

the inner posts had been left to the body-guard, and refused to the Parisian army; and this fatal refusal caused all the misfortunes of this night. The inner guard had not even been doubled; it had scarcely visited the grates; and the service was, as in ordinary times, negligently performed. These men, agitated by all the passions which had conducted them to Versailles, perceived one of the body-guard at a window, and assailed him with abuse. He drew upon them and wounded one of them. They then precipitated themselves upon the rest of the guard, who defended the château foot by foot, and devoted themselves like heroes; one of them informed the queen, whom the assailants especially menaced; she fled half-naked to the king; the tumult and the dangers were extreme in the château.

La Fayette, apprized of the invasion of the royal residence, mounted his horse, and directed his course as rapidly as possible to the scene of danger. He found upon the spot the body-guard, surrounded by a furious mob, determined to massacre them. He threw himself into the midst, called to his assistance some French guards, who were not far distant, and having dispersed the assailants and saved the body-guard, precipitated himself into the château. He found it already succoured by the grenadiers of the French guards, who, at the first rumour of the tumult, had run thither, and protected the royal guard against the fury of the Parisians. But the scene was not yet terminated; the mob, reassembled in the marble court, under the balcony of the king, demanded him with loud cries;—the king appeared. They demanded his departure for Paris,—he promised to go there with his family; and they covered him, on this new determination, with applause. The queen was resolved to follow him; but the opposition was so strong against her, that the journey was not without danger. It was necessary to reconcile the multitude to her; La Fayette proposed to accompany her to the balcony. After some hesitation, she consented. They appeared together; and in order to make himself understood by this tumultuous assembly,—in order to overcome its animosities, to revive its enthusiasm, La Fayette kissed, with the profoundest respect, the hand of the queen: the multitude responded by its acclamations. It remained still to make the peace of the body-guard. La Fayette advanced with one of them, placed upon his head his own tri-coloured cockade, and embraced him in view of the mob, who shouted "*Long live the body-guard!*" Thus ended this scene; the royal family set out for Paris, escorted by the army and by its guards mixed with it.

LETTER XVIII.

The French Revolution continued—Consequences of the Events of October 1789—Financial Arrangements—Benefices of the Clergy proclaimed national Property—Issues of Assignats—Anniversary of the 14th of July—Abolition of Tithes—Federation of the Champ-de-Mars—New Organization of the Army—Schism of the Clergy—Clubs—Death of Mirabeau, &c. A. D. 1789, 1790.

THE period which forms the subject of this Letter, was less remarkable for its events, than for the more decided separation of parties which it developed. In proportion as changes were effected in the state of the laws, those whose interests or opinions were struck at declared themselves against them. The revolution had been opposed from the commencement of the states-general by the court; from the reunion of the orders and the abolition of privileges by the noblesse; from the establishment of a single assembly, and the rejection of the two chambers by the minister and the partisans of the English government. It had, moreover, for adversaries, after the departmental organization, the old provinces; after the decree upon the property and the civil constitution of the clergy, the whole ecclesiastical body; after the new military laws, all the officers of the army. It seems that the assembly should not have attempted so many changes at the same time, in order not to make for itself so many enemies; but its general plans, its wants, and the underplots even of its adversaries, required all these alterations.

The assembly, after the 5th and 6th of October, had its emigration, as the court had its own after the 14th of July. Mounier and Lally Tollendal left it, and despaired of liberty, at the moment that their ideas ceased to be followed. Too absolute in their plans, they would have wished the people, after having delivered the assembly on the 14th of July, to cease altogether from acting, which was entirely to misunderstand the sequence of revolutions. When they had once employed the people, it became very difficult to disband them: and the most prudent plan would have been not to oppose but to regulate their intervention. Mounier retired to Dauphiné, his province, which he endeavoured to stir up against the assembly. He had the inconsistency to complain of one insurrection, and then to provoke another, when it could only profit another party, for his own was too feeble to sustain itself against the ancient régime and the revolution. In spite of his influence in Dauphiné, whose movements he had formerly directed, Mounier could not establish there a centre of durable resistance, although the assembly was diverted by it from destroying the ancient departmental organization, which might have served for the framework of a civil war.

After the 5th and 6th of October, the national representation had followed the king into the capital, which their common presence had very much contributed to calm. The people were satisfied to possess their king, the motives which excited its effervescence had ceased; their distrust also had greatly abated, and at Paris the counter-revolutionary projects became difficult. The duke of Orleans, who, right or wrong, was considered as the spring of the revolution, was sent away; he had consented to accept a mission to England. La Fayette was determined to preserve order; the national guard, which was animated by the best spirit, acquired every day new habits of discipline and obedience; the municipality was emerging from the confusion of its establishment, and beginning to have authority. There remained only one cause of trouble, the famine; in spite of the zeal and foresight of the committee charged with the purveying of provisions, mobs daily menaced the public tranquillity. The multitude, so liable to error at a period of suffering, murdered a baker named François, who had been unjustly designated as a forestaller. Martial law was then proclaimed, which authorized the municipality to employ force in dispersing these assemblages of people, after having first summoned them to retire. The power was in the hands of a class interested in preserving order; the commons and the national guards were subject to the assembly, obedience to the law being the passion of the epoch. The deputies, on their part, aspired only to achieve the constitution and effect the reorganization of the state. They had the more reason to be expeditious, that the enemies of the assembly availed themselves of what remained of the ancient régime to throw embarrassments in its way; thus it answered to each of their attempts by a decree, which, in changing the ancient order of things, deprived them of one of their means of attack.

It began by distributing the realm in a manner more equal and more regular. The provinces, which had seen with regret the loss of their privileges, formed small states, of which the extent was too great, and the administration too independent: it was important to reduce their dimensions, to change their names, and to subject them to the same régime. The assembly adopted in this respect the project conceived by Siéyes, and presented by Thouret, in the name of the committee, which was incessantly occupied in this matter for two months.

France was divided into eighty-three departments, nearly equal in extent and in population; the department was divided into districts, the districts into cantons. They regulated their administration in a manner uniform and hierarchical. The department had an administrative council composed of thirty-six members, and an executive directory, consisting of five: as the names indicate, the functions of the one were to decide, of the other to act. The district was organized in the same manner: although upon a smaller scale, it had a council and a directory, which were less numerous, and which

delegates, to reunite the electors, and attempt new nominations. Their hope was not to obtain a favourable choice, but to create divisions between the assembly and the departments. This project was denounced from the tribune; and as soon as it was known, it failed. Its authors then tried another scheme: the term of the commissions given to the deputies of the states-general was at hand; their power was to last only one year, according to the vote of the *bailliages*; the aristocrats availed themselves of this expiration to obtain a new election of the assembly. Had they succeeded, they would have gained a great advantage; and it was for this reason that they themselves invoked the sovereignty of the people. "Undoubtedly," answered Chapelier, to their arguments, "all sovereignty resides in the people, but this principle has no application under the present circumstances. This would be to destroy the constitution and liberty rather than renew the assembly, even before the constitution is completed; such is, in fact, the hope of those who wish to see the constitution and liberty perish, and to see the distinction of the orders spring up again, the prodigality of the public revenue, and the abuses which march in the train of despotism." All eyes at this moment were directed to the right side, and rested on the abbé Maury; "Send these gentlemen then to the *châtelet*," he abruptly exclaimed, "or if you do not know them, say nothing about them." "It is impossible," continued Chapelier, "that the constitution should be the work of more than one assembly. Besides, the electors no longer exist; the bailiwicks are confounded in the departments; the orders are no longer separate. The clause of the limitation of the power loses its value; it is therefore contrary to the principles of the constitution, that the deputies, whose authority is affected only by it, should not continue in this assembly; their oath commands them to remain here, and the public interest requires it."

"We are environed by sophisms," replied the abbé Maury; "for how long have we been a national convention? They speak of the oath we have taken on the 20th of June, without dreaming that it cannot subvert that which we have taken to our constituents. And since, gentlemen, the constitution is achieved, it remains for us only to declare, that the king possesses the plenitude of the executive power; we are here only to assure to the French people the right of influencing its legislation, to establish the principle, that taxes shall be consented to by the people,—in a word, to assure our liberty. Yes; the constitution is made, and I oppose myself to every decree which limits the rights of the people over their representatives. The founders of liberty ought to respect the liberty of the nation: it is above us; and by putting limits to the national authority, we destroy our own."

Applauses resounded from the right side at these words of the abbé Maury. Mirabeau immediately ascended the tribune. "They demand," says he, "since when the deputies of the people have become the national convention? I answer, it was on that day when, finding their seat of assembly surrounded by soldiers, they proceeded to sit in the first place where they could assemble themselves, in order to swear that they would perish rather than betray and abandon the rights of the nation. Our powers, whatever they were, on that day changed their nature. Whatever may be the powers we have exercised, our efforts, our labours, have legitimated them. The adherence of the nation has sanctified them. You recall the words of that great man of antiquity, who had neglected the legal forms to save his country. Summoned by a factious tribune, to say, if he had observed the laws; he answered, 'I swear that I have saved the country!' Gentlemen (turning himself to the deputies of the commons), I swear that you have saved France!" The entire assembly rose in a spontaneous movement, and declared, that its session should end only when its work was accomplished.

Counter-revolutionary attempts also multiplied out of the assembly. It was endeavoured to seduce or disorganize the army, but the assembly adopted the wisest measures to meet this emergency. It attached the troops to the revolution by rendering the gradation and promotion independent of the court and of titles of nobility. The count d'Artoise, who had taken refuge at Turin, formed a correspondence with Lyons and the south, but emigration

not having at this epoch the compactness abroad which it subsequently attained, and having no *point d'appui* in the interior, all his projects failed. The attempts of the clergy at insurrection in Languedoc were without any effect; they induced some troubles of short duration, but they did not lead to a war of religion. It requires some time to form a party, and still more is necessary to determine it on serious combat. A design less impracticable was that of carrying off the king, and taking him to Péronne. The marquis of Favras had taken upon himself the execution of this enterprise, when it was discovered. The court of the *châtelet* condemned to death this intrepid adventurer, who failed in his object, because he had made too much preparation. The escape of the king, after the events of October, could only be effected clandestinely, as he afterward went to Varennes.

The court was in an equivocal and embarrassed position; it encouraged every enterprise, it undertook none; it felt more than ever its weakness; and, eagerly desirous of extricating itself, it feared to make any attempt, since success seemed so difficult. Thus it excited resistance without openly co-operating in it. With some it dreamed of the ancient régime—with others it sought only to moderate the revolution. Mirabeau had lately treated with it. Having been one of the principal authors of the reform, he wished to consolidate it by chaining down faction; his object was to convert the court to the revolution, and not to deliver up the revolution to the court. The support which he offered was constitutional; he could not in fact propose any other, for his power sprung from his popularity, and his popularity from his principles. But he erred in endeavouring to purchase it; if his immense necessities had not compelled him to accept money, and sell his counsels, he had been no more blameable than the unalterable La Fayette, Lameth, and the Girondists, who successively conferred with it. But neither the one nor the other ever acquired the absolute confidence of the court, which had recourse to them only in the last resort; it tried, by means of them, to suspend the revolution; and, by means of the aristocracy, to destroy it. Of all the popular leaders, Mirabeau was perhaps the one who exercised the greatest ascendancy over the court, because he was the most insinuating and the most energetic.

In the midst of all these conspiracies and intrigues, the assembly laboured without intermission at the constitution. The popular torrent, after having spent its fury upon the ancient régime, fell gradually into its old channel. New banks hedged it in on every side; the government of the revolution established itself promptly; the assembly had given to the new régime its monarch, its national representation, its territorial division, its armed force, its municipal and administrative powers, its popular tribunals, its currency, its clergy; it had discovered a pledge for its debt, and a means of transferring property without injustice.

All the new magistracies were held for limited periods. Under the absolute monarchy, power flowed from the throne; its functionaries were nominated by the king. Under the constitutional monarchy, all power flowed from the people; its functionaries were nominated by the people. The throne alone was transferable; the other powers were neither the property of a man nor of a family, and were neither for life nor hereditary. The legislation of this period depended on a single principle—the sovereignty of the nation. Even the judicial functions had this character of mobility; trial by jury, a democratic institution, common in former times all over the continent, and which in England alone had survived the encroachments of the feudal system or the throne, was introduced in criminal causes. In civil cases, special judges were nominated; they established permanent tribunals, with two degrees of jurisdiction, so as to give a remedy against error, and a court of cassation to watch over the conversation of the cautionary forms of the law. But the judges were elective and temporary. This great power, when it springs from the throne, to be independent ought to be irremovable; but it may be temporary when it is derived from the people, because, being dependent on all, it is dependent on no one.

In another very important matter, the right of peace and war, the assembly decided a new and delicate question, and did it in a manner prompt, certain, and just, after one of the most luminous and eloquent discussions which had adorned its sittings. As war and peace belong rather to action than to will, contrary to the ordinary rule, the assembly gave the initiative power to the king. He, who was most in the way of knowing the propriety of war or peace, ought to propose it, but it was for the legislative body to make a final determination.

The 14th of July was approaching, a day which was the anniversary of the nation's deliverance; they prepared to celebrate it by a solemnity which should elevate the souls of the citizens, and bind them in closer bonds. A confederation of the whole realm was to take place in the Champ-de-Mars, and there, in the open air, the deputies sent by the eighty-three departments, the national representation, the Parisian guard, the monarch, were to take the oath to the constitution. As a prelude to this patriotic festival, the popular members of the noblesse proposed the abolition of titles, and the assembly hastened to renew a sitting similar to the 4th of August. Titles, armorial bearings, liveries, orders of chivalry, were abolished, and vanity lost its privileges, as power had already done.

This sitting led to a universal equality, and put words in accordance with things, by destroying these trappings of other times. Titles had formerly designated functions; armorial bearings had distinguished powerful families; liveries had been invented for the armies of vassals; the orders of chivalry had defended the state against the foreigner, or Europe against Mahometanism; but at the present day nothing of this remains. Titles had lost their reality and their suitableness; the noblesse, after having ceased to be a magistracy, had ceased even to be an illustration; and power as well as glory was to spring from plebeian ranks. But whether the aristocracy was more attached to its titles than its privileges, or whether it had been waiting only for a pretext to declare itself openly, this last measure, more than any other, led to its emigration and its attacks. It was to the noblesse what the civil constitution had been for the clergy, an occasion rather than a cause of hostility.

The 14th of July arrived; the revolution had few days more triumphant; the weather alone did not correspond with this magnificent fête. The deputies from all the departments were presented to the king, who welcomed them with great affability. He received also the most touching testimonies of affection, but it was as a constitutional king. "Sire," said the leader of the Breton deputation, putting one knee on the ground, and presenting his sword to him, "I replace in your hands the faithful sword of the brave Bretons; it shall be stained only by the blood of your enemies." Louis XVI. raised him, embraced him, replaced the sword in his hands. "It will never be better," answered he, "than in the hands of my affectionate Bretons; I have never doubted of their affection and their fidelity. Assure them that I am the father, the brother, the friend of all Frenchmen." "Sire," added the deputy, "all Frenchmen cherish you, and will cherish you, because you are a citizen king."

It was in the Champ-de-Mars that the federation took place. The immense preparations for this festival were with difficulty completed. All Paris had assisted for several weeks, in order that every thing should be ready on the 14th. At seven o'clock in the morning, the assemblage of electors, of representatives of the commune, the presidents of the districts, the national assembly, the Parisian guard, the deputies of the army, the federates of the departments, went in procession from the place of the bastille. The presence of all the national bodies, the floating banners, the patriotic inscriptions, the varied costumes, the sounds of music, the joy of the people, produced a grand effect. The procession traversed the town, and passed the Seine, to the sound of a discharge of artillery, across a bridge of boats, which had been thrown over in the evening. It entered the Champ-de-Mars, through a triumphal arch, decorated with patriotic inscriptions. Each body, hailed with applause, placed itself in the situation destined for it.

The vast site of the Champ-de-Mars was surrounded by steps of green turf rising one above another, occupied by four hundred thousand spectators; in

the middle rose an altar, constructed according to the manner of the ancients; around the altar, in a vast amphitheatre, were seen the king, his family, the assembly, and the municipality; the federates of the departments were placed in order under their banners; the deputies of the army were in their ranks, and under their colours; the bishop of Autun ascended the altar in pontifical robes; four hundred priests, clothed in white surplices, and decorated with floating tri-coloured cinctures, proceeded to the four corners of the altar. Mass was celebrated amid the sound of military instruments; the bishop of Autun then blessed the oriflamme and the eighty-three banners.

A profound silence now ensued in this vast enclosure; and La Fayette, nominated this day commandant-general of all the national guards of the realm, advanced first to take the civic oath. He was carried in the arms of grenadiers, on to the altar of the country, in the midst of the acclamations of the people; he then, in an elevated voice, in his own name, in the name of the troops, and of the federates, spoke as follows: "WE SWEAR to be for ever faithful to the nation, to the law, and to the king; to maintain with all our power the constitution decreed by the national assembly, and accepted by the king; and to remain united to all Frenchmen by indissoluble ties of fraternity." Discharges of artillery, shouts of "*Long live the nation! Long live the king!*" the clashing of arms, the sounds of music, instantly mingled in one unanimous and prolonged cadence. The president of the assembly took the same oath, and all the deputies repeated it at the same time. Louis XVI. then rising, "I," said he, "the king of France, swear to employ all the powers delegated to me by the constitutional act of the state, to maintain the constitution decreed by the national assembly, and accepted by me." The queen being then led forward, and raising the dauphin in her arms, and showing him to the people, said, "Here is my son; he unites with me in the same sentiments." At the same instant the banners were lowered, the acclamations of the people were heard in one loud and prolonged shout. Subjects believed in the sincerity of the monarch, and the monarch in the attachment of his subjects; and this happy day was terminated by a solemn chant of thanksgiving.

The festival of the federation was prolonged some time longer: plays, illuminations, balls, were given by the city of Paris to the deputies of the departments. A dance was celebrated on the very spot where formerly had stood the bastille. Gratings, bars, ruins, were scattered here and there, and over the gate was written this inscription, which contrasted finely with the ancient destination of this abode—*Dancing here*. "They danced, in fact," says a contemporary, "with joy, with security, on the very spot where had flowed so many tears—where courage, genius, and innocence had so often breathed forth their groans—where the cries of despair had been so often stifled." After the fêtes were terminated, medals were struck to perpetuate the remembrance of them, and the federates returned to their departments.

The federation had only suspended the hostilities of the parties; they recommenced them by small intrigues, as well within the assembly as without. The duke of Orleans had returned from his mission, or, to speak more properly, from his exile. The information which charged Mirabeau with being the author of the riots of the 5th and 6th of October had been conducted by the court of the châtelet. This process, which had been suspended, was now resumed. The court by this attack gave another proof of its improvidence; for it should either have been able to prove the accusation, or it should not have made it. The assembly, which had determined to acquit them, even if they had proved guilty, declared that there were no grounds for the charge; and Mirabeau, after a most brilliant invective against this procedure, forced the right side into silence, and stood triumphant from an accusation which had been raised only to frighten him.

They did not content themselves by merely attacking single deputies, but they tried to subvert the assembly itself. The court intrigued against it; the right side pushed it to exaggeration. "*We love its decrees,*" said the abbé Maury; "*we must have three or four more of them.*" Hired libellers stood at its very gates, selling pamphlets to excite against it the suspicions of the

relieved the superior council and directory. The canton, consisting of five or six parishes, was instituted for electoral purposes, and not administrative; the acting citizens, and in order to become such it was necessary to pay a contribution equivalent to three days' labour, assembled in the canton to nominate their deputies and magistrates. Every thing in the new plan was submitted to election; but this had many gradations. It appeared imprudent to intrust to the multitude the choice of delegates, and illegal not to let them concur in it; they escaped this difficulty by the double election. The acting citizens of the canton designated the electors, who in their turn nominated the members of the national assembly; the administrators of the department, those of the district, and the judges of the tribunals. A criminal tribunal was established for every department, a civil tribunal for each district, and a tribunal of peace for each canton.

Such was the institution of the department; it remained to regulate that of the commune. The administration of this last was confided to a general council and a municipality, composed of members whose number was proportionate to the population of the town. The municipal officers were nominated immediately by the people, and were alone able to call out the assistance of an armed force. The commune was the first degree of the civil association, the kingdom as a whole was the last; the department was intermediate between the commune and the state, between the universal interests and interests purely local.

The execution of this plan, which organized the sovereignty of the people, which made all the citizens concur in the election of their magistrates, which confided to them their peculiar administration, and distributed them into parts, which, in permitting to the estate to move itself in one body, maintained the correspondence of the parts and prevented their isolation, excited the discontent of some of the provinces. The states of Languedoc and Brittany protested against the new division of the realm; and on their part the parliaments of Metz, of Rouen, of Bourdeaux, of Toulouse, opposed the operations of the assembly, which suppressed the chambers of vacations, abolished the orders, and declared incompetent the commissions of the states. The partisans of the ancient régime seized every means of arresting its progress; the noblesse excited the provinces, the parliaments made resolutions, the clergy issued mandates, and writers availed themselves of the liberty of the press to attack the revolution. Its two principal enemies were the nobles and the bishops. The parliament, having no root in the nation, formed only a magistracy, whose attacks they put an end to by destroying it; instead of which the noblesse and the clergy had means of action which survived their influence as a body. The misfortunes of these two classes were caused by themselves; after having harassed the revolution in the assembly, they afterward attacked it by open force, the clergy by internal insurrections, the noblesse by arming Europe against it. They hoped much from anarchy, which caused, it is true, great evils to France, but which was far from bettering their situation. Let us see how the hostility of the clergy was induced, and for this purpose it will be necessary to resume the inquiry a little farther back.

The revolution had been commenced by financial difficulties, and had not yet been able to remove the embarrassments which had produced it. Moreover, important objects had occupied the time of the assembly. Called on no longer to supply the wants of the administration, but to constitute the state, it had, from time to time, suspended its legislative discussions, to satisfy the most urgent wants of the treasury. Necker had proposed provisional means, which had been adopted with confidence, and almost without discussion. In spite of this readiness, he did not see, without dissatisfaction, the finances subservient to the constitution, and the minister to the assembly. A first loan of thirty millions, decreed on the 9th of August, had not succeeded: a subsequent loan of eighty millions, decreed on the 27th of the same month, had been insufficient. The imposts were reduced or abolished, and they produced scarcely any thing, from the difficulty of collecting them. It became useless to recur to the public confidence, which refused its aid; and

in September, Necker proposed an extraordinary contribution of a fourth of the national income payable at once; each citizen was to fix it himself, employing only this simple formula of oath, and which paints very well these first times of loyalty and patriotism:—"I declare with truth," &c.

It was then that Mirabeau obtained for Necker the decree of a true financial dictatorship. He spoke of the urgent wants of the state, of the labours of the assembly, which did not permit it to discuss the plan of the minister, and which forbade it from examining any other; of the skill of Necker, who promised the success of his own; and he pressed the assembly to discharge itself upon him of the responsibility of success, by adopting it with confidence. As some did not approve the plans of the minister, as others suspected the intentions of Mirabeau in this matter, he ended this harangue, one of the most eloquent which he had pronounced, by showing the menacing bankruptcy, and by exclaiming, "Vote this extraordinary subsidy, and it may be sufficient! Vote it, because if you have doubts upon the means, you cannot have any upon the necessity, and upon the impossibility of replacing it: vote it, because the public circumstances will not suffer any delay, and that we should be accountable for every delay. Take care of demanding time; misfortune never grants it. In relation to a ridiculous motion, which never had any importance except in weak imaginations, or in the perverse designs of men of bad faith, you have lately heard these furious words—*Catiline is at the gates of Rome, and we deliberate!*" and truly there was around us neither Catiline, nor perils, nor factions, nor Rome; but to-day the bankruptcy, the hideous bankruptcy, is here; it threatens to swallow up yourselves, your property, your honour; and you deliberate!" Mirabeau had subdued the assembly, and they voted the patriotic contribution amid universal plaudits.

But this resource produced only a momentary relief. The finances of the revolution depended on a hardier and more gigantic measure; it was necessary, not only to subsist the revolution, but also to fill up the immense deficit which retarded its march, and menaced its future designs. There remained only one means, that of declaring national the property of the church, and of selling it for the use of the state. The public interests also required it, and they could do it with justice, the clergy not being the proprietors, but simply the administrators of its benefices, which were given to the religion, not to the priests. The nation, in charging itself with the expenses of the altar, and the support of its ministers, could therefore appropriate these benefices, and obtain at once a great financial resource, and a great political result.

It was important to have no longer in the state an independent body, especially if it were ancient; for, at the epoch of the revolution, whatever was ancient was an enemy. The clergy by its formidable hierarchy, and its opulence, would have maintained itself a separate republic in the realm. This form was suitable for the ancient régime: when there was no state, but only bodies, each order had provided for its organization and its existence. The clergy had its decretals, the noblesse its law of fiefs, the people its municipalities; every thing was independent, because every thing was private; but now, when the functions became public, it was consistent to make of the priesthood magistracy, as had already been done with the royal power; and in order to render them dependent on the state, it was necessary to pay them, and to take from the monarch his domains, from the clergy its benefices, replacing them by adequate salaries. We shall presently see how they conducted this grand operation, which destroyed the ancient ecclesiastical régime.

One of the most urgent necessities was the abolition of tithes. As it was an impost paid to the clergy by the inhabitants of the country, the sacrifice was to turn to the profit of those who had been crushed by it. Thus, after having, on the night of the 4th of August, declared them redeemable, they suppressed them without equivalent on the 11th of the same month; the clergy at first resisted, but it had afterward the good sense to consent to this measure. The archbishop of Paris abandoned tithes in the name of all his brethren, and by this act of prudence he showed himself faithful to the prac-

tices of the privileged, on the night of the 4th of August, but this was the term of his sacrifices.

A short time after, the discussion began on the property of the ecclesiastical benefices. Talleyrand, bishop of Autun, proposed to the clergy to renounce it in favour of the nation, which would employ it in the support of the altars, and the payment of its debt. He proved the justice and the propriety of this measure; he showed the great advantages which would result from it to the state. The benefices of the clergy amounted to many thousand millions of francs: in charging itself with its debts, with the ecclesiastical service, with that of the hospitals, with the endowment of its ministers, there still remained sufficient to satisfy all the public rents, as well perpetual as for life, and to reimburse the expenditure of the offices of judicature. The clergy struggled against this proposition. The discussion was very animated; it was proved, in spite of its resistance, that the clergy were not the proprietors, but simply the depositaries of the benefices consecrated to the altars by the piety of the kings and the faithful, and that the nation, in furnishing the means of supporting this service, was entitled to resume possession of the benefices. The decree which put them in its possession was carried the 2d of December.

From that moment the hatred of the clergy to the revolution broke forth. It had been less intractable than the noblesse at the commencement of the states-general, in the hope of preserving its wealth: afterward it showed itself not less opposed to the new régime. Nevertheless, as the decree put the ecclesiastical property at the disposition of the nation, without its being as yet divested, this hatred did not break out all at once. For some time the administration was in its confidence, and it hoped that the property would be put in pledge for the debt, but that it would not be sold.

It was, in fact, difficult to effect this sale, which nevertheless could not be put off; as the treasury subsisted only by anticipation, by getting its bills discounted, it began to lose all credit from the excessive amount of its issues. This is the way in which they brought matters to a termination, and proceeded to the new financial arrangement. The wants of this and the following year required a sale of property to the amount of four hundred millions of francs. To facilitate it, the municipality of Paris entered into a considerable recognisance, and the municipalities of the realm followed the example of that of Paris. They undertook to pay into the treasury the purchase-money of the estates which they received from the state to sell out to private individuals; but they had no money, and they could not put down the price, inasmuch as they had as yet no buyers. What were they to do then? they furnished municipal bills, in order to pay the public creditors, until they should have acquired the funds necessary to redeem these bills.—When they had got so far, they found that instead of these municipal bills, it would be better to create exchequer bills, which had a forced currency, and which might discharge the functions of money; the operation was simplified by generalizing it. Thus *assignats* came into existence.

This discovery very greatly facilitated the operations of the revolution, and enabled the state to effect the sale of the ecclesiastical property: the assignats, which were a means of payment for the state, became a pledge for the creditors, and moreover a real money. In this manner, the creditor who received them was not bound to pay himself in lands for that which he had furnished in money; but sooner or later the assignats must arrive in the hands of men disposed to realize them, and then they should be destroyed at the same time that the pledge ceases. To the fulfilment of their object, a forced circulation was necessary; that they should be solid, the quantity sold was limited to the value of the benefices put in sale; that they might not be liable to a sudden change, they carried interest; the assembly wished to give them, from the moment of the issue, all the consistency of money. It hoped that the money which had vanished in a period of distrust, would presently reappear, and that the assignats would circulate concurrently with it. The pledge rendered them as safe, and the interest more advantageous; but this interest,

which had great inconveniences, disappeared at the next issue. Such was the commencement of this paper money, sent out in the first instance with so much necessity and prudence, which enabled the revolution to accomplish such great objects, and which was discredited by causes which sprung less from its nature than the use which was subsequently made of it.

When the clergy saw the administration of its benefices transferred to the municipalities; the sale of four hundred millions which they were about to make of them; the creation of a paper money which facilitated its divestment, and rendered it definitive, they omitted no means to obtain the intervention of the Deity in behalf of its riches. As a last resource, the clergy offered to realize in its name a loan of four hundred millions, which was rejected, because its right of property, in that case, would have been recognised anew, after it had been decided that it had none. They then sought by every means to control the operations of the municipalities—at midday they excited the Catholics against the Protestants,—in the pulpit they alarmed their consciences,—in the confessional they treated the sale as sacrilege,—and on the tribune they endeavoured to create suspicions on the sentiments of the assembly. They originated, as much as possible, religious questions, in order, by this means, to compromise and to confound the cause of its own interest with that of religion. Already, when the abolition of monastic vows, the abuses and inutility of which were then recognised by all the world, even by the clergy, the bishop of Nancy had proposed, in an incidental and crafty manner, that the Catholic religion should be the only public worship; the assembly cried out against the motives which had suggested this proposition, and rejected it. But the same proposition was presented anew in another sitting; and after the most stormy debates, the assembly declared that from reverence to the Supreme Being and the Catholic religion, the only one which was maintained at the expense of the state, it ought not to pronounce upon the question which was submitted to it.

Such were the dispositions of the clergy when the assembly began the interior organization. It waited impatiently for this occasion of exciting a schism. This project, which has done so much mischief, proposed to reconstitute the church upon its ancient basis, and to restore the purity of its creed: it was not the work of philosophers, but of austere Christians, who wished to build up a church upon the basis of the constitution, and to make them both concur in promoting the welfare of the state. The reduction of the bishoprics to the number of the departments, the conformity of the ecclesiastical with the civil boundaries, the nomination of the bishops by the electors, who should choose the administrators and the deputies, the suppression of chapters, and the replacing of canons by curates;—such was this plan. No part of it made any encroachment on the dogmas or the worship of the church.—For a long time the bishops and the other ecclesiastics were nominated by the people; and as to the diocesan limits, it was an operation purely material, and which had nothing to do with religion; the support of the members of the clergy was moreover generously provided; and if the high dignitaries saw their revenues diminished, the *curés*, who formed the most numerous and most useful class, obtained an augmentation of theirs.

But a pretext was wanting, and that of the civil constitution of the clergy was greedily seized. At the opening of the discussion, the archbishop of Aix protested against the principles of the ecclesiastical committee. According to him, it was inconsistent with discipline that the bishops should be instituted by the civil authority or divested by it; and at the moment when the decree was put to the vote, the bishop of Clermont recapitulated the principles expounded by the archbishop of Aix, and he left the hall at the head of all the dissident members. The decree passed; but the clergy declared war against the revolution.

From this moment, the ecclesiastical body joined in the strictest league with the dissident noblesse. Reduced to a common condition, the two privileged classes employed all their efforts to prevent the execution of the reforms. Scarcely were the departments formed, when they sent to them