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title of prince of Benevento, a papal fief in the Neapolitan territory.

In the negotiations with England which went on in the summer of 1806 Talleyrand had not a free hand; they came to nought, as did those with Russia which had led up to the signature of a Franco-Russian treaty at Paris by d'Oubril which was at once disavowed by the tsar. The war with Prussia and Russia was ended by the treaties of Tilsit (7th and 9th of July 1807). Talleyrand had a hand only in the later developments of these negotiations; and it has been shown that he cannot have been the means of revealing to the British government the secret arrangements made at Tilsit between France and Russia, though his private enemies, among them Fouche, have charged him with acting as traitor in this affair.

Talleyrand had long been weary of serving a master whose policy he more and more disapproved, and after the return from Tilsit to Paris he resigned office. Nevertheless Napoleon retained him in the council and took him with him to the interview with the Emperor Alexander I. at Erfurt (September 1808). There Talleyrand secretly advised that potentate not to join Napoleon in putting pressure on Austria in the way desired by the French emperor; but it is well known that Alexander was of that opinion before

Talleyrand tendered the advice. Talleyrand disapproved of the Spanish policy of Napoleon which culminated at Bayonne in May 1808; and the stories to the contrary may in all probability be dismissed as idle rumours. It is also hard to believe the statement in the Talleyrand Memoirs that the ex-foreign minister urged Napoleon to occupy Catalonia until a maritime peace could be arranged with England. On Talleyrand now fell the disagreeable task of entertaining at his new mansion at Valencay, in Touraine, the Spanish princes virtually kidnapped at Bayonne by the emperor. They remained there until March 1814. At the close of 1808, while Napoleon was in Spain, Talleyrand entered into certain relations with his former rival [Fouche](#) (*q.v.*), which aroused the solicitude of the emperor and hastened his return to Paris. He subjected Talleyrand to violent reproaches, which the ex-minister bore with his usual ironical calm.

After the Danubian campaign of 1809 and the divorce of Josephine, Talleyrand used the influence which he still possessed in the imperial council on behalf of the choice of an Austrian consort for his master, for, like Metternich (who is said first to have mooted the proposal), he saw that this would safeguard the interests of the Habsburgs, whose influence he felt to be essential to the welfare of Europe. He continued quietly to observe the course of events during the disastrous years 1812–13; and even at the beginning of the Moscow campaign he summed up the situation in the words, “It is the beginning of the end.” Early in 1814 he

saw Napoleon for the last time; the emperor upbraided him with the words: "You are a coward, a traitor, a thief. You do not even believe in God. You have betrayed and deceived everybody. You would sell even your own father." Talleyrand listened unmoved, but afterwards sent in his resignation of his seat on the council. It was not accepted. He had no share in the negotiations of the congress of Châtillon in February-March 1814. On the surrender of Paris to the allies (30th of March 1814), the Emperor Alexander I. took up his abode at the hotel Talleyrand, and there occurred the conference wherein the statesman persuaded the victorious potentate that the return of the Bourbons was the only possible solution of the French problem, and that the principle of legitimacy alone would guarantee Europe against the aggrandizement of any one state or house. As he phrased it in the Talleyrand *Memoirs*: "The house of Bourbon alone could cause France nobly to conform once more to the happy limits indicated by policy and by nature. With the house of Bourbon France ceased to be gigantic in order to be great." These arguments, reinforced by those of the royalist agent de Vitrolles, convinced the tsar; and Talleyrand, on the 1st of April, convened the French senate (only 64 members out of 140 attended), and that body pronounced that Napoleon had forfeited the crown. Ten days later the fallen emperor recognized the inevitable and signed the Act of Abdication at Fontainebleau. The next effort of Talleyrand was to screen France under the principle of legitimacy and to prevent the scheme of partition on which several of the

German statesmen were bent. Thanks mainly to the support of the tsar and of England these schemes were foiled; and France emerged from her disasters with frontiers which were practically those of 1792.

At the congress of Vienna (1814–15) for the settlement of European affairs, Talleyrand, as the representative of the restored house of Bourbon in France, managed adroitly to break up the league of the Powers (framed at Chaumont in February 1814) and assisted in forming a secret alliance between England, Austria and France in order to prevent the complete absorption of Poland by Russia and of Saxony by Prussia. The new triple alliance had the effect of lessening the demands of those Powers, and of leading to the well-known territorial compromise of 1815. Everything was brought into a state of uncertainty once more by the escape of Napoleon from Elba; but the events of the Hundred Days, in which Talleyrand had no share—he remained at Vienna until the 10th of June—brought in the Bourbons once more; and Talleyrand's plea for a magnanimous treatment of France under Louis XVIII. once more prevailed in all important matters. On the 9th of July 1815 he became foreign minister and president of the council under Louis XVIII., but diplomatic and other difficulties led him to resign his appointment on the 23rd of September 1815, Louis,, however, naming him high chamberlain and according him an annuity of 100,000 francs. The rest of his life calls for little notice except that at the time of the July Revolution of 1830, which unseated the

elder branch of the Bourbons, he urged [Louis Philippe, duke of Orleans](#) (*q.v.*), to take the throne offered to him by popular acclaim. The new sovereign offered him the portfolio for foreign affairs; but Talleyrand signified his preference for the embassy in London. In that capacity he took an important part in the negotiations respecting the founding of the new kingdom of Belgium. In April 1834 he crowned his diplomatic career by signing the treaty which brought together as allies France, Great Britain, Spain and Portugal; and in the autumn of that year he resigned his embassy. During his last days he signed a paper signifying his reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church and his regret for many of his early actions. The king visited his death-bed. His death, on the 17th of May 1838, called forth widespread expressions of esteem for the statesman who had rendered such great and varied services to his country. He was buried at Valencay. He had been separated from the former Madame Grand in 1815 and left no heir.

Under all the inconsistencies of Talleyrand's career there lies an aim as steadily consistent as that which inspired his contemporary, Lafayette. They both loved France and the cause of constitutional liberty. Talleyrand believed that he served those causes best by remaining in office whenever possible, and by guiding or moderating the actions of his chiefs. He lived to see the triumph of his principles; and no Frenchman of that age did so much to repair the mischief wrought by fanatics and autocrats. In the opinion of enlightened men this will mitigate the censures that must be

passed on him for his laxity in matters financial. If he enriched himself, he also helped to save France from ruin at more crises than one. In private life his ease of bearing, friendliness, and, above all, his inexhaustible fund of humour and irony, won him a large circle of friends; and judges so exacting as Mmes de Staël and de Remusat and Lord Brougham avowed their delight in his society.

By a codicil added to his will on the 17th of March 1838 Talleyrand left his memoirs and papers to the duchess of Dino and to M. de Bacourt. The latter revised them with care, and added to them other pieces emanating from Talleyrand. They were not to be published until after the lapse of thirty years from the time of Talleyrand's death. For various reasons they did not see the light until 1891. This is not the place in which to discuss so large a question as that of the genuineness of the *Mémoires*, which, indeed, is now generally admitted. There are, however, several suspicious circumstances which tell against them as documents of the first importance, notably these: first that Talleyrand is known to have destroyed many of his most important papers, and secondly that





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