abolition of the most burdensome of feudal and class privileges. This programme was adopted by the clergy of his diocese as their *cahier,* or book of instructions to their representative at the States General, namely Talleyrand himself.

His influence in the estate of the clergy, however, was cast against the union of the three estates in a single assembly, and he voted in the minority of his order which in the middle of June opposed the merging of the clergy in the National Assembly. The folly of the court, and the weakness of Louis XVI. at that crisis, probably convinced him that the cause of moderate reform and the framing of a bicameral constitution on the model of that of England were hopeless. Thereafter he inclined more and more to the democratic side, though for the present he concerned himself mainly with financial questions. In the middle of July he was chosen as one of the committee to prepare a draft of a constitution; and in the session of the Assembly which Mirabeau termed the *orgie* of the abolition of privileges (4th of August) he intervened in favour of discrimination and justice. On the 10th of October, that is, four days after the insurrection of women and the transference of the king and court to Paris, he proposed to the Assembly the confiscation of the lands of the church to the service of the nation, but on terms rather less rigorous than those in which Mirabeau (*q.v.*) carried the proposal into effect on the 2nd of November. He identified himself in general with the Left of the Assembly, and supported the pro­posed departmental system which replaced the old provincial system early in 1790. At the federation festival of the 14th of July 1790 (the “ Feast of Pikes ”) he officiated at the altar reared in the middle of the Champ de Mars. This was his last public celebration of mass. For a brilliantly satirical but not wholly fair reference to the part then played by Talleyrand, the reader should consult Carlyle’s *French Revolution,* vol. ii., bk. i., ch. 12. The course of events harmonized with the anti­clerical views of Talleyrand, and he gradually loosened the ties that bound him to the church. He took little part in, though he probably sympathized with, the debates on the measure known as the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, whereby the state enforced its authority over the church to the detriment of its allegiance to the pope. When the Assembly sought to impose on its members an oath of obedience to the new decree, Talleyrand and three other bishops complied out of the thirty who had seats in the Assembly. The others, followed by the greater number of the clergy throughout France, refused, and thence­forth looked on Talleyrand as a schismatic. He did not long continue to officiate, as many of the so-called “ constitutional ” clergy did; for, on the 2rst of January 1791, he resigned the see of Autun, and in the month of March was placed under the ban of the church by the pope.

Just before his resignation he had been elected, with Mirabeau and Sieyès, a member of the department of Paris; and in that capacity did useful work for some eighteen months in seeking to support the cause of order in the turbulent capital. Though he was often on strained terms with Mirabeau, yet his views generally coincided with those of that statesman, who is said on his death-bed (2nd of April 1791) to have communicated to him his opinions on domestic and international affairs, especially advising a close understanding with England. Talleyrand’s reputation for immorality, however, was as marked as that of Mirabeau. While excelling him in suppleness and dexterity, he lacked the force of character possessed by the great “ tribune of the people”; and his influence was gradually eclipsed by that of the more ardent and determined champions of democ­racy, the Girondins and the Jacobins. In the closing days of the first or Constituent Assembly, Talleyrand set forth (10th of September 1791) his ideas on national education. Education was to be free, and to lead up to the university. In place of dogma, the elements of religion were alone to be taught.

Debarred from election to the second National Assembly (known as the Legislative) by the self-denying ordinance passed by the “ constituents,” Talleyrand, at the close of r79r, sought to enter the sphere of diplomacy for which his mental qualities and his clerical training furnished him with an admirable equipment. The condition of affairs on the continent seemed to French enthusiasts to presage an attack by the other Powers on France. In reality those Powers were far more occupied with the Polish and Eastern questions than with the affairs of France; and the declaration of Pilnitz, drawn up by the sovereigns of Austria and Prussia, which appeared to threaten France with intervention, was recognized by all well-informed persons to be “ a loud-sounding nothing.” The French foreign minister, Delessart, believed that he would checkmate all the efforts of the *émigrés* at the continental courts provided that he could confirm Pitt in his intention of keeping England neutral. For that purpose Delessart sent Talleyrand, well known for his Anglophil tendencies, to London, but in the unofficial or semi­official capacity which was rendered necessary by the decree of the Constituent Assembly referred to above. Talleyrand arrived in London on the 24th of January 1792, and found public opinion so far friendly that he wrote off to Paris, “ Believe me, a *rapprochement* with England is no chimera.” Pitt received him cordially; and to Grenville the envoy stated his hope that the two free nations would enter into close and friendly relations, each guaranteeing the other in the possession of its existing territories, India and Ireland being included on the side of Britain. After some delay the British government decided to return no definite answer to this proposal, a result due, as Talleyrand thought, to the Gallophobe views of King George and of the ministers Camden and Thurlow. Talleyrand, however, was convinced that Great Britain would not intervene against France unless the latter attacked the Dutch Netherlands.

He returned to Paris on the roth of March to persuade the foreign minister (Dumouriez now held that post) of the need of having a fully accredited ambassador at London. The ex­Marquis Chauvelin was appointed, with Talleyrand as adviser. The situation became more complex after the r9th of April, when France declared war against Austria and prepared to invade the Austrian or Belgic Netherlends. Owing to certain indiscretions of Chauvelin and the growing unpopularity of the French in England (especially after the disgraceful day of the 20th of June at the Tuileries), the mission was a failure; but Talleyrand had had some share in confirming Pitt in his policy of neutrality, even despite Prussia’s overtures for an alliance against France. After Talleyrand’s return to Paris early in July (probably in order to sound the situation there) matters went from bad to worse. The overthrow of the monarchy on the roth of August and the September massacres rendered hopeless all attempts at an *entente cordiale* between the two peoples; and the provocative actions of Chauvelin, undertaken in order to curry favour with the extremists now in power at Paris, undid all the good accomplished by the tact and modera­tion of Talleyrand. The latter now sought to escape from France, where events were becoming intolerable; and after some unsuccessful attempts to obtain a passport to leave Paris, he succeeded on the 14th of September and landed in England on the 23rd, avowedly on private business, but still animated by the hope of averting a rupture between the two governments. In this he failed. The provocative actions of the French Con­vention, especially their setting aside of the rights of the Dutch over the estuary of the Scheldt, had brought the two nations to the brink of war, when the execution of Louis XVI. (2rst of Jan. 1793) made it inevitable. Talleyrand was expelled from British soil and made his way to the United States. There he spent thirty months in a state of growing uneasiness and dis­content with his surroundings.

The course of events after the Thermidorian reaction of July 1794 favoured his return to France. Thanks to the efforts of Daunou and others his name was removed from the list of *émigrés,* and he set sail for Europe in November 1795. Landing at Hamburg in the January following, he spent some time there in the company of his friends Madame de Genlis and Reinhard ; and when party rancour continued to abate at Paris, he returned thither in September. After a time marked by some pecuniary embarrassment, he was recommended by Madame de Staël to the Director Barras for the post of minister of foreign affairs.