



***ALEXIS
DE TOCQUEVILLE***

***THE STATE
OF SOCIETY
IN FRANCE BEFORE
THE REVOLUTION
OF 1789***



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The State of Society in France Before the Revolution of 1789

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

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TO THE SECOND EDITION.

AN interval of about seventeen years has elapsed since the first publication of this book in France, and of the translation of it, which appeared simultaneously, in England. The English version has not been republished, and has long been out of print. But the work itself has retained a lasting place in the political literature of Europe.

The historical events which have occurred since the date of its first publication have again riveted the attention of every thinking man on the astonishing phenomena of the French Revolution, which has resumed in these later days its mysterious and destructive course; and a deeper interest than ever seems to attach itself to the first causes of this long series of political and social convulsions, which appear to be as far as ever from their termination.

Nor is this interest confined to the state of France alone; for at each succeeding period of our contemporary annals the operation and effects of the same causes may be traced in other countries, and the principles which the author of this book discerned with unerring sagacity derive fresh illustrations every day from the course of events both abroad and at home.

For this reason, mainly, this translation is republished at the present time, in the hope that it may be read by men of the younger generation, who were not in being when it first appeared, and that some of those who read it before may be led by the light of passing events to read it again. For I

venture to say that in no other work on the French Revolution has the art of scientific analysis been applied with equal skill to the genesis of these great changes: no other writer has so skilfully traced the continuous operation of the causes, long anterior to the Revolution itself, which have gradually reduced one of the greatest monarchies of Europe to its present condition.

Are we to learn from this stern lesson of experience that the hopes of progress are closely united to the germs of dissolution, and that the great transformation hailed with so much enthusiasm eighty-four years ago was but the prelude of a final catastrophe; that the nation which was the first to plunge into this new order of things, by the destruction of all that it once loved and revered, is also the first to make manifest its fatal results; and that the last results of civilisation are no preservative against the decline of empires? These pages may suggest such reflections, for if the vices and abuses of political society in France before the Revolution were, in some measure, peculiar to herself, the elements of destruction which the Revolution let loose upon the world are common to all civilised nations.

In the present edition, moreover, it appeared to be desirable to make a considerable addition to the volume published in 1856. At the time of his death in the spring of 1859, M. de Tocqueville had made some progress in the continuation of his work, though his labour advanced very slowly, from the minute and conscientious care with which he conducted his researches and elaborated his thoughts. Seven chapters of the new volume were, however, found among his papers by his friend and literary executor, M.

Gustave de Beaumont, in a state approaching to completeness; and these posthumous chapters were published in the seventh volume of the collected edition of M. de Tocqueville's works. They have not before been translated, and they are, I believe, but little known in this country.

These chapters are not inferior, I think, to any of the works of their author in originality and interest; and they have the merit of bringing down his Survey of the State of France before the Revolution to the very moment which preceded the convocation of the States-General. I have therefore included these posthumous chapters in the present edition, and they form a Third Book, in addition to the two books of the original volume.

HENRY REEVE.

April 1873.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE

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THE book I now publish is not a history of the French Revolution; that history has been written with too much success for me to attempt to write it again. This volume is a study on the Revolution.

The French people made, in 1789, the greatest effort which was ever attempted by any nation to cut, so to speak, their destiny in halves, and to separate by an abyss that which they had heretofore been from that which they sought to become hereafter. For this purpose they took all sorts of precautions to carry nothing of their past with them into their new condition; they submitted to every species of constraint in order to fashion themselves otherwise than their fathers were; they neglected nothing which could efface their identity.

I have always thought that they had succeeded in this singular attempt much less than was supposed abroad, and less than they had at first supposed themselves. I was convinced that they had unconsciously retained from the former state of society most of the sentiments, the habits, and even the opinions, by means of which they had effected the destruction of that state of things; and that, without intending it, they had used its remains to rebuild the edifice of modern society, insomuch that, fully to understand the Revolution and its work, we must forget for an instant that France which we see before us, and examine in her sepulchre that France which is no more. This is what I have

endeavoured to do; but I have had more difficulty than I could have supposed in accomplishing this task.

The first ages of the French Monarchy, the Middle Ages, and the Revival of Letters have each given rise to vast researches and profound disquisitions which have revealed to us not only the events of those periods of history, but the laws, the customs, and the spirit of the Government and the nation in those eras. But no one has yet taken the trouble to investigate the eighteenth century in the same manner and with the same minuteness. We suppose that we are thoroughly conversant with the French society of that date, because we clearly distinguish whatever glittered on its surface; we possess in detail the lives of the most eminent persons of that day, and the ingenuity or the eloquence of criticism has familiarised us with the compositions of the great writers who adorned it. But as for the manner in which public affairs were carried on, the practical working of institutions, the exact relation in which the different classes of society stood to each other, the condition and the feelings of those classes which were as yet neither seen nor heard beneath the prevailing opinions and manners of the country,—all our ideas are confused and often inaccurate.

I have undertaken to reach the core of this state of society under the old monarchy of France, which is still so near us in the lapse of years, but concealed from us by the Revolution.

For this purpose I have not only read over again the celebrated books which the eighteenth century produced, I have also studied a multitude of works less known and less worthy to be known, but which, from the negligence of their

composition, disclose, perhaps, even better than more finished productions, the real instincts of the time. I have applied myself to investigate thoroughly all the public documents by which the French may, at the approach of the Revolution, have shown their opinions and their tastes. The regular reports of the meetings of the States, and subsequently of the Provincial Assemblies, have supplied me with a large quantity of evidence. I have especially made great use of the Instructions drawn up by the Three Orders in 1789. These Instructions, which form in the original a long series of manuscript volumes, will remain as the testament of the old society of France, the supreme record of its wishes, the authentic declaration of its last intentions. Such a document is unique in history. Yet this alone has not satisfied me.

In countries in which the Administrative Government is already powerful, there are few opinions, desires, or sorrows—there are few interests or passions—which are not sooner or later stripped bare before it. In the archives of such a Government, not only an exact notion of its procedure may be acquired, but the whole country is exhibited. Any stranger who should have access to all the confidential correspondence of the Home Department and the Prefectures of France would soon know more about the French than they know themselves. In the eighteenth century the administration of the country, as will be seen from this book, was highly centralised, very powerful, prodigiously active. It was incessantly aiding, preventing, permitting. It had much to promise—much to give. Its influence was already felt in a thousand ways, not only on

the general conduct of affairs, but on the condition of families and the private life of every individual. Moreover, as this administration was without publicity, men were not afraid to lay bare before its eyes even their most secret infirmities. I have spent a great deal of time in studying what remains of its proceedings, both at Paris and in several provinces.[1]

There, as I expected, I have found the whole structure of the old monarchy still in existence, with its opinions, its passions, its prejudices, and its usages. There every man spoke his mind and disclosed his innermost thoughts. I have thus succeeded in acquiring information on the former state of society, which those who lived in it did not possess, for I had before me that which had never been exposed to them.

As I advanced in these researches I was surprised perpetually to find again in the France of that time many of the characteristic features of the France of our own. I met with a multitude of feelings which I had supposed to be the offspring of the Revolution—a multitude of ideas which I had believed to originate there—a multitude of habits which are attributed to the Revolution alone. Everywhere I found the roots of the existing state of French society deeply imbedded in the old soil. The nearer I came to 1789, the more distinctly I discerned the spirit which had presided over the formation, the birth, and the growth of the Revolution; I gradually saw the whole aspect of the Revolution uncovered before me; already it announced its temperament—its genius—itself. There, too, I found not only the reason of what it was about to perform in its first effort, but still more, perhaps, an intimation of what it was

eventually to leave behind it. For the French Revolution has had two totally distinct phases: the first, during which the French seemed eager to abolish everything in the past; the second, when they sought to resume a portion of what they had relinquished. Many of the laws and political practices of the old monarchy thus suddenly disappeared in 1789, but they occur again some years later, as some rivers are lost in the earth to burst forth again lower down, and bear the same waters to other shores.

The peculiar object of the work I now submit to the public is to explain why this great Revolution, which was in preparation at the same time over almost the whole continent of Europe, broke out in France sooner than elsewhere; why it sprang spontaneously from the society it was about to destroy; and, lastly, how the old French Monarchy came to fall so completely and so abruptly.

It is not my intention that the work I have commenced should stop short at this point. I hope, if time and my own powers permit it, to follow, through the vicissitudes of this long Revolution, these same Frenchmen with whom I have lived so familiarly under the old monarchy, and whom that state of society had formed—to see them modified and transformed by the course of events, but without changing their nature, and constantly appearing before us with features somewhat different, but ever to be recognised.

With them I shall proceed to review that first epoch of 1789, when the love of equality and that of freedom shared their hearts—when they sought to found not only the institutions of democracy, but the institutions of freedom—not only to destroy privileges, but to acknowledge and to

sanction rights: a time of youth, of enthusiasm, of pride, of generous and sincere passion, which, in spite of its errors, will live for ever in the memory of men, and which will still long continue to disturb the slumbers of those who seek to corrupt or to enslave them.

Thus rapidly following the track of this same Revolution, I shall attempt to show by what events, by what faults, by what miscarriages, this same French people was led at last to relinquish its first aim, and, forgetful of freedom, to aspire only to become the equal servants of the World's Master—how a Government, stronger and far more absolute than that which the Revolution had overthrown, grasped and concentrated all the powers of the nation, suppressed the liberties which had been so dearly bought, putting in their place the counterfeit of freedom—calling 'sovereignty of the people' the suffrages of electors who can neither inform themselves nor concert their operations, nor, in fact, choose—calling 'vote of taxes' the assent of mute and enslaved assemblies; and while thus robbing the nation of the right of self-government, of the great securities of law, of freedom of thought, of speech, and of the pen—that is, of all the most precious and the most noble conquests of 1789—still daring to assume that mighty name.

I shall pause at the moment when the Revolution appears to me to have nearly accomplished its work and given birth to the modern society of France. That society will then fall under my observation: I shall endeavour to point out in what it resembles the society which preceded it, in what it differs, what we have lost in this immense displacement of our

institutions, what we have gained by it, and, lastly, what may be our future.

A portion of this second work is sketched out, though still unworthy to be offered to the public. Will it be given me to complete it? Who can say? The destiny of men is far more obscure than that of nations.

I hope I have written this book without prejudice, but I do not profess to have written it without passion. No Frenchman should speak of his country and think of this time unmoved. I acknowledge that in studying the old society of France in each of its parts I have never entirely lost sight of the society of more recent times. I have sought not only to discover the disease of which the patient died, but also the means by which life might have been preserved. I have imitated that medical analysis which seeks in each expiring organ to catch the laws of life. My object has been to draw a picture strictly accurate, and at the same time instructive. Whenever I have met amongst our progenitors with any of those masculine virtues which we most want and which we least possess—such as a true spirit of independence, a taste for great things, faith in ourselves and in a cause—I have placed them in relief: so, too, when I have found in the laws, the opinions, and the manners of that time traces of some of those vices which after having consumed the former society of France still infest us, I have carefully brought them to the light, in order that, seeing the evil they have done us, it might better be understood what evils they may still engender. To accomplish this object I confess I have not feared to wound either persons, or classes, or opinions, or recollections of the

past, however worthy of respect they may be. I have done so often with regret, but always without remorse. May those whom I have thus perhaps offended forgive me in consideration of the honest and disinterested object which I pursue.

Many will perhaps accuse me of showing in this book a very unseasonable love of freedom—a thing for which it is said that no one any longer cares in France.

I shall only beg those who may address to me this reproach to consider that this is no recent inclination of my mind. More than twenty years ago, speaking of another community, I wrote almost textually the following observations.

Amidst the darkness of the future three truths may be clearly discovered. The first is, that all the men of our time are impelled by an unknown force which they may hope to regulate and to check, but not to conquer—a force which sometimes gently moves them, sometimes hurries them along, to the destruction of aristocracy. The second is, that of all the communities in the world those which will always be least able permanently to escape from absolute government are precisely the communities in which aristocracy has ceased to exist, and can never exist again. Lastly, the third is, that despotism nowhere produces more pernicious effects than in these same communities, for more than any other form of government despotism favours the growth of all the vices to which such societies are specially liable, and thus throws an additional weight on that side to which, by their natural inclination, they were already prone.

Men in such countries, being no longer connected together by any ties of caste, of class, of corporation, of family, are but too easily inclined to think of nothing but their private interests, ever too ready to consider themselves only, and to sink into the narrow precincts of self, in which all public virtue is extinguished. Despotism, instead of combating this tendency, renders it irresistible, for it deprives its subjects of every common passion, of every mutual want, of all necessity of combining together, of all occasions of acting together. It immures them in private life: they already tended to separation; despotism isolates them: they were already chilled in their mutual regard; despotism reduces them to ice.

In such societies, in which nothing is stable, every man is incessantly stimulated by the fear of falling and by eagerness to rise; and as money, while it has become the principal mark by which men are classed and distinguished, has acquired an extraordinary mobility, passing without cessation from hand to hand, transforming the condition of persons, raising or lowering that of families, there is scarcely a man who is not compelled to make desperate and continual efforts to retain or to acquire it. The desire to be rich at any cost, the love of business, the passion of lucre, the pursuit of comfort and of material pleasures, are therefore in such communities the prevalent passions. They are easily diffused through all classes, they penetrate even to those classes which had hitherto been most free from them, and would soon enervate and degrade them all, if nothing checked their influence. But it is of the very essence of despotism to favour and extend that influence. These

debilitating passions assist its work: they divert and engross the imaginations of men away from public affairs, and cause them to tremble at the bare idea of a revolution. Despotism alone can lend them the secrecy and the shade which put cupidity at its ease, and enable men to make dishonourable gains whilst they brave dishonour. Without despotic government such passions would be strong: with it they are sovereign.

Freedom alone, on the contrary, can effectually counteract in communities of this kind the vices which are natural to them, and restrain them on the declivity along which they glide. For freedom alone can withdraw the members of such a community from the isolation in which the very independence of their condition places them by compelling them to act together. Freedom alone can warm and unite them day by day by the necessity of mutual agreement, of mutual persuasion, and mutual complaisance in the transaction of their common affairs. Freedom alone can tear them from the worship of money, and the petty squabbles of their private interests, to remind them and make them feel that they have a Country above them and about them. Freedom alone can sometimes supersede the love of comfort by more energetic and more exalted passions—can supply ambition with larger objects than the acquisition of riches—can create the light which enables us to see and to judge the vices and the virtues of mankind.

Democratic communities which are not free may be rich, refined, adorned, magnificent, powerful by the weight of their uniform mass; they may contain many private merits—good fathers of families, honest traders, estimable men of

property; nay, many good Christians will be found there, for their country is not of this world, and the glory of their faith is to produce such men amidst the greatest depravity of manners and under the worst government. The Roman Empire in its extreme decay was full of such men. But that which, I am confident, will never be found in such societies is a great citizen, or, above all, a great people; nay, I do not hesitate to affirm that the common level of the heart and the intellect will never cease to sink as long as equality of conditions and despotic power are combined there.

Thus I thought and thus I wrote twenty years ago. I confess that since that time nothing has occurred in the world to induce me to think or to write otherwise. Having expressed the good opinion I had of Freedom at a time when Freedom was in favour, I may be allowed to persist in that opinion though she be forsaken.

Let it also be considered that even in this I am less at variance with most of my antagonists than perhaps they themselves suppose. Where is the man who, by nature, should have so mean a soul as to prefer dependence on the caprices of one of his fellow-creatures to obedience to laws which he has himself contributed to establish, provided that his nation appear to him to possess the virtues necessary to use freedom aright? There is no such man. Despots themselves do not deny the excellence of freedom, but they wish to keep it all to themselves, and maintain that all other men are utterly unworthy of it. Thus it is not on the opinion which may be entertained of freedom that this difference subsists, but on the greater or the less esteem we may have for mankind; and it may be said with strict accuracy that the

taste a man may show for absolute government bears an exact ratio to the contempt he may profess for his countrymen. I pause before I can be converted to that opinion.

I may add, I think, without undue pretensions, that the volume now published is the product of very extended labours. Sometimes a short chapter has cost me more than a year of researches. I might have surcharged my pages with notes, but I have preferred to insert them in a limited number at the end of the volume, with a reference to the pages of the text to which they relate. In these notes the reader will find some illustrations and proofs of what I have advanced. I could largely augment the quantity of them if this book should appear to require it.

STATE OF SOCIETY IN FRANCE
BEFORE THE
REVOLUTION OF 1789.



BOOK I.

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CHAPTER I.

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OPPOSING JUDGMENTS PASSED ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AT ITS ORIGIN.

NOTHING is better fitted to give a lesson in modesty to philosophers and statesmen than the history of the French Revolution; for never were there events more important, longer in ripening, more fully prepared, or less foreseen.

The great Frederick himself, with all his genius, failed to perceive what was coming, and was almost in contact with the event without seeing it. Nay, more, he even acted in the spirit of the Revolution beforehand, and was in some sort its precursor, and already its agent; yet he did not recognise its approach, and when at length it made its appearance, the new and extraordinary features which were to distinguish its aspect, amidst the countless crowd of human revolutions, still passed unheeded.

The curiosity of all other countries was on the stretch. Everywhere an indistinct conception arose amongst the nations that a new period was at hand, and vague hopes were excited of great changes and reforms; but no one as yet had any suspicion of what the Revolution was really to become. Princes and their ministers lacked even the confused presentiment by which the masses were agitated; they beheld in the Revolution only one of those periodical

disorders to which the constitutions of all nations are subject, and of which the only result is to open fresh paths for the policy of their neighbours. Even when they did chance to express a true opinion on the events before them, they did so unconsciously. Thus the principal sovereigns of Germany assembled at Pillnitz in 1791, proclaimed indeed that the danger which threatened royalty in France was common to all the established powers of Europe, and that all were threatened by the same peril; but in fact they believed nothing of the kind. The secret records of the period prove that they held this language only as a specious pretext to cover their real designs, or at least to colour them in the eyes of the multitude.

As for themselves, they were convinced that the French Revolution was an accident merely local and temporary, which they had only to turn to good account. With this notion they laid plans, made preparations, and contracted secret alliances; they quarrelled among themselves for the division of their anticipated spoils; split into factions, entered into combinations, and were prepared for almost every event, except that which was impending.

The English indeed, taught by their own history and enlightened by the long practice of political freedom, perceived dimly, as through a thick veil, the approaching spectre of a great revolution; but they were unable to distinguish its real shape, and the influence it was so soon to exercise upon the destinies of the world and upon their own was unforeseen. Arthur Young, who travelled over France just as the Revolution was on the point of breaking out, and who regarded it as imminent, so entirely mistook

its real character, that he thought it was a question whether it would not increase existing privileges. 'As for the nobility and clergy,' says he, 'if this Revolution were to make them still more preponderant, I think it would do more harm than good.'

Burke, whose genius was illuminated by the hatred with which the Revolution inspired him from its birth, Burke himself hesitated, for a moment uncertain, at the sight. His first prediction was that France would be enervated, and almost annihilated by it. 'France is, at this time, in a political light, to be considered as expunged out of the system of Europe; whether she could ever appear in it again as a leading power, was not easy to determine; but at present he considered France as not politically existing; and, most assuredly, it would take up much time to restore her to her former active existence. *Gallos quoque in bellis floruisse audivimus*, might possibly be the language of the rising generation.'

The judgment of those on the spot was not less erroneous than that of distant observers. On the eve of the outbreak of the Revolution, men in France had no distinct notion of what it would do. Amidst the numerous instructions to the delegates of the States General I have found but two which manifest some degree of apprehension of the people. The fears expressed all relate to the preponderance likely to be retained by royalty, or the Court, as it was still called. The weakness and the short duration of the States General were a source of anxiety, and fears were entertained that they might be subjected to violence. The nobility were especially agitated by these fears. Several of

their instructions provide, 'The Swiss troops shall take an oath never to bear arms against the citizens, not even in case of riot or revolt.' Only let the States General be free, and all abuses would easily be destroyed; the reform to be made was immense, but easy.

Meanwhile the Revolution pursued its course. By degrees the head of the monster became visible, its strange and terrible aspect was disclosed; after destroying political institutions it abolished civil institutions also; after changing the laws it changed the manners, the customs, and even the language of France; after overthrowing the fabric of government it shook the foundations of society, and rose against the Almighty himself. The Revolution soon overflowed the boundaries of France with a vehemence hitherto unknown, with new tactics, with sanguinary doctrines, with *armed opinions*—to use the words of Pitt—with an inconceivable force which struck down the barriers of empires, shattered the crowns of Europe, trampled on its people, though, strange to say, it won them to its cause; and, as all these things came to pass, the judgment of the world changed. That which at first had seemed to the princes and statesmen of Europe to be one of the accidents common in the life of a nation, now appeared to them an event so unprecedented, so contrary to all that had ever happened in the world, and, at the same time, so widespread, so monstrous, and so incomprehensible, that the human mind was lost in amazement at the spectacle. Some believed that this unknown power, which nothing seemed to foster or to destroy, which no one was able to check, and which could not check itself, must drive all human society to

its final and complete dissolution. Many looked upon it as the visible action of the devil upon earth. 'The French Revolution has a Satanic character,' says M. de Maistre, as early as 1797. Others, on the contrary, perceived in it a beneficent design of Providence to change the face not only of France but of the world, and to create, as it were, a new era of mankind. In many writers of that time may be seen somewhat of the religious terror which Salvian felt at the incursion of the Barbarians. Burke, reverting to his first impressions, exclaimed, 'Deprived of the old government, deprived in a manner of all government, France, fallen as a monarchy, to common speculators, might have appeared more likely to be an object of pity or insult, according to the disposition of the circumjacent powers, than to be the scourge and terror of them all; but out of the tomb of the murdered monarchy in France has arisen a vast, tremendous, unformed spectre, in a far more terrific guise than any which ever yet have overpowered the imagination, and subdued the fortitude of man. Going straight forward to its end unappalled by peril, unchecked by remorse, despising all common maxims and all common means, that hideous phantom overpowered those who could not believe it was possible she could at all exist,' etc.[3]

And was the event really as extraordinary as it appeared to those who lived at the time when it took place? Was it so unprecedented, so utterly subversive, so pregnant with new forms and ideas as they imagined it to be? What was the real meaning, the real character—what have been the permanent effects of this strange and terrible Revolution? What did it, in reality, destroy, and what has it created?

The proper moment for examining and deciding these questions seems now to have arrived, and we are now standing at the precise point whence this vast phenomenon may best be viewed and judged. We are far enough removed from the Revolution to be but slightly touched by the passions which blinded those who brought it about, and we are near enough to it to enter into the spirit which caused these things to happen. Ere long this will have become more difficult; for as all great revolutions, when successful, sweep away the causes which engendered them, their very success serves to render them unintelligible to later generations.

CHAPTER II.

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THE FUNDAMENTAL AND FINAL OBJECT OF THE REVOLUTION WAS NOT, AS HAS BEEN SUPPOSED, THE DESTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AND THE WEAKENING OF POLITICAL POWER.

ONE of the first acts of the French Revolution was to attack the Church; and amongst all the passions born of the Revolution the first to be excited and the last to be allayed were the passions hostile to religion. Even when the enthusiasm for liberty had vanished, and tranquillity had been purchased at the price of servitude, the nation still revolted against religious authority. Napoleon, who had succeeded in subduing the liberal spirit of the French Revolution, made vain efforts to restrain its antichristian spirit; and even in our own time we have seen men who thought to atone for their servility towards the meanest agents of political power by insolence towards God, and who whilst they abandoned all that was most free, most noble, and most lofty in the doctrines of the Revolution, flattered themselves that they still remained true to its spirit by remaining irreligious.

Nevertheless it is easy now to convince ourselves that the war waged against religions was but one incident of this great Revolution, a feature striking indeed but transient in its aspect, a passing result of the ideas, the passions, and special events which preceded and prepared it, and not an integral part of its genius.

The philosophy of the eighteenth century has rightly been looked upon as one of the chief causes of the Revolution, and it is quite true that this philosophy was profoundly irreligious. But we must be careful to observe that it contains two distinct and separable parts.

One of these relates to all the new or newly revived opinions concerning the condition of society, and the principles of civil and political laws, such, for instance, as the natural equality of mankind, and the abolition of all privileges of caste, of class, of profession, which is the consequence of that equality; the sovereignty of the people, the omnipotence of social power, the uniformity of laws. All these doctrines were not only causes of the French Revolution, they were its very substance: of all its effects they are the most fundamental, the most lasting, and the most true, as far as time is concerned.

In the other part of their doctrines the philosophers of the eighteenth century attacked the Church with the utmost fury; they fell foul of her clergy, her hierarchy, her institutions, her dogmas; and, in order more surely to overthrow them, they endeavoured to tear up the very foundations of Christianity. But as this part of the philosophy of the eighteenth century arose out of the very abuses which the Revolution destroyed, it necessarily disappeared together with them, and was as it were buried beneath its own triumph. I will add but one word to make myself more fully understood, as I shall return hereafter to this important subject: it was in the character of a political institution, far more than in that of a religious doctrine, that Christianity had inspired such fierce hatreds; it was not so much