

St. Aloysius Sr. Sec. School, Cantt Jabalpur

Academic Session 2020-21

STUDY NOTES

Class: IX

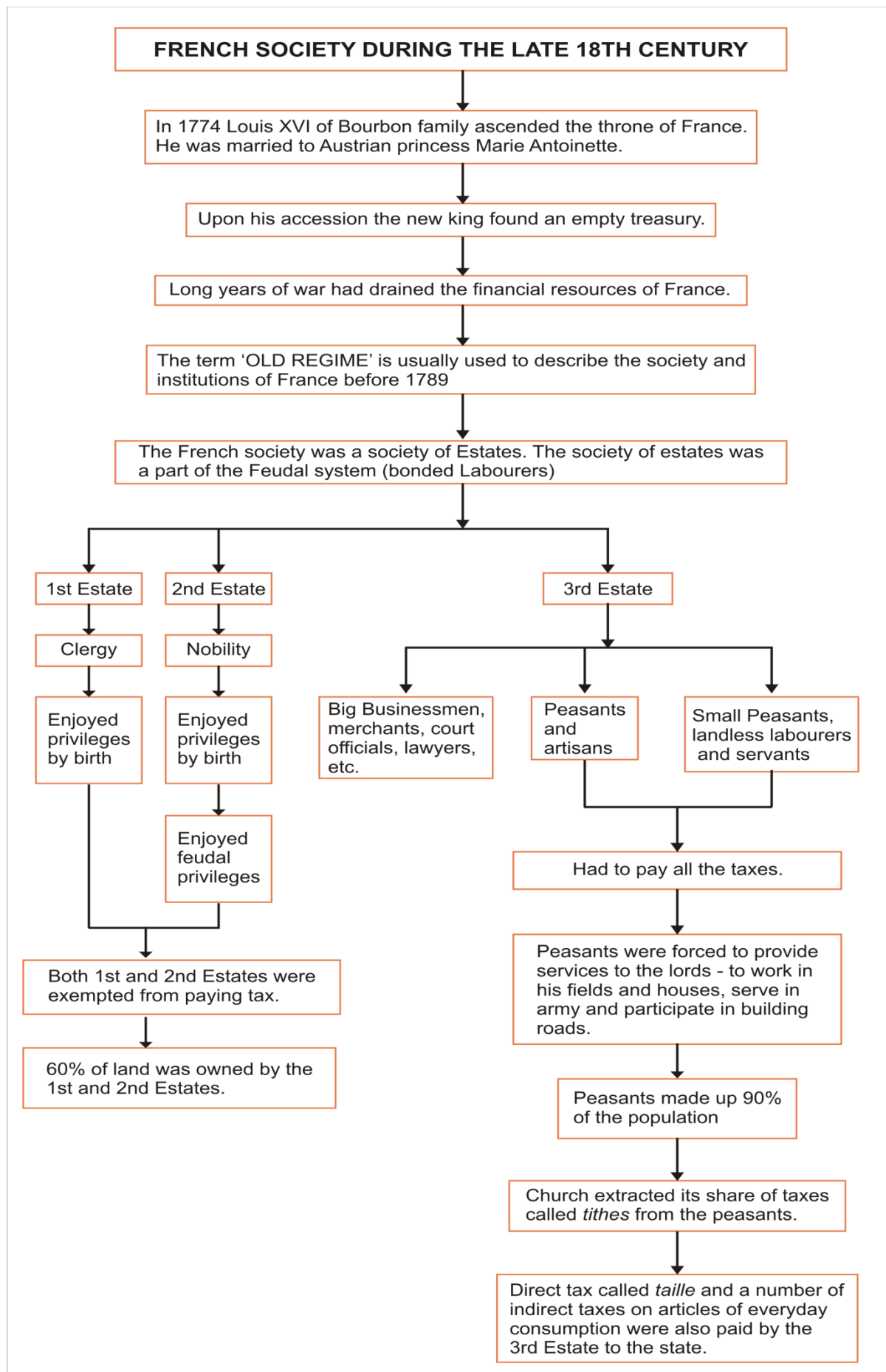
Subject: Social Science

Book: History (NCERT)

Chapter: 1

Title: The French Revolution

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GROWING MIDDLE CLASS

- The 18th century witnessed the emergence of social groups, termed as ‘middle class’.
- They earned their wealth through trade and from manufacturing goods like silk and woollen textiles.
- There were also professionals in this groups like lawyers and administrative officials.
- They all believed in the idea of privileges on merit and not on birth.
- These ideas were based on freedom and equal laws and opportunities for all in a society.
- These ideas were highlighted by philosophers:
 - John Locke in his book Two treatises of Government.
 - Jean Jacques Rousseau in his book The Social contract.
 - Montesquieu in his book The spirit of the laws.

THE OUTBREAK OF A REVOLUTION

- In 1789, Louis XVI called together an assembly of the Estate General to pass proposals for new taxes.
- The 1st and 2nd estates sent 300 representatives each, who were seated in rows facing each other & 600 members of the 3rd estate had to stand at the back.
- Peasants, artisans and women were denied entry to the assembly.
- In the past, Voting was conducted on the notion that each estate, as a whole, had one vote.
- But members of the 3rd estate demanded that each individual should be given a right to vote.
- This was one of the democratic principles by Rousseau, written in his book ‘The social Contract’.
- When their proposal was rejected by the king, the members of the 3rd estate walked out of the assembly in protest.
- The 3rd estate declared themselves as the National Assembly and drafted the constitution for France, which limited the powers of the monarch.
- The price of bread rose rapidly but wages did not keep pace with the rise in price.
- There was an outbreak on the streets, where crowds of angry women stormed into the shops, after spending hours in long queues at the bakery.
- On 14th July 1789 the agitated crowd stormed and destroyed the Bastille (The fortress prison).
- Louis XVI, after facing the revolting subjects, recognised the National Assembly and also accepted that his powers would be checked by the constitution.
- On the night of 4th August 1789, the Assembly passed a decree abolishing the Feudal system of obligations and taxes.

FRANCE BECOMING A REPUBLIC

- (A republic is a form of government where the people elect the government including the head of the government.)
- Even though Louis XVI had signed the constitution, he entered into a secret negotiations with king of Prussia.

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- A war was declared by the National Assembly against Prussia and Austria in April 1792.
- As the constitution provided political rights only to a richer section of society, a large section of the population were convinced that the revolution should continue.
- People started forming political clubs to discuss government policies and plans.
- The most successful of these clubs was of the ‘Jacobins’.
- The members of the Jacobin club belonged mainly to the less prosperous sections of the society including shopkeepers, artisans and workers.
- Their leader was Maximilian Robespierre.
- These Jacobins came to be known as the Sans-Culottes, meaning – ‘Those without knee breeches’.
- In August 1792, the Jacobins stormed inside the palace of Tuileries, and held the King as hostage.
- Later the Assembly voted in imprisonment of the royal family.
- Elections were held, and the newly elected Assembly was known as the ‘Convention’.

THE REIGN OF TERROR (1793-1794)

- The period from 1793 to 1794 in France is known as the reign of terror.
- Maximilian Robespierre: The leader of the Jacobins – followed a policy of severe control and punishment.
- All those whom he considered as his enemies – including his club members and anyone who did not agree to his methods – were arrested, imprisoned and then tried by a revolutionary tribunal.
- If the court found them ‘guilty’, they were ‘guillotined’ (Guillotine is a device consisting of two poles and a blade with which a person is beheaded)
- Laws were introduced in placing maximum ceiling on wages and prices by Robespierre’s government.
- Robespierre pursued his policies so relentlessly that even his supporters began to demand moderation.
- He was convicted by a court in July 1794, arrested and guillotined.

THE DIRECTORY RULES

- After the fall of the Jacobin Government – the wealthier middle class took over the power.
- A new constitution was introduced which denied the voting right to those who did not own property.
- It gave way to two elected legislative councils.
- These then appointed a Directory, and executive made up of five members.
- This provided a safeguard against any one man dominating the power.
- The Directors often clashed with the legislative councils.
- This political instability paved the way for the rise of a military dictator, Napoleon Bonaparte.

THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

- The slave trade began in the 17th century.
- The merchants sailed from the ports of Bordeaux or Nantes to the African coast, where they bought slaves from the local chieftains.
- They were sold to plantation owners.
- The exploitation of slave labour made it possible to meet the growing demands of sugar, coffee and indigo in Europe.
- Bordeaux and Nantes were the major port cities whose economic prosperity was due to the flourishing slave trade.
- Whereas, one of the most revolutionary social reforms of the Jacobins regime was the abolition of slavery in the French colonies.
- After Napoleon came to France, he reinstated slavery.
- It was finally abolished in 1848 in French colonies.

Multiple Choice QUESTIONS:

Q1) The French Revolution was:

- a) against the dictatorial policies of the monarch b) Against the clergy
c) against the society d) none of these

Q2) 18th century French society was divided into:

- a) castes b) four estates
c) three estates d) two estates

Q3) The terms 'Old Regime' is usually used to describe:

- a) the society of France before the French Revolution
b) the reign of king Louis XVI c) None of these

Q4) The French society, before 1789, was divided into three estates, hence, it was called a:

- a) Society of Estates b) The Old Regime
c) Policy of Monarch

Q5) The society of estates was part of the:

- a) Feudal system b) Ryotwari system
c) Zamindari system d) New Revenue system

Q6) Which estates enjoyed privileges by birth?

- a) Clergy b) Nobility
c) The third estate d) both (a) and (b)

Q7) French society in the 18th century was divided into three estates, and only members of the _____ paid taxes.

- a) first estate b) second estate
c) Nobility and clergy d) third estate

Q8) The third estate enjoyed:

- a) Privileges by birth
- b) Feuded privileges
- c) Both (a) and (b)
- d) No privileges

Q9) Which century saw the rise of the middle class?

- a) 14th Century
- b) 15th Century
- c) 18th Century
- d) 19th Century

Q10) Name the tax levied by the Church on the third estate.

- a) Taille
- b) Tithe
- c) Indirect Tax
- d) None of these

Q11) Name the direct tax levied on the third estate.

- a) Taille
- b) Tithe
- c) Custom duty
- d) Livre

NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS:

Q1) Describe the circumstances leading to the outbreak of revolutionary protests in France.

Ans. There were some causes which led to the outbreak of revolutionary protest. They are as follows:

- i) **Privileges based on birth:** There were rich people in the society who received privileges by birth leading to resentment among common people.
- ii) **The war with Britain for an independent America:** Due to this war, there was a high debt on the French monarchy. For the repayment of those debts, many new taxes were imposed on the common people.
- iii) **Concentration of power among the privileged:** There was no equal division of power in the society. The 3rd estate was depended on the 1st and 2nd estate for money.
- iv) **Subsistence Crisis:** There was a demand supply gap of bread due to the increasing population and less production of grain.
- v) **Growing middle class:** A new class emerged due to the increase in overseas trade. This class was wealthy because of its ability to utilise opportunities and not because of birth right. As the people of the middle class were educated and believed in the idea of equal distribution of wealth they began raising their voice to end the privileges on the basis of right of birth.

Q2) Which group of French society benefited from the revolution? Which groups were forced to relinquish power? Which sections of society would have been disappointed with the outcome of the revolution?

Ans. It was the 3rd estate of common people who mainly benefitted from the revolution as they gained equal socio-economic rights and status. Whereas, the Clergy and nobility were forced to surrender powers. Their privileges were taken away. The moderates

who wanted a Constitutional Monarchy were also disappointed because ultimately, Napoleon came into power.

Q3) Describe the legacy of French Revolution for the people of the world during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Ans. There were two most important legacies of the French Revolution

- i) The ideas of democratic rights and liberty with equality and fraternity.
- ii) It was France from which these ideas were spread to the rest of Europe and the rest of the world during the 19th century. These ideas were interpreted and moulded according to the respective needs of the colonised people.
- iii) India's struggle for independence was also inspired by the ideas of the great French philosophers like Montesquieu and Rousseau. It was the French Revolution that spread out the idea of freedom sovereignty.

Q4) Draw up a list of democratic rights we enjoy today and whose origins could be traced to the French Revolution.

Ans. The following fundamental rights given in the Indian constitution can be traced to the French Revolution:

- i) Right to equality
- ii) Right to freedom of speech and expression
- iii) Right to freedom
- iv) Right to assemble and form unions (as long as they are not a threat to national security and peace)

Q5) Would you agree with the view that the message of universal rights was beset with contradictions? Explain.

Ans. The contradiction that follows in the message of universal rights as per the French Constitution of 1791 was women being completely ignored. Women were struggling for equal political rights. All the rights at that time were given to men. Apart from that the presence of huge number of people as passive citizens, without voting rights, was like not putting into practice what you preach. It could also be said that the declaration of universal rights was a good beginning but it left much to be desired. In this universal rights poor were suppressed. Constitution is only available for the rich. Women were completely neglected in decision making.

Q6) How would you explain the rise of Napoleon?

Ans. After the fall of the Jacobin government, the wealthier class came in power. A new constitution was introduced. According to the new constitution, those members of the society who did not own property were not given right to vote. It provided for two elected legislative councils. These elected legislative councils, appointed a Directory which consisted of five members. This was done to safeguard against the possibility of any one man dominating the power. Members of the directory often fought among themselves leading to political instability and chaos. This political instability of the directory paved the way for the rise of a military dictator, Napoleon Bonaparte.

EXTRA QUESTIONS:

Q1) Describe the French division of society.

Ans. The French society was divided into three Estates:

- i) **First Estate:** It comprised of the church and the clergy. They enjoyed certain privileges by birth. They were exempted from paying taxes to the state.
- ii) **Second Estate:** In the second estate, were the nobles and other rich members. They were also exempted from paying taxes. They also enjoyed feudal privileges. These included feudal dues from the peasants.
- iii) **Third Estate:** About 90 percent of the population peasants. They were obliged to work in the fields of their landlords as well as in their houses and also serve in the army. They were paying all direct taxes like 'taille' and a number of indirect taxes were also levied on articles of everyday consumption like salt or tobacco.

Q2) What was the role of the philosophers in the French Revolution?

Ans. Ideas of having a society based on freedom and equal laws and opportunities for all were put forward by the French philosophers.

- iv) **John Locke:** Locke wrote, '*Two Treatises of Government*'. In this book, he criticised the divine and absolute rights of the monarch rulers.
- v) **John Jacques Rousseau:** Rousseau had written his viewpoint in his book, '*The Social Contract*'. He had put forward the idea of formation of a government based on a social contract between people and their representatives.
- vi) **Montesquieu:** His ideas were proposed in his book, '*The Spirit of the Laws*'. According to him there should be a division of power between the three important organs – the legislature, the executive and the judiciary.

Q3) What do you know about the 'Estates General'?

Ans. 'The Estates General' was a political body to which the three estates sent their representatives in France of the Old Regime, the monarch did not have the power to impose taxes to his will alone. Rather he had to call a meeting of the Estates General to pass the proposal for new taxes. However, it was the monarch alone who could decide when to call a meeting of this body.

Q4) Differentiate between Active and Passive Citizens.

Ans. i) **Active Citizens:** Only men above 25 years of age who paid taxes equal to at least 3 days of a labourer's wage were given the status of active citizens. Only they had the right to vote.

ii) **Passive Citizens:** Whereas, the remaining men as well as all the women of France, who were not entitled to vote were called Passive Citizens.

Q3) What was a 'Directory'? Why was it removed from France?

Ans. After the fall of Jacobins, a new Constitution was formed which denied the right to vote to non-propertied men. It provided two elected legislative Councils, who appointed a Directory, an executive made up of five members. However, the directors often clashed with the legislative councils and were finally dismissed. With this,

political instability emerged in France which gave rise to a military dictator, Napoleon Bonaparte.

Q3) How did women suffer in France?

Ans. Most of the women had to work for a living. They worked as laundresses or seamstresses, sold flowers, fruits and vegetables or were employed as domestic servants. They could not get education or job training. Working women had also to take care of their families, that is cook, fetch water, queue up for bread and look after children. Their wages were also lower than men.

Q4) What were the main causes of the French Revolution?

Ans. Causes of the French Revolution:

- i) **Despotic rule of Louis XVI:** He became the ruler of France in 1774. He had drained the financial resources of France in wars. For the cost of his regular extravagant expenses, he increased taxes which were paid by the third estate.
- ii) **Division of French society:** The French society was divided into three estates; first, second and third estates, respectively. Among them, First and Second Estates had 10 percent of the 90 percent was of the third estate, which paid all kinds of direct or indirect taxes. This kind of discrimination led to the revolution by the third estate.
- iii) **Rising prices:** The population of France had increased. This resulted into more demand of food grains. So the price of bread rose rapidly, which a poor could not afford to buy. So the gap between the rich and poor widened.
- iv) **Inspiration of the philosophers:** Philosophers like John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Montesquieu propagated the ideas of having a society where people would enjoy freedom, equal laws and equal opportunities. Their ideas inspired the people of France to realise their dreams.
- v) **Role of middle class:** The 18th century witnessed the emergence of social groups termed as middle class, who earned their wealth through an expanding trade of the manufactured goods, being exported. There were other professionals also like lawyers, administrative officials who were all educated. They believed that no group in society should be privileged by birth.

Q5) Who was Napoleon Bonaparte? Why was he called a 'liberator'?

- Ans.
- i) Napoleon Bonaparte was the Emperor of France in 1804, who reintroduced monarchy in France.
 - ii) He conquered his neighbouring countries and created kingdoms, where he placed his own family members.
 - iii) He was called a moderniser of Europe. He introduced many laws such as the protection of private property and a uniform system of weights and measures provided by the decimal system.
 - iv) Initially, many people believed that Napoleon was a liberator who would bring freedom for the people.
 - v) But soon his army was viewed as an invading force. So, he was finally defeated in 1815, in the famous 'Battle of Waterloo'.

Q6) What does subsistence crisis mean? What led to subsistence crisis in France?

Ans. Subsistence Crisis is an extreme situation where the basic means of livelihood are endangered. The demand from foodgrains was increased as population had increased in France from 23 million to 28 million. Production of grains could not keep pace with the demand. So the price of bread, which was the staple diet of the majority, rose rapidly. Most workers were employed as labourers in workshops whose owner fixed their wages. But wages did not keep pace with the rise in prices. So the gap between the poor and the rich widened. Things became worse whenever drought or hail reduced the harvest. This led to subsistence crisis, something that occurred frequently in France during the Old Regime.

Q7) What did the women do to voice their interests?

Ans. To raise the voice of their interests :

- i) Women started their own political clubs and newspapers.
- ii) About **sixty women's club** came up in which the *Society of Revolutionary and Republican Women* was most famous.
- iii) They demanded right to vote, to be selected to the Assembly and to hold political office.

Q8) What was the women's main demand and how did the revolutionary government help them to improve their lives?

Ans. They demanded for political rights/right to vote. The revolutionary government introduced the following laws:

- i) Schooling was made compulsory.
- ii) Girls father could no longer force them into marriage against their will.
- iii) Marriage was made into contract entered into freely and registered under civil law. Divorce was made legal.
- iv) Women could be trained for jobs and business.

Q9) 'A growing middle class in France during the 18th century envisages an end to privileges'. Analyse the statement.

OR

Who constituted the middle class in the French society in the 18th century? Explain the conditions that helped them in bringing change in social and economic order in France.

Ans. The prosperous social groups within the Third Estate like traders, merchants, manufacturers and professionals were termed as middle class. 18th century witnessed emergence of middle class.

Circumstances:

- i) Their prosperity and access to education and new ideas.
- ii) Having enough means and programme to bring about the change.
- iii) They belief that no social group should be privileged by birth.
- iv) Idea of philosophers (Rousseau, Montesquieu) helped in envisaging a society based on freedom and equality.
- v) Expansion of trade.
- vi) American war of independence.

Q10) What is the Reign of Terror? Why is it so called?

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Ans. The period from 1793 to 1794 is referred to as the Reign of Terror because Maximilian Robespierre of the Jacobin Club followed a policy of severe control and punishment.

- i) All those who were considered as enemies of the Republic were arrested, tried by the revolutionary tribunal and guillotined if found guilty.
- ii) Maximum ceiling was placed on wages and prices. Meat and bread were rationed.
- iii) Peasants were forced to transport their grains to the nearby cities & sell it at prices fixed by the Government.
- iv) The use of more expensive white flour was forbidden. All citizens had to eat bread made of whole wheat.
- v) All French men and women were addressed as citizen and citizenne.
- vi) Churches were shut down and their buildings converted into barracks. Robespierre pursued his policies so strictly that finally, he was convicted by a court in July 1794 and sent to the guillotine.

Q11) Analyse the impact of French Revolution over Europe and other parts of the world.

Ans. The French Revolution was a landmark event:

- i) The ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity inspired the people in Europe to fight for their rights in other countries.
- ii) It sowed the seed of Nationalism and led to the establishment of Nation-States in Europe.
- iii) The Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen inspired the colonies to fight for their rights and independence.
- iv) It also gave the idea of democracy to other countries along with the concept that power should be based on the will of the people.
- v) The concept of separation of powers into the Legislative, the executive and the Judiciary was adopted the world to form governments all over.

Q12) Explain the features of the constitution of 1791, framed by National Assembly in France.

Ans. The features of the constitution of 1791, framed by National Assembly in France are as follows:

- i) It declared France a constitutional monarchy.
- ii) Powers of the king separated and assigned to the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.
- iii) Law to be made by National Assembly.
- iv) Only men above 25 year of age, who paid taxes equal to at least 3 days of labourer's wage, were entitled to vote.