

nals will draw specie out of the coffers where it is now hoarded."†

On the other hand, Cazalès and Maury showed that the result could only be disastrous. Never, perhaps, did a political prophecy meet with more exact fulfillment in every line than the terrible picture drawn in one of Cazalès' speeches in this debate. Still the current ran stronger and stronger; Petion made a brilliant oration in favor of the report and Necker's influence and experience were gradually worn away.

Mingled with the financial argument was a strong political plea. The National Assembly had determined to confiscate the vast real property of the French Church,—the pious accumulations of fifteen hundred years. There were princely estates in the country, bishop's palaces and conventual buildings in the towns; these formed between one-fourth and one-third of the entire real property of France, and amounted in value to at least two thousand million *livres*. By a few sweeping strokes all this became the property of the nation. Never, apparently, did a government secure a more solid basis for a great financial future.*

There were two special reasons why French statesmen desired speedily to sell these lands. First, a financial reason,—to obtain money to relieve the government. Secondly, a political reason,—to get this land distributed among the thrifty middle-classes, and so commit them to the Revolution and to the government which gave their title.

† *Ibid.*, sitting of April 15, 1790.

* For details of this struggle, see Buchez and Roux, "*Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution Française*," vol. III, p. 364, 365, 404. For the wild utterances of Marat throughout this whole history, see the full set of his "*L'ami du peuple*" in the President White Collection of the Cornell University. For Bergasse's pamphlet and a mass of similar publications, see the same collection. For the effect produced by them see Chaumel, "*Les Français sous la Révolution*," also "De Goncourt, "*La Société Française pendant la Révolution*," &c.,

For the Report referred to, see Lavasseur, "*Histoire des classes ouvrières et de l'industrie en France de 1789 à 1870*," Paris, 1903, vol. I., chap. 6. Lavasseur, (vol. I., p. 120), a very strong conservative in such estimates, sets the total value of church property at two thousand millions; other authorities put it as high as twice that sum. See especially Taine, *liv. II, ch. I.*, who gives the valuation as "about four milliards." Sybel, "*Gesch. der Revolutionszeit*," gives it as two milliards and Briand, "*La séparation*," &c., agrees with him. See, also De Nervo, "*Finances Françaises*," vol. II., p. 236-240; also Allison, *History of Europe*, vol. I.