

heaven to the Hebrew prophet, "Put off your shoes, for the ground on which you stand is holy." You are the professed friends, the devoted worshippers of civil liberty; will you violate her sanctuary? Will you profane her temple of justice? Will you commit sacrilege while you kneel at her altar?

BARNAVE



ANTOINE PIERRE JOSEPH MARIE BARNAVE, French revolutionist, lawyer, and orator, and president, in 1790, of the National Assembly, was born at Grenoble, France, Oct. 22, 1761, and was guillotined at Paris, Nov. 29, 1793. He studied law, and, at the age of twenty-two, made himself favorably known by a discourse pronounced before the local Parliament on the Division of Political Powers. On May 5, 1789, the States-General were convoked at Versailles, and Barnave was chosen deputy of the Third Estate for his native province. Next to Mirabeau, to whom, on several occasions, he was opposed, Barnave was the most powerful orator of the National Assembly. After the fall of the Bastille, he advocated the suspensive veto, the system of two Chambers, and the establishment of trial by jury in civil causes, after which he became President of the Assembly. On the arrest of the King and the royal family, Barnave was one of the three appointed to conduct them back to Paris. It is said that on the occasion he gained the favor of the Queen by his gallantry to her on her return to the capital after her flight with the King to Varennes. His public career came to an end in 1792 with the close of the Constituent Assembly. Shortly afterward he was arrested and imprisoned, on suspicion of being in sympathy with the royal family and of conspiring with the court against the nation. For this, in 1793, he died by the guillotine.

REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY AGAINST MAJORITY ABSOLUTISM

DELIVERED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, AUGUST 11, 1791

IT IS not enough to desire to be free—one must know how to be free. I shall speak briefly on this subject, for after the success of our deliberations, I await with confidence the spirit and action of this Assembly. I only wish to announce my opinions on a question, the rejection of which would sooner or later mean the loss of our liberties. This question leaves no doubt in the minds of those who reflect on governments and are guided by impartial

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judgments. Those who have combated the committee have made a fundamental error. They have confounded democratic government with representative government; they have confounded the rights of the people with the qualifications of an elector, which society dispenses for its well understood interest. Where the government is representative, where there exists an intermediary degree of electors, society, which elects them, has essentially the right to determine the conditions of their eligibility. There is one right existing in our constitution, that of the active citizen, but the function of an elector is not a right. I repeat, society has the right to determine its conditions. Those who misunderstand the nature as they do the advantages of representative government, remind us of the governments of Athens and Sparta, ignoring the differences that distinguish them from France, such as extent of territory, population, etc. Do they forget that they interdicted representative government? Have they forgotten that the Lacedemonians had the right to vote in the assemblies only when they held helots? And only by sacrifice of individual rights did the Lacedemonians, Athenians, and Romans possess any democratic governments! I ask those who remind us of them, if it is at such government they would arrive? I ask those who profess here metaphysical ideas, because they have no practical ideas, those who envelop the question in clouds of theory, because they ignore entirely the fundamental facts of a positive government—I ask is it forgotten that the democracy of a portion of a people would exist but by the entire enslavement of the other portion of the people? A representative government has but one evil to fear, that of corruption. That such a government shall be good, there must be guaranteed the

purity and incorruptibility of the electorate. This body needs the union of three eminent guarantees. First, the light of a fair education and broadened views. Second, an interest in things, and still better if each had a particular and considerable interest at stake to defend. Third, such condition of fortune as to place the elector above attack from corruption.

These advantages I do not look for in the superior class of the rich, for they undoubtedly have too many special and individual interests, which they separate from the general interests. But if it is true that we must not look for the qualifications of the pure elector among the eminently rich, neither should I look for it among those whose lack of fortune has prevented their enlightenment; among such, unceasingly feeling the touches of want, corruption too easily can find its means. It is, then, in the middle class that we find the qualities and advantages I have cited. And, I ask, is it the demand that they contribute five to ten francs that causes the assertion that we would throw elections into the hands of the rich? You have established the usage that the electors receive nothing; if it were otherwise their great number would make an election most expensive. From the instant that the voter has not means enough to enable him to sacrifice a little time from his daily labor, one of three things would occur. The voter would absent himself, or insist on being paid by the State, else he would be rewarded by the one who wanted to obtain his suffrage. This does not occur when a comfortable condition is necessary to constitute an elector. As soon as the government is established, when the constitution is guaranteed, there is but a common interest for those who live on their property, and those who toil honestly. Then can be

distinguished those who desire a stable government and those who seek but revolution and change, since they increase in importance in the midst of trouble as vermin in the midst of corruption.

If it is true, then, that under an established constitutional government all its well-wishers have the same interest, the power of the same must be placed in the hands of the enlightened who can have no interest pressing on them, greater than the common interest of all the citizens. Depart from these principles and you fall into the abuses of representative government. You would have extreme poverty in the electorate and extreme opulence in the legislature. You would see soon in France what you see now in England, the purchase of voters in the boroughs not with money, even, but with pots of beer. Thus incontestably are elected many of their parliamentary members. Good representation must not be sought in either extreme, but in the middle class. The committee have thus placed it by making it incumbent that the voter shall possess an accumulation the equivalent of, say forty days of labor. This would unite the qualities needed to make the elector exercise his privilege with an interest in the same. It is necessary that he own from one hundred and twenty to two hundred and forty livres, either in property or chattels. I do not think it can seriously be said that this qualification is fixed too high, unless we would introduce among our electors men who would beg or seek improper recompense.

If you would have liberty subsist do not hesitate because of specious arguments which will be presented to you by those who, if they reflect, will recognize the purity of our intentions and the resultant advantages of our plans. I add to what I have already said that the system will diminish

many existing inconveniences, and the proposed law will not have its full effect for two years. They tell us we are taking from the citizen a right which elevated him by the only means through which he can acquire it. I reply that if it was an honor the career which you will open for them will imprint them with character greater and more in conformity with true equality. Our opponents have not failed either to magnify the inconveniences of changing the constitution. Nor do I desire its change. For that reason we should not introduce imprudent discussions to create the necessity of a national convention. In one word, the advice and conclusions of the committee are the sole guarantees for the prosperity and peaceable condition of the nation.

COMMERCIAL POLITICS

COMMERCE forms a numerous class, friends of external peace and internal tranquillity, who attach themselves to the established government.

It creates great fortunes, which in republics become the origin of the most forceful aristocracies. As a rule commerce enriches the cities and their inhabitants, and increases the laboring and mechanical classes, in opening more opportunities for the acquirement of riches. To an extent it fortifies the democratic element in giving the people of the cities greater influence in the government. It arrives at nearly the same result by impoverishing the peasant and landowner, by the many new pleasures offered him and by displaying to him the ostentation and voluptuousness of luxury and ease. It tends to create bands of mercenaries rather than those capable of worthy personal

service. It introduces into the nation luxury, ease, and avarice at the same time as labor.

The manners and morals of a commercial people are not the manners of the merchant. He individually is economical, while the general mass are prodigal. The individual merchant is conservative and moral, while the general public are rendered dissolute.

The mixture of riches and pleasures which commerce produces, joined to freedom of manners, leads to excesses of all kinds, at the same time that the nation may display the perfection of elegance and taste that one noticed in Rome, mistress of the world, or in France before the Revolution. In Rome the wealth was the inflow of the whole world, the product of the hardest ambition, producing the deterioration of the soldier and the indifference of the patrician. In France the wealth was the accumulation of an immense commerce and the varied labors of the most industrious nation on the earth diverted by a brilliant and corrupt court, a profligate and chivalrous nobility, and a rich and voluptuous capital.

Where a nation is exclusively commercial, it can make an immense accumulation of riches without sensibly altering its manners. The passion of the trader is avarice and the habit of continuous labor. Left alone to his instincts he amasses riches to possess them, without designing or knowing how to use them. Examples are needed to conduct him to prodigality, ostentation, and moral corruption. As a rule the merchant opposes the soldier. One desires the accumulations of industry, the other of conquest. One makes of power the means of getting riches, the other makes of riches the means of getting power. One is disposed to be economical, a taste due to his labor. The

other is prodigal, the instinct of his valor. In modern monarchies these two classes form the aristocracy and the democracy. Commerce in certain republics forms an aristocracy, or rather an "extra aristocracy in the democracy." These are the directing forces of such democracies, with the addition of two other governing powers, which have come in, the clergy and the legal fraternity, who assist largely in shaping the course of events.

ORATION FOR THE CROWN

THE French nation has just undergone a violent shock; but if we are to believe all the auguries which are delivered, this recent event, like all others which have preceded it, will only serve to advance the period, to confirm the solidity of the revolution we have effected. I will not dilate on the advantages of monarchical government; you have proved your conviction by establishing it in your country; I will only say that every government, to be good, should comprise within itself the principle of its stability; for otherwise instead of prosperity there would be before us only the perspective of a series of changes. Some men, whose motives I shall not impugn, seeking for examples to adduce, have found, in America, a people occupying a vast territory with a scanty population, nowhere surrounded by very powerful neighbors, having forests for their boundaries, and having for customs the feelings of a new race, and who are wholly ignorant of those factitious passions and impulses which effect revolutions of government. They have seen a republican government established in that land, and have thence drawn the conclusion that a similar government was suitable

for us. These men are the same who at this moment are contesting the inviolability of the king. But if it be true that in our territory there is a vast population spread,—if it be true that there are amongst them a multitude of men exclusively given up to those intellectual speculations which excite ambition and the love of fame,—if it be true that around us powerful neighbors compel us to form but one compact body in order to resist them,—if it be true that all these circumstances are irresistible, and are wholly independent of ourselves, it is undeniable that the sole existing remedy lies in a monarchical government. When a country is populous and extensive, there are—and political experience proves it—but two modes of assuring to it a solid and permanent existence. Either you must organize those parts separately—you must place in each section of the empire a portion of the government, and thus you will maintain security at the expense of unity, strength, and all the advantages which result from a great and homogeneous association—or else you will be forced to centralize an unchangeable power, which, never renewed by the law, presenting incessantly obstacles to ambition, resists with advantage the shocks, rivalries, and rapid vibrations of an immense population, agitated by all the passions engendered by long-established society. These facts decide our position. We can only be strong through a federative government, which no one here has the madness to propose, or by a monarchical government, such as you have established; that is to say, by confiding the reins of the executive power to a family having the right of hereditary succession. You have intrusted to an inviolable king the exclusive function of naming the agents of his power, but you have made those agents responsible. To be independent the king must be inviolable: do not let us set aside this axiom. We have never failed to observe this

as regards individuals; let us regard it as respects the monarch. Our principles, the constitution, the law, declare that he has not forfeited (*qu'il n'est pas déchu*); thus, then, we have to choose between our attachment to the constitution and our resentment against an individual. Yes; I demand at this moment from him amongst you all, who may have conceived against the head of the executive power prejudices however strong and resentment however deep; I ask at his hands whether he is more irritated against the king than he is attached to the laws of his country? I would say to those who rage so furiously against an individual who has done wrong,—I would say, Then you would be at his feet if you were content with him? Those who would thus sacrifice the constitution to their anger against one man seem to me too much inclined to sacrifice liberty from their enthusiasm for some other man; and since they love a republic it is indeed the moment to say to them, What! would you wish a republic in such a nation? How is it you do not fear that the same variableness of the people which to-day manifests itself by hatred may on another day be displayed by enthusiasm in favor of some great man?—enthusiasm even more dangerous than hatred; for the French nation, you know, understands better how to love than to hate. I neither fear the attacks of foreign nations nor of emigrants; I have already said so; but I now repeat it with the more truth, as I fear the continuation of uneasiness and agitation, which will not cease to exist and affect us until the revolution be wholly and pacifically concluded. We need fear no mischief from without; but vast injury is done to us from within, when we are disturbed by painful ideas—when chimerical dangers, excited around us, create with the people some consistency and some credit for the men who use them as a means of unceasing agitation. Immense damage is done to

us when that revolutionary impetus which has destroyed everything there was to destroy, and which has urged us to the point where we must at last pause, is perpetuated. If the revolution advance one step further it cannot do so without danger. In the line of liberty, the first act which can follow is the annihilation of royalty; in the line of equality, the first act which must follow is an attempt on all property. Revolutions are not effected with metaphysical maxims—there must be an actual tangible prey to offer to the multitude that is led astray. It is time, therefore, to end the revolution. It ought to stop at the moment when the nation is free and when all Frenchmen are equal. If it continue in trouble it is dishonored, and we with it; yes, all the world ought to agree that the common interest is involved in the close of the revolution. Those who have lost ought to perceive that it is impossible to make it retrograde. Those who fashioned it must see that it is at its consummation. Kings themselves—if from time to time profound truths can penetrate to the councils of kings—if occasionally the prejudices which surround them will permit the sound views of a great and philosophical policy to reach them—kings themselves must learn that there is for them a wide difference between the example of a great reform in the government and that of the ambition of royalty; that if we pause here, where we are, they are still kings! but be their conduct what it may, let the fault come from them and not from us. Regenerators of the empire! follow straightly your undeviating line; you have been courageous and potent—be to-day wise and moderate. In this will consist the glorious termination of your efforts. Then, again returning to your domestic hearths, you will obtain from all, if not blessings, at least the silence of calumny.

ROYER-COLLARD



PIERRE PAUL ROYER-COLLARD, French philosopher and politician, and in 1828 president of the Chamber of Deputies, was born at Sompuis, Marne, France, June 21, 1763, and died near St-Aignan, Sept. 4, 1845. After receiving a liberal education, he was admitted to practice at the Bar. On the outbreak of the French Revolution, he took the popular side, and was Secretary of the Paris Municipal Council, and a member in 1797 of the Council of Five Hundred. He was, however, repelled by the sanguinary course pursued by Danton and Robespierre, and from the era of the Reign of Terror until the fall of Napoleon, in 1814, he lived in retirement, devoting himself to his duties as professor of philosophy in Paris. After the Restoration, he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies, and remained a member of it for about fifteen years, becoming eventually its president. The annexed speech was delivered while the doctrinaire was a member of that body. After the Revolution of July, 1830, he withdrew from politics.

"SACRILEGE" IN LAW

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, PARIS, 1825, AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY FOR SACRILEGE

WHAT is a sacrilege? It is, according to this law, the profanation of sacred vases and of consecrated wafers. What, then, is profanation? It is an act of violence committed voluntarily, through hatred or contempt of religion. What are consecrated wafers? We Catholics believe that consecrated wafers are no longer the wafers that we see, but Jesus Christ the Holy of Holies; God and man together, invisible and present in the most sacred of our mysteries. The violence is thus committed against Jesus Christ himself. The irreverence of this language is shocking, for religion also has its modesty; but the irreverence is that of the law. The sacrilege then consists, I take the law to witness, in an act of violence committed