

lution, in the midst of the more pressing problems of national safety and welfare, betook themselves to the solution of the great problem of national education and the instruction of all grades of society. "The Convention," says the historian of public instruction,¹ "affords us the strange and grand spectacle of an assembly, which on the one side seems to have no other mission than to crush in the name of public welfare everything that stands in the way of the triumph of the Republican State, and which can see no other way of attaining this than the most terrible and cruel of tyrannies; and which on the other side devotes itself, with a stoical calm and serenity, forming a surprising contrast to its acts, to the study, the examination, and the discussion of all the problems involved in public instruction, of all the measures conducive to the progress of science. It had the glory of creating institutions, some of which were carried away by the blast of the Revolution, but among which the most important still exist for the great honour of France, and bear proof of the loftiness of her ideas."²

17.
Promoted
by Govern-
ments of
Revolution.

d'histoire naturelle, d'anatomie, d'antiquités, fondés par un certain nombre d'académies et, entre autres, par Dijon, par Rouen, par Bordeaux, par Toulouse, par Montpellier, et dont les professeurs étaient des membres, non rétribués de ces académies. . . . A combien de jeunes talents les académies provinciales n'ont-elles pas donné l'essor, par leurs récompenses solennelles et leurs encouragements? Combien de leurs lauréats ne sont pas devenus des hommes célèbres?" (p. 81, &c.) Besides Bouillier, consult on these matters the several articles, "Académie," "Collège," "École," in the 'Grande Encyclopédie.'

¹ C. Hippeau, 'L'Instruction publique en France pendant la Révolution,' 1^o série, préface, p. xix.

² It appears nowadays a kind of paradox that, as M. Hippeau remarks, in the very year 1793, when "the Convention was labouring with a feverish ardour at the creation of schools of all degrees," this same Convention, on a report of the Committee of Public Instruction, voted on the 8th of August the suppression of all the academies of Paris and the provinces. On this M. Bouillier ('L'Institut et les Académies,' p. 95) remarks: "Bientôt il est vrai, les académies devaient renaître après la chute de la