

**DEMOCRACY IN  
FRANCE,  
JANUARY, 1849**

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Democracy in France, January, 1849 by Monsieur Guizot

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**MONSIEUR GUIZOT**

**DEMOCRACY IN  
FRANCE,  
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DEMOCRACY IN FRANCE.

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*THIRD EDITION.*

*M. Guizot*

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**JANUARY, 1849.**

**BY MONSIEUR GUIZOT.**

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( v )

I VENTURE to believe that nothing will be found in the following pages which bears the impress of my personal situation. While events of such magnitude are passing before his eyes, a man who did not forget himself would deserve to be for ever forgotten. I have thought of nothing but the situation of my country. The more I reflect upon that, the more I am convinced that the evil which lies at the root of all her evils, which undermines and destroys her governments and her liberties, her dignity and her happiness, is the evil which I attack;—the idolatry of Democracy.

Whether the accession of M. Louis Napoléon Bonaparte to the Presidency of the Republic will be found an efficacious remedy for this disease, the future will show. What I have said here after the election of M. Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, I should have equally said, without the slightest alteration, if General Cavaignac had been elected. It is not to individuals, but to society itself, that great social truths are addressed.

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# DEMOCRACY IN FRANCE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF THE PREVALENT EVIL?

MIRABEAU, Barnave, Napoleon, and Lafayette, who died at distant and very dissimilar periods, in bed or on the scaffold, in their own country or in exile, all died under the influence of one sentiment—a sentiment of profound melancholy. They thought their hopes deceived, their labours abortive. They were assailed by doubts of the success of their cause, and by misgivings as to the future.

King Louis-Philippe reigned above seventeen years, for more than eleven of which I had the honour to be his minister. If to-morrow it pleased God to summon us into his presence, should we quit this earth very confident in the future destiny and the constitutional order of our country?

Is then the French Revolution destined to give birth only to doubt and deception?—to bury all its triumphs under ruins?

Yes: so long as France shall suffer the true and the false, the upright and the perverse, the practicable and the chimerical, the salutary and the pestilent to be constantly mingled and confounded in her opinions, her institutions, and the government of her affairs, such will be the unfailling and inevitable result.

Until a people which has gone through a great revolution has passed on the principles, the passions, and the doctrines which have led to this revolution, a sentence like that which shall be passed on all human things at the Last Day, "severing the wheat from the tares, and the corn from the straw that shall be cast into the fire," it can never surmount the perils, nor reap the advantages, of the struggle in which it has been engaged.

So long as this judgment is deferred, chaos reigns; and chaos, if prolonged in the midst of a people, would be death.

Chaos is now concealed under one word—Democracy.

This is now the sovereign and universal word which all parties invoke, all seek to appropriate as a talisman.

The Monarchists say, "Our Monarchy is a Democratic Monarchy: therefore it differs essentially