



Centre for Distance and Online
Education, Punjabi University, Patiala.

Class: M.A.I (History)

Semester : I

PAPER: II HISTORY OF THE WORLD (1500-1815)

Unit:I

Medium: English

Lesson No.

- 1.1 Renaissance
- 1.2 Reformation
- 1.3 Industrial Revolution : Causes and Effect
- 1.4 American Revolution and Causes its Significance
- 1.5 Causes of the French Revolution - Political, Social, Religious and Economic
- 1.6 Causes of the French Revolution - The Role of the French Philosophers

Department website www.pbidde.org

Syllabus

M.A. PART-I SEMESTER-IPAPER-II (OPTION-I) HISTORY OF THE WORLD (1500 - 1815)

Time Allowed: 3 hours

External Examination : 75

Internal Assessment : 25

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PAPER-SETTERS

1. The Syllabus prescribed should be strictly adhered to.
The paper-setters should keep in view the topics specified in each paper and not the title of the paper.
2. The question paper will consist of three sections: A,B and C Sections A and B will have four questions each from the respective sections of the syllabus and will carry 12 marks each. Section C will consist of 9 short-answer type questions which will cover the entire syllabus and will carry 27 marks in all. There being no internal choice in this section, each short-answer type questions will carry 3 marks. Candidates are required to attempt two questions each from the Sections A and B and the entire Section C. The candidates are required to give answer of each short-type question in 50 words i.e. in 7-10 lines.
3. If there is a question on notes, the choice offered in such question should at least be fifty percent.
4. The wording of the questions should be simple and easily understandable by an average student. There should be no vagueness.
5. The number of questions based upon quotations should not exceed two in a question paper.
6. The general standard of the questions should cater to the different intellectual levels - average, above average and below average.
7. Each paper is of 75 marks and three hours duration and 25 marks are of internal assessment.

NOTE: The paper setter should keep in view the topics specified in each paper and not the title of the paper.

Candidates are required to attempt two questions each from the sections A and B and the entire Section C

SECTION-A

1. Renaissance and Reformation
2. Industrial Revolution : causes and effects
3. American Revolution : causes and significance.
4. French Revolution of 1789 : causes and effects,

SECTION-B

5. National Assembly : aims and estimate of its achievements
6. Napoleon Bonaparte: Reforms, Continental System
7. Napoleonic Wars: Peninsular war and Moscow Campaign
8. Vienna Congress : aims, principles and work.

SECTION -C

Nine short answer questions will be set from the entire syllabus. The candidate will attempt all the 9 questions. These questions will be based upon terms, concepts and institutions within the purview of the syllabus. The answer of these questions will be of 50 words i.e. 7-10 lines and will carry 3 marks each total marks for these questions will be 27.

Essential Books:

1	Leo Gershoy	French Revolution and Napoleon (Reprint) Allahabad, 1977
2	Geroge Lefebvre	The French Revolution from its origin to 1793 (London, 1981)
3	George, Rude	The Revolutionary Europe, 1783-1815
4	J.M. Thompson	Napoleon Bonaparte- His Rise and Fall.
5	C.D.M. Ketelbey	A History of Modern Times
6	John A, Garraty & Peter Gay	A History of the World 1789-1957 Vol-III (Harper and Row, London, 1972)
7	S.A. Pakeman	The Modern World 1789-1957
8	H.C. Jain & K.C. Mathur	World History 1500-1950
9	ਏ.ਜੈਡ.ਮਾਨਫਰੇਦ	ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ, ਜਿਲਦ ਪਹਿਲੀ, ਦਿੱਲੀ, 1976
10	ਐਚ.ਜੀ.ਵੈਲਜ	ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦਾ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ
11	ਜੇ.ਈ.ਸਵੈਨ	ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਸੱਭਿਅਤਾ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ
12	A.C. Arora	Advanced History of Modern World 1500-1900

REFERENCE BOOKS

1	H.G. Wells	A Short History of the World (Penguin, 1967)
2	J.M. Roberts	The Hutchison History of the World (Hutchison, Bombay, 1976)
3	Robert Ergang and Donald G. Rohr	Europe Since Waterloo
4	Robert Ergang	Europe From Renaissance to Waterloo
5	Garraty & Gay.P	The University History of the World
6	HA.L. Fisher	A History of Europe ,Vol.I
7.	H.A. Davies	An Outline History of the World
8	J.E. Swain	A History of World Civilization
9	Will Durant	The Reformation
10	Wood Ward	History of United States
11	Lucas Henry S.	The Renaissance and Reformation
12	Arvind Sinha	Europe in Transition- From feudalism to industrialisation

RENAISSANCE

- 1.1.1 Objectives
- 1.1.2 Introduction
- 1.1.3 The Italian Renaissance
- 1.1.4 French Renaissance
- 1.1.5 German Renaissance
- 1.1.6 Spanish Renaissance
- 1.1.7 English Renaissance
- 1.1.8 Inventions and Science
- 1.1.9 Rise of Capitalism
- 1.1.10 Keywords
- 1.1.11 Long Questions
- 1.1.12 Short Questions
- 1.1.13 Suggested Readings

1.1.1 Objectives

In this lesson you will study beginning of Renaissance and its spread. It began from Italy and spread all over the Europe. You will also study essential features of Renaissance.

1.1.2 Introduction

Renaissance or the ‘revival of learning’ originated in Italy in the 14th century. It flourished in the 15th and 16th century and continued even during a part of the 17th century. In a way, broadly speaking, it marked the end of the ‘Middle ages’ and beginning of the Modern times.’

The term Renaissance is derived from the French word ‘renaister’ which means to be born again. It was reawakening of the European world to the value of ideals which had inspired and were embodied in art, architecture and literature in classical world of Greece and Rome.

Ramsay Muir was unhappy with the choice of the term Renaissance to describe the movement. He writes “In one way the name Renaissance is unforunate; it suggests that there had been intellectual sterility or deadness during the Middle ages, which is far indeed from being, the truth. It is not right to suppose that the great change in men’s thinking and in their way of looking at the world came suddenly.

The year 1453 is regarded roughly as the beginning of the Renaissance

because it was in this year that the Greek scholars in large numbers were driven out from Constantinople when the city came to be occupied by the Turks. They took refuge in Italy because of its proximity and being a well established trade centre. But many historians refute the idea of the revival of Greek learning from 1453 onwards. They claim that the Greek classics were being studied even earlier also. The fact is that the beginning of the Renaissance can be traced as far back as the middle ages. A great change in men's outlook has already been coming about. The enthusiasm for the learning of the Greek literature after 1453 only gave special direction to the movement. This proves that men were prepared by earlier developments to appreciate the Greek classics and the ideals they stood for.

The essential feature of the Renaissance was the wide diffusion of a new way of looking at the world and at life, which was a contrast and a sharp reaction against the conceptions that had dominated the best men in middle ages. The Greek view of life attracted the Italians so much that they went mad about it. Princes lavished their treasures on the purchase of Greek manuscripts. A knowledge of Greek was the sure passport to honour and even to high office. The contrast between the thinking of the men of the middle ages and the modern times was sharp and clear. During the middle ages men had believed that life on earth was punishment for the 'original sin'. They thought of the world as a place of struggle where rigorous discipline had to be observed in preparation for the world to come. Whereas the Greek thought that life in this world to be a place of wonder and beauty which ought to be explored and enjoyed. The preachers of the middle ages had regarded the world as a snare of souls and man's body as the source of evils and temptations, which lead to destruction, unless they are kept in subjugation. The Greeks thought the human body as noble, beautiful and a marvel, which ought to be cultivated by a cultured mind. Regarding truth, the middle ages preached that, truth was something that was communicated to men by God through his church and regarded man's reason as very imperfect instrument. The church, so to say, was the guardian of the truth. Greeks on the other hand, thought truth to be attained through face and fearless expression on man's reason. For the best mind of middle ages the highest duty of man was to conquer his passions and resign to the will of the God. He was to obey the rules set forth by God's church. Whereas the Greeks had thought that man should develop qualities of mind and health in a harmonious way to enjoy the beauty of the world and should seek the truth.

The revival of learning has often been identified with humanism, several humanists, namely Vittorino da Feltre and Guarino of Verona, figured most prominently. They founded model humanist schools. It was a small group of people, which completely broke away from the christian moorings.

The new learning brought about tremendous creations of art. In Italy first, later, though more faintly in other countries of the west. In every field the stimulus was felt. The reformation in religion would be looked upon as the outcome

of the renaissance.

To highlight the course of Renaissance in the countries which came under the influence would be necessary to mention the life and work of the celebrated persons in the spheres of art, architecture, literature and science. Most of them were multifaceted personalities who could claim achievements in fields more than one.

1.1.3 The Italian Renaissance

Between 1340-1540 the cities of Italy produced an output of art, scholarship and literature such as the world had not seen since the glory of ancient Athens. During the times of Lorenzo di Medici, the master of Florence, art and letters advanced with great strides. In his capital Arno (known for Dantch Petrurh and Baccaccio) there was a constellation of illustrious men who made Florence, the artistic and intellectual capital of Europe. It included the names of Michael, Angelo, Donatello, Fillippo Lippi, Botticelli, the great artist. The names of Machieveli, a known publicist (authour of the Prince) Guicciardini, a historian, Ficino a politician and a Latin scholar, Leonardo-da-Vinci and Lorenzo himself were well known in their fields.

In Florence, for instance, painters and sculptors belonged to the same corporation as the doctors and *apothecuries*, and were often instructed by Jewellers. The classical example of the omnipotence was Michael Angelo and Leonardo-da-Vinci who fall in the same class.

The first one, (Michael Angelo) was known for his status and Frescoes, but as a man he was equally well known for his skill in fortification. This was proved when he defended Florence during a famous seige. Leonardo was not only a painter of 'Mona Lisa' and the 'Last Supper', but an architect, mechanic and a man of science as well. Albert, an athlete and a horseman wrote poetry, built churches, painted pictures and wrote comedies also. He is known for developing some modern discoveries in optics. The greatest of the culminating renaissance was Raphael (1483-1520). His famous works are Cistine Chapel, Madonna, Madonna in the chair and Vatican frescoes.

The Florentino, Donatello, contemporary and friend of Brunclleshi, was the pioneer in this field. Although he fell in love with antiquity and closely studied classical remains, yet he had the good sense to regard nature as a more vital source of inspiration than the ancient models. He initiated a school of sculpture, which owed freshness of its products to its closeness of nature. Donatello thus became the herald of the new secular influences.

A love for personal glory was a feature of the age. Rich men commissioned painters for portraits and statues to give them immortality in art. The days of anonymous architecture of Gothic Cathedrals built by generation after generation of nameless craftsman were past. The Italian style of architecture spread out of Europe. New palaces and villas were designed for grandeur, pleasure and comforts. The architecture of feaf (castles), which had sprang as a result of barbarian invasions was on the decline.

In the field of literature, the main feature was of drifting away from

scholastic and theological themes. They threw ethics and religion to the wind. There was a great influx of manuscripts into Rome, Lorenzo Valla based his bold treatise on scientific and historical criticism. He criticised the Pope. It was life of leisure and freedom for scholars. People got attracted to read about ordinary people instead of kings or captains. They preferred to read biographies of intellectuals. The first Italian writer who used his native language, was Dante, a citizen of Florence. His book 'Divine Comedy' was a masterpiece of world literature. He was followed by Petrarch who was a poet and a humanist and represented middle ages. Totally committed to Renaissance was Boccaccio, author of hundred agitated and often licentious tales familiar under the name of the 'Decameron'.

The rulers of Rome (Popes) could hardly remain indifferent to the changes going around them. The Popes of Renaissance continued building, restoring, decorating and collecting. The accession of Leo X from the Medici home, when the papal patronage to the arts soared to a climax was a rich period in Florence.

Two books destined to exert an enduring influence in the sphere of politics and Education were bequeathed to Europe by the Italian Renaissance. The first was "Il Principe", 'The Prince' written by Machiavelli in 1513 and the second was 'Castiglione's Courtier'. The theme of the Prince was that in power politics and political means however, unscrupulous are justifiable if they strengthen the power of the state. Such measures of force or fraud might be used unashamedly to enable the prince to secure and extend his conquests. The theme of the Castiglione's book was that a courtier must be trained in the school not only of the court but of the camp. He must be a man at arms and a sportsman, an athlete and an intellectual, who should be well versed in Greek and Italian.

The Italian renaissance remained limited to Latin Christianity and meant nothing either to the Sultan of Turkey or the Tsar of Russia.

1.1.4 French Renaissance

The most splendid period in the artistic history of France coincided with the long and painful convalescence of France from the havoc of the hundred years war against England. During these anxious years there was no French patronage of Italian genius and little sign of native artistic talent. It was not until the French invasion of Italy in 1494 that the French became aware of the splendours of the Italian scene and got prepared for a reception of the Italian renaissance. Louis XI was a lucky king. His main rival the Charles, Bold* of Burgundy died without a male heir in 1477 and provinces like Burgundy, Picardy and Artois became part of the French Empire. Revic, the last king of Aix had the similar fate and the areas of Main and Anjou and the imperial freedom of Province became part of Royal France in 1480. Louis brought in a new type of statesmanship. He was a business king cast in a mould of Italian Renaissance. Francis I succeeded to the French throne in 1515. He was a young, brilliant and artistic man. He was devoid of all scruples. Henry VIII of England felt towards him an intense personal jealousy, which

influenced his policy. Francis celebrated his accession to throne by a raid on Italy where he reconquered the duchy of Milan. During his reign the art of the Flamish painters and sculptors spread westward through Burgundy into France and there existed profound influence. As Flanders influenced France, so did France through the Burgundian dukes influenced Flanders. From the Flemish the Italians borrowed the use of oil in painting.

1.1.5 German Renaissance

The later half of the 15th century is marked in the history of Germany by a notable enlargement of culture, learning and education. The extension of German

John Gutenberg in the art of typography brought revolution in the intellectual activities of the mankind. Printing from metal types reached Italy in 1465, Paris in 1470, London in 1477, Stockholm in 1483 and Madrid in 1499. It is estimated that by the close of the century around nine million printed books were in existence. Printing was a German Art. Initially it brought more interest in the religious books but the 16th century, the printed material acted as an instrument, of liberating critical movements of thought. The essential virtue of Germany and cathedrals, developed the musical instrument. 'The organ' wrought carvers and sculptors in stone, wood and bronze and by their engravings, paintings and metal work secured a brilliant reputation. The drawings and engravings of Albert Durer were monumental. Nuremberg was the Florence of Germany in the 15th century. With

A Title of Charles of Burgundy. the coming of the Reformation an ill wind began to blow upon the sculptors and painters. It turned the minds of the German people to religion and social anarchy.

Luther's hymns pointed a new way. The Germans gave themselves to music and throughout the 18th century they led Europe in this art. German painters, early influenced by the Italians, also came under Flemish influence and turned to naturalism and technical mastery while taste of their Patrons directed them to realistic portraiture. Holbein was not only known for his portraits but also as a designer of jewellery, glass windows and embroidery.

1.1.6 Spanish Renaissance

Iberian art of the period centred around the figure of EL Greco, who studied in Venice before he came to paint in Catholic Spain. The Spanish had lived through a half-century of religious wars and persecutions when to a great relief. EL Greco flourished there.

The drama in Spanish literature achieved a distinct place. Over two thousand works of the prolific Spanish dramatist Lopez de Vega were free from Italian influences. Both his comedies and religious plays depicted the everyday life of his countrymen and appealed strongly to all classes of people. Cervante's satires not always gentle, are directed at the pageant of and Spanish life in his day. On Quixote is the story of a quaint and woeful knight who pines for the old days before the introduction of the gunpowder and the decline of chivalry. His Squire Sancho Panche is a prosaic peasant.

1.1.7 English Renaissance

William Caxton, a London trader brought over a press from Netherlands, in 1476, and set it up at Westminster and his service to English thought were immense. He not only printed Latin classics but also did a long series of translations of notable works into English in 1488. Thomas Linacre (1410-1524) came from Italy fired with enthusiasm for learning of the Greeks, and on the basis of Greek learning started in England the scientific study of medicine. Grocyn, his friend, made, Oxford, the centre of Greek studies.

The English renaissance was far less brilliant in its artistic achievement. The only great painter working in England was the German Holbein. One of the earliest writings in England in the 16th century were of Thomas Moore, a young noble lawyer. 'Utopia' his classic was an attempt at criticism of political and social ills and a glowing picture of an imaginary world. It was a dream of the future. He hated religious bitterness and persecution. He felt that religion ought to be the teacher of mercy and love. Moore was a personal friend of Henry VIII-essentially a man of renaissance.

Renaissance in General

The brilliant achievements of the age had their dark shadows too. The gravest among them was a relaxation of moral standards, a sort of moral anarchy. This was the natural result of the sudden casting off the old restraints and the old ideas of conduct, of the worship of human individuality and of the claim that every man had a right to develop his own personality unrestrained. According to Cellini, a typical Italian Renaissance artist, no apology was necessary for vices in which one was led by his own self-will. Henry VIII and Cromwell were typical examples of Renaissance.

The disregard of moral restraints and the passionate egoism found most unhappy expression in the sphere of politics. The record of petty Italian Princes were full of incredible instances of ruthless non-moral cunning and cruelty in pursuit of power. Rulers regarded themselves as totally exempted from morality. The ideal Princes has been projected very well in Machiavelli's Prince-a classic of the age.

The whole theme of the book was based on the idea that morality has no bearing on Politics. Even Kings like Francis II of France and Ferdinand of Aragon were examples of new morality. Infact, the age of absolute monarchy had set in. Monarchs were refusing to admit the right of any one to control their actions.

In politics, renaissance was a reaction against the ideas of the middle ages. The belief in the middle ages held the theory that there must be some power in the world charged with the duty of enforcing the moral law of God upon all princes. This was theoretically used by the Popes. But the rulers of renaissance repudiated it.

The ambition of every active sovereign of the Renaissance period (Spain, France and England) was to strengthen in every way the authority centered about his person. The king confirmed his position as court of final appeal and

head of the national system of justice. He multiplied the offices who looked after the royal interests in the Provinces. He increased his income by subsidies from the towns and with his enlarged means. As a result of this political evolution, before the close of the Renaissance the kings of Spain, France and England had acquired a formidable structure. They had acquired a centralized organisation undreamt of by their medieval predecessors.

After the reformation, the popes were in no position to impose their authority on the rulers.

1.1.8 Inventions & Science

During the middle ages people moved mostly for performing pilgrimages and for a lesser extent for purpose of trade. With the coming of Renaissance the immobility ended. However mobility operated so languidly that its effects made themselves felt only gradually.

The invention of gunpowder in the 4th century was another memorable event. It was gradually put to use in warfare; it did not greatly affect the military tactics till the 15th century. Thus, before gun powder could revolutionize warfare, it was necessary to provide muskets and artillery. The appearance of these weapons set important political and social changes in motion. The moated castle and the valour of the knight was replaced by the musket-wielder. The loss of the feudal lord or Baron was the gain of the overlord, i.e. the king. Feudalism declined and gave birth to many absolute monarchies.

There was a sea change in Geographical extent of the world. The Greek merchants and Sea Captains had added enlarged man's knowledge of the new lands and countries. The Spanish and Portuguese discoveries of the earth demanded the enlargement and redrawing of maps. This brought to the forefront the importance of Cartographers for preparing new maps showing new details in them.

In the middle ages, the traders, especially of Italy, began to undertake the sea voyages which ended in their becoming thoroughly acquainted with the whole of the mediterranean basin. They hesitated to advance beyond the great middle sea, which was their immediate domain. In these circumstances the exploration of the Atlantic Ocean left to the lot of the States bordering the Atlantic Ocean. The lead was taken by Portugal.

In the first half of the 15th century a brother of the king of Portugal, Prince Henry known as 'Henry the Navigator' took up the idea of exploring the nearby coast of Africa. Its inhabitants were Mohammadans and pirates who had aversion for the Portuguese. The first reward of the Prince's efforts was the discovery of the isles of Azores and Madeira. The Prince died in 1406 but the explorations had penetrated almost to the Equator. By 1486 Bartholomew Diaz succeeded in rounding the southernmost point of the African continent and named it Cape of Good Hope. In 1498, after rounding the Cape of Good Hope, Vasco Da Gama sailed into the Indian ocean and touched Calicut in India. With this voyage, the Portuguese were able to acquire spices, silks and other

luxuries of the orient.

The discoveries inaugurated by Prince Henry; the Navigator, aroused the emulations of all the maritime world of Europe. Columbus, a native of Genoa, secured the financial support of Queen Isabella of Castile and sailed from Palos, a port of Western Spain. Instead of touching Indies his goal, he landed in the Bahamas Islands and touched the Islands of Cuba and Haiti. He thought he had touched Indies. That is why he called the people of these Islands as Indians. On his forth voyage he sighted the American mainland. These startling discoveries did not remain passion for Spaniards and Portuguese alone. In 1497, John Cahot, a Venetian in the court of Henry VIII of England, reached Cape Breton Island off the Coast of North America. These new discoveries were promptly utilized for the purposes of trade. But Portugal and Spain out of religious Zeal undertook to Christianize the new regions and to settle them with colonists from the home lands. They thus committed themselves to the policy of europianization of the newly discovered lands.

One of the most successfully cultivated field of the Greek was Astronomy. The Ptolematic system was challenged in the Renaissance period. The challenge came from a citizen of Poland named 'Copernicus' (1473-1513). He propounded a revised astronomy with two outstanding propositions. The first was that not the earth but the Sun was the centre of the Planetary system. This was known as his 'Heliocentric Theory'. The second preposition was that instead of being stationary, the Earth not only revolved around the sun in course of a year but it also revolved once ever twenty four hours about its own axis.

These new researches of Copernicus were not known to people immediately. He had a fear that he would be punished by church as a heretic since the Ptolemaic theory had the acceptance of the church. He hesitated to challenge the old established concept. It was only in the year of his death i.e., 1543, that this new theory was made known to the people of Europe. Later on German scientist, Kepler, also supported his point of view.

1.1.9 Rise of Capitalism

Renaissance was also responsible for fostering a new form of economic organisation. Earlier the economic life had centred around the manor which was the economic counterpart of feudalism. Later the 'gild' system grew up more particularly in the manors which had grown into the towns. Each guild enjoyed monopoly for its particular product within the limits of the town government (feudal lord, the Church or the King). The guilds assumed the obligations to furnish the consumers proper articles at a fair price. Owing to the prevailing Christian system of Ethics and the system of elimination of middle man, the guild system was finding it difficult to cope with the new commercial situation of enlarged markets. The development of export trade also made guilds ineffective. Although the foreign trade involved lot of risks yet the profits were correspondingly large. Larger Markets required more output. More output needed capital. This gave rise to new class in society 'the merchants'

who provided capital, either by own or by borrowing it. He towered head and shoulders over the rest of the community. Later, the merchants organised themselves into companies, raised larger amount of funds to increase profit. The risks could also be spread over a larger number to subscribers of capital. Risks particularly in foreign trade were very great.

The early trading companies, without exception almost, did the business of Banking. The Medici Bank of the Italy by the second half of the 15th century had operated a branch established in every important centre of Europe. On the strength of its money power, the family gradually became a part of the Florence Government and finally the Medici family emerged as the ruler of the city and later became the Dukes of Tuscany ruling over a stretch of territory.

Though capitalism originated in the export trade, it was not long before it invaded and overwhelmed the inherited guild economy. The exporter with connections in every market and commanding ample resources could buy the raw material much more cheaply than the local guilds. Thus, the export merchants brought the guilds under their control. The decline of the guilds signified an economic revolution which was bound to grow on the socialists guilds entirely from the scene by establishing a competitive capitalist order of the society. This was a momentous development as it harmonized with all the other forces abroad in the Renaissance.

1.1.10 Keywords

1. Greek Scholars
2. Sculptors
3. Manuscripts
4. Florence
5. Gunpowder

1.1.11 Long Questions

1. Define Renaissance. What were its impacts on European culture?
2. What were the causes of Renaissance?
3. Discuss impact of Renaissance on art and literature.

1.1.12 Short Questions

Write Short Notes on:

1. Mona Lisa
2. Michael Angelo
3. Petrarch
4. The Prince

1.1.13 Suggested Readings

1. Cheyney, E.P. : *The dawn of New Era*, New York, 1936.
2. Grant, A.J. : *History of Europe*, 1494-1610, London 1938.
3. Hudson, W.H. : *The Story of Renaissance*, New York, 1920.
4. Lucas, H.S. : *The Renaissance and Reformation*, New York, 1934.
5. Schevil, F.A. : *History of Europe*, New York, 1946.
6. Muir, R. : *A Short History of the British Commonwealth*, London, 1961.

REFORMATION

- 1.2.1 Objectives
- 1.2.2 Introduction
- 1.2.3 Causes of Reformation
- 1.2.4 Sale of Indulgences
- 1.2.5 Lutheran Movement
- 1.2.6 Reform Movement in Switzerland
- 1.2.7 Calvinism
- 1.2.8 Reformation in England
- 1.2.9 The Huguenots in France
- 1.2.10 Keywords
- 1.2.11 Long Questions
- 1.2.12 Short Questions
- 1.2.13 Suggested Readings

1.2.1 Objectives

In this lesson you will study how religious movements were directed in Europe in 16th century. You will go through Lutheran Movement. You will also study the contribution of various reformers in connection with this movement. The protests were against Catholics.

1.2.2 Introduction

The Reformation was the 16th century religious movement directed to the rejection or reform through modification of much of the doctrines or practices of the Roman Catholic Church of Rome. It led ultimately to the establishment of the reformed or Protestant churches of central North Western Europe.

Many evils crept in the principles and practices of the Roman Catholic Church through the course of centuries of its existence. These had been questioned by intelligent and pious persons from time to time but without success. The Church had grown more and more venal and corrupt. The clergy had become more and more worldly. Learning and piety were rare among them. Sale of church offices had acquired scandalous proportions. The sale of pardons to the sinners even long dead by the church to fill the coffers of Pope was widely criticised and ridiculed. The practice and claiming 'the benefit of clergy' by which a member of the clerical order could escape trial in King's Court was still in vogue at least in the case of the high officials of the Church.

The doctrine of 'Papal Supremacy' was an irritant and much resented by the kings who were growing powerful.

The middle ages were so thoroughly dominated by the Church that its head, Pope, was able to proclaim the theory that since all power came from God and he himself God's Earthly Vicar, all government civil as well as ecclesiastical right was vested in his person. Although the doctrine of papal supremacy never enjoyed general acceptance yet no European monarch made efforts to assert his independence.

Donald Sach said, "a revolution does not arise without provocations and a wide spread reaction to them". In the case of reformation, the feeling of revolt on the surface against the Roman Catholic Church in Western Europe had been simmering for long. People like Valla, Erasmus and Von Hutten had exposed the vulnerable points of the Church, and the ground for a change to take place.

1.2.3 Causes of Reformation

During Renaissance powerful monarchies developed in France, Spain and England. They undertook to challenge the papal authority exercised within boundaries.

In each stance, they scored successes. In France, King Charles VII issued in 1438 a royal ordinance known as 'Pragmatic sanction' by which the French King got the right of nominating French Bishops and Abbots in his kingdom. In Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella in 1482, also acquired the right of nominating Bishops and forbade all appeals from the religious courts of Spain to Rome. In England also through various measures since the mid fourteenth century, the English clerical appeals were not taken to Rome. But the act of Praemunire in the reign of Richard II, any guilty of doing so could be prosecuted. These monarchies helped to bring about new attitudes. Many nobles, lowly soldiers and middle class patriots who followed their country's fortunes through numerous wars began to think that their kings were as much entitled to their loyalty as was their Church.

In addition to this the merchant, the banker, the Sea Captain on the Joint stock holder who now had a vested interest in the growth of the overseas empires could not help feeling greater sympathy with their kings than with the Church. Thus, whether they wished to strengthen the king or to weaken him, various groups in society had begun to question the place of the Church in the political structure.

The demand for reform was not, however, confined to any particular section, it was widespread for various reasons. It was Church as an institution that was criticised. Some of the Church ceremonies and rituals struck their critics as becoming more and more formal and empty of content and inspiration. Many people, especially the humanists, felt that Church was not keeping pace with the intellectual development. Middle classes felt that many Churchmen were much behind the times. Both kings and townmen regarded with envy the steady stream of 'Peter', 'pence', tithes, annates, and other religious taxes and the payments for confirmations' dispensations, marriages, penances and other religious gifts that swelled the coffers of the Church. The lowly placed peasantry especially in Germany, had the impression that Church

supports the oppression on them by siding with the feudal lords.

It was felt that the universal, unified and dominant Church was an anarchonisa in a world turning towards sovereign nations, cultural diversity and religious pluralism. The spirit of the middle ages was one of a single faith, resistance to innovation and devotion to traditional institutions like the Church, the guild and the feudal order. The conflict was inevitable. The individual became less fearless of innovation. He was ready to listen to searching questions even in the religious sphere. The public mind recoiled from the discipline of the past. Old limitations upon thought and learning fell away. The layman could now read for himself, he could learn Greek and even Hebrew. He could reach his God without the intermediacy of a priest.

Those who were formented by doubts were clergymen themselves. They not only strengthened the forces favouring change but also revealed internal weakness among the forces resisting change. The church had been able in the past to weather storms and protests led by heretics like John Wycliff (1320-1384) and John Huss (1373-1414). Now, however, it was not only facing a stronger opposition from without but it was also weaker within. The revolt began in Germany led by a German clergyman, Martin Luther.

Martin Luther was born on Nov. 10, 1483, in a village of Thuangia at the foot of the Harz Mountain. His family was of peasant origin. He had his early education in his village and later on was sent to the university of 'Erfut'. In his youth, he had accepted unquestionably the doctrines and practices of the Church. He finally became a monk. He was diligent in the observance of the Church's teachings. When the Elector of Saxony in 1508 established a university at Wittenberg he was appointed professor of the theology on the recommendations of the Vicar General. In 1512, he visited Rome and felt deeply disturbed with the wickedness prevailing there.

1.2.4 Sale of Indulgences

The unpremeditated revolt of Martin Luther was a protest against the sale of indulgences to tragic money for the completion of St. Peter's Church Rome. In 1517, Tetzal, a dominican frair appeared in Saxony for their sale. An indulgence was a ecclesiastical promise of remission of the whole or part of the penalty that he must undergo in purgatory on account of its sins. Rightly or wrongly, the Germans had come to suspect that indulgence were a financial device to minister the scandalous luxury of the Roman Court. Luther's revolt against Tetzal was not against the indulgence but against his fraudulently telling people that his certificate would permit not only the penalty but the sin itself. Even the Prince did not approve of so much money being sent out of the country. But none of them ventured to incur the anger of the Pope by forbidding his agent.

In 1517, Luther gave notice of his intention to protest against the indulgence. He nailed on the Church door a paper containing ninety-five statements on the subject including assertions that indulgence bought and sold were valueless, because the penalties of sin were not be evaded by the payment

of money. Pardon of sin was only to be obtained by repentance and faith in God. This act of Luther had a tremendous outcome. His thesis sounded an antipapal note. The soil was germane to the seed as an antipapal sentiment.

The immediate effect of the Luther's action was that the sale of indulgence fell low. Though Leo X, the Pope, initially considered Luther's protest as a squabble among monks, yet dangerous dimensions were realized later on. A Papal bull (order) was ordered against Luther. He was declared heretic and given two months to recant or to be excommunicated. Luther met the challenge with a dramatic counter blast in 1520. He consigned the Papal Bull to the flames amid the applauding audience of Wittenburg. The breach with the Pope was complete. He described the Pope as anti-Christ. Choosing sides became a test for the German People.

Diet of Worms - 1520

In 1520 Charles V, the emperor of Germany, while touring the low countries summoned Luther and the Diet in the City of Worms on the Rhine. The Young king was well aware that a large section of the German princes and people either secretly or openly are Luther's supporters. To condemn him unheard might bring on civil war. A public trial was ordered. To the questions, "would he recant the heresies" the king asked? Luther replied, My conscience is taken captive by God's Word, and I neither can nor will revoke anything seeing. Seeing that it is not safe or right to act against conscience. God help me. Amen". He was allowed to depart because a safe conduct had been promised to him. But his friends kidnapped him and placed him safely in one of the castles of his protector, the Elector of Saxony at Wartburg. On May 6, 1521, King Charles published the 'Edict of Worms' which pronounced the ban of the empire against the heretic and declared him an outlaw. King Charles at that stage never wanted to annoy the Pope Leo X as he wanted his help in his designs against France and the reconquest of Milan. The King remained away from Germany for a decade and the people of Germany regarded Luther as a messenger straight from heaven-hostile decree remained a dead letter.

1.2.5 Lutheran Movement

The Luther movement spread among all ranks of people. Many of the German Princes responded to Luther's direct appeal. As soon as a Prince went over to the new faith, his first act would be to appropriate the monastic and other ecclesiastical property, thereby greatly increasing his revenues and adding to his importance. The allurements of huge big Church lands to the Princes was determining factor in their conversion.

Reforms

The changes carried through reforms belonged more particularly to the realms of doctrine and worship. On the monasteries being seized by the state, the monks and nuns resumed their civil condition and in many instances married. Luther himself set an example by marrying Catherine Von Bora (1525), a former Nun. Many medieval practices which fell under the head of 'works' were formally condemned and abandoned. Outstanding among them were

pilgrimages to holy shrines, adoration of the virgin and the saints and of course indulgencies.

A new religious series in Germany was adopted. The Pope and the ecclesiastical hierarchy had no place in the reformed faith. Control of the Church was within the hands of the Princes. The sacred practices were reduced from seven to three- baptism, marriage and communion.

King Charles held a meeting of the Reichstag (German Parliament) at Speyer. In it after hot discussions he conceded to Princes and free cities the right to choose their own faith. It was a qualified recognition of the new Lutheran Church. Three years later, i.e. 1529 Charles had reconciled with the Pope and he convened a meeting of the Reichstag at Speyer and revoked the concession of 1526. Luthernism was thus again outlawed. It was now mainly apparent that the decade of Liberty enjoyed by the Lutherans had stiffened their resolution. At the risk of incurring the emperor's displeasure they drew up a document resolution wherein they took precedence over their duty to their earthly overlord. Because of this protest, the followers of Luthernism tended to subordinate the Church to the local rulers.

Turkish Invasion

Just a religious war seemed unavoidable the Turks had built up a huge empire after taking over Constantinople (1453). They were making efforts to win West Europe upto Danube and by 1529 had appeared near Vienna. But the tough resistance given by the natives of Austria repulsed their attack. After two years Sultan Solyman attacked Vienna but the whole of German people spontaneously acted against them and the King Charles prudently decided to have a truce with Lutheran Church. The united faith of Germany headed by Charles defeated Turks.

By 1545, Charles had triumphed over all his obstacles, and Pope III accepting the inevitable convened a council at the city of Trent. But, was too into, protestants had completely broken with their past were no longer to go back to the Roman Church, Charles resolved to settle the issue in the battlefield. But just before the hostilities had started, Luther died in 1546. Some years after their leader's death, the protestants found themselves at war with Charles, but in 1555 shortly before the emperor's abdication, it was agreed that the religion of every German State should be settled by its Prince. Thus the empire came to be almost equally divided, Catholic in the South and Protestants in the North.

1.2.6 Reform Movement in Switzerland

Almost simultaneously with the Lutheran revolt in Germany, a Swiss reformer named Lelrich Zwingli inaugurated in the town of Zurich a movement that was parallel to the movement in many ways. Zwingli was a cleric. He criticised the Pope and the abuses of the Church and ended up by breaking away from Rome in theology and in organisation. Zwingli delivered a concept of salvation by faith similar to that of Luther. He differed from the catholics and on the ceremony of "communion". While catholics taught that the holy bread and

wine actually became blood and body of the Jesus. In Switzerland, the republican ideals and cantonal machinery already prevailing in politics were adopted by Zwingli to the organisation of his Church. While operating under the civil authorities, the Zwinglian Church in each locality was self-governing. He reverted to the medieval Christian idea of Church and the state united in a single religion. Zwingli denounced fasting in lent, the celibacy of clergy, monastic vows, the use of Latin in the Church services and the doctrine of the real presence. By 1529, six of the thirteen cantons and some few towns in Southern Germany were captured for Zwinglian reform.

The attempt known as the 'Marburg Colloguy' to bring the two protestant movements together against the common catholic force was unsuccessful. They were able to agree upon most matters but not on the nature of the communion. As a result Zwingli's movements retained its influence in Switzerland but never became deeply rooted elsewhere. Civil war eventually broke out between Zurich and the neighbouring catholic cantons and Zwingli attending the Zurich forces as Chaplain, was killed in the battle. Zwingli's adherents were eventually absorbed in the more powerful calvinist movement.

1.2.7 Calvinism

John Calvin was born in France in 1509. He was intended for the Priesthood. Suspected of heresy, he left France and lived for a time at Basel, where he produced a book called "The Institutes". In it he set forth his ideas of Christianity and Christian

Church. In 1536, he was invited to live at Geneva a small independent city of Switzerland. There he was able to put his ideas into force. He proved to be so strict with the Genevans that he was exiled in 1538. But disorder broke out in his absence. He was asked to return in 1541. He virtually ruled the city till his death i.e. 1564.

His system was very severe. Every citizen compelled to belong to the church of Geneva and to obey its rules. The lines of the people were strictly regulated even the cut and colour and material of their clothes being prescribed. Many positives were forbidden. Few religious ceremonies were permitted, places of worship were made as plain as possible. Calvin persecuted and severely punished those who disagreed with his system and his doctrine in this respect imitating the Practice of the Roman Church. The theaters were closed and taverns were closely watched. Violators, were banished.

Efforts were made to unite together the Lutherians, Zwinglis and Calvinists. The followers of Zwingli acquiesced (accepted) and united with the calvinists to establish a single Protestant church in Switzerland and Calvin accepted the Augsburg confession. But after Luther's death, the Lutherians rejected all compromise on his interpretation of communion and so perpetuated the division.

Puritans

Had his influence been limited to Geneva he would have been hardly worthy of mention. But Geneva was open to reformers who were compelled to

fly from persecution in other countries. Some men became Calvinist upon coming to Geneva and when it was possible for them to return to their native land they spread Calvin's views. Many Englishmen fled to Geneva in the days of Queen Mary Todor. When Elizabeth came to the throne they came back and formed a Calvinistic group known as Puritans. They were also to be found in other countries like France, Netherlands, Scotland, Holy Roman Empire and later on the North America. Calvin's influence on the world was far greater than that of Luther, whose doctrine scarcely spread outside the empire, except into the Scandinavian Peninsula and Denmark.

1.2.8 Reformation in England

The Christian church had existed in England since the later part of the 6th century. The church was co-extensive with the nation. The king of England was the head of the nation as well as the head of the church.

In the year 1213, however, king John who was engaged in a bitter wordy duel with the church and submitted objectly. He accepted the Pope's Vassal. For more than three centuries the Popes were the masters of the English church. It was only in the time of Henry VIII that the papal authority was abolished.

Henry VIII who came to the throne of England in 1509 was an accomplished specimen of a young Renaissance prince. Soon after he married his brother Arthur's widow, Catherine of Aragon, who was six years senior in age. A dispensation from Pope Julius II had sanctioned this union with a widow. Catherine bore him no male heir to the throne and only a sickly daughter, Mary survived the infancy. Meanwhile Henry VIII developed fancy for another woman Annie Boylen.

In the early part of his reign, Henry VIII and little sympathy for the Reformation. He was deeply interested in theology. He even wrote a treatise in 1521 in refutation to further leading to the Pope bestowing on him the title of 'defender of faith'. He was a champion of the papal camp. During the period of Henry VIII, Lutherism was however, not unknown to England. It was often discussed in circles of nobles and the clergies at that time. Luther's writings and his sect frequently formed the subject of an exchange of views. But interest in it was only academic.

The new commercial class (Business Class) had also begun to challenge the credentials of the old, wealthy and domineering church. They grudged the privileges and envied the passions of the priests. They were indignant that the clergy should be immune from the criminal jurisdiction of law courts and the layman should be subject to the criminal jurisdiction of the church. These complaints were passionately ventilated in the Parliament in 1515.

The reformation in England was inflamed by widespread social bitterness. There were certain things which the English people could not stand. Over and excessive taxation was one, war with Netherlands which would ruin the wool trade was another. The times were of great economic disturbances, poor were becoming poorer and the rich richer. Debate on religion however was not

too much concern to them as yet. The conversion of farm land into meadow for grazing sheep was throwing people out of employment and causing great distress. These social discounts never alarmed the king of the possibility of an organised uprising.

The incident that precipitated the break with Rome grew out of the private ambitions of Henry VIII. He wanted Cardinal Woolsey his Chancellor confidant in 1527 to ask Pope element VII to annual his marriage to Catherine of Spain. He could do it on the plea that the marriage with widow of his brother was sinful from the beginning that Pope's special dispensation could not legitimise it. He wanted the Pope to cancel his predecessor's dispensation and render the marriage null and void. The pontiff hesitated to comply, partly from conscientious scruples, but largely because he did not dare offend the powerful Charles I who was head of the Spanish house. He stood by his aunt Cathrine, the British Queen. The Pope would examine and not pronounce. In 1529 Pope sent Cardinal Campeggio to England to form with Cardinal Woolsey the legaline court and ascertain the facts. The cardinals were instructed to delay and then the cases were suddenly transferred to Rome. King Henry got furious with this action of the Pope. He showed his displeasure in arresting Cardinal Woolsey and stripping him off his powers. Henry resolved to repudiate the Pope and make the English church subordinate to the king. An assembly of the English clergy was convened in 1513, which passed a decree announcing Henry VIII to be the head of the English church. In 1532, parliament was convened (it had not been called for the last 14 years) and the act of Annates was passed. This forbade the payment to Rome of the first 'fruits'¹, which was the chief source of revenue to the Pope. When the Pope did not budge in 1533, the ban was put on for putting any religious case in the court of the Pope. John Cranmmer was made the Archbishop of the Canterbury, who three months later, pronounced Henry VIII divorce with Catherine of Arragon in his court. Henry married Anne Boylen and made her the queen in 1533.

Pope excommunicated² Henry VIII. But Henry was prepared for this. In 1534 the British Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy by which the last trace of connection with Rome were removed.

The English Church was thus made subordinate to the king. Sir Thomas More, the humanist opposed the King's actions. He was convicted of treason and was executed. The King abolished the monasteries. In 1539, Parliament formally approved the liquidation of the monasteries. By that time Anne Boylen had been beheaded for unfaithfulness to Henry. Her daughter Elizabeth had been declared illegitimate and the King married again Jane Seymore.

Anglican Church

Henry did not go beyond these essential political moves. All the main tenets of the catholic doctrine were reaffirmed in the six articles passed by the Parliament. These were neither Catholic nor Protestant and yet partook of both the creeds. A general revision of the service book was ordered and the litany sanctioned in 1545. The 'great Bible' was already by royal order placed in

the churches and made accessible to all. It must be clearly understood that Henry did not become a Protestant. He had been brought up in Catholic faith and held on to it the end of his life. No change in the religion was made, only the break up with Rome was there. This hardly affected the commoner. Henry died in 1547 and was succeeded by Edward VI. The Church as established by law in England, was Catholic in doctrine but Protestant in government.

1.2.9 The Huguenots in France

In every country where reformation took place it was closely associated with politics. In France, the reformation was of a different nature. The Catholic Church of France was not regarded as hostile and anti-national institution. The relations of the French King and the Pope were very cordial. In France the movement was against the king, who since 1516 had controlled the state as well as the church. The concordat³ of 1516 had been disastrous. It gave the king the right of appointment of Bishops, abbots and other patronage in the religious matters. This act corrupted the hierarchy. The king started appointing people of his choice and even appointed foreigners to Bishopries. They never saw their dioceses (church). Some abbacies were given to youthful people, who spent their revenues in debentures and pleasure making. The discipline of the church as a whole became lax. Drunkenness and concubinage abounded. Morality was very low. The need for reform was evident and insistent.

1. The first fruit meant the offerings of the Church of the first year were given to the Pope of Rome out of reverence for the appointment in the Church.
2. It meant that Pope put off Henry VIII from the Communication with the Church.
3. Concordat is an agreement between the Pope and the King regarding religious methods.

The efforts of Jacques Lefevre and his pupil Guillame Briconnet initiated a practical agitation for reform of the church from within. However, Calvinism also had its moorings in France. Its system of theology, worship and government appealed strongly to the French mind. But what commended it most was its militant republicanism. It was the 'creed of rebels'. After 1536, the political movement became very powerful and hence a menace both to catholicism and the monarchy. The French Calvinists were commonly known as 'Huguenots' or Associates. Their growth seriously alarmed both Francis I and his successor of all sorts. Burning became frequent but brought no relief.

It is stated that between 1550-59 no fewer than two thousand Huguenots churches were founded. The breakaway schism came to be well organised. They flourished due to their diligence. While France suffered by their departure, other countries became seats of new crafts because of their skills.

1.2.10 Keywords

1. Tithes
2. Religious Taxes
3. Rituals

Long Questions

1. What were the causes of the Reformation?
2. What was the impact of the Reformation?

Short Questions

1. Martin Luther
2. John Calvin
3. Sale of Indulgences

Suggested Readings

1. F. Sechevill : A History of Europe. (London 1948).
2. L. Gotrsckalk D. Laco. : The Rise of Modern Europe (Bombay, 1962 id, Ed.)
3. F.H.Carter, R.A.F.Mears : A History of Britain (Delhi, 1977)
4. J.Clapham : A Concise Economic History of Britain(Cambridge, 1951)
5. G.W.Southgate : A Text Book of Modern English History London, 1960)

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION : CAUSES AND EFFECTS

- 1.3.1 Objectives
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- 1.3.3 The Guild System
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1.3.1 Objectives

In this lesson you will study the Guild System and the Putting Out System. Industrial Revolution started in England. You will also study causes and effects of Industrial Revolution and industry in France and Germany.

1.3.2 Introduction

Prior to the Industrial Revolution which took place in England in the second half of the eighteenth and early decades of nineteenth century, the industries in almost all the important countries of Europe developed under three economic systems, the guild system, the putting out system and the central workshop or factory system. In France, Germany and Austria-Hungary, the Governments under the inspiration of mercantilistic thinking tried to develop industries in their countries by pursuing policies of starting and operating industries on their own account. This may be described as a fourth and a separate economic system.

1.3.3 The Guild System

During the middle ages, certain villages, enjoying the advantages of being either a seaport or a favourable position on a river, or presence of a monastery, cathedral or a manor house (the seats of a feudal lord) or for attracted more people to settle there. They had great security for pursuit of trade and crafts. But though these places came to be called towns, they were essentially over

grown villages and continued to owe allegiance to a feudal lord, king, church or a noble and paid feudal dues.

The merchants were the first to organise themselves into what came to be called merchant guilds. Their main aim to form themselves into corporate bodies was to regulate trade and to make the feudal lords to forge their feudal rights in return for money. The towns came to manage their own affairs under elected mayors and councils.

Craft guilds of separate occupations came later than the merchant guilds. In the beginning the craft guilds had both master-craftsman and workers as their members. But subsequently, the gulf between master-craftsmen and journeymen widened and the later come to organise themselves into "Journeymen Guilds". The chief grievance was that journeymen were not being permitted to set up as independent master-craftsmen and most of them had to remain journeymen all their life.

The ideal of the guilds was not only to ensure workmanship of high quality to yield a fair living but also to enforce a just price for the output. The idea of a justice thus made the guilds not only to protect the interests of the craftsmen but also of the consumers. Exemplary punishments were awarded to craftsmen for bad work and dishonest practice. In these days economic, social and religious life was intertwined.

The guilds also served as mutual assistance societies and made provision for look after the sick and aged of their craft. They also laid down standards of training. A person to be enrolled as master-craftsman, had to serve a period of apprenticeship (generally seven years), remained as a journeyman till he produced some masterpiece and allowed to become a master-craftsman and set up work on his own account.

The craft guilds also provided some common facilities like bleaching places, dyeing houses and fulling mills in woolen textile industry. The guilds secured trade marks which indicated the origin of the goods and guarantee their quality. The trade marks of the culfers of Sheffield (England) and Solingen (Germany) were well known all over Europe.

The handicraft economy under the guilds was predominantly based on direct producer-consumer relations. But the handicraft wholesale societies were also unknown. The building societies undertook construction of cathedrals, places of the nobility and hospitals.

The guild system reached its climax in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Then a long period of decay set in. The guilds came to be closed bodies, dominated by cliques and factions. They abused their powers and there was mounting antagonism to them. The rising power of the state also imposed restrictions on them. Their rights and duties were codified in England under the Tudors, in France, Austria and the German states in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At times, the states interfered in regulating guild affairs in fixing wages, prices etc. on a national basis.

The guilds, instead of being useful to industry, came to be looked up as a

hindrance to future progress. They resisted innovation. Their disappearance became necessary as an essential condition for industrial advancement. where they continued, they arrested the national's industrial progress. One of the reasons why England sole a march in industrial progress was the early decay of the guild system. In Germany, Austria and Spain guilds continued to exist side by side with mechanized industry well in to the nineteenth century. This gave birth to many new problems which led to middle class movements to secure legislative support for the new industrial order.

1.3.4 The Putting Out-System or the Merchant Capitalist

While the guild system was still flourishing another economic system made its appearance in industry. The merchant-capitalist made his appearance on the scene. He would buy the raw material in big lot and put out small portion of it to the craftsman to be turned into finished product. The craftsmen continued to work in their own homes and with their own tools, but they neither owned the raw material nor the finished product. The finished product belonged to the capitalist who made arrangements for its marketing either within or outside the country.

The merchant capitalist, in time, started supplying either the tools themselves or advanced the means to craftsmen to buy them. He also started rendering advice and guidance to the workers. The system probably originated in the Italian textile industries. The system did not remain confined to textiles wool, silk and later cotton industries. It gradually came to be applied in mining the iron industries, book printing and the paper industries.

The merchant capitalist came to occupy the centre of the stage. He set the producer in motion, supplying fixed and working capital. For instance, in the British woolen industries, the merchant-capitalist known as the clothier would buy wool pay for the spinning, weaving, milling, dyeing, shearing, finishing, etc. He was the master of the manufacture from first to the last and employed a large number of workers carrying on different tasks involved in the process of manufacturing cloth.

The transition from the guild system to the putting out system was gradual. It came to cover almost all the important industries. If there were merchants capitalist in the wool industry in Lyons (France) Woolen industry in Yorkshire (England) had also come to be similarly organised. The best example is afforded by the Fugger family in Germany. The oldest known Fugger, a weaver, settled in Augsburg in about 1380. His grandson, Jakob Fugger, was 'banker', wholesaler of copper, silver and other minerals, collector of papal revenues, financier of the crown of Spain and many other kings and Princes.

There were several variations of the putting out system. They ranged from simple financier as a mining where the capitalist advanced money to the mines and took care of the sales, to financing of the industry at very state, to financing stage as in the case of wool in yorkshire (England). The system offered opportunities for horizontal and vertical combinations. It had shortcomings and major evils on both sides for the merchant capital as well as craftsmen. The

merchant had to watch closely so that the worker did not get drunk. For the worker, the system meant loss of economic slavery. "The sweating' system of ill fame originated in the putting-out system.

The putting out system was tolerable as long as the worker worked in his own home and there were personal contracts between the employer and the worker. But the system became obvious when the relationship became impersonal. It was, however, responsible for introducing division of labour into multifarious operation. But its chief merit was that it allowed the worker to work in his own home in the midst of the kith and kin. He could work when he liked and rest when bored or tired. The discipline of the factory and 'wage slaving' was set you at a distance.

1.3.5 The Central Workshop

Even before the industrial revolution, scale enterprise was not altogether unknown, John Winchomb the biggest English cloth manufacturer of the sixteenth century, employed in his factories 200 weavers, each with an assistant, 200 women carders, 200 girl spinners, 150 child sorters, 50 shearers, 40 dyers in the dyeing house and 20 walkers in the walding mill. there were also examples of large scale manufacturers in the eighteenth century France. The Austerian Imperial Wool Factory in Line employed more than 25, 300 persons most of them home wokers, but not less than 100 worked in the manufactory itself. Large scale units were also to be found in the sugar industry, breweries, malt distilleries, soap factories and early blast furnaces producing raw iron. Building enterprises undertook the construction of Palaces of Fountain-Bleau in France and San-Souci near Potsdam in Prussia, Ships, Coaches and luxury furniture were also produced in big establishments.

The employers were sometimes forced to make the workers to come and work in the factories or workshops set up for them because under the domestic system or the putting -out system, the workers could not be relied upon the supply of the finished good in time. The work schedule could be more closely enforced in a central workshop, Moreover, there could not be substitution of bad good raw materials which was done by dishonest craftsmen. Spoiling of raw materials could also be checked. More rigorous standards of output could be prescribed.

The large scale enterprises required much capital. Workers had to be skilled in the jobs with lot of experience. The workers who had been accustomed to work in their homes under the domestic system were generally reluctant to go and work in these early factories unless compelled by dire necessity or tempting incentives. But such establishments were an exception and not a rule till industrial revolution.

State Encouragement of Industries

Colbet, the famous Finance Minister of France under Louis XIV, was greatly influenced by mercantilistic thinking which was the ruling economic philosophy of his time. He set before himself the task to promote within France itself the production of wealth by all the means in the power of the Government.

He raised high tariff walls to prevent the foreigner from under selling the home producer in any of the commodities necessary to the national well being. He encouraged manufactures of all sorts. Under his care a large number of French products acquired world celebrity. He established Government exploitation of states, forests, breeding stables for horses, encouraged the formation of a navy by undertaking construction of ships.

But too much of minute regulations inspired by mercantilistic ideology ultimately strangled the new enterprises and 'Calbertism' lay in shamble seven before its champion had closed his eyes.

The attempt of Emperor Joseph II of Austria after 1783 to promote industries in the empire following the lead given by Colbert in France, also came to a dismal end for Government in those days ill equipped administratively to undertake the management of economic enterprises. 'Statism' in industry came to be ill-fated. The experiment was premature and could not survive.

1.3.6 The Industrial Revolution

The long drawn-out historic process called the Industrial Revolution started in England about 1750. France and Belgium were to follow later in the early decades of nineteenth century. Germany was about forty years behind France. It was not until the unification of Germany in 1870 that the new German Empire began to catch up with rapid strides. By the turn of the century it had surpassed France and became the rival of Great Britain. The rest of Europe in 1870 could be described largely agricultural and industrially backward. Even France and Belgium continued to have half their population occupied in agriculture.

The term industrial revolution was first used by Arnold Toynbee in 1884 to describe the industrial changes which made England the industrial workshop of the world in the later part of eighteenth and the early part of nineteenth century. Though the changes were spread over a long period of time the change brought about by them was so complete that they could be described as revolutionary. The same was true of Germany. The transformation was so rapid that, within a generation, the sleepy Germany of 1850 became one of the highly industrialised country of the world.

The causes which determined the order in which the chief European countries were industrialised were partly economic and partly political. It was the great expansion of overseas trade which took place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which served as the principal economic causes for the great changes. The opening up of new markets in Asia, Africa and America created a new demand for goods. The goods demanded by the new markets were of the kind most suitable for production by machinery. They were simply goods, like cotton cloth, which would be easily standardised. This gave a great stimulus to the mechanical inventions of the eighteenth century. Some of the significant inventions concerning the spinning and weaving of cotton cloth were the spinning Jenny of Hargreaves, the water framer of Arkwright, the mule of Crompton, the power loom of Cartwright and Watt's steam engine.

The expansion of the market was the primary cause and just comes first. The inventions were a secondary cause only. Cheap machine goods are good unless there is a market for them.

Mechanical inventions often appear as if they are result of accident. But actually they occur because there is a demand for them. The inventor unconsciously works to satisfy the changing needs of society.

While the expansion of the overseas market was the economic cause of the industrial revolution in Europe, it were the political factors which determined the order in which the change occurred. Circumstances favoured Britain. She emerged victorious from the prolonged struggle for colonial empire. Her naval supremacy enabled her to overcome in turn the might to Spain, Holland and France. The British empire in India and America gave her the exclusive right to trade with these areas. France was more popular and richer than Britain but she had no outlet for her goods outside its own border. Germany was in worse position. It was divided into a large number of petty states. Till Zollverein (Customs Union) in 1834. Its home market was split up into fragments and her domestic trade was strangled. It was also the cockpit of Europe for centuries. It was not till the establishment of the empire in 1871 that her economic and political difficulties were removed.

In addition to extensive overseas market, British had the necessary capital for investment in industries. Profits from foreign trade mobilised through efficient banking were readily available for new industrial enterprises. Its insular character saved her from the ravages of war. Complete freedom of trade within the country also favoured industrial progress. It was the first country in Europe to put an end to feudal abuses which continued to obstruct the progress in the rest of Europe. The prevalence of the rule of law saved Englishmen from the tyranny of class privilege. The inter-marriages between the land owning and other classes made her system flexible. The result was it could easily and quickly respond to changes in economic conditions. Its ruling class was favourably inclined to trade and industry and willing to promote them by all the methods which current economic philosophy approved.

The first result of the industrial revolution was the substitution of machines for tools in distinction being that which the tool is set in motion by man's physical strength, the machines worked by same natural force like wind, water or steam. The last had superiority over both wind and water in being independent of weather or the seasons and not limited by conditions of place. It can be created where it is needed and in exact proportion required introduction of steam made for the adoption of machine-methods of production. The invention of Watt's steam engine may be described as the central fact of the industrial revolution.

The motive power of steam thought known for a long time put to practical use only in the seventeenth century. Savory's stationary steam engine and later one designed by Newcomen was used in the eighteenth century of pumping water of coal mines. Newcomen's engine, involved a considerable

waste of fuel. James Watt (1736-1819) removed the defects of Newcomen's engine. Later, he adopted the engine for rotary motion.

The early machine-builders were unable to find workmen capable of doing the work with precision. Watt's engine in the beginning were so faulty that when the parts were put together, they refused to work. Thanks to Mathew Boulton of Birmingham, Watt's Partner that a nucleus of a craft of engines was created. The invention of Maudsley's side-rest, in 1794 largely reduced the difficulties in the way of accurate workmanship. It revolutionized the engineering industry.

The early machines were generally made of wood with a few metal parts. So long as water was the motive power this did not pose a problem. But with the introduction of steam of driving machinery wood was found to be too much subject to wear and tear. Iron which was more durable than wood came to be used. But the making of iron had its own difficulties in the eighteenth century. Wood fuel for smelting iron was becoming scarce. This almost threatened English iron industry with extinction. Abraham Darby an iron manager invented the process of cooking coal for use in smelting in 1738. It came to be widely used after the middle of the eighteenth century. The intervention of hand blast by Neilson, in 1829, made possible the use of raw coal in place of coke. The Scottish coal which was not suitable for cooking could not be used. This laid the foundation of the iron industry of the Clyde.

The metal industries continued to progress. Sir Henry Bessemer discovered a cheap method of converting iron into steel. The later being superior to iron by reason of its lightness, hardness and durability came to replace iron. But Bessemer process could be used with ores free from phosphorus from the ore. This enabled Germany to make use of phosphoric ore of Lorraine for steel making. Steel could now be produced cheaply and came to be used for most industrial purposes, for the making of rails, the building of ships and construction of factories and houses.

The growth of iron industry and the use of steam as a motive power created a growing demand for coal for industrial purposes. This led to a series of changes in coal mining. The steam pump for pumping out water, the steam engine for raising the coal from shaft bottom and large winding engine using wire ropes were used in the mines in 1840's. Ventilation began to be improved towards mid fifties of nineteenth century. Above ground, improvements in haulage and transport facilities led to efficient marketing of coal. The coal output increased considerably.

Coal and iron formed the twin foundations of modern industrialism. France lagging behind in its struggle for industrial development was largely due to her poverty in coal. French coal was not only deficient in quantity, it was also poor in quality. It was not good cooking coal and it was for this reason that coke did not displace charcoal until 1860's. The want of coal is the chief reason for the slow and incomplete industrialization of France. Britain's primacy in the industrial field was largely due to the presence of coal and iron ore in bulk in close proximity.

The great technical changes described above were bound to have effect on

industrial organisation. The feudal system had become more or less lifeless. The industrial revolution put an end to the medieval system of workshop production. The use of machinery led to the concentration of the workers in a large building under the supervision of the employer or his agents. The resistance of the workers to give up the independence of their homes for the discipline of the factory were overcome. The production of machinery had turned the balance in favour of the employer. The hard worker was definitely at a disadvantage against the competition of machine made goods. He had to accept work in a factory in order to earn a living.

The tendency towards large scale production became a leading characteristic of modern industrialism. The tendency also effected the business unit. The partnership in its turn gave way to the limited liability company. Both as a result of the cut throat competition, and to reap the rewards of monopoly, the size of the business organisation became still larger through mergers, formation of some of them cover the entire world these days.

Growth of Towns

The tendency towards large scale production led to the growth of towns. People lived in large numbers of the coal and iron areas. The new canals and latter roads and railways enabled food, fuel and other requirements to be moved to these new concentrations of population. As there were no regulations to prevent overcrowding and construction of houses, many of the evils of present associated with urbanisation came into existence. The rapid growth of population which became a feature of the period further accentuated these problems of fifth, congestion and disease.

Increase in Population

In Britain, Germany and Belgium, population doubled or tripled itself during the nineteenth century. In France., the increase was slow and did not exceed 50% while urbanisation grew space in Britain and Germany, it was not true of France and Belgium. The urban population in the former two countries, 75% and 60% of the total population, in France it was 40% and in Belgium 43%.

Concentration of Industries in Regions

Another feature of modern industrialism was the concentration of industries in certain regions. Coal and iron besides presence of raw materials act as magnets to attract means of communication and transport, banking services, repair and servicing facilities, auxiliary industries utilising the products of the main industries or supplying semi finished products of use in the former production of machinery etc. also developed in these areas. They thus grew into industrial conglomerations. The areas acquired countrywise and even worldwide reputation for their products.

Such industries area in England were to be found in the midland or the northern part of the country. The industrial Revolution shifted the centres of wealth and population from south east to north west. Similarly, Belgium the industrial activity came to be concentrated in the Wallon provinces and the area stretching from Liege to the east to Mons and Chareroi in south-west. France

did not have any such concentration of industry except to some extent in the coal area in the north east. The industry in France tended to settle in the small coalfields of the centre, or near sea ports which could get suppliers of coal from abroad. There was geographical dispersion of industries in the country.

Industrial development was the rest of expansion in foreign trade. But development of industries, in its turn, gave a boost to world trade. Britain is the most common example of this tendency. As the only industrialised country at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it supplied the less developed nations with manufacturers in exchange of goods and raw materials. As terms of trade were more favourable to the manufacturing countries as compared to countries supplying agricultural products, it amassed riches. But when later other countries also developed industrially, the terms of trade for manufacturers ceased to be so favourable. In case of Britain, exports continued to be predominantly manufactured and imports overwhelming agricultural. In case of France, the items of exports imports were almost equally divided between manufactures and agricultural products.

The Industrial Revolution in Europe also tipped the balance of wealth and political influence among its nations. While Britain arose in importance, France was eclipsed. France lacked what was then considered essential for a sound industrial base coal. Perforce, it had to concentrate on industries which did not very much depend upon bulk use of coal. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Germany was able to make a bid for acquiring hegemony in Europe on the strength of its industrialisation, based on coal and iron.

Industrial Position in 1870

To get an idea of the magnitude of 'Britains' industrialisation by 1870 it may be mentioned that while Britain was consuming only 8000 tons of raw cotton in 1760 the consumption rose to 6,000,000 tons by 1870. The iron output stood at 2,50,000 tons in 1800 it was 6,000,000 tons by 1875. It produced 6,000,000 tons by 1875. It produced 6,000,000 tons of coal in 1770. The production shot up to 110,000,000 tons in 1870.

In the textile group, the cotton industry had taken first place from wool, while the silk industry was declining. Britain was exporting increasing amounts of cotton goods to pay for raw products from abroad. In case of wool, mechanisation was slow but by 1855 Britain was importing about 100 million lbs. of raw wool about half of it from Australia. Exports of woollen goods stood at 35 million lbs. coal became an important item in the British export balance. In copper, it led the British export balance. In copper, it led the world production up to about 1840. From 1840-70, Chile had the first place. But the industry there was developed with British capital and British enterprise. In iron and steel industry, Britain easily maintained its supremacy during the period under review.

1.3.7 Industry in France (Prior to 1789)

The guild system in France continued to cooperate till it was abolished during the Revolution of 1789. The putting out system had been introduced

during the sixteenth century. Capitalist exploitation of mines was based on special privileges granted by the Crown. Glass production was favoured by tax exemption. The development of faïence (glazed pottery) was encouraged. Colbert's efforts to lend vitality to industries through limited monopoly rights, tax exemptions and attracting foreign workers by granting loans without interest did not show lasting effects.

During the period immediately preceding the France Revolution, several large enterprises were organised. Companies to undertake coal mining were started. But the trend towards industrialisation was much less in France than in Britain. (1789-1815) the violent disorders of the revolutionary period caused a general decline in most sectors of the economy. Under Napoleon inventions were encouraged. His civil code emphasized freedom of contract. British inventions were introduced in France through English businessmen and through industrial spies and smugglers. New inventions were encouraged and the development of new plans were promoted, particularly after the continental system came into full swing. Prizes were rewarded for perfecting a silk loom that could weave patterns. Mechanised cotton factories were established. Calico printing was promoted. Soda workers using 'Leblanc process' were organised. Special attention was given to iron industry for military purposes.

France in 1815-1848

After Waterloo, the Bourbons and, to a lesser extent, Louis Philippe tried to foster industry under the protection of high tariffs. But high tariffs delayed adjustment to competitive conditions.

The Metallurgical industries were built up partly with British technicians and British skilled workers. But they could not make much progress as long as charcoal was used for smelting. But the situation gradually improved after 1830. The production of crude iron increased more than 4 times between 1820 and 1850 and French iron industry was second only to the British, but considerably behind it.

The textile industry led French industrial development after 1815. It acquired a name for quality. The industry was highly specialised. Some centres produced rough, other fine cloth and still other for military uniforms. Alsace was the major centre of cotton industry. Lyons was the centre of silk industry and worked for the world market. The industry which had created for the wealthy alone came to be democratised by the introduction of Jacquard power loom.

France in 1851-70

Napoleon III (1851-70) taking counsel with his able advisers launched a policy of expansion of the both production and transportation. He promoted railroads. The conclusion of the Anglo-French Treaty initiated a period of free trade in most of the continental Europe, under him. Paris became the financial centre of Europe. There was a tremendous upswing in the dynamic development of Europe. But the French population showed signs of becoming stationary.

Mechanisation made rapid progress after 1850. The number of steam engines which had only doubled between 1840-50, increased 400 percent between 1850-1870. Coal was nearly entirely substituted for charcoal in smelting of iron in smelting of iron ore. French mines supplied more than 2/3 of domestic requirement of coal. The iron and steel industry underwent major changes. French textiles continued to excel in quality rather than in mass production. It led in high value wool alpaca and silk manufacturers. As in Britain mechanisation spread in spinning more rapidly than in weaving and in cotton and silk to a greater extent than in wool. But supplies of raw cotton and wood created problems, particularly the former during the American Civil War. Due to disease of silk worms, supplies of raw silk from Far-East replaced much of domestic production.

1.3.8 Industry of Germany (Prior to 1815)

Tragedy of Germany was that it was split up into more than 300 small states. After Napoleonic wars it came to consist of 38 states. It was not till 1871 that it was united into a single nation state followed a mercantilistic policy under Frederick the Great (1740-1866). It was the emigrants from France, Switzerland etc. who brought industrial skills with them and started some of the handicrafts. The reforms inaugurated by Stein and Hardenberg after the Treaty of Tilsit (1807) swept away the feudal regime of old Prussia. The industrial code of 1811 proclaimed freedom of commerce. By 1851, as the result of reforms carried out in the French occupied parts of Germany, obstacles to capitalistic development were eliminated in large parts of Germany. British historians look upon this period as one of quiet preparation while Germans review it as one of economic obsolescence.

Germany in 1815-40

Certain factors favoured development of industry in Germany. Natural resources were considerable. A diligent working force accustomed to strict discipline by military training and chemical science and atmosphere of paid research in well organised institutions was not to be belittled. But lack of unity, lack of commercial tradition, lack of capital and emigration (435,000 emigrated to U.S.A. between 1840-50) could be serious shortcomings.

Germany was still predominantly an agricultural country. There were some salt, copper, silver and coal mines from old times. There was also an old industry in Rhine land Westphalia. Guilds had been abolished in Prussia, but persisted in rest of Germany and the narrow minded guild spirit still persisted. Industrial progress in Germany did not impress the visitors to world Exposition in London, 1851.

But Zollverein (Customs Union) of 1840 was a success. There was marked improvement in land communications. New metallurgical methods were being successfully employed. Training of chemists was far superior than anywhere in the world. The Prussian Government organised an institute for practical training. It took steps to introduce and popularise the manufacture and application of modern machinery. It even brought machines from Britain and

other countries and gave them to private industry at its own expense.

Germany in 1840-70

Economic reforms following the Revolution of 1848 favoured development of industry. For example, Government operation of mines was done away with. It enabled prospectors who discovered mines to acquire title of them. The development of rail, roads, banking and general upswing of business in the world favoured industrial development.

With capital obtained from Britain, Belgium and France helped considerably. In 1863, Krrups set up the first steel mill. Foreman and workers, formerly taken from England could not be dispensed wit. In 1865, Germany became world's second largest producer of iron. In 1870, it left behind France in production of big iron machines production made great progress in Saxony. The output of agriculture machinery expanded. The factory workers came to be highly skilled. development of coal mining. The iron and seel industry also expanded

Germany was ready for a rapid industrialisation. The unification in 1871 accelerated the process.

The rest of Europe remained predominantly agricultural. Mechanisation for them lay in future.

1.3.9 Keywords

1. Monastery
2. Merchants
3. Capitalist
4. Machinery
5. Monopoly

1.3.10 Long Questions

1. What were the Causes of Industrial Revolution in England?
2. What were the Effects of Industrial Revolution in England?

1.3.11 Short Questions

Write Short Notes on:

1. Guild System
2. The Putting Out System
3. The Central Workshop
4. Industrial Revolution in France
5. Industrial Revolution in Germany

1.3.11 Suggested Readings

1. L.C.A. Knowees : *The Industrial and Commercial Revolution in Great Britain during the 19th Century.*
2. Arthurs Birnie : *An Economic History of Europe, 1760-1932.*
3. Friend Leander and Oser : *Economic History of Modern Europe.*
4. Hammond : *Rise of Modern Industry.*
5. Ogg and Sharp : *Economic Development of Europe.*

AMERICAN REVOLUTION : CAUSES & ITS SIGNIFICANCE

- 1.4.1 Objectives
- 1.4.2 Introduction
- 1.4.3 Causes of American Revolution
- 1.4.4 Differences between Colonists and the British
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- 1.4.6 The Administrative System of the Colonies
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- 1.4.8 The Stamp Act
- 1.4.9 Lord North's Administration
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- 1.4.11 Keywords
- 1.4.12 Long Questions
- 1.4.13 Short Questions
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1.4.1 Objectives

In this lesson you will study the Guild System and the Putting Out System. Industrial Revolution started in England. You will also study causes and effects of Industrial Revolution and industry in France and Germany.

1.4.2 Introduction

The American Revolution broke out when George III's personal rule was at its climax. It may be considered the most significant event of his reign. Many causes led to this and the most important of these are given below:

1.4.3 Causes of American Revolution

1.4.4 Differences between the colonists and the British

Firstly, **differences between the colonists and the British** were due to composition of the people living in the thirteen colonies. The Pilgrim Fathers had left England during the reign of the James I on account of religious persecution at home had settled down in the American Colonies. The New England Colonies in the north had been founded by Puritan settlers at various times in the Stuart period. Yet another category of the colonists was that of Dissenters, who had also left England on account of their religious disabilities.

Those colonists who were Roman Catholics had left the mother-country because they were sick of the consequences of the Test Act, Corporation Acts, etc. In the 18th century, the population of American Colonies had increased beyond all expectations; for instance between 1700 and 1720, it rose from 2,00,000 to 20,00,000. Later immigration consisted of German and French Protestants of Irish peasants and Scottish Crofters, of whores and felons and bankrupts from London. J.H. Plumb says that "there was no loyalty among these immigrants nor was it to be expected among the American born. Usually their ancestors had left England in resentment". The mother-country had used the colonies as dumping ground for bad characters and criminals. To have sent them thousands of miles away from their homes was considered quite a severe punishment which the immigrants and their descendants never forgot. Thus all the aforementioned kinds of people, who had settled down in American Colonies, had no love for Great Britain.

1.4.5 Old Colonial System

Secondly, the **Old Colonial system** which the mother-country had adopted vis-a-vis the colonies also contributed to the quarrel. Under this system, the colonies were required as if ordained by God, to provide raw materials to the mother-country and to accept manufactured articles from her in return. All trade was to be carried in British ships (Navigation laws). These restrictions, naturally, were quite galling to the enterprising colonists. The dependence on England for manufactured goods had led to an adverse trade balance which had created a shortage of bullion and an inflated paper currency. This was hampering commercial development of America. The colonies would have liked to trade directly with other countries and hated the idea of sending their goods first to England.

Why should the mother-country make profits out of the products of colonies and why the goods manufactured in the Colonies should not compete with those of Great Britain? The American Colonists raised these questions and were now determined not to remain dependent on English economy.

Although the Colonists hated the old Mercantilist Systems, they did not protest against it because in the eighteenth century, especially during the period of Whig ascendancy (1714-1760) it was held more in breach rather than in observance. The American Colonists carried out illicit trade with Spain and other countries and many of them made large fortunes by trading with France during the Seven Years war. Sir Robert Walpole, the great Whig minister, winked at these acts of the Colonists and observing on the principle 'let sleeping dogs lie', never tried to enforce the old Mercantilist System. Non-observance of the existing laws by the colonists was highly undesirable. It was bound to create a spirit of lawlessness and defiance of authority among the people. When George III and his ministers tried to enforce the Old Colonial System by forcible means, the American Colonies revolted.

1.4.6 The Administrative System of the Colonies

Thirdly, **administrative system of the Colonies** also created differences between the British and the Colonists. Politically, the American Colonies were more advanced than Great Britain. All the white settlers, who had not been qualified to vote at home found themselves in possession of franchise in the Colonies. Each Colony had its own Legislative Assembly, a body which was elected by the votes of the white population. The Assembly made laws for the Colony and imposed upon it such taxation as was required. The Governor of each Colony was appointed from Great Britain but his authority was extensive. He was not responsible to the Assembly but to the Crown. The Colonists made many efforts to make the Governors responsible to the Legislative Assembly. The salaries of the Governors and judges were reduced and the British Government could do nothing. This created serious differences between the executive and legislature. Clearly, all this was not conducive to the smooth working of administrative machinery and made the problems of Colonial Government quite difficult. Here, it would be relevant to quote the following remarks made by Cornbury, Governor of New York, during the reign of Queen Anne.

“If once they (the Colonists) can clothe themselves without the help of England, they, who are already not very fond of submitting to Government would soon think of putting into execution designs they have long harboured in their breasts.”

Fourthly as Hunt remarks, the American revolution was bound to take place sooner or later, “though the date of its coming and the violent means by which it was accomplished, were decided by individual action.” The revolution was the result of a ‘spirit of independence puritan in religion and republican in politics, impatient of control, self-assertive, and disposed to opposition.’

Fifthly, the problem of Colonial defence also created differences between the two parties. In 1763, Great Britain had emerged victorious from a protracted struggle with France. The war had been extremely expensive and the national debt had risen from £ 70 million to £ 90 million. Many Englishmen felt that there was an imminent danger of national emergency. This had been mainly incurred in defending the Colonies from a very grave peril. But most of the individual Colonies had been extremely reluctant to provide either men or money against the enemy. This was not liked by mother-country who insisted that the Colonies must make some contribution and thereby help the British. The Colonies, on the other hand, not only refused to help the British against the French, but categorically refused to contribute towards the defence of the Colonies in future too.

1.4.7 The Policy of George III and his Ministers

Finally, the problem of local defence and the **policy of George III and his ministers** brought the American War of Independence. There was the need for local defence, even though the French danger had disappeared. The vast regions between the Alleghanies, and the Mississippi, full of war-like Indian tribes, had to be policed and the natives had to be protected against unfair treatment by

traders and land speculators. Further, it has to be understood that the natives of North American Colonies subsisted on wild life, they ate meat and sold skins to the French, getting in return necessaries of life. But the English settlers started cutting wood and clearing jungles. As a result, the wild-life became extinct and the natives started starving. That is why they detested the English Colonists and liked the French traders who in return for skins and furs provided them sugar, and other articles of daily use. In 1763-64, the Red Indians revolted against the British primarily due to the fear that British consolidation of North America after the Seven Years War would increase the difficulties. This is also known as the Conspiracy of Pontiac. The result of this uprising was that the border districts of Pennsylvania, and Maryland Virginia were devastated; these states were only saved from a worse fate by the presence of British forces. This episode showed that while the Colonies had no means of common action, they were individually unorganised and unwilling to organise themselves for their defence. However, in order to defend them, a force had to be stationed and it was estimated that for this purpose a sum of about £ 350,000 would have to be spent annually. British policy makers in London contended that the Colonies should pay at least a part of this amount.

This was the situation in 1763, when George III, became Prime Minister. Two problems demanded his immediate attention : first colonial defence and organisation of the new territories; second, evasion of trade laws by the Colonists. He tried to solve the first by limiting the expenses and make the Americans pay a share. His method of limiting expenses was to prevent Red Indian wars. To affect economy, he also forbade further westward expansion and reserved the Prairies for the Red Indians. All this was resented bitterly by the American colonies.

Further, Grenville also started reading colonial despatches which had been neglected by his predecessors. He refused to treat the colonies “with wise and salutary neglect”. Perhaps that is why it is said that Great Britain lost America “because Grenville read the colonial despatches.” He revised the scale of duties and tried to enforce the old Mercantilist System by employing the navy to prevent smuggling. But as the jurists of the ordinary courts in America generally refused to give a verdict in smuggling cases, Grenville established a Court of Admiralty for America where such cases could be tried. Finally, in 1765 he passed the Stamp Act under which a duty was imposed on legal transactions in America. The money thus raised was to be used towards the cost of colonial defence.

1.4.8 The Stamp Act

The Colonists opposed the **Stamp Act** tooth and nail and ‘no taxation without representation’ became their popular slogan. Meetings of protests were held and resolutions passed and sent to England, Riots occurred at many places; government offices were stormed and the stamped paper destroyed. The colonists also resolved to discontinue the use of goods manufactured in Great Britain until the Stamp Act was repealed. The value of trade between Great

Britain and America fell and the British merchants became quite alarmed.

In 1766, after Grenville's resignation, the Earl of Rockingham and the 'Old Whigs' came into power. The Stamp Act was repealed in 1766, but a Declaratory Act was passed by which the British Parliament confirmed its sovereign right to tax the Colonies. It was the statement of a doctrine long detested in Ireland where the phrase "no taxation without representation" had been used repeatedly for thirty years. The Americans, though feeling happy over the cancellation of Stamp Act, again contested the claim of the British Parliament to impose taxes on them. The Declaratory Act, intensified the differences among them.

In 1767, Townshend, Chancellor of Exchequer, thought that American objection would not apply to indirect taxation which was levied only at the ports. Accordingly he established customs duties on import of tea, glass, red and white lead, painter's colours and paper. The Colonists, however, resented these measures too. Their fury was intense and a pattern of revolutionary organisation and leadership began to emerge. In 1770, Prime Minister Lord North removed all the 'Townshend duties' except the tax on tea and this was retained, more for the sake of asserting the right to tax America than on account of any expectation of substantial revenue to be obtained from it. The Colonists then accused the British Government of removing the taxes in order to flood the American market with cheap goods which had been taxed.

1.4.9 Lord North's Administration

Lord North's administration also allowed the English East India Company to send tea directly from India to America by drastically reducing its prices. The idea was to provide cheaper tea to the Colonists and make smuggling unprofitable. Even then the Colonists refused to accept tea and in 1773, at Boston, they boarded the ship and threw the caskets containing tea into the sea. London reacted and passed punitive measures; it removed the custom house from Boston and suspended the Massachusetts Charter. The result was the calling of a Congress in Philadelphia in 1774 and the preparation by the Colonies for war. The Philadelphia Congress which was attended by all the states except Georgia, condemned the law passed by British Government and declared for a general stoppage of trade with Great Britain until grievances should be redressed. The second American Congress which met in 1775 sent 'Olive Branch Petition' to the king requesting to repeal all the obnoxious laws passed since 1765. But George III refused to consider any communication from the 'rebel assembly'. Ultimately war broke out in April, 1775 when General Gage, in Boston, swooped on an illegal gunpowder depot at Concord. Force was used, and both the sides lost many men. Thus started the American War of Independence.

A detailed treatment of the events of war is beyond the scope of this lesson. However, it may be said that in this war both sides suffered heavy losses. During the first two years (1775-76), when the Americans were fighting alone, the British attempted to stamp out opposition in the northern and middle

colonies which were more determined in their resistance. In the first important battle which took place in 1775 at Lexington, the Colonists were victorious. After that they besieged General Gage and his army at Boston, but were defeated in the battle at Bunker's Hill. However, the Colonists compelled Gage to withdraw from Boston to Halifax. Meanwhile the Colonists of the northern states who had invaded Canada, occupied Montreal and besieged Quebec, were forced to retire losing, General Montgomery. In July, 1776, the Congress issued Declaration of Independence and asserted that the Colonies were no longer under the control of Great Britain. However, soon after this Declaration, the British army, now under the command of Lord Howe defeated Washington and seized New York. But in 1777, the British attempt to isolate north American Colonies by marching their army under Burgoyne from Canada via Lake Champlain failed. The British army was forced to surrender at Saratoga. With this event the Northern colonies were lost.

The capitulation of Saratoga was the turning point in the war. France recognised the independence of the Colonies and in March, 1778 declared war against England. The French now thought that the moment had come to take revenge for their defeat in the last war. The effect of French entry in the war was quite decisive, the French Navy opened an attack on the West Indies which had to be defended at the same time as the French hampered British Communications with the mainland of America. The actual fighting force sent by France to America was of little use till nearly the end of war; but the French naval action crippled Britain and made it impossible for her to conquer the colonies. Further, American privateers also attacked British ships.

In 1779 and 1780 Spain and Holland respectively joined the war against the British. The northern power-Russian, Prussia, Denmark and Sweden formed a League of Armed Neutrality. The object of this alliance was to prevent the British warships from searching the merchants vessels of the Neutral Powers. The combined French and Spanish fleets attacked Britain in the Mediterranean, where Gibraltar and Minorca were seized. The French also sent a fleet to attack the British in India. The British, therefore, now had to fight this maritime war against other naval powers of Europe. She had also to defend India, Gibraltar, the West Indies and at the same time to carry on the war against the Colonists.

In America, during the period 1777-1781, the British made a serious efforts to recover the Southern Colonies where resistance to the British had always been less strenuous than in the north. Lord Cornwallis captured Charleston and defeated Colonists at Camden and Guilford; he was successful in North Carolina and Virginia. With depleted forces, he reached the coast of Yorktown in 1781, where he expected a fleet to meet him and embark his army. But the combined French and Spanish fleets did not allow the English to come near Yorktown. This compelled Cornwallis to surrender and with it the loss of the American Colonies was complete.

The peace which concluded this war had two aspects. On the other

hand, by a Treaty signed in November 1782, British recognised the Independence of the thirteen colonies, and ceded to them the whole vast territory east of the Mississippi except Florida, which was claimed by Spain. Canada remained British by her own choice though the line of demarcation was not clearly drawn. On the other hand, the treaties with France, Spain and Holland, concluded in 1783. The Treaty of Versailles made very little change. Spain regained Florida, which she had lost in 1786, and Minorca, which she had lost in 1713. France gained the West Indian island of St. Lucia, and the West African district of Senegal, conquered from Spain in 1763.

When the war started, the Colonists were in a very weak position; they had no money, no trade, no fleet and no army. Further, quite a large number of the Americans were Loyalists who took sides with the British. In spite of all this the Americans won. The following were some of the important causes which led to the defeat of Great Britain. *First*, the British underestimated the qualities of Americans as fightingmen. In this context, Wolfe remarked:

The Americans are in general the dirtiest, the most contemptible, cowardly dogs you can conceive. There is no depending on them in action. They fall down dead in their own dirt and desert by battalions, officers and all.

General Gage, underestimating the strength of Americans, also boasted that if he were given four regiments, he would conquer all the American colonies. *Secondly*, the British were fighting in a land which was about 3,000 miles away from their country. It was quite a difficult task to transport men, ammunition and supplies across the Atlantic for a long time. Further, equally great was the difficulty of carrying on operations in a vast country which had no roads and was full to forests. Again, the forces employed by the British were inadequate for the task of erushing the revolt, and the officers who had been trained in the principles of warfare as practised in Europe were unsuitable for directing the fighting in as Colony. *Thirdly*, no attempt was made by the British to get the fullest advantage of the support and sympathies of the Loyalists. German contingents of Hessian troops which had been hired by George III and which found a large part of the royal army in America, while moving through New Jersey and other states destroyed alike the property of Loyalists and rebels. This was a great mistake made by the British; help of the Loyalists, who knew every nook and corner of the country and could have guided the British throughout difficult terrain, was thus lost. *Fourthly*, during the second period (1778-83), the American War of Independence also became a European, if not an international war. Great Britain was now fighting against France, Spain, Holland and other European countries. When for a short time she lost the command of the seas, that proved quite disastrous. Thus British naval weakness at a critical time when Cornwallis was besieged in Yorktown, proved the decisive reason for British defeat. *Fifthly*, personal rule of George III was highly unpopular in England. Many Englishmen fully sympathised with the Colonists who were fighting the battle of liberty. Such Englishmen thought that with the defeat of George III in America, his personal rule would also come to

an end. Obviously George III could not rally the whole nation behind him. *Sixthly*, George III and his ministers interfered too much in the conduct of war. There were political jealousies and rivalries. These were responsible for a lot of heart-burning and inefficiency. Claretown, an abelle assistant of Wolfe, was dismissed for political reasons. In his place, General Burgoyne was appointed. Williamson aptly remarks that the failure of the English was due “not to the King’s enemies but to the King’s friends.” *Finally*, the American won because of superior generalship of Washington. He was a man of high character who never lost heart during the darkness period of war. Under his inspiring command, the Colonists held out for two years.

1.4.10 The Effects of the American Revolution

The defeat of English had far reaching effects both for Great Britain and the World. It turned out to be an important factor in moulding the political destiny of mankind. Green has remarked that “whatever might be the importance of American independence in history of England, it was of unequalled moment in the history of the world.” Some of the **important effects of the American War of Independence** are given below:

Firstly, it sounded the death-knell of the Old Colonial System. The British realised that the system which was based on the ‘Navigation Act’ and keeping the Colonies in permanent subordination to the mother-country had become outdated and needed to be changed. Hereafter the British Parliament did not make attempts to tax British Colonies. This opened a new era in the development of British Commonwealth. J.H.Plumb remarks that “American independence was the nation’s fall from grace, a lesson in punishment for sin. For better, or for worse, the idea of Empire was wedded to a sense of mission.”

Secondly, American success also brought an end of George III’s personal rule. There had been a decade of frustration and failure which had brought the country to the verge of revolutionary action. When the American Colonies were lost, George III could not retain the confidence of his subjects. Soon, William Pitt the Younger became Prime Minister, who refused to the line of the King’s policy. Pitt remained Prime Minister for about twenty years and during this period Great Britain built up a new commercial prosperity, regained her position as the first power in Europe, and laid the foundation of a new Empire.

Thirdly, before 1783, it had been customary to transport criminals and bad characters to the American Colonies. Now, that was not possible and new places had to be discovered for this purpose. In 1787, a body of convicts was first sent to Botany Bay and in 1788 first Australian settlement was made. This was followed by other settlements, and after some time New Zealand was also annexed. Thus, with the passage of time, a group of new colonies (Australia and New Zealand) came into existence.

Fourthly, the position of American Loyalists became quite difficult. Their neighbours; treated them with hostility. About 20,000 of them left their hearths and homes and settled in Canada. The Loyalists, along with men of their ilk,

found it difficult to mix up with the Roman Catholics and this ultimately resulted in a conflict between the Frenchmen and Englishmen in Canada.

Fifthly, the American War of Independence was also not without its effects on Ireland. Britain's difficulty afforded an opportunity to the Irish; the latter started agitation which resulted in repeal of the Poyning's Law in 1782. Thus, the Irish got rid of an obnoxious law which had been in operation since 1496, now legislative independence of Irish Parliament was secured.

Sixthly, in 1783, France seemed to have re-established her prestige which she had lost after the Seven Years War. But it was not so; in reality she had gained nothing and very nearly ruined herself. According to Ramsay Muir, "The strain on her finances, already gravely disorganised before the war, brought her to the verge of bankruptcy and so formed the immediate cause of the Great Revolution which broke out less than seven years after the conclusion of peace". Further, the French Revolution was precipitated by the absorption of republican enthusiasm and democratic ideas by the French soldiers who had fought in America, were largely inspired by American ideals.

Finally, successful working of democratic institutions in a vast country which emerged after this war is another striking event in the world history. Before that, democracy had worked successfully in small states such as the Greek City States and Switzerland, etc. The United States has withstood the disruptive tendencies of democracy. The smooth working of the federal system of government on a vast scale is America's contribution to the civilisation of the world.

1.4.11 Keywords

1. Mercantlist System
2. Colonial System
3. Philadelphia
4. Federal System

1.4.12 Long Questions

1. What is meant by the old Colonial System? To what extent was this system the causes of the war of American Independence?
2. "George Washington did more than liberate the American Colonies; he liberated England from the Personal Rule of George III." Examine the statement.
3. "It was not the three penny duty on tea which caused the War of American Independence, In fact the breach was inevitable." Explain.
4. Describe the impact of the War on the Internal and Foreign Policy of England?
5. Discuss the effects of American Revolution. Was it a blessing in disguise for Britain?

1.4.13 Short Questions

1. Boston Tea Party
2. 13 Colonies

3. Causes of British defeat.
4. The Congress of Philadelphia

1.4.14 Suggested Reading

1. C.G. Robertson : *England under the Hanoverians*, London, 1953.
2. Ramsay Muir : *British Commonwealth*, Vol. II, London, 1954.
3. R.K. Webb : *Modern England*, London, 1969.
4. G.M. Trevelyan : *History of England*, London, 1926.
5. J.H. Plumb : *England in the Eighteenth Century*, Penguin Books:London, 1971.
6. R. Pares : *George III and the Politicians*, Oxford, 1953.
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**CAUSES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION-POLITICAL,SOCIAL,
RELIGIOUS AND ECONOMIC**

- 1.5.1 Objectives
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1.5.1 Objectives

In this lesson you will study the Guild System and the Putting Out System. Industrial Revolution started in England. You will also study causes and effects of Industrial Revolution and industry in France and Germany.

1.5.2 Introduction

The French Revolution of 1789 inaugurated a new era not only in the history of France but also in that of Europe and world at large. It is so significant that the paradoxes of the modern world may be found in it to a great extent. R.R. Palmer in his introduction to *The Coming of the French Revolution* by George Lefebvre, says, that the Revolution of 1789 liberated the individual, and it consolidated the modern state. It confirmed the rule of law and it launched a tradition of violence. It created the institution of private property as an important basis of the society and thus cleared the way of capitalism, but at the same time placed emphasis on human rights of the average man and inspired socialism. It brought about the principle of equality among the people and gave birth to the movement of nationalism. It is for the reasons that scholars and historians from the contemporary. Tom Paine and Edmund Burke to the present George Lefebvre and Alfred Cobban, have written volumes to

understand the cause and nature of the phenomenon which produced such a great change in this world. Nobody at that time could comprehend that the meeting of the Estate General on May 2, 1789 under the Electoral Regulation of 24 January, 1789 was going to be a watershed in the history of the world. It poses many problems; what were the causes of the Revolution? Was France prepared to the Revolution? Did not all the French social classes participate in it? Why did it not happen in other countries of Europe? Was the old regime unfit to resolve the crisis?

There is however, unanimity in all historians that the total condition had deteriorated to such an extent that it needed a major surgical operation, a radical reform and a concerted effort to set the things right. Leo Gershoy in his study, *The French Revolution and Napoleon* rightly remarked about the magnitude of the crisis in the following words:

A peasantry bitter in his grievances : a bourgeoisie restive under its many restrictions privileged class and corporate interests at odds with each other but united in their parasitism upto the nation : A government discredited by its ruinous foreign policy, its financial extravagances and its administrative inefficiency and corruption; and a powerful public opinion that scouraged the government for its weakness and its errors of policy and assailed the very theory of absolutism government-such were the factors with which Louis XVI and his ministers had to cope between 1774 and 1889.

1.5.3 The Ancient Regime

While making a detailed study of the ancient regime, we can divide our subject into two parts :

- (1) The government
- (2) The society

1.5.4 Crisis of French Monarchy

Monarchy reached its height and achieved final majestic proportions under Louis XIV 1647-1715. In 1661 he became his own minister. Like all his royal contemporaries, he believed with all his heart in the divine sanction of his absolutism. The meticulous code of etiquette that organised to the last detail the acts of his daily life gave to his court splendour and brilliance. The cult of the royal majesty was based on political calculation. His transfer of royal quarter from Paris to Versailles was calculated to provide glorious setting for the court. He stripped off the nobility of political power. With the assistance of the faithful officials, many of these from middle classes, he organised a competent bureaucracy.

Dignified, gracious, imposing and majestic Louis XIV impressed and overawed his subjects by his appearance. Under him absolutism reached its apogee. To quote Alfred Cobban, Modern Louis XIV's court "became a sense of perpetual baller performed before an audience of twenty million." Greshoy aptly observes that "The Versailles which embodied the spirit of absolute monarchy the aristocracy of France assembled night and day to pay homage to the great ruler, the master whose will had made France rich and powerful, the dictator

and the Cynosure of Europe in the arts and letters, in manners and tastes, in war and diplomacy.”

This is only the one side of the picture. The edifice which Louis XIV constructed came crashing down in ruins during the 18th century. His love for war and glory no doubt enhanced his prestige and that of France in western Europe and fetched him the title of “Grand Monarch” but this also ruined the finances of the country. He bought the aristocratic elements by tax exemptions, grant of sinecures and pensions at the expenses of royal revenue and by the creation and sale of host of venal offices carrying with them financial privileges. During the later years of his reign great famines devastated France, population declined due to war, starvation and disease. Even in diplomacy and war, his policy failed because as Sorel observes “he pushed his ambitions to the point at which they brought about the creation of hostile coalition powerful enough to defeat even France.” His shift of residence and court from Paris to Versailles brought about a complete and overlong separation with his subjects which to his successor cost the throne. Moreover his religious policy, particularly prosecution of the Huguenotes inflicted a rude blow to the material prosperity of the country, for thousands of skilled artisans, professional man and merchants fled from the country. By siding with the Jesuits, he precipitated a political controversy that ultimately weakened the unity of Catholics and undermined the prestige of Monarchy. While summing up the situation in 1715 we may quote

Gershoj :

“He left France poor, with her finances in disorder her population diminished by war, her most industrious craftsmen in exile and her peasantry hungry bent under staggering fiscal obligation and ripe for revolt.”

The Grand Monarch was succeeded by his great grandson, Louis XV, who was only five at time. As he was a minor, Philip of Orleans, the uncle of the child monarch was appointed as regent. His licentious habits, shady suspected background left confusion and disorder to the regency period extending from 1715 to 1723 A.D. Aristocracy again became powerful. During 1723-24, under the cautious and able leadership of the aged Cardinal Fleury France witnessed peace and prosperity. After his death Louis XV became his own master but his defects destroyed his popularity, Apathetic and indifferent to the affairs of the state, Louis XV was given to pleasure, hunting and gambling. He showed no concern for the government and the people. For thirty years he continued the worst features of the old regime, despite rapid socio-economic changes taking place in the country. On the one hand there was a mounting pressure for practical reform, while on the other France faced disastrous and humiliating defeat in the Seven Years Wars (1756-60). The country was virtually controlled and governed by royal mistress, there was reckless prodigality in the royal court the growing power of the middle classes was gradually eroding the hold of aristocracy and absolutism of the monarch. All these developments opened the gates to the deluge that swept over France.

Louis XV died in 1774 leaving as Gershey says, to his successors “an unenviable heritage of military defeats, financial embarrassment, governmental incompetence, parliamentary opposition and intellectual resistance to the existing political and social regime.”

The new King Louis XVI, barely twenty years old, was the grandson of Louis XV. He was conscious of his own youth and inexperience. Full of good intentions and determination to end the corruption he looked around for capable ministers to handle administration. But he had many personal defects such as love for hunting and utter lack of intelligence which made him unequal to his responsibilities, especially in the age of revolution. His queen, Marie Antoinette, was an extravagant and extremely frivolous lady. She came to a court whose chief occupation was pleasure. She became the leader of fashion. Intoxicated with supreme power, she cared no constraints, never bothered about the people as well as nobility. The royal family confined its company to a few favourites, leading to alienation of both the King and Queen from the people. At the top of it necklace affairs and consequent trail dragged Queen's name through the mire with those of the scum of society. “A diamond thief, ‘an adventurer, a ‘prostituter’, ‘a cardinal’, etc. were the epithets used for her. In short, the weakness of the King and the indiscretion of the Queen undermined the prestige of the monarchy.

1.5.5 The Government

Louis XIV had formed an excessively centralised government which could be held by a strong and capable ruler. Even during the later part of his reign when his control began to falter it had become clear that such a highly centralized form of government would not bring about efficiency and prosperity. However, the organisation formed by Louis XIV continued till the revolution. The King was assisted by the Chancellor (the chief judicial and legislative official), the Controller General of finance, four Secretaries of State and the members of the Royal Council. The Royal Council was further divided into three sections namely Council of Finance, Council of States and Privy Council. To its deliberations customary to select intendants from the ranks of lawyers. There were many defects in the administrative system :

The intendants derived their authority directly from councils which were merely advisory bodies to the king.

There was neither a representative body nor a written constitution to limit the authority of the administrators.

The so-called fundamental laws of the kingdom were nothing but loose body of precedents and traditions.

Under these circumstances, it was natural that under a weak king there should emerge conflicts of jurisdiction of courts, rivalries among administrators, tradition of graft and high handed procedure. France prior to 1789 was saved by just two factors, namely, the relative stability of local administration and the loyalty of the petty bureaucracy which was wedded to slow cumbersome and wasteful routine. Habit, not reason furnished the native

force of government under the last Buorbons.

The whole country was divided into intendants or generalities. There was thirty four in number in 1789. There were very large administrative units which differed from each other in customs and cultures and possessed no importance in government while in other one province was spill, into many intendants. In the beginning the intendants or governors were selected out of lawyers. Louis XIV did not wish them to share authority nor did he wish them to aspire for authority. But they otherwise enjoyed unbounded authority as they had the right to administer justice in all royal courts, verify accounts and assets and levied direct taxes.

These intendants did great service in the seventeenth century as they held in firm check all the old and new forces that could resist the central monarchy. But gradually it became art absolute institution as most of intendants began to be recruited from higher nobility who stayed in Versailles rather than at their station. With the rise of trade and commerce and consequent urbanisation the city municipal governments ran into clash with intendants whose power was not booked by the royal edict. So severe was the rule of intendants that they were known as “tyrantintendants”. The major defect was not in intendants but in the theory of government. The new form of centralised royal administrative set up was superimposed upon a semi-feudal society. Lefebvre rightly comments “Localism flourished in the provincial estates and provincial courts”. During 150 years before 1789 the monarchy had completely failed to bring about unity of the nation. It resulted in chaos and breakdown of the central administration during the incompetent reign of Louis XVI.

One of the worst features of the ancient regime was the administration of justice. According to absolutists theory “all justice emanated from the monarch whose officials administered it in his name in the royal courts. In reality, a large number of courts such as manorial courts, Church courts etc. which had been in existence for centuries continued imparting variety, a variety without uniformity to the judicial administration of the country. Most of the positions in the royal courts were sold out. The incumbents could not be deprived of their position even when they ceased to do services as the monarchy had no money to buy them back. They became irremovable office holders who undermined the supposedly absolute authority of the king.

1.5.6 Judicial System

Of the royal courts there were thirteen parliaments of the realm which functioned as supreme courts of appeal in civil and criminal cases. In the country there were many courts. Besides these courts of general royal jurisdiction; there were many other specialised purposes-administrative, military, commercial courts concerned with specified taxes. There were more than 360 codes, 2,500 feudal courts and 3,500 judges. This caused confusion. Their jurisdiction was not clear, interpretation of law was conflicting and uncertain. As salaries of judges were low bribery and corruption of justice was

arbitrary. The criminal cases were not tried in public, punishments were inhuman. The members of judiciary acted as officers of the King. They thwarted all efforts of reform, helped in suppressing press and defended barbaric criminal procedure. They sided with nobility and resisted registration of new taxes. They defended an old regime and the privileges of aristocrats.

1.5.7 Economic Causes

Like the administration of justice, the financial administration was arbitrary and unsound. It functioned in confusion and disorder. Taxes fell inequally on people: the privileged classes were exempted from taxes, "The methods of collection were financially wasteful and corrupt, socially offensive and economically indefensible", says Gershoy. Deplorable condition of treasury was remedied by objectionable measures like the sale of offices, irregular funding of the national debasement of currency, farming of tax collection of fresh loans and taxes. Extravagance remained unchecked, wasteful expenditure on lavish laying remained unabated. The financial situation got further deteriorated due to increasing expenditure on administration and military. The top heavy administration consisting of 117 officers was maintained at the cost of 46 million livrs. In 1789 about 14 percent of the revenues were spent on collection. Average tax burden varied from 14 to 64 percent on the eve of Revolution. The Government did not introduce and reform before 1774 and those which were much temporary and partial.

There were large number of direct taxes which were borne by the middle or lower poor classes. *Taille* was derived from city tolls open farm produce. It was a tax paid by a peasant on his presumed wealth. It was assessed uniformly. It was most arbitrary and exclusively fell on peasantry. The capitation was like a poll tax and *vigtieme* as income tax on all professions. The privileged classes either evaded these taxes or transferred their burden on the poor classes. *Corvee* was another abominable tax which was payable in labour by peasants by working on royal highways for certain days.

The system of indirect taxes was equally unjust and vicious as they were collected by private tax collectors. To name a few such taxes we may mention gabellie (salt-tax), aides (excise tax) and traites and douanes (custom duties). In the collection and administration of these taxes many fragrant abuses prevailed.

In brief the French Government of the ancient regime both local and central, suffered by its numerous internal weaknesses by the lack of responsible leadership, by the opposition of powerful corporate groups and by the deep rooted traditions and ancient loyalties.

1.5.8 The States General

The States-General was a representative body of the clergy, nobility and commons which had not been called into session since 1614. Triumph of monarch during the seventeenth century led to its disappearances. The three estates met separately and had no powers to pass tax and other laws. Each member brought from his constituency a statement of grievances (*Cashier*

desdolcanes). The only business of each estate was to draw up a general statement of their wishes and to present it separately to the Crown. As compared to the British Parliament, the State-General was a body of hardly any significance, Yet when there was wide spread enthusiasm for election representation, the mind of the French naturally turned to it. Let us now study the character composition of these Estates.

1.5.9 Social Causes

The First Estate : Clergies

The first Estate was the most influential corporate body for it had honour, prestige and independent financial resources, and autonomy in the administration of its institution. Their main fields of activity were religious ceremonies, education, baptism, performance of marriage, death and other ceremonies. In theory the church was autonomous while in practice monarchy exercised police and supervisory rights over the domains and revenue of the church. The king had the right to make appointment of principle bishops. As no accurate recount of the number of the members of clergy is possible, it is roughly estimated that the number of the upper clergy ranged from 10,000 to 11,000 while the lower secular clergy and monks numbered 10,000 each making the total strength of clergy as one per cent of the total population of France. The church controlled one fifth of the total cultivable land which was revenue free. The church earned about 120 million livres from property and another 123 million raised in the form of tithes. The church and the clergy did not pay any tax but it was general practice that used to make a free gift to the king after every five years. The clergy were sharply divided into two groups they upper and lower clergy. A member of the upper clergy earning about 40,000 the 400,0000 livres per year. They were fairly rich and were generally recruited from the nobility class. The lower clergy generally consisting of parish clergy generally led a poor life in Versailles. The relationship between these two sections of clergy was that of hostility. Sieyes observes that the clergy strictly speaking constituted a profession and not a social class. Of the 300 elected members of the First Estate 205 were parish priests who sided with the commoners in the revolution.

The Second Estate : Nobility

The nobility constituted the Second Estate of the realm consisting of roughly 50,000 families. The rank of nobility was acquired by birth, by military service, by the purchase of patents of nobility , or the possession of certain public offices. Nobility consisted of two categories nobility of the sword or the nobility of robes. The former having a few members was the legacy to medieval military nobility, while latter had become prominent in the wake of commercial revolution of the eighteenth century. They become prominent in the wake of commercial revolution of the eighteenth century. They had acquired this position primarily due to purchase and inheritance of judicial and administrative offices. The new rich bourgeoisie class purchased big landed estates. On the basis of function, residence and wealth the nobility was further

divided into many categories. The court nobility was wealthy and influential the provincial nobility was holding posts of administration in provinces; and the sparrow hawks were too poor to leave their property and join any other profession. Nobles in general scornfully looked at the commoners. Irrespective of social classification they enjoyed seigniorial rights administering manorial justice, tax exemptions a monarchy or public offices in court, administration and army. The court nobility lived in luxury and exhausted their resources.

The nobility of robes, belonging to the rich bourgeoisie, continued to a mass wealth through trade and commerce. They formed a group apart, in their political role they were opposed to the absolutism of the King. The country nobility as Salvemini says, "Was envious of great nobility at court who gained all the favour for themselves." They looked up to the court as source of all evils. Lafayette, who himself was a noble, gives a vivid picture of the young nobles in these words : "We were scornful critics of the old customs, of feudal pride of our fathers and their severe etiquette and everything that was old seemed annoying and ridiculous to us. Voltaire attacked our intellect and Rousseau touched our hearts. We took secret pleasure in seeing them attack the old framework. The nobility was disunited condemned classes. Their internal strife divided them at that time of revolution. Out of 290, about 90 were liberal nobles who sided with the Third Estate.

The Third Estate : Commoners

In this category the whole nation from the rich trader to the beggar was dumped together. Its social composition can be divided into two broad sections- the bourgeoisie and the urban proletariat and the poor peasantry in the country side. It was the former, constituting about one twentieth of French population, which fully dominated the Third Estate. Besides industry, trade, finances and other profession, they also controlled about 17 percentage of land in the north. During the eighteenth century when feudal order in France was fast disintegrating, "aimed ruins of the past the broad outlines of new bourgeois society were beginning to appear", says Salvemini. The increase in the means of communication and consequent increase in internal and foreign trade, and progress in industry led to the mobilisation of capital and the specialised profession. The urban classes were divided into the bourgeoisie and proletariat.

Although the rich middle classes had entered into nobility, yet the whole bourgeoisie remained distinct on the basis of legal status and attitude. The merchant wanted the end monopoly and protectionist tariff. The lawyers, judges, doctors and teachers wanted jobs on the basis of merit rather than birth. They were envious of the Aristocracy. The growth of education led the concept of dignity of man. Concentrated in the cities of France, it was this class which was to gain most at the collapse of the ancient regime. They had sufficient wealth, material comforts and intellectual capabilities. They organised themselves and established the society of the saloons joined clubs and Masonic lodges where they discussed liberal radical ideas and thus spearheaded the movement for revolution. In the meeting of the State General

they demanded double representation. Of the six hundred and odd deputies, 400 were lawyers, 90 financiers and 50 doctors and teachers. Of all the Estates, Third Estate was the most cohesive.

Peasantry :

France was predominantly an agricultural country at the time of revolution. Condition of 20 million peasants in France was different from those in other European countries. They were under appalling tax burden and were generally backward. In France peasant proprietors and tenants cultivated small plots of land, and not many of the free properties who were technically leaseholders and paid numerous manorial dues, could support their families. Many worked as tenants from rich landlords or bourgeoisie landowner. About 5 million did not own any land. They were labourers. Their condition became very bad after 1750.

Though serfdom was abolished in 1772 these peasants in addition to direct and indirect taxes paid manorial dues and traditional rents and services to the land. There was increase in the tax burden by 8% under Louis XVI. The second half of the century witnessed a notable increase in the revenues that the privileged classes derived from their manorial rights, deeper and deeper in economic distress", says Gershoy. According to Salvemini" continually harassed at harvest and vintage time on the threshing floor, in the mill and in the very act of selling his produce; he was under the threat of fines arrest and judicial proceedings. No wonder he nursed an incredible bitterness in his heart on the eve of the revolution when there were famines and food shortages, the poor peasants formed brigands that looted and plundered countryside and most flocked in Paris as beggars and provided power and base to the revolution. By creating chaos they facilitated collapse of ancient regime. Lefebvre remarks that peasants, took it upon themselves to deal the blow by which the aristocracy was laid low.

At the time of accession of Louis XVI, France was vexed with financial problems, particularly that of maintaining balance between income and expenditure. Persistent and continuous efforts were made to cure overwhelming crisis of treasuries. Louis XVI at first appointed Turgot, a practical administrator. With experience of being intendent, at first appointed Turgot, a practical administrator. With experience of being intendent, his motto was : "No bankruptcy : no increase in taxation : no borrowing : reduction of expenditure with a view to redemption of long outstanding debt." Since he favoured imposition of taxes on all incomes and introduction of free trade, his appointment was favoured by philosophers and intellectuals including Voltaire. In eighteen months of his stay in office his policies in reducing national debt and its rate of interest yet he was dismissed he remarked. On his dismissal he remarked, "Never forget Sir, that it was weakness which brought the head of Charles I to the block."

After several months of Turgot's dismissal, Louis XVI invited Necker, the Genevan financier who being a foreigner could not be appointed minister. He

was therefore, vested with the power of Controller General. He was an honest and skillful financier but not a great statesman. He accepted the administrative system of France as it stood, and hoped without introducing fundamental change, to carry on the government by means of economy and of loans. He suppressed many unnecessary offices, simplified by accounted system and reformed the system of collection of indirect Taxes. But unfortunately France got involved in American War of Independence and Natural measures proved inadequate to meet was expenses. But he manipulated accounts to show concocted surplus of 10,000,000 instead of 46,000,000 deficit. His publication of account was considered dangerous in the royal circles. Necker asked for minister's post, which refused, led to his resignation on 19th May, 1781.

Two years later Calonne, was appointed he was an experienced intendant and a highly intelligent and resourceful person. His was an uphill task. The budget was in arrears : future revenues had been discounted; and the moneyed classes had not lost confidence. He heavily depended on borrowing from capitalists. He increased the general purchasing power which temporarily silenced his critics but during the tenure from 1783 to 1785 borrowing touched to the figure of 653 million livers. He suggested a comprehensive plan to reforms, which meant end of privileges of nobility, the Assembly of Notables called to advise the king declined to approve it in 1781 and suggested calling of the States General, Calone was dismissed on 8th April, 1787 commenting on the performance of these persons, New Cambridge History (Vol. IX) writes "Like all performance of these persons, despotism Calone, Turgot and Necker were revolutionaries only in sense that they rejected many of the assumptions of the old regime, seeking clearly that only by the abolition of the privileges and restrictive protection fiscal and economic problems of the age could be solved."

Under the pressure from Queen, Louis XVI did not appoint Cardinal de Brienne.

Though an opponent of Calonne's policies, he soon after assuming office imposed taxes on the privileged classes. Although it was constitutional for King to use his authority, yet, the Paris Parliaments refused to register proposed taxes. Nobles were annoyed at reduction of pensions. Patriots found central government weak. In the words of Cobban, "The Remonstrances and pamphlets in which such ideas were expressed; along with attacks, often in violent and emotional language, on the King, ministers, had wide circulation. In the face of the wide spread opposition the King dismissed de Brienne and recalled Necker. He also annulled his intention of summoning the State General.

It was the most critical time. The Central Government was weak nobility divided and partly hostile, prices sky-rocketed, wages depressed and treasury empty. The collection of revenues were gradually breaking down and payments were suspended; the budget showed great deficit Mirabeau later commented. "This deficit is nation's most valuable asset". The King stood helpless, waiting for a miracle to cure the ills of the nation.

Before the State-General actually met in May 1789, the Third Estate

succeeded in securing double representation. On their demand of vote by head and not by chamber King could not give his final decision. Emboldened by the inaction on the government the confidence increased. On the 10th June, Abbe Sieyes a great constitutional expert, proposed that the clergy and nobility should be summoned for the last time to join the Third Estate in one chamber. So great was the enthusiasm that the Third Estate declared itself on 17th June as National Assembly, as they believed that they really represented the nation. It was a revolution in miniature. "The King, however, declared to hold royal session of the State-General on 22nd June. The deputies of the Commons were not allowed in as the doors were closed. They met it near by Tennis Court and took oath that they would continue their meeting till they had formulated the constitution. On 23rd June King addressed the States General, while concerning right to property, fiscal reforms and abolition of feudal cases, he refused to concede one chamber for all. He also ignored their demand for estates. Nobility and a part of the clergy left the hall. Mirabeau then declared, "Go and tell those who sent you that we are here by the will of people and that we shall go only if we are driven at the point of bayonet."

The King had no choice but to submit to the Commons. He accepted their demand of joint session. But the King was not sincere as he was under the influence of his queen and nobility. He called troops and on 11th July dismissed Necker, which caused amazement as well as disappointment among the Commoners. Paris was excited. It was in the grip of mobs. People looted shops, and secured arms, Camille, 'a revolutionary exclaimed, "There is not a moment to lose, we have only one course of action, rush to arms." There was municipal government in Paris. Soon the Commons formed civil guards later known as 'National Guards' for the defence of rights and property of the people for the rioters in Paris. At this moment defence of the Revolution lay in the hands of the Parisians. On 15th the tumultuous forces led by Camille, attacked the Bastille a great fortress symbolising the royalty. The royal troops, were asked to, leave Versailles and invited Necker to the ministry. He recognised the municipal government of Paris, and the civil military of Paris, was recognised as National Guard. King conceded victory to the people. Old regime collapsed. Its king was a constitutional monarch and his subjects the French citizens. In fact, the end of the old regime made the beginning of the French Revolution.

1.5.10 Keywords

1. Grand Monarch
2. Aristocracy
3. Church courts
4. Troops

1.5.11 Long Questions

1. Discuss the main causes of the French Revolution.
2. How far French monarch was responsible for the outbreak of the French Revolution?

1.5.12 Short Questions

1. The States General
2. Louis XIV
3. Louis XVI
4. Marie Antoinette

1.5.13 Suggested Readings

1. Irene Collins : *Age of Progress.*
2. Leo Gershoy : *The French Revolution and Neapolean.*
3. George Lefebvre : *A Coming of the French Revolution.*
4. Alfred Cobban : *A History of Modern France. 1715-1799.*
5. Grant and Temperly : *Europe in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century.*
6. G. Rude : *Revolutionary Europe, 1789-1815.*
7. C.D. Hazen : *Modern Europe up to 1945.*
8. C.D.M. Ketelbey : *A History of Modern Times.*

**CAUSES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION : THE ROLE OF THE
FRENCH PHILOSOPHERS**

- 1.6.1 Objectives
- 1.6.2 Introduction
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1.6.1 Objectives

In this lesson you will study the role French Philosophers in the French Revolution.

Philosophers like Voltaire, Montesquieu and Rousseau had a lot of contribution in bringing the Revolution of 1789.

1.6.2 Introduction

In the last lesson we have seen that in the eighteenth century France remained politically the France of Louis XIV, the Grand Monarch. But socially, the nation changed rapidly and the conflict of social realities with its traditional pattern became increasingly acute. In the realm of ideas change had been taking place since the Reformation, but it became revolutionary in the eighteenth century. This period is known as the 'Age of Enlightenment', France could not remain immune to the intellectual change taking place in Europe.

To study the role of ideas in bringing about a revolution is important because all revolution first takes place in the minds of people in response to and as a reaction against the actual realities. It is generally said that the thinkers at the most sought to reform the state and not to destroy it, their ultimate aim was reform rather than revolution. Since ideas from the content of revolutions, it would be wrong to separate the two, the ideas and realities.

With the help of reason, the thinkers attacked the existing superstitions,

ignorance, incompetent administration crushing financial system, barbarious judicial procedure, religious crushing and economic waste and confusion. Aroused by the spirit of humanism and service to mankind they condemned anything which went against the dignity of man. They proclaimed that the existing institutions were unnatural and only reason could help in discovering just and ideal order. It would not, therefore, be incorrect to say that these were men of letters, scholars and intellectuals of France popularly called the philosophers who played a momentous role in bringing about the French revolution.

Roots of this change go deep in history. Amongst many thinkers like Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo, credit goes to Isaac Newton, and Englishman for affecting revolution in the minds of people. He provided mathematical system which reduced the physical world to order and demonstrated that there was only universal law of nature. By vanishing mystery from universe he instead brought nature between man and God. Another Englishman.

1.6.3 John Lock

John Locke evolved a theory of human psychology and wished that man could live in accordance with nature because human nature was innately evil. He said that there were laws operating in society. By understanding these laws the human society could make advances. Thus the theory of morals marks the emergence of utilitarianism.

These developments had deeper implications for example man could discover the truth concerning nature without church or revelation. They suggested people to follow reason. Thus the growth in the knowledge of physical sciences brought about a great mental revolution. It became the foundation of the French Revolution when it was applied to government and society.

France did not remain immune from infection of new ideas. Since the days of Louis XIV change had started taking place. Breaking down of religious and political absolutism started taking place even during the reign of Louis XIV and it got accelerated during his successor's reign. Perre Bayle was one of leading thinkers who has sceptic. He based his ideas on scientific and historical evidence. Essentially concerned with a practical question he argued on the basis of observations and experience. His most revolutionary idea was that people should be held together not by religion but by common secular interest. In his opinion no system of government was absolutely good. All governments should be judged by their results.

In the field of religion new ideas led to growth to toleration. Despite censorship there were as many as 102 different treatises. In circulation expression unorthodox religious ideas. Condte de Bou Jain villiers, the author of *vic ae mahomet* was one of the leading heretical thinkers : while Moslier was another who wrote in the early 18th century "the world is not ruled by an intelligent being". Predecessor of Voltaire. Meslier was more vilom in his political and social criticism. He and many other including Voltaire condemned metaphysics

and dogma, but they were intensely concerned with ethics. They were essentially empirical in their outlook. They judged the church and other social institutions by their practical results. Utilitarianism dominated the century and it taught the gospel that pain was evil and pleasure good. 'Limited the doctrine may have been, in its simplicity it appealed to the ordinary educated man of age of reasons' writes Alfred Cobban.

There were a host of writers and thinkers in those days. For the purposes of this lesson which is limited in its scope we shall study only some great philosophers whose writing affected a fundamental change in society and ushered in a revolution in the minds of people.

1.6.4 Voltaire

Having no systematic political beliefs and only limited interest in politics, Voltaire was the foremost champion of reason and tolerance. A man of the fine literary taste, wit, poetry and drama, Voltaire made Newton and Locke till then not very well known persons in France, household names. His name is permanently associated with the campaign "crush in the famous things". For his ideas Voltaire was beaten and put in Bastille. After his release he left England in 1726. He was about thirty two years of age at that time. England was a revelation to him for, in England middle classes were socially respected, there was freedom of expression and religious prosecution was unknown. He made a thorough study of English society and institutions and wrote letters on the English (1773). By describing English society he exposed that of the French. After a brief sojourn in Paris, he fled to Lorraine and then on invitation to the court of philosopher King, Fredrick the Great of Prussia. After three years, he fled to Swiss frontier. He wrote many works and smuggled them into France. In 1778 at the age of eighty four he returned to Paris where he died in the same year.

As regards his religious views, he was not athestic. He accepted the few and fundamental tenets of natural religion. He believed in a transcended diets and obedience to moral precepts that God had revealed to man through his reason. He attacked dogmas, fanaticism, persecution in the name of religion and complex ritualism. "For a quarter of century this inspired publicist, this man of prodigious intellectual and literary gifts preached the cause of tolerance through enlightenment". He wrote *Philosophical Dictionary* (1764), a novel *Condid* (1769), a *Treatise on Tolerance* besides numerous articles.

Voltaire while intending to teach people could make them laugh. Sorel rightly comments, "He reigned by virtue of his defects much as by his qualities." His guests of generosity refreshed the atmosphere of the courts without disturbing it. Enchanted by the marvellous limpidity of his prose, his readers admired him for he was the greatest charmer of his age.

In his political views, Voltaire was not a revolutionary. He believed that the state could do every thing and it was his constant aim to strengthen it. He said "Liberty and property are the English watchwords they are property guaranteed by a strong government. His programme can be summed up in one

phrase, “enlightened despotism” and his political aim in his own sentence : it is not the question of making a revolution like that of Luther and Calvin, but of bringing about a revolution in the minds of these called to govern”.

1.6.5 Montesquieu (1689-1755)

A contemporary of Voltaire, Montesquieu was born in a rich family. He inherited baronate of his uncle and was a magistrate but he resigned from the job afterwards. He was one of the first persons who were capitulated by the success of Newtonian physics. He inaugurated rational politics by applying reason and natural law to the political organisation of society. In the opinion of Anderson, he was “one of the most fertile in ideas and one of the widest in intellectual scope”, comparable to Aristotle he was deeply interested in the practical problems of government, “As a political philosopher he endeavoured to do for France what Locke had done for England”, says Hollwell.

Montesquieu’s major concern was individual liberty. Aware of the perils of the personal dictatorship, he made a serious study of moral, intellectual, social and political institutions and practices of the French society. His earliest work *Persian letters* was an indictment of the reign of Louis XIV. He ridiculed the corruption of the court, condemned the privileges of the aristocrat derived the incompetent financial administration, and denounced the vices of fanaticism and intolerance.

His greatest work in ‘Spirit of the Laws’ was published in 1748. A full discussion of this celebrated work, however, belongs properly to the history of political theory. One year after its publication, it was quoted in the Parliament of Paris, and the King of Sardinia advised his son to read it. He displayed conservative temper, and suggested moderation. He did exaggerate the power of rulers and governments and denounced extreme centralisation of authority of Louis XIV. Although his understanding of the English constitutional monarchy was erroneous but his views carried great weight with the English and American thinkers and influenced the subsequent events. On the basis of the fact that there were laws which governed various kinds of governments, he suggested that the republican government was based on virtue, monarchy on honour and despotism on personal interest and caprice. For the maintenance of individual liberty he suggested separation of legislative, executive and judicial power. His ideas and works like those of Voltaire were popular with enlightened rulers. He was no democrat, nor did he denounced privileges. He favoured perpetuation of Church to operate as a check on monarchy. “Voltaire fought the middle class cause of constitutional government, religious toleration, civil freedom, and freedom of thought and expression. Montesquieu, not less enlightened preferred to check to the arbitrary rule of the monarch by restoring the political powers of the nobility”, observes Gershoy while making comparison of Voltaire and Montesquieu. But both wanted rational jurisprudence, decried torture and inhuman penalties and condemned secret procedure of courts. Both were symptomatic of the new attitude towards the political organisation of society. But by his contemporary people, observes Sorel,

“he was more often admired than read, more often read, than understood.”

1.6.6 The Physiocrats

They were the men who applied the general precepts of eighteenth century of the specific problems of the economic welfare. Their central doctrine, from where the name physiocrats was derived, may briefly be summed up in the following words : land was the sole source of wealth the society was governed by definite and ascertainable as in the material universe: and the task of the government is to discover those laws and maintain their free operation. The fundamentals over which there was general agreement among the physiocrats were as follows :

- (i) The mutual interdependence of man and nations which should be maintained by free exchange of products.
- (ii) Maintenance of man's natural right to property which could be secured by abolishing all government regulations and feudal restrictions for the fullest enjoyment of property.
- (iii) Free production and free distribution, under only natural restriction of supply and demand.

Physiocrats who propagated these ideas, the names of Francois Quesnay (1694-1764) and Marquis de Gournay (1712-1759) are worthy of mention. Both were opposed to custom duties, protective duties and guild regulations. Their followers were Dupont de Nemours, Trudaine and Turgot were affected many agricultural reforms had helped in the development of textile industry by their teachings. In Scotland, Adam Smith wrote *Wealth of Nations*. It is one of the most profound doctrines of economic liberalism. Other persons like Hugo Grotius in Holland Condorcet denounced the menace of militarism and international anarchy. They favoured international cooperation. The physiocrats were opponents of governmental interference. They favoured enlightened despotism who would organise society in accordance with the natural and essential laws of the social order.

During the middle of the eighteenth century a generation of writers, young forthright and imbued with new spirit began a determined offensive and a movement against the ideas and institutions of the old Regime. Known as Encyclopaedists, they were actually publicist. Led by Denis Diderot, D' Alembert, D' Holbach and Helvetius they achieved success in completing the colossal Encyclopedia in 33 volumes. Many men of letters, writers of novels, play, poetry, men of science, religion, philosophy, education and social science contributed their articles and built up a great monument to human knowledge. It brought together all the knowledge which the mankind had acquired by that time and virtue of this we rightly call the eighteenth century as the age of enlightenment. To the modern man the *Encyclopaedia* may appear outdated and wrong in many conclusions, yet it may be pointed out that some men of genius moulded public opinion in favour of a fundamental transformation of society, a work which was at once destructive and constructive.

1.6.7 Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

If Montesquieu was from many points of view the most modern of the great political thinkers of the century, Rousseau was the most dynamic and most revolutionary in the influence. Saving Babitt rightly comments, "If we wish to see the psychology of Rousseau writ large, should turn to the French Revolution". Similarly Sorel says in "France, he was the Prophet war excellence of Revolution".

Son of Genevan Watchmaker, Rousseau was ruthless, impulsive and unstable. From his childhood he led an utterly lonely life. Undisciplined, untutored and unfamiliar with worldly dealings yet utterly honest, Rousseau spent life of a vagabond from one place to another, acquiring knowledge of everything. He fortunately reached Paris in 1741 where also he left wretched life and sank deeper into himself. It was at the influence of Diderot that he wrote an Essay, *'Discourse on Science and Arts'*(1751) wherein he argued against the very age he lived in. He rejected the idea that knowledge was an answer to man's problem. From now onward he began to pour out his unrestrained, undisciplined genres and wrote books in rapid succession, *The Origin of Inequality* (1765), *The New Heloise* (1761), *Emile* (1762), *The Social Contract* (1763). He expressed ideas which emerged from his own torturous and unhappy personality. He sought to establish society which was simpler and more egalitarian than those of the civilized Europe. Rousseau preached the gospel of spiritual revolution. He therefore did not aim at the heads of the people put a little below their hearts. He appealed to instinct rather than wisdom. He was the preacher of ignorant innocence and poverty. He said, "Ignorance never did any one harm, error alone is fatal." Our wisdom in slavish prejudice, our customs consist in constraint, compulsions. He once said, "the only society in which man can be happy is one in which he is free to follow the dictate of his spiritual being and to live in virtuous harmony with the purpose of nature".

In his most famous book, *The Social Contract* he argued that all men had certain natural rights and liberties, which were life, liberty and property. The government which was incapable of protecting these rights should be removed. He explained the relationship of an individual to authority which governed him by the theory of "General Will" which was sovereign and to government only an agency. Thus Rousseau developed a revolutionary theory that the people are sovereign and the government derive their legitimate authority from the consent of all the governed. Its revolutionary aspect should be viewed from the 18th century situation when monarchy was absolute and the King's will was law, in legitimate government was the republican form of government. So sure was Rousseau about the ultimate success of his ideas that he said, "Bring into being the European Republic for a single day and this is enough to make it last for ever.

So great was the impact of his ideas that "the great succumbed to it as completely as mediocre; at the same time he spawned a generation of muddled sophists, turgid speechifiers and tearful libertines, he inspired the poets and

instructed the philosophers from him issued Schillers and Kant, "So popular were his writings that it is said that at the time of his death every one who could read was reading his works."

We should not presume that the intellectuals and philosophers achieved instant success. For the dissemination of their ideas, they were faced with many hurdles Radical as they were they faced tremendous opposition from the established church and state. The repressive policy of the government, clamping of censorship; arrest of publishers, exile of the condemned writers, were some of the rigors with which these persons were confronted. They however, tried to overcome them by publishing their work outside France anonymously and smuggling them into the country from beyond French frontier. For example Voltaire's pamphlets were smuggled into France in thousands. The other limitation was the limited public which could read and write, probably none outside the bourgeoisies. There were only a few public libraries.

Nevertheless, there were hundreds of clubs, mostly saloons which attracted intellectual luminaries of France. Their discussions were wider in range and conversation free. Among these who visited these saloons were the young nobles and the churchmen. The new ideas were spread through cafes and street cornermeeting. Number of newspapers also increased which indicate increasing interest of public ideas. There were seven hundred Masonic lodges where the members could read, latest books and current periodicals.

1.6.8 Role of Ideas

While assessing the contribution of ideas in bringing about the French Revolution historians generally believe that its causes were embedded in the economic inconsistencies and financial mismanagement in an indefensible system of taxation. In the decaying political and social institutions and in the inability of the ruling class to improve them. In their opinion the philosophers taught neither democracy nor revolution. According to Hazen, to say that philosophers brought the revolution is like putting the horse behind the carriage. But such comments are based on erroneous conception and ideas are separable. In the case of French Revolution the former is more important than the latter.

Before going into this problem, let us study the role of ideas in the French Revolution. There is a general agreement that the philosophers helped in breaking down the traditional attitude respect for the government and reverence for religion. They exposed the evils of the government and prepared the nation for a radical change. They gave ideas for reform. If the ruling classes had given attention to those and had introduced there would have been perhaps no revolution of the kind which took place in France. Since the philosophers preached reforms and revolution, particularly violent ones some historians believe that, Philosophers should not be considered as leaders of revolutions. As a matter of fact those who led the French Revolution were as much inspired by those ideas as they were compelled by the circumstances. If we go deeper into the concept of revolution we shall see that the revolution unlike an upheaval is

an organised movement for a deliberated change. Alternative system which the bourgeoisie wished to establish could be established peacefully. Reform in the ruling classes had cared to do so or could be raised by pulling down the whole edifice of ancient regime. But in both cases it would have constituted a revolution. Ideas impart content to the revolution and their mutual relationship is like that of the seed of soil and the life force to the physical organism. Without ideas, a violent upheaval can at most be a great catastrophe and not a revolution: particularly a political-social revolution. The philosophers gave certain concrete ideas such as rule of law, right to freedom of press expression and civil liberty. These ideas formed the content and spirit of the French Revolution. The people believed that these were the remedies for the evils of the ancient regime. The French Revolution was the clash of two forms of government of classes, of two divergent attitudes, of two different concepts of government; end of the one and the beginning of the other symbolised revolution. No revolution, of course, can occur without a suitable ripe situation and no event can be termed as revolution if it does not bring in its wake a radically different and qualitative improved political and social system. It is the domain of ideas that can conceive alternative projects of living. Therefore, to bring a revolution, the role of conditions is as important as that of ideas. In fact, both are complementary to each other and by virtue of this fact are inseparable and equally significant.

1.6.9 Keywords

1. Middle classes
2. Fanaticism
3. Religious toleration
4. Social System
5. Monuments

1.6.10 Long Questions

1. Discuss the role played by the Philosophers in bringing about the Revolution of 1789.
2. Was the Revolution of 1789 a result of the contribution of Philosophers?

1.6.11 Short Questions

Write Short Notes on:

1. Voltaire
2. Montesquieu
3. Jean Jacques Rousseau
4. The Social Contract

1.6.12 Suggested Readings

1. Leo Gershey : The French Revolution and Napoleon.
2. Alfred Cobban : A History of Modern France, Vol. I., 1715-1799.
3. M.S. Anderson : Eighteenth Century Europe.
4. J.S. Hallowell : Main Currents in Modern Political Thought, pp.140-50.
5. C.D. Hazen : Modern Europe upto 1945.

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