to France. Pitt expelled him from England. Washington refused to receive him in America. The Pope excommunicated him.

And yet he lived to be summoned back to France, and appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Revolutionary Government; lived to return to England as Ambassador from France, with the prestige of the most distinguished living diplomatist, to meet with a reception which could scarcely have been more respectful if he had been a crowned head; lived to give notice to the American Ministers Plenipotentiary in Paris that they must buy peace or leave the country; lived to have the Pope's excommunication withdrawn, and died in the odor of sanctity, with his king at his bedside, and the blessings of the Cardinal of Paris.

Many of the lineaments in this strange portrait, drawn by the French historians, are not likely to be much changed. There seems little chance to erase the licentiousness, the treachery, the deceit, the monstrous venality. In recalling them, however, it must always be remembered that he can only be fairly judged by the standard of his century, which was lax to a degree we can hardly comprehend, especially with reference to the first of these faults, and the last. When the American commissioners resented Talleyrand's demand for a bribe of \$250,000 for himself, and a bigger one, called a loan, for the Directory, his representative said naïvely: "Don't you know that everything is bought in Paris? Do you dream that you can get on with this government without paying your way?"

It must be further remembered, and to his honor, that while he betrayed her rulers, he never betrayed France. On the contrary, when he was secretly thwarting his masters he was often helping his country. On several notable occasions he rendered her service of incomparable value, and may almost be said to have saved her from destruction as a first-class European power. It was a touching, and in the main a just, eulogy pronounced on him at his death in varying phrases by both Thiers and Mignet, that he had always shown an aversion to persecutions and violence, and that he had never done harm to anybody. In the main this praise is deserved. "But," exclaims Sainte-Beuve, in protest (writing in 1867), "there are three points in his life which raise terrible doubts—the death of Mirabeau, the affair of the Duke d'Enghien, the affair of Maubreuil." This last was the alleged plot for the assassination of Napoleon.

Talleyrand was perfectly aware of the shocking charges against himself in connection with the death of Mirabeau, but he makes no ref-

erence whatever to them in the portion of his memoirs treating of that period. The fact that they were believed at the time only shows the estimate then placed on him by some of his contemporaries. On the other hand, it must be said that many things make the story improbable, and that the evidence is circumstantial, vague, and inconclusive. The second charge, to which great weight has been attached, was the alleged responsibility for the murder of the Duke d'Enghien. This Napoleon repeatedly, in conversation and in writing, fastened directly and positively upon him. Talleyrand devotes one chapter to repelling the accusation, and fixing the responsibility for the crime on Napoleon himself. As to the third charge, that of trying to have Napoleon assassinated, even Talleyrand's enemies must admit that, while some circumstances were certainly suspicious, the evidence is fragmentary and not convincing.

No portrait of the man can be just which does not relieve by many light touches the somber colors in which his countrymen have generally depicted him. He had the uniform courtesy and dignity of the old régime. He was the most accomplished of courtiers, the most correct of masters of ceremonies. He spoke well, and he wrote better—his few appearances at the Academy really being events. In the brilliant salons of the court circles before the Revolution he was a social lion. Women always liked and helped him. His witty sayings were the talk of Paris. In prosperity he was not arrogant; in times of trouble he bore himself with unruffled dignity and composure. When Napoleon denounced him in the presence of others, for treachery and venality, he merely said, as he went down the staircase, "What a pity that so great a man should have been so badly brought up." At another time when Napoleon, then First Consul, asked him how he had become so rich (he was said at this period to be worth thirty millions of francs), he replied, "Nothing could be more simple, General; I bought Rentes the day before the 18th Brumaire [the day on which Napoleon seized power], and I sold them the day after." He had taken office under Louis XVIII., and was representing France at the Congress of Vienna, when Napoleon suddenly came back from Elba. He merely discovered that his liver was a little out of order, and he must go to Carlsbad. "The first duty of a diplomat," he observed, after a Congress, "is to take care of his liver." When things went wrong, says Sainte-Beuve, he always had trouble with his liver. In fact, a few months later, after Waterloo, there were fresh symptoms of the same disease so long as Louis XVIII. regarded him



askance; but the moment he was reappointed Minister of Foreign Affairs all was well.

The harm Talleyrand did was chiefly to individuals. The good he did was to France. His public action in the Constituent Assembly was most important and in the main most judicious. The French writers of that period, and even down to the day of his death, habitually ascribed sinister motives to every act, and professed to find his hidden hand in many excesses of the Revolutionary party. But he can only be fairly judged now by what he is known to have done; and by that standard there is no Frenchman who might not be proud of his record in the Constituent Assembly. He was the pioneer in the establishment of the metric system. He opposed the issue of the assignats, and accurately foretold their end. He presented an elaborate and judicious plan for the reform of the finances and the establishment of a sinking fund. He urged the suppression of lotteries. He presented, in a comprehensive and in the main a judicious report and bill, a system of national education, including a plan for the secularization of the schools. He favored the policy of peace and alliance with England. Bishop as he still was, he presented the measure for selling the property of the clergy, and thus secured for the almost bankrupt treasury of Louis XVI. two milliards of francs. He carried the measure for abolishing the oppressive tithes of the clergy. In effect this representative of the old nobility of France showed himself among the earliest to recognize the inevitable changes, and loyally endeavored at first to introduce reforms which would enable the monarchy to adapt itself to them without too violent a wrench. As time went on he became convinced of the incapacity of the king to meet the crisis. Thenceforward he went with the tide, but strove rather to moderate and restrain it. The address to the people of France which the Assembly chose him to prepare breathed throughout a spirit of genuine and almost republican devotion to the rights of man as we now understand them.

In other and widely differing occasions his influence was exerted to promote peace, and to discourage wars of mere ambition. He faithfully warned Napoleon against his Spanish policy, and fell into disgrace for a time through efforts to thwart it. With that Spanish policy the downfall of Napoleon began. At Erfurt he protested against the scheme of wanton aggression against Austria, and even maintained private relations and had nightly interviews with the Czar Alexander to keep him from being led into it by Napoleon's importunities. At another stage in Napoleon's wild aggressions he protested, "I do not want to

be the torment of Europe." He lost his place in the Cabinet of Louis XVIII. because that king would not tolerate his plans for an alliance with England. Later on he went to England as the ambassador of Louis Philippe, and there negotiated the treaty of 1834, which secured his country many years of peace and prosperity. He rendered useful service at the peace of Amiens. At the Congress of Vienna his efforts were directed to an English rather than to a Russian alliance, and for this Thiers and others have criticized him; but there is no proof that his policy would not have resulted as well. After the hundred days, he did everything in his power to protect French property and preserve French territory.

To close this cursory recital, two other acts of Talleyrand's may be cited, which this generation should not allow to be forgotten. He proposed under the Consulate a practical system of civil service for the Department of Foreign Affairs. He was permitted to introduce it in part only, but his remarkable memorandum on the subject can be read with profit to this day. He defended the liberty of the press under Louis XVIII. against the tendency of the king and the court. Twice in the Chamber of Peers, in successive years, he faced the reaction on this subject, and exposed the fatal path on which they wished to enter.

Let us take for granted [he once said] that what has been desired, what has been held good and useful by all the enlightened men of a country, without variation, during a succession of years of various governments, is a necessity of the time. Such, gentlemen, is the liberty of the press. . . . I do not say that governments ought to hasten to recognize these new necessities. But when they have been recognized, to take back what was given, or—which comes to the same thing—to suspend it indefinitely, that is a rashness which, more than any one, I hope may not bring a sad repentance to those who have conceived the convenient but pitiful thought. You must never compromise the good faith of a government. In our days it is not easy to deceive for a long time. There is some one who has more sense than Voltaire, more sense than Bonaparte, more than any Director, more than any Minister, past, present, or to come. That is—everybody. To undertake or even to persist in a controversy where all the world is interested against you is a fault; and to-day all political faults are dangerous.

Students of current American politics are accustomed to the phrase, "Everybody is wiser than anybody." It may interest some of them to note from the above that Talleyrand said so, before the American politicians.

The forthcoming memoirs have been expected to clear up some of the dark charges against him, and to do much towards clarifying our views of that extraordinary epoch.



They are sure to leave a better impression as to the character and work of Talleyrand himself. One of his critics, Sainte-Beuve, judiciously says: "I am persuaded that everything to be found in the letters and other writings of Talleyrand will give one a more favorable idea of him. People of genius like his never put the worst of their thoughts or of their lives on paper." His relation to the murder of the Duke d'Enghien, and his treachery at one period or another of his service to almost every master he ever served, are all likely to appear in a new and more favorable aspect. He will shed a new

light on the career of Napoleon, and on the secret motives which controlled the Emperor at critical moments. He may disclose his real opinions of the religion he preached in his youth, and he will certainly disclose his real opinions about the monarchy which he helped to overturn and to reestablish. But he will make no attempt to explain away his unfortunate relations to America, on both sides of the water, and there is no sign that he will make the slightest reference to his constant acceptance of bribes.

*Whitelaw Reid.*

## THE MEMOIRS.<sup>1</sup>

### A STRANGE CHILDHOOD.

[The opening volumes of the Memoirs are noticeably wanting in references to the private life and domestic associations of Talleyrand. He does, however, give some details of his neglected childhood, and with these the extracts from the first volume may properly begin.]



I WAS born in 1754; my parents had a very small fortune, but held at court a position which, if properly taken advantage of, could secure for themselves and their children the highest offices.

Louis XV. was then enjoying universal respect. The first subjects of the Crown still considered obedience to the sovereign as glorious; they did not conceive of any other power or luster than that proceeding from the king's majesty.

The queen was revered, but the very melancholy of her virtues did not prepossess people in her favor. She was wanting in those outward charms that caused the nation to be so proud of the fine features of Louis XV. Hence the mixed feeling of justice and indulgence which, on one hand, led people to pity the queen, and, on the other, induced them to excuse the inclination shown by the king towards Madame de Pompadour. M. de Penthièvre, the Maréchale de Duras, Madame de Luynes, Madame de Marsan, Madame de Périgord, the Duchesse de Fleury, M. de Sourches, Madame de Villars, M. de Tavannes, Madame d'Estissac, doubtless grieved at the fact, but were then afraid of disclosing by censure what was looked upon as one of those open family secrets, that nobody dares to deny, but everybody hopes to palliate by hushing them up and behaving as though one were not aware of their existence. All the personages I have just

mentioned would have considered that they were forfeiting their honor by admitting too openly the failings of the king.

My relatives held various positions with the royal family. My grandmother was lady of the queen's household, and was treated with especial regard by the king; she always resided at Versailles, and kept no house in Paris. She had five children. Like that of all persons connected with the court, their early tuition was rather neglected, or, at least, devoted to few important branches of knowledge. As to their subsequent education, it was to consist merely in imparting to them what were termed the usages of society. Their outward appearance was prepossessing.

My grandmother had noble, refined, and reserved manners. Her piety won universal respect for her, and the fact of her numerous family caused the frequent steps she took towards securing and promoting the future of her children to be regarded as quite natural.

My father held the same views as his mother, concerning the education befitting children whose parents enjoyed a position at court. Thus mine was rather left to take care of itself; not through any indifference towards me, but owing to the special disposition of the mind which leads some people to consider that the best plan is *to do, or to be like everybody else.*

Too much care would have seemed pedantry; affection, too openly expressed, would have been regarded as quite unusual and therefore ridiculous. Children, at that time, inherited their father's *name and title.* Parents considered they had done enough for their progeny by opening a career to them, and securing for them advantageous posts; by marrying them, and increasing their allowance.

Paternal care had not yet come into fashion; the fashion was, indeed, the reverse, when

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I was a child; thus, my early years were cheerlessly spent in an outlying district of Paris. At the age of four, I was still there, when I accidentally fell from the top of a cupboard, and dislocated my foot. The woman to whose care I was intrusted only informed my family of this several months afterwards. The truth became known only when my parents sent for me to go to Périgord to visit Madame de Chalais, my grandmother, who had expressed a wish to see me. Although Madame de Chalais was my great-grandmother I always called her grandmother, very likely, I think, because that name implied a closer relationship. The dislocation of my foot had been neglected too long to be remedied; even my other foot, having had to bear alone the whole weight of my body, had grown weaker, and thus I remained lame for life.

That accident had a great influence over my after-life. It, indeed, led my parents to think I was unfit for a military career, or, at least, that, in such, I should labor under great disadvantages; they were thus induced to seek for me some other profession, which, in their eyes, would be best calculated to serve the interests of the *family*. For, in great families, the *family* was far more cared for than its members individually, chiefly those young members who were still unknown. These considerations are rather painful to my mind, so I will not dwell further on them.

Madame de Chalais was a most refined and distinguished lady; her mind, her language, the dignity of her manners, the sound of her voice, were most winning. She retained what was still termed the wit of the Mortemarts; indeed, she was a Mortemart by birth.

My appearance pleased her; she acquainted me with feelings heretofore unknown to me. She was the first member of my family who displayed any affection towards me, and also the first who taught me the sweetness of filial love. God bless her for it! Indeed, I was fondly attached to her! To this day, her memory is still dear to me. Many a time have I regretted her! Many a time have I bitterly conceived how priceless is the sincere affection of some member of one's own family. Such affection affords immense comfort through the trials and troubles of life, when those who inspire it are near us. When they are away, it soothes both the heart and the mind, and enables us to collect calmly our thoughts. . . .

I am perhaps dwelling too long on those details, but I am not writing a book, I am only noting my impressions. The recollection of what I saw and heard during those early years of my life is extremely sweet to my mind. "Your name," I was daily told, "was always held in veneration in our province. Our fam-

ily," people affectionately said to me, "was at all times serving some member of yours. This piece of ground we received from your grandfather—he it was who built our church—my mother's cross is a gift from your grandmother—he who comes from a good stock cannot degenerate! You will also be kind, will you not?" I am very likely indebted to those early years for the general spirit of my conduct in life. If I displayed affectionate and even tender feelings without too much familiarity; if in various circumstances I showed pride without haughtiness; if I love and respect old people, it is at Chalais, by the side of my grandmother, that I imbibed all the good feelings which surrounded my relatives in that district, and which they enjoyed with delight. For feeling constitutes an inheritance which increases from generation to generation. For a long time to come people whose fame or fortune is of recent origin will be unable to appreciate its sweetness.

[The neglect with which Talleyrand's parents treated him, and the measures taken to drive him into the priesthood, for which he felt no inclination, stung him through life, and the bitterness he felt is shown in many passages like the following:]

I was struck with the sudden manner in which I was sent off to school without being previously brought to my father and mother. I was eight years old, and I had never yet felt my father's gaze rest upon me. I was told—and I took it for granted—that imperative reasons had caused this precipitate step to be taken. I obeyed.

Once each week I was brought home to dinner by the Abbé Hardi, and taken back to school as soon as we rose from table, after hearing on every occasion the selfsame recommendation: "Be good, my son, and give satisfaction to Monsieur l'Abbé." I worked pretty well; my schoolfellows were fond of me, and I took kindly to my new life. I had led it for three years when I was afflicted with small-pox. . . . The principal informed my people, and they sent a sedan-chair to have me conveyed to Madame Lerond, a nurse employed by the school physician, M. Lehoc, who lived in the Rue Saint-Jacques. At that time, patients attacked with small-pox were still shut up inside double rows of curtains; the windows were hermetically closed; a huge fire was lit in the room, and efforts were made to bring out the fever with very potent draughts. Many a man has been killed outright by this fiery cure; I recovered; I was not even marked. . . .

I was now in my twelfth year; during my convalescence I began musing over my situation with a feeling of surprise. The little interest that had been shown in my illness, the



fact of my having been brought to school without even an interview with my father and mother; these and other sad memories pained me at heart. . . .

No visit home was permitted me before my departure for Reims, and—let me say it once for all, and, I trust, never more think of it—I am perhaps the only man of noble birth, and scion of a large and respected family, who never experienced for one week in his life the bliss of feeling himself under the paternal roof. . . .

All the care with which they surrounded me was planned to impress profoundly upon me the conviction that, my lameness making service in the army impossible, I must necessarily enter the Church—a man of my name having no other career. . . .

No means of defense had I against this; I was alone, and all my surroundings seemed to tell me, as though with preconcerted uniformity of language, that I had no chance of escaping the plan adopted by my parents on my behalf. After a year's sojourn at Reims, seeing I could not possibly avoid my fate, I wearily gave way to it, and allowed myself to be led to St. Sulpice.

#### TALLEYRAND AND PARISIAN SOCIETY.

[He tells how he settled in Paris after taking holy orders, cultivated the acquaintance of people who might be useful, and went into society. But he does not tell how he secured the abbey of Périgord by so pleasing Madame du Barry with a questionable joke about the immorality of Paris that she asked the king to give him a lucrative appointment.]

I SETTLED in Bellechasse in a snug little house. My first thought was to gather the nucleus of that library which afterwards became valuable for the selection of the books, the scarcity of the editions, and the elegance of the bindings. I cultivated the acquaintance of such men as were most distinguished by their past lives, by their works, by their ambition, or by the prospects held out to them by their birth, their connection, or their talents. Placed thus, by my own act, within that vast circle where so many superior men shone with such various lights, I indulged in the proud consciousness of being indebted for what I was to no one but myself. Indeed, it was a happy moment for me when, having been appointed by the king to the abbey of Saint-Denis, at Reims, I was able to use my first year's income in handing to the Harcourt College a large portion of my fees which was still unpaid, and thus make a return to M. Langlois for the kindly care he had bestowed upon me in my early years. . . .

The cold manners, the outward show of reserve I had adopted had made some people assert that I was a clever man. Madame de

Gramont, who disliked any reputation of which she had not been the prime mover, proved useful to me, at my *début*, in endeavoring to embarrass me. It was on the occasion of my first supper at Madame de Bouffler's, at Auteuil. I was seated at one end of the table, barely venturing an occasional word with my neighbor. Suddenly, in a loud and harsh voice, Madame de Gramont calls me by my name and asks me what had struck me so forcibly, when entering the room after her, as to make me say: *Ah! Ah!*—"Madame la Duchesse," I reply, "has not heard me rightly; what I said was not *Ah! Ah!* it was *Oh! Oh!*—" My answer, poor wit though it was, raised a laugh; I went on with my supper, and said no more; but, on rising from table, I was greeted by several of the guests, and received for the following days various invitations which enabled me to make the acquaintance of persons whom I was very anxious to meet.

[The following is an exquisite portrait in miniature of one of Talleyrand's early friends.]

Nobody ever appeared to me to possess a conversational charm comparable with hers. She had no pretentiousness; her words never bore, if I may say so, any striking color; she spoke in delicate shadings; no witticism ever fell from her lips; that would have been too violent. Witticisms are remembered, whereas she only sought to please, and to let the words be forgotten. An abundant stock of facile, new, and ever delicate expressions supplied the varied requirements of her intelligence.

This lady has inspired me with a thorough aversion for people who, in order to speak the more accurately, use none but technical terms. I have no faith in the brain power, or in the science, of persons who are ignorant of equivalents, and go on for ever defining; it is to their memory alone they are indebted for what they know, and, accordingly, they know it badly. I am sorry that this remark should have occurred to me during M. de Humboldt's stay in Paris; but now it is penned, let it remain. . . .

The power of what is called "Society" in France was prodigious during the years which preceded the Revolution, and even throughout the whole of the last century. Those light and varied forms which are peculiarly its own have probably hindered our historians from noticing the origin and following up the effects of this outcome of modern civilization. I have often thought of it. The following are my views in this connection. In those countries where the origin of the present forms of government is lost to view in the mist of ages, the influence of "Society" must needs be immense. Where,



on the contrary, the constitution is but of recent date, and, consequently, still present before men's eyes, this influence is null. Thus it is, that Athens and Rome in ancient times, England and the United States of America in our own day, have had, and have, no "Society."

[He disapproved of the increasing number of literary men in society.]

Society, under Louis XV., had all the weaknesses of his reign; it opened its sanctuary, a few literary men entered. Conversation, first, and works of taste, subsequently, were benefited thereby. M. de Fontenelle, M. de Montesquieu, M. de Buffon, President Hénault, M. de Mairan, M. de Voltaire, all brought up under the influence of the century of Louis XIV., preserved in the world that mutual regard, that freedom, that noble ease, which were the charm and the fame of the Paris literary gatherings. That was the lofty standard which should have been kept up.

But, under the reign of Louis XVI., members of all the different grades of literature spread themselves through "Society." No man kept in his own place, confusion extended through the ranks, pretensions were boldly displayed and the sanctuary was violated. Then, the general tone of "Society" underwent modifications of every kind. Knowing everything, probing everything, judging of everything, was the aim of all. For sentiments were substituted philosophical ideas; for passions, the analysis of the human heart; for the desire of pleasing, personal opinions; for recreations, plans, schemes, etc.—Everything became unnatural. I say no more, for I fear I am too strongly foreshadowing the French Revolution, from which several years and numerous events still separate me.

#### LA FAYETTE — THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

[He did not like La Fayette; and he thought the true interests of France lay in cultivating close relations with Northern Africa rather than with America.]

M. DE LA FAYETTE belongs to a noble family of Auvergne, boasting of but little luster; under Louis XIV. the intelligence of a woman had brought the name into some renown.

He was born to a large fortune, and had married a lady of the house of Noailles. Had not an extraordinary occurrence drawn him out of the rank and file, he would have been ignored all his life. M. de La Fayette had not enough in himself to come to anything; for he is below the standard at which one is reckoned a clever man. In his desire to distinguish himself, as well as in the means he uses, there is something that seems taught. What he does looks as though it did not proceed from his

own self; he gives one the idea of a man following the advice of somebody else. Unfortunately no one will boast of having offered him any at the most important moment of his life. . . .

Sympathy for the cause of America was kept up in France by the report of all the deliberations of Congress, published each week by a newspaper named "Le Courier de l'Europe." This, I believe the first really political paper we ever had, was edited by a man who belonged to the police; his name was Morande, and he was the author of an infamous lampoon known as "Le Gazetier Cuirassé."

Frenchmen, brought to the colonies on military expeditions, came home with glowing descriptions of the wealth contained in the New World. America was on every lip. In my youth great lords had one peculiarity; they attributed to themselves the discovery of anything that was new to them, and the interest they felt therein increased in proportion. "What should we be were it not for America?" everybody wanted to know. "She gives us a navy," stated M. Malouet; "she extends our trade," the Abbé Raynal proclaimed; "she gives work to our overcrowded populations," repeated the administrators of the day; "she welcomes all restless spirits," said the ministers; "she is the refuge of all dissenters," remarked the philosophers, etc.—Nothing more useful, nothing more pacific, in appearance. There was no topic of conversation but the glory attached to the discovery of America. And yet, let us sift matters to the bottom. What has been the result of all our communications with the New World? Do we see less misery round about us? Have all our disorganizers disappeared? Have not the longing looks we have cast abroad lessened our love for fatherland? These newly discovered parts of the globe having given England and France additional points of irritation, are not wars more frequent, longer, of greater extent, and more costly? The history of mankind supplies this sad conclusion: that the spirit of strife rushes to every spot on earth to which communication is opened. . . .

When we examine the geographical situation of that solid, compact body, called France, and carry our eye all along its coast line, we cannot refrain from feeling surprised that the Mediterranean Sea has not always been considered as part of its domain. This basin, the only access to which is an opening a few miles in width, is inclosed on all sides by countries that have no considerable sea trade. France gathering by herself, and through Spain, her ally, all the resources that may be supplied by the ports of Toulon, Marseilles, Carthage, etc., ought to have in the Mediterranean any



preponderance she may choose to acquire. The immense advantages which might result therefrom have been neglected. . . .

Have we a greater interest in reëstablishing our former relations with the New World than in seeking fresh ones with the Old? It is important that this political problem should be solved. If it were proved that agriculture is less difficult and not more expensive in the Old World than in the New, that the produce is equally good, and that the great shipping interests will not be injured by the new state of things, the solution would be complete. . . .

That is the reason why, at a time in my life when I had the power to do so, I introduced into the Amiens Treaty — merely as a philosophical view, so as to give umbrage to nobody — certain points which aimed at the civilizing of the African coast. If the government had followed me up; if, instead of sacrificing all that was left of the splendid army of Egypt to the vain hope of reconquering San Domingo, this imposing and already acclimatized force had been directed against Barbary, it is probable that my philosophy would have become a practical fact, and that France, instead of destroying a fine army at San Domingo in a few months, would have established herself firmly on the African shore of the Mediterranean and would have spared us the gigantic and disastrous continental system. . . .

[Later on, in discussing the growth of the spirit of equality before the Revolution, Talleyrand shows more plainly his feeling against the French assistance to the American Revolution.]

I must repeat it once more, that portion of the army which had been so incautiously sent to the help of the American colonies struggling against the mother-country, had in the New World imbibed doctrines of equality. The men returned full of admiration for these doctrines, and perhaps with a desire to put them in practice in France; and, by a kind of fatality, this was the very time hit upon by *Maréchal de Ségur* to reserve for the nobles all the officers' posts in the army.

[Talleyrand's enemies have denied that his rapid promotion in the Church, before the Revolution, was crowned by an actual offer to the young man of a cardinal's hat. Here is his own account of it, following his story of loss of favor at court.]

I look back on that period of my disfavor at court with greater pleasure than on many fortunate situations in which I have been in my life, and which have left no trace, either in my mind or in my heart. Hardly do I still remember that the queen would not let me have the benefit of a very gracious act of *Gustavus III.*, who had obtained a cardinal's hat for me from *Pope Pius VI.* She desired *M. de Mercy* to induce the Vienna court to oppose

the appointment of a French cardinal before the promotion of the crowns. Her wishes were complied with; the papal appointment was suspended; and, since then, my cardinal's hat is likely to have spent a few years in French fortresses.

#### BEGINNINGS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

[His account of his part in the Constituent Assembly is brief and almost apologetic. He wanted to resist the movement; failing in this, he wanted to make the best of it. He scarcely speaks of his brilliant personal successes, or of his presidency, but does speak of his devoting the last exercise of his religious functions to the service of the Revolution.]

I WAS a member of the delegation of the order of the clergy. My opinion was that the States-General should be dissolved, and then convoked again according to certain plans. I suggested it to the Count d'Artois who, at that time, showed me a certain amount of kindness, nay—if I dare use his own expression—of friendship.

My idea appeared too hazardous. It was an act of violence, and there was no one about the king able to make use of violence. I had several appointments by night at *Marly*; but all of them having proved fruitless, the conviction was forced upon me that I could do no good, and that, such being the case, I should be a madman if I did not think of my own self.

The composition of the States-General evidently rendering null the first and the second orders,<sup>1</sup> there was but one rational course open—to yield before we were compelled to do so, and while we might yet claim credit for our action. Thereby we might prevent things being carried to extremities; we imposed a certain regard for us on the third estate; we preserved the means of influencing the common deliberations; we gained time—which frequently means gaining everything—and if we had any chance of reconquering lost ground, this was the only course that presented it. I therefore felt no hesitation in joining those who set the example in this direction. . . .

I resolved, accordingly, not to leave France before I was driven away by personal danger, not to do anything to provoke this danger, not to struggle against a torrent which it was impossible to stem; but to keep within reach and in a position to help the saving of what could be saved; not to raise any obstacle between the opportunity and myself, and to reserve myself for the opportunity.

The deputation of the third order, before its triumph over the two others, had been busy drafting a declaration of rights similar to that which the American Colonies had drawn out

[1 The three orders were the nobility, the clergy, and the people.]



when they had proclaimed their independence. This declaration continued to be discussed after the fusion of the orders. It was but the development of a theory of equality. . . Those who had the keenest presentiment of its ravages were reduced to playing, as far as prudence permitted, a passive part in the proceedings.

That is what I did generally. Still, I thought it my duty to speak on several questions of high finance. I opposed the creation of assignats, the reducing of the interest of the public debt. I laid down, somewhat fully, the principles on which, in my opinion, a national bank should be founded. I proposed the decreeing of a uniform standard of weights and measures. I likewise took charge of the report of the Constitutional Committee on public instruction. For the proper carrying out of this great work, I consulted the most learned men, the most noted savants of the period—a period boasting such men as M. de Lagrange, M. de Lavoisier, M. de la Place, M. Monge, M. de Condorcet, M. Vicq d'Azir, M. de la Harpe. All came to my aid. The reputation which this work has acquired demands that I should name these men.

One circumstance presented itself in which, in spite of all my repugnance, I deemed it necessary to come to the fore. These are the motives by which I was urged.

The Assembly claimed to regulate, of itself and by civil law, that which hitherto had been regulated only by the concurrence of the spiritual and the temporal powers, and a blending of canon and civil laws. It planned a special constitution for the clergy, and required that all ecclesiastics in office should take an oath of compliance with it, under penalty of being considered as having resigned their functions. Most of the bishops declined to do so, whereupon, their sees being held vacant, the electoral bodies appointed successors to them. The new elects would readily have done without the "institution" granted by the court of Rome, but they could not do without the episcopal character which could be conferred upon them only by men who had received it themselves.

Had there been no one to confer it on them there would have been every reason to apprehend, not the proscription of every kind of worship (which came to pass a few years later), but an eventuality which struck me as more dangerous because it might be more lasting; and that was, that, through the doctrines it had sanctioned, the Assembly might soon drive the country into Presbyterianism (more in accordance with the then prevailing opinions), and that it might become impossible to bring France back to Catholicism, the hierarchy and external forms of which are in harmony with those of the monarchical system. I therefore

lent my assistance to consecrate one of the bishops elect, and he, in his turn, consecrated the others. That being done, I resigned the bishopric of Autun, and thought only of leaving the career I had hitherto followed; I placed myself at the disposal of events; provided I remained French, I was ready for anything.

The Revolution held out fresh prospects to the nation; I followed her in her progress, and went through its vicissitudes. I offered her the tribute of all my abilities, determined as I was to serve my country for its own sake, and I founded all my hopes on the constitutional principles which we thought we were so near attaining. This explains why and how, several times over, I entered, left, and reentered the world of public affairs, and it accounts also for the part I played therein.

[But Talleyrand makes no mention of his share in the famous celebration of the 14th of July, 1790, on the Champ de Mars, when, in his capacity of Bishop of Autun, he officiated at the altar, in the presence of the immense crowd, before swearing the multitude to allegiance to the new constitution. Bastide, author of a French life of Talleyrand, which appeared within a few years after his death, recites that, at the very moment of mounting the altar, Talleyrand turned to the Commandant of the National Guard, General La Fayette, with the words: "Come, now, don't make me laugh." There is a letter published by the same author, written by Talleyrand on the 15th, to his friend, the Comtesse de Flahaut. In this he calls the solemn religious ceremony "Yesterday's ridiculous fête," and quotes Sieyès as having asked him, in the presence of sixteen persons, with a sardonic smile, how he was enabled to keep a sober face in executing his dexterous buffoonery on the Champ de Mars, and how many Christians he believed there were among the hundred thousand spectators who received the national and Christian oath. After saying that he professed ignorance in his reply to Sieyès, he adds: "I share the opinion of Voltaire, whether we ourselves believe in a God or not it would be dangerous for all society that the multitude could think that, without punishment in this world, and without fear of chastisement in the other, it could steal, poison, and assassinate." And then he continues: "I hope that your penetration has not failed to make you feel to what divinity I yesterday addressed my prayers, and my oath of fidelity. You alone were the Supreme Being whom I adore, and always will adore." The rest is simply a love-letter of a rather bold character.

In beginning his account of the Constituent Assembly, Talleyrand speaks of his consultation with the Count d'Artois. M. de Bacourt gives in a footnote the following account of this effort by Talleyrand to induce the younger brother of Louis XVI. (afterwards Charles X.) to influence the king to more decided measures, and how, when Louis XVIII. was coming to the throne, Talleyrand reminded him of the interview:

"The most important, and the last, of these interviews took place at Marly during the night from the 16th to the 17th of July, 1789, that is to say a



few hours before the prince left France. When M. de Talleyrand presented himself at the residence of the Count d'Artois, the latter was already in bed; he admitted his visitor, however, and there, during two hours' conversation, M. de Talleyrand again explained all the dangers of the situation, and entreated the prince to lay them before the king. The Count d'Artois was moved at this intelligence; he got up, repaired to the palace, and returning after a pretty long absence declared to M. de Talleyrand that there was nothing to be done with the king, determined as he was to give way rather than to have one drop of blood shed through his resistance to the popular movements. 'As to myself,' added the Count d'Artois, 'my mind is made up; I am off in the morning, and will leave France.'

"M. de Talleyrand vainly besought the prince to give up such an intention, and pointed out to him the inconveniences and dangers it might have for him in the immediate present, and for his rights and those of his children in the future. The Count d'Artois was obstinate, and in the end M. de Talleyrand said to him: 'In that case, Monseigneur, there is nothing now left for each one of us but to think of his own interests, since the king and the princes desert theirs as well as those of monarchy.' 'Quite so,' replied the prince; 'that is what I advise you to do. Whatever may happen, I can never blame you; always reckon on my friendship.' The next morning the Count d'Artois emigrated.

"In the month of April, 1814, it befell to M. de Talleyrand, as president of the Provisional Government, to announce to Count d'Artois (who was then awaiting events at Nancy) that Louis XVIII. was called to the throne, and that the prince himself was invited to come to Paris and assume the reins of government in the capacity of lieutenant-general of the kingdom. He entrusted this mission to the Baron de Vitrolles; and, pacing up and down with him the first floor of his residence in the Rue Saint-Florentin, while the prince's dispatch was being sealed, he related the above conversation to him, adding the request: 'Pray do me the pleasure to ask the Count d'Artois if he remembers this little incident?'

"M. de Vitrolles, after fulfilling his important mission, did not fail to communicate M. de Talleyrand's query to the prince. 'I have a distinct recollection of the occurrence,' answered the Count d'Artois; 'M. de Talleyrand's account of it is accurate in every point.'"]

#### THE DUKE OF ORLEANS — ORIGIN OF THE REVOLUTION.

[Talleyrand paints a terrible picture of the Duke of Orleans, grandfather of Louis Philippe, and great-grandfather of the Count of Paris. He seems to have been intimate with him before and during the Constituent Assembly, and he describes him as "destitute of ability, ignorant to the verge of illiteracy, without heart and without principle. All his actions had the characteristics of thoughtlessness, frivolity, and trickery." In this sketch, for the first time, occurs a significant gap, for which the editors offer no explanation, excepting that—"Here eight pages are missing in the manuscript."]

IN 1788, after a friendship of twenty-five years' duration, he displayed the most heartless

indifference at the death of one of his principal *habitués*, the Marquis de Conflans, a man always remarkable, first by his handsome cast of features, his noble bearing, his gait, his skill, and also by his faults when he kept evil company, by his qualities when he was among military men, by the accuracy of his judgment when he spoke on serious matters and, at every period in his life, by the frankness of his tastes, his feelings, and his hatreds. M. de Conflans, afflicted with a lingering disease which was fated to have a sudden termination, would not believe that he was ill, and went about in the world as usual. On the day of his death, he was to dine, with the Duke of Orleans and several others, at M. de Biron's, at Montrouge. They were all waiting for him—the Duke more impatiently than the rest, as he wanted to go to the theater. At four o'clock, the company being all together, one of M. de Conflans's servants arrived with the news that he had just died. Every person in the room, according to his more or less intimate acquaintance with M. de Conflans, expressed his sympathy. The only words the Duke of Orleans pronounced were: "Well, Lauzun, as we are no longer expecting any one, let us go on with our dinner so that we can get to the opera in time for the beginning."

[And here is Talleyrand's conclusion as to the Duke of Orleans, and as to who were the authors of the French Revolution.]

After the instructions he gave to his bailiwicks, the Duke of Orleans ceased to be an active political personage; his weak character and his equivocal, disquieting position were obstacles to his becoming one again. After the crime he committed by his vote, he was henceforth without purpose or aim—a nobody; he remained in the rank and file, and as that was not his place, he became a non-entity, a degraded being, a dead man.

What now becomes of the opinion, so loudly asserted, that the Duke of Orleans was the author of the Revolution; that his name served as a rallying standard for a large number of citizens; that he was urged by the ambition of a few restless minds to turn his views to the throne itself? This opinion cannot be maintained in the face of his actual life. For immorality, extreme frivolity, want of thought, and weakness are quite sufficient to explain his moments of activity as well as his fits of inaction. Moreover, the impulse having once been given, the rapid and violent movement of the public mind left no room, at any period in the Revolution, for the development of individual ambitions. As all thoughts, from the very start, verged towards the establishment of equality and the weakening of power, high personal ambitions were necessarily discon-



certed. Much later only, and after terrible ordeals, did the need of a chief begin to be felt, who would modify the existing state of things; it was then that Bonaparte appeared.

The Duke of Orleans could not possibly have been the last man to observe the tendency I have just alluded to; and accordingly the real aim of his ambition has always remained open to doubt. He was, as I said, neither the principal, nor the object, nor yet the motive of the Revolution. He, like all the rest, was carried along by the raging torrent.

The Duke of Orleans began to turn his attention to himself, his own tastes, his wants. Thence sprang the secret thought which made him consent, after the 6th of October, 1789, to undertake the shameful trip to England which all parties have reproached him with. It is from that time that may be dated the dwindling of his immense fortune; which, being more easily convertible, left still fewer traces than the splendid picture gallery of the Palais Royal, now scattered so far and wide. All the available funds of the Duke of Orleans found their way to England by underhand means, and through secret agents who, thanks to their obscurity, may have been dishonest and quietly enjoyed the proceeds of their dishonesty. Such is the opinion of the men who were then at the head of affairs.

Should historians ever puzzle themselves to find out the men to whom they can attribute the honor or the blame of having started, or directed, or modified the French Revolution, they will give themselves very needless trouble. It had no creators, no leaders, no guides. The seeds were sown by the writers who, in an enlightened and enterprising age, when aiming a blow at prejudices, upset religious and social principles, and by the unskilled ministers who increased the deficit of the treasury and the discontent of the people.

[The time was now come when the prudent spirit of Talleyrand sought a refuge from the impending storm. A few extracts show the English experiences to which this purpose led, and his feeling about the bloody drama enacted in his own land, which he watched from the English coast.]

What was left of the royal prerogatives after the vote of the Constituent Assembly was but a shadow, growing fainter daily. It was, therefore, of paramount importance to save from further ruin the frail power of the king, which all efforts made in view of restoring to it its lost reality only tended to diminish. The men who still affected to be afraid of it, such as it was, only sought a pretext to complete its destruction. The great point would have been not to have offered them any. They were not satisfied that the king should imitate the reed, that withstands the fury of the wind, simply

because it is incapable of offering any resistance to it: they wished his supporters both at home and abroad to remain in utter inaction, and to abstain from expressing any opinion he might have been accused of sharing. But who could be induced to adopt such a spiritless policy? The revolutionary impulse had been given and stirred all classes.

The cabinet of the time, of which M. Necker was no longer a member, then understood the necessity for royalty to obtain from the chief courts of Europe the promise that they should either disarm or not arm at all. The leaders of the second Assembly, known as Girondists, had insisted on this step with the belief that the king's ministry would decline to take it. Their hopes were deceived. M. de Lessart, who was then Minister of Foreign Affairs, took up that suggestion, and proposed that I should go to England in order to open negotiations on the subject. I was anxious to leave France for some time; I was tired and disgusted, and, though I felt sure that my mission had little chance of success, I accepted. The king wrote to the king of England a letter of which I was the bearer. . . .

At that stage, it was no longer a question whether the king should reign, but whether he himself, the queen, their children, his sister, should be saved. It might have been done. It was at least a duty to attempt it. At that time France was only at war with the Emperor, the Empire,<sup>1</sup> and Sardinia. Had all the other states concerted in offering their mediation by proposing to recognize whatever form of government France might be pleased to adopt, with the sole condition that the prisoners in the Temple should be allowed to leave the country and retire wherever they liked — though such a proposal, it may be supposed, might not have filled the demagogues with delight, they would have been powerless to reject it.

So little were the demagogues inclined to general hostilities, that they hastened to make pacific declarations to all the governments with which France was still at peace. Indeed, very few amongst them thirsted for the blood of Louis XVI.; and if they shed it afterwards, that was owing to reasons not one of which would have existed had Europe taken the course indicated above. The royal family might therefore have been saved. A war of twenty-two years might have been prevented.

#### TALLEYRAND IN ENGLAND.

AFTER August 10, 1792, I solicited from the provisional executive a temporary mission to

[<sup>1</sup> The Emperor of Austria was the head of the Holy Roman Empire, of which the German States were an integral part.]



London. As the object of my mission I chose a scientific question with which I was somewhat entitled to deal, seeing that it related to a motion previously made by me in the Constituent Assembly. The point was to establish for the whole kingdom a uniform system of weights and measures. When the exactitude of that system should have been ascertained by the most competent men of Europe, it might subsequently have been adopted by the different nations. It was therefore advisable to confer with England on the subject.

My real object was, however, to leave France, where it seemed to me useless and even dangerous to stay any longer, but I only wished to leave the country with a regular passport, in order that it should not be shut to me for ever. . . .

I resided in England during the whole of the dreadful year 1793, and a portion of 1794. There I was welcomed with the utmost kindness by the Marquis of Lansdowne, whom I had known in Paris; he was a nobleman of lofty views, gifted with abundant and lively powers of elocution. He was still free from the infirmities of old age. Some people brought against him the commonplace accusation of being *too clever*—an accusation by means of which, in England as well as in France, people keep at a distance all the men whose superiority gives them umbrage. That is the only reason why he never was in office again. I saw him often, and he kindly sent me word every time he received the visit of some distinguished person of whom he thought I should be pleased to make the acquaintance. It was at his house that I met Mr. Hastings, and Doctors Price and Priestley. There also I formed an intimacy with Mr. Canning, Mr. Romilly, Mr. Robert Smith, M. Dumont, Mr. Bentham, and Lord Henry Petty, the son of Lord Lansdowne, who at that time was already looked upon as one of the hopes of England. All the friends of Mr. Fox, with which gentleman I had, on several occasions, been on intimate terms, did their best to render my stay in London as pleasant as possible. . . .

My absence from France during the most terrible years of the Revolution left me in ignorance of the details of its dreadful events; scarcely could I, at that distance, discern their broad outlines. On the other hand, I too often turned away from those hideous scenes, in which so much abjectness was mingled with so much fierceness, to be able to depict them. The reign of Henri IV. and that of Louis XIV. are known to us in all their details, but these recent events appear confused and problematic even to the very men who played a part in them; they followed each other with such rapidity that each in turn

almost stamped out the recollection of what occurred before. Perhaps also the mob leaves too slight an imprint on what it does; its deeds have but a transient effect, and the character of the men who serve it is such as to make no impression on one's memory. Having lived in obscurity until such day as they appear on the scene, to obscurity they return as soon as their part is played.

I confess that it would not cause me the slightest concern if the details of that awful calamity were to leave no trace in men's minds, for they are of no historical importance. Indeed, what teachings could men derive from deeds performed without aim or plan, and which were merely the outcome of ruthless and unruly passions?

Instruction of every kind is rather to be sought in the knowledge of the facts preceding the catastrophe, and for the investigation of which every material exists; that knowledge will disclose the numerous and weighty causes of the Revolution. . . . The study of those already distant days possesses, methinks, the invaluable advantage of cautioning us against every form of intolerance. When considering the last twenty years of the old monarchy, there is no man of any elevation of mind and good faith who, on remembering what he did or said, what he wrote, what he blamed or approved, will not find some fault with himself—if that man possessed any influence at all: I might almost add that no one knows all the examples—good or bad—he must have set. I thus deny that it is in the power of any of the men I have known, whether princes or simple subjects, to decline all share of responsibility in the subsequent outbreak.

[Talleyrand tells very briefly his expulsion from England, and at the moment of setting out for America gives a pitiful glimpse of a certain well-known American.]

It was not my intention to stay long in England. Though being nominally an outlaw in France, I yet did not wish to place myself in the category of *émigré*, which I really was not. However, the English Foreign Minister thought it advisable to emphasize his zeal for the general cause by displaying at first his antipathy towards the *émigrés*. With that object he availed himself of the alien bill, which he had wrenched from Parliament, to send me orders to leave the country within twenty-four hours. Had I acted on the first impulse, I should have started off at once, but my dignity required of me to protest against the unjust persecution of which I was the victim. In consequence, I applied to Mr. Dundas, to Mr. Pitt, and to the king himself; being unable to obtain satisfaction in any quarter, I had but to submit, and therefore went to sleep on board



a ship which, I had been told, was the first to start for the United States. . . .

On the second day of our voyage, just after having left the Thames, we met with a violent storm. I was then between England and France—a most critical situation. I could see France; there my head was in danger. Though I ran no immediate risk by returning to England, it would have been repugnant to me to solicit the hospitality of a government which had tried to injure me.

Fortunately the danger we were running was noticed on shore, and induced some Falmouth lightermen to brave the fury of the sea and come to our assistance. With their help, we managed to reach the harbor. Whilst our ship—all the rigging of which was much damaged—was being repaired, a rather striking incident added an impression of a special kind to the many I was to experience in the course of this voyage. The innkeeper at whose place I had my meals, informed me that one of his lodgers was an American general. Thereupon I expressed the desire of seeing that gentleman, and, shortly after, I was introduced. After the mutual exchange of greetings, I put to him several questions concerning his country, but, from the first, it seemed to me that my inquiries annoyed him. Having several times vainly endeavored to renew the conversation which he always allowed to drop, I ventured to request from him some letters of introduction to his friends in America. "No," he replied, and, after a few moments of silence, noticing my surprise, he added, "I am perhaps the only American who cannot give you letters for his own country,—all the relations I had there are now broken,—I must never return to the States." He dared not tell me his name. It was General Arnold! I must confess that he excited my pity, for which political puritans will perhaps blame me; but I do not reproach myself, for I was a witness of his agony.

#### TALLEYRAND IN AMERICA.

We had been sailing for several weeks, when one morning, the word I feared, "Land! Land!" loudly shouted by the people on board, roused me from my sleep. The captain, the crew, and the passengers, all displayed the most lively joy. On reaching the deck, I saw the pilot who was to take us up the Delaware, and, at the same time, I noticed an outbound ship steering round the headland. Having ascertained from our pilot that the other ship was bound for Calcutta, I immediately despatched a boat to her captain, in order to inquire whether he had room for one more passenger. The ship's destination was of no consequence to me; she was going on a long

voyage, and my object was, if possible, to avoid landing. Unfortunately, the captain being unable to accommodate me, I had no choice left but to submit to be taken to Philadelphia.

[He stayed for a short time in Philadelphia, encountering there a Dutchman, whom he had known in Paris, Mr. Cazenove; and he subsequently found other Dutch and French friends. With some of these he made a journey into the interior.]

Only twelve years had elapsed since the United States had ceased to be a colony, and the years of their independence had been lost for their prosperity, owing to the inefficiency of their first Constitution. The bases of public trust not having been properly defined, a paper money more or less discredited roused everybody's cupidity, encouraged bad faith, disturbed all transactions, and caused the institutions necessitated by the recent independence of the country to be lost sight of. It was only in 1789, at the time of the new Federal Constitution, that property in the United States began to rest on truly solid foundations, that social guarantees securing the safety of foreign intercourse were shaped, and that the government of the young nation was admitted to rank with older powers. That is the true date of the foundation of the United States. . . .

Intending to tire myself I made up my mind to leave Philadelphia, and thus proposed to M. de Beaumetz and to a Dutch gentleman, of the name of Huidekoper, to travel with me inland. They both accepted, and I must confess that from the beginning I was pleased with the undertaking. I was struck with astonishment. Less than a hundred and fifty miles distance from the capital, all trace of men's presence disappeared; wild nature in all its pristine vigor confronted us; forests old as the world itself; decayed plants and trees covering the very ground where they once grew in wildness; others shooting forth from under the *débris* of the former and like them destined to decay and rot; thick and intricate bushes that often barred our progress; green and luxuriant grass decking the banks of rivers; some large natural meadows; some strange and delicate flowers quite new to me; and here and there the traces of former tornadoes that had carried everything before them. Enormous trees all mowed down in the same direction, extending for some considerable distance, bear witness to the wonderful character of those terrible phenomena. . . .

Agriculture is the basis on which all states are founded. It is this,—I say it with all economists,—that forms the chief wealth of the social state, that teaches the respect of property, and warns us that we are blind to our interests



whenever we interfere with those of other people. . . .

The American government allowed itself too easily to be influenced by the geographical situation of the States; it gave too much encouragement to the spirit of enterprise, for, in order to increase its population, America annexed Louisiana; it will now be obliged to annex the Floridas. Commerce requires ports and harbors from Sainte-Croix River, near the Saint-Lawrence, to the Gulf of Mexico, yet nine-tenths of the five hundred millions of acres composing the territory of North America are still untilled. Too much activity is devoted to business, and not enough to farming; and that first direction given to all the ideas of the country unsettles its social establishment. You need only travel hardly a hundred miles inland to see, in the same spot, people paying in kind for whatever they buy, whilst others draw bills on the first markets of Europe: the contrast is really too shocking; it is the symptom of a social disease.

I saw, sixty miles from Boston, six thousand feet of timber exchanged for a bullock, and in Boston itself twenty pounds paid for a Florence straw hat.

At Frenchman's Bay, on the border of the Eastern States, a violent storm having compelled me to stop at Machias, I questioned the man at whose house I was staying. That house was indeed the best in the district, and, as people say in the country, the landlord was *a most respectable man*. Having exhausted the chapter relative to the value and price of land, I asked him whether he had ever been to Philadelphia. He replied that he had not yet done so. He was a man of about forty-five years of age. I scarcely dared to ask him whether he knew General Washington. "I have never seen him," he said. "If you should go to Philadelphia," I went on, "you will be pleased to see the great man?" "No doubt I shall, but," he added with beaming eyes, "I should very much like to see Mr. Bingham, the man who they say is so rich."

Throughout the States I met with similar love for money, and often as coarsely expressed. This country is too soon acquainted with luxuries. The latter are, indeed, shocking when men can hardly provide themselves with the necessaries of life. I recollect having seen, in the drawing-room of Mrs. Robert Morris, the hat manufactured in the birthplace of the master of the house, carefully laid on an elegant Sèvres china table, bought at Trianon by some American. Hardly would a European peasant have consented to wear such a hat.

On the banks of the Ohio, Mr. Smith possesses a residence known in the country by the name of *log-house*. The walls of it were formed with rough trees. The drawing-room

contained a pianoforte enriched with most beautiful bronzes. M. de Beaumetz, having opened it, Mr. Smith said to him: "Please do not attempt to play on it, for the man who tunes it lives a hundred miles from here, and he has not come this year."

#### TALLEYRAND AND HAMILTON.

[The above is almost, or quite, the only reference Talleyrand makes to Washington. The explanation is simple. Talleyrand was armed with an extremely cordial letter of introduction to Washington from Lord Lansdowne, telling how he had sacrificed his ambition in the church to public principle, eulogizing his moderation, and attributing his exile to the wish of courts, which can never pardon in a bishop a desire to promote the general freedom of worship. In spite of this appeal, Washington flatly refused to receive him, and Talleyrand never forgot, or forgave it. He saw much, however, of Hamilton who was very kind to him, and of whom he always spoke, during his after life, in terms of the utmost admiration.]

DURING the two winters I spent either in Philadelphia or in New York, I availed myself of the opportunity thus afforded me to see the chief personages whose names the American Revolution gave to history — especially General Hamilton, whose mind and character placed him, I thought, on a par with the most distinguished statesmen of Europe, without excepting Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox.

As remarked above, I had noticed, whilst traveling in the States, that agriculture was less encouraged than commerce, that, having to choose between two sources of prosperity, government had caused the scale to fall in favor of commerce, and, still recently, emphasized its intention by adding to all the real wealth of their country the fictitious one procured by all the banking establishments which have sprung up everywhere in the States, and serve exclusively the ends of commerce. Such direction, once adopted, vanity and cupidity could not help soon to denounce wisdom, moderation, or simple probity, as narrow views. By upsetting the barriers formerly raised by the metropolis which centralized on its markets all the products of its colonies, and set its own rules to their speculations, the United States take able advantage of the position and power their independence obtained for them. They send to all the markets of the Old World unexpected quantities of all sorts of goods, which, by altering prices, bring about commercial crises impossible to avoid. The chief cause of all those perturbations proceeds from the great distance existing between the eastern and southern ports of the States, whence thousands of ships loaded with similar products start every year, on almost the same day, bound for all the ports of



Europe. Thus will, for a long time to come, the commerce of America with Europe be left to chance. . . .

All these considerations make it most difficult to foresee the future, and well-nigh impossible to direct its course. Yet everything seems easy to a man driven from his country and obliged to put up at an inn or reside in indifferent lodgings: not so to him who is quietly seated under his own roof. I then took advantage of the disposition in which my narrow quarters placed me to indulge myself in high politics, and set the world to rights. . . . I even fancy that I was on the very point of applying the system of the economists to free trade and the abolition of customs, which must needs be comprised in my speculative ideas, when, at the very moment I was engaged in trying to solve the problem, a new customs-tariff, adopted by the American Congress, on the motion of my friend Hamilton, came into force. The early conversations I had with him dwelt on that branch of the American administration. "Your economists," he said to me, "invented a beautiful dream; it is the chimerical exaggeration of people whose intentions were good. Theoretically," he added, "their system might perhaps be contested, and its unsoundness be exposed; but we must leave them their sweet illusions; the present state of affairs of this world suffices to prove that, at least for the nonce, their plan cannot be carried out; let us be satisfied with that fact." I did not make a very firm stand in favor of the economists, yet I could scarcely make up my mind to abandon the idea that there could exist some generous combinations that would result in mutual advantages for all commercial nations. Philanthropic ideas rush to the mind when one is an outlaw.

Mr. Hamilton did not seem to me to reject so peremptorily the possibility of all industry being, some day, divided in a permanent way between all the nations of the world.

Europe, I said to him, is acquainted with and cultivates all branches of art, and excels in the manufacture of all articles of luxury, as in everything that tends to make life more pleasant and agreeable. The New World possesses a kind of wealth peculiar to it: its crops will always surpass in quantity those of any rival nation.

Might not, therefore, the distribution of those two modes of applying men's abilities serve, at least for a considerable time to come, as the measure and basis of the relations that must necessarily spring up between nations, some of which daily require to buy, at a moderate cost, the most usual necessities of life, whilst

others are anxious to acquire all that tends to make life more pleasant and sweet?

Might not that natural balance furnish a vast ground for intelligent exchange, which, being ruled by international conventions, would constitute the commercial intercourse of the different powers?

"Your idea," Mr. Hamilton said to me, "will only be practical the day when—and it is perhaps not very remote—great markets, such as formerly existed in the Old World, will be established in America.

"You have four chief markets concentrating all the products of the world: that of London, which, notwithstanding our commercial successes, will yet be the first for a long time to come; that of Amsterdam, which, if things do not mend in Holland, will soon be removed to London; that of Cadiz, which will eventually pass into the hands of our northern or southern ports; and that of Marseilles, which owed its flourishing state to Levantine trade, but is now on the eve of being lost to you Frenchmen.

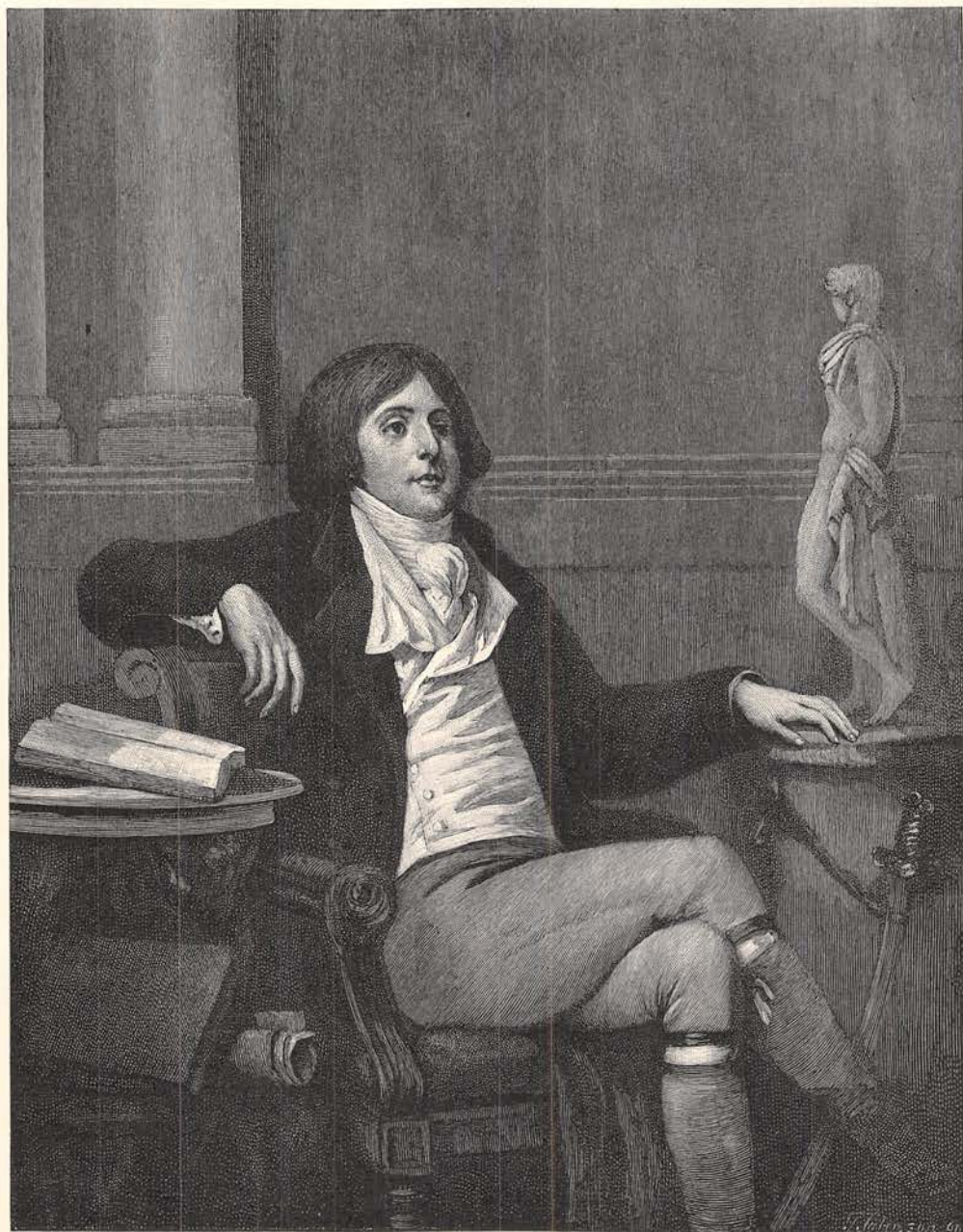
"As for us, we only need two markets, but they are indispensable to us: one for the North and one for the Southern States.

"When those large markets are established, commerce will be able to resume its regular course; commercial enterprise will no longer rely on mere chance, it being the interest of each market to publish the real price and quality of the various goods that find their way to it; excessive fluctuations will be thereby avoided, thus keeping within reasonable bounds the losses and gains of all speculations. Then will sailors of all nations bring in confidence their cargoes to the various ports of the world."

I admired the large-mindedness always apparent in the private views expressed by Mr. Hamilton respecting the prosperity of his country. I do not know whether they will ever be realized, but, if they are, it will only be when the American desire to encroach and invade will have ceased to alter the general relations of the American people with other nations, and when, by a judicious regard for its own interests, it will endeavor to conquer its own country by turning to every possible advantage the vast extent of territory belonging to it.

I had acquainted myself with almost all I wanted to know in America; I had been spending nearly thirty months in that country, without any other aim than that of being away from either France or England, and impelled by the sole interest of seeing with my own eyes the great American nation whose history is only beginning.





FROM A PAINTING BY GREUZE, IN POSSESSION OF M. CHAIX D'EST-ANGE.

ENGRAVED BY T. JOHNSON.

*ch. mau. talleyrand.*  
TALLEYRAND.



cession of dry seasons, and then sheep have perished by millions and cattle by thousands on the more remote stations. To master recurring droughts is the great problem of Australia's inland future. Here, as elsewhere, nature challenges man's free advance, and places some special obstacle in his way. Australians are facing their task with energy, confidence, and the promise of much success. They have learned the art of drawing wealth even from scrub land of which a single sheep requires several acres for its support. Irrigation works on a large scale have been begun in Victoria and South Australia. The storage of water in reservoirs is being carried out in a large way by munic-

palities and private companies. Throughout New South Wales and Queensland the boring of artesian wells has met with satisfactory success. Once given the certain means of carrying the flocks and herds through the occasional periods of drought, there seems no limit to the pastoral capacity of such immense provinces as New South Wales and Queensland. With completed systems of irrigation Australia promises to become one of the greatest grape and fruit growing countries in the world. The many difficulties with which men are confronted on this great continent are more than matched by its wonderful possibilities.

*George R. Parkin.*

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## THE MEMOIRS OF TALLEYRAND.<sup>1</sup>

### TALLEYRAND'S RELATIONS WITH NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

#### HIS APOLOGY FOR TAKING OFFICE UNDER THE DIRECTORY.

[Talleyrand, learning that a decree from the Convention permitted his return, arrived in Paris in September, 1796. Having been made an Academician in his absence, he delivered two papers before the Institute, one on America, the other on the necessity of French colonies. Almost immediately he established the closest connection with the Directory, and presently became Minister of Foreign Affairs. This is his story of how it came about.]



PERCEIVING no element of order and no guarantee of stability in the various political factions whose struggles I witnessed, I took care to keep aloof from active politics. Madame de Staël, who had again acquired a certain influence, earnestly begged me to go with her to Barras, one of the members of the Directory. I demurred at first; I could not call on a member of the Directory without asking to see all the other Directors, and chiefly those who had been my colleagues in the Constituent Assembly. The reasons alleged to justify my refusal did not seem valid. Besides, they were conveyed through Madame de Staël, who, being anxious that Barras and I should be brought together, so managed matters that the Director sent me a note inviting me to dine with him at Suresnes on a certain day. I had no alternative but to accept. On the appointed day I was at Suresnes at about three o'clock in the afternoon. In the dining-room, which I had to cross to reach the draw-

ing-room, I noticed the table was laid for five persons. Much to my surprise, Madame de Staël was not invited. A man who was rubbing the floor showed me a cupboard containing a few odd books, and told me that the Director — the title given to Barras in private life — seldom came home before half-past four. While I was engaged in reading, I know not what book, two young men came in to ascertain the time by the drawing-room clock, and seeing that it was only half-past three, they said to each other, "We have time to go for a swim." They had not been gone twenty minutes when one of them returned, asking for immediate help; I ran, with all the persons in the house, to the riverside. Opposite the garden, between the highroad and the island, the Seine forms a kind of whirlpool in which one of the young men had disappeared. The watermen of the neighborhood quickly rowed to the spot, and two of them most courageously dived to the bottom, but all the efforts made to save the unfortunate fellow proved vain. I went back to the house.

The corpse of the young man was found only the next day, caught in the weeds at a spot more than six hundred yards distant from the place where he had disappeared. His name was Raymond; Lodève was his birth-place. Barras was very fond of him; he had brought him up, and since he had been appointed a Director he had made him his aide-de-camp. I was alone in the drawing-room, not knowing exactly what to do. Who was to tell Barras the misfortune that had just happened? I had never seen him. My position

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from the Memoirs, printed in advance of the volumes by arrangement with Messrs. Griffith, Farran & Co., the English publishers. (See also THE CENTURY for January.)



was really painful. A carriage drove up. On opening the door the gardener said, "Mr. Raymond has just been drowned; yes, citizen Director, he has just been drowned." Barras crossed the front yard, and rushed up-stairs to his room, crying aloud. After some little time one of his servants told him I was in the drawing-room. He sent me word to excuse his not coming, and requested me to sit down to dinner. The secretary, who had come home with him, remained up-stairs. Thus I was alone at Barras's table. A quarter of an hour having elapsed, a servant came and requested me to go up-stairs. I felt thankful for his supposing that, under the circumstances, the dinner before me could have no attraction. I was quite upset. As I entered his room he took hold of both my hands and embraced me; he was weeping. I said to him all the kind things that the situation in which I found him, and my own feelings, prompted. The sort of embarrassment he at first displayed with me, an utter stranger, gradually disappeared, and the share I took in his trouble seemed to do him good. He begged of me to go back with him to Paris; I readily accepted. From that day I never had any occasion to regret having made his acquaintance. He was a man of an excitable and impulsive nature, easily carried one way or the other; I had known him scarcely a couple of hours, and yet might have almost supposed I was the person he liked best in the world.

Shortly after my first interview the Directory wished to make a change in the Ministry. To this Barras consented on condition that his new friend should be appointed "Minister of Foreign Relations." He defended his proposal with great warmth, and so effectively that it was adopted; at ten o'clock the same night a gendarme called for me at a club named the Salon des Étrangers, and handed me the decree just issued.

The peremptory character of every decree of the Directory, the pressing requests of Madame de Staël, and, more than all, the feeling one cherishes that it may not be impossible to do a little good, caused me to dismiss all idea of declining the post. On the following day, therefore, I called at the Luxembourg in order to thank Barras, after which I went to the Foreign Office.

Under my predecessor, Charles de Lacroix, all state matters concerning his department were previously settled by the Directory. Like the previous secretary, my duties were confined to signing passports and other administrative documents, and to forwarding to the proper quarters the despatches or communications already drafted by the Executive; yet I often delayed those communications, which delay

enabled me to soften their terms when the impulse under which they were written had passed away. All business relative to home affairs was kept from me. . . .

It has come to my knowledge that some people, not in the days I speak of, but since the Restoration, considered that it was wrong to accept office in times of crisis and revolution, when it was impossible to work absolute good. Such judgment always appeared to me most superficial. In the affairs of this world we must not simply consider the present moment. *That which is* usually has very small importance, unless we remember that *that which is* produces *that which shall be*; and, indeed, in order to arrive we must start. If we consider matters without prejudice, and, above all, without envy, we will plainly see that men do not always accept office so as to gratify their personal interests; and I might add that it is no mean sacrifice on the part of a political man to consent to being the responsible editor of other people's works. Selfish and timorous natures are incapable of so much self-abnegation; but, I repeat it, it must be borne in mind that, by refusing official posts in times of upheaval, one simply affords greater facilities to those bent upon destruction. He who accepts does so not to second the men or the cause to which he is opposed, but in order to make everything profitable to the future. "En toute chose il faut considérer la fin," said good old La Fontaine, and that is not a mere maxim.

I must not omit to state that Admiral Bruix, for whose character, intellect, and talent I had the greatest esteem, was to be appointed Minister of Marine; I was thus entering in office with a colleague as unacquainted as I was myself with the ways of the Directory, and with whom I could consult as to what good might be done and what evil prevented.

#### FIRST MEETING WITH GENERAL BONAPARTE.

[It was not long before the astute Minister of Foreign Affairs measured the Directory, and began to look around for a stronger power. In the extract below he tells of his first meeting with Bonaparte, but he does not tell of the singularly courtier-like letter which he himself wrote to the young general, eulogizing his wonderful campaign, and more wonderful treaty, which he styled a true treaty *à la Bonaparte*.]

To give a clear conception of what I have termed the ways of the Directory, I think it will be sufficient to relate the incidents that marked the first council at which I was present. A quarrel took place between Carnot and Barras; the latter charged his colleague with having destroyed a letter which ought to have been submitted to the Directory. They were both standing. Carnot, putting up his hand,



said, "I give you my word of honor that that is not so." "Do not raise your hand," replied Barras; "blood would dribble from it." Such were our rulers, and my task was to try to obtain the readmission of France in the councils of Europe while such men were in power. Difficult as was that great undertaking, I did not hesitate to confront it.

Austria, beaten in Italy, beaten in Germany, seeing her territory invaded on both sides and her capital threatened by General Bonaparte, had already signed preliminaries of peace with him at Leoben, and was now negotiating the final treaty, which became that of Campo Formio. It was during the interval between the preliminaries and the signing of the treaty that I became Minister of Foreign Affairs. On learning of my appointment, General Bonaparte wrote to the members of the Directory to congratulate them on their choice, and also sent me a very polite letter. From that day we kept up a close correspondence. All the young victorious general did, said, or wrote was, in my mind, sufficiently full of originality, sufficiently striking, skillful, and daring, to justify great hopes of his genius. A few weeks after he signed the treaty of Campo Formio (October 17, 1797).

I had never seen him. As already mentioned, he had written to me—on the occasion of my appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs—a long, carefully composed letter, in which he evidently intended I should discover a different man from the one he had hitherto shown himself on the stage of public affairs. . . . On the very evening of his arrival in Paris he sent me an aide-de-camp to inquire at what time he could see me. I replied that I was at his disposal; he sent me word that he would call on me at eleven o'clock the next morning. Of this I informed Madame de Staël, who the following day, at ten o'clock, was in my drawing-room. There were also present several other persons brought by curiosity. I recollect that Bougainville was among them. The General being announced, I went to meet him. As we crossed the drawing-room I introduced Madame de Staël to him, but he hardly paid any attention to her; he noticed only Bougainville, to whom he addressed some pleasant words.

At first sight he struck me as a charming figure; the laurels of twenty victories are so becoming to youth, a handsome eye, a pale complexion, and a certain tired look. We went to my study. This first conversation was, on his side, without reserve. He referred with much courtesy to my appointment to the Ministry, and laid emphasis on the pleasure he had felt in corresponding in France with a person of a different stamp from the Directors.

Then, with scarcely any transition, he said to me, "You are a nephew of the Archbishop of Reims, who is with Louis XVIII." (I noticed that on this occasion he did not say "with the Count of Lille.") "I, too," he added, "have an uncle who is an archdeacon in Corsica; it is he who brought me up. In Corsica, you know, being an archdeacon is the same as being a bishop in France."

We soon returned to the drawing-room, which was now full, and he said aloud: "Citizens, I feel deeply the greeting you accord me; I have done my best when carrying on the war, my best when making peace. It is for the Directory to know how to turn my efforts to profit for the happiness and prosperity of the Republic."

Whereupon we repaired together to the Directory.

[After having made his arrangements with Bonaparte, and watched the interior dissensions of the Directory, till he thought the proper moment had arrived, he retired from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.]

The Directors had experienced the fate which always awaits despots. So long as the armies at their disposal were victorious they were hated, but still they were feared. As soon as their armies were beaten they were despised. They were attacked in the newspapers, in pamphlets, everywhere. Nor were their ministers spared; and this afforded me the looked-for opportunity to leave my post. I had become convinced that the proportion of harm that this position enabled me to prevent was too insignificant, and that later on only would it be possible to effect real good in such a place.

In view of my premeditated retirement I had taken one measure of precaution. I had confided my intentions to General Bonaparte before his departure for Egypt; he had approved my motives, and had readily consented to ask the Directory to give me the embassy at Constantinople, if there was a possibility of coming to terms with Turkey, or to authorize me to go and join him at Cairo, where it was to be expected there would have to be negotiations with the Porte.

Having obtained this authorization, and resigned office, I retired to the country, not far from Paris, to await events.

#### BONAPARTE TURNS PALE.

[Then came the return of Napoleon from Egypt, plots for the overthrow of the Directory, and the final establishment of the Consulate. Here is Talleyrand's account of a grotesque incident that interrupted one of the nights of plotting between himself and Bonaparte.]

A FEW nights before the 18th Brumaire a little scene was enacted at my house which would be void of interest but for the circumstances.



General Bonaparte, then lodging at Rue Chantierine, had come to have a talk with me about the preparations for the eventful day. I was then living on Rue Taitbout, in a house which has since become No. 24, I believe. It stood at the back of a courtyard, and, running from the first floor, there were galleries which led to wings looking on the street. My drawing-room was lighted with several candles: it was one o'clock in the morning, and we were in the middle of a very animated conversation, when we heard a great noise in the street; to the rumbling of carriages was added the galloping of an escort of cavalry. Suddenly the carriages stopped right before the door of my house. The General turned pale, and I quite believe I did the same. The idea struck us both at the same time that they were coming to arrest us by order of the Directory. I blew out the candles and crept stealthily along a gallery to one of the outside wings, from which I could see what was going on in the street. For some time I was at a loss to make anything out of the tumult, but at last I discovered the somewhat grotesque cause.

At this epoch, the Paris streets being very unsafe at night, when the gambling-houses closed at the Palais Royal all the money that had been used for the bank was collected and placed in cabs, and the banker had been allowed by the police to have his cabs escorted by gendarmes, at his expense, to his home in the Rue de Clichy, or thereabout. That night one of the cabs had broken down just in front of my house, and that was the reason of the halt, which lasted for about a quarter of an hour. We had a hearty laugh, the General and I, over our panic—very natural though it was when we knew, as we did, the tendencies of the Directory and the extreme measures it was capable of taking.

#### HIS APOLOGY FOR SUPPORTING BONAPARTE.

[Talleyrand would seem never to have given up his belief in the monarchical principle, in spite of his democratic speeches and writings in the Constituent Assembly. He would then have preferred that Louis XVI. might have shown himself strong enough to maintain the monarchy, and he now believed that power should again be concentrated in the hands of one man. He wished Bonaparte to be that man, and he tells of his first measures to accomplish this end.]

MONARCHY must now be reëstablished, or its reëstablishment must be postponed to perhaps an indefinite date—and the 18th of Brumaire were in vain.

Reëstablishing monarchy was not raising up the throne once more. There are three degrees or forms of monarchy: it may be elective for a

term of years, it may be elective for life, it may be hereditary. What is termed "the throne" cannot appertain to the first of these three forms, and does not necessarily appertain to the second. To reach the third without passing successively through the other two was a matter of absolute impossibility, unless in the event of France being at the mercy of foreign powers. True, it might not have been so had Louis XVI. been alive, but the murder of that prince placed an insurmountable obstacle in this direction.

An immediate transition from polyarchy to hereditary monarchy being then out of the question, it followed, as a necessary consequence, that the reëstablishment of the latter and the reëstablishment of the House of Bourbon could not be simultaneous. And thus it was necessary to try to reëstablish the monarchy without troubling about the Bourbons, whom time might perchance bring back, if he who filled the throne showed himself unworthy of it and deserved to lose it. We had to make a temporary sovereign, who might become a life sovereign and eventually an hereditary monarch. The question at issue was not whether Bonaparte possessed those qualifications that are most to be desired in a monarch; he undoubtedly had those that were indispensable to reaccustom France to monarchical discipline, infatuated as she was with all the revolutionary doctrines; and no one possessed those qualities to such a degree as he did.

The real question was how to make Bonaparte a temporary sovereign. If we proposed that he should be appointed Consul by himself, we betrayed ulterior views which we could not conceal with too great care; if he were given colleagues, his equals in title and power, then we still retained polyarchy.

[Three Consuls were created, or, to speak more accurately, a first, a second, and a third Consul, the prerogatives of each being so arranged that the first (Bonaparte) was *de facto* invested with very nearly the same authority that a sovereign wields in moderate or constitutional monarchies.]

In order to render the First Consul's power more effective, I made a proposal to him, on the very day of his installation, which he eagerly accepted.

The three Consuls were to meet every day, and to hear from each of the ministers an account of the affairs of his department. I observed to General Bonaparte that the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, being secret by its very nature, could not be opened in a council, and that he should reserve to himself the hearing of this report, the Foreign Office being a department which the head of the Government alone should have in hand and administer. He recognized the usefulness of the advice; and as, at the time when a new government is being



organized, it is much easier to regulate everything, it was settled, from the first day, that I should work with the First Consul alone.

#### HOW THE FIRST CONSUL SNUBBED AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

[He gives a curious glimpse of Napoleon's arrogant temper in his reception of the Austrian envoy. The court of Vienna had chosen this representative because he had already treated with Bonaparte at Campo Formio and had there been in familiar relations with him. Both the Austrian court and the envoy supposed that he would easily resume these relations. The First Consul wished to teach him better, and this is how he did it.]

BONAPARTE gave him an audience at nine o'clock at night, at the Tuileries. He himself had prescribed the arrangement of the room in which he would receive him: it was the drawing-room next to the king's study. In one corner he had placed a little table at which he sat; all the seats had been taken away save some couches which were at a considerable distance from him. On the table were various papers and an inkstand; there was one solitary lamp. The chandelier had not been lighted.

M. von Cobenzl entered; I was escorting him. The darkness of the room; the distance he had to traverse before reaching Bonaparte, whom he could barely discern; the uncomfortable feeling which resulted from this; the greeting vouchsafed by Bonaparte, who stood up and immediately sat down again; the necessity in which M. von Cobenzl found himself of remaining standing—everything combined straightway to put each man in his place, or at least in that particular place which the First Consul had desired to assign to him.

#### BONAPARTE'S SERVICE TO TALLEYRAND.

[Talleyrand had been excommunicated by the Pope about the time when, as he innocently says in his Memoirs, he sent in his resignation as bishop. Bonaparte now secured the withdrawal of the excommunication.]

At the time of the battle of Marengo a secret connection had been formed between Bonaparte and the court of Rome. He had had several interviews at Milan with an envoy of Pope Pius VII., just elected at Venice as successor to Pius VI. These interviews were the starting point of the Concordat, signed in Paris, later on, by Cardinal Consalvi. This agreement and its immediate ratification reconciled France with the Holy See, without any other opposition than that of a few military men—good, honest people, to be sure, but whose minds did not rise to a conception of this kind.

It was after this great reconciliation with the Church, in which I was greatly instrumental,

that Bonaparte obtained the Pope's brief for my secularization. This brief is dated from St. Peter's at Rome, the 29th of June, 1802.

It seems to me that nothing shows the indulgence of Pius VII. towards me better than what he said one day to Cardinal Consalvi: "M. de Talleyrand! Ah, ah! May God keep his soul! I, for one, like him very much."

#### THE BEGINNING OF BONAPARTE'S RUIN.

[At last there came a time when Talleyrand began to cool towards Bonaparte. Here is his own statement.]

UNTIL the peace of Amiens, Bonaparte might have committed many an error—where is the man who is faultless? But he had manifested no intentions in the carrying out of which a Frenchman, loving his country, could have hesitated to coöperate. You might not always agree with him as to the means, but the utility of the aim could not be contested at a time when evidently the sole object in view was, on the one hand, to put an end to the war abroad, and, on the other, to terminate the revolution at home by the reëstablishment of royalty—a royalty which, I protest, it was impossible to reëstablish for the benefit of the legitimate heirs of the last king.

The Amiens peace was barely concluded when Bonaparte's moderation seemed to leave him, and it had not been completely put in execution when he was already sowing the seeds of those new wars which were to crush Europe and France and eventually bring about his own ruin.

Piedmont should have been restored to the King of Sardinia immediately after the peace of Lunéville; it was in the hands of France merely in trust. Restoring it would have been an act both of strict justice and of very wise policy. Bonaparte, on the contrary, annexed it to France. I made vain efforts to dissuade him. He looked upon this measure as affecting his own personal interest, his pride seemed to demand it of him, and he turned a deaf ear to all the counsels of prudence.

Although his victories had contributed to the enlargement of France, none of the territories lately annexed had been conquered by the armies he commanded. It was under the Convention that the county of Avignon, Savoy, Belgium, and the left bank of the Rhine had been added to France, and Bonaparte could not claim any of these as his own personal conquests. Being a ruler, and an hereditary ruler, as he wished to be, over a country enlarged by officers who were once his equals, and whom he wanted to make his subjects, seemed almost humiliating to him; and might, moreover, give rise to outbreaks of opposition, which he was



anxious to avoid. Thus it was that, in order to justify his claims to the title of sovereign, he deemed it necessary to add to the territory of France possessions that she should receive from himself. He had been the conqueror of Piedmont in 1796; this fact seemed to point out that country as the very one to fulfil his views. He therefore had its annexation pronounced by the Senate, little dreaming that anybody would call him to account for so monstrous a violation of the most sacred rights of nations.

The English Government, who had made peace only through sheer necessity, having now got over those difficulties at home which had compelled them to sign it, and not having as yet restored Malta, which they wished to retain, seized upon the opportunity afforded them by the annexation of Piedmont to France, and resumed hostilities.

This event hastened Bonaparte's resolve to transform the life-consulate into hereditary monarchy. The English had landed on the coast of Brittany a few devoted and very enterprising emigrants. Bonaparte availed himself of this plot—with which he had fondly believed he could connect Dumouriez, Pichegru, and Moreau, his three rivals in glory—to get the title of Emperor bestowed on himself by the Senate. But this title, which he would have won as surely by wise and moderate means, though perhaps not immediately, was purchased with violence and crime. He did ascend the throne, but that throne was stained with innocent blood—with blood endeared to France by ancient and glorious memories.

The violent and unexplained death of Pichegru, and the means employed to procure the condemnation of Moreau, might be placed to the account of politics; but the assassination of the Duke of Enghien, in which act Bonaparte joined the ranks and secured the adherence of those guilty of the death of Louis XVI.—men who dreaded any kind of power not their own—this murder, I say, could not be either excused or forgiven, and it never has been; and, hence, Bonaparte was reduced to the necessity of boasting of it.

#### NAPOLEON HAS AN EPILEPTIC ATTACK.

[He gives an account of Napoleon's having something like an epileptic fit, and of the indomitable energy with which he immediately afterward resumed the march.]

I RECEIVED instructions to accompany him to Strasburg, so as to be ready to follow his headquarters according to circumstances (September, 1805). An attack which the Emperor suffered at the beginning of this campaign alarmed me peculiarly.

The very day of his departure from Stras-

burg I had been dining with him; on rising from table he went alone to the Empress Josephine's apartments, and after a few moments came out again in an abrupt manner. I was in the drawing-room; he took me by the arm and brought me to his room. M. de Rémusat, his first chamberlain, who had certain instructions to get, and was afraid Napoleon might go without giving them to him, entered at the same time. We were barely in when the Emperor fell to the floor. He scarce had time to tell me to close the door. I tore open his neckerchief, as he seemed to be suffocating: he did not vomit; he groaned, and foamed at the mouth. M. de Rémusat gave him some water; I inundated him with eau de Cologne. He had something in the nature of convulsion, which ceased in about a quarter of an hour. We seated him in an arm-chair; he began to speak again, dressed himself, urged upon us to say nothing of this occurrence, and half an hour later he was on the road to Carlsruhe. On reaching Stuttgart he let me know how he was; his letter ended with the words: "I am well. The duke (of Würtemberg) came to meet me as far as outside the first gate of his palace; he is a clever man." Another letter of his, from Stuttgart, and dated the same day, said: "I have heard of Mack's doings; he is getting on as if I led him by the hand myself. He will be trapped in Ulm like a clodhopper."

Efforts have been made since to spread the belief that Mack had been bribed; this is untrue; by their presumption alone were the Austrians ruined. We know very well how their army, beaten partly at several points and driven into Ulm, was obliged to capitulate there, and how the troops were kept in that town as prisoners of war after passing under the Caudine forks.

#### AUSTERLITZ AND THE FAUBOURG ST. GERMAIN.

[Talleyrand was with Bonaparte at Austerlitz. He describes his entrance after the battle, the constant arrival of the captured flags of Austria and Russia, and of prisoners bearing the names of all the great houses of the Austrian Empire. At this moment the despatch bag came from Paris, and Talleyrand tells how Napoleon turned from the glories of Austerlitz to fret over the indifference towards himself of the Faubourg St. Germain.]

A SOMEWHAT piquant incident occurred then, which depicts Napoleon's character and opinions too well to allow of its being omitted here.

The Emperor, who at this time was in very confidential relations with me, desired me to read his correspondence to him. We began with deciphered letters from foreign ambassadors in Paris; they were of little interest to him, since all the news of the globe was really being



enacted round about him. Then we came to the police reports; several letters spoke of the embarrassed condition of the bank due to certain bad measures of the Minister of Finances, M. de Marbois. The report he took greatest notice of was that of Madame de Genlis; it was long and written entirely in her own hand. She spoke of the spirit that animated Paris, and quoted some offensive remarks made, she said, in the houses constituting what was then called the Faubourg St. Germain; she named five or six families which never would, she added, rally to the government of the Emperor. Certain rather biting expressions related by Madame de Genlis threw Napoleon into a state of inconceivable rage; he swore and stormed against the Faubourg St. Germain. "Ah, indeed, they think themselves stronger than I," he would say, "the gentlemen of the Faubourg St. Germain do! We shall see; we shall see!"

And when was this "we shall see" thundered forth? A few hours after a decisive victory over the Russians and the Austrians; so impressed was he with the force and power of public opinion, and especially of the opinion of a few nobles, whose sole offense consisted merely in keeping away from him! Hence it was that, on his returning to Paris later on, he looked upon himself as having made a fresh conquest when Mesdames de Montmorency, de Montemart, and de Chevreuse came to the palace as ladies-in-waiting of the Empress and shed the luster of their nobility on Madame de Bassano, who had been appointed along with them.

#### TALLEYRAND THWARTS NAPOLEON.

[From this time forward Talleyrand seems never to have hesitated in thwarting Napoleon's views in the treaties he negotiated, whenever he could. Here is one of the first instances he mentioned.]

In the distressed condition to which it was reduced, Austria had no alternative but to submit to the conditions imposed by her victor. These conditions were hard, and the treaty made with M. von Haugwitz rendered it impossible for me to mitigate them in any way except with respect to the "contribution." I so managed, at least, that these conditions could not be made worse by any fallacious interpretation. Being entirely free—thanks to the distance at which Napoleon was from me at the time—to draft them as I chose, I did my very utmost to render their wording unequivocal; wherefore, although he had obtained all it was possible to obtain, the treaty failed to please him. Some time after he wrote to me, "That treaty you made for me at Presburg cramps me a good deal."

This, notwithstanding, he gave me at no

distant date a great mark of his satisfaction by creating me Prince of Benevento, the territory of which was occupied by his troops; and it is a pleasure to me to state that this duchy, which I retained until the Restoration, was thereby saved from all kinds of vexatious measures, and even from conscription.

#### NAPOLEON CHARGED WITH HEARTLESSNESS.

[Talleyrand throws quietly in, without comment, an instance of Napoleon's heartlessness.]

A SERIOUS accident which befell General Duroc at Kutno did not delay Bonaparte's journey by a quarter of an hour. He saw him fall, passed by him, went on his way, and not until he had gone five or six miles farther did the idea strike him that he ought to have inquiries made about him.

#### THE QUEEN OF PRUSSIA AND NAPOLEON.

[After the treaty with Prussia, which followed the famous interview with the Czar in the middle of the Niemen, Talleyrand's sympathies seemed largely on the side of Prussia.]

THE Emperor Alexander, pleased that he had lost nothing, that he had gained even something (which favorable historians will dislike to record), and had thus sheltered his prestige in the eyes of his subjects, thought he had fulfilled all the duties of friendship towards the King of Prussia by nominally preserving for him one-half of his kingdom; after which he went away, without even taking the precaution to ascertain whether this half which the king was to retain would be promptly restored to him; if he would get it back in its entirety; and if he might not have to make further sacrifices in order to redeem it. This might be justly apprehended after the coarse question Napoleon asked the Queen of Prussia one day: "How ever did you dare go to war, Madame, with such feeble means as those you had?" "Sire, I must confess it to your Majesty, the glory of Frederick II. had deluded us as to our own power," was the queen's reply. The word "glory," so happily placed,—and in Napoleon's drawing-room at Tilsit, too,—struck me as superb. Afterward I so frequently referred to this noble reply that the Emperor said to me one day, "I am at a loss to see what there is in that saying of the Queen of Prussia that you consider so fine; you may as well talk of something else."

I felt indignant at all I saw, all I heard; but I was obliged to conceal my indignation. Hence I shall ever feel grateful to the Queen of Prussia, who was a queen of other days, for taking kindly notice of my sentiments. If among the scenes of my past life that I conjure up there are several which are necessarily



painful, I at least recall with great gratification the words she vouchsafed to address to me — spoken almost in confidence — on the last occasion that I had the honor to accompany her to her carriage: "Prince of Benevento," said she to me, "there are but two persons who regret that I should have come here; and those are you and I. You are not displeased, are you, that I carry that opinion away with me?"

The tears of emotion and pride which filled my eyes were my reply.

#### TALLEYRAND LEAVES NAPOLEON'S MINISTRY.

[Contemporary writers have told that Talleyrand was now driven out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on account of Napoleon's disgust with his venality and belief in his treachery. This is Talleyrand's own account of his retirement.]

On his arrival in Paris, Napoleon created for Marshal Berthier the post of vice-constable, and for me that of vice grand-electeur. These offices were honorable and lucrative sinecures. I then left the Ministry, as I had wished to do.

During the whole time that I was intrusted with the Foreign Office I served Napoleon with fidelity and zeal. For a long time he had complied with the views which I deemed it my duty to lay before him. They were based on two considerations — establishing in France monarchical institutions which would assure the authority of the sovereign by keeping it within proper bounds, and dealing cautiously with Europe to make it forgive France her happiness and her glory. In 1807 already Napoleon had long deviated, I acknowledge it, from the path on which I had done everything to keep him; but not before the opportunity which now presented itself had I been able to leave the post I occupied. It was not so easy as people might think to resign active service with him.

#### TALLEYRAND AND THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER.

[He maintains that while thwarting Napoleon he was serving Europe, and even serving Napoleon himself.]

THE full and entire coöperation of Russia would have enabled him but too well to attain his object. Having a very poor opinion of the genius and character of the Emperor Alexander, he felt confident of success. He proposed, first, to intimidate him, and then to attack at the same time his vanity and his ambition; and, in truth, it was to be feared that on each of these three points the Emperor of Russia might prove but too assailable. But the destiny of Austria willed it that M. de Caulaincourt, a man that people seem to have delighted in misjudging, inspired the Emperor

Alexander with some confidence and made him place some in me. I had on several occasions seen him privately at Tilsit. I saw him almost every day at Erfurt. Conversations, of a general character at first, on the common interest existing between the great European powers, on the conditions which would necessarily break the bonds that it was important to maintain between them, on the European equilibrium in general, on the probable consequences of its destruction; conversations, of a more private nature afterwards, on those states whose existence was essential to the equilibrium, on Austria in fine — put the Emperor in such a condition of mind that the caresses, the offers, and the fits of passion of Napoleon were positively fruitless and idle, and that, before leaving Erfurt, the Emperor Alexander wrote, with his own hand, to the Emperor of Austria, to quiet his fears regarding the Erfurt interview. This is the last service I was able to render to Europe while Napoleon reigned; and that service, in my opinion, I rendered also to Napoleon himself. . . .

At all hazards I had done everything that I could to obtain the Emperor Alexander's confidence, and I had succeeded in doing so to such an extent that, at the very commencement of his difficulties with France, he sent to me Count von Nesselrode, counselor at the Russian Embassy in Paris, who said to me on entering my room: "I have just come from St. Petersburg; I hold an official post with Prince Kourakin, but it is to you I have credentials. I am in private correspondence with the Emperor, and I bring you a letter from him."

#### NAPOLEON'S SPANISH PLOTS.

[Talleyrand devotes an interesting chapter to a detailed account of Napoleon's plots for establishing his brother on the throne of Spain. He thus states his theory of Napoleon's motives.]

NAPOLEON, being at Finkenstein [his headquarters in Poland during the campaign of 1807], remarked gaily, one day, "I can, when the occasion requires it, throw off the lion's skin and put on that of the fox."

He was fond of deceiving people. He would have deceived for the mere pleasure of doing so; and, even when politics did not require it, his instincts would have led him to indulge in deception. To carry out the schemes he was unceasingly turning over in his head, artifice was hardly less necessary to him than force; and more especially for the accomplishment of his views in regard to Spain did he feel that force alone would not suffice.

Napoleon, seated on one of the thrones of the House of Bourbon, looked upon the



princes who occupied the other two as natural enemies whom it was his interest to overthrow. But that was an undertaking a failure in which would ruin his plans, perhaps ruin himself. It was, therefore, not to be attempted without an absolute certainty of success.

Now the first condition of success in this case was that there should be no fear of a possible diversion on the Continent. . . .

The Emperor had several times spoken to me of his intention to seize Spain. I opposed this project with all my might, and endeavored to show the immorality and the peril of such an undertaking. He always ended by laying stress on the dangers of a possible diversion created at the Pyrenees by the Spanish Government whenever he might be involved in difficulties on the banks of the Rhine or in Italy; and he would quote for me the unfortunate proclamation of Prince de la Paix at the time of the battle of Jena. Many a time before had I refuted this argument by reminding him that it would be supremely unjust to hold the Spanish nation responsible for the fault of a man that she detested and despised, and that he would find it easier to overthrow the Prince de la Paix than to get possession of Spain. But to this he would reply that the idea of Prince de la Paix might be adopted by others, and that he would never be safe along his Pyrenean frontiers. It was then that, driven to extremities by the captious arguments of his ambition, I proposed a plan to him which offered the very guarantees of security he was feigning to seek in the direction of Spain. I advised him to occupy Catalonia until such time as he should be able to obtain a maritime peace with England. "Let it be known," I said to him, "that you will keep it as a pledge until peace is concluded, and you will thereby hold the Spanish Government in check. Should peace be long delayed, it is possible that Catalonia, which is the least Spanish of all the provinces of Spain, might become attached to France, nor are historical traditions wanting to help such a feeling; and perhaps it might then be annexed to France altogether. But anything you do beyond that cannot fail some day to be a source of bitter regret for you."

He would not be convinced, and thenceforth he distrusted me on this question. [Eventually] he tempted the cupidity and ambition of Prince de la Paix by a treaty for the partition of Portugal.

[The Spanish princes were decoyed across the frontier, and Napoleon had ordered that they should be quartered under guard in Talleyrand's château at Valençay. He thus describes their reception.]

I had been at my château for several days when the princes arrived. The moment of

their arrival has left in my soul an impression which will never wear away. The princes were young; and they, their surroundings, their clothes, their carriages, their liveries, everything, suggested centuries of the past. The carriage from which I saw them alight might have been taken for one of the conveyances of Philip V. This air of antiquity, by recalling their greatness, added to the interest of their position. After so many years of storms and disasters they were the first members of the House of Bourbon I once more beheld. They were not embarrassed; it was I, and I take pleasure in saying so.

Napoleon had ordered that they should be accompanied by Colonel Henri, a superior officer in the *gendarmérie d'élite*, and one of those soldiers of police who imagine that military glory is acquired by fulfilling in a harsh manner the duties of such a mission as this. I soon perceived that this man's attitude of suspicion and anxiety towards the princes would render their stay at Valençay unbearable. I therefore assumed the tone of a master, and gave him to understand that Napoleon reigned neither out doors nor in at Valençay. This reassured the princes, and herein I found my first reward. I showed them every respect, attention, and care; I permitted no one to appear before them without their previous consent. No visitor ever approached them unless in dress-suit, and I myself never failed to show the example of what I expected from others in this respect. All the hours of the day were divided according to their usual practices—religious service, time of rest, walks, prayers, etc. Will it be believed that at Valençay I made the Spanish princes acquainted with a kind of liberty and enjoyment that they had never known near their father's throne? In Madrid the two eldest brothers had never taken a walk together without a written permission from the king. Being free by themselves, going out ten times a day about the garden and the park, were new pleasures for them; never before had they been able to be brothers together to such an extent.

#### TALLEYRAND'S STINGING RETORT.

[Talleyrand details further arguments with Napoleon concerning the Spanish enterprise, dates his rupture with Napoleon from that period, and closes with a story of Napoleon's vanity.]

THE Emperor had long felt hurt by the opinion I had expressed as to his Spanish enterprise; besides, he had considered that the arrangements I had made at the time when the princes arrived at Valençay had too much regard for their safety. And so, from the first time we met again at Nantes, our conversations—our discussions, I might call them—were of an irri-



tating nature. On one occasion among others, assuming an air of banter, rubbing his hands, and pacing up and down the room, he said to me with a sneering look: "Well, you see how your predictions have turned out about the difficulties I should meet in settling the affairs of Spain according to my own views. I have got the better of those people, after all; they were all caught in the nets I spread for them, and I am master of the situation in Spain, as in the rest of Europe!"

Driven out of patience by this boast,—which in my mind was so little justified,—and above all by the shameful means he had employed to reach his aim, I replied to him, though calmly, that I did not see things from the same point of view as he did, and that I believed he had lost more than he had gained by the Bayonne events. "What do you mean by that?" he inquired. "Well," I answered, "the thing is very plain, and I will show it to you by an example. Let a man of the world behave foolishly, let him be a faithless husband, let him even commit grievous faults against his friends, he will be blamed, no doubt; but if he be wealthy, powerful, clever, society may be somewhat indulgent to him. Let that same man cheat at the gambling table, he is forthwith banished from good society and will never be forgiven."

The Emperor grew pale and embarrassed, and said not another word to me that day. I may date from this particular conversation our more or less evident rupture. Never after did he utter the name of Spain, of Valençay, or my own, without coupling therewith some offensive epithet suggested to him by his rancor. The princes had not been three months at Valençay when he already pictured to himself all the vengeance of Europe ready to break forth from the château. Personages around him often told me that he never spoke of Valençay but with embarrassment whenever his conversation or his inquiries turned to that locality.

My absence lasted but a few days; the princes saw me again and greeted me with extreme kindness. A letter of Napoleon's which I found on my return deserves to be preserved; here it is, literally:

"Prince Ferdinand, when writing to me, calls me his cousin. Try and make M. de San Carlos understand that this is ridiculous, and that he is to call me simply, *Sire*."

Ajaccio and St. Helena make all comment unnecessary.

#### NAPOLÉON AND THE CZAR.

[The first volume of these Memoirs concludes with a chapter on the Erfurt meeting between Napoleon and the Czar, which begins as follows.]

THE Emperor Napoleon, in the interviews which preceded the treaty of Tilsit, often spoke of Moldavia and Wallachia to the Emperor Alexander as of provinces which should some day be joined to Russia; with the air of a man who yields to the current and submits to the decrees of Providence, he placed on the list of unavoidable events the dismemberment of Turkey in Europe. He then would outline, as if by inspiration, the general basis of a partition of that empire, a partition to which Austria should be called with a view to satisfy her pride rather than her ambition. Practised eyes could perceive what an effect all these chimeras produced on the mind of the Emperor Alexander. Napoleon watched him carefully, and the moment he saw he had seduced his imagination he announced that letters from Paris urged him to return, and desired that no time should be lost in drafting a treaty. The instructions I received concerning this treaty were, that I should not allow one word to be introduced into it relating to the dividing of the Ottoman Empire, or even to the future fate of the two provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia; these instructions I carried out rigorously. And so Napoleon left Tilsit, after preparing for himself prospective openings which he could use at his pleasure for the furtherance of his other designs. He himself remained free, while the Emperor Alexander was fettered by means of his false hopes, and placed, besides, with regard to Turkey, in an equivocal position, out of which the Tuileries cabinet could bring forth fresh claims that the treaty had in no way interfered with.

It was at a court gathering in Paris, during the month of January, 1808, that Napoleon made a first attempt to turn this position to profit. He approached M. de Tolstoi, then Russian Ambassador, took him aside, and in the very midst of a conversation in which he extolled the advantages of Wallachia and Moldavia for Russia he ventured a hint of compensations for France, and pointed to Silesia as the province which would be appropriate in the case.

On this occasion, as on all those when he meditated some new territorial aggrandizement, he appeared frightened at the ambition of England, which, he said, would not listen to any proposal of peace, and compelled him to have recourse to all the means dictated by prudence in order to diminish the strength of the powers with which there was reason to believe England was on terms of intimacy. For the time being, he added, we must lay aside all idea of partitioning the Ottoman Empire; for to start on any enterprise against Turkey without great maritime resources would be to place her most precious possessions at the mercy of Great Britain.



M. de Tolstoi, whose business it was to listen and who was ill fitted for anything else, reported to his court the hint he had received. The Emperor Alexander was the reverse of pleased on hearing of it, and said rather sharply to the French Ambassador: "I cannot believe what I have just read in Tolstoi's despatches; is it intended to tear up the Tilsit treaty? I do not understand the Emperor. He cannot mean to place me in a personal difficulty. On the contrary, his duty is to clear up my position in the eyes of Europe, by speedily placing Prussia in the situation which has been determined by the treaty. This is really a point of honor with me."

This incident gave rise to some explanations, which were terminated only by a letter from the Emperor Napoleon which reached St. Petersburg about the end of February, 1808. This letter contained (1) the implicit surrendering of all claims to Silesia; (2) new ideas on a partition of Turkey; (3) a scheme to carry on a war in India; (4) a proposal, either that a trustworthy person should be sent to Paris to treat on these weighty questions, or that some locality should be selected where the two emperors might meet.

It is to be remarked that Napoleon's letter, while proposing a dividing of Turkey, did not specify any of the bases on which this should be done. Thus, with the exception of the Silesian difficulty, which was removed, things were left very nearly in the same state of uncertainty. However, the Emperor Alexander felt so much relieved at no longer having to contend for the personal interests of the King of Prussia that he read this letter with extreme pleasure and at once decided to have an interview with the Emperor Napoleon. He wrote to him to tell him so. He asked for this interview, however, in the belief and on the condition that the partitioning of Turkey should have been previously drawn up, and that the only object of the meeting should be to have a good understanding about the means to be adopted of carrying out the treaty, and to render the ratification the more inviolable by personal pledges from man to man. In this sense it was that M. de Romanzoff was instructed to enter into negotiations with the French Ambassador, M. de Caulaincourt. . . .

The share I had had in the Tilsit treaty; the marks of personal kindness given me by the Emperor Alexander; the uncomfortable feeling cherished by the Emperor Napoleon towards M. de Champagny, who, as he used to put it, came to him every morning "brimful of zeal to excuse the blunders he had made the night before"; my own friendly relations with M. de Caulaincourt, to whose qualities justice must surely be done some day — all these

motives made the Emperor overlook the embarrassing position in which he had placed himself with regard to me by blaming me so violently for my disapproval of his Spanish venture.

He therefore proposed to me to accompany him to Erfurt and take in hand the negotiations to be carried on there, with the sole restriction that the treaty which might result therefrom should be signed by his Minister of Foreign Affairs. I agreed. The confidence he showed me at our first interview was a sort of amends for the past. He had all M. de Caulaincourt's correspondence handed to me; I found it excellent. In a few hours he acquainted me with everything that had been done in St. Petersburg; and henceforth I thought of nothing but the means of preventing, so far as lay in my power, the spirit of enterprise from being too predominant in this singular interview.

Napoleon would fain give great éclat to the meeting; he made it a practice to speak continually to those around him of the thought uppermost in his mind. I was still Grand Chamberlain at the time; every hour in the day he would send for me, as well as for General Duroc, the Grand Marshal of the Palace, and M. de Rémusat, who had charge of the theatricals. "My journey must be magnificent," he would repeat to us every day. At one of his breakfasts, at which we were all three present, he asked me who would be his chamberlains in attendance.

"It strikes me," he said, "we have no very great names; I must have some: the truth is, that they alone can make a good figure at court. In justice to the French nobility, we must allow that it is admirable for that."

"Sire, you have M. de Montesquieu."

"Good!"

"Prince Sapieha."

"Not bad!"

"I think two will be sufficient. The journey being a short one, your Majesty can always have them in attendance."

"Quite so. And now, Rémusat, I must have one performance every day. Send for Dazincourt; he is the manager, is he not?"

"He is, Sire."

"I want to astonish Germany with my magnificence."

Dazincourt had gone out, so the arrangements for the stage performances were postponed to the following day.

"It is, no doubt, your Majesty's intention to invite a few great personages to Erfurt; and time presses."

"One of Eugène's aides-de-camp starts this very day," replied the Emperor. "We might let him know the proper thing to hint to his



father-in-law [the King of Bavaria]; and if one of the kings comes, they will all want to come. Then again—"he added, "no, we must not make use of Eugène for that; Eugène is not clever enough. He is the man to carry out exactly what I want, but he is no good at hinting. Talleyrand is better; the more so"—and here he laughed—"as he will pose as my critic, and declare that I shall feel gratified by the kings' coming. It will be *my* business, afterwards, to show that I was absolutely indifferent in the matter, and that they were really more in my way than otherwise."

At next morning's breakfast the Emperor sent for Dazincourt, who was awaiting his orders. He had told M. de Rémusat, General Duroc, and myself to be there.

"Dazincourt, you have heard that I am going to Erfurt?"

"I have, Sire."

"I should like the Comédie Française to come with me."

"To play comedy and tragedy?"

"I want nothing but tragedies; our comedies would be useless: they are not understood on the other side of the Rhine."

"Of course your Majesty wants a very fine performance?"

"I do—our very finest plays."

"Sire, we might give 'Athalie'?"

"'Athalie'! Nonsense! Here is a man who does not understand me! Am I going to Erfurt to put some *Joas*<sup>1</sup> into the heads of those Germans? 'Athalie'! How stupid!<sup>2</sup> My dear Dazincourt, that 's enough! Warn your best tragedians to get ready to come to Erfurt, and I shall send you my commands respecting the date of your departure and the pieces that must be played. Go! How stupid those old people are! 'Athalie'! I must say it is my fault, too; why should I consult them? I ought to consult nobody. If he had suggested 'Cinna,' even! In that piece great interests are in play; and there is a scene of clemency, which is always a good thing. I once knew 'Cinna' almost all by heart; but I have never been a good elocutionist. Rémusat, is it not in 'Cinna' these lines occur?—

"Tous ces crimes d'État qu'on fait pour la couronne,

Le ciel nous en absout, *lorsqu'il* nous la donne."

I am not sure that I am quoting the lines accurately."

<sup>1</sup> See also Athaliah and Joash, II. Kings xi. and II. Chronicles xxii. and xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> "Que c'est bête!" were his imperial Majesty's own words.—AMERICAN TRANSLATOR.

<sup>3</sup> It may not be out of place to remark that, by substituting (not quite unintentionally, perhaps) *lorsqu'il* for *alors qu'il*, Napoleon considerably weakened the emphasis of Corneille's expression. However, as the substitution unluckily made the poet's line one foot

"Sire, the quotation does occur in 'Cinna'; but I believe the poet says '*Alors qu'il*'<sup>3</sup> nous la donne."

"How do the next lines run? Get a 'Corneille.'"

"Sire, there is no necessity for that; I remember them:

"Le ciel nous en absout, alors qu'il nous la donne;  
Et dans le sacré rang où sa faveur l'a mis,  
Le passé devient juste et l'avenir permis.  
Qui peut y parvenir ne peut être coupable;  
Quoi qu'il ait fait ou fasse, il est inviolable."

"That is excellent, especially for those Germans who dwell forever on the same ideas, and who still talk of the death of the Duke of Enghien; we must enlarge their views of moral philosophy. I do not say that with reference to the Emperor Alexander: those things are of no account to a Russian; but the sentiment is good for those people with melancholy ideas, of whom Germany is full. We shall give 'Cinna,' then; that 's one play, and let it be for the first day. Rémusat, find out what tragedies might be given on the following days, and let me know before settling anything."

"Sire, your Majesty will allow some actors to be kept for Paris?"

"Yes, under-studies; but we must take all the good actors with us: it is better to have too many of them."

An order was immediately forwarded to Saint-Prix, Talma, Lafont, Damas, Després, Lacave, Varennes, Dazincourt, Mademoiselle Raucourt, Madame Talma, Mademoiselle Bourgoin, Mademoiselle Duchesnois, Mademoiselle Gros, Mademoiselle Rose Dupuis, and Mademoiselle Patrat.

[The Memoirs tell how the treaty which Napoleon wished to conclude was prepared in advance.]

I had gone through the whole of the correspondence, but the Emperor had not yet had with me the all-important conversation respecting the affairs to be treated at Erfurt. A few days previous to the date fixed for my departure the Grand Marshal wrote to me that the Emperor desired me to go to the grand reception that very evening. I had scarcely entered the salon when he took me away to his own apartments.

"Well! You have read all that correspondence with Russia," he said to me. "What do you think of it?"

The quotation may be Anglicized literally thus:

Whatever crimes of state a royal crown may cost  
By Heaven is absolved when 't is given to us,  
And in that hallowed rank by heavenly grace bestowed,  
The past is righteous made, the future all our own.  
He who has gained the crown, guiltless henceforward stands;  
Whate'er he did or does, 'gainst him no hand may rise.

—AMERICAN TRANSLATOR.



you think of the way I have manœuvered with the Emperor Alexander?"

And he straightway went over, with complacency, all he had said and written in the course of the past year, winding up with a remark on the ascendancy he had gained over the Emperor Alexander, although on his part he had executed, of the Tilsit treaty, nothing but what suited him.

"Now," he added, "we are going to Erfurt. I want to return home quite free to do in Spain anything I may choose; I want to feel sure that Austria will be anxious and quiet, and I do not want to be bound in any definite manner with Russia for what concerns the affairs of the Levant. Prepare for me such a convention as would content the Emperor Alexander—would, above all, be directed against England, and would leave me plenty of elbow-room for the rest; I will help you; prestige will not fail you."

I was for two days without seeing him. In his impatience he had written down what he wished to be contained in the various articles, and had sent it to me with a request that I should bring it to him duly drawn out, as soon as possible. I did not keep him waiting, and within a few hours I went to him with the projected treaty written out in his own words.

"That is very nearly all I told you," he said. "Leave it with me; I shall arrange it. We must add to one of the last articles, to the article at which I stopped you: 'That, in the event of Austria causing any anxiety to France, the Emperor of Russia binds himself to declare himself against Austria and join France immediately on his being requested so to do, this being one of the cases to which the alliance of the two powers applies.' That is the essential article—how can you have forgotten it? Are you still Austrian?"

"Just a little, Sire; but I think it would be more accurate to say that I am never Russian and that I am always French."

"Make your arrangements to start: you must be at Erfurt a day or two before me. During our stay there you will seek opportunities to see the Emperor Alexander frequently. You know him well; you will use the right kind of language with him. You will tell him that in the usefulness of our alliance for mankind at large it is easy to recognize one of the grand designs of Providence. United, we are fated to reëstablish general order in Europe. We are both young; we must not be in too great a hurry. On this you must lay great stress; for Comte de Romanzoff is impatient with regard to the Levant question. You will tell him how nothing can be effected without public opinion, and that Europe must be brought to see with pleasure, and without

being frightened by our combined power, the realization of the great undertaking we are now meditating. The security of neighboring powers, the properly understood interest of the whole continent, seven million Greeks restored to liberty, etc. You have a fine field for philanthropy; in this I give you *carte blanche*; only I want the philanthropy to be a long way off! Farewell."<sup>1</sup>

#### NAPOLEON'S CHIEF FLATTERERS.

[The nature of Napoleon's reception at Erfurt is thus described.]

THE Emperor entered Erfurt on the 27th of September, 1808, at ten in the morning. An immense crowd had filled the avenues leading to his palace since the day before. Every one wanted to see, to come near the man who dispensed everything—thrones, misery, fears, and hopes. The three men on whom most praise has been lavished on this earth are: Augustus, Louis XIV., and Napoleon. Different epochs and different talents have varied the wording of these eulogies, but, intrinsically, it is always the same thing. My post as Grand Chamberlain enabling me to have a closer view of the homages, be they forced, feigned, or even sincere, which were paid to Napoleon, gave them in my eyes what I might call monstrous proportions. Servility never displayed so much invention; it suggested the idea of giving a hunt on the very ground where the Emperor had won the famous battle of Jena. A butchery of boars and wild game was prepared there to recall to the eyes of the victor the exploits of that battle. It has often been forced upon me that the more people had cause to vow vengeance against the Emperor, the more they smiled at his good fortune, and applauded that high destiny which they said was the gift of Heaven.

I am inclined to believe—and the idea came to my mind at Erfurt—that there are secrets of flattery that are known to none but those princes who, without leaving their thrones, have submitted to an ever-menacing protectorate; and they know how to make the most skillful use of these secrets when they happen to be near the power that dominates them and that is capable of crushing them. I have often heard a line quoted, out of I forget what wretched tragedy:

Tu n'as su qu'obéir, tu serais un tyran.

I did not see one prince at Erfurt who did not suggest to my mind the advisability of improving that line into:

Tu n'as su que régner, tu serais un esclave.

<sup>1</sup> "Je veux seulement que ce soit de la philanthropie lointaine."



## TALLEYRAND PLOTS AGAINST NAPOLEON.

[Talleyrand describes with perfect naïveté his entering into relations with the representative of Austria to thwart Napoleon's wishes.]

THIS interview held at Erfurt without Austria being invited to it, without her being even made officially acquainted with it, had alarmed the Emperor Francis, who, of his own accord, had sent the Baron de Vincent straight to Erfurt with a letter for the Emperor Napoleon, and, I think, another for the Emperor Alexander. . . .

M. de Vincent showed me a copy of the letter of which he was the bearer: it was a nobly worded epistle, and betrayed no anxiety on the part of the writer. M. de Vincent had been ordered to be open-hearted with me; I told him that I was greatly pleased with his coming, as I was not without some apprehension concerning the dispositions of the two emperors. The very words of the Emperor Napoleon, quoted above, show how he looked upon me, and rightly so, as a supporter of the alliance of France with Austria. I believed, and still believe now, that I was thereby serving France. I assured M. de Vincent that I was doing, and would do, in every direction, what I would consider as likely to prevent any resolution injurious to the interests of his government as a result of the Erfurt interview.

## NAPOLEON, GOETHE, AND WIELAND.

[Talleyrand kept careful notes of the conversation at Erfurt, and also had copies made of the notes taken by others. He is thus able to give the detailed account which follows of the interview of Napoleon with Goethe and Wieland.]

EVERY morning he read, with complacency, the list of newly arrived personages. The first time he saw M. Goethe's name he sent for him.

"M. Goethe, I am delighted to see you."

"Sire, I see that your Majesty, when traveling, does not neglect to cast your eyes on the smallest things."

"I know that you are the first tragic poet of Germany."

"Sire, you wrong our country. We believe we have great men: Schiller, Lessing, and Wieland must be known to your Majesty."

"I confess my acquaintance with them is very slight; I did read the 'Thirty Years' War,' and that—excuse my saying so—struck me as affording subjects for tragedy only fit for our boulevards."

"Sire, I am unacquainted with your boulevards; but I presume it is there that popular performances are given; and I am sorry to hear you judge so severely of one of the finest geniuses of modern times."

"You habitually reside in Weimar; is that the place where the literary celebrities of Germany congregate?"

"Sire, they are in high favor there; but, just now, Wieland is the only man with a European fame who lives in Weimar; for Müller resides in Berlin."

"I should be very glad to see M. Wieland."

"If your Majesty permits me to send for him, I feel sure he will come immediately."

"Does he speak French?"

"He knows the language, and has himself corrected several French translations of his own works."

"During your stay here you must go to our plays every evening. It will do you no harm to see the best French tragedies on the stage."

"Sire, I will go with pleasure, and I must confess to your Majesty that I intended doing so; I have translated, or rather imitated, a few French pieces."

"Which ones?"

"'Mahomet' and 'Tancrède.'"

"I must inquire from Rémusat whether we have actors here to play them. I should be glad to let you hear them in our language. You are not so strict as we are with the rules of the drama."

"Sire, with us the unities are not essential."

"What do you think of our meeting here?"

"Very brilliant, Sire; and I trust it will be useful to our country."

"Are your people happy?"

"They are full of hope."

"M. Goethe, you ought to remain here all the time of our stay, and to note the impression you derive from the great spectacle we afford you."

"Ah, Sire, such a task would need the pen of some writer of the ancient times."

"Are you one of those who like Tacitus?"

"Yes, Sire; very much."

"Well, I am not; but we shall talk of that again another time. Write to M. Wieland to come here; I shall return him his visit at Weimar, where the duke has invited me. I shall be very pleased to see the duchess; she is a woman of great merit. The duke was rather on the wrong road for some time, but he has been made to see it."

"Sire, if he was on the wrong road he has been made to see it somewhat sharply; but I am not a judge of such things; he protects literature and the sciences, and we have nothing but good to speak of him."

"M. Goethe, come to 'Iphigénie' to-night. It is a good play; it is not among those I like best, but French people are very fond of it. You shall see not a few sovereigns in my parterre. Do you know the Prince Pimate?"

"I do, Sire, almost intimately; he is a prince



endowed with great mental powers, extensive knowledge, and much generosity."

"Well, you shall see him to-night asleep with his head on the shoulder of the King of Würtemberg. Did you ever see the Emperor of Russia?"

"No, Sire, never; but I hope to be presented to him."

"He speaks your language well; if you write something on the Erfurt interview, you must dedicate it to him."

"Sire, that is against my practice. When I first began to write, I made it a rule for myself to abstain from dedications, so as to spare myself a possible source of regret."

"It was not so with the great writers of the age of Louis XIV."

"That is true, Sire; but your Majesty would not affirm that they were never sorry for it."

"What has become of that *mauvais sujet* Kotzebue?"

"Sire, they say he is in Siberia, and that you will ask his amnesty from the Emperor Alexander."

"But do you know that he is far from being a man to my taste?"

"Sire, he is very unfortunate, and he is a man of great talent."

"Adieu, M. Goethe."

I followed M. Goethe out and invited him to come and dine with me. On my return I wrote down this first conversation, and in the course of the dinner I ascertained, by various questions I asked of him, that it occurred exactly as I have reproduced it above. On leaving my table, M. Goethe went to the theater. I was anxious that he should be near the stage, and that was no easy matter, as the first row of seats was occupied by crowned heads; the second row, one of simple chairs, was filled with heirs-apparent; and all the benches behind them were crowded with ministers and minor princes. I therefore intrusted M. Goethe to M. Dazincourt, who managed to find a good seat for him without committing any breach of etiquette. . . .

I KNOW not what Napoleon wanted to get out of Wieland, but it pleased him to say a number of pleasant things to him.

"M. Wieland, we are very fond of your works in France; for you are the author of 'Agathon' and 'Oberon.' We call you 'the Voltaire of Germany.'"

"Sire, such a likeness would be very flattering to me; but there is no truth in it: it is exaggerated praise on the part of kindly disposed persons."

"Tell me, M. Wieland, why your 'Diogenes,' your 'Agathon,' and your 'Peregrinus'

are written in that equivocal style which introduces history into romance and romance into history. These two methods, in a superior man like you, should be sharply defined. Everything that is of a mixed character easily leads to confusion. That is why *le drame* is so little of a favorite in France. I am afraid to say much, for I have to deal with a powerful adversary, the more so as what I say applies to M. Goethe as well as to you."

"Sire, your Majesty will permit me to observe that there are on the French stage very few tragedies which are not a mixture of history and romance. But I am now encroaching on M. Goethe's ground; he will answer you, and, surely, will answer you well. As for what concerns me, my wish has been to give a few useful lessons to mankind, and I have stood in need of the authority of history. I wished the examples I borrowed from it to be easy and pleasant to imitate, and for that purpose I had of necessity to mingle with history the ideal and the romantic. Men's thoughts are sometimes better than their actions, and good novels are better than mankind. Compare, Sire, the age of Louis XIV. with 'Telemachus,' which contains the best lessons both for sovereigns and for peoples. My Diogenes in his barrel is a good man."

"But do you know," said the Emperor, "what happens to those who always exhibit virtue in fiction? They induce the belief that virtues are never anything but fancies. History has been very often calumniated by historians themselves."

This conversation, in which Tacitus was inevitably on the point of making his appearance, was interrupted by M. de Nansouty, who came and told the Emperor that a courier from Paris had arrived with letters for him. The Prince Primate withdrew with Wieland and Goethe and asked me to dinner with them at his house. Wieland, who, simple-minded as he was, did not know whether he had given the correct replies or otherwise to the Emperor, first went home to take down the conversation he had just had, whereupon he brought his writing to the Prince Primate's, just as I have given it above.

All the literary personages of Weimar and the vicinity were present at this dinner. I remarked among them a lady from Eisenach, who had a seat next to the Primate. She was never addressed but by the name of some muse, and that without the least affectation. "Clio, would you like so-and-so?" was with the Primate an entirely unaffected mode of expression, to which she would quite naturally reply "yes," or "no." On earth she was called the Baroness of Bechtolsheim.



# THE MEMOIRS OF TALLEYRAND.<sup>1</sup>

## NAPOLEON—JOSEPHINE—ALEXANDER.

### TALLEYRAND, ALEXANDER, AND NAPOLEON.

[In connection with the Erfurt meeting between Napoleon and Alexander,—spoken of in the extracts printed in the February CENTURY,—here is Talleyrand's account of one of his secret interviews with the Czar, at the apartment of the Baronne de la Tour, late at night, after he had finished his work with Napoleon.]



AS the Emperor spoken to you these few days?" was his first inquiry.

"No, Sire," I replied; and I ventured to add, "Had I not seen M. de Vincent, I might believe that this Erfurt interview was nothing

more than a pleasure party."

"What does M. de Vincent say?"

"Very sensible things, Sire; for he expresses the hope that your Majesty will not allow himself to be drawn by the Emperor Napoleon into *threatening*, or at least *offensive*, measures against Austria; and, if your Majesty will permit me to say so, I cherish the same hopes."

"I should like it too; but it is very hard, for the Emperor Napoleon strikes me as feeling very strongly in the matter."

"But, Sire, you have comments to make. Might not your Majesty consider as useless the clauses in which there is question of Austria, and say that they are contained implicitly in the Tilsit treaty? You might add, it seems to me, that tokens of confidence should be mutual; and that whereas your Majesty, in the draft under consideration, partly leaves it to the Emperor Napoleon to judge of the circumstances in which certain articles might be carried into execution, you have, on your part, the right to demand that he should leave you the judge of those cases in which Austria would become a real obstacle to the project adopted by both of you. This being once agreed upon, everything concerning Austria should be stricken out of the draft. And if your Majesty gives due thought to the panic which must needs have been caused at Vienna by this Erfurt meeting, prearranged as it was without the official knowledge of the Emperor Francis, you might perhaps think it well to write to him and reassure him concerning everything that touches him personally."

I could see that my words fell pleasantly on the Emperor's ear: he took pencil notes of what I was saying to him; but I had to convince him, and I had not succeeded so far yet. It was M de Caulaincourt who carried off this final victory by the weight of his own personal influence.

The following day the Emperor showed me his comments on the draft, and said to me, graciously, "You will recognize yourself in several passages; other additions are extracts from former conversations of the Emperor Napoleon with me." These comments seemed sufficient to meet the case. He stated to me his fixed determination to present them the next morning, at which I was highly pleased; for there was, in my mind, such a lack of independence about him that I was most desirous this first step should be over. My apprehensions proved groundless, however; for, during the three hours that his conference with the Emperor Napoleon lasted, he yielded nothing to him. The latter sent for me as soon as they separated.

"I have done nothing," said he to me, "with the Emperor Alexander. I turned him round in every way, but he is a short-sighted man. I did not get one step further ahead."

"Sire, I think your Majesty has moved many a step onward since you came here, for the Emperor Alexander seems completely under the spell."

"He gives you that idea; you are his dupe. If he has such regard for me, why does he not sign?"

"Sire, there is a touch of chivalry in him, which makes him feel hurt at too much caution being used towards him. He thinks himself more thoroughly bound to you by his own word and by his affectionate feeling towards you than by treaties. His correspondence, which your Majesty gave me to peruse, gives abundant proof of what I say."

"All that is utter nonsense!"

### NAPOLEON'S DIVORCE FROM JOSEPHINE.

[This is the account given of Napoleon's instructions to Talleyrand, at Erfurt, in connection with his project for a divorce from Josephine.]

NAPOLEON, who was pleased with his day's work, had made me stay with him long after he had retired to bed. There was something

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from the Memoirs, printed in advance of the volumes by arrangement with Messrs. Griffith, Farran & Co., the English publishers. (See also THE CENTURY for January and February.)

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strange in his restlessness: he would ask me questions and would not wait for my answers; he would fain speak to me, and what he said was different from what he meant; at last he uttered the big word "divorce."

"My destiny demands it," he said, "and the tranquillity of France requires it of me. I have no successor. Joseph is a nullity, and he has daughters only. It is I who ought to found a dynasty. I cannot found it save by a matrimonial alliance with a princess belonging to one of the great reigning houses of Europe. The Emperor Alexander has sisters; one of them is of an age to suit me. Broach that question to Romanzoff; tell him that after the settlement of my Spanish affairs I shall enter into all his views regarding the partition of Turkey. As to other arguments, you will have plenty; for I know that you are in favor of divorce, and so does the Empress Josephine, I warn you."

"Sire, if your Majesty permits, I will say nothing to M. de Romanzoff. Despite his being the hero in Madame de Genlis's 'Chevaliers du Cygne,' I do not think him clever enough. And then when M. de Romanzoff has been duly tutored, he will have to go and repeat to the Emperor everything I have told him. Will he repeat my words correctly? Will he be willing to do so? I know not. It is much more natural, and I might say much more easy to have, in this great affair, an earnest conversation with the Emperor Alexander himself; and, if your Majesty adopts my view, I undertake to introduce the matter."

"That is quite right," said the Emperor; "but take care you bear in mind that it is not as coming from me you are to speak to him. It is as a Frenchman you will address him, that he may ask me to take a step that may assure the stability of France, whose fate would be uncertain after my death. As a Frenchman you will be at liberty to say anything you choose. Joseph, Lucien, all the members of my family, afford you a vast field; say anything you like about them; they are nothing to France. Even my son—but this is unnecessary to say—would often have need of being my son in order to succeed me in peace."<sup>1</sup>

It was now late. Still, I ventured to go to the house of the Princesse de la Tour. The door was not closed yet. The Emperor Alexander had prolonged his stay later than usual. There he was, relating to the princess, with admirable good faith, all the melancholy details of the morning's interview. "Nobody," he said, "has a correct idea of that man's character. Whatever he does of a nature to

cause anxiety to other countries, he is compelled to by his very position. People little know how good he is. You think so—do you not?—you who know him well."

"Sire, I have my personal motives to believe it, and I always give them with great pleasure. Might I ask your Majesty whether you could favor me with an audience to-morrow morning?"

"To-morrow—yes, with pleasure; before or after I see M. de Vincent. I have a letter to write to the Emperor Francis."

"Then, Sire, it will be after, with your permission. I should be very sorry to delay that good action; the Emperor Francis sadly needs to be tranquillized. I do not doubt but your Majesty's letter will produce this effect."

"It is my intention, at least, that it should do so." Whereupon the Emperor remarked, with surprise, that it was nearly two o'clock.

The next day, on his way to the audience to which he had been summoned, M. de Vincent called on me, and I had an opportunity to tell him how much he had cause to be pleased with everybody in general, and the Emperor Alexander in particular. His face brightened up, as much as it is capable of doing, and when he bade me adieu he pressed my hand with affectionate gratitude. He left for Vienna immediately after having his audience.

While it was going on, I mentally went over the means at my command in order to fulfil, to the satisfaction of all concerned and to my own, the mission I had undertaken. I confess I was frightened, for the sake of Europe, at the thought of one more bond between Russia and France. In my mind, what I should aim at was to get the idea of this alliance sufficiently admitted to satisfy Napoleon, and yet to leave reservations in the background which would render it difficult.

All the art I had thought I should call to my aid proved needless with the Emperor Alexander. From the first word he understood me, and he understood me exactly as I wished to be understood.

"If I were alone in question," he said to me, "I should readily give my consent; but mine is not the only consent to be obtained. My mother has kept an authority over her daughters that I must not contest. I can suggest the using of that authority in a particular direction; she is likely to comply, but I dare not answer for it. All this, inspired as it is by genuine friendship, should satisfy the Emperor Napoleon. Tell him that I shall be with him presently."

"Sire, your Majesty will not forget that this forthcoming conversation is to be imbued with friendly feeling and a consciousness of its mo-

<sup>1</sup> Mon fils même—mais cela est inutile à dire—aurait souvent besoin d'être mon fils pour me succéder tranquillement.



mentous import. Your Majesty is about to speak of the interest of Europe—of the interest of France. Europe needs to have the French throne protected against every storm, and your Majesty has come to propose the means of accomplishing this great object.”

“I shall take that as my text; it is a very fruitful one. I shall see you, this evening, at the Princesse de la Tour’s.”

#### NAPOLEON AND THE ACADEMICIANS OF WEIMAR.

[He tells with evident satisfaction of Napoleon’s ignoring the princes who surrounded him as he was leaving Erfurt, in order to distinguish men of letters.]

THE last morning spent by Napoleon at Erfurt was employed in receiving visitors. The spectacle presented at his palace on that last morning will never fade from my memory. He was surrounded by princes either whose armies had been destroyed by him, their states reduced, or their whole existence humbled. There was not one among them who dared address a single request to him; all they wished was to be seen, and to be seen last, so as to be remembered. This open servility went unrewarded. He took particular notice of no one but the academicians of Weimar; to them alone he spoke, and, in these last moments, he wished to make on their minds a new impression. He asked them if there were many ideologists in Germany.

“Yes, Sire,” one of them answered; “quite a number.”

“I pity you. I have some in Paris. They are dreamers, dangerous dreamers; they are all disguised, and rather ill-disguised, materialists. Gentlemen,” and he now raised the tone of his voice, “philosophers tax all their ingenuity to create systems; in vain will they seek a better system than that of Christianity, which, while reconciling man with himself, secures at the same time public order and the peace of states. Your ideologists destroy all illusions, and the age of illusions is, for nations as for individuals, the age of happiness. I carry one away, when leaving you, which is precious to me: that is, that you will retain some kindly remembrance of me.”

A few moments later he was driving off, on his way, as he thought, to achieve the conquest of Spain.

#### NAPOLEON CHOOSES A NEW BRIDE.

[The following is taken from Talleyrand’s account of the council which Napoleon called to advise him as to the bride he should take in place of Josephine.]

WITH a certain embarrassment, and with an emotion which to me appeared genuine, the

Emperor spoke somewhat as follows: “It has not been without regret, surely, that I have renounced the marriage which has made my life at home so sweet. In order to satisfy the hopes that the empire places in the new bonds I am about to contract, if I could consult my own feelings alone it is from the young pupils of the Legion of Honor, among the daughters of the brave sons of France, that I would select my bride, and I should give as an empress to the French the woman among them whose qualities and virtues rendered her the most worthy of the throne. But it is necessary to comply with the usages of the times, with those of other states, and above all with that code of propriety which politics impose as a duty. Sovereigns have sought alliances with my relatives, and I believe there is not one, now, to whom I might not confidently offer my own personal alliance. Three reigning families might give an empress to France—those of Austria, of Russia, and of Saxony. I have summoned you to examine with you as to which of these three possible alliances we might give the preference in the interest of the empire.”

This speech was followed by a long silence, which the Emperor broke with the query, “M. Archchancellor, what is your opinion?”

Cambacères, who struck me as having prepared what he was going to say, professes to have discovered, while a member of the committee of public safety, that Austria was and always would be our enemy. After having developed this idea at full length and supported it with a number of facts and precedents, he ended by expressing the hope that the Emperor might marry a grandduchess of Russia.

Lebrun, putting aside politics, employed in a plain, bourgeois-like kind of way every argument he could draw from strict morality, education, and simplicity of manners to obtain the preference for the court of Saxony, and voted accordingly. Murat and Fouché thought the revolutionary interests would be safer with a Russian alliance; both apparently felt more at ease with the descendants of the czars than with those of Rudolph of Hapsburg.

My turn came at last. On this ground I was at home, and I argued my case pretty well. I was able to maintain, with excellent reasons, that an Austrian alliance would be preferable for France. My own secret motive was that the preservation of Austria depended on the course the Emperor was about to adopt. But this was not to be said aloud. After briefly exposing the advantages and the inconveniences of a Russian and of an Austrian marriage respectively, I cast my vote for the latter. I appealed as a Frenchman to the Emperor, and asked him to bring an Austrian princess among us to absolve France, in the eyes of



Europe and in her own, of a crime which was not hers but was the exclusive deed of a faction. The words "European reconciliation," which I used several times, sounded pleasantly to several members of the council who had had enough of warfare. Despite some objections that the Emperor made to me, I saw very plainly that my opinion was to his taste. M. Mollien spoke after me, and upheld the same sentiment with the judgment and refined talent that were so characteristic of him.

After hearing everybody, the Emperor thanked the council, declared the sitting at an end, and retired. That same evening a courier was despatched to Vienna, and after a few days the French ambassador sent word that the Emperor Francis granted the hand of his daughter, the Archduchess Maria Louisa, to the Emperor Napoleon.

In order to connect this union with the glory of a conquest made by his army, Napoleon sent the Prince of Wagram (Berthier) as bridegroom by proxy, and gave to the Duchess of Montebello, the widow of Marshal Lannes, who had been killed at [Essling], the post of lady of honor.

As I must omit none of the *bizarre* events of those days, I ought to remark that at the very moment when the cannon proclaimed in Paris the performance of the betrothal ceremonies at Vienna, the French Ambassador's letters recounted how the last treaty with Austria was faithfully carried out, and that the fortifications of the town of Vienna were being blown down with cannon. This shows with what unyielding rigor the Emperor Napoleon treated his new father-in-law, and is proof evident that even then peace was for him but a truce which he employed in preparing new conquests for himself. And accordingly all the nations continued to suffer, all the sovereigns were kept in anxiety and trouble. All around him Napoleon gave rise to feelings of hatred and created difficulties which, in the long run, were to become insurmountable. And as though Europe did not afford him a sufficient number of them on his own account, he courted others by backing with his authority the ambitious views of members of his family. He had uttered one day the fatal expression that before his death his own dynasty would be the most ancient in Europe; and in accordance therewith he distributed to his brothers and to the husbands of his sisters the thrones and principalities that victory or perfidy placed in his hands. Thus it was that he disposed of Naples, of Westphalia, of Holland, of Spain, of Lucca, of Sweden even, since it was a desire to please him that had brought about the election of Bernadotte as a royal prince of Sweden.

#### NAPOLEON'S TREATMENT OF HIS CREATURES.

[The following remark is thrown in at the end of his account of Murat's treason, and suggests, if it was not suggested by, Talleyrand's personal experience.]

THERE was in Napoleon's power, at the stage it had now reached, a radical defect which seemed to me necessarily injurious to his stability, and even tending towards his final overthrow. Napoleon took delight in disquieting, in humiliating, in tormenting those that he himself had raised; and they, placed in a state of continual distrust and irritation, worked underhand against the power that had created them and that they already looked upon as their greatest enemy.

#### THE LUXURY OF THE BONAPARTES.

[This just comment on the luxury and vice of Napoleon's court derives a peculiar flavor coming from the pen of Talleyrand.]

THE luxury of the courts founded by Napoleon, it is opportune to observe here, was absurd. The luxury of the Bonapartes was neither German nor French; it was a medley, a kind of learned luxury. There was a touch of gravity in it, as in that of Austria; there was something half European, half Asiatic, borrowed from St. Petersburg; there were a few imperial mantles taken from the old Rome of the Cæsars; but, on the other hand, there was very little visible of that ancient court of France where the art of good taste veiled the gorgeousness of personal adornment. What this kind of luxury mostly displayed was an utter lack of propriety; and in France, whenever *les convenances* are lacking, ridicule is not far off.

This Bonaparte family, coming from a lonely isle which was barely French, and where it lived in mean circumstances, having for its chief a man of genius whose elevation was due to military laurels won at the head of republican armies, which armies were themselves the outcome of a democracy in a state of ferment—should not this family have discarded the old luxury and adopted a new method even in relation to the lighter side of life? Would not a noble simplicity have made it more imposing and inspired confidence in its power and its durability? Instead of this, the Bonapartes so far deluded themselves as to believe that a childish imitation of the kings whose thrones they had taken was one way of succeeding them.

I am desirous to avoid anything that might appear libelous, and indeed I have no need to mention proper names to show that by their manners also these new dynasties were harmful to the moral power of the Emperor Napoleon. The morals of the people in troublous times are often bad, but at the very time when



every vice is to be found in the multitude its code of morality is a strict one. "Men," said Montesquieu, "individually corrupt are very honest people collectively." And it is those honest people that pass judgment on kings and queens. When this judgment is adverse it is very difficult for a power, especially a new-born one, not to be shaken by it.

"I AM CHARLEMAGNE!"

[There is a long and minute account of the second Ecclesiastical Council to which the controversies with the Pope led. While this Council was in session an extraordinary scene with Napoleon occurred, which is thus narrated.]

THE report of the first sitting of the Council was given in the "Moniteur," which paper the Emperor held, or rather twisted, in his hands. He first attacked Cardinal Fesch, and, singularly enough, launched forth with uncommon volubility into a discussion on ecclesiastical principles and usages, without possessing the slightest notion, either historical or theological, of the subject.

"By what right, sir," said he to the Cardinal, "do you assume the title of Primate of the Gauls? What ridiculous pretension! And without having asked my authority, either! I understand your finesse; it is easy to see through it. You have aimed at raising yourself, sir, so as to draw attention to yourself, and thereby prepare the public for your climbing still higher in the future. Presuming on your relation to my mother, you endeavor to make people believe that I intend making you the head of the Church some day; for it will enter into nobody's head that you have had the audacity to take the title of Primate of the Gauls without being authorized by me. Europe will imagine that this is my way of preparing her to see a future pope in you. A fine pope, in truth! With that new title of yours you mean to scare Pius VII. and render him still more unmanageable!"

The Cardinal, deeply hurt, answered with firmness, and his dignified answer veiled for a time the lack of dignity of his countenance, of his tone, of his manners, and the memory of his former profession, characteristics of which lingered still too visibly in him; for the corsair reappeared frequently under the cloak of the archbishop. But there, face to face with the Emperor, he had every advantage: he explained how, in all ages, there had been in France not only a Primate of the Gauls, but a Primate of Aquitaine, and a Primate of Neustria. Napoleon, somewhat surprised, turned round to the Bishop of Nantes and asked him if this were true. "The fact is undeniable," said the Bishop.

Thereupon the Emperor gave up the Cardinal, against whom alone he had hitherto thun-

dered, and now hurled his bolts promiscuously. On the word *obédience* which occurs in the oath, and which he confounded with *obéissance*, he became so excited that he called the fathers of the Council traitors. "For," he added, "that man is a traitor who takes two oaths of fidelity at the same time, and to two hostile sovereigns."

The Bishop of Nantes spoke a few words which the Emperor did not listen to. Nor did he pay the slightest heed to the sad, discontented, and thoughtful air of M. Duvoisin, to the downcast look of Messrs. de Barral and Man- nay, to the Italian's submissive mien, or to the wrathful restlessness of Cardinal Fesch; and for a whole hour he continued to talk in an incoherent style which would have made no lasting impression on his hearers, beyond their astonishment at his ignorance and his loquacity, if the following phrase, which he repeated every three or four minutes, had not revealed his inner mind. "Gentlemen," he would exclaim, "you would fain treat me as if I were Louis le Débonnaire. Do not confound the son with the father. In me you see Charlemagne. I am Charlemagne, I am!—Yes, I am Charlemagne!" This "*I am Charlemagne!*" recurred every moment. After a few vain efforts to make him understand the difference between the word *obédience*, which is used only in a spiritual sense, and the word *obéissance*, which has a wider acceptance, the bishops grew weary of their fruitless toil. There was nothing left for them but to wait, in the deepest silence, until sheer fatigue would check this uncontrollable flow of language. The Bishop of Nantes, availing himself of a short pause for breath, asked of the Emperor the favor of a few words in private. Napoleon left the room, and he followed him to his study. It was almost midnight, and each one withdrew, carrying away from St. Cloud impressions of a most extraordinary character.

#### TALLEYRAND AND NAPOLEON'S MINISTER OF POLICE.

[Talleyrand has narrated how he and Napoleon were startled by the movements of the police while they were plotting the overthrow of the Directory.<sup>1</sup> In the second volume occurs this passage concerning his plot for the restoration of the Bourbons, and how rude an interruption he again experienced, this time from Napoleon's Minister of Police.]

WHEN, in 1812, Napoleon, rejecting every reasonable proposal of an agreement, rushed into his fatal Russian campaign, every thoughtful mind could almost fix beforehand the day when, pursued by all the powers he had humiliated, and compelled to recross the Rhine, he would lose all the prestige with

<sup>1</sup> See THE CENTURY for February, p. 615.



which fortune had crowned him. Napoleon, beaten, was to disappear from the world's stage; such is the fate of all vanquished usurpers. But France once invaded, how many chances against her! What possibility would there be to ward off the evils with which she was threatened? What form of government was she to adopt in the event of her surviving the terrible catastrophe? Those were grave questions for the meditation of all good Frenchmen; to study them was a duty for those who had been called by circumstances, or — if you will — by their own ambition, to exercise at other periods their influence on the fate of the country. For several years past I had deemed it my right to do so; and as I saw the dreaded dénouement drawing nearer and nearer, I examined and combined with greater attention and care the resources that would be left us. This was neither betraying Napoleon nor plotting against him, although he laid this charge against me on repeated occasions. Never did I plot in my life but when I had France as my accomplice, and when I sought with her the salvation of the country. Napoleon's suspicions and insults can in no way alter the truth of facts, and I proclaim it aloud once more, there never was a dangerous conspirator against Napoleon but himself. None the less, however, did he keep me under the most hateful surveillance during the last years of his reign. I might, indeed, point to this very surveillance to show how impossible I should have found it to conspire, even if I had been so minded.

Let me be excused if I recall here an incident of this surveillance which comes to my mind, and which will show how the imperial police regarded the privacy of home life.

One evening in February, 1814, several visitors were gathered in my drawing-room, among them Baron Louis, the Archbishop of Malines, M. de Pradt, M. Dalberg, and several others. We chatted of things generally, but more particularly of those momentous events of the times which naturally occupied every mind. Suddenly the door was flung open, and, without allowing the footman time to announce him, General Savary, the Minister of General Police, rushed into the room, exclaiming: "Ah! That is how I catch you all, in the very act of conspiring against the Government!" Despite the would-be serious tone of his remark, we soon saw he had meant it as a joke while endeavoring, in the mean time, to pick up some little item with which to swell his police reports to the Emperor. He failed, however, to disconcert us, and the state of things justified but too fully the anxiety we, each and all, expressed to him concerning Napoleon's perilous situation and the consequences that might result

from it. I am rather inclined to believe that, had not the Emperor fallen, General Savary would not have failed to bring under his notice the boldness, and what he looked upon as the cleverness, of his conduct on this occasion. A nasty business, after all, is that of a Minister of Police!

#### THE CURIOUS RELATIONS BETWEEN TALLEYRAND AND NAPOLEON.

WHAT was strange in Napoleon's behavior towards me was, that at the very time that he showed himself most suspicious of me he was endeavoring to draw me nearer to him. Thus in the month of December, 1813, he asked me to resume the portfolio of Foreign Affairs — which I straightway declined, convinced as I was that we could never agree on the only possible way of his escape from the maze into which he had been brought by his folly. A few weeks later, in the month of January, 1814, before his departure to the army and when M. de Caulaincourt had already started for the Châtillon congress, the Emperor worked almost every evening with M. de la Besnardière, who had the foreign office in M. de Caulaincourt's absence. In the course of these conversations, which were kept up far into the night, he often opened his mind to him in a strange fashion. Thus he several times repeated to him, after reading the despatches in which the Duke of Vicenza told him of the progress of the Châtillon negotiations, "Ah! If Talleyrand were there, he would pull me through."

#### NAPOLEON AND MURAT.

NAPOLEON was mistaken, for I could not have pulled him through unless by taking it upon myself to accept the conditions of the enemy; and if, at that moment, he had happened to obtain the most trifling military success, he would have disavowed my signature.

M. de la Besnardière told me likewise of another scene at which he was present, and which deserves to be recorded, so characteristic is it. Murat, in return for his fidelity to the cause of his brother-in-law, desired that Italy should be given to him as far as the right bank of the Po. He had written several letters to Napoleon, who did not answer them, and he bitterly resented this as a mark of contempt.

"Why," said De la Besnardière to the Emperor, "does your Majesty leave him that pretext, and what objection can your Majesty have, not to granting him his wish, but to holding out some hope to him?"

Napoleon answered: "Can I answer a madman? Why does he not see that nothing but my extreme preponderance kept the Pope away from Rome? It was in the interest of all the powers that he should go back to Rome, and



now it is in my interest also. Murat is losing his head; I shall be called upon to give him alms some day; but I will get him locked up in the keep of some good old donjon, so that such black ingratitude may not go unpunished."

Can a man understand the follies of others so well and be so utterly blind to his own!

I said above that Napoleon never had any conspirator against him but himself, and I am in a position to prove the absolute accuracy of my statement; for it is plain that, to the very last minute which preceded his ruin, it depended only on himself to save himself. Not only, as I have already said, was it possible for him, in 1812, to consolidate his power forever by a general peace, but at Prague, in 1813, he could have obtained conditions, less brilliant, to be sure, than those of 1812, but still advantageous enough; and, in fine, even at the Châtillon congress in 1814, could he but have yielded at the right moment, he could have concluded a peace useful to France — which was then reduced to the last extremities, and which, even in the interest of his insane ambition, would have offered him opportunities of regaining some glory later on. The terror he had succeeded in inspiring in the different cabinets kept them, to the last moment, willing to treat with him.

#### NAPOLEON AND THE BOURBONS.

[Talleyrand argues at great length that no one excepting a Bourbon could at that period be called to govern France in Napoleon's stead.]

THOSE were the ideas and the considerations which fixed me in my determination to bring about the restoration of the Bourbons, should the Emperor Napoleon "render himself impossible," and should I be able to influence in any way the course of action that would be definitely adopted. Far from me to claim these ideas as exclusively my own; nay, I can quote one authority that shared these same ideas, and that was Napoleon himself.

In the course of his conversations with M. de la Besnardière, which I mentioned above, he said to him, the day he heard that the Allies had entered Champagne, "If they come as far as Paris, they will bring you the Bourbons, and there 's the end of it."

"But," answered M. de la Besnardière, "they are not here yet."

"Ah," he replied, "it is for me to prevent them; and that 's what I shall do."

Another day, he long dilated on the fact that he could not possibly bring himself to conclude peace on the basis of the former frontiers of France — "such a peace," he said, "as Bourbons alone could make." As to himself, he declared he would rather abdicate; he would return to private life without any repugnance; his wants were few; a dollar a day would be

enough for him; his only passion had been a desire to make the French the greatest people on earth, and if he was compelled to give up that hope, all the rest was nothing to him. And he finished with these words: "If nobody wants to fight, I cannot wage war all by myself; if the nation wishes for peace on the basis of our old frontiers, my answer will be, 'Look for some one else to govern you; I am too great for you.'"<sup>1</sup>

It was thus that, forced to acknowledge the necessity of the return of the Bourbons, he reconciled his vanity with the misfortunes he had brought on his country.

#### TALLEYRAND AS KING-MAKER.

[His old friend with whom he had labored against Napoleon at Erfurt, the Czar Alexander, had now entered Paris, and was staying at Talleyrand's house. The next steps are thus described.]

THE first question spoken of between the Czar Alexander and myself could naturally be no other than the choice of the government to be adopted for France. I put forth the reasons I explained above, and did not hesitate to declare to him that the house of Bourbon was called back both by those who had dreams of the old monarchy with the principles and virtues of Louis XII., and by those who desired a new monarchy with a free constitution. . . .

Such was the unhesitating reply I gave to one of the questions of the Emperor of Russia. "How can I ascertain," he asked, "whether France desires the return of the house of Bourbon?" "Sire, by a motion which I undertake to get adopted by the Senate, and of which your Majesty will see the immediate effect." "You are sure of it?" "I answer for it."

I convened the Senate on the 2d of April, and at seven o'clock on the same evening I brought to the Emperor Alexander the famous deliberation which I had had signed individually by every member of that assembly. It pronounced the downfall of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbons, with constitutional guarantees.

[The Memoirs narrate, briefly, Talleyrand's appointment at the head of the provisional government, and his reception by Louis XVIII.]

I had had the honor of being placed, by a decree of the Senate on the 1st of April, at the head of the provisional government which for a few days conducted the affairs of France. . . . In one hour's time Napoleon's empire was no more; the kingdom of France once more existed, and already everything proved

<sup>1</sup> "Si personne ne veut se battre, je ne puis faire guerre tout seul; si la nation veut la paix sur la base des anciennes limites, je lui dirai, 'Cherchez qui vous gouverne, je suis trop grand pour vous.'"



easy and smooth for the little provisional government: it met no obstacles anywhere; the lack of police administration, the lack of money, passed unfelt; we did remarkably well without either. The whole expenditure of the provisional government, which lasted for seventeen days, and of the king's entrance into Paris, appears on the budget for that year as two hundred thousand francs.<sup>1</sup> It is true, we received help on every side. I feel sure that the expenses of various officers of Napoleon's army, whom I sent on errands from one end of France to the other, are still unpaid.

On the 12th of April, 1814, the Count of Artois, to whom I had sent M. de Vitrolles at Nancy, made his entrance into Paris and took the title of Lieutenant-General of the kingdom. I found the same kindly nature in him still as on the night of the 17th of July, 1789, when he and I had parted, he to emigrate, and I to rush into the whirlwind that had ultimately brought me to the head of the provisional government. Strange destinies!

The duties of my position kept me in Paris and made it impossible for me to go and meet Louis XVIII. I saw him for the first time at Compiègne. He was in his study—M. de Duras brought me to it. The king, on seeing me, held out his hand, and said to me in the most amiable—nay, the most affectionate—manner: "I am very glad to see you; both our houses date from the same epoch. My ancestors were more clever than yours: had it been the reverse, you would say to me to-day, 'Take a chair, come here near me, let us speak of our affairs'; whereas to-day it is I who say to you, 'Sit down and let us talk.'"

I very soon did my uncle, the Archbishop of Rheims, the pleasure of repeating to him the compliments paid by the king to our family. I repeated them the same evening to the Emperor of Russia, who was at Compiègne, and who with much kindness asked me *if I was satisfied with the king*. These were his own words. I have not been weak enough to relate the opening of this interview to any other person.

#### TALLEYRAND REVIEWS NAPOLEON'S CAREER.

[IN] the year 1807, when the Emperor had conquered, one after the other, Austria, Prussia, and Russia, and held the whole destiny of Europe in his hands, what a grand and magnificent rôle might he not have played!

Napoleon is the first and only power that could have given to Europe a real balance; a goal which for centuries she had tried in vain to reach, and from which she is now more than ever distant.

For this he only needed, first, to urge Italy

<sup>1</sup> Forty thousand dollars.

to unite, by giving it the house of Bavaria; secondly, to divide Germany between the house of Austria, which would stretch to the mouth of the Danube, and the house of Brandenburg, which could have been strengthened; and, thirdly, to reawaken Poland by giving it to the house of Saxony.

With a true balance of power Napoleon might have given Europe an organization in accord with the moral law. A true balance would have made war almost impossible. An appropriate organization would have brought to each people the highest civilization of which it was capable.

Napoleon could have done these things, and he did not do them. If he had done them, he would have had everywhere statues to mark the gratitude of the people; every nation would have bewailed his death. Instead, he prepared the way for the state of affairs which we now see, and brought upon us the dangers which threaten us from the Orient. It is by these results that he ought to be, and will be, judged. Posterity will say of him: This man had great intellectual force, but he did not know what true glory meant. His moral power was slight, almost absent. He could not bear success with moderation, or misfortune with dignity; thus the moral force which he lacked was the undoing of all Europe, and himself as well.

Placed as I was for so many years in the midst of his plans and in the very crater, so to speak, of his politics, and an eye-witness to what was done or plotted against him, it did not require great astuteness to see that the countries recently subdued to his rule, all these new principalities created for and placed under the dominion of his own family, would be the first to strike the blow at his power.

It was not without much sorrowful bitterness, I confess, that I watched these events. I loved Napoleon. I had a personal attachment for him in spite of his faults. In his early career I felt the fascination which great genius carries with it; his kindnesses filled me with true gratitude. Why should I hesitate to say that I profited by his glory and the reflection of it which shone upon those who aided him in his noble task?

And I can justly give myself the credit of having served him with devotion—to the limit of my capacity, with an enlightened devotion. While he still could listen to the truth, I told him the truth loyally; I even told it him later when it was more difficult for the truth to reach his ears; and the disgrace consequent upon my honesty justifies me with my own conscience for abandoning first his political projects and then his person—when he had reached the point of imperiling the future of my country.