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THE
REVOLUTIONARY PLUTARCH:

EXHIBITING THE MOST
DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERS,
LITERARY, MILITARY, AND POLITICAL,
IN THE RECENT ANNALS OF THE
FRENCH REPUBLIC;

THE GREATER PART
FROM THE ORIGINAL INFORMATION
OF
A GENTLEMAN RESIDENT AT PARIS.

TO WHICH, AS
AN APPENDIX,
IS REPRINTED ENTIRE, THE CELEBRATED
PAMPHLET OF "KILLING NO MURDER."

VOL. I.

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CHARLES M. TALLEYRAND,
DE PEREGORD.

TALLEYRAND is descended from the ancient Sovereigns of the province of Peregord, in the South of France. His father, a younger brother, with a small fortune, destined his son, early in life, for the church; before twenty he possessed several rich abbeys, and before thirty was made bishop of Autun, much against the inclination of the virtuous Louis XVI. who had heard that the Abbé de Peregord was one of the most immoral, but insinuating *Reues* and libertines in France.

When at college, Talleyrand shewed an early genius for intrigues, and a strong propensity to vice, and but for the defect of being lame, he would, according to the wish of his governors, have disgraced the army, instead of scandalizing the church; because he always was as great a coward in his private quarrels, as daring when supported in his public plots; in fact, all his transactions since a minister, exhibit an ungenerous poltroon, backed by power.

The Revolution found him a gamester, a *debauchee*, and a bankrupt, without honour, principles or probity. He openly intrigued with a married lady; and *her son by this catholic bishop* was lately an aid-de-camp to Louis Buonaparte.

In 1789, when a member of the National Assembly, the gown of the bishop did not long conceal the modern philosopher and the fashionable atheist; he was *one of the first traitors to his king* and the *first apostate to his religion*; he soon alike attacked the majesty of heaven and the majesty of the throne.

The 2d of November, 1789, upon the motion of Talleyrand, the confiscation of the church property in France was decreed; and such is the incomprehensible will of Providence, that after years of wars, murders and crimes, this same man has been lately the disposer of all the church property both in Germany and in Italy. This motion to dispose of the property of others, by a *person who had no property but debts*, may be considered as the cruel foundation in France of all the consequent confiscations and plunders, as well as the proscriptions of owners of estates, lands, or of money. It has caused the ruin and wretchedness of millions, but it has enriched Talleyrand and his accomplices.

In

In May 1790, he was one of the members of the Diplomatic Committee, headed by Mirabeau, upon whose report it was decreed by the National Assembly, and sanctioned by the king, *that France renounced for ever all conquests.* Since he has become a revolutionary minister, he has never concluded a treaty, or entered into any negotiations without aggrandizing the territory, and augmenting the power of France.

In the same year, when a member of the Ecclesiastical Committee, he planned the intolerant and impolitic decree, which made a distinction between a constitutional and a nonjuring clergy, which has caused so many torments, dissensions, and civil wars, and which still continues to divide the Gallican church.

Talleyrand was always the worthy friend of Mirabeau, who, in April 1791, resigned his guilty soul in the arms of this his guilty accomplice.

In June, the same year, he was in the secret of La Fayette to betray his king into that improvident state (the journey to Varennes) which produced so many insults, humiliations, suspicions, and accusations; and which was the principal cause of all the subsequent sufferings of the king and his family.

In the spring 1792; Talleyrand accompanied
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the French Minister Chauvelin to England.— After the late constitution, he could not, for some years, occupy any public employment; but Chauvelin was only the *nominal*, and Talleyrand the *real* minister, and the inventor, author, promoter, and instigator of all the plots, intrigues, and conspiracies, in and against England that year.

In 1793, Robespierre's faction caused a decree of outlawry to pass against Talleyrand; proscribed every where else, he enjoyed hospitality and protection in England; but in return he meditated new plots, and invented new projects to embroil or ruin this country, which was the cause of the order he received from government to leave it.

In 1794, he went to America, because no state in Europe would receive him. In 1795, the National Convention annulled its decree of outlawry, and in 1796 he arrived at Hamburgh, where he resided some time before he returned to France. Gratitude was never amongst the virtues of this man: Hamburgh, for its hospitality, has since, by his orders, been several times laid under contributions, and he detests alike America and England; and their ruin is his incessant and daily contrivance and study.

By his intrigues with his old accomplices, the Directors, Barras, Rewbel, and La Reveille,

Here, he was, in 1797, promoted to the ministry of the foreign department in France. His negotiations this year, and in 1798, at Rastadt, prove his abilities to intrigue, to embroil, to divide, and to profit by his nefarious deeds.

To tranquillize the jealousy of the Directory, and at the same time to employ and gratify the ambition of Buonaparte, he brought forward, in the autumn 1797, the old scheme of former French ministers—the conquest of Egypt; and his emissaries prepared the treason that delivered up Malta to Buonaparte, in June 1798.

After the victory of Lord Nelson, at Aboukir, Talleyrand became unpopular; and the issue, in 1799, of the Congress at Rastadt, and the unsuccessful campaign which followed, augmented the hatred of the jacobin faction against him, and he was obliged to resign: such was, however, still his influence with the Directory, that he chose Rheinhard for his successor, a person whom he governed as much in 1799, as he had done Chauvelin in 1792, to whom this Rheinhard was then Secretary.

When Buonaparte with such treachery had deserted his army in Egypt, Talleyrand and Sieyès prepared the revolution which seated him upon the throne of the Bourbons. No sooner was

was the Corsican proclaimed First Consul, that he reinstated Talleyrand in his former place as minister.

In the beginning of 1800, by promises, bribes, and negotiations, Talleyrand pacified the Royalists of La Vendee, and afterwards, by treachery, delivered them up to arrest, transportation, and death.

The treaties of Luneville, of Amiens, and of Ratisbon, Talleyrand calls his *political chef d'œuvres*, or master-pieces: time will soon discover if these two treaties will not follow the fate of the third, already made impracticable by French encroachment, intrigues, pretensions, and insolence.

When a bishop, Talleyrand was a jobber: since he possesses the key to all the political transactions which so much influence the finances of all countries, his speculations in different funds have procured him a fortune greater than he dares to acknowledge, or Buonaparte suspects. This fortune has been considerably augmented by his many negotiations, in particular those about the throne in Tuscany*, the indemnities in Germany, and Louisiana in America.

* An idea may be formed of his fortune, when, for that transaction alone, he received ONE MILLION LIVRES.

Because

Because the former kings of France, Louis XIII. Louis XIV. and Louis XV. made their ministers, Richelieu, Mazarine, and Fleury, cardinals; Buonaparte proposed to Talleyrand, in 1802, to procure him the same dignity. Talleyrand had, however, given his promise to marry his former mistress, the divorced wife of a Mr. Grand; when, therefore, this proposal was made, he cunningly answered, that those *cardinals* were *prime ministers*, that *the great* Henry IV. had *no cardinal* for a minister, but *a friend* in his minister Sully. The same day he obtained the consular permission to marry Madame Grand.

From debauchery, intemperance, and gluttony, Talleyrand's constitution is entirely broken, and his health destroyed; and the invalid suffers daily for the excesses and the vices of which he has been guilty.

Talleyrand's inveteracy against England is proverbial; but it does not originate from the love of his own country, but from envy to the prosperity of England. He would willingly sign the ruin of France, was he certain that of England should follow.

Of Talleyrand's hatred towards this country, and of the plans and plots of Buonaparte, during a peace, to prepare the ruin of the British empire,

pire, if any proofs are required, the following extract from a memorial presented to the Chief Consul by Talleyrand, on the 13th Frimaire, year xi, or December 4th, 1802, must remove the doubts, even of the most prejudiced, in favour of the republican ruler and his republican minister:

Talleyrand begins by telling the Chief Consul, that the present memorial is merely a copy of one presented to the ministers of Louis XV. after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, to dissuade them from that fatal and dishonourable war to France which ended in 1762. He says, "by the ignorance of the ministers, the bribes of Austria, the intrigues of Berpis, the influence of Pompadour, and the weakness of Louis XV. those strong reasons for peace were not listened to; the consequence is known, but it is not known that this impolitic war alone prevented the total ruin of England during the following, or American war, and preserved that country from being what, if we are prudent, *it sooner or later must be, an invaluable Naval and Military Station of France, and which shall secure us the empire of the world.*"

Talleyrand then enters into the particulars of the many and *irresistible* means France, during the peace,

peace, possesses "to foment troubles, to spread discontent, to tarnish the honour, to undermine the resources, to weaken the strength, to lull asleep the public spirit, and to cool the patriotism of the inhabitants of the British empire; and by a gradual train of intrigues, insults, demands, insurrections, vexations, murmurs, alarms, and bankruptcy, prepare even the warmest English patriot to see with indifference, if not with approbation, *an union with France*, which will put an end to all difficulties, and procure Englishmen the same tranquillity, honour, and happiness Frenchmen enjoy under the mild, but firm government of the Chief Consul.

"But," says he, "powerful as France is upon the Continent by its conquests, by its influence, by the vigour of its Government, and by the victories of its armies; in regard to England it is not in a better position of strength than in 1755, because, with the knowledge of our means, and with the great abilities of our ruler, we are unable *directly* to injure England, our navy being more reduced, and our naval officers more ignorant than in 1755, but *indirectly*, and in a time of peace, to lay the *infallible* foundation for the future subjection of England, France at no former period had so many certain and undoubted underhand

hand methods. A war at present may lessen, if not destroy them, but every year's continuance of peace will preserve, augment, and fix them.

“ Ought we not to wait, at least ten years, before we renew the war with England? till we are in a condition effectually to support our claims, our views, and our plans? The English will do our business, if we permit them. Their religion is pleasure, and their pleasure debauchery. They have plunged themselves into an excess of luxury and intemperance. *They have begun to neglect their navy, and to disband their artificers, who go to France, Spain, and Holland for maintenance.*

“ While their individuals squander their riches, *the State grows parsimonious, and begins to save in those articles on which it cannot be too profuse.*

“ They are even near reducing their trivial army, and their patriots speak of entrusting, what they call their liberty and property, to the valour of a militia. What a field is this for our policy? Is it our business to awaken or arouse them from their lethargy? If we do, the consequence is obvious—We teach them to believe *a real truth*, ‘ That they cannot strengthen themselves too much by sea or land.’ Then an army ceases to be the object of public complaint, of public

public dislike—and the people begin to think that, as they must have one, it is better to have an army of English than of Frenchmen. Then their young nobility will continue to apply themselves to the military profession, and think themselves honoured by that profession, in which alone consist the defence and security of their country.

“ This may be fatal to us, for the sooner we go to war, the sooner their effeminacy will wear off, and their ancient spirit and courage revive. They will not then become more wealthy, but they will get more wisdom, which is better. The military virtues and the manly exercises may become fashionable, and the nation which now seems immersed in debauchery and corruption, may yet think seriously, and be once more what it has often been, the terror of Europe.—This is not an unnatural supposition—they easily glide from one extreme to another—it is their natural temper, and their whole history is one continued proof of it.

“ The ashes of La Vendee still smook—it requires only a spark to kindle a civil war in the bosom of our country. The returned emigrants are as yet quiet, but they have not forgot their former principles, and the wrongs they have suf-
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ferred from the Revolution. Let not a new war give the Bourbons an opportunity to remind them of it. The most dangerous of the Bourbons reside in England; let not the renewal of a war permit England to use them, their name and influence, to trouble and invade France.

“ We command at present all the Continental Powers; but we know they wear with disgust and complaint, the fetters we have imposed. Let not a war with England give them occasion to shake them off, and to command us in their turn.

“ The general weakness and supineness that for ever attend immoderate wealth and luxury, hide from the English the knowledge of their own strength, real power, and true interest. Suffer them not to relapse into virtue and understanding. Plunge them not too deep into difficulties, and they will never emerge from folly into real wisdom.

“ We have already insulated them from the Continental politics—*Leave them in peace*—and the insulation of their trade shall soon follow. We have already made them feared, envied, and hated every where on the Continent—*Leave them in peace*, and they shall soon be despised, neglected, and unpitied.

“ *Leave*

“ *Leave them in peace,* and they will soon return to their amusements of elections, races, party, and faction—*Leave them in peace,* and their ministers must be directed by popular clamour, which we can always excite and encourage.—*Leave them in peace,* and their navy will once more be laid up to rot, and their seamen and artificers once more turned over to us, to Spain, and to Holland!—*Leave them in peace,* and the greatest part of their army will soon be reduced, and the small remains will soon become a mere militia in pay.—*Leave them in peace,* and we shall not fear the defection of Russia or Prussia, or any of our present Allies, which otherwise would much hurt, and, perhaps, ruin our present system. *Leave them in peace,* and they will never think of schemes for increasing their population, or for making every part of their dominions of real use to every other.—*Leave them in peace,* and most of their nobility and gentry will continue to squander away amongst us their great riches, and augment our resources, to enslave their country.—*Leave them in peace,* and before the year 25, France shall command the departments of the Thames, and of the Tweed, as it already does the departments of the Rhine and of the Po.

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“ Pursue, Citizen Consul, this plan steadily, for ten or fifteen years, constantly directing the riches of the country to the raising a navy, equal or superior to England, and then, and *not till then*, shall we be able to strike the blow we have for above one hundred and fifty years been meditating, *the Conquest of the British Islands.*”

(Signed) C. M. TALLEYRAND.

This memorial the author received from a friend at Paris, within three weeks of its presentation to Buonáparte; and though the *Moniteur* has mentioned it after its insertion in some of the English papers, its authenticity was never contradicted; on the contrary, one of Talleyrand's chief des bureaux, in the cabinet of Secret State Papers, was dismissed on the totally unfounded suspicion of having transmitted it to somebody in this country.*

Talleyrand has talents, and the Revolution, fortune, and circumstances, have procured him opportunities to exhibit them to the greatest advantage; under a *regular government* he would have been but an indifferent minister; under a *revolutionary tyranny* he is a great statesman and a political oracle; and those very vices which would have injured him under the one, are the prin-

principal cause of his great success under the other. But an impartial posterity, without our passions and our interest, will place him in his true rank, in that of a **TRAITOR**, a **REBEL**, and an **APOSTATE**.

END OF VOL. I.