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SECULARIZATION OF THE CHURCH PROPERTY OF WESTERN GEORGIA BY THE RUSSIAN RULE (1870s-80s)

In the 1870s-80s, the state property in Western Georgia significantly grew as a result of the transference of church estates and incomes to the treasury. Back in the 1810s, the Russian government attempted to do it, but the government had to postpone these activities. At last, by the law of November 13, 1869, it was declared the property of the treasury, and was included into the state property.

The 1852 Decree should have also embraced Imereti and Guria, but, in Western Georgia, the registration of the church property was not completed, and, hence, its realization was practically impossible. Therefore, the Emperor ordered an ad hoc commission (1858-1862), aimed at registering of the state property in Kutaisi Province to start with the registration of church estates and incomes.

The Decree concerning the transference of the church property of Imereti and Guria to the treasury was signed by Emperor Alexander II on August 4, 1871. As for the property of Samegrelo Diocese, it was transferred to the treasury by the Decree of May 21, 1880.

With these activities, the Russian government aimed at making the Georgian Church economically dependent upon the state, and at including it in the confines of its colonial policy.