

places of Germany to create a sense of national solidarity.

His measures The system of coinage was centralised and an uniform system of coinage was introduced for the whole of Germany. Economic unity and solidarity was secured by the establishment of an Imperial Bank.

Bismark took care to uproot the causes which may endanger the unity and solidarity of Germany. While building up the German nation he came into conflict with the Catholics and the Socialists. Bismark thought that the Catholics were dangerous to the unity of Germany because they owe their allegiance to a foreign entity—the Pope of Rome. He enacted several very repressive legislation. But

Struggle with the Catholics—the Kulturkampf the Catholics were very much united and they opposed the work of Bismark vigorously. For this, Bismarck could not secure full success against the Catholics. This

struggle with the Catholics is known as the Kulturkampf or campaign for culture. Bismark thought that the socialists were anti-royalists and were against his military policy. So, to bring about the destruction of the socialists, he followed a two-edged policy—on one side he tried to break the backbone of the socialists by highly repressive legislations

Struggle with the Socialists and on the other hand he tried to check the spread of socialism by improving the conditions of the working class people. This

socialistic legislation of Bismark is very important because he was perhaps the first statesman to bring about socialistic legislation though like the Catholics he was not fully successful in crushing the socialists too.

The economic policy which Bismark inaugurated saved the newly growing German industries from keen foreign

competitions. This economic policy profoundly helped the German industries. The German industries received great impetus and the amount of production increased enormously. The high rate of industrialisation and the increase of the amount of the production made it necessary to search for source for raw materials and the markets for finished goods. Bismark was at first not in favour of establishing colonies but rapid growth of industries caused a change in his outlook.

The economic policy—rapid growth of industries

Foreign Policy of Bismark

The entire foreign policy of Bismark aimed at the accomplishment of two things : firstly, the possessions of Germany which she has acquired must be preserved, and secondly, he wanted to keep France isolated in Europe. To accomplish these two objects, he took vigorous and detailed measures. Bismark had apprehended that France would try to take revenge on Germany because the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine had been taken away from her after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. So, he tried to take measures to forestall France in this respect. In so doing, he weaved a delicate network of diplomatic tangle.

The twofold aim of Bismark's foreign policy

Bismark made friendship with Austria and Italy. He secured for Austria some very favourable terms in the Treaty of Berlin. He concluded between Germany, Austria and Italy, the famous Triple Alliance. A friendship with Russia was also made. Thus France became without a friend in the continent.

Friendship with Russia & Austria

But the diplomacy of Bismark divided Europe into two opposite camps. Germany was in one camp and France was in the opposite camp. There was peace in Europe during the period of Bismark and even some time after his fall. But the peace was only in name—it was more apparent than real. The European powers were making military preparations. So, the atmosphere of Europe was becoming more and more heated.

Bismark's policy divided Europe

Secondly, the diplomatic network which Bismark had spread over Europe was too delicate to be handled and maintained by any other person. Few people had such diplomatic skill. So, when Bismark was removed, the young Emperor of Germany could not maintain it or rather allowed it to fall through. And one word more about

Defects in Bismark's diplomacy

It formed the background for World War I

Bismark's politics. Bismark had bound the states of Austria, Italy, Russia together into a single bond of union. But Italy had many causes of quarrel with Austria, and Austria and Russia had many clashing interests (notable among them is the clashing interest in the Balkans). The clashing interest of Russia and Austria in the Balkan region and the desire of France to get back Alsace and Lorraine formed the background of the World War I.

Meanwhile the German Emperor Kaiser William I died and he was succeeded by his son Frederick III who died three months later. Frederick III was succeeded by Kaiser William II and with him Germany received a new master and a new page was opened in the history

Tug of war for power and prominence between the German Emperor and Bismark

of Germany. The young Emperor had many fine qualities but he was self-willed and of resolute nature. He came into conflict with the old minister Bismark.

Bismark's
resignation—the
"dropping of the
Pilot"

The Emperor had a different view regarding the foreign and internal policy of Germany.

For some time, there was tussle between the old prime minister and young Emperor for power and supremacy. The Emperor, unwilling to be overshadowed by his chancellor wished him to resign and Bismark resigned very unceremoniously. This incident is known as "Dropping the Pilot". Bismark had been undoubtedly a Pilot who had helped Germany to steer clear many a storm and tide.

Estimate of Bismark

Bismark had been undoubtedly one of the ablest statesmen of the century. He had a strong mind. To him the future courses of action were clear and he knew how to

work them. When he became the
Bismark's genius
Chancellor of Prussia, his course of action was clear. He knew that Germany was to be united, Austria was to be driven out of Germany and that Prussia was to be made militarily strong. With a policy of

Policy of 'Blood
and Iron'

'Blood and Iron' he accomplished this. The wars he fought in this connection were remarkable because these wars were all aggressive wars but Bismark managed them in such a way as to show that, as if, Prussia was going to war in self-defence. By his internal policy, he established the basis for the future greatness of Germany. He consolidated the Union, infused

His achievements

in the minds of the German people a strong national feeling and industrialised Germany.

By this process, Germany rapidly developed into a first class

power in Europe. His ability as a statesman and administrator and his giant work for Germany were unique and without any parallel. He is the creator of Modern Germany.

Internal developments under Emperor William II

After the resignation of Bismarck, Emperor William II took up the reins of government in his own hands. Under him there was a tremendous growth of Industrial growth German commerce and industries. The economic life of Germany was completely changed. She was mainly an agricultural country upto now, but now industries began to dominate her economic life. The coal mines and iron deposits being abundant in Germany, her rapid industrialisation became easily possible.

Improvement of
agriculture.

The German people showed great skill in scientific knowledge and technical skill. The German scientists discovered many chemical products and in some of the chemical by-products, she practically enjoyed the monopoly. There was improvement of agriculture and Germany remained nearly self-sufficient in food.

The Foreign Policy of William II

The German nation made brilliant progress in internal life. In foreign policy, the Kaiser struck a new note. The

The new German
policy

German nation had been full of extreme nationalistic sentiments. The new German Emperor declared that German people belonged to a vigorous Teutonic race and they can expand themselves. As industrial growth and

Weltpolitik

economic prosperity took place, the German people thought to find out their proper place under the sun.

This mentality of German people found expression in the words of William II who talked in terms of 'world politics' (Weltpolitik). The policy of Germany henceforth was one of expansion and increasing participation in the world affairs and since these activities needed a large navy, a strong navy became the watchword of German policy. So, colonial expansion, spheres of influence for economic growth, navy and 'weltpolitik' became the dominant features of German foreign policy.

The German
naval policy

The policy of Bismark had been to isolate France and to keep Russia friendly. But William II allowed friendship with Russia to fall through. Instead of that he strengthened ties with Austria. Detached from German friendship, Russia turned towards France and formed an alliance with her. Vigorous colonial expansion and expansion of navy antagonised England. England was at first disposed to be friendly and William II did not accept it. England had many causes of friction with France. But when Germany began to increase her naval strength, she could not remain idle. She made friendship with France and so England, France and Russia formed a common friendship.

Reinsurance
policy lapsed

English friendship
not accepted

Under Emperor William II Germany took up a vigorous foreign policy. In 1895, Germany joined France and Russia to compel Japan to give up Liao Tung Peninsula which she had secured from China by the Treaty of Shimonoseki. She secured important commercial privileges and Kiao Chao as her sphere of influence from China and when Boxer

Vigorous
foreign policy

Rebellion took place in China, she sent soldiers for the international army that put down the Revolt. Emperor William II cultivated friendship with the Sultan of Turkey. He personally went to Syria and secured concessions to build a railway from Constantinople and Bagdad to

England took alarm at the growth of German naval power

Persian Gulf. He encouraged Austria to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina which she was authorised to occupy only by the Treaty of Berlin, 1878. This activities

alarmed England, France and Russia. England was especially alarmed because the German navy was expanding dangerously. England was the most powerful naval power upto now and it was her policy to keep a naval strength equal to the naval strength of any two powers. So, as Germany began building up her navy England was forced to increase her naval strength. This caused an enormous expenditure on the part of England. England tried several

The Triple Entente

times to bring about a solution but became unsuccessful. So, she concluded with France the famous Entente Cordiale and with France

and Russia, she formed the famous Triple Entente in 1907. The Triple Entente was a counterpoise to the Triple Alliance concluded by Germany with Austria and Italy. So, the emergence of united Germany not only upset the Balance of Power in Europe but created new complications and brought Europe nearer to the First World War.

The Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente

After the Franco-Prussian War, Bismark had taken away from France the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine and a large amount of money as compensation. Bismark feared that France

Fear against French revenge

would try every possible way to take revenge. So his policy was to keep France without a friend in Europe and to preserve what Germany had secured. He made elaborate diplomatic arrangement for that.

After the defeat of Austria in Austro-Prussian War (1866), Austria had been treated very mildly. Austrian sympathy was therefore easily achieved.

The alliance of the three Emperors—the Dreikaiserbund

Next with great diplomatic skill, Bismark

drew the Russian Tsar into an alliance

known as the 'Dreikaiserbund' or the alliance

of the three Emperors—of Austria, Germany and Russia.

The alliance was significant because it meant that Austria

had accepted her exclusion from Germany and that she had

been reconciled to her defeat. But when the Berlin Congress

was held, the Russian Tsar, disgusted with Bismark's Pro-

Austrian attitude withdrew from the alliance. Bismark

showed favouritism towards Austria and so the Austro-

German relations became closer. An alliance was formed

with Austria which provided that each was to help the

other militarily in case one of them was attacked by Russia

or any other power aided by Russia. This alliance is known

as 'Dual Alliance' between Austria and Germany. Next,

Italy was taken in and the Triple Alliance

was formed in 1882. Italy had suspicion of

France because France may try to restore

the Pope at Rome. She had much ill-feelings towards France

over the question of Tunis. So, though she had many points

of friction against Austria, French fear drew her closer

towards Austria and Germany and she became a party

to the Triple Alliance. The Triple Alliance is undoubtedly

an instance of diplomatic genius of Bismark. After this,

Triple Alliance
formed in 1882

Bismark tried to keep Russia in good humour and he was able to restore the good relations which existed previously.

In 1884, the Emperors of Austria, Germany and Russia concluded a secret treaty promising to help each other in case any of them was attacked by a fourth power. But bitter relation soon ensued between Austria and Russia and Bismark concluded a separate treaty with Russia known as the Re-insurance Treaty of 1887. Thus did Bismark weave the intricate network of diplomacy.

But this intricate system was too difficult to be maintained and only Bismark could do that. So, when in 1891 Bismark resigned, there were signs of change. The new Emperor allowed the Re-insurance Treaty with Russia to lapse. He drew closer to Austria instead for an alliance with her. The new Emperor talked in terms of world politics, declared that Germany's future lay in water and that a vigorous colonial and commercial policy was adopted by Germany. All these utterances and actions had created alarm in the hearts of France and England.

Russia was disgusted with Austria and there were very sincere causes for that. Russia and Austria had clashing interests in Balkan and this bitterness could not be reconciled. Moreover, the Tsars were following a policy of industrialising Russia. For this work much capital was necessary and she was on the look-out for capital. France had been friendless in the continent due to the diplomacy of Bismark and she was searching for a friend. France agreed to supply the capital which Russia was

The Re-insurance
Treaty with Russia

The Emperor
William II
followed a
different policy

Russia and
France came
close to each
other—the Dual
Alliance in 1898

searching and so France and Russia drew closer to each other. The famous Dual Alliance between Russia and France was concluded in 1893.

England had many causes of enmity with France and hence she was disposed to be friendly with Germany. But the German Emperor repeatedly rejected chances to establish friendship with England. Moreover, the naval policy followed by Germany had alarmed England. The rapid German activities in central Asia and Persian Gulf region had aroused a sense of danger for the safety of British and Russian interests in Asia. So, England made up her quarrels with France and concluded with her the famous Anglo-French 'Entente Cordiale'. Three years later, Russia was taken in the alliance and the Triple Entente among Russia, France and England was formed. The Triple Entente became an effective reply to the Triple Alliance.

There was peace in Europe during the period beginning with the Berlin Congress and ending with the outbreak of the First World War. But this peace was a superficial one—it was more apparent than real. Europe was divided into two armed camps,— Austria, Germany and Italy on one side and Russia, France and England on the other. There was armed preparations on both sides and interests regarding colony, spheres of interest and trade and commerce clashed. Ill-feelings, bitterness, suspicion and distrust and secret diplomacy vitiated the peace that existed. And these clashing interests and armed preparations formed the background of the First World War.

England's policy—
close relation
with France—
Entente Cordiale

The Triple
Entente

Conclusion

Background of
the World War I

Questions

1. Discuss the internal developments of Germany under Bismark.

(Bismark's policy to consolidate the union—uniformity of law, Imperial institutions, Uniform Coinage for the whole of Germany—establishment of Imperial Bank—these measures created a sense of National Unity.

Bismark's policy of Blood and Iron—his struggle with the Catholics—the Kultur Kampf ;—his struggle with the socialists—repressive legislations—social legislation for the improvement of the condition of working class people—Bismark's failure to crush either the Catholics or the Socialists.

Rapid growth of industries—increase of productions and its consequences.)

2. Narrate the foreign policy of Bismark.

(The twofold aims—to keep France isolated and to preserve for Germany what has been secured—Alliance with Austria and Russia—the Dreikaiserbund—withdrawal of Russia—Dual Alliance between Austria and Germany—the Triple Alliance—Re-insurance Treaty with Russia—France completely isolated—defects of Bismark's diplomacy—its consequences.)

3. Make an estimate of Bismark's statesmanship.

(A master diplomat of the 19th century—his policy of Blood and Iron—his contribution towards the Prussian monarchy—his fight for power with Parliament—his wars to bring about the unification of Germany—war with Denmark, war with Austria, war with France—unification accomplished—his diplomatic genius in every case.

Became Imperial Chancellor of United Germany—his works for consolidation—his diplomatic network—his ability and capacity—the creator of Modern Germany.)

4. Discuss the Internal and Foreign Policies of Germany under Emperor William II.

(Rapid industrial growth—economic prosperity ;—skill of German people—the talk of Weltpolitik—colonial activities—vigorous foreign policy—increasing participation in the world affairs—increase in the naval strength.

Allowed Re-insurance Treaty with Russia to lapse—relation with Austria made closer—incited Austria to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina—other activities.)

5. Write short notes on the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente and analyse the background on which they were formed.

(Bismark's policy to isolate France—formed alliance with Austria and Italy ; the policy of Germany against the interest of England—naval policy of Germany antagonised England—Russia and France formed an alliance—Triple Entente—background of the First World War.)

6. Why is the period (1878-1914) termed as the Age of Armed Peace ? Critically discuss and give your opinion.

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

Introduction

Europe was proceeding steadily and quickly towards the bloody conflict which convulsed Europe and the world during the early years of the 20th century. This bloody

The political
background

war which is known as the First World War was fought during the years 1914 and 1918.

The black cloud of this unholy war was gathering over the political sky of Europe for quite a long time. The political background had been prepared by the rivalry among the nations of Europe for trade and economic influence and for the establishment of empire and colonies. At the beginning of the 19th century, the people and the nations of Europe had been animated by the ideal of Nationalism. The history of Europe was convulsed time

The ultra-
nationalism
among the newly
born national
states

and again and the courses of history became profoundly changed due to the resurgence of this new spirit. The Vienna states system was violated and towards the end of the century several National states had been set

up in Europe. These new National states had been imbued with an ultra-national spirit and they tried by means of a militant nationalism to become a world power. Inspired by this thought, they came out and searched for colonies and empires and for economic market in the world. But there were not many places for them for colonisation

and for markets for their industrial outputs—because the old powers were already in possession of all the good places. But this new powers were not ready to be satisfied—they began to manufacture arms and armaments in a large scale. The war preparations and rivalry seriously unbalanced the Balance of Power in Europe and was inevitably leading it towards a great war. ‘We were often conscious that we were skating on the thinnest of ice and that peace of Europe depended on the mercy of a chapter of an unforeseen and unforeseeable accidents’—such analysis were made of the political atmosphere of Europe during the years that preceded the war.

This created a spirit of rivalry

The First World War was the first war of its type in human history. In its destructive nature, in its extent and ferocity, it was altogether without a precedent. The causes of this war are varied and some of them had their roots in distant past. There were both indirect and direct causes for this war.

In its characteristics it was unprecedented

Indirect Causes

Among the indirect causes, the responsibility of Germany stands in the forefront and the activities of Germany became the biggest single cause of this war. The unification of Germany had been accomplished under the leadership of Bismark in the second half of the 19th century. Towards the close of this century, a militant Nationalism of a very dangerous nature revealed itself among the German people. The German philosophers and writers began to preach the idea that German state and German nation was superior

Responsibility of Germany

Militant Nationalism in Germany

to all other states and nations in the world. The German Emperor spoke in terms of world politics and expressed the idea that in nowhere of the globe should anything happen in which Germany did not play any part. All these lectures and writings had made the German people believe that they were a great nation. To translate this idea into

Race for
armaments

fact, the German people and statesmen were eager to establish colonies and empire and to find their proper place under the sun.

But the scope of establishing colony and Empire was very limited and whatever there was the old powers had already occupied them. Germany could not accept this fact. She

Tense situation

began extensive military preparation. Other powers took alarm and tried to increase their strength. One instance would be sufficient. England was most powerful in navy. When Germany began to increase her naval strength, that superiority was threatened and England in fear increased her naval strength too. In this way the great powers were engaged in this race of armament. This suicidal race became the feature of European history from 1870 to the outbreak of the war.

The Vienna Congress of 1815, while resettling the state of Europe after the downfall of Napoleon Bonaparte, ignored the new spirits of the time—the spirit of

Responsibility of
the Vienna
Congress

Nationalism and Democracy. The people of Europe tried to establish national states and tried to bring about the breakdown

of the Vienna system. All the great factors of European history took place around these aspirations. The spirit of Nationalism created some complications which were seen in the Balkans in Italy, etc. This complication created much

tension and bitterness and in this respect, the Vienna Congress must have a distant responsibility for the First World War.

France was defeated in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. The victorious Prussian statesman Bismark took away from France the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine which were rich in mineral deposits. The plea of Bismark to capture the two provinces was that these provinces had a majority of German population. But the inhabitants of these places thought themselves French for they were under France for a very long time. France could not accept the defeat and could not be reconciled to the permanent loss of Alsace and Lorraine which had very rich iron deposits. So France was on the look-out for revenge and bitter feelings against Germany was created in France.

Anti-German
feelings in France
for the loss of
Alsace and
Lorraine

Italian unification had been accomplished but some places with bulk of the Italian population still remained under Austria. For this reason, the Italian Nationalists thought that Italian unification had not been complete. 'Italia irredenta' (unredeemed Italy) became their battle cry. The Italian Nationalists hoped to bring Trieste and Trentino under the occupation of Italy. They were prepared even to go to war for this. So, like Germany, militant nationalism made itself felt in Italy also.

Nationalistic up-
surge in Italy

Due to the resurgence of nationalism in Balkan region, some national states were created out of the Turkish Empire. These newly independent states were dissatisfied with their territorial limits. The European powers while trying to solve

the Balkan questions created new problems. Austria was given 'to occupy' the principalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina which she annexed. This was bitterly resented by Serbia because her expansion was thereby checked. The interest of Russia clashed with that of Austria in the Balkans. Their clashing of interest, ill-feelings between Austria and Serbia and the Russian propaganda in this region made the condition of the Balkans like a volcano before an eruption.

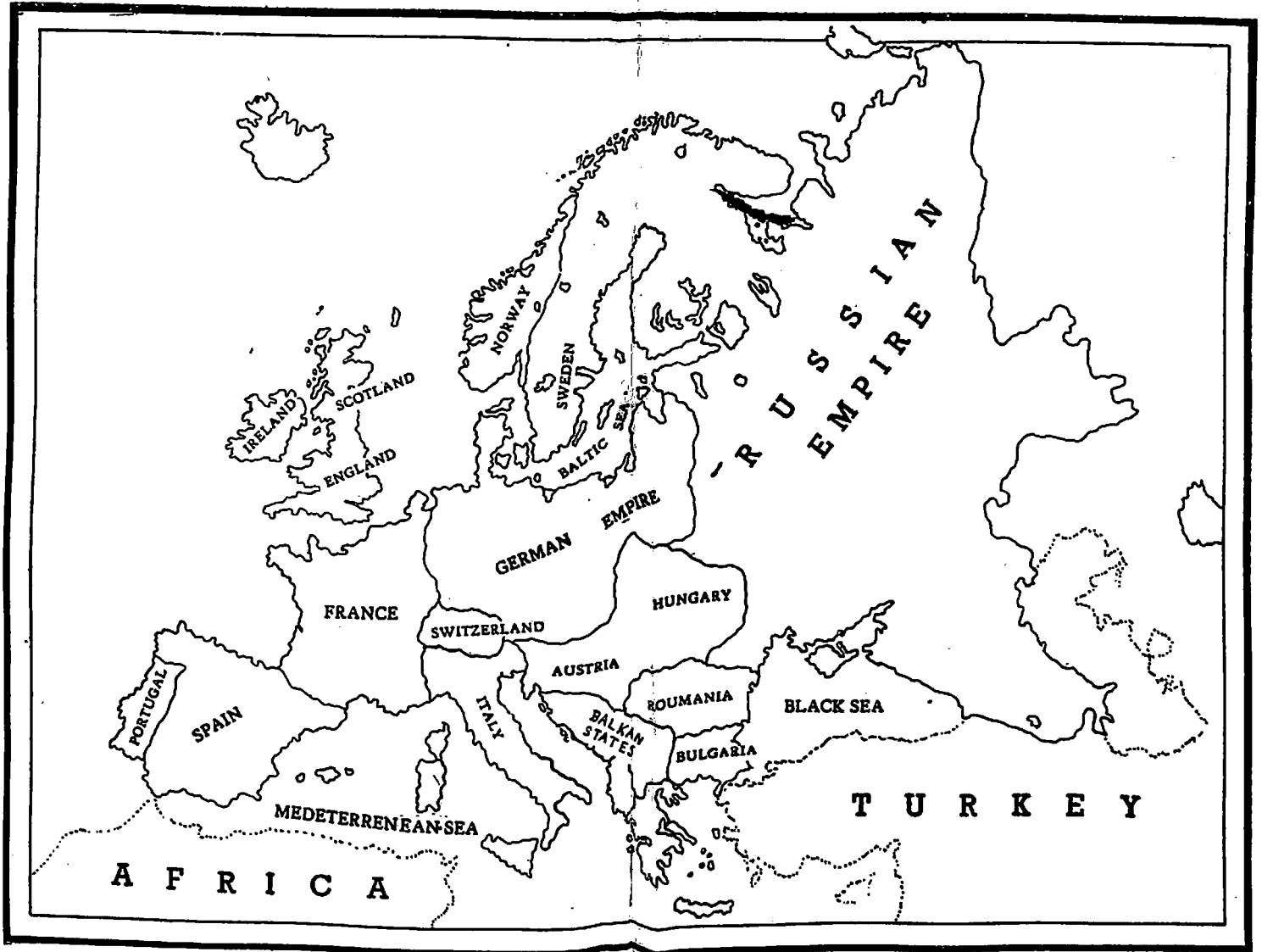
During the 19th century, a great competition ensued between the European powers for trade and for empire. This competition had vitiated the atmosphere of Europe. There was ill-feeling between Germany and France over the question of Alsace and Lorraine. There were clashing interests over the question of navy between England and Germany. German activities in Central Asia had created alarm and anxiety in the minds of England and Russia. Interests also clashed over the Balkan questions and lastly, the war preparation of Germany had frightened European powers. This fear and jealousy was mainly responsible for forming the background of the great war.

Bismark had wrested Alsace and Lorraine from France. He had taken recourse to intricate diplomacy to prevent any possibility of returning them to France. He isolated France by means of diplomacy. France did not remain idle at the face of this condition of things. She went out in search for allies and secured it. Consequently Europe became divided into two opposing armed camps.

The condition of
the Balkans

Bitter relations
between different
European states

Europe divided
into two opposing
camps



POLITICAL MAP OF EUROPE SHOWING GERMAN EMPIRE ON THE EVE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR - 1914

Different ideals and interests were preparing grounds for unholy things to come. The European monarchs and statesmen were engaged in suicidal policy and none of them earnestly endeavoured to preserve peace. Mutual distrust and suspicion, secret diplomacy and alliances vitiated the atmosphere of Europe. The sane minds of Europe was allowed to be banished and Europe steadily moved towards the bloody war.

Secret diplomacy
and lack of
earnestness for
peace

Direct Causes

For various reasons, the atmosphere of Europe had assumed the nature of a powder magazine. Everything was ready for the explosion. Only a spark was wanted and this spark came soon. The Austro-Serbian relation supplied the

The murder of
Archduke Francis
Ferdinand of
Serajevo

direct cause of the First World War. It has been told before that great bitterness existed between Austria and Serbia due to clashing interest in the Balkan region. On the 28th June, 1914, in the town of Serajevo, the capital city of Bosnia, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne was killed along with his wife at the hands of the anarchists while on a tour. This murder created great tumult and excitement all over Europe. Austria held Serbia res-

Ultimatum on
Serbia and her
reaction

ponsible for this murder and issued an ultimatum with severe terms calling upon Serbia to fulfil them within a very short time. If Serbia had fulfilled all the terms of the ultimatum, her sovereignty would have been at a stake. So, Serbia could not consent to it.

War broke out

Thereupon, Austria declared war upon Serbia. Of course, it must be remembered that the issuing

of ultimatum and declaration of war was possible for Austria because the shining armour of Germany inspired her to action.

Serbia was a Balkan state and the Serbs were closely related to the Russian race. Besides, Russia could not remain a silent spectator at this development of events. So, Russia declared war against Austria, and Germany joined Austria. To safeguard her interest, France joined this war against Germany. Germany had planned to put an end to this war within a short time. In order to do this, Germany sent soldiers through Belgium to attack France. Belgium had been recognised as a permanently neutral state by the European powers at the London Conference. So, when Germany broke this neutrality guaranteed by powers, England protested. German occupation of Belgium was a serious danger to the safety of England. So, England joined France and Russia against Germany and Austria. The war between Austria and Serbia became a European war. And with the participation of U. S. A. and Japan, it became a world war.

Courses of the War

The First World War is an unprecedented event in the history of human race. It was a total war and covered an extensive area. The theatre of war comprised nearly the whole of the civilised world and all the important nations took part in it. The nature and characteristic of this war was very much different from other wars of the past. Never before did in any war such huge number of soldiers take part. Rarely a war had been so much destructive and

Violation of
Belgian neutrality
and the war
became a
European war

Nature and
character of the
war

ferocious as this. Though the war began as a conflict between Austria and Serbia, it assumed the aspect of a global war when Germany tried to pass armies through Belgium.

Germany had been ready for the war ; in fact she had made preparations for a long time. She secured rapid success

Rapid success
of Germany

towards the beginning of the war. German

offensive began with the attack of Belgium.

The Belgians fought heroically but they were defeated. After defeating the Belgian resistance, the German army rapidly marched towards Paris, the capital of France, driving before them the French army. The situation became extremely critical but France was saved by the exploits of General Foch. Rapid marches had thrown the

Battle of the
Marne and defeat
of German army

German army into confusion and a big gap had been created between the advancing German army and the main German army.

General Foch took advantage of this and defeated the German forces at the battle of the Marne and compelled them to fall back. The battle of the Marne is very important because it destroyed the German hope of ending the war within a very short time. It halted and checked German advances and gave the Allies time to make adequate military preparations.

After the battle of the Marne, the Germans dug trenches and the repeated attempts on the part of the French failed

Trench warfare

to dislodge them from their entrenched position. The Allies also entrenched themselves.

Both tried to extend their flanks and so the theatre of war became extended to a very long area. The battle of the trenches made it a defensive war and there was no