

CHAPTER  
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Summary

CHAPTERS IN BRIEF *An Age of Democracy and Progress, 1815–1914*

**CHAPTER OVERVIEW** *In Britain, reforms gave all men the right to vote. A republic was proclaimed in France, but political conflict continued. Some British colonies won the right to govern themselves, but the struggle for that right was not easy in Ireland. The United States fought a civil war that finally put an end to slavery. New inventions and scientific advances made life more healthful and enjoyable.*

## 1 Democratic Reform and Activism

**KEY IDEA** *Spurred by the demands of ordinary people, Great Britain and France underwent democratic reforms.*

Since the 1600s, Britain's government had been a constitutional monarchy. A king or queen ruled the country, but the elected legislature—Parliament—held the real power. Still, very few people could vote for members of Parliament. Only men who owned property—about six percent of the population—had the right. That changed in the 1800s.

The Reform Bill of 1832 was the first step. Middle-class people across England protested the fact that they could not vote. Worried by revolutions sweeping Europe, Parliament passed the Reform Bill. This law gave the right to vote to many in the middle class. It also gave seats in Parliament to the new industrial cities, which had not had any representatives before. Over time, Parliament made more changes. By 1884, almost all adult males in Britain could vote. Parliament also made votes take place by secret ballot. Another law gave pay to members of Parliament, which in effect opened that body to people who were not wealthy.

By 1890, a number of countries with industrial economies had given all men the right to vote. None, however, gave women that right. During the 1800s, women in the United States and Britain peacefully campaigned for the vote. Beginning in 1903, a group called the Women's Social and Political Union began a stronger campaign for women's suffrage in Britain. They held rallies and parades. They also broke up the speeches of government officials and sometimes set fire to buildings. When the leaders were arrested, they went on hunger strikes to gain publicity for their cause. It was not until after World War I, however, that women won the right to vote in both Great Britain and the United States.

The road to democracy in France was more rocky. After France's defeat at the hands of Prussia in 1870, France went through a series of crises. Finally a new government—the Third Republic—was formed. It lasted over 60 years, but France remained divided.

In the 1890s, French society was divided over the case of an army officer, Alfred Dreyfus, who was accused of being a traitor. The charge was false and was made largely because Dreyfus was a Jew. However, many believed the charge, and he was found guilty. A few years later, new evidence showed that he had been framed. Dreyfus was later declared innocent.

The affair revealed that many in Europe hated Jews. In Eastern Europe, the situation was very bad. The Russian government even allowed organized attacks on Jewish villages. From the 1880s on, many Jews fled to the United States.

## 2 Self-Rule for British Colonies

**KEY IDEA** *Britain allowed self-rule in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand but delayed independence for Ireland.*

Britain had colonies all around the world. Three of them were settled by colonists from Europe who built societies strongly shaped by British culture. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand developed industrial economies. They reached a point where they hoped to have their own governments.

The white settlers of Canada were split into two groups. Britain had won Canada from France back in 1763. However, some French-speaking Catholics still lived in the colony. The other group was English-speaking and mostly Protestant. The two groups did not get along. In 1791, Britain split the colony into two provinces, each with its own government. The French-speaking people grew angry at British rule.

After a series of rebellions, the British Parliament put the two sections back together under one government. Other, smaller colonies were added to create the Dominion of Canada. Canadians had the right to make all laws concerning their own affairs. Parliament kept the right to make decisions about relations with other countries. By 1871, Canada stretched all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

New Zealand and Australia first became part of the British Empire around 1770. The first settlers sent to Australia were convicted criminals. Once they had spent the required amount of time, they won their freedom and had the right to buy land. In the 1800s, other settlers arrived, many to join in the growing sheep industry. The settlement of New Zealand went more slowly because the British government recognized that the native people—the Maori—had rights to the land. By the 1840s, though, the number of settlers was growing.

During the 1850s, these two countries became self-governing. However, they stayed in the British Empire and in the early 1900s became dominions. Australia was the first country to use secret ballots in voting for representatives. New Zealand—in 1893—was the first country to give women the right to vote. The native peoples of Australia and New Zealand enjoyed few of these rights, though. Like Native Americans, they suffered the spread of European settlement.

Irish self-rule took longer to achieve. Ireland bitterly opposed English rule from its start in the 1100s. Conflict also separated the Catholic Irish and the small group of English Protestants. When Ireland was made part of Britain in 1801, the Irish won representation in Parliament. A leader used that position to win back some rights for Irish Catholics.

In the 1840s, the Irish suffered a terrible famine. A disease destroyed the potatoes on which the Irish depended, causing many to starve. About 1 million died and another 1.5 million left for the United States and other countries. Meanwhile, the British forced the Irish to pay their rents. Many lost their land, and resentment against England grew even stronger.

In the late 1800s, some Irish pushed for complete independence. Most argued for home rule—the right to govern internal affairs. The British government opposed this move. They were afraid that the Catholic majority would harshly treat the

Protestants in the north. In 1914, Parliament finally gave home rule to the southern part of Ireland. When World War I delayed its enactment, Irish nationalists rebelled. Finally, Britain split Ireland in two. Northern Ireland remained part of Britain. The southern part became independent. Many people still seek independence for all of Ireland.

### 3 War and Expansion in the United States

**KEY IDEA** *The United States expanded across North America and fought a bloody civil war.*

The United States had troubles of its own. In the early 1800s, the nation grew in size. It bought a huge piece of land from France in the Louisiana Purchase. Many said it was “manifest destiny”—the right of the United States to rule the land from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. As white settlers moved farther and farther west, Native Americans suffered. In the 1830s, many thousands were forced to move from their homes in the eastern states to the present state of Oklahoma. The United States won a war with Mexico in the 1840s and thus gained even more land.

This growth raised serious questions. The southern states used slave labor to grow crops such as cotton. People in the South hoped to extend slavery to the new western lands. Many in the North, however, believed that slavery was wrong and should be ended.

Conflict over slavery eventually led to the Civil War. The southern states seceded, or pulled out of, the Union. When southern forces fired on a Union fort in 1861, war broke out. The fighting lasted four long and bloody years. The North won the war. During the fighting, President Abraham Lincoln declared that slavery was ended in the United States. Later, the Constitution was changed to make this the law of the land and to say that African Americans were citizens.

In the first few years after the war, newly freed African Americans enjoyed equal rights. Later, whites regained control of the governments of the southern states. They passed laws that took away the rights of blacks and treated them unfairly. It would be many years before African Americans could enjoy equality.

The economy of the South was destroyed by the Civil War. Elsewhere, though, the nation saw a surge of industrial growth. Helping achieve this

great growth was a sharp rise in immigration from Europe and Asia. By 1914, more than 20 million people had come to the United States.

## **🕒 Nineteenth-Century Progress**

**KEY IDEA** *Breakthroughs in science and technology transformed daily life and entertainment.*

In the late 1800s, new inventions made major changes in how people lived. Thomas Edison got patents on more than 1,000 inventions. Among them were the electric light bulb and the phonograph. Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone, and Guglielmo Marconi created the first radio.

There were big changes in transportation too. Though someone else invented the car, Henry Ford made it affordable to ordinary people. He had a factory with an assembly line that allowed him to quickly build cheap cars that cost as little as \$300. In 1903, the Wright brothers flew the first motor-powered airplane flight. Soon there was an aircraft industry.

Medicine made advances. Until the mid-1800s, no one knew about germs. French scientist Louis Pasteur discovered that microscopic animals that he called bacteria could live in food. Soon he and others realized that bacteria could cause disease. British surgeon Joseph Lister took steps to kill bacteria, which helped more patients survive. Soon his practices became widespread. Public officials began to clean up plumbing and sewage systems. All these steps helped people lead longer and healthier lives.

English scientist Charles Darwin developed a new theory that was hotly debated. He said that all life on earth, even humans, had developed from simpler forms over millions of years. Many did not accept this idea, which they said went against the Bible.

In the mid-1800s, an Austrian monk named Gregor Mendel did some experiments that showed that parents passed on their traits to offspring. His work formed the basis of the science of genetics. Other scientists made new discoveries in chemistry and physics. They found that all matter is made of tiny particles called atoms. They also were able to identify the differences between different elements.

In the late 1800s, some thinkers began the new social science of psychology, which is the study of the mind. A series of experiments led Russian Ivan Pavlov to argue that people responded to certain

situations because of how they were trained. By changing the training, he said, one could change the response. Austrian Sigmund Freud argued that powerful forces in the subconscious mind of a person shaped behavior. These views shocked many. They seemed to overturn the idea that people could use their reason to build better lives.

In earlier times, art, music, and the theater had been of interest only to the wealthy. With the rise of the middle class, culture became available to more people. One reason was that more people could read, which led to more newspapers, magazines, and books.

Another reason was that working people had more time to enjoy art, music, and recreation. People went to music halls to enjoy singing and dancing. In the early 1900s, they began to watch the first silent movies. People also began to enjoy sporting events, both as participants and as spectators.

## **Review**

### ***Comparing and Contrasting***

1. Contrast the spread of democracy in Britain with that in France.
2. Compare the development of self-rule in the different colonies of Britain.
3. ***Determining Main Ideas*** How did the United States change during the 1800s?
4. ***Drawing Conclusions*** What important inventions were made in the late 1800s and early 1900s? Which one do you think was most important?
5. ***Analyzing Causes and Recognizing Effects*** How did new medical and scientific discoveries and ideas from the late 1800s change life?