

North abolished the duties on glass and sugar. But in order to assert the right of taxing, the tax on tea was retained. The tax on tea led to a lot of trouble and finally led to war.

Small incidents are exaggerated when two peoples are irritated with one another and at this time various occurrences exasperated feelings on both sides.' Great indignation was aroused due to the action of the British Regiment in the town of Boston in 1773. Other events of more serious nature soon followed.

The British East India Company had been allowed to export tea direct to America without going to Great Britain first. When the ships of the Company arrived in Boston, a number of men disguised as Red Indians boarded them and threw three hundred and forty chests of tea into the sea. This happened in 1773. The British authorities took strict measures and additional troops were sent. The colonies became united and a Congress representing twelve of the thirteen colonies was held at Philadelphia.

The Congress drew up a Declaration of Rights, lodged a protest against the atrocities of the British authorities and proposed to boycott British goods. There was a skirmish between the colonial forces and the British forces at Lexington in 1775 and in the next year, on the July 4th 1776, by making the famous Declaration of Independence, the thirteen colonies finally broke their allegiance to Great Britain.

Ill-feelings
towards each
other

The incident of
Boston

Congress of
Philadelphia

Declaration of
Independence, 1776

Courses of the War of Independence.

In 1775, the small battle of Lexington was fought. The British forces were successful, nevertheless, the battle proved the fighting spirit and capacity of the colonists. In the same year, the gruelling battle of Bunker's Hill was fought and it was a very costly victory for the British. In 1776, the rebellious colonies made the Declaration of Independence and took the oath to fight to the last. In this year, the colonists carried the war into Canada but they were unsuccessful. George Washington, the Commander-in-Chief of the colonists suffered a defeat at Brooklyn. The British forces gained uniform success upto this. But the shape of things were altered when General Burgoyne surrendered with his whole army at Saratoga in 1776. This became the turning point of the war. Emboldened by this reverse of the British, France and Spain declared war upon England. Holland joined France and Spain sometimes after. Russia, Denmark and Sweden formed an Armed Neutrality to protest against England's demand to put enemy character to enemy goods on neutral ships. The hope of the English to win the contest was lost when in 1781 General Cornwallis was forced to surrender at Yorktown. In 1783, with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, the war came to a close. By this treaty, England recognised the Independence of the rebellious colonies.

Battle of Lexington and Bunker's Hill

War in Canada

Surrender of English general Burgoyne

France, Spain and Holland joined the colonies

Surrender of Cornwallis 1781 and the Treaty of Versailles 1785

Effects of Success of the Colonies

The American War of Independence has undoubtedly historical importance. The effects of the war had tremendous consequences. The success of the colonies created a deep impression everywhere in Europe. The British authorities came to their senses and they could understand the defects in their colonial policy. Consequently the old colonial policy was discarded and a new colonial policy was promulgated. In their new policy, the British authorities showed greater amount of tolerance and consideration. The British Government could understand at last that it was dangerous to treat the colonies always for the interest of the motherland.

The British changed their old practice and adopted a new colonial policy

colonial policy was discarded and a new colonial policy was promulgated. In their new policy, the British authorities showed greater amount of tolerance and consideration.

The success of the English colonies in America inspired the Spanish American colonies and before long they made a great bid for independence. The Spanish Government became unable to suppress them. It can be unhesitatingly said that the independence of the Spanish American colonies is the direct effect of the successful War of Independence wedged by the English colonies of America.

The Spanish colonies in America got inspiration from the success of the English colonies

The Spanish Government became unable to suppress them. It can be unhesitatingly said that the independence of the Spanish American colonies is the direct effect of the successful War of Independence wedged by the English colonies of America.

Towards the middle of the 18th century, French economy showed signs of breaking down. France suffered much in finance and territory during the Seven Years' War. She was on the lookout for taking revenge.

Effect of the War of Independence on the economy of France

With this intention she joined the rebellious American colonies against their mother country England. The monetary help which

France gave was of much help to the colonies but this

completely exhausted the French treasury. An empty treasury compelled the French monarch to summon the States General and the summoning of States General was the signal for the outbreak of the French Revolution. The French people were greatly inspired by the ideal of freedom which the English colonies in America had achieved. The French Revolutionaries took their ideals and inspiration from the American War of Independence.

The war hastened the outbreak of the French Revolution

Some French leaders like Lafayette had joined the war in America and had gathered valuable experience. The American revolution

greatly influenced the outbreak of the French Revolution or as historian Guedalla would say, "the American Revolution...brought Europe nearer to French Revolution."

Causes of Success of the Colonies

There were various causes for the success of the American colonies. For many reasons, it had not been possible for England to engage her full strength

The great distance was a great difficulty for the English

in the war. England had to fight in a country three thousand miles away. To conduct a campaign three thousand miles away, in a

country a thousand miles long and covered with forest was for Great Britain, a difficult task. In the War of American Independence, the American colonies fought in their own country. The English authorities had thought that the backbone of the resistance of the colonies would be easily broken. But geographical factor was underestimated and that error proved fatal for the English.

The British forces displayed some definite drawbacks,—

her generals could not make the correct study of the situation in many cases. The English fleet even lost command of the sea for some time. Moreover, the colonial people displayed fine fighting spirit. They had not enough arms, ammunitions and other equipments of war and they lacked experience. But

Drawbacks of the English forces

The spirit of the colonial people

this weakness was more than made up by two factors. Firstly, they had a burning zeal for freedom and they had developed an almost unconquerable spirit which helped to tide over many difficulties and adverse situations. Secondly, the colonies had secured the services of a very brilliant general whose name was George Washington. The name of George Washington inspired confidence in the army. He was a cool-brained

The brilliant leadership of George Washington

person. His strength of character, his military skill, his perseverance and farsightedness had supplied mental strength to the colonial army. The progress of Washington was slow but steady. He did not break down by defeats; in fact, he always rose superior to defects. The leadership of George Washington was surely responsible for the victory of the colonies to a great extent.

The colonies had not to fight alone. France, Spain and Holland joined them. The armed neutrality formed against England became helpful to the colonies. So many factors combined to make the American War of Independence a

The European powers helped the colonies

success.

Questions

1. Why did the people of Europe migrate to the American continent? Discuss how the Colonies and Empires were established in North and South America.

2. What were the causes of the American War of Independence?

(Direct and indirect causes—dislike for English rule—lack of tight control—the defeat of the French in Canada—the people of the English colonies were Englishmen who were imbued with the Englishman's idea of constitutional govt.—individual liberty and political justice—as Englishmen they wanted to plant English institutions in American soil—the slogan of 'no taxation without representation. Economic causes—the action of George Grenville, Rockingham and North—the Boston episode—the war broke out)

3. Discuss the courses of the War of Independence.

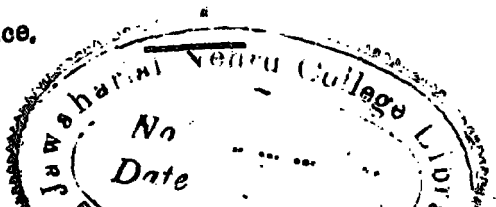
4. Trace the reasons for the success of the American colonies.

(The great distance—the burning desire of the colonists for freedom—the English drawbacks—the leadership of George Washington—European help)

5. What were the effects of the success of the American colonies?

6. Write short notes on :

(a) Seven Years' War (b) Stamp Act (c) 'No taxation without representation' (d) George Washington (e) Declaration of Independence.



THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Introduction

From the time of Louis XIV, the great French monarch who wanted to make France supreme in Europe, France had been the most cultured state in Europe and the capital of France had been her cultural capital. In the 18th century, France had been defeated many times in various armed conflicts; the prestige of French monarchy had gone down beyond recovery, her economy had been wrecked nevertheless, the kingdom of France still outshone every state in Europe. The court of the French monarch was the model of princes and language and literature of France was more familiar to them than their own. French academicians, dancers and musicians were honoured throughout the length and breadth of Europe. The society of Paris, the capital of France was the flower of European civilization and 'to be admitted to those circles was the ambitions of social and intellectuals all over Europe.' There might be found all that made perfect the ease and elegance of social intercourse, the glamour of great names, the sparkle of great wits, variety of entertainment, fertility of discussion and theme and the friendly consciousness of common interest.

But below this brightly burning lamp of civilization and culture there was darkness. The brilliance of French civilization could not conceal a gross and ominous disorder. The monarchy was weak and despotic ; the church was corrupt and had

Superiority of
French culture

French civilization was the
model of
European princes
and elite

Internal condi-
tion of France

become notorious for its lust of power; the nobility was selfish, the finance was in a near bankrupt position and for the gross inequality in political and social conditions both intellectual middle class (the Bourgeoisie) and the peasantry was resentful. All these factors had given France the shape of a powder keg. All the factors that 'lead a country to revolution' were present.

The Revolution came and swept away the ancient state of order. The great Englishman Pitt had said of the French Revolution—"a schism with the universe." It was exactly so. In habits of life and conventions of thought, in concep-

The French Revolution caused 'a schism with the universe'.

tions of duty and values, in ideas of state and social order, there was a sea of difference between the order of things before the Revolution and after it. A new era came into existence and new standards, new values and new voices were born. The battle cries of the French Revolution were 'equality, liberty and fraternity'. The quake of the French Revolution was still shocking Europe when 18th century closed. The new century stepped in and it

began with the new ideas of Liberalism, Nationalism and Democracy. These were

Ideologies of the Revolution

dominant ideologies that influenced the courses of European history throughout the 19th century. French Revolution is the biggest single event in the European history and for 25 years, the history of Europe was the history of 'one event, one nation and one man'. The event was, of course, the French Revolution, the nation was the French and the man was the Corsican born Napoleon Bonaparte, the greatest military leader of modern times.

Causes of the French Revolution

Next to Reformation and Renaissance, French Revolution is the most important event in world history. This big event did not take place due to one or two reasons —it was due to many a deep-rooted reason and some of them had their root in distant past. The causes can be classified under several heads—political, social, economic and the philosophical etc.

Political Causes

The Government of France was a highly centralised administration. From the time of the famous Louis XIV, the strength and power of the monarchy had increased enormously. Louis XIV devised a highly centralised system of administration and by reducing the power of the nobles, he was able to make the crown all powerful and omnipotent. It is said that Louis XIV used to say, "I am the State." Despotic and powerful though he was, still he was never wanting in assiduity and anxious care for the good of his country. Louis XIV improved his internal administration, made his court the most beautiful and gorgeous court in Europe and by his warfares, he brought glory and prestige to French monarchy. But the things took a different aspect soon.

The condition over which a despotism is based is that the character of the ruler must be very vigorous. Whenever the ruler is weak, there is chaos in the administration. After the death of Louis XIV, this thing took place. Louis XV was a weak and frivolous minded ruler. He wanted to enjoy

Many deep-rooted causes

Centralised administration

Activities of Louis XIV

Conditions of despotism

all the benefits of an autocracy while avoiding all the responsibilities attached to it. The evil effects of a centralised despotic state under a weak ruler soon manifested itself. The nobles usurped many rights and privileges and avoided the responsibilities. The administration fell into the hands of a band of courtiers and high officials of the state who knew nothing but their own interest. Corruption had very high tide. To corruption was added the vices of oppression. Anybody might be arrested and put to prison by the mere issue of a warrant known as the 'Letters De Catchet' which was most notorious in nature.

Character of
Louis XV

Evil results
arising out of the
weak character of
Louis XV

The internal administration was vitiated due to corruption, oppression and weak character of the monarch. But the glory and prestige which were secured for the French monarchy by Louis XIV had also declined very much. The battles in which France was engaged throughout the 18th century had been decided against her. France had been defeated in the war of Spanish Succession (1702-1713) towards the beginning of the century. Thereafter she was severely defeated in the War of Austrian Succession (1740-48) and Seven Years' War (1756-63). In the Seven Years' War France was forced to cede her superiority to Prussia in land warfare and in colonial struggle she was defeated by England.

All these defeats had highly undermined the prestige of the French monarchy. French people did not protest against the absolutism of Louis XIV because he had established order at home and brought prestige for France. But the weak Louis XV

Failure of
absolutism

could do none. The absolutism became a failure and so it was a decried institution. Weak French monarchy and her repeated defeats supplied powerful causes for the Revolution.

Social Condition—The French society was in an anomalous condition. It was graded from top to bottom and there were sharp differences in the enjoyment of power and privileges. The society, like all feudal society during the Middle Ages, was divided primarily between two sections—privileged and non-privileged. The privileged class had all the privileges and they rolled in comfort and luxury while the non-privileged class were devoid of any privilege and they were subjected to all the evils of oppression.

The privileged class included the nobility and the higher clergy. These two sections of the French people were wealthy and they enjoyed many a privilege as a matter of right. They could pay taxes in greater amount but they evaded paying it as much as possible. Louis XIV had taken many of the duties and responsibilities of the noble in his hand in order to strengthen the monarchy. The nobles thus were free from much of their duties but they were allowed to retain all the privileges and honours intact. The result was that the French noble class became a class of wealthy people who recognised only their own interest. They had little duties but all the rights. The higher clergy was an aristocratic class who were possessed of much wealth and property. Instead of looking towards the

Highly anomalous
social condition

The privileged
nobility and
higher clergy

Nobles enjoyed
rights but had no
responsibilities to
perform.

moral and religious well-being of the people, they indulged in luxury and loved too much to meddle in politics. The spiritual well-being were looked after by the lower clergy while the upper clergy were a totally degenerated lot.

The higher clergy—a highly degenerated and power-loving class

The degeneration and decline of the French nobility and clergy had been completed and their highly corrupt life caused resentment among the greater portion of the French people. The nobles and clergymen had degenerated into a band of greedy courtiers who were selfish and cared nothing for the interest of the state.

The non-privileged class included the middle class intelligentsia (Bourgeoise), the lower clergy, the poor labourers and the peasantry. These people bore the brunt of nearly ninety per cent of the total taxation. They had no rights and privileges and they were excluded from all places of administration. The non-privileged class had all the obligations but enjoyed no rights.

The non-privileged order

The Bourgeois or the upper middle class included the educated middleclass French people and though included in the non-privileged section, their position was fairly well. They were a well-to-do class and included the doctors, the lawyers, the philosophers, the writers, the teaching community and the businessmen. They were energetic and intelligent people. But, however energetic and intelligent they might be, they were excluded from every kind of office and from the enjoyment of rights and privileges. This made the Bourgeois very much resentful. Conscious of their ability, the Bourgeois, they bitterly attacked the existing order of

The position of the Bourgeois

things. They were not ready to bear coolly the existing order in which they had all the obligations but no right. They were not ready to accept this position of inferiority. They earnestly hoped to end this social anomaly.

The resentment of the Bourgeois

The condition of the poor artisans and labourers were very bad and they were completely under the mercy of the rich people. The condition of the peasantry was also equally bad and the peasantry and the artisan class formed the bulk of the non-privileged section of the French people.

The miserable condition of the artisan class and the peasantry

Their condition was very deplorable. They had to pay taxes to the king, to their feudal nobles and to the church. The crushing burden of taxation fell upon them. The story of the misery of the poor labourers and in particular, the peasants did not end here. In addition to this crushing weight of taxes, he was obliged to give his labour free of cost, was subjected to repair roads without any remuneration and his lords could trample his corn while on hunting. In a word, the French peasantry had been the prey to every kind of exaction and oppression and was on the very brink of ruin and destruction.

The crushing burden of taxation and oppressive feudal responsibilities

The privileged nobility and the clergy were known as the first two 'Estates' and the non-privileged section was known as the 'Third Estate'. The first two Estates had the monopoly of all high governmental posts, were exempted from various taxes on ground of their feudal obligations which had been long taken away by the Central Government. The poor peasantry,

The three 'Estates'

Sharp differences in the enjoyment of rights and privileges

while serving his feudal obligations bitterly resented the fact that his overlord has avoided it. While paying taxes, the exasperated Third Estate felt bitter envy for the lot of the first two Estates. Both the peasantry and the Bourgeois sincerely wished to end this state of society in which those who had capacity did not pay and those who were overburdened had to pay all the taxes. They were determined to put an end to this anomalous system.

Economic Condition—In the economic sphere also, there persisted anomaly and discrepancy. The nobility and the upper clergy enjoyed special favour in this respect also. They were in the possession of the bulk of the land of the country. They had the monopoly of all the high offices of the state. And by law, they were exempt from paying taxes. For this reason whole burden of taxation fell on the Third Estate. This discrepancy in the policy of taxation loudly called for remedy.

The first two 'Estates' had wealth but they were not liable to give taxes.

France had been engaged in several big wars during the period of Louis XIV and after him. Louis XIV had fought many battles during his reign. Such wars needed enormous expenditure. In the 18th century France joined the War of Austrian Succession and Seven Years' War. In these two wars, France had to sustain defeats and her treasury was exhausted. In the Seven Years' War France was decisively defeated in the colonial and commercial contest with England. She was on the lookout for revenge when the War of American Independence broke out and she joined the rebellious colonies against England. The empty French treasury was further exhausted. On the eve of the French

Repeated war caused economic miseries.

Revolution, French treasury had been totally bankrupt and her economy was on the very verge of ruin.

To this near bankrupt condition was added the extravagance of the French Emperors. During the long reign of Louis XIV, the condition of national finance had been highly critical. France was heavily in debt and this debt had been on the increase due to the extravagant and unwise policy of Louis XV. His court expenses were very high and he gave all sort of appointment to his favourites.

Extravagance
of the French
monarch

Louis XVI, during whose reign the French Revolution finally broke out inherited an empty exchequer. Marie Antionette, the queen of Louis XVI was a highly extravagant woman. She used to spend huge amount of money for her clothing and toilet. Though he was a moderately well intentioned monarch, Louis XVI could do nothing to remedy the lamentable condition of the treasury. France was proceeding steadily towards bankruptcy and economic factor finally precipitated the revolution.

Louis XVI and
his queen Marie
Antionette

The French Philosophers of 18th Century—Before the French Revolution had broken out, another Revolution had swept France and this was a Revolution in the ideas of French people. This Revolution had prepared the French people mentally for the actual Revolution.

Revolution in the
realm of ideas

In ideas of religion, politics, in arts and science, in culture and in outlook towards society, a spirit of inquiry and analytical bent of mind marked the Renaissance of 15th century Europe. This spirit of inquiry and criticism

The new spirit
of enquiry was
again seen.

was again seen in a new manner in the 18th century. The Age of Reason had again come in. In every aspect of life, in religion, society, in law, economics and politics—everywhere this new idea made itself felt. Instead of blind faith in ancient practices, the French people had developed passionate longing to achieve social equality and social justice. For this new desire, the French people were indebted to the writings of a band of intellectuals majority of whom were philosophers. These groups of intellectual people held torch for the French people to come out of the medieval darkness of social inequality and political despotism to the sunlit modern world founded on the equality of men in every respect.

New a spiration of the French people

Of these people, some have become famous in history. They were Montesque, Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, Alembert, etc. Their writings raised storm in the minds of French people and made them ready for the Revolution. These writers aimed their attack at almost everything.

The writings prepared the minds for the Revolution.

The higher clergy and the nobility were the two pillars on which rested the despotism of the French monarchs. The clergy had shadowed the mind of common people by keeping them ignorant and superstitious. The selfish and reactionary noble class had been trying to suppress the new spirit of the French people by means of relentless oppression and extortion. The French philosophers made the people think about the social and political injustice perpetrated by a corrupt administration and a selfish official and noble class. The people had

The philosophers used their pen to uproot the anomalous socio-political condition of France.

been used to think that this hardship and misery had been their lot and their fate had been declared from the time of their birth. The French philosophers for the first time taught them that they had every right to demand equality in social, political and administrative affairs of the realm. The French writers inspired the French people by means of their writings and urged to change the shape of things by revolutionary process. They taught the people to think critically and by so doing struck at the very root of all kinds of ignorance and superstition.

The philosophers taught the people to think in a different way.

Montesque (1689-1755) was a prominent political philosopher of the 18th century. He sarcastically criticised the defects of the French society in his book 'The Persian Letters'. In his more famous book named 'The Spirit of Laws' he highly praised the constitutional monarchy of

Montesque and his 'Persian Letters' and 'The Spirit of Laws'

England and wished that similar constitutional measures be introduced in France. Montesque was an ardent supporter of individual liberty. In France, the individual liberty was endangered because the legislative, executive and the judicial functions rested in one person—the French monarch. As a remedy to this evil, Montesque recommended the

Theory of separation of power

separation of executive, legislative and judicial functions. The writings of Montesque inspired the French people to a great extent to put an end to the despotic nature of administration.

Another person of prominence was Voltaire. He was the most outstanding intellect amongst the European writers of his time. He showed his matured capacity in different

ways—in writing dramas, history, essays and poetry. The Prussian king Frederick the Great and the Russian empress Tsarina Catherine II were in correspondence with him. Voltaire severely criticised the corruption that had vitiated the social and political life of men. He directed his satires especially against the corruption and worldliness of the clergy. Thus he struck at the root of the anomalous social condition. Voltaire was not an extreme revolutionary. Though he directed his satires against the existing evils of state and society, yet he was not in favour of destroying them altogether. He advocated the reconstruction of the French state and society entirely upon a new basis. “If God did not exist, it would be necessary to create him”—this was his ideology.

Voltaire and his sharp satires

The ideology of Voltaire—he was in favour of reconstruction

Voltaire wanted to reorganise the French state and society on a new basis. While Voltaire tried to preserve it, Rousseau aimed to destroy it. Where Voltaire left, Rousseau began. In fact Jean Jaeque Rousseau was the most powerful of the French philosophers and his writing spread fire among the minds of the French people.

Rousseau and his theory

Rousseau's 'Contract Social' precipitated a revolution.

Rousseau led a private life which was anything but honourable. He obtained very little success in his life. But his writings brought about a revolution. The genius of Rousseau were surpassed by few of his contemporaries. He had a deep sympathy with the oppressed. The political influence of his famous book 'Contract Social' is incalculable. His theory was that man is born free and the civiliza-