upon his mission, and he returned baffled to Paris, where he arrived shortly before the *coup d'état* of the 10th of August. But this place, where his wariest manœuvres were outdone by the rapidity of the popular movements, and where at any turn of affairs he might lose his head, was not to his liking ; and by the middle of September he is for the third time in London. It is characteristic of the man—of the dexterity as well as audacity of his intrigue—that he who had but shortly before carried with him a letter of favour from Louis XVI. was, now that royalty was abolished, the bearer of a specific passport— “ going to London by our orders ”—under the hand of Danton. Equally characteristic is the express falsehood with which he opens his negotiations : he writes at once to Lord Grenville, “I have at this time absolutely no kind of mission in England”—he was selling his library and seeking repose. His courtesies were not returned ; and, although he succeeded in making friends in certain high quarters, he was, in the end of January 1794, under the provisions of the Alien Act, ordered to leave England. Fortified with an introduction by Lord Lansdowne to Washington, he sailed for the United States.

A decree of the convention had issued against Talley­rand during his stay in England. He was an *émigré.* But as the excesses of the period drew to a close the proscription was recalled on the appeal of Chénier, who founded on Talleyrand’s relations with Danton and his mission to England in the service of the Revolution ! On July 25, 1795, he arrived at Hamburg, whence he passed to Berlin, and, after a short stay there, to Paris. He was received with enthusiasm in the circles of fashion and intrigue. He would have been eagerly welcomed by any of the political parties as a strength ; but the Directory was in power, and he supported it. Within the Directory he supported Barras, as against his compeers. He was thus a moderate constitutionalist and in the way of advancement.

During his absence from France he had been elected a member of the Institute. He was now elected its secre­tary. In this capacity he read before it two memoirs—one on the “ commercial relations of the United States with England,” and the other “on the advantages of withdraw­ing from new colonies in present circumstances.” These memoirs exhibit Talleyrand at the very maturity of his powers, and are sufficient to establish his position as one of the most far-seeing aud thoughtful statesmen that France ever possessed. The first paper shows how, in spite of the War of Independence, the force of language, race, and interest must in his view bind England and the States together as natural allies; and it contains that remarkable passage (which once read is never forgotten) in which the civilization of America is described as exhibited in space as well as in time,—as the traveller moves west­ward from State to State he appears to go backward from age to age. The papers, which were read in April and July of 1797, made his claim to state recognition irre­sistible, and towards the end of the latter month he was appointed to the post of foreign minister.

He had been carefully scanning the political situation, and he accurately foresaw that the Directory, which represented no one set of opinions, but only a vain com­pound of all, could not stand against unity of policy backed by force, and in the meantime could be manipu­lated. Thus with a brutal swiftness its personnel becomes changed. Barras with his sluggish moderation remains ; but, behind and through him, it is the dexterous purpose of Talleyrand that is at work. This is the first character­istic of his administration. Its second is the ability which he displays in his communications with the diplomatic service, in view of the rupture with England. Its third is the shamelessly corrupt manner in which he approaches the American ambassadors on the subject of the seizure of certain ships, on the conclusion of a commercial treaty between England and the States, putting himself in his public and powerful position at their service,—if the bribe were suitably large. And its fourth is that he is hardly in the chair of office until he has shrewdly selected Bonaparte as the object of his assiduous flatteries, writing to him in semi-confidence, and laying the basis of their future intimacy. But his first term of office was short : the American ambassadors spurned his offer and let his conduct be publicly known, with the result that for this and other reasons he resigned his post. Public opinion was outraged. His official corruption, however, was not ended, for Talleyrand turned everything into gold ; in his later diplomacy also he could always be bought ; and this public immorality was but too faithfully reflected in his private life, in which gambling was his passion and a source of his vast wealth.

Out of office, but still pulling the strings of the Directory, he awaited the arrival of Napoleon in Paris, and it was his hand which was most powerful in shaping the events of the 18th and 19th Brumaire—9th and 10th November 1799. He reconciled Sieyès to Bonaparte; a majority of the Directory—Sieyès, Ducos, and at last at his persuasion even Barras—resigned ; the Directory collapsed, and the consulate was established (see Napoleon and Sieyès). Napoleon was the first and Talleyrand the second man in France.

He was now an absolutist, the whole drift of his influence being in the direction of consolidating, under whatever title, the power of Bonaparte. For many years henceforward Talleyrand’s career is part of the general history of France. He is soon again foreign minister ; and he is acknowledged to have been the ablest diplomatist of an age when diplomacy was a greater power than it has ever been before or since. To him falls a full share of responsibility for the kidnapping and murder of the Duc d’Enghien in March 1804 (see Savary). He had assisted at the councils when the atrocity was planned, and he wrote to the grand-duke justifying the seizure of the prince while on Baden territory. His hand in the matter was of course concealed. But, when one advised him to tender his resignation, he demurely remarked, “ If, as you say, Bonaparte has been guilty of a crime, that is no reason why I should be guilty of a folly.” In other and more agreeable directions he had prostrated himself before Napoleon’s purposes, approving among other things of the policy of the Concordat (15th July 1801), and securing thereby the recall of his excommunication. To the pope’s grateful brief, which gave him liberty “ to administer all civil affairs,” he coolly gave a wide interpretation, and he shortly thereafter married. He of course supported and defended first the consulship for life and then the crown­ing of the emperor.

By and by, however, a change comes over his political attitude, and it is not long ere Napoleon detects it. This change we date, with Sainte-Beuve, from the end of January 1809. Before the peace of Tilsit, July 8, 1807, from Jena onwards, he had personally accompanied the great conqueror ; after it they stood apart, for the states­man saw in those brilliant but ceaseless conquests the prelude to the ruin of his master and his country. He was now prince of Benevento, and he withdrew from the ministry, receiving at his own desire the title of vice-grand­elector of the empire. Yet he had not disapproved of the Spanish war ; the young princes had even been entrusted to his surveillance at his country house at Valençay. But anything might have happened to the emperor in Spain, and Talleyrand had evidently been calculating the chances