

gardes du corps, and struck up a friendship with the kings of the streets and suburbs. He philosophised even then, and knew that at the outbreak of a tumult one cannot raise one's head too defiantly, and that one must live in a burning fever of illusions, at least for a time.

He founded the Jacobin club: he, like Goethe's Mephistopheles, introduced paper money and urged at every session that the church plate, those (to him) odious vessels he had had to carry in his priestly robes, should be sold without mercy. He wanted no other worship but that of the nation. One day, however, it occurred to him that his hands were too delicate for a popularity that goes unwashed and wears no gloves. He grew tired of republican virtue, because it reproached him with having won 30,000 livres in play in one night. He looked at himself in the glass and found that the Phrygian cap of the Jacobins ill became his faultlessly handsome French features; so he founded the club of the Feuillants. That was a bad move; Talleyrand was outflanked: events came too fast for him. Mirabeau's fall made him totter, the affair of the Postmaster at Varennes and the emigration sorely puzzled him, and the foreign coalition compelled him to consider the situation of France. He heard the sharpening of the guillotine, the Pope's anathema which hit him personally awoke thoughts of death, and his popularity deserted him for men whose hands were more horny than his own. Hating violence, passion, and cruelty, he thrust himself into the office of ambassador, and was able to leave the unsafe ground of Paris with a good grace. As long as things went well in France and Louis XVI was still alive, Talleyrand played the republican admirably in London. His business was to represent the new order of things, and he did so with equal satisfaction before both English and refugees. His undoubtedly feudal descent made his political abandon bearable; less so, his moral. The Queen turned her back upon the dissolute priest; and indeed when the Convention shewed a desire for his head, and time after time besought him in a friendly way to cross the Channel, he quite lost all his prestige. His mission was at an end; but he did not despair yet: he reckoned on Pitt,—on Pitt who had once eaten pheasants from the forest of Perigord at his uncle's the Archbishop of Rheims. But Pitt, great statesman as he was, was afflicted with a short memory, and would not remember the pheasants. Talleyrand was too proud to mention them, and left England by Pitt's direction. In spite of his condemnation he was always considered a Jacobin in disguise. In fact he never suffered from a deeply rooted idea; for greatly as London had sinned against him, he was still constant to his affection and even went so far as to say that the principle of the English constitution was the best, in which wisdom required a value to be