

Lesson -2

French Revolution

1. VERY SHORT TYPE QUESTIONS :

(a) Who was the emperor of France during the time of the French Revolution ?

Ans : The emperor of France during the time of the French Revolution was Louis XVI.

(b) What is Cahier ?

Ans : The memorandums submitted by the representatives listing the needs and demand of their constituencies as per suggestion of the king came to be known as Cahier.

(c) Who was the author of 'The Wealth of Nations' ?

Ans : The author of 'The Wealth of Nations' was Adam Smith.

(d) In which year was the emperor Louis XVI executed ?

Ans : Emperor Louis XVI was executed by the National Convention in 1793.

(e) In which year was the Congress of Vienna held ?

Ans : The Congress of Vienna was held in the year 1815.

(f) Who said, " I am the State" ?

Ans : The statement 'I am the State' was said by Emperor Louis XVI.

(g) Who said himself to be the son of Revolution ?

Ans : Napoleon said himself to be the son of Revolution.

(h) Who said, " When France sneezes, Europe catches cold" ?

Ans : The statement ' When France sneezes, Europe catches cold' was said by Prince Metternich.

(i) Under whose presidency was the Oath of Tennis Court convened ?

Ans : The Oath of Tennis Court was convened under the presidency of Bally.

(j) Who composed the book, 'Social Contract' ?

Ans : The famous book ' Social Contract' was written by Rousseau.

(k) In which year was the republic in France formed ?

Ans : France became a republic in the year 1792.

(l) What was the incident of the 18th Brumaire ?

Ans : The starting of the consulate after dissolving the powers of the Directors came to be known as 18th Brumaire.

(m) What was the message of French Revolution ?

Ans : The message of French Revolution was equality, liberty and fraternity.

B. SHORT NOTES ON :

(a) States General.

Ans : States General :- The summoning of the States General in 1789 was the immediate cause for the outbreak of French Revolution. King Louis XVI was forced to call the States General which consisted of three groups or Estates of French society. These were:

1. The First Estate consisted of Bishops and other important men of the church.
2. The Second Estate consisted of nobles and men of high birth.
3. The Third Estate consisted of peasants, artisans, small merchants, and the bourgeoisie which included

the industrial and commercial entrepreneurs, professional men, etc. The representatives of three groups together constituted what is known as States General.

The Estates-General consisted of 1200 members, 600 representing the first two estates and the remaining 600 were from the Third estate. The members of the Third Estate demanded that the three estates should constitute and meet as a single body representing the entire country. They also wanted every member to have an individual vote. But these demands were rejected by the king and by the members of first two estates.

Abbe Sieyes, an important leader of the Third Estate therefore suggested that the Third estate should convert itself into a National Assembly. This was too much for the king and he put off the general meeting of the estates general. Soon the Third Estate met together, converted itself into a national assembly and called the other two Estates to join them. This was the beginning of the French Revolution.

(b) Fall of Bastille.

Ans : Fall of Bastille :- The fall of Bastille Prison on 14th July, 1789 is an important landmark event of French Revolution. The Bastille fort symbolised the tyranny, oppression and the despotism of the French monarchy and it was a symbol of its power and autocracy. The mob, particularly from Paris already agitated over the posting of the soldiers all over the city, marched towards

the fort and stormed it on July 14, 1789. They broke the walls of the prison and set free the prisoners. Many consider it as real beginning of French revolution. The fall of Bastille prison is therefore an event of great significance. It signalled the commencement of a great revolution which put an end to the old order. It marked the end of royal despotism, aristocratic domination and the power of the privileged class. It ushered a new era of liberty, equality and fraternity and established the sovereignty of the people. That is why, the day July 14 is recognised as the chief national day even today in France.

(c) Declaration of the Rights of man and citizen.

Ans : Declaration of the Rights of man and citizen :- The Third Estate which had been summoned in May 1789 by King Louis XVI under financial difficulties converted itself to the constituents Assembly and decided to frame a new Constitution for France. One of its first tasks was to issue a set of fundamental rights and liberties to the French people. On Aug, 26th 1789 the Assembly passed a charter of liberties known as the 'Declaration of the Rights of the Man and of the citizen'. This document reflected the spirit of Rousseau's philosophy. It asserted that :

(i) all men are born equal in rights.

(ii) Sovereignty resides with the people.

(iii) Laws must be the expression of the general will of the people.

(iv) None should be punished unless for violation of the laws of the land.

(v) All men have the freedom of expression.

(vi) All taxes would be raised only by the consent of the people.

Thus the declaration recognised the fundamental rights of man, his right to liberty, equality, freedom from arrest from arbitrary imprisonment, freedom from arrest from arbitrary imprisonment, freedom of speech and writings, right to vote, right to equitable taxation etc. Thus the document is a Magna Carta of individual rights and liberties.

(d) Paris commune.

Ans : Paris commune :- The fall of Bastille prison on 14 July 1789 marked the beginning of the French Revolution and the overthrow of French monarchy. A new tricolour flag was adopted. A National Guard was created in Paris under the command of Marquis Lafayette. A new Municipal Council consisting of the chosen representatives of various localities of Paris was set-up to rule Paris. This committee came to be known as 'Paris Commune'. It controlled the affairs of Paris for the next three years.

(e) Women March.

Ans : Women March :- Soon after the fall of the Bastille prison on 14th July, 1789 a revolutionary government was formed in Paris under the banner of Paris commune with a new National Guard. Under pressure, King Louis XVI recognised the new set-up. But at the same time he tried to bring about a counter-revolution with the help of foreign powers and local supporters. With this in view, he gave a sumptuous banquet to his royal supporters on 4th October, 1789.

Soon rumours spread that the National tricolour was insulted by King's royal supporters and that the king was planning a counter-revolution. The Parisians became furious and wanted to kill all the counter-revolutionaries. Therefore on 5th October, 1789 the women of Paris numbering About six to seven thousand mad with hunger and rage, marched to the palace of the King Louis XVI in Versailles. This came to be known as the famous march of hungry women of Paris. They marched to Versailles and compelled King and his royal family to join the revolution. Ultimately, the king yielded and on compulsion accompanied the crowd to Paris the very next day while the crowd sang along the way, "We have the baker, baker's wife and the little cook boy, now we shall have bread." When the royal family reached Paris they became virtual prisoners in the hands of the Paris Commune.

(f) Jacobin Club.

Ans : Jacobin Club :- The Jacobins were a group of French revolutionaries who wanted to establish social and political democracy in France in the place of Bourbon monarchy. They came to prominence during the days of the Legislative Assembly formed in 1791. They stood for the abolition of monarchy in France, removal of property franchise and confiscation of all church property and execution of all those who were opposed to the revolution. Robespierre and Danton were the key personalities of this group. Jacobins were primarily responsible for the execution of King Louis XVI and for the ten-month long reign of terror in France. They practically controlled the destiny of France from 1791 to 1794. The power and position of this group ended with the guillotining of their leader Robespierre on 6th July, 1794.

(g) Black September.

Ans : Black September :- The events of the revolutionary France in 1791 compelled the foreign powers to come to the aid of King Louis XVI. The combined armies of Austria and Prussia invaded France towards the end of August, 1792 and on 2nd Sept. captured Verdun, the last strong-hold before Paris. Fear and frenzy gripped the city. Soon a rumour was spread that the thousands of royal supporters kept in jail and the counter-revolutionaries hiding within the country would join the foreigners to undo the revolution.

Thereupon, the radicals let loose a reign of two days of terror (Sept. 2nd and 3rd) in which thousands of

suspected royal supporters and counter-revolutionaries were savagely butchered to death. This event came to be known as Black September or September massacre.

(h) Reign of terror.

Ans : Reign of terror :- Amidst the chaos of the bloody massacre of September 1792, a new Legislative Assembly was elected. It converted itself into a National Convention. A Committee Public Safety consisting of twelve members was authorised by this National Convention to take all necessary executive action to deal on account of the activities of royalists and the counter-revolutionaries. It therefore, let loose a ten-month long reign of terror from September 1793 to July 1794 under the leadership of Robespierre in which all those who were guillotined.

This period in French history is known as the 'Reign of Terror'. It is estimated that about five thousand people were executed in Paris alone during this period. This period of French history is reckoned as one of the black periods of French history when hundreds perished due to difference of opinion and whims of certain leaders.

(i) Consulate.

Ans :- Consulate :- One of the features of the new Constitution of the Third year (1795) prepared by the National Convention was the creation of a new executive organ of the state known as Directory. It consisted of five directors who were to be appointed by

the bicameral Legislative Assembly. Their main task was to see to the enforcement of laws within the country. In 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte with the help of one of the directors overthrew this executive organ and established a government of system of government came to be known as the consulate. It consisted of a government of three consuls of whom Napoleon was the First Consul and the president of the consulate. The other two consuls served as assistants. The First Consul was not only the administrative head but also exercised supreme control over to the army and foreign policy.

The legislative organs of the consulate consisted of four houses, namely, the council of the state, tribunate, the legislative body and the senate. The Council of state proposed the laws, the Tribunate discussed the laws, the Legislative body was the given right to vote in the bills. The senate had the final right of testing the constitutionality of any law passed by the other three organs. Thus, the legislative power lay in the hands of the Senate whose members were nominated by the consuls.

3.Essay type questions :

(a) Briefly discuss the causes of French Revolution.

Ans : The French Revolution is considered to be one of the major landmark events of world history. It let loose certain vital principles which are at work even today. The concepts of liberty, equality and fraternity are indeed the legacies of French Revolution. The ideas of

constitutional monarchy, individual rights, right to vote , right to property, equality before law, separation of powers, etc. Effectively tested in France during this revolution and their success and failures during have been important lessons for other nations to imitate. Several factors led to the outbreak of this great revolution.

These factors are as follows :

(i) Political causes :- Royal absolutism as witnessed during the glorious epoch of Louis XVI came to an end with his death in 1715. His successor, Louis XV neither had the capacity nor the ability to govern the country effectively. He devoted himself to a life of ease and self-indulgence. He allowed his mistress and favourites to rule him. He wasted millions in personal pleasures and more millions in wasteful foreign wars. King Louis XVI, grandson of Louis XIV was a well disposed man.

But France needed in her king firmness and strength of will to reduce the extravagance of the countries and the privileged class. For such a task King Louis XVI was totally misfit. He was totally under his wife, Marie Antoinette who was despised by the French people for her scandalous living. She was surrounded by unworthy favourites who wasted much of the state exchequer. People's tolerance of the royalty had reached a breaking-point.

(ii) Social causes :- The social organisation of the French society was far from satisfactory. Privileges,

concession, exemption, inequality, etc. was the basis of social organisation. It only created distrust, suspicion, discontent and social hatred. Classes were divided against classes, group against group and not one was satisfied. Each maintained itself in great isolation as possible distrusting the class above and despising the class below. There were three groups or estates in France at this time. The First Estate of the clergy while the nobles constituted of the second estate. The third Estate consisted of the ordinary people, businessmen and the middle class.

The first two were the privileged classes who paid no taxes. The common masses had to bear the burden of the taxes. He had to pay up feudal services to the nobles, tithes to the clergy and taxes to the king. The result was the utter poverty of the common masses. It is said that "In France 9/10 of the population died of hunger and 1/10 of indigestion". The prevailing inequality, injustice, exploitation prepared the ground for the Revolution.

(iii) Financial bankruptcy :- Financial causes lay at the root of the revolution. Between 1733 and 1783 France waged four wars and as a result the state treasury became nearly empty. Her support to the American colonists during the American war of independence cost her dearly and once again huge amount had to spend for transporting men and materials to America against the British. Six percent of the total revenue went to the upkeep of the king and the nobles. It was due to the financial burden that compelled King Louis XVI to

summon the Estates General which lit the fire of revolution.

(iv) Philosophical and intellectual causes :- The political revolution of the 1789 was preceded by a revolution in the realm of ideas. The works of Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau aroused the French to fight for their rights. Voltaire attacked the church and the privileged class exposing their hollowness and tyranny. Montesquieu proposed the concept of constitutional monarchy and the separation of powers in his famous work 'The Spirit of Laws'.

Probably the greatest French philosopher of the time was Jean Jacques Rousseau. In this book 'Social Contract' he advocated the concept of popular sovereignty, right to revolution, and right to freedom. He said, "Man was born free but everywhere he is in chains". Thus, these philosophers awakened the sleeping masses and aroused them to fight for their rights. The contributions of Encyclopaedists such as Diderot, Aumont, Helvetius and Baron Hallbak etc. in this respect cannot be forgotten. Similarly, the physiocrats headed by Quesnay also played a major role in bringing about national awakening in the country.

(v) Corrupt Administration :- The administration system of France was in shambles in 1789. Various units of administration, possessed ill-defined and overlapping jurisdictions. The legal system of the country was chaotic and in a mess. There were about four hundred different types of laws in the country. The privileged

section of society could imprison any individual without any judicial enquiry. By the royal code of imprisonment known as 'letters de cachet' any individual could be imprisoned without justice for an indefinite period. The defective administration alienated the people and they waited for an opportunity to pull down such inefficient and corrupted government.

(vi) Influence of American and English revolution :- The revolutions of England and America had a profound effect on the minds of the French people. The example of the British in dethroning Stuart king James II by a bloodless revolution in 1688 was an example to the French. The French volunteers who had gone to America to help the colonists against England imbibed the spirit of the American revolutionaries and sowed it in France. Lafayette one of the front-line leaders of the French revolution had participated in the American war of Independence.

(vii) Immediate cause :- With a view to tackle the financial problem, Louis XVI summoned in 1787 an Assembly of Notables with the hope that they would consent to the taxation of the privilege class. But the nobles were not prepared to oblige the king tried new loans but the parliament of Paris refused to grant further loans and taxes. The latter drafted a declaration of rights and contented that the subsidies could be granted only by the Estates General the highest Legislative body of France. The Government took action against the parliament. They were huge and cry and the soldiers refused to arrest the members of Paris Parliament. They

were huge and cry the soldiers refused to arrest the members of Paris Parliament. Crowds demanded the convocation of the Estates General. Under these circumstances, the king was forced to give way and ordered elections to the Estates General after a gap of 175 General on 5th May, 1789 the first shots of revolution was fired.

(viii) In conclusion :- we may say "An unjust social order, a rotten political system, an unfair system of taxation, financial breakdown, the personal characters of Louis XVI and his queen Marie Antoinette coupled with the French Revolution".

(b) How did the writings of Philosophers and intellectuals inspire the French revolutionaries against the autocracy of the king ?

Ans : Perhaps, one of the major factors that prepared the ground for French Revolution was the philosophical cause. The political revolution of 1789 was preceded by a revolution in the realm of ideas. France produced a number of Philosophers and thinkers who actually prepared the ground. For the revolution.

Their writings gave expression to the discontentment and the indignation which lay at the heart of the French people. These writers aroused the French consciousness to fight for their rights. The work of Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau are significant in this context.

For twenty-five years Voltaire, 'intellectuals God of Europe', flooded France with his literary writing which aroused people's mind against the existing social disorders. His real name was Francis Marie Arouet. His chief target was the Catholic Church and privileged classes. He attacked tyranny, oppression, inequality and exploitation . To him the best form of government was the one where the king thought for the welfare of his subjects. He was a strong advocate of individual freedom.

He opposed all kinds of oppression, exploitation, blind belief and evil practices. While Voltaire wanted enlightened despotism Montesquieu proposed a constitutional monarchy in France. He summed up his ideas of such a government in his important work 'The Spirit of Laws' through which he popularized the idea of the separation of powers. He recommended constitutional monarchy, the type of government that was established in England as a result of the Glorious Revolution which occurred in England in 1688. Probably the greatest French philosophers of the age was Jean Jacques Rousseau.

In his famous work 'Social Contract', and therefore if the kind did not rule according to 5ge general will of the people, the people had the right to overthrow him. Rousseau advocated the theory of popular sovereignty. He said, " Man was born free but everywhere he is in chains". "Sweep away therefore the fabric of society. level its inequalities, repudiate its learning's, break its

principles of liberty, equality and fraternity as inalienable rights of man.

A group of encyclopaedists such as Diderat, Alembert, Helvetius and Baron Hallbak etc. also contributed much for the awakening of the French society. By criticizing the existing governments in their work they opened the eyes of the people. The Physiocrats headed by Quesnay too joined the encyclopaedists in their attempt to bring enlightenment to the French masses.

The philosophers of France did not cause the revolution. It was caused by the conditions and evils of national life prevalent then in France in 1789. Nevertheless, the writers were a factor in the revolution. They exposed the evils and disorders of the time, brilliantly focused attention upon them, compelled discussion and aroused passion.

(c) Briefly mention about the functions of National Assembly.

Ans : The French Revolution commenced with the famous Oath of Tennis Court on 20th June , 1789 by the members of the Third Estate which had been summoned by King Louis XVI in May, 1789 under financial problems. Soon the Third estate converted itself into a National Constituent Assembly determined to make a new constitution for France. Seeing the revolutionary trends of the members of the Third Estate and the people of Paris on June , 27th, king ordered the first and second Estates namely the clergy and the

nobles respectively to join with the Third Estate in forming a single National Constituent Assembly. The National Assembly thus started its work in June 1789 and completed its task by September 1791. Its chief tasks or functions were the following:

(i) Abolition of the Old order :- The first major task of the National Assembly was to abolish the remnants of the Old Order and the pillars of the ancient regime . On the night of 4th August, 1789 the Assembly passed a series of acts numbering about thirty abolishing serfdom, feudal jurisdiction, manorial rents, tithes , saleable offices, clerical fees, unequal taxation, and all types of class privileges, etc. All class distinctions and social bars were removed.

(ii) Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen :- On Aug 26, 1789 the Assembly passed a charter of liberties known as the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizens'. This document reflected the spirit of Rousseau's philosophy and incorporated some of the finer elements of the English bill of Rights and the American declaration of independence. It asserted that:

(a) All men are born equal in rights.

(b) Sovereignty resides with the people.

(c) Laws must be expression of the General will of the people.

(d) None should be punished unless for violation of the laws of the land.

(e) No person shall suffer on the account of his opinion, provided that the expression of such opinion did not imperil the peace of the community.

(f) All taxes should be raised only with consent of the people. The document is considered as a 'Magna Carta' of individual rights and liberties and has been widely recognised as a 'Gospel of modern times'.

(iii) Confiscation of the Church properties :- The treasury was practically empty. The economy of the country was in shambles. Therefore the Assembly took certain drastic steps to settle this problem. In November, 1778 it ordered the confiscation of all church properties without any compensation. Since these properties could not be sold quickly they issued interest- bearing security bonds named Assignats to the public to raise the money. The step greatly improved the financial situation of the country.

(iv) Civil constitution of the clergy :- The confiscation of the church properties brought forth a lot of problems. As all church properties became state properties many clergy found themselves penniless with no means to support themselves. This led to the farming of 'Civil Constitution of the Clergy' which sought to regulate the relation of the state with the church. The clergy were to be paid by the state and thus reduced them to the status of paid servants of the state. All secular clergy were to

be chosen by popular election requiring no papal sanction. They were all required to take an oath of adherence to the new constitution. This brought a division in the clergy. Some of them refused to take the oath. They were called 'Non- Juring Clergy', while those who took the oath came to be known as the 'Juring Clergy'.

(v) New Administrative system :- The Constituent Assembly introduced a new uniform system of administration in place of the old system of government by intendants, governors and Parliament. The country was divided into eighty-three departments of uniform size and population. The Department in turn were further divided into cantons and communes. Their Administration was entrusted with the elected local body which replaced the old government official appointed by the monarchy.

The assembly also provided a new judicial system. A national court established to try political offenders. The system of trial by Jury was introduced. The judges were to be elected by the people and were to hold Office for 2 or 4 years and were to be given government salaries. A uniform system of law was introduced all over France in lieu of the variety of laws which existed then.

(vi) The Constitution of 1791 :- The most significant achievement of the National Assembly was the framing of the new Constitution. It completed the task by September, 1791 and the new Constitution was formally accepted by King Louis XVI in 1791 becoming law of the

land. It was the first written Constitution of France and was based on the twin principles of the sovereignty of the people and separation of powers. The new Constitution established a constitutional monarchy whereby the king's power was totally curbed. Monarchy was to be hereditary . Ministers were to be appointed by the king. The Legislative Assembly was to be unicameral consisting of 745 members elected on high property franchise. The system of electing all judges and trial by jury in criminal cases were also introduced by the new constitution.

In conclusion, we can say that the National Constituent Assembly did achieve certain marvellous results. The Assembly abolished the inequalities and injustices of the ancient regime. It abolished feudalism, serfdom, aristocracy and all class privileges. The fundamental right to be free and independent was accepted and laid down in black and white. Equality before law, personal dignity of the common man and his political rights were assured and granted. It attempted to create a new France but somehow it failed short of that aim.

(d) Discuss the results of the French Revolution.

Ans : The French Revolution is considered to be one of the most significant events of world history which has influenced almost all countries in the world. The principles let loose by this great revolution are at work even today in many parts of the world. It is one of the most influencing events of world history.

1. Begins a new dawn in Europe :- French Revolution heralded a new era in the history of France. It destroyed absolute monarchism with its foundations of autocracy and feudal privileges. Age old social privileges were swept away. Economic inequalities were levelled . Rotten political systems of France were thrown asunder. A new France was created.

3. Abolition of Feudalism: One of the significant results of the French Revolution was that it helped the liquidation of feudalism and its accompanying evil called serfdom. Feudalism of France was swept away overnight . Her example was soon followed by many other European nations.

3. Rise of Nationalism :- The French Revolution helped the rise of Nationalism in the world. The French slogan of 'liberty, equality and fraternity ' became the demand of the suppressed nationalities all over the world. The freedom struggle movements in later years in different parts were greatly influenced by this great revolution.

4. Rise of individual rights: The French Revolution began a new era in the fight for the basic rights of man. The 'Declaration of the rights of Man and Citizen' wherein individual's fundamental and inalienable rights were set forth became the 'gospel of modern democracy' and the 'Manna of human liberties' . Practically almost all the countries of Europe and Asia were affected and influenced by these noble ideals laid down in this document.

5. Popular Sovereignty :- The greatest contribution of French Revolution or the most notable legacy of French revolution was that it for the first time introduced the principle of popular sovereignty. It brought into the forefront of the concept that the ultimate power and authority rests with the people alone and not in the kings or in their aristocracy.

6. Caused similar revolutions :- The French example had a lasting impact on the people of Europe. Those who were suffering under the tyranny of foreign rulers derived their inspiration from the French. Europe during the 19th and early part of the 20th century was convulsed by many revolutions based on the principles outlined by the French Revolution.

7. Spread of the ideas of liberty :- equality and fraternity: Ever since the fall of Bastille on 14th july, 1789 the noble concept of liberty, equality and fraternity as propagated by the French philosophers resounded all over Europe . These ideals became 'the gospel of modern times' and a universal slogan.

8. Demand for parliamentary reform :- The effect and consequences of the French Revolution were felt all over Europe. Monarchy was threatened. Kings saw the need to change and pacify the new emerging democratic trends. Following the French example many countries of the world witnessed a period of parliamentary reforms.

9. Beginning of Constitutional reforms :- Beginning with rise of parliamentary reforms, the first step towards constitutional reforms also began to take shape. The idea of written constitution, the separation of powers between the various organs of government, constitutional monarchy, limited monarchy and notion of republic, etc were some of the concepts which emerged as a result of the French Revolution and soon most of these concepts began to echo and re-echo all over Europe compelling certain constitutional reforms.

Perhaps no other event has had so much influenced and impact on human history as the French revolution.

It brought into prominence certain new concepts such as sovereignty of the people , separation of powers , constitutional monarchy, right to revolution, the right of man to be free and independent, etc. It fostered the spirit of democracy and democratic ideals. In whatever way we may look at the French Revolution it is a undoubtedly one of the breath-taking and landmark events of our history.

(e) Write briefly how did Napoleon capture power in France.

Ans : Napoleon was born in the island of Corsica in the Mediterranean in 1769. This island belonged to Italy but had been captured by France in 1768 a year before Napoleon's birth. Soon after his initial studies he joined the French army. He was a sub-lieutenant when the French broke out in 1789. By dint of his military

capability good luck , Napoleon became an important officer in the French army. In 1793, he was able to defeat the British and capture the town of Toulouse from them. As a result of his incredible action against the British he made the commander of the French army in Italy. On his return to France, he made himself famous by suppressing the rebellion of the revolutionaries on Oct. 5, 1795 against the National Convention. The Directory which pleased with this action of Napoleon appointed him as the commander-in-chief of the French forces in Italy in 1796.

He then undertook the second Italian campaign. Within a year in 1797, he was able to give a crushing defeat to the Austrian forces at Ravioli and made the treaty of Camping Formio by which Austrians from Italy during 1786-1797 campaign made him famous all over France. With the permission of directory he decided to attack the British in Egypt. He mobilised Army off 35000 man and in invaded Egypt in 1798. But the French forces were thoroughly defeated in the battle of Nile in 1793 by the British forces led by Amoral Lord Nelson. Soon after this Napoleon invaded Syria and then came back to France.

Meanwhile, the directory had become and unpopular. The directors quarrelled among themselves and we're totally inefficient to bring peace and order in the country. On the other hand, the French had a very high opinion of Napoleon and they thought that only he could save their country from the internal and external dangers. Sensing the public mood and support, on Nov. 9, 1799

he overthrew the Directory and captured power. The dismissal of the directory and the starting of a new system of administration known as consulate came to be called 18th Brumaire . Soon after this a new Constitution named constitution was adopted in 1800 i.e., eight after the establishment of Republic in 1792, it came to be called Eight year Constitution. The new system of administration established by Napoleon was known as consulate. Under this arrangement, the country was to be ruled by three consuls for a period of 10 years. Napoleon made himself the first consul with all executive power. Very soon he dropped the other two consuls and assumed the powers of a dictator. In this manner he ruled France from 1799 to 1804 and was able to save France from disorders and foreign threats. He introduced several praiseworthy reforms in all spheres of life. He became the emperor of France in 1804 and ruled the country until his defeat in the battle of Waterloo in 1815.