

SECTION 2



Prussian soldiers at Versailles

French bayonet



WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

The New German Empire

In 1870, German historian Heinrich von Treitschke (vawn TRYCH kuh) wrote a newspaper article demanding the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine from France. A year later, annexation became a condition of the peace settlement in the Franco-Prussian War:

“The sense of justice to Germany demands the lessening of France. . . . These territories are ours by the right of the sword, and . . . [by] virtue of a higher right—the right of the German nation, which will not permit its lost children to remain strangers to the German Empire.”

Focus Question How did Germany increase its power after unifying in 1871?

Germany Strengthens



Objectives

- Describe how Germany became an industrial giant.
- Explain why Bismarck was called the Iron Chancellor.
- List the policies of Kaiser William II.

Terms, People, and Places

Kulturkampf

William II

social welfare

Note Taking

Reading Skill: Recognize Sequence Keep track of the sequence of events described in this section by completing a chart like the one below. List the causes that led to a strong German nation.



In January 1871, German princes gathered in the glittering Hall of Mirrors at the French palace of Versailles. They had just defeated Napoleon III in the Franco-Prussian War. Once home to French kings, the palace seemed the perfect place to proclaim the new German empire. To the winners as well as to the losers, the symbolism was clear: French domination of Europe had ended. Germany was now the dominant power in Europe.

Germany Becomes an Industrial Giant

In the aftermath of unification, the German empire emerged as the industrial giant of the European continent. By the late 1800s, German chemical and electrical industries were setting the standard worldwide. Among the European powers, German shipping was second only to Britain's.


Making Economic Progress Germany, like Great Britain, possessed several of the factors that made industrialization possible. Germany's spectacular growth was due in part to ample iron and coal resources, the basic ingredients for industrial development. A disciplined and educated workforce also helped the economy. The German middle class and educated professionals helped to create a productive and efficient society that prided itself on its sense of responsibility and deference to authority. Germany's rapidly growing population—from 41 million in 1871 to 67 million by 1914—also provided a huge home market along with a larger supply of industrial workers.



The new nation also benefited from earlier progress. During the 1850s and 1860s, Germans had founded large companies and built many railroads. The house of Krupp (kroop) boomed after 1871, becoming an enormous industrial complex that produced steel and weapons for a world market. Between 1871 and 1914, the business tycoon August Thyssen (TEES un) built a small steel factory of 70 workers into a giant empire with 50,000 employees. Optics was another important industry. German industrialist and inventor Carl Zeiss built a company that became known for its telescopes, microscopes, and other optical equipment.

Promoting Scientific and Economic Development German industrialists were the first to see the value of applied science in developing new products such as *synthetic* chemicals and dyes. Industrialists, as well as the government, supported research and development in the universities and hired trained scientists to solve technological problems in their factories.

The German government also promoted economic development. After 1871, it issued a single currency for Germany, reorganized the banking system, and *coordinated* railroads built by the various German states. When a worldwide depression hit in the late 1800s, Germany raised tariffs to protect home industries from foreign competition. The leaders of the new German empire were determined to maintain economic strength as well as military power.

 **Checkpoint** What factors did Germany possess that made industrialization possible there?

Vocabulary Builder

synthetic—(sin THET ik) *adj.* prepared or made artificially

Vocabulary Builder

coordinate—(koh AWR dih nate) *v.* to design or adjust so as to have harmonious action

Analyzing Political Cartoons

The Iron Chancellor

As chancellor of the new German empire, Bismarck pursued several foreign-policy goals. He wanted to keep France weak and isolated while building strong links with Austria and Russia. He respected British naval power but did not seek to compete in that arena. “Water rats,” he said, “do not fight with land rats.” Later, however, he would take a more aggressive stand against Britain as the two nations competed for overseas colonies.

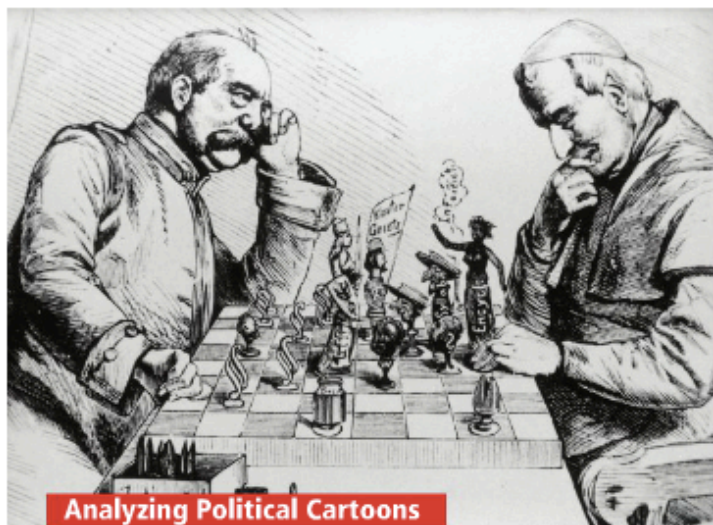
BIOGRAPHY

Otto von Bismarck

Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898) spent his early years on his father’s country estate. He worked briefly as a civil servant, but found the work boring. At 24, Bismarck resigned his post as a bureaucrat. “My ambition strives more to command than to obey,” the independent-minded young man explained.

The resignation did not end his career in government. While he was a delegate to a United Diet that was called by Prussian King Frederick William IV, Bismarck’s conservative views and passionate speeches in defense of government policies won him the support of the king. He then served as a diplomat to the German Federation. He became chancellor of the German empire in 1871, a position he held for 19 years. **What path did Bismarck take to win political power?**





Analyzing Political Cartoons

A Political Game of Chess This political cartoon shows Otto von Bismarck and Pope Pius IX trying to checkmate each other in a game of chess.

1. How does this cartoon reflect the relationship between Bismarck and the Catholic Church?
2. How did the conflict between church and state affect German politics in the 1870s?

On the domestic front, Bismarck applied the same ruthless methods he had used to achieve unification. The Iron Chancellor, as he was called, sought to erase local loyalties and crush all opposition to the imperial state. He targeted two groups—the Catholic Church and the Socialists. In his view, both posed a threat to the new German state.

Campaign Against the Church After unification, Catholics made up about a third of the German population. Bismarck, who was Lutheran, distrusted Catholics—especially the clergy—whose first loyalty, he believed, was to the pope instead of to Germany.

In response to what he saw as the Catholic threat, Bismarck launched the **Kulturkampf** (kool TOOR kahmpf), or “battle for civilization,”


which lasted from 1871 to 1878. His goal was to make Catholics put loyalty to the state above allegiance to the Church. The chancellor had laws passed that gave the state the right to supervise Catholic education and approve the appointment of priests. Other laws closed some religious orders, expelled the Jesuits from Prussia, and made it compulsory for couples to be married by civil authority.

Bismarck’s moves against the Catholic Church backfired. The faithful rallied behind the Church, and the Catholic Center party gained strength in the Reichstag. A realist, Bismarck saw his mistake and worked to make peace with the Church.

Campaign Against the Socialists Bismarck also saw a threat to the new German empire in the growing power of socialism. By the late 1870s, German Marxists had organized the Social Democratic party, which called for parliamentary democracy and laws to improve conditions for the working class. Bismarck feared that socialists would undermine the loyalty of German workers and turn them toward revolution. Following a failed assassination plot against the kaiser, Bismarck had laws passed that dissolved socialist groups, shut down their newspapers, and banned their meetings. Once again, repression backfired. Workers were unified in support of the socialist cause.

Bismarck then changed course. He set out to woo workers away from socialism by sponsoring laws to protect them. By the 1890s, Germans had health and accident insurance as well as old-age insurance to provide retirement benefits. Thus, under Bismarck, Germany was a pioneer in social reform. Its system of economic safeguards became the model for other European nations.

Although workers benefited from Bismarck’s plan, they did not abandon socialism. In fact, the Social Democratic party continued to grow in strength. By 1912, it held more seats in the Reichstag than any other party. Yet Bismarck’s program showed that conditions for workers could be improved without the upheaval of a revolution. Later, Germany and other European nations would build on Bismarck’s social policies, greatly increasing government’s role in providing for the needs of its citizens.

 **Checkpoint** Why did Bismarck try to crush the Catholic Church and the Socialists?



Kaiser William II

In 1888, **William II** succeeded his grandfather as kaiser. The new emperor was supremely confident in his abilities and wished to put his own stamp on Germany. In 1890, he shocked Europe by asking the dominating Bismarck to resign. “There is only one master in the Reich,” he said, “and that is I.”

William II seriously believed that his right to rule came from God. He expressed this view when he said:

Primary Source

“My grandfather considered that the office of king was a task that God had assigned to him. . . . That which he thought I also think. . . . Those who wish to aid me in that task . . . I welcome with all my heart; those who oppose me in this work I shall crush.”

—William II

Not surprisingly, William resisted efforts to introduce democratic reforms. At the same time, however, his government provided programs for **social welfare**, or programs to help certain groups of people. His government also provided services such as cheap transportation and electricity. An excellent system of public schools, which had flourished under Bismarck, taught students obedience to the emperor along with reading, writing, and mathematics.

Like his grandfather, William II lavished funds on the German military machine, already the most powerful in Europe. He also launched an ambitious campaign to expand the German navy and win an overseas empire to rival those of Britain and France. William’s nationalism and aggressive military stance helped increase tensions on the eve of World War I.

Checkpoint Why did William II ask Bismarck to resign in 1890?

Social Reform

Under Bismarck’s leadership, Germany pioneered social reform. By 1884, Germans had health and accident insurance. By 1889, they had disability and old-age insurance. *Why did Bismarck introduce these social reforms?*



SECTION 2 Assessment

Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice
Web Code: naa-2222

Terms, People, and Places

1. For each term, person, or place listed at the beginning of the section, write a sentence explaining its significance.

Note Taking

2. **Reading Skill: Recognize Sequence** Use your completed chart to answer the Focus Question: How did Germany increase its power after unifying in 1871?

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

3. **Summarize** How did Germany become an industrial giant in the late 1800s?
4. **Demonstrate Reasoned Judgment** Do you think Bismarck’s methods were justified by his social reforms? Explain.
5. **Draw Conclusions** Do you think the supporters of a democratic government in Germany in the late 1800s had hope of success? Explain.

Writing About History

Quick Write: Answer Opposing Arguments To write a strong persuasive essay, you need to address arguments that can be used to contradict your position. Choose a topic from the section. For example, think about whether a government should guarantee that its citizens have adequate healthcare. List the arguments for and against your position on a piece of paper.