

**MEDIEVAL AND  
MODERN TIMES**  
**PART II**

by

*James Harvey Robinson*

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## PREFACE

This volume is a very careful and thoroughgoing revision of the author's *Introduction to the History of Western Europe*, which first appeared in 1902. The presentation has been simplified so as to adapt the book especially to use in high schools and preparatory schools, although it can readily be employed in colleges as the basis of an introductory course in general European history, when supplemented by outside reading. The treatment of medieval times, especially of the Church, has been considerably reduced with a view of permitting a more adequate discussion of recent times. This saving of space and other condensations and omissions have made it possible to devote a hundred pages more than in the original edition to the developments of the past hundred years.

The illustrations have been selected with great care from the standpoint of their educational value. The explanatory legend under each of them serves to add much information which it would have been awkward to include in the general narrative. These numerous cuts have inevitably added to the length of the volume, but it should be noted that the narrative itself is somewhat shorter than that in the original edition.

In the revision and expansion of the latter part of the book the author is under great obligations to his friends and colleagues, Professors Charles A. Beard and James T. Shotwell. A great deal of time and thought has been given to the selection of suitable illustrations, and in this Mr. Edward K. Robinson of Boston has given us constant aid and advice.

J. H. R.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
NEW YORK CITY



# CONTENTS

## XVIII. FRANCE UNDER LOUIS IV

- 76. POSITION AND CHARACTER OF LOUIS XIV . . . . . 1
- 77. HOW LOUIS ENCOURAGED ART AND LITERATURE . . 7
- 78. LOUIS XIV ATTACKS HIS NEIGHBORS . . . . . 10
- 79. LOUIS XIV AND HIS PROTESTANT SUBJECTS . . . . . 13
- 80. WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION . . . . . 14

## XIX. RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA; AUSTRIA

- 81. BEGINNINGS OF RUSSIA . . . . . 20
- 82. PETER THE GREAT . . . . . 22
- 83. THE ORIGIN OF THE KINGDOM OF PRUSSIA . . . . . 26
- 84. THE WARS OF FREDERICK THE GREAT . . . . . 31
- 85. THREE PARTITIONS OF POLAND, 1772, 1793,  
AND 1795 . . . . . 35
- 86. THE AUSTRIAN REALMS: MARIA THERESA AND  
JOSEPH II . . . . . 40

## XX. HOW ENGLAND BECAME QUEEN OF THE OCEAN

- 87. ENGLAND AFTER THE REVOLUTION OF 1688 . . . . . 46
- 88. HOW ENGLAND BEGAN TO EXTENDS ITS  
COMMERCE OVER THE WHOLE WORLD . . . . . 50
- 89. THE CONTEST BETWEEN FRANCE AND  
ENGLAND FOR COLONIAL EMPIRE . . . . . 54
- 90. REVOLT OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES  
FROM ENGLAND . . . . . 61

**XXI. GENERAL CONDITIONS IN THE  
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

- 91. LIFE IN THE COUNTRY — SERFDOM ..... 67
- 92. THE TOWNS AND THE GUILDS ..... 70
- 93. THE NOBILITY AND THE MONARCHY ..... 75
- 94. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ..... 79
- 95. THE ENGLISH ESTABLISHED CHURCH AND  
THE PROTESTANT SECTS ..... 81

**XXII. MODERN SCIENCE AND THE SPIRIT OF REFORM**

- 96. THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN  
SCIENCE ..... 87
- 97. HOW THE SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES  
PRODUCED A SPIRIT OF REFORM: VOLTAIRE .. 91

**XXIII. THE EVE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION**

- 98. THE OLD REGIME IN FRANCE ..... 100
- 99. HOW LOUIS XVI TRIED TO PLAY  
THE BENEVOLENT DESPOT ..... 113

**XXIV. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION**

- 100. HOW THE ESTATES WERE SUMMONED  
IN 1789 ..... 119
- 101. FIRST REFORMS OF THE NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY, JULY TO OCTOBER, 1789 ..... 127
- 102. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN PARIS,  
OCTOBER, 1789, TO SEPTEMBER, 1791 ..... 131

103. FRANCE BECOMES INVOLVED IN A WAR WITH OTHER EUROPEAN POWERS . . . . .	135
104. FOUNDING OF THE FIRST FRENCH REPUBLIC . . .	144
105. THE REIGN OF TERROR . . . . .	148

**XXV. EUROPE AND NAPOLEON**

106. GENERAL BONAPARTE . . . . .	158
107. HOW BONAPARTE MADE HIMSELF MASTER OF FRANCE . . . . .	164
108. HOW BONAPARTE SECURED FRANCE IN 1801 AND REORGANIZED GERMANY . . . . .	169
109. BONAPARTE RESTORES ORDER AND PROSPERITY IN FRANCE . . . . .	172
110. HOW NAPOLEON DESTROYED THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE . . . . .	175
111. NAPOLEON AT THE ZENITH OF HIS POWER (1808–1812) . . . . .	184
112. THE FALL OF NAPOLEON . . . . .	192

**XXVI. EUROPE AFTER THE CONGRESS  
OF VIENNA**

113. RECONSTRUCTION OF EUROPE BY THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA . . . . .	202
114. FRANCE, 1814–1830 . . . . .	210
115. GERMANY AND METTERNICH . . . . .	212
116. REVOLUTIONARY TENDENCIES IN ITALY, 1820–1848 . . . . .	216

## XXVII. THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

- 117. INVENTION OF MACHINERY FOR  
SPINNING AND WEAVING ..... 223
- 118. THE STEAM ENGINE ..... 227
- 119. CAPITALISM AND THE FACTORY SYSTEM ... 230
- 120. THE RISE OF SOCIALISM ..... 234

## XXVIII. THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1848 AND THEIR RESULTS

- 121. THE SECOND REPUBLIC AND SECOND  
EMPIRE IN FRANCE ..... 238
- 122. THE REVOLUTION OF 1848 IN AUSTRIA,  
GERMANY, AND ITALY ..... 242
- 123. OUTCOME OF THE REVOLUTION OF 1848 ... 244

## XXIX. THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY AND GERMANY

- 124. FOUNDING OF THE KINGDOM OF ITALY ..... 251
- 125. HOW PRUSSIA DEFEATED AUSTRIA AND  
FOUNDED THE NORTH GERMAN  
CONFEDERATION ..... 255
- 126. THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR OF 1870  
AND THE ESTABLISHMENT  
OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE ..... 262
- 127. THE FINAL UNIFICATION OF ITALY ..... 266

**XXX. THE GERMAN EMPIRE AND THE THIRD  
FRENCH EMPIRE**

128. THE GERMAN CONSTITUTION . . . . . 271
129. BISMARCK AND STATE SOCIALISM . . . . . 274
130. REIGN OF WILLIAM II . . . . . 280
131. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRESENT FRENCH  
REPUBLIC . . . . . 284

**XXXI. GREAT BRITAIN AND HER EMPIRE**

132. THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION . . . . . 295
133. THE REFORM OF THE SUFFRAGE . . . . . 296
134. THE CABINET . . . . . 300
135. GENERAL REFORMS IN ENGLAND . . . . . 302
136. THE IRISH QUESTION . . . . . 310
137. THE BRITISH EMPIRE: INDIA . . . . . 315
138. THE BRITISH EMPIRE: CANADA AND  
AUSTRALASIA . . . . . 320
139. THE BRITISH EMPIRE: SOUTH AFRICA . . . . . 326

**XXXII. THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN THE NINETEENTH  
CENTURY**

140. THE REIGNS OF ALEXANDER I (1801–1825)  
AND NICHOLAS (1825–1855) . . . . . 332

- 141. THE FREEING OF THE SERFS AND THE  
GROWTH OF THE SPIRIT OF REVOLUTION . . 337
- 142. THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY UNDER  
NICHOLAS II . . . . . 344

### XXXIII. TURKEY AND THE EASTERN QUESTION

- 143. THE EMERGENCE OF SERBIA AND GREECE . . 350
- 144. THE CRIMEAN WAR (1854-1856) . . . . . 353
- 145. REVOLTS IN THE BALKAN PENINSULA . . . . . 355
- 146. EXTINCTION OF TURKEY IN EUROPE . . . . . 357

### XXXIV. THE EXPANSION OF EUROPE INTO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

- 147. THE GROWTH OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE  
AND COMPETITION: IMPERIALISM . . . . . 366
- 148. RELATIONS OF EUROPE WITH CHINA. . . . . 375
- 149. JAPAN BECOMES A WORLD POWER:  
INTERVENTION IN CHINA . . . . . 379
- 150. RUSSIA AND JAPAN . . . . . 383
- 151. PARTITION OF AFRICA . . . . . 387
- 152. THE DISRUPTION OF THE SPANISH  
EMPIRE . . . . . 393

### XXXV. ORIGIN OF THE WAR OF 1914

- 153. THE ARMIES AND NAVIES OF EUROPE . . . . . 397
- 154. MOVEMENTS FOR PEACE:  
THE HAGUE CONFERENCES . . . . . 400

155. MATTERS OF DISPUTE: NATIONAL RIVALRIES .....	403
156. THE NEAR-EASTERN QUESTION .....	409
157. THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR .....	417

### XXXVI. THE GREAT WAR

158. COURSE OF THE WAR IN 1914 AND 1915 ...	425
159. THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1916 .....	435
160. THE WORLD AGAINST GERMANY, 1917 .....	438
161. THE QUESTION OF PEACE .....	445
162. THE END OF THE GREAT WAR .....	460





## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

The  
government  
of Louis XIV

Louis XIV carried the work of these great ministers still farther. He gave that form to the French monarchy which it retained until the French Revolution. He made himself the very mirror of kingship. His marvelous court at Versailles became the model and the despair of other less opulent and powerful princes, who accepted his theory of the absolute power of kings but could not afford to imitate his luxury. By his incessant wars he kept Europe in turmoil for over half a century. The distinguished generals who led his newly organized troops, and the wily diplomats who arranged his alliances and negotiated his treaties, made France feared and respected by even the most powerful of the other European states.



*Figure 103. Louis XIV*

The theory of  
the "divine  
right of kings"  
in France

Louis XIV had the same idea of kingship that James I had tried in vain to induce the English people to accept. God had given kings to men, and it was His will that monarchs should be regarded as His lieutenants and that all those subject to them should obey them absolutely, without asking any questions or making any criticisms; for in submitting to their prince they were really submitting to God Himself. If the king were good and wise, his subjects should thank

## FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XIV

the Lord; if he proved foolish, cruel, or perverse, they must accept their evil ruler as a punishment which God had sent them for their sins. But in no case might they limit his power or rise against him.<sup>1</sup>

Louis XIV had two great advantages over James I. In the first place, the English nation has always shown itself far more reluctant than France to place absolute power in the hands of its rulers. By its Parliament, its courts, and its various declarations of the nation's rights, it had built up traditions which made it impossible for the Stuarts to establish their claim to be absolute rulers. In France, on the other hand, there was no Great Charter or Bill of Rights; the Estates General did not hold the purse strings, and the king was permitted to raise money without asking their permission or previously redressing the grievances which they chose to point out. They were therefore only summoned at irregular intervals. When Louis XIV took charge of the government, forty-seven years had passed without a meeting of the Estates General, and a century and a quarter was still to elapse before another call to the representatives of the nation was issued in 1789.

Different attitude of the English and French nations toward absolute monarchy

Moreover, the French people placed far more reliance upon a powerful king than the English, perhaps because they were not protected by the sea from their neighbors, as England was. On every side France had enemies ready to take advantage of any weakness or hesitation which might arise from dissension between a parliament and the king. So the French felt it best, on the whole, to leave all in the king's hands, even if they suffered at times from his tyranny.

Louis had another great advantage over James. He was a handsome man, of elegant and courtly mien and the most exquisite perfection of manner; even when playing billiards he is said to have retained an air of world mastery. The

Personal characteristics of Louis XIV

<sup>1</sup> Louis XIV does not appear to have himself used the famous expression "*I am the State*," usually attributed to him, but it exactly corresponds to his idea of the relation of the king and the State.



**EUROPE**  
**WHEN LOUIS XIV BEGAN**  
**HIS PERSONAL GOVERNMENT**  
**1661**

- Spanish Possessions
- Austrian Possessions
- Boundary of the Holy Roman Empire

0 100 200 300  
 Scale of Miles

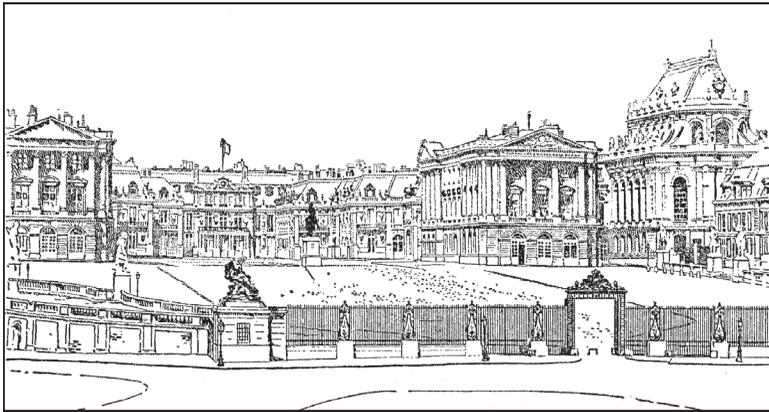
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## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

first of the Stuarts, on the contrary, was a very awkward man, whose slouching gait, intolerable manners, and pedantic conversation were utterly at variance with his lofty pretensions. Louis added, moreover, to his graceful exterior a sound judgment and quick apprehension. He said neither too much nor too little. He was, for a king, a hard worker and spent several hours a day attending to the business of government.



*Figure 104. Façade of the Palace of Versailles*

The strenuous  
life of a  
despotic ruler

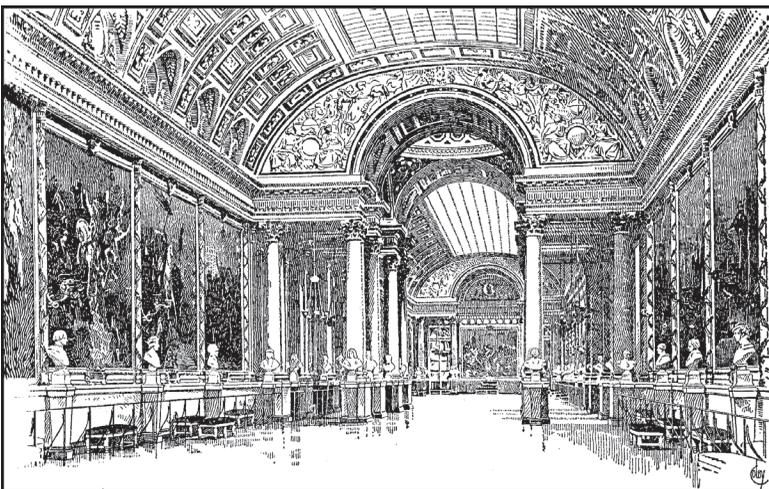
It requires, in fact, a great deal of energy and application to be a real despot. In order thoroughly to understand and to solve the problems which constantly face the ruler of a great state, a monarch must, like Frederick the Great or Napoleon, rise early and toil late. Louis XIV was greatly aided by the able ministers who sat in his council, but he always retained for himself the place of first minister. He would never have consented to be dominated by an adviser, as his father had been by Richelieu. “The profession of the king,” he declared, “is great, noble, and delightful if one but feels equal to performing the duties which it involves,” — and he never harbored a doubt that he himself was born for the business.

§77

**HOW LOUIS ENCOURAGED  
ART AND LITERATURE**

Louis XIV was careful that his surroundings should suit the grandeur of his office. His court was magnificent beyond anything that had been dreamed of in the West. He had an enormous palace constructed at Versailles, just outside of Paris, with interminable halls and apartments and a vast garden stretching away behind it. About this a town was laid out, where those who were privileged to be near his majesty or supply the wants of the royal court lived. This palace and its outlying buildings, including two or three less gorgeous residences for the king when he occasionally tired of the ceremony of Versailles, probably cost the nation about a hundred million dollars, in spite of the fact that thousands of peasants and soldiers were forced to turn to and work without pay. The furnishings and decorations were as rich and costly as the palace was splendid and still fill the visitor with wonder. For over a century Versailles continued to be the home of the French kings and the seat of their government.

The king's  
palace at  
Versailles

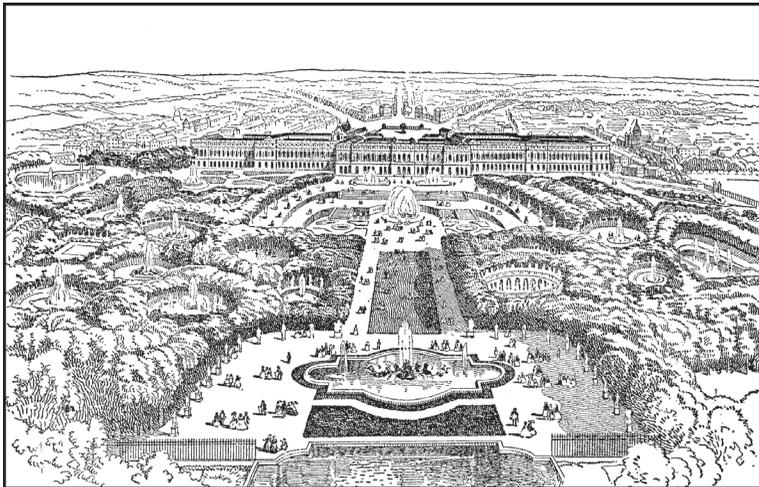


*Figure 105. One of the Vast Halls of Versailles*

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

Life at  
Louis XIV's  
court

This splendor and luxury helped to attract the nobility, who no longer lived on their estates in well-fortified castles, planning how they might escape the royal control. They now dwelt in the effulgence of the king's countenance. They saw him to bed at night and in stately procession they greeted him in the morning. It was deemed a high honor to hand him his shirt as he was being dressed or, at dinner, to provide him with a fresh napkin. Only by living close to the king could the courtiers hope to gain favors, pensions, and lucrative offices for themselves and their friends, and perhaps occasionally to exercise some little influence upon the policy of the government. For they were now entirely dependent upon the good will of their monarch.



*Figure 106. Façade of the Palace of Versailles  
Toward the Gardens*

The reforms  
of Colbert

The reforms which Louis XIV carried out in the earlier part of his reign were largely the work of the great financier Colbert, to whom France still looks back with gratitude. He early discovered that the king's officials were stealing and wasting vast sums. The offenders were arrested and forced to disgorge, and a new system of bookkeeping was introduced, similar to that employed by business men. He then turned his attention to increasing the manufactures of France by establishing new industries and seeing that the older

## FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XIV

ones kept to a high standard, which would make French goods sell readily in foreign markets. He argued justly that if foreigners could be induced to buy French goods, these sales would bring gold and silver into the country and so enrich it. He made rigid rules as to the width and quality of cloths which the manufacturers might produce and the dyes which they might use. He even reorganized the old medieval guilds; for through them the government could keep its eye on all the manufacturing that was done; this would have been far more difficult if every one had been free to carry on any trade which he might choose.

It was, however, as a patron of art and literature that Louis XIV gained much of his celebrity. Molière, who was at once a playwright and an actor, delighted the court with comedies in which he delicately satirized the foibles of his time. Corneille, who had gained renown by the great tragedy of *The Cid* in Richelieu's time, found a worthy successor in Racine, the most distinguished, perhaps, of French tragic poets. The charming letters of Madame de Sévigné are models of prose style and serve at the same time to give us a glimpse into the more refined life of the court circle. In the famous memoirs of Saint-Simon, the weaknesses of the king, as well as the numberless intrigues of the courtiers, are freely exposed with inimitable skill and wit.

Men of letters were generously aided by the king with pensions. Colbert encouraged the French Academy, which had been created by Richelieu. This body gave special attention to making the French tongue more eloquent and expressive by determining what words should be used. It is now the greatest honor that a Frenchman can obtain to be made one of the forty members of this association. A magazine which still exists, the *Journal des Savants*, was founded for the promotion of science at this time. Colbert had an astronomical observatory built at Paris; and the Royal Library, which only possessed about sixteen thousand volumes, began to grow into that great collection of two and a half million volumes — by far the largest in existence

Art and literature in the reign of Louis XIV

The government fosters the development of the French language and literature

— which to-day attracts scholars to Paris from all parts of the world. In short, Louis XIV and his ministers believed one of the chief objects of any government to be the promotion of art, literature, and science, and the example they set has been followed by almost every modern state.

## §78

### LOUIS XIV ATTACKS HIS NEIGHBORS

Louis XIV's  
warlike  
enterprises

Unfortunately for France, the king's ambitions were by no means exclusively peaceful. Indeed, he regarded his wars as his chief glory. He employed a carefully reorganized army and the skill of his generals in a series of inexcusable attacks on his neighbors, in which he finally squandered all that Colbert's economies had accumulated and led France to the edge of financial ruin.

He aims  
to restore  
the "natural  
boundaries"  
of France

Louis XIV's predecessors had had, on the whole, little time to think of conquest. They had first to consolidate their realms and gain the mastery of their feudal dependents, who shared the power with them; then the claims of the English Edwards and Henrys had to be met, and the French provinces freed from their clutches; lastly, the great religious dispute was only settled after many years of disintegrating civil war. But Louis XIV was now at liberty to look about him and consider how he might best realize the dream of his ancestors and perhaps reestablish the ancient boundaries which Cæsar reported that the Gauls had occupied. The "natural limits" of France appeared to be the Rhine on the north and east, the Jura Mountains and the Alps on the southeast, and to the south the Mediterranean and the Pyrenees. Richelieu had believed that it was the chief end of his ministry to restore to France the boundaries determined for it by nature. Mazarin had labored hard to win Savoy and Nice and to reach the Rhine on the north. Before his death France at least gained Alsace and reached

## FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XIV

the Pyrenees, “which,” as the treaty with Spain says (1659), “formerly divided the Gauls from Spain.”

Louis XIV first turned his attention to the conquest of the Spanish Netherlands, to which he laid claim through his wife, the elder sister of the Spanish king, Charles II (1665–1700). In 1667 he surprised Europe by publishing a little treatise in which he set forth his claims not only to the Spanish Netherlands, but even to the whole Spanish monarchy. By confounding the kingdom of France with the old empire of the Franks he could maintain that the people of the Netherlands were his subjects.

Louis XIV  
lays claim to  
the Spanish  
Netherlands

Louis placed himself at the head of the army which he had re-formed and reorganized, and announced that he was to undertake a “journey,” as if his invasion was only an expedition into another part of his undisputed realms. He easily took a number of towns on the border of the Netherlands and then turned south and completely conquered Franche-Comté. This was an outlying province of Spain, isolated from her other lands, and a most tempting morsel for the hungry king of France.<sup>2</sup>

The invasion  
of the  
Netherlands,  
1667

These conquests alarmed Europe, and especially Holland, which could not afford to have the barrier between it and France removed, for Louis XIV would be an uncomfortable neighbor. A Triple Alliance, composed of Holland, England, and Sweden, was accordingly organized to induce France to make peace with Spain. Louis contented himself for the moment with the dozen border towns that he had taken and which Spain ceded to him on condition that he would return Franche-Comté.

The success with which Holland had held her own against the navy of England and brought the proud king of France to a halt produced an elation on the part of that tiny country which was very aggravating to Louis XIV. He was thoroughly vexed that he should have been blocked by so trifling an obstacle as Dutch intervention. He consequently

Louis XIV  
breaks up the  
Triple Alliance  
and allies  
himself with  
Charles II of  
England

<sup>2</sup> See Part I, §54 and §56.

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

conceived a strong dislike for the United Provinces, which was increased by the protection that they afforded to writers who annoyed him with their attacks. He broke up the Triple Alliance by inducing Charles II of England to conclude a treaty which pledged England to help France in a new war against the Dutch.

Louis XIV's  
invasion  
of Holland,  
1672

Louis XIV then startled Europe again by seizing the duchy of Lorraine, which brought him to the border of Holland. At the head of a hundred thousand men he crossed the Rhine (1672) and easily conquered southern Holland. For the moment the Dutch cause appeared to be lost. But William of Orange showed the spirit of his great ancestor William the Silent; the sluices in the dikes were opened and the country flooded, so the French army was checked before it could take Amsterdam and advance into the north. The emperor sent an army against Louis, and England deserted him and made peace with Holland.

Peace of  
Nimwegen,  
1678

When a general peace was concluded at the end of six years, the chief provisions were that Holland should be left intact, and that France should this time retain Franche-Comté, which had been conquered by Louis XIV in person. This bit of the Burgundian heritage thus became at last a part of France, after France and Spain had quarreled over it for a century and a half. For the ten years following there was no open war, but Louis seized the important free city of Strasbourg and made many other less conspicuous but equally unwarranted additions to his territory. The emperor was unable to do more than protest against these outrageous encroachments, for he was fully occupied with the Turks, who had just laid siege to Vienna.

Louis XIV  
sieves  
Strasbourg

§79

**LOUIS XIV AND HIS  
PROTESTANT SUBJECTS**

Louis XIV exhibited as woeful a want of statesmanship in the treatment of his Protestant subjects as in the prosecution of disastrous wars. The Huguenots, deprived of their former military and political power, had turned to manufacture, trade, and banking; "as rich as a Huguenot" had become a proverb in France. There were perhaps a million of them among fifteen million Frenchmen, and they undoubtedly formed by far the most thrifty and enterprising part of the nation. The Catholic clergy, however, did not cease to urge the complete suppression of heresy.

Situation of the Huguenots at the beginning of Louis XIV's reign

Louis XIV had scarcely taken the reins of government into his own hands before the perpetual nagging and injustice to which the Protestants had been subjected at all times took a more serious form. Upon one pretense or another their churches were demolished. Children were authorized to renounce Protestantism when they reached the age of seven. Rough dragoons were quartered upon the Huguenots with the hope that the insulting behavior of the soldiers might frighten the heretics into accepting the religion of the king.

Louis's policy of suppression

At last Louis XIV was led by his officials to believe that practically all the Huguenots had been converted by these harsh measures. In 1685, therefore, he revoked the Edict of Nantes, and the Protestants thereby became outlaws and their ministers subject to the death penalty. Even liberal-minded Catholics, like the kindly writer of fables, La Fontaine, and the charming letter writer, Madame de Sévigné, hailed this reestablishment of "religious unity" with delight. They believed that only an insignificant and seditious remnant still clung to the beliefs of Calvin. But there could have been no more serious mistake. Thousands of the Huguenots

Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and its results

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the royal officials and fled, some to England, some to Prussia, some to America, carrying with them their skill and industry to strengthen France's rivals. This was the last great and terrible example in western Europe of that fierce religious intolerance which had produced the Albigensian Crusade, the Spanish Inquisition, and the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.

Louis's  
operations in  
the Rhenish  
Palatinate

Louis XIV now set his heart upon conquering the Palatinate, a Protestant land, to which he easily discovered that he had a claim. The rumor of his intention and the indignation occasioned in Protestant countries by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes resulted in an alliance against the French king headed by William of Orange. Louis speedily justified the suspicions of Europe by a frightful devastation of the Palatinate, burning whole towns and destroying many castles, including the exceptionally beautiful one of the elector at Heidelberg. Ten years later, however, Louis agreed to a peace which put things back as they were before the struggle began. He was preparing for the final and most ambitious undertaking of his life, which precipitated the longest and bloodiest war of all his warlike reign.

### §80

## WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION

The question  
of the  
Spanish  
succession

The king of Spain, Charles II, was childless and brotherless, and Europe had long been discussing what would become of his vast realms when his sickly existence should come to an end. Louis XIV had married one of his sisters, and the emperor, Leopold I, another, and these two ambitious rulers had been considering for some time how they might divide the Spanish possessions between the Bourbons and the Hapsburgs. But when Charles II died,

## FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XIV

in 1700, it was discovered that he had left a will in which he made Louis's younger grandson, Philip, the heir to his twenty-two crowns, but on the condition that France and Spain should never be united.

It was a weighty question whether Louis XIV should permit his grandson to accept this hazardous honor. Should Philip become king of Spain, Louis and his family would control all of southwestern Europe from Holland to Sicily, as well as a great part of North and South America. This would mean the establishment of an empire more powerful than that of Charles V. It was clear that the disinherited emperor and the ever watchful William of Orange, now king of England (see Part I, §75), would never permit this unprecedented extension of French influence. They had already shown themselves ready to make great sacrifices in order to check far less serious aggressions on the part of the French king. Nevertheless, family pride and personal ambition led Louis criminally to risk the welfare of his country. He accepted the will and informed the Spanish ambassador at the French court that he might salute Philip V as his new king. The leading French newspaper of the time boldly proclaimed that the Pyrenees were no more.

Louis's  
grandson,  
Philip,  
becomes king  
of Spain

King William soon succeeded in forming a new Grand Alliance (1701) in which Louis's old enemies, England, Holland, and the emperor, were the most important members. William himself died just as hostilities were beginning, but the long War of the Spanish Succession was carried on vigorously by the great English general, the Duke of Marlborough, and the Austrian commander, Eugene of Savoy. The conflict was more general than the Thirty Years' War; even in America there was fighting between French and English colonists, which passes in American histories under the name of Queen Anne's War. All the more important battles went against the French, and after ten years of war, which was rapidly ruining the country by the destruction of its people and its wealth, Louis XIV

The War  
of Spanish  
Succession

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

was willing to consider some compromise, and after long discussion a peace was arranged in 1713.

The Treaty of  
Utrecht, 1713

The Treaty of Utrecht changed the map of Europe as no previous treaty had done, not even that of Westphalia. Each of the chief combatants got his share of the Spanish booty over which they had been fighting. The Bourbon Philip V was permitted to retain Spain and its colonies on condition that the Spanish and French crowns should never rest on the same head. To Austria fell the Spanish Netherlands, hereafter called the Austrian Netherlands, which continued to form a barrier between Holland and France. Holland received certain fortresses to make its position still more secure. The Spanish possessions in Italy, that is, Naples and Milan, were also given to Austria, and in this way Austria got the hold on Italy which it retained until 1866. From France, England acquired Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Hudson Bay region, and so began the expulsion of the French from North America. Besides these American provinces she received the rock and fortress of Gibraltar, which still gives her command of the narrow entrance to the Mediterranean.

The  
development  
of  
international  
law

The period of Louis XIV is remarkable for the development of international law. The incessant wars and great alliances embracing several powers made increasingly clear the need of well-defined rules governing states in their relations with one another both in peace and in war. It was of the utmost importance to determine, for instance, the rights of ambassadors and of the vessels of neutral powers not engaged in the war, and what should be considered fair conduct in warfare and in the treatment of prisoners.

Grotius's *War  
and Peace*

The first great systematic treatise on international law was published by Grotius in 1625, when the horrors of the Thirty Years' War were impressing men's minds with the necessity of finding some means other than war of settling disputes between nations. While the rules laid down by Grotius and later writers have, as we must sadly admit, by no means put an end to war, they have prevented many conflicts

## *FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XIV*

by increasing the ways in which nations may come to an understanding with one another through their ambassadors without recourse to arms.

Louis XIV outlived his son and his grandson and left a sadly demoralized kingdom to his five-year-old great-grandson, Louis XV (1715–1774). The national treasury was depleted, the people were reduced in numbers and were in a miserable state, and the army, once the finest in Europe, was in no condition to gain further victories.

### **QUESTIONS**

SECTION 76. What did Richelieu accomplish in strengthening the French monarchy? What were Louis XIV's ideas of kingship? Why did the French view the "divine right of kings" differently from the English? Contrast Louis XIV with James I.

SECTION 77. Describe the palace of Versailles. What were the chief reforms of Colbert? Mention some of the great writers of Louis XIV's time. How did the government aid scholarship and science?

SECTION 78. What led Louis XIV to attack his neighbors? What are the "natural" boundaries of France? What country did Louis first attack? What additions did he make to French territory?

SECTION 79. What was the policy of Louis XIV toward the Huguenots? Who were Louis XIV's chief enemies?

SECTION 80. What were the causes of the War of the Spanish Succession? What were the chief changes provided for in the Treaty of Utrecht?





## CHAPTER XIX

# RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA; AUSTRIA

### §81

## BEGINNINGS OF RUSSIA

We have had little occasion hitherto, in dealing with the history of western Europe, to speak of the Slavic peoples, to whom the Russians, Poles, Bohemians, and many other nations of eastern Europe belong. Together they form the most numerous race in Europe, but, as has been well said, “they occupy a greater place on the map than in history.” In the eighteenth century, however, Russia began to take an increasingly important part in European affairs, and it is now a great force in the politics of the world. The realms of the Tsar in Europe exceeded in extent those of all the other rulers of the Continent put together, and yet they were scarcely more than a quarter of his whole dominion, which embraced northern and central Asia, and formed together an empire occupying nearly three times the area of the United States.

Movements  
of the Slavs  
during the  
period of  
the German  
Invasions

The Slavs were settled along the Dnieper, Don, and Vistula rivers long before the Christian era. After the East Goths had penetrated into the Roman Empire the Slavs followed their example and invaded, ravaged, and conquered the Balkan Peninsula, which they held for some time. When the German Lombards went south into Italy,

## RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA

about 569,<sup>3</sup> the Slavs pressed behind them into the eastern Alps, where they still live within the bounds of the Austrian Empire. Other Slavic hordes had driven the Germans across the Oder and the upper Elbe. Later the German emperors, beginning with Charlemagne, began to push them back, but the Bohemians and Moravians, who are Slavs, still hold an advanced position on the borders of Germany.

In the ninth century some of the Northmen invaded the districts to the east of the Baltic, while their relatives were causing grievous trouble in France and England.<sup>4</sup> It is generally supposed that one of their leaders, Rurik, was the first to consolidate the Slavic tribes about Novgorod into a sort of state, in 862. Rurik's successor extended the bounds of the new empire to the south as far as the Dnieper River. The word "Russia" is probably derived from *Rous*, the name given by the neighboring Finns to the Norman adventurers. Before the end of the tenth century the Greek form of Christianity<sup>5</sup> was introduced and the Russian ruler was baptized. The frequent intercourse with Constantinople might have led to rapid advance in civilization had it not been for a great disaster which put Russia back for centuries.

Beginnings of  
Russia

Russia is geographically nothing more than an extension of the vast plain of northern Asia, which the Russians were destined finally to conquer. It was therefore exposed to the great invasion of the Tartars, or Mongols, who swept in from the east in the thirteenth century. The powerful Tartar ruler, Genghis Khan (1162–1227), conquered northern China and central Asia, and the mounted hordes of his successors crossed into Europe and overran Russia, which had fallen apart into numerous principalities. The Russian princes became the dependents of the Great Khan, and had frequently to seek his far-distant court, some three thousand miles away, where he freely disposed of both their crowns

The Tartar  
invasion in  
the thirteenth  
century

<sup>3</sup> See Part I, §6.

<sup>4</sup> See Part I, §18.

<sup>5</sup> See Part I, §10.

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

and their heads. The Tartars exacted tribute of the Russians but left them undisturbed in their laws and religion.

Influence of the Tartar occupation on manners and customs

Of the Russian princes who went to prostrate themselves at the foot of the Great Khan's throne, none made a more favorable impression upon him than the prince of Moscow, in whose favor the Khan was wont to decide all cases of dispute between the prince and his rivals. When the Mongol power had begun to decline in strength and the princes of Moscow had grown stronger, they ventured to kill the Mongol ambassadors sent to demand tribute in 1480, and thus freed themselves from the Mongol yoke. But the Tartar occupation had left its mark, for the princes of Moscow imitated the Khans rather than the Western rulers, of whom, in fact, they knew nothing. In 1547 Ivan the Terrible assumed the title of "Tsar,"<sup>6</sup> which was the Russian equivalent of the title "king," or "emperor." The costumes and etiquette of the court were also Asiatic. The Russian armor suggested that of the Chinese, and their headdress was a turban. It was the task of Peter the Great to Europeanize Russia.

Ivan the Terrible assumes the title of "Tsar"

## §82

### PETER THE GREAT

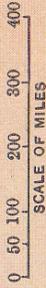
Peter the Great, 1672-1725

At the time of Peter's accession, in 1672, Russia, which had grown greatly under Ivan the Terrible and other enterprising rulers, still had no outlet to the sea. In manners and customs the kingdom was Asiatic, and its government was like that of a Tartar prince. Peter had no objection to the despotic power which fell to him, but he knew that Russia was very much behind the rest of Europe and that his crudely equipped soldiers could never make head against

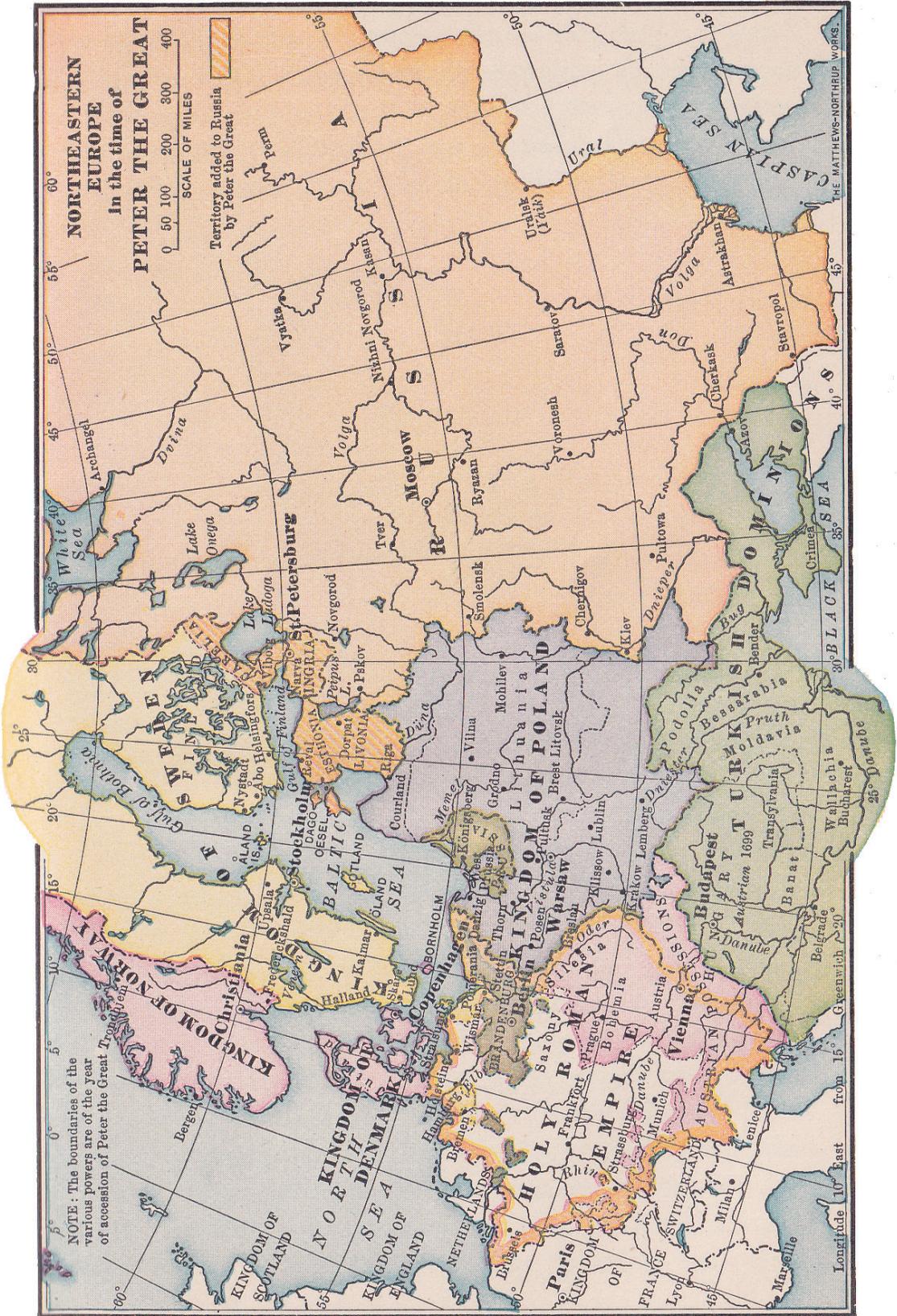
<sup>6</sup>The word "Tsar," or "Czar," is derived from "Cæsar" (German, *Kaiser*), but was used in Slavic books for the title of the kings of antiquity as well as for the Roman emperors. Peter the Great called himself "Imperator," that is, "emperor." The Tsar was also known as "Autocrat of all the Russians."

# NORTHEASTERN EUROPE

In the time of  
**PETER THE GREAT**



Territory added to Russia  
by Peter the Great



NOTE: The boundaries of the various powers are of the year of accession of Peter the Great

THE MATTHEWS-NORTHROP WORKS.



**Figure 107. Peter the Great**

*Peter was a tall, strong man, impulsive in action, sometimes vulgarly familiar, but always retaining an air of command. When he visited Louis XV of France in 1717, he astonished the court by taking the seven-year-old king under the arms and hoisting him up in the air to kiss him. The courtiers were much shocked at his conduct.*

the well-armed and well-disciplined troops of the West. He had no seaport and no ships, and without these Russia could never hope to take part in the world's affairs. His two great tasks were therefore to introduce Western habits and to "make a window," as he expressed it, through which Russia might look abroad.<sup>7</sup>

Peter's travels  
in Europe

In 1697–1698 Peter himself visited Germany, Holland, and England with a view to investigating every art and science of the West, as well as the most-approved methods of manufacture, from the making of a man-of-war to the etching of an engraving. Nothing escaped the keen eyes of this rude, half-savage northern giant. For a week he put on the wide breeches of a Dutch laborer and worked in the shipyard at Zaandam near Amsterdam. In England, Holland, and Germany he engaged artisans, scientific men,

<sup>7</sup>For contemporaneous accounts of Peter the Great, see *Readings in European History*, Vol. II, pages 303 ff.

## RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA

architects, ship captains, and those versed in artillery and in the training of troops — all of whom he took back with him to aid in the reform and development of Russia.

He was called home by the revolt of Russian nobles and churchmen who were horrified at Peter's desertion of the habits and customs of his forefathers. They hated what they called "German ideas," such as short coats, tobacco smoking, and beardless faces. Peter took a fearful revenge upon the rebels and is said to have himself cut off the heads of many of them. Like the barbarian that he was at heart, he left their heads and bodies lying about all winter, unburied, in order to make the terrible results of revolt against his power quite plain to all.

Suppression  
of revolt  
against  
foreign ideas

Peter's reforms extended through his whole reign. He made his people give up their cherished oriental beards and long flowing garments. He forced the women of the richer classes, who had been kept in a sort of oriental harem, to come out and meet the men in social assemblies, such as were common in the West. He invited foreigners to settle in Russia, and sent young Russians abroad to study. He reorganized the government officials on the model of a Western kingdom, and made over his army in the same way.

Peter's reform  
measures

Finding that the old capital, Moscow, clung persistently to its ancient habits, he prepared to found a new capital for his new Russia. He selected for this purpose a bit of territory on the Baltic which he had conquered from Sweden — very marshy, it is true, but where he might hope to construct Russia's first real port. Here he built St. Petersburg<sup>8</sup> at enormous expense and colonized it with Russians and foreigners. Russia was at last becoming a European power.

Founding of  
a new capital,  
St. Petersburg

The next problem was to get control of the provinces lying between the Russian boundary and the Baltic Sea. These belonged to Sweden, which happened to have at that

Russia gains  
provinces on  
the Baltic

<sup>8</sup> Changed to *Petrograd* during the war with Germany in 1914, so that the Russian capital should no longer be called by a German name.

time a very warlike young monarch, Charles XII. He filled Europe with astonishment for a time by engaging in war with Denmark, Poland, and Russia and gaining many surprising victories. But his attempt to penetrate into Russia proved as fatal to him as a similar attempt did to Napoleon a century later. His prowess only served to set back Russia's plans for the moment. Three years after his death, which occurred in 1718, Peter forced Sweden to cede to him Livonia, Esthonia, and other Swedish territory which had previously cut Russia off from the sea.

Peter's attempt to extend Russia to the Black Sea

Peter looked with longing eyes on the possessions of the Turks to the south of him, and he made vain attempts to extend the Russian control as far as the Black Sea. He did not succeed in this, but it had become evident that if the Turks were to be driven from Europe, Russia would prove a mighty rival of the other European powers in the division of the spoils.

For a generation after the death of Peter the Great, Russia fell into the hands of incompetent rulers. It only appears again as a European state when the great Catherine II came to the throne, in 1762. From that time on, the Western powers had always to consider the vast Slavic empire in all their great struggles. They had also to consider a new kingdom in northern Germany, which was just growing into a great power that was to prove incalculably dangerous to the whole world. This was Prussia, whose beginnings we must now consider.

## **§83**

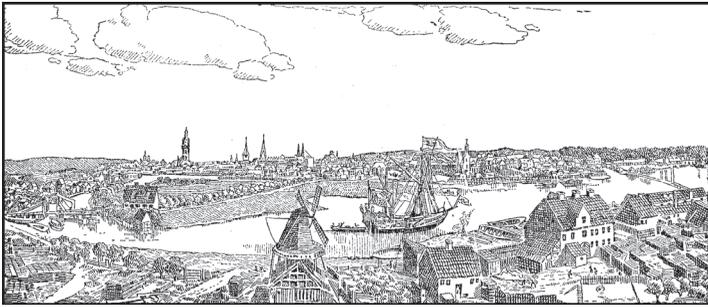
### **ORIGIN OF THE KINGDOM OF PRUSSIA**

Brandenburg and the Hohenzollerns

The electorate of Brandenburg had figured on the German map for centuries, but there was no particular reason to suppose that it was to become one day the dominant state in Germany. Early in the fifteenth century

## RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA

the old line of electors had died out, and Emperor Sigismund had sold Brandenburg to a hitherto unimportant house, the Hohenzollerns, which is known to us now through such names as those of Frederick the Great, of William I, the first German emperor, and of his grandson, William II. Beginning with a strip of territory extending some ninety or a hundred miles to the east and to the west of the little town of Berlin, the successive representatives of the line have gradually extended their boundaries until the present kingdom of Prussia embraces nearly two thirds of Germany.



**Figure 108. View of Berlin in 1717**

*Berlin was only a small town until the days of the Great Elector. It increased from about 8000 inhabitants in 1650 to about 20,000 in 1688. It is therefore not really an ancient city like Paris. Most of its great growth has taken place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.*

Of the earlier little annexations nothing need be said. While it has always been the boast of the Hohenzollern family that almost every one of its reigning members has added something to what his ancestors handed down to him, no great extension took place until just before the Thirty Years' War. About that time the elector of Brandenburg inherited Cleves and Mark, and thus got his first hold on the Rhine district (see map, page 34).

What was quite as important, he won, far to the east, the duchy of Prussia, which was separated from Brandenburg by Polish territory. Prussia was originally the name of a region on the Baltic inhabited by heathen Slavs. These had been conquered in the thirteenth century by one of the orders

Prussia  
acquired by  
the elector of  
Brandenburg

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

of crusading knights (the Teutonic order), who, when the conquest of the Holy Land was abandoned, looked about for other occupation.

After the German knights had conquered Prussia it began to fill up with German colonists. In Luther's day (1525) the knights were converted to Protestantism and dissolved their order. They then formed their lands into the duchy of Prussia, and their Grand Master, who was a relative of the elector of Brandenburg, became their first duke. About a hundred years later (1618) this branch of the Hohenzollerns died out, and the duchy then fell to the elector of Brandenburg.

The territories  
of the Great  
Elector  
(1640–1688)

Notwithstanding this substantial territorial gain, there was little promise that the hitherto obscure electorate would ever become a formidable power when, in 1640, Frederick William, known as the Great Elector, came to the throne of Brandenburg. His territories were scattered from the Rhine to the Vistula, his army was of small account, and his authority disputed by powerful nobles. The center of his domain was Brandenburg. Far to the west was Mark, bordering on the Rhine valley, and Cleves, lying on both banks of that river. Far to the east, beyond the Vistula, was the duchy of Prussia (see map on page 34).

Character  
of the Great  
Elector

The Great Elector was, however, well fitted for the task of welding these domains into a powerful state. He was coarse by nature, heartless in destroying opponents, treacherous in diplomatic negotiations, and entirely devoid of the refinement which distinguished Louis XIV and his court. He unscrupulously set to work to increase his territories and his power.

The Great  
Elector  
makes  
important  
gains in  
territory

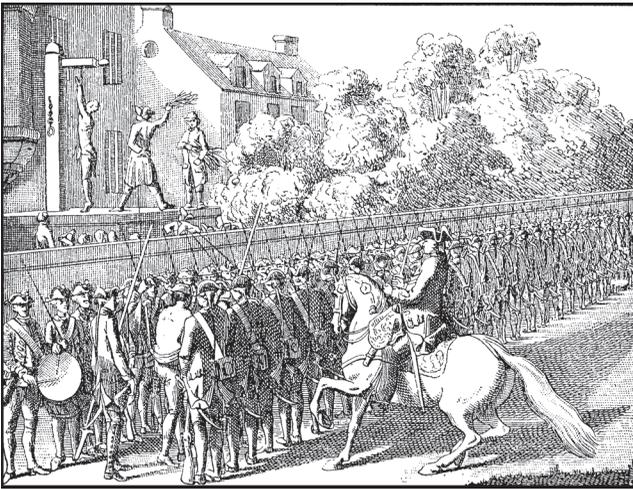
By shrewd tactics during the closing days of the Thirty Years' War he managed to secure, by the Treaty of Westphalia, the bishoprics of Minden and Halberstadt and the duchy of Farther Pomerania, which gave him a good shore line on the Baltic.

Knowing that the interests of his house depended on

## RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA

military strength, he organized, in spite of the protests of the taxpayers, an army out of all proportion to the size and wealth of his dominions, and this was the beginning of that great Prussian war machine which showed its horrible efficiency in the conflict of 1914. He succeeded in creating an absolute monarchy on the model furnished by his contemporary, Louis XIV. He joined with England and Holland in their alliances against Louis, and the army of Brandenburg began to be known and feared.

Reforms of  
the Great  
Elector



**Figure 109. Military Punishment**

*The armies of the old regime were mostly made up of hired soldiers or serfs, and the officers maintained discipline by cruel punishments. In this picture of a Prussian regiment one soldier is being flogged while half suspended by his wrists; another is forced to walk between two files of soldiers who must beat his bared back with heavy rods. It has been said that Prussian soldiers found war a relief from the terrors of peace, since in*

Though a good Protestant, the Great Elector permitted religious freedom to a remarkable degree. He made Catholics eligible to office and, on the other hand, gave asylum to the persecuted Huguenots of France, even offering them special inducements to settle in his realms.

Huguenots  
received in  
Brandenburg

It was accordingly an enriched legacy which the Great Elector left in 1688 to his son, Frederick, and although the

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

Brandenburg becomes the kingdom of Prussia, 1701

career of the latter was by no means so brilliant as that of his father, he induced the emperor to permit him to change his title from “elector” to “king” and so to transform his *electorate* into a *kingdom*.<sup>9</sup>

Frederick III, elector of Brandenburg, becomes King Frederick I of Prussia

The title “King in Prussia” was deemed preferable to the more natural “King of Brandenburg” because Prussia lay wholly without the bounds of the empire, and consequently its ruler was not in any sense subject to the emperor but was entirely independent.<sup>10</sup>

Government of Frederick William I (1713–1740)

The second ruler of the new kingdom, Frederick William I, the father of Frederick the Great, was a rough and boorish king who devoted himself entirely to governing his realm, collecting tall soldiers, drilling his battalions, hunting wild game, and smoking strong tobacco. He was passionately fond of military life from his childhood. He took special pride in stalwart soldiers and collected them at great expense from all parts of Europe. He raised the Prussian army, which numbered twenty-seven thousand in the days of the Great Elector, to eighty-four thousand, making it almost equal to that maintained by France or Austria. He was constantly drilling and reviewing his men, of whose military appearance he was inordinately proud.

Frederick William and the Prussian army

Miserly economy in finances

Moreover, by strict management, miserly thrift, and entire indifference to luxury, Frederick William treasured up a huge sum of money. He discharged a large number of court servants, sold at auction many of the royal jewels, and had a great portion of the family table silver coined into money. Consequently he was able to leave to his son, Frederick II, not only a strengthened army but an ample supply of gold. Indeed, it was his toil and economy that made possible the warlike achievements of his far better-known son.

<sup>9</sup> As king of Prussia his title was Frederick I.

<sup>10</sup> He was not king of all of Prussia. Frederick the Great changed it to “King of Prussia” after the incorporation of the rest, in the partition of Poland.

§84

THE WARS OF FREDERICK  
THE GREAT

In his early years Frederick II grieved and disgusted his boorish old father by his dislike for military life and his interest in books and music. He was a particular admirer of the French and wrote all his works in their tongue. No sooner had he become king, however, than he suddenly developed marvelous energy and ruthlessness in warlike enterprises. Chance favored his designs. The emperor Charles VI, the last representative of the direct male line of the Hapsburgs, died in 1740, just a few months before Frederick ascended the throne, leaving only a daughter, Maria Theresa, to inherit his vast and miscellaneous dominions. He had induced the other European powers to promise to accept the “pragmatic sanction,” or solemn will, in which he left everything to the young Maria Theresa; but she had no sooner begun to reign than her greedy neighbors prepared to seize her lands. Her greatest enemy was the newly crowned king of Prussia, who at first pretended friendship for her. Frederick determined to seize Silesia, a strip of Hapsburg territory lying to the southeast of Brandenburg. In true Prussian fashion he marched his army into the coveted district and occupied the important city of Breslau without declaring war or offering any excuse except a vague claim to part of the land.<sup>11</sup>

Accession of  
Frederick II  
of Prussia,  
called  
“the Great,”  
1740–1786

Frederick's  
attack upon  
Silesia

<sup>11</sup> As no woman had ever been elected empress, the Duke of Bavaria managed to secure the Holy Roman Empire, as Emperor Charles VII. Upon his death, however, in 1745, Maria Theresa's husband, Francis, duke of Lorraine, was chosen emperor. Their son, Joseph II, succeeded his father in 1765, and upon his death, in 1790, his brother Leopold II was elected. When he died, in 1792, the empire fell to his son Francis II, who was the last of the “Roman” emperors but assumed the new title “Emperor of Austria.” See below, page 179.

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

The War of  
the Austrian  
Succession

Within a short time France had joined with Bavaria in the attack upon Maria Theresa. It seemed for a time as if her struggle to keep her realm intact would be vain, but the loyalty of all the various peoples under her scepter was roused by her extraordinary courage and energy. The French were driven back, but Maria Theresa was forced to grant Silesia to Frederick in order to induce him to retire from the war. Finally, England and Holland joined in an alliance for maintaining the balance of power, for they had no desire to



**Figure 110. Frederick II of Prussia,  
Commonly Called "The Great"**

see France annex the Austrian Netherlands. A few years later (1748) all the powers, tired of the war, — which is known as the War of the Austrian Succession, — laid down their arms and agreed to what is called in diplomacy the *status quo ante bellum*, which simply means that things were to be restored to the condition in which they had been before the opening of hostilities.

Frederick  
promotes  
the material  
development  
of Prussia

Frederick, however, retained possession of Silesia, which increased his dominions by about one third of their former extent. He now turned his attention to making his subjects happier and more prosperous, by draining the swamps, promoting industry, and drawing up a new code

## RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA

of laws. He found time, also, to gratify his interest in men of letters, and invited Voltaire<sup>12</sup> to make his home at Berlin. It will not seem strange to any one who knows anything of the character of these two men, that they quarreled after two or three years, and that Voltaire left the Prussian king with very bitter feelings.

Frederick  
and Voltaire

Maria Theresa was by no means reconciled to the loss of Silesia, and she began to lay her plans for expelling the perfidious Frederick and regaining her lost territory. This led to one of the most important wars in modern history, in which not only almost every European power joined but which involved the whole world, from the Indian rajahs of Hindustan to the colonists of Virginia and New England. This Seven Years' War (1756–1763) will be considered in its broader aspects in the next chapter. We note here only the part played in it by the king of Prussia.

The Seven  
Years' War

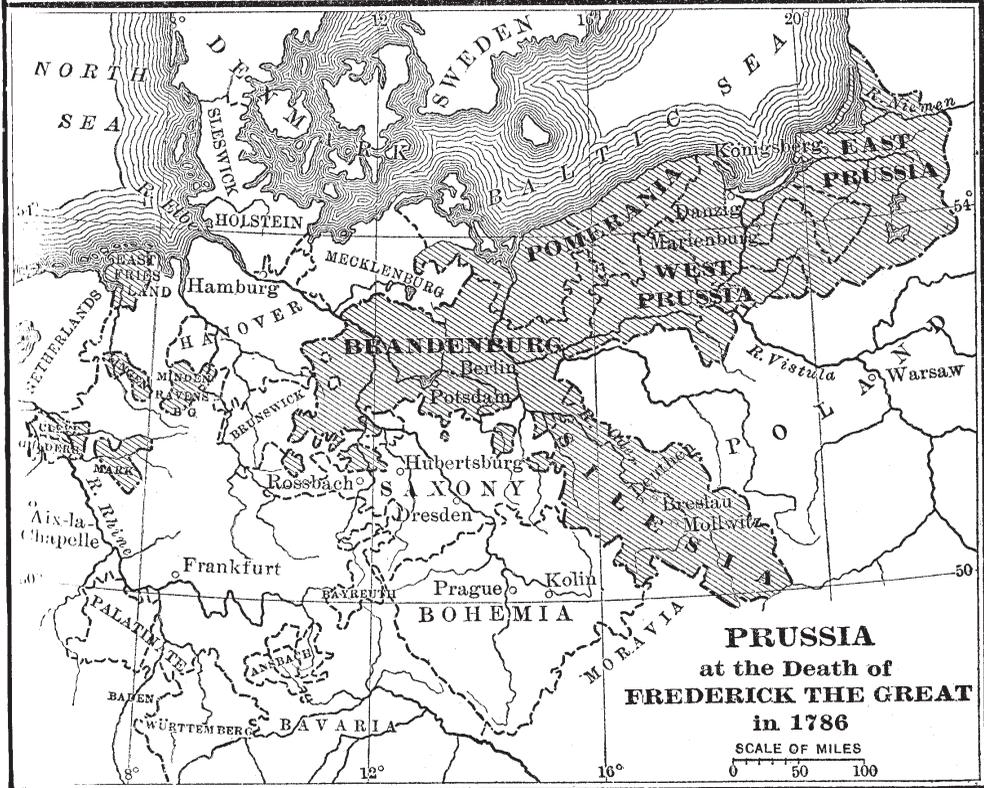
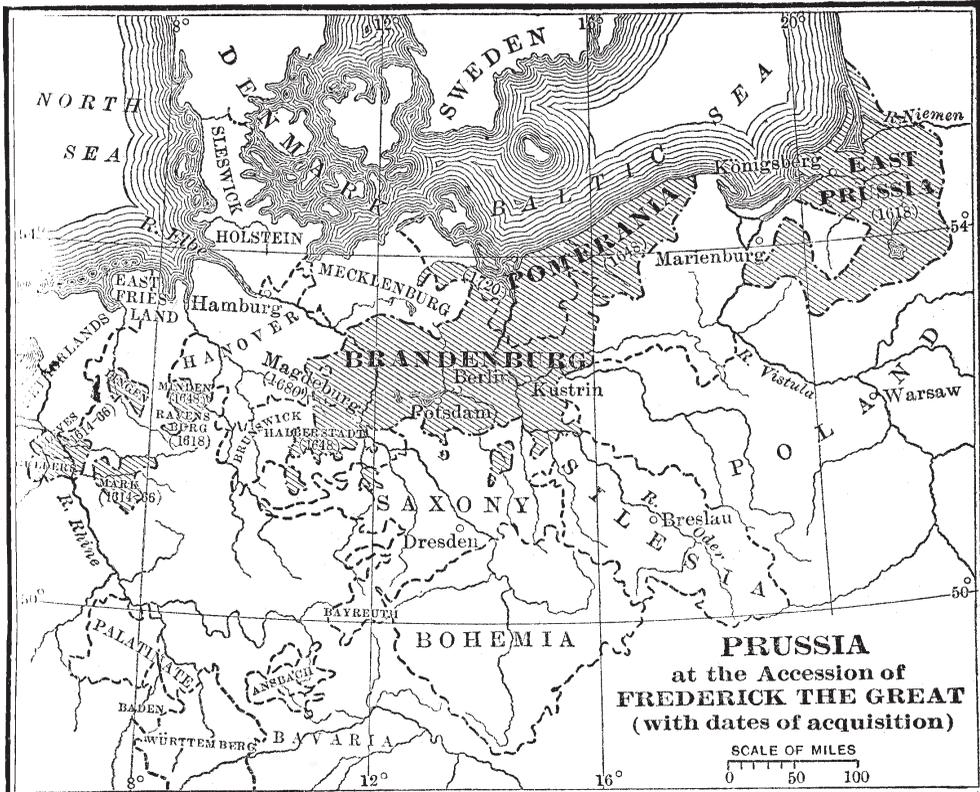
Maria Theresa's ambassador at Paris was so skillful in his negotiations with the French court that in 1756 he induced it, in spite of its two hundred years of hostility to the House of Hapsburg, to enter into an alliance with Austria against Prussia. Russia, Sweden, and Saxony also agreed to join in a concerted attack on Prussia. Their armies, coming as they did from every point of the compass, threatened the complete annihilation of Austria's rival. It seemed as if the new kingdom of Prussia might disappear altogether from the map of Europe.

The alliance  
against  
Prussia

However, it was in this war that Frederick earned his title of "the Great," and because of his successes he has often been classed with the ablest generals the world has seen. Learning the object of the allies, he did not wait for them to declare war against him, but occupied Saxony at once and then moved on into Bohemia, where he nearly succeeded in taking the capital, Prague. Here he was forced to retire, but in 1757 he defeated the French and his German enemies in the most famous, perhaps, of his battles, at Rossbach. A month

Frederick's  
victorious  
defense

<sup>12</sup> See below, pages 91 ff.



## *RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA*

later he routed the Austrians brilliantly at Leuthen, not far from Breslau. Thereupon the Swedes and the Russians retired from the field and left Frederick for the moment master of the situation.

England now engaged the French and left Frederick at liberty to deal with his other enemies. While he exhibited great military skill, he was by no means able to gain all the battles in which he engaged. Money paid him by the English government helped him to stay in the field, but for a time it looked as if he might, after all, be vanquished. But the accession of a new Tsar, who was an ardent admirer of Frederick, led Russia to conclude peace with Prussia, whereupon Maria Theresa reluctantly agreed to give up once more her struggle with her inveterate enemy. Shortly afterwards England and France came to terms, and a general settlement was made at Paris in 1763.

Frederick  
finally  
triumphs  
over Austria

### **§85**

#### **THREE PARTITIONS OF POLAND, 1772, 1793, AND 1795**

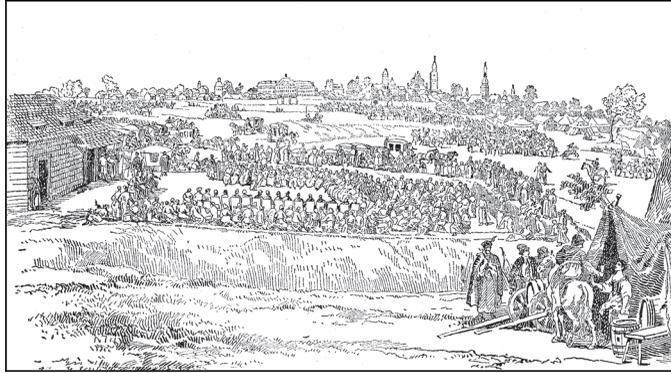
Frederick's success in seizing and holding one of Austria's finest provinces did not satisfy him. The central portions of his kingdom — Brandenburg, Silesia, and Pomerania — were completely cut off from East Prussia by a considerable tract known as West Prussia, which belonged to the kingdom of Poland. The map will show how great must have been Frederick's temptation to fill this gap, especially as Poland was in no condition to defend its possessions.

With the exception of Russia, Poland was the largest kingdom in Europe. It covered an immense plain with no natural boundaries, and the population, which was very thinly scattered, belonged to several races. Besides the Poles themselves, there were Germans in the cities of West Prussia and Russians in Lithuania. The Jews were very numerous

Mixed  
population  
and  
discordant  
religions in  
Poland

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

everywhere, forming half of the population in some of the towns. The Poles were usually Catholics, while the Germans were Protestants and the Russians adhered to the Greek Church. These differences in religion, added to those of race, created endless difficulties and dissensions.



**Figure 111. The Election of a Polish King in the Eighteenth Century**

*This is an eighteenth-century engraving of a Polish diet, meeting in the open country outside of Warsaw, whose churches are just visible, in order to elect a king. In the center of the picture a ditch surrounds the meeting place of the senators, who are holding a solemn public session out in front of their little house. On the plain there are processions of nobles and various indications of a celebration.*

The defective system of government

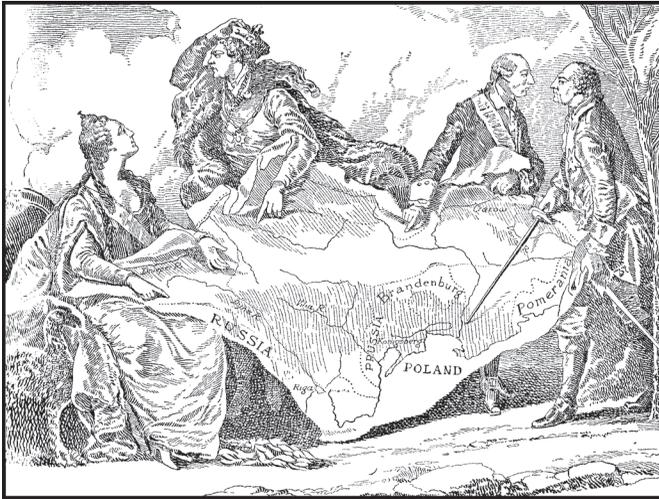
The government of Poland was the worst imaginable. Instead of having developed a strong monarchy, as her neighbors — Prussia, Russia, and Austria — had done, she remained in a state of feudal anarchy, which the nobles had taken the greatest pains to perpetuate by binding their kings in such a way that they had no power either to maintain order or to defend the country from attack. The king could not declare war, make peace, impose taxes, or pass any law, without the consent of the diet. As the diet was composed of representatives of the nobility, any one of whom could freely veto any measure, — for no measure could pass that had even one vote against it, — most of the diets broke up without accomplishing anything.

The *liberum veto*

## RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA

The kingship was not hereditary in Poland, but whenever the ruler died, the nobles assembled and chose a new one, commonly a foreigner. These elections were tumultuous, and the various European powers regularly interfered, by force or bribery, to secure the election of a candidate whom they believed would favor their interests.

The elective kingship



**Figure 112. A Cartoon of the Partition of Poland**

*Catherine II, Joseph II, and Frederick II are pointing out the part of the map of Poland they each propose to take. The king of Poland is trying to hold his crown from falling off his head. What is left of Poland on the map?*

The nobles in Poland were numerous. There were perhaps a million and a half of them, mostly very poor, owning only a trifling bit of land. There was a saying that the poor noble's dog, even if he sat in the middle of the estate, was sure to have his tail upon a neighbor's land. There was no middle class except in the few German towns. The peasants were miserable indeed. They had sunk from serfs to slaves over whom their lords had the right of life and death.

The Polish nobles and peasants

It required no great insight to foresee that Poland was in danger of falling a prey to her greedy and powerful neighbors, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, who clamped

Catherine II and Frederick II agree on Polish matters, 1764

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

in the unfortunate kingdom on all sides. They had long shamelessly interfered in its affairs and had actually taken active measures to oppose all reforms of the constitution in order that they might profit by the chronic anarchy.

The ruler of Russia was the famous Catherine II, who arranged with Frederick the Great to prevent any improvement in Poland and to keep up and encourage the disorder. Finally, Poland's kind neighbors, including Austria, agreed, in 1772, each to take a slice of the unhappy kingdom.

First  
partition of  
Poland, 1772

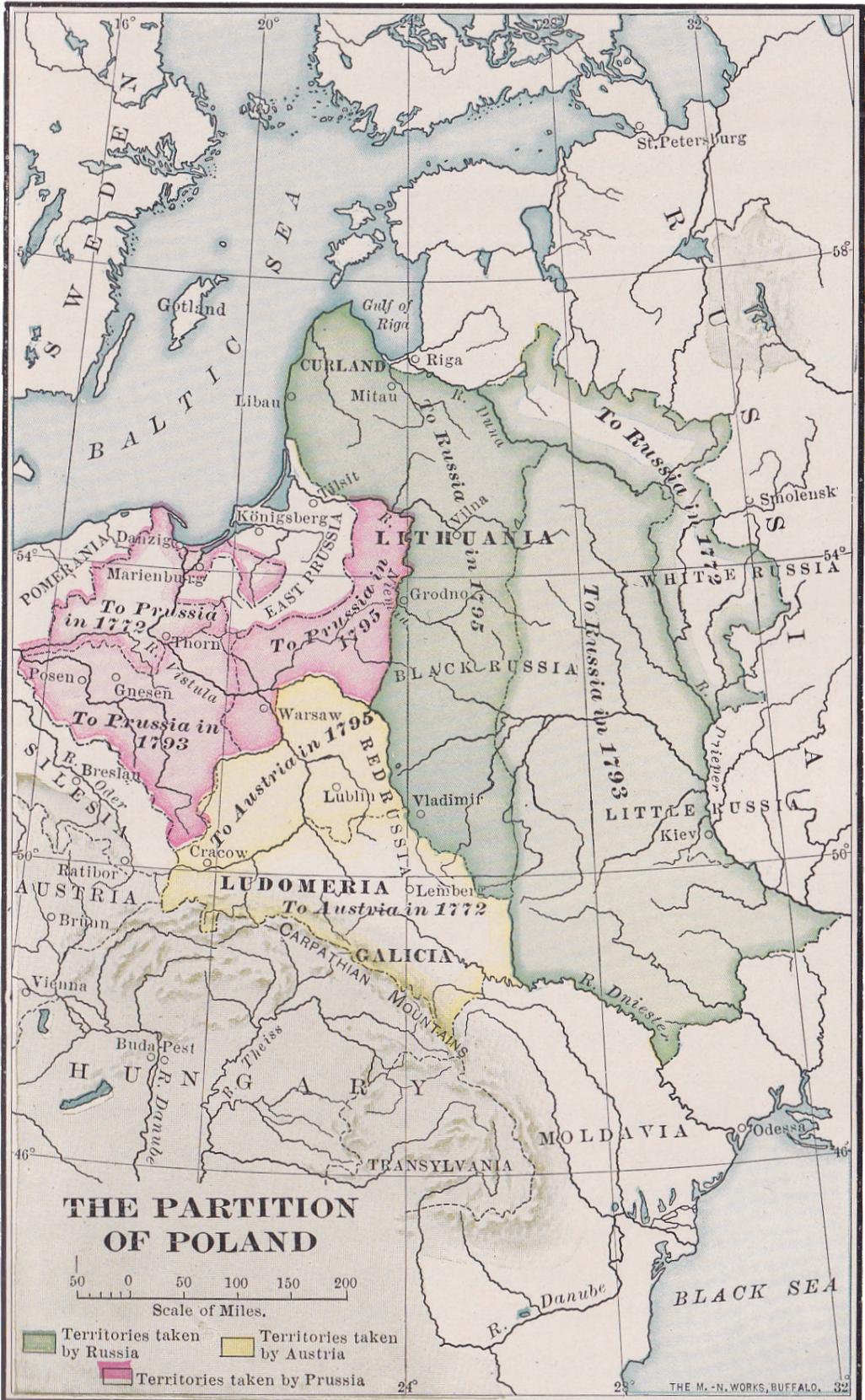
Austria was assigned a strip inhabited by almost three million Poles and Russians, and thus added two new kinds of people and two new languages to her already varied collection of races and tongues. Prussia was given a smaller piece, but it was the coveted West Prussia, which she needed to fill out her boundaries, and its inhabitants were to a considerable extent Germans and Protestants. Russia's strip, on the east, was inhabited entirely by Russians. The Polish diet was forced, by the advance of Russian troops to Warsaw, to approve the partition.

Revival  
of Poland,  
1772-1791

Poland seemed at first, however, to have learned a great lesson from the disaster. During the twenty years following its first dismemberment there was an extraordinary revival in education, art, and literature. Historians and poets sprang up to give distinction to the last days of Polish independence. The constitution which had made Poland the laughingstock and the victim of its neighbors was abolished, and an entirely new one worked out. It did away with the free veto of the nobles, made the crown hereditary, and established a parliament somewhat like that of England.

The new  
Polish  
constitution  
of 1791

Russia had no desire that Poland should become a strong monarchy, and it sent soldiers to help the enemies of the new constitution on the ground that Russia could not bear to see any changes in the government "under which the Polish commonwealth had flourished for so many centuries." Russia and Prussia, having secured the continuance of disorder in Poland, declared that they could not put up with such a dangerous neighbor and proceeded to a second



Second  
partition,  
1793

partition in 1793. Prussia cut deep into Poland, added a million and a half of Poles to her subjects, and acquired the towns of Thorn, Danzig, and Posen. Russia's gains were three millions of people, who at least belonged to her own race. On this occasion Austria was put off with the promises of her confederates, Russia and Prussia, that they would use their good offices to secure Bavaria for her in exchange for the Austrian Netherlands.

Revolt of  
Poles under  
Kosciusko,  
1794

At this juncture the Poles found a national leader in the brave Kosciusko, who had fought under Washington for American liberty. With the utmost care and secrecy he organized an insurrection in the spring of 1794 and summoned the Polish people to join his standard of national independence. The Poles who had been incorporated into the Prussian monarchy thereupon rose and forced Prussia to withdraw its forces.

Third and  
final partition,  
1795

Russia was ready, however, to crush the patriots. Kosciusko was wounded and captured in battle, and by the end of the year Russia was in control of Warsaw. The Polish king was compelled to abdicate, and the remnants of the dismembered kingdom were divided, after much bitter contention, among Austria, Russia, and Prussia. In the three partitions which blotted out the kingdom of Poland from the map of Europe, Russia received nearly twice the combined shares of Austria and Prussia.

## §86

### THE AUSTRIAN REALMS: MARIA THERESA AND JOSEPH II

The Hapsburgs  
in Austria

While the Hohenzollerns of Prussia from their capital at Berlin had been extending their power over northern Germany, the great house of Hapsburg, established in the southeastern corner of Germany, with its capital at Vienna, had been grouping together, by conquest or inheritance, the vast realm over much of which they still rule. It will

## RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA

be remembered that Charles V, shortly after his accession, ceded to his brother, Ferdinand I, the German or Austrian possessions of the house of Hapsburg,<sup>13</sup> while he himself retained the Spanish, Burgundian, and Italian dominions. Ferdinand, by a fortunate marriage with the heiress of the kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary, greatly augmented his territory.<sup>14</sup> Hungary was, however, almost completely conquered by the Turks at that time, and till the end of the seventeenth century the energies of the Austrian rulers were largely absorbed in a long struggle against the Mohammedans.

A Turkish tribe from western Asia had, at the opening of the fourteenth century, established themselves in western Asia Minor under their leader Othman (d. 1326). It was from him that they derived their name of Ottoman Turks, to distinguish them from the Seljuk Turks, with whom the crusaders had come into contact. The leaders of the Ottoman Turks showed great energy. They not only extended their Asiatic territory far toward the east, and later into Africa, but they gained a footing in Europe as early as 1353. They gradually conquered the Slavic peoples in Macedonia and occupied the territory about Constantinople, although it was a hundred years before they succeeded in capturing the ancient capital of the Eastern Empire.

Conquests of  
the Turks in  
Europe

This advance of the Turks naturally aroused grave fears in the states of western Europe lest they too might be deprived of their independence. The brunt of the defense against the common foe devolved upon Venice and the German Hapsburgs, who carried on an almost continuous war with the Turks for nearly two centuries. As late as 1683 the Mohammedans collected a large force and besieged Vienna, which might very well have fallen into their hands had it not been for the timely assistance which the city received from the king of Poland. From

The defense  
of Europe  
against the  
Turks

<sup>13</sup> For the origin of the Austrian dominions, see Part I, Chapter XIII.

<sup>14</sup> See Part I, §65.

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

this time on, the power of the Turks in Europe rapidly decreased, and the Hapsburgs were able to regain the whole territory of Hungary and Transylvania, their possessions of which was formally recognized by the Sultan in 1699.



*Figure 113. Maria Theresa*

The conquest of Silesia by Frederick the Great was more than a severe blow to the pride of Maria Theresa; for, since it was inhabited by Germans, its loss lessened the Hapsburg power inside the empire. In extent of territory the Hapsburgs more than made up for it by the partitions of Poland, but since the Poles were an alien race, they added one more difficulty to the very difficult problem of ruling so many different peoples, each of whom had a different language and different customs and institutions. The Hapsburg possessions were inhabited by Germans in Austria proper, a Slav people (the Czechs) mixed with Germans in Bohemia and Moravia, Poles in Galicia, Hungarians or Magyars along with Rumanians and smaller groups of other peoples in Hungary, Croats and Slovenes (both Slavs) in the south, Italians in Milan and Tuscany, and Flemish and Walloons in the Netherlands.

Peoples ruled  
over by the  
Hapsburgs

Maria Theresa ruled these races with energy and skill.

## RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA

She patiently attended to all the tiresome matters of State, read long documents and reports, and conferred with the ambassadors of foreign powers. After her long reign of forty years her son Joseph, who had already been elected emperor as Joseph II, tried in the ten years of his rule (1780–1790) to modernize these backward states of southeastern Europe by a series of sweeping reforms. He was a very enlightened man and with something of the impetuous zeal of Peter the Great tried to sweep away at once the old abuses of feudalism, to introduce more general education, and to lessen the power of the clergy. He even abolished six hundred monasteries. Besides this he attempted to govern more and more from one center where he could oversee matters himself, a scheme which also seemed to promise greater unity to his realms. But his peoples did not understand his ideas or

Enlightened  
rule of Maria  
Theresa and  
Joseph II

Joseph II's  
reforms



*Figure 114. Joseph II*

feared the growth of his own power, and he was opposed on every hand. He died just as the Revolution in France was beginning to show that a nation could do for itself in a few months what a king could not do in a lifetime.

It must be admitted, however, that the problems which confronted Maria Theresa and Joseph II were much more

## MEDIEVAL AND MODERN TIMES

Why Austria did not develop as a single nation state

difficult than those of France or England. Poles, Italians, Magyars, and Germans could never be united into one state by such common interests as Englishmen or Frenchmen have felt so keenly in the last two centuries. Instead of fusing together to form a nation, the peoples ruled over by the Hapsburgs were on such bad terms with each other that it often seemed as if they would split apart, forming separate nations. Moreover, since some of these peoples, especially the Slavs, Poles, and Rumanians, lived in neighboring states as well, the Hapsburg monarchy was always much concerned in what happened outside its borders. The immediate cause of the terrible European war of 1914–1918 was trouble between Austria and her neighbor Serbia. So if one hopes to understand the great questions of our own time, he must follow carefully the complicated history of Austria and her ever-changing realms.

## QUESTIONS

SECTION 81. In what portions of eastern Europe were the Slavs settling during the barbarian invasions? What is supposed to be the origin of the name “Russia”? Give some of the results of the domination of Russia by the Mongols.

SECTION 82. What were the boundaries of Russia upon the accession of Peter the Great? What territories did he add? What were some of Peter’s reforms?

SECTION 83. Explain how the elector of Brandenburg came to have the title of “King of Prussia.” Mention some of the chief rulers of the Hohenzollern line. What had been accomplished toward making Prussia a great European power before the accession of Frederick the Great?

SECTION 84. Give an account of the War of the Austrian Succession. What were the chief events of the Seven Years’ War? What have you learned of Frederick the Great? Why was he a great admirer of the French?

*RISE OF RUSSIA AND PRUSSIA*

SECTION 85. Describe the conditions in Poland in the eighteenth century. How was the first partition of Poland arranged? When did the second partition take place and why was Austria left out? Under what conditions did the third partition take place?

SECTION 86. Explain the relations of Austria and the Turks. What was the extent of the Hapsburg dominions when Maria Theresa came to the throne? Compare the reign of Joseph II with those of Peter the Great and of Frederick II. Why is Austria specially interesting to us to-day?