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Memoirs To Illustrate The History Of My Time Volume 1

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MEMOIRS
TO ILLUSTRATE
THE HISTORY OF MY TIME.

BY
F. GUIZOT,
AUTHOR OF 'MEMOIRS OF SIR ROBERT PEEL;' 'HISTORY OF
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CHAPTER I.

FRANCE BEFORE THE RESTORATION.

1807-1814.

MY REASONS FOR PUBLISHING THESE MEMOIRS DURING MY LIFE.—MY INTRODUCTION INTO SOCIETY.—MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH M. DE CHÂTEAUBRIAND, M. SUARD, MADAME DE STAEL, M. DE FONTANES, M. ROYER-COLLARD.—PROPOSAL TO APPOINT ME AUDITOR IN THE IMPERIAL STATE COUNCIL.—WHY THE APPOINTMENT DID NOT TAKE PLACE.—I ENTER THE UNIVERSITY, AND BEGIN MY COURSE OF LECTURES ON MODERN HISTORY.—LIBERAL AND ROYALIST PARTIES.—CHARACTERS OF THE DIFFERENT OPPOSITIONS TOWARDS THE CLOSE OF THE EMPIRE.—ATTEMPTED RESISTANCE OF THE LEGISLATIVE BODY.—MM. LAINÉ, GALLOIS, MAINE-BIRAN, RAYNOUARD, AND FLAUGERGUES.—I LEAVE PARIS FOR NISMES.—STATE OF PARIS AND FRANCE IN MARCH, 1814.—THE RESTORATION TAKES PLACE.—I RETURN TO PARIS, AND AM APPOINTED SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR.

I adopt a course different from that recently pursued by several of my contemporaries; I publish my memoirs while I am still here to answer for what I write. I am not prompted to this by the weariness of inaction, or by any desire to re-open a limited field for old contentions, in place of the grand arena at present closed. I have struggled much and ardently during my life; age and retirement, as far as my own feelings are concerned, have expanded their peaceful influence over the past. From a sky profoundly serene, I look back towards an horizon pregnant with many storms. I have deeply probed my own heart, and I cannot find there any feeling which envenoms my recollections. The absence of gall permits extreme candour. Personality alters or deteriorates truth. Being desirous to speak of my own life, and of the times in which I have lived, I prefer doing so on the brink, rather than from the depths of the tomb. This appears to me more dignified as regards myself, while, with reference to others, it will lead me to be more scrupulous in my words

and opinions. If objections arise, which I can scarcely hope to escape, at least it shall not be said that I was unwilling to hear them, and that I have removed myself from the responsibility of what I have done.

Other reasons, also, have induced this decision. Memoirs, in general, are either published too soon or too late. If too soon, they are indiscreet or unimportant; we either reveal what would be better held back for the present, or suppress details which it would be both profitable and curious to relate at once. If too late, they lose much of their opportunity and interest; contemporaries have passed away, and can no longer profit by the truths which are imparted, or participate in their recital with personal enjoyment. Such memoirs retain only a moral and literary value, and excite no feeling beyond idle curiosity. Although I well know how much [3] experience evaporates in passing from one generation to another, I cannot believe that it becomes altogether extinct, or that a correct knowledge of the mistakes of our fathers, and of the causes of their failures, can be totally profitless to their descendants. I wish to transmit to those who may succeed me, and who also will have their trials to undergo, a little of the light I have derived from mine. I have, alternately, defended liberty against absolute power, and order against the spirit of revolution,—two leading causes which, in fact, constitute but one, for their disconnection leads to the ruin of both. Until liberty boldly separates itself from the spirit of revolution, and order from absolute power, so long will France continue to be tossed about from crisis to crisis, and from error to error. In this is truly comprised the cause of the nation. I am grieved, but not dismayed, at its reverses. I neither renounce its service, nor despair of its triumph. Under the severest disappointments, it has ever been my natural tendency, and for which I thank God as for a blessing, to preserve great desires, however uncertain or distant might be the hopes of their accomplishment.

In ancient and in modern times, the greatest of great historians, Thucydides, Xenophon, Sallust, Cæsar, Tacitus, Macchiavelli, and Clarendon, have written, and some have themselves published, the annals of the passing age and of the events in which they participated. I do not venture on such an ambitious work; the day of history has not yet arrived for us, of complete, free, and unreserved history,

either as relates to facts or men. But my own personal and inward history; what I have [4] thought, felt, and wished in my connection with the public affairs of my country; the thoughts, feelings, and wishes of my political friends and associates, our minds reflected in our actions,—on these points I can speak freely, and on these I am most desirous to record my sentiments, that I may be, if not always approved, at least correctly known and understood. On this foundation, others will hereafter assign to us our proper places in the history of the age.

I only commenced public life in the year 1814. I had neither served under the Revolution nor the Empire: a stranger to the first from youth, and to the second from disposition. Since I have had some share in the government of men, I have learned to do justice to the Emperor Napoleon. He was endowed with a genius incomparably active and powerful, much to be admired for his antipathy to disorder, for his profound instincts in ruling, and for his energetic rapidity in reconstructing the social framework. But this genius had no check, acknowledged no limit to its desires or will, either emanating from Heaven or man, and thus remained revolutionary while combating revolution: thoroughly acquainted with the general conditions of society, but imperfectly, or rather, coarsely understanding the moral necessities of human nature; sometimes satisfying them with the soundest judgment, and at others depreciating and insulting them with impious pride. Who could have believed that the same man who had established the Concordat, and re-opened the churches in France, would have carried off the Pope from Rome, and kept him a prisoner at Fontainebleau?

[5] It is going too far to apply the same ill-treatment to philosophers and Christians, to reason and faith. Amongst the great men of his class, Napoleon was by far the most necessary for the times. None but himself could have so quickly and effectually substituted order in place of anarchy; but no one was so chimerical as to the future, for after having been master of France and Europe, he suffered Europe to drive him even from France. His name is greater and more enduring than his actions, the most brilliant of which, his conquests, disappeared suddenly and for ever, with himself. In rendering homage to his exalted qualities, I feel no regret at not having appreciated them until after his death. For me, under the

Empire, there was too much of the arrogance of power, too much contempt of right, too much revolution, and too little liberty.

It is not that at that period I was much engaged in politics, or over-impatient for the freedom that should open to me the road I desired. I associated myself with the Opposition, but it was an Opposition bearing little resemblance to that which we have seen and created during the last thirty years. It was formed from the relics of the philosophic world and liberal aristocracy of the eighteenth century, the last representatives of the saloons in which all subjects whatever had been freely proposed and discussed, through the impulse of inclination, and the gratification of mental indulgence, rather than from any distinct object of interest or ambition. The errors and disasters of the Revolution had not led the survivors of that active generation to renounce their convictions or desires; they remained sincerely liberal, [6] but without practical or urgent pretension, and with the reserve of men who had suffered much and succeeded little in their attempts at legislative reform. They still held to freedom of thought and speech, but had no aspirations after power. They detested and warmly criticized despotism, but without any open attempt to repress or overthrow existing authority. It was the opposition of enlightened and independent lookers-on, who had neither the opportunity nor inclination to interfere as actors.

After a long life of fierce contention, I recur with pleasure to the remembrance of this enchanting society. M. de Talleyrand once said to me, "Those who were not living in and about the year 1789, know little of the enjoyments of life." In fact, nothing could exceed the pleasure of a great intellectual and social movement, which, at that epoch, far from suspending or disturbing the arrangements of the world, animated and ennobled them by mingling serious thoughts with frivolous recreations, and as yet called for no suffering, or no sacrifice, while it opened to the eyes of men a dazzling and delightful perspective. The eighteenth century was, beyond all question, the most tempting and seductive of ages, for it promised to satisfy at once the strength and weakness of human nature; elevating and enervating the mind at the same time; flattering alternately the noblest sentiments and the most grovelling propensities; intoxicating with exalted hopes, and nursing with effeminate concessions. Thus it has produced, in pellmell confusion, utopians and egotists, scep-

tics and fanatics, enthusiasts and incredulous scoffers, different offspring of the same period, but all enraptured with the age and with them [7] selves, indulging together in one common drunkenness on the eve of the approaching chaos.

When I first mixed with the world in 1807, the storm had for a long time burst; the infatuation of 1789 had completely disappeared. Society, entirely occupied with its own re-establishment, no longer dreamed of elevating itself in the midst of mere amusement; exhibitions of force had superseded impulses towards liberty. Coldness, absence of fellow-feeling, isolation of sentiment and interests,—in these are comprised the ordinary course and weary vexations of the world. France, worn out with errors and strange excesses, eager once more for order and common sense, fell back into the old track. In the midst of this general reaction, the faithful inheritors of the literary saloons of the eighteenth century held themselves aloof from its influence; they alone preserved two of the noblest and most amiable propensities of their age—a disinterested taste for pleasures of the mind, and that readiness of sympathy, that warmth and ardour of curiosity, that necessity for moral improvement and free discussion, which embellish the social relations with so much variety and sweetness.

In my own case, I drew from these sources a profitable experience. Led into the circle I have named, by an incident in my private life, I entered amongst them very young, perfectly unknown, with no other title than a little presumed ability, some education, and an ardent taste for refined pleasures, letters, and good company. I carried with me no ideas harmonizing with those I found there. I had been brought up at Geneva, with extremely liberal notions, but in austere habits and religious convictions entirely opposed to the philosophy of the eighteenth century, rather than in coincidence with or in admiration of its works and tendencies. During my residence in Paris, German metaphysics and literature had been my favourite study; I read Kant and Klopstock, Herder and Schiller, much more frequently than Condillac and Voltaire. M. Suard, the Abbé Morellet, the Marquis de Boufflers, the frequenters of the drawing-rooms of Madame d'Houdetot and of Madame de Rumford, who received me with extreme complaisance, smiled, and sometimes grew tired of my Christian traditions and

Germanic enthusiasm; but, after all, this difference of opinion established for me, in their circle, a plea of interest and favour instead of producing any feeling of illwill or even of indifference. They knew that I was as sincerely attached to liberty and the privileges of human intelligence as they were themselves, and they discovered something novel and independent in my turn of thought, which inspired both esteem and attraction. At this period, they constantly supported me with their friendship and interest, without ever attempting to press or control me on the points on which we disagreed. From them especially, I have learned to exercise in practical life, that expanded equity, joined to respect for the freedom of others, which constitute the character and duty of a truly liberal mind.

This generous disposition manifested itself on every opportunity. In 1809, M. de Châteaubriand published 'The Martyrs.' The success of this work was at first slow, and strongly disputed. Amongst the disciples of the eighteenth century and of Voltaire, a great majority [9] treated M. de Châteaubriand as an enemy, while the more moderate section looked on him with little favour. They rejected his ideas even when they felt that they were not called upon to contest them. His style of writing offended their taste, which was divested of all imagination, and more refined than grand. My own disposition was entirely opposed to theirs. I passionately admired M. de Châteaubriand in his ideas and language: that beautiful compound of religious sentiment and romantic imagination, of poetry and moral polemics, had so powerfully moved and subdued me, that, soon after my arrival at Paris in 1806, one of my first literary fantasies was to address an epistle, in very indifferent verse, to M. de Châteaubriand, who immediately thanked me in prose, artistically polished and unassuming. His letter flattered my youth, and 'The Martyrs' redoubled my zeal. Seeing them so violently attacked, I resolved to defend them in the 'Publicist,' in which I occasionally wrote. M. Suard, who conducted that journal, although far from coinciding with the opinions I had adopted, lent himself most obligingly to my desire. I have met with very few men of a natural temperament so gentle and liberal, and with a mind at the same time scrupulously refined and fastidious. He was much more disposed to criticize than to admire the talent of M. de Châteaubriand; but he admitted the great extent of his ability, and on that ground dealt

with him gently, although with delicate irony. Besides which, the talent was full of independence, and exerted in opposition to the formidable tendencies of Imperial power. These qualities won largely upon the esteem of M. Suard, [10] who, in consequence, allowed me an unfettered course in the 'Publicist,' of which I availed myself to espouse the cause of 'The Martyrs' against their detractors.

M. de Châteaubriand was deeply affected by this, and hastened to express his acknowledgments. My articles became the subject of a correspondence between us, which I still refer to with pleasure. [1] He explained to me his intentions and motives in the composition of his poem, discussed with susceptibility and even with some degree of temper concealed under his gratitude, the strictures mixed with my eulogiums, and finished by saying: "In conclusion, Sir, you know the tempests raised against my work, and from whence they proceed. There is another wound, not exhibited, which is the real source of all this rage. It is that *Hierocles* massacres the Christians in the name of *philosophy* and *liberty*. Time will do me justice, if my work deserves it, and you will greatly accelerate this justice by the publication of your articles, provided you could be induced to change and modify them to a certain point. Show me my faults, and I will correct them. I only despise those critics who are as base in their language as in the secret motives which induce them to speak. I can find neither reason nor principle in the mouths of those literary mountebanks hired by the police, who dance in the gutters for the amusement of lacqueys.... I do not give up the hope of calling to [11] see you, or of receiving you in my hermitage. Honest men should, particularly at present, unite for mutual consolation; generous feelings and exalted sentiments become every day so rare, that we ought to consider ourselves too happy when we encounter them.... Accept, I entreat you, once more, the assurance of my high consideration, of my sincere devotion, and if you will permit, of a friendship which we commence under the auspices of frankness and honour."

Between M. de Châteaubriand and myself, frankness and honour, most certainly, have never been disturbed throughout our political controversies; but friendship has not been able to survive them. The word is too rare and valuable to be hastily pronounced.

When we have lived under a system of real and serious liberty, we feel both an inclination and a right to smile when we consider what, in other times, has been classed as factious opposition by the one side, and courageous resistance by the other. In August, 1807, eighteen months before the publication of 'The Martyrs,' I stopped some days in Switzerland, on my way to visit my mother at Nismes; and with the confident enthusiasm of youth, as anxious to become acquainted with living celebrities as I was myself unknown, I addressed a letter to Madame de Staël, requesting the honour of calling upon her. She invited me to dinner at Ouchy, near Lausanne, where she then resided. I was placed next to her; I came from Paris; she questioned me as to what was passing there, how the public were occupied, and what were the topics of conversation in the saloons. I spoke of an article by M. de Châteaubriand, in the [12] 'Mercury,' which was making some noise at the moment of my departure. A particular passage had struck me, which I quoted according to the text, as it had strongly impressed itself on my memory. "When, in the silence of abject submission, we hear only the chains of the slave and the voice of the informer, when all tremble before the tyrant, and it is as dangerous to incur favour as to merit disgrace, the historian appears to be charged with the vengeance of nations. It is in vain that Nero triumphs. Tacitus has been born in the Empire; he grows up unnoticed near the ashes of Germanicus, and already uncompromising Providence has handed over to an obscure child the glory of the master of the world." My tone of voice was undoubtedly excited and striking, as I was myself deeply moved and arrested by the words. Madame de Staël, seizing me by the arm, exclaimed, "I am sure you would make an excellent tragedian; remain with us and take a part in the 'Andromache.'" Theatricals were at that time the prevailing taste and amusement in her house. I excused myself from her kind conjecture and proposal, and the conversation returned to M. de Châteaubriand and his article, which was greatly admired, while at the same time it excited some apprehension. The admiration was just, for the passage was really eloquent; neither was the alarm without grounds, for the 'Mercury' was suppressed precisely on account of this identical paragraph. Thus, the Emperor Napoleon, conqueror of Europe and absolute master of France, believed that he could not suffer it to be written that his future historian might perhaps be born under his reign, and

held himself compelled to take the honour of Nero [13] under his shield. It was a heavy penalty attached to greatness, to have such apprehensions to exhibit, and such clients to protect!

Exalted minds, who felt a little for the dignity of human nature, had sound reason for being discontented with the existing system; they saw that it could neither establish the happiness nor the permanent prosperity of France; but it seemed then so firmly established in general opinion, its power was so universally admitted, and so little was any change anticipated for the future, that even within the haughty and narrow circle in which the spirit of opposition prevailed, it appeared quite natural that young men should enter the service of Government, the only public career that remained open to them. A lady of distinguished talent and noble sentiments, who had conceived a certain degree of friendship for me, Madame de Rémusat, was desirous that I should be named Auditor in the State Council. Her cousin, M. Pasquier, Prefect of Police, whom I sometimes met at her house, interested himself in this matter with much cordiality, and, under the advice of my most intimate friends, I acceded to the proposition, although, at the bottom of my heart, it occasioned me some uneasiness. It was intended that I should be attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. M. Pasquier named me to the Duke of Bassano, then at the head of the department, and to Count d'Hauterive, Comptroller of the Archives. The Duke sent for me. I also had an interview with M. d'Hauterive, who possessed a fertile and ingenious mind, and was kindly disposed towards young men of studious habits. As a trial of ability, they ordered me [14] to draw up a memorial on a question respecting which, the Emperor either was, or wished to appear, deeply interested—the mutual exchange of French and English prisoners. Many documents on the subject were placed in my hands. I completed the memorial; and, believing that the Emperor was sincere, carefully set forward those principles of the law of nations which rendered the measure desirable, and the mutual concessions necessary for its accomplishment. My work was duly submitted to the Duke of Bassano. I have reason to conclude that I had mistaken his object; and that the Emperor, looking upon the English detained in France as of more importance than the French confined in England, and believing also that the number of the latter pressed inconveniently on the

English Government, had no serious intention of carrying out the proposed exchange. Whatever might be the cause, I heard nothing more either of my memorial or nomination, a result which caused me little regret.

Another career soon opened to me, more suitable to my views, as being less connected with the Government. My first attempts at writing, particularly my Critical Notes on Gibbon's 'History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' and the 'Annals of Education,' a periodical miscellany in which I had touched upon some leading questions of public and private instruction, obtained for me the notice of literary men. [2] With gratuitous [15] kindness, M. de Fontanes, Grand Master of the University, appointed me Assistant Professor to the Chair of History, occupied by M. de Lacretelle, in the Faculty of Letters in the Academy of Paris. In a very short time, and before I had commenced my class, as if he thought he had not done enough to evince his esteem and to attach me strongly to the University, he divided the Chair, and named me Titular Professor of Modern History, with a dispensation on account of age, as I had not yet completed my twenty-fifth year. I began my lectures at the College of Plessis, in presence of the pupils of the Normal School, and of a public audience few in number but anxious for instruction, and with whom modern history, traced up to its remote sources, the barbarous conquerors of the Roman Empire, presented itself with an urgent and almost contemporaneous interest. In his conduct towards me, M. de Fontanes was not entirely actuated by some pages of mine he had read, or by a few friendly opinions he had heard expressed. This learned Epicurean, become powerful, and the intellectual favourite of the most potent Sovereign in Europe, loved literature for itself with a sincere and disinterested attachment. The truly beautiful touched him as sensibly as in the days of his early youth and poetical inspirations. What was still more extraordinary, this refined courtier of a despot, this official orator, who felt satisfied when he had embellished flattery with noble eloquence, never failed to acknowledge, and render due homage to independence. Soon after my appointment, he invited me to dinner at his country-house at Courbevoie. Seated near him at table, we talked of studies, of the different modes of [16] teaching, of ancient and modern classics, with the freedom of old acquaintances,

and almost with the association of fellow-labourers. The conversation turned upon the Latin poets and their commentators. I spoke with warm praise of the great edition of Virgil by Heyne, the celebrated professor of the University of Göttingen, and of the merit of his annotations. M. de Fontanes fiercely attacked the German scholars. According to him, they had neither discovered nor added anything to the earlier commentaries, and Heyne was no better acquainted with Virgil and the ancients than Père La Rue. He fulminated against German literature in the mass, philosophers, poets, historians, or philologists, and pronounced them all unworthy of attention. I defended them with the confidence of conviction and youth; when M. de Fontanes, turning to his neighbour on the other side, said to him, with a smile, "We can never make these Protestants give in." But, instead of taking offence at my obstinacy, he was cordially pleased with the frankness of this little debate. His toleration of my independence was, not long after, subjected to a more delicate trial.

When I was about to commence my course, in December, 1812, he spoke to me of my opening address, and insinuated that I ought to insert in it a sentence or two in praise of the Emperor. It was the custom, he said, particularly on the establishment of a new professorship, and the Emperor sometimes demanded from him an account of these proceedings. I felt unwilling to comply, and told him, I thought this proposal scarcely consistent. I had to deal exclusively with science, before an audience of students; how then could I be expected to introduce [17] politics, and, above all, politics in opposition to my own views? "Do as you please," replied M. de Fontanes, with an evident mixture of regard and embarrassment; "if you are complained of, it will fall upon me, and I must defend you and myself as well as I can." [3]

He displayed as much clear penetration and good sense as generosity, in so quickly and gracefully renouncing the proposition he had suggested. In regard to the master he served, the opposition of the society in which I lived had in it nothing of practical or immediate importance. It was purely an opposition of ideas and conversation, without defined plan or effective influence, earnest in philosophic inquiry, but passive in political action; disposed to be satis-

fied with tranquil life, in the unshackled indulgence of thought and speech.

On entering the University, I found myself in contact with another opposition, less apparent but more serious, without being, at the moment, of a more active character. M. Royer-Collard, at that time Professor of the History of Philosophy, and Dean of the Faculty of Letters, attached himself to me with warm friendship. We had no previous acquaintanceship; I was much the younger man; he lived quite out of the world, within a small circle of selected associates; we were new to each other, and mutually attractive. He was a man, not of the old system, but of the old times, whose character had been developed, though not controlled, by the Revolution, the [18] principles, transactions, and leading promoters of which he judged with rigid independence, without losing sight of the primary and national cause. His mind, eminently liberal, highly cultivated, and supported by solid good sense, was more original than inventive, profound rather than expanded, more given to sift thoroughly a single idea than to combine many; too much absorbed within himself, but exercising a singular power over others by the commanding weight of his reason, and by an aptitude of imparting, with a certain solemnity of manner, the unexpected brilliancy of a strong imagination, continually under the excitement of very lively impressions. Before being called to teach philosophy, he had never made this particular branch of science the object or end of his special study, and throughout our political vicissitudes between 1789 and 1814 he had never taken an important position, or connected himself prominently with any party. But, in youth, under the influence of the traditions of Port-Royal, he had received a sound classical and Christian education; and after the *Reign of Terror*, under the government of the Directory, he joined the small section of Royalists who corresponded with Louis XVIII., less to conspire, than to enlighten the exiled Prince on the true state of the country, and to furnish him with suggestions equally advantageous for France and the House of Bourbon, if it were destined that the House of Bourbon and France should be re-united on some future day. He was therefore decidedly a spiritualist in philosophy, and a royalist in politics. To restore independence of mind to man, and right to government, formed the prevailing desire of his unobtrusive life. "You cannot

[19] believe," he wrote to me in 1823, "that I have ever adopted the word *Restoration* in the restricted sense of an individual fact; but I have always regarded, and still look upon this fact as the expression of a certain system of society and government, and as the condition on which, under the circumstances of France, we are to look for order, justice, and liberty; while, without this condition, disorder, violence, and irremediable despotism, springing from things and not from men, will be the necessary consequence of the spirit and doctrines of the Revolution." Passionately imbued with this conviction, an aggressive philosopher and an expectant politician, he fought successfully in his chair against the materialistic school of the eighteenth century, and watched from the retirement of his study, with anxiety but not without hope, the chances of the perilous game on which Napoleon daily staked his empire.

By his lofty and intuitive instincts, Napoleon was a spiritualist: men of his order have flashes of light and impulses of thought, which open to them the sphere of the most exalted truths. In his hours of better reflection, spiritualism, reviving under his reign, and sapping the materialism of the last century, was sympathetic with and agreeable to his own nature. But the principle of despotism quickly reminded him that the soul cannot be elevated without enfranchisement, and the spiritualistic philosophy of M. Royer-Collard then confused him as much as the sensual ideology of M. de Tracy. It was, moreover, one of the peculiarities of Napoleon's mind, that his thoughts constantly reverted to the forgotten Bourbons, well knowing that he had no other competitors [20] for the throne of France. At the summit of his power he more than once gave utterance to this impression, which recurred to him with increased force when he felt the approach of danger. On this ground, M. Royer-Collard and his friends, with whose opinions and connections he was fully acquainted, became to him objects of extreme suspicion and disquietude. Not that their opposition (as he was also aware) was either active or influential; events were not produced through such agencies; but therein lay the best-founded presentiments of the future; and amongst its members were included the most rational partisans of the prospective Government.

Hitherto they had ventured nothing beyond vague and half-indulged conversations, when the Emperor himself advanced their

views to a consistence and publicity which they were far from assuming. On the 19th of December, 1813, he convened together the Senate and the Legislative Body, and ordered several documents to be laid before them relative to his negotiations with the Allied Powers, demanding their opinions on the subject. If he had then really intended to make peace, or felt seriously anxious to convince France, that the continuance of the war would not spring from the obstinacy of his own domineering will, there can be no doubt that he would have found in these two Bodies, enervated as they were, a strong and popular support. I often saw and talked confidentially with three of the five members of the Commission of the Legislative Body, MM. Maine-Biran, Gallois, and Raynouard, and through them I obtained a correct knowledge of the dispositions of the two others, MM. Lainé and Flaugergues. [21] M. Maine-Biran, who, with M. Royer-Collard and myself formed a small philosophical association, in which we conversed freely on all topics, kept us fully informed as to what passed in the Commission, and even in the Legislative Assembly itself. Although originally a Royalist (in his youth he had been enrolled amongst the bodyguards of Louis XVI.), he was unconnected with any party or intrigue, scrupulously conscientious, even timid when conviction did not call for the exercise of courage, little inclined to politics by taste, and, under any circumstances, one of the last men to form an extreme resolution, or take the initiative in action. M. Gallois, a man of the world and of letters, a moderate liberal of the philosophic school of the eighteenth century, occupied himself much more with his library than with public affairs. He wished to discharge his duty to his country respectably, without disturbing the peaceful tenor of his life. M. Raynouard, a native of Provence and a poet, had more vivacity of manner and language, without being of an adventurous temperament. It was said that his loud complaints against the tyrannical abuses of the Imperial Government, would not have prevented him from being contented with those moderate concessions which satisfy honour for the present, and excite hope for the future. M. Flaugergues, an honest Republican, who had put on mourning for the death of Louis XVI., uncompromising in temper and character, was capable of energetic but solitary resolutions, and possessed little influence over his colleagues, although he talked much. M. Lainé, on the contrary, had a warm and sympathetic heart under a gloomy exterior, and an