

The Struggle for Freedom

WALTER MURDOCH, M.A.

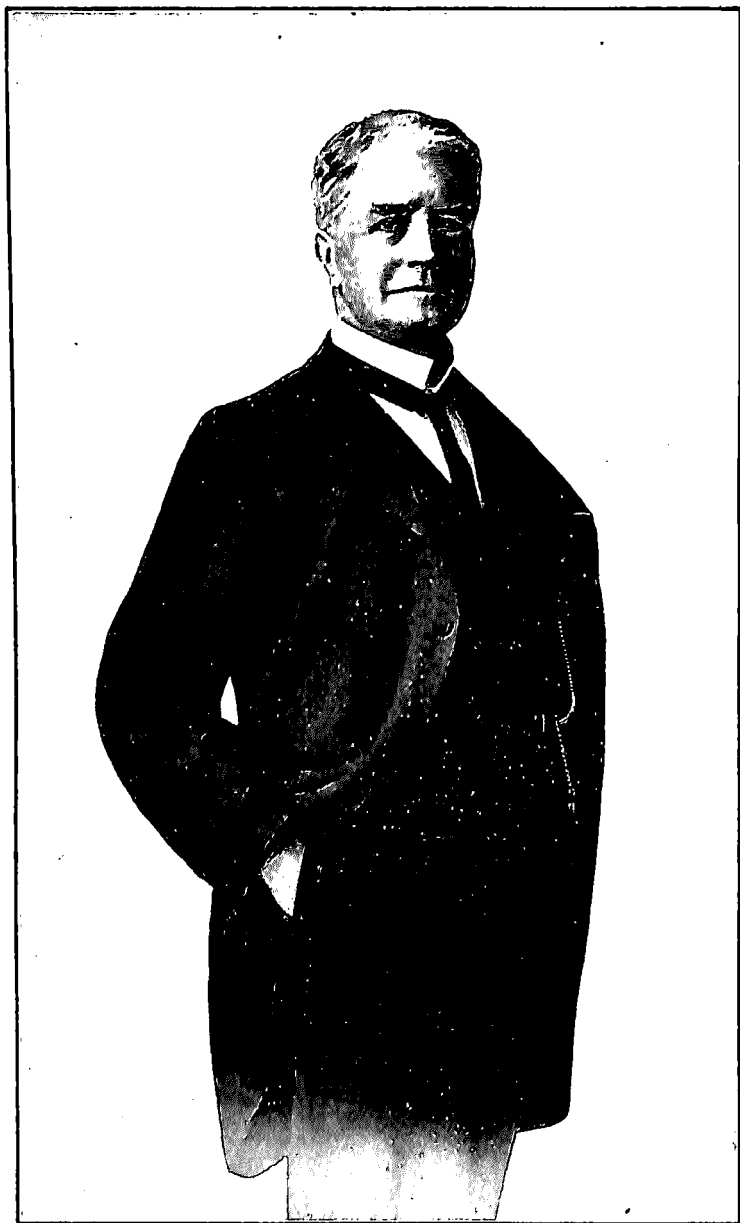


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Sir Edmund Barton,
First Prime Minister of the Commonwealth.

The Struggle for Freedom

BY

WALTER MURDOCH, M.A.

SIXTH EDITION, REVISED.



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For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And, though thou slay us, we will trust in thee.



NOTE TO SIXTH EDITION.

For this edition the book has been carefully revised. The author has to thank many friends for assistance in this task; and he wishes especially to record his indebtedness to Professor Harrison Moore, of the University of Melbourne, for a number of valuable suggestions.

June, 1911.

FOR TEACHERS.

The following works will be found useful by those who desire to study in detail the subjects treated in this book:—

SYDNEY LOW—"The Governance of England."

LOWELL—"The Government of England."

HARRISON MOORE—"The Commonwealth of Australia."

SEELEY—"Introduction to Political Science."

GOLDWIN SMITH—"The United Kingdom."

LORD MORLEY—"Walpole."

FREDERIC HARRISON—"Chatham."

LORD ROSEBERY—"Pitt."

SIR A. LYALL—"Warren Hastings."

SEELEY—"The Expansion of England."

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THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM.

INTRODUCTORY.

WHAT IS GOVERNMENT?

1. In order to understand what government really means, and why it is necessary, let us suppose that a dozen sailors have been shipwrecked on an unknown shore, and that the captain and all the officers have been drowned, so that there is no one to take the lead. At first all is disorder; they cannot agree as to their best course. Some beef and biscuit have been washed ashore; some of the men are in favour of eating till their hunger is satisfied, and trusting to find something else to eat when they have finished what they have; others are for eating just enough to keep them from starvation, so that the supply may last over as many days as possible. The latter, however, quickly perceive that, if they do not eat as much as they can lay hands on, the result will simply be that their share will be eaten by others: they therefore decide to eat while they have the chance. Thereupon follows a wild scramble for food.

2. One man proposes that they shall go inland and see if they can find any fruit; another urges that they ought to stay on the shore so that they may be ready to make signals if a sail appears; a third points out

that, whatever they do, they must remain together so as to be a united force in case the savages, whom they see in the distance, should venture to attack them. In the end they come to no decision, and sit still.

3. Someone suggests that they ought to try to catch fish; but none offers to go and do it. Another suggests that they should build a hut; all agree that it is an excellent idea, but no-one volunteers to begin, and the hut remains unbuilt. Night comes on; everyone sees plainly that a watch should be kept, but nobody sees any reason why *he* should be selected for the first watch. Each man has his own opinion as to what should be done, and some begin to impress their views on others by blows.

4. But, when things are at their worst, it occurs to one of them that they ought to choose a captain; and he persuades them all to swear that they will obey the captain when he is chosen. After some more quarrelling, a captain is elected. The first thing he does is to make some rules: a rule as to the amount of food each man is to have per day; a rule as to the order in which they are to keep watch by night; a rule as to which men are to fish, which to build a hut, which to search for fruit; a rule as to how they are to fight in case of attack by the savages. Moreover, he announces that any man who disobeys these rules will be driven away by the rest, and will probably roam about alone until the savages kill him, or until he dies of starvation. Thus every man is induced to obey the rules *through fear of losing the protection afforded him by the rest*. And so they manage to live together very peaceably, all obeying

their captain, until one day a ship appears, and they are saved.

5. We see, then, what a difference it has made to these men to get a captain, and a set of rules or laws, which they must all obey. Without these they could not agree about anything; they would soon have been fighting, and perhaps killing one another; they would never have taken united action to protect themselves from the cold, from the savages, or from hunger; and they must soon have fallen victims one and all, to one or other of these evils. But, when the captain came, with his set of laws and his way of getting them obeyed, all was changed.

6. Where, as in this case, the people who have to live together are few in number, the laws necessary are few and simple. These sailors have no need, for example, of any laws about private property, because none of them possesses any property except the clothes he is wearing. They need no laws about buying and selling, because they have nothing to sell and no money to buy with. But it is quite otherwise when a great many people live near one another, and have constant dealings, of all kinds, with one another. In that case the rules, or laws, become much more numerous and complicated.

7. Even two people cannot live together for any length of time without certain rules to regulate their intercourse. I cannot even walk down the street with a friend, unless he and I obey some well-recognised rules or *laws*, though we may not think of them by that name; for, should either of us violate the simple rules of courtesy, a quarrel would probably be the result, and an abrupt end of our walk. Imagine,

then, a country without laws; imagine what it would be like to live in such a country. There would be constant fights, because, with no law to protect private property, the only method of protecting it would be to fight for it. There would be constant murders, because there would be no law to forbid a man taking the life of his enemy. No trade would be possible; for, with no law to prevent cheating, the honest trader would go to the wall, and nobody could be trusted: without the law of honesty, trade is impossible. The law of truthfulness being unknown, language would become useless; for, as nobody could believe what anybody else said, people might as well be dumb. In a thousand other ways, life would be made intolerable by the absence of laws. That state of things is known as *anarchy*; and it may safely be said, that it is better to live under the worst laws that ever were made than to live in a country where anarchy prevails.

8. If we found ourselves in such a country, the best thing to do would be to call together all the sensible and honest people we could find, and to say to them: "Why do we allow this state of things to continue? We all abhor it; why not do away with it? Let us make a rule that there is to be no more murder, no more robbery, no more cheating; let us proclaim publicly that anyone found doing these things will be punished." If, after we had made these laws, we were strong enough to enforce them—that is, to get them obeyed by most of the people, and to punish those who disobeyed them,—then we should have succeeded in establishing a *Government*.

9. We are now in a position to say what govern-

ment really means. Government does not consist simply of making rules, but also of enforcing obedience to those rules. Moreover, Government does not concern itself with *all* our actions, but only with those which affect others in the same society as ourselves. Everyone leads, in a sense, two lives. One of his lives is made up of the actions which concern himself alone; that is his *individual* life. Whether I shall or shall not go shooting to-morrow may be a question for myself to decide. It may be of no consequence to anyone else. But whether or not I shall shoot in the public streets—that is a question which affects my neighbours; a question, therefore, which the laws of the country answer for me. Actions which affect one's neighbours make up one's *social* life; and it is with this life, and not with the individual life, that government deals.

10. **Government**, then, means *the making of rules for a body of people living together in a society, and the enforcement of those rules*. It is necessary only for people who live together; but this applies practically to the whole human race. Men must live together. Man is not the strongest of the animals; alone he is too weak and helpless to combat the great forces of Nature; in union with his fellow-men, he is strong enough to subdue Nature to his will. And so society becomes necessary; society being simply the expression of the *social instinct*, that deep-seated instinct which makes man turn to man for help and protection. And society being necessary, Government, without which, as we have seen, society is impossible, becomes necessary also.

11. There is another instinct which exists in every

human being side by side with the social instinct, namely, the instinct for *freedom*. We feel the need of order, of laws, of government; but we feel just as strongly, and sometimes far more strongly, the need of freedom; and the two needs seem at first sight to be radically opposed to each other. How is it possible to be free if you have to submit to laws imposed upon you by another? We must be free; and yet we must obey; it appears an insoluble problem. We need not attempt to find the solution at present, but let us keep the problem in mind; the following pages will, perhaps, show how it is to be solved. For it is the especial glory of England, and the feature that makes English history a lesson for all other nations, that she, first of all the nations, set herself to solve this very problem: how to have strong government and personal freedom at the same time. The great fight for freedom, about which we shall read, was not an effort to do away with Government—for that were madness—but an effort to find a form of government that would not interfere with men's personal liberty.

CHAPTER I.

THE MODERN STATE.

1. The Norman Conquest completed the process by which England became a State, in the modern sense of the word. To understand this, it is necessary that we should understand clearly the difference between the older, or "patriarchal," type of

society, and the kind of society represented by the modern "State."

2. **What is Society?** A society is not merely a collection of persons, but a collection of persons bound together by some permanent bond. People may collect to see a fire, or hear a lecture, but such an assemblage of people does not constitute a society, because when they have seen or heard what they came together to see or hear, they scatter to their several homes, and may never see one another again; they have no permanent bond of union to keep them together. The distinction between the various kinds of society is simply the distinction between the various bonds that unite the members. Thus a cricket club is a society whose bond is a common desire on the part of its members to play cricket. A Trade Union is a society whose members are united by the fact that they all practise the same trade. A church is a society whose bond is a common belief in the same form of worship. A State is a society: by what bond is it held together?

3. In the older, or **patriarchal**, type of society, the bond was blood-relationship, descent from the same ancestors. Strangers might come and settle down in the midst of such a community, but they were looked upon as aliens, foreigners. They might trade with the members of that community, they might even fight its battles; but they could never become members of it themselves. A good example of the patriarchal type of society is to be found in ancient Rome. The Roman State was in its earlier days a society of kinsmen, who had, or believed they had, a common ancestor in *Æneas*; and, when there

sprang up in their midst an alien population, brought thither in the first instance by trade, and by the conquest of other cities, the Romans thought it a monstrous thing that these foreigners should ask for membership of the State. They were ready to die rather than yield to such a demand; and two hundred years of bloodshed and bitter strife had to pass before Rome ceased to be a patriarchal State and became a State of the modern type. In precisely the same way, the Boers of South Africa, a patriarchal society, long refused to admit to membership of their society those who were among them, but not of the same race: they clung tenaciously to the old idea of blood-relationship as the basis of a community, and only by a long and cruel war could they be taught the stern lesson that the patriarchal idea of society is not suited to modern conditions, and must everywhere give place to the modern conception of a State.

4. The Military Type. In States, as we use the word to-day, the bond which unites the members is the military bond of obedience to a common authority; whether it be the authority of an absolute monarch, or of a monarch whose power is limited by law, or of a council appointed by the State itself, need not now concern us. That the basis of modern States is a military basis, is perhaps at first sight rather a startling statement; but a moment's reflection will show that it is true. In certain European countries, France, for instance, every able-bodied man is compelled to serve for a time in the army; if any man wishes to escape from that service, he must also escape from the country, and cease to be a member of that State. Thus it appears that military ser-

vice is the essence of membership. In Britain there is no such compulsion; or rather, in Britain, people have been allowed, from very early times, to pay money instead of serving as soldiers—that is, to pay taxes which will enable the King to keep a standing army. In Australia, on the other hand, military service is now compulsory. But what unites all of us who are members of the British Empire is simply this, that we are “subjects of the King”; and what does that phrase mean? It means that if the King calls upon us, in case of necessity, to leave our homes and fight for our country, we are bound to obey. To fight *against* one’s country, to assist in any way the enemies of one’s country in time of war, is called treason and may be punished by death. But it is really treason, also, if we refuse to fight for our country when called upon to do so by a sovereign; such a refusal strikes at the foundation of the State; for the British Empire, and all modern states, are founded on *allegiance*.

5. Origin of the Modern State. The modern State, then, is primarily a society whose bond is military; it is, as it were, a band of men sworn to stand by one another in war, whether in defence of their property, or in acquiring more property. High as we have risen above this rather savage-looking idea, it is well to remember that such was our origin: that our modern “State” is developed out of the ancient “war-band” of our ancestors. Tacitus, the Roman historian, has, in a famous passage, described these war-bands, as the ancient Germans knew them, each with its “dux” or war-leader; and, as this “dux” is the origin of the modern king, it will be well to look at him carefully.

6. The "dux," as Tacitus describes him, was a man chosen for his superior strength, courage and skill in arms; which does not mean that he was formally *elected* by any of our systems of election, but simply that he attracted to himself, by his own qualities, a band of warriors who took him for their leader. These warriors swore to stand by their leader through good and evil chance; they considered it an indelible disgrace to leave the field of battle alive if their leader were killed; they formed his body-guard, and on the day of defeat stood round him, or over his body till all were slain. In return for their loyalty and unquestioning obedience, they were fed and clothed by him, and received a share of whatever booty the band might win by its raids. These companions, or *gesiths*, as the Saxons called them, are the origin of our British House of Lords; and out of the original constitution of the war-band, with its system of rewards for military allegiance, sprang the Feudal System.

7. **The Founding of States.** Many of the modern States of Europe were founded in this very simple way: a band of warriors went on a longer expedition than usual to a strange country; liking the look of the place, they determined to stay there; so they overcame the native inhabitants, reduced them to a state of permanent subjection, and settled down as masters of the territory they had won. Now, it is obvious that, when this had happened, both the leader and his band must have occupied a somewhat perilous position; for the conquered race would naturally hate their conquerors, and would not give up the hope of winning back their stolen territories; they would be constantly planning and attempting

revolts, which might at any time be successful. The problem before the conqueror was twofold; he must endeavour to reconcile the conquered race to his rule, and he must somehow make himself strong enough to nip in the bud any attempt at insurrection. To win the land was a soldier's work; to hold it when won required a statesman. If William I. had been merely what he at first appeared to be, a peculiarly ruthless military leader, he would never have founded the Kingdom of England. He was also one of the wisest and most far-seeing of statesmen.

8. Roughly speaking, what generally happened when a war-band had successfully invaded a country inhabited by a patriarchal community was this: the leader, who in process of time came to be called King, endeavoured to reconcile the conquered race to his rule, in the first place, by retaining as many as possible of the ancient institutions of the race. We must remember that with such races *custom* took the place of *law*; a thing was wrong, not because there was a written law forbidding it, but because it had always been considered wrong as far back as anyone could remember. The patriarchal society had a profound veneration for established custom, and the wise conqueror would interfere with the customs of the race as little as he could. In the second place, these communities had, as we have seen, the deepest respect for the tie of blood-relationship: the conqueror would therefore endeavour to persuade the people that he himself was sprung of a common stock with them, that he was akin to them: and he would very likely connect himself with the conquered race by marriage. (William, immediately after assuming the crown, married his niece to an

English noble.) Thirdly, the conqueror, knowing the weakness of an elective monarchy, and the disorder that would arise at his death if a successor had to be elected, would make the Kingship hereditary. And, finally, as he could not personally look after the affairs of every part of his new dominion, he could send out his companions—the members of his war-band—into various parts of his kingdom, as his *agents*, each with a certain territory to rule over.

9. The Feudal Baronage. The leader's servants thus became lords over their own domains; they were authorised to collect tribute from those over whom they ruled, keeping part for themselves, and giving part to the King. Thus the *booty* of the original war-band now took the form of *tribute*, exacted from the subject race by the conqueror year after year, and shared by him with his warriors. The King also insisted that every man of the conquered race must fight for him if called upon; and he would naturally make each of the *barons*, as his warriors now came to be called, responsible for seeing that those over whom he ruled should fulfil this duty. The baron had to see, too, that "the King's peace" was kept in his own domain, and to do this he had to administer justice throughout that domain.

10. The Weak Spot in Feudalism. Such was the Feudal System in its essence: William I. introduced some important modifications which will be considered later on; meanwhile we must not fail to notice another danger that the victorious leader would sooner or later have to face. These Barons were, as we have seen, the King's servants, sent into various parts of his kingdom to manage his affairs for him. But they were masters in their own

domains; and they would be almost sure, after a time, to grow so fond of being masters as to forget that they were servants; they would be almost sure, sooner or later, to throw off their allegiance, and try to make themselves independent of the King. Having armies of their own, they would be sure to use those armies to avenge private injuries, to satisfy private spites, to increase their domains at the expense of other barons. Hence would arise a state of violence and lawlessness. We shall see how William endeavoured to guard against this danger; but, as long as feudalism lasted, the power of the barons was a constant menace to the power of the crown, and was the cause of much misery and much bloodshed. It was also, as we shall see, the opening through which the English people forced their way to national independence.

11. **Summary.** Let us not forget, however, the distinction that has been drawn between the patriarchal community and the modern State. The Normans made England a modern state by giving it a military basis. In ancient England every freeman owned a piece of land, which nobody could take from him; whereas, after the Norman Conquest all the country was *owned by the King*, and by him was parcelled out among his followers, those who had done the fighting for him, *on condition* that they should always be prepared to furnish him with an army if he required one, and that they should continue to look upon him as their leader, to whom obedience was due. Blood-relationship no longer counted for anything. The English Kingdom was *national*; it was a society of kinsfolk; the Norman Kingdom was *territorial*; everyone, Saxon, or Dane,

or Norman, or Jew, who lived in the King's territory, was one of the King's subjects, bound to take up arms in his behalf if the need should arise. The modern State has nothing to do with nationality: it welcomes men of every race, if their character is satisfactory. The patriarchal society was exclusive, and in this racial exclusiveness lay its great weakness. "It is a question of whether it is preferable to maintain purity of race, and be extinguished as an independent community, or to admit alien blood, and prosper. All the world over the rule applies: the pure-blooded races are weak, the mixed races are strong."*

CHAPTER II.

THE OLD ENGLISH KINGDOM.

1. **England Before the Conquest.** Anyone passing to-day through Britain in the railway, say, from London to Edinburgh, can with difficulty realise the appearance which the country must have presented to its Norman invaders. To understand the part played by these invaders in the making of our national history, we must try to imagine what the country was like and what its inhabitants were like; we must try to understand what influences were making for civilisation and what influences were keeping it back.

2. **State of the Country.** To begin with, most of

*Professor Jenks.

the land then consisted of dense forest and undrained swamp. The forest was still inhabited by bears and wolves, and the wild boar was still plentiful in the fens, while wild deer and wild cattle still roamed over the length and breadth of the country. But here and there amid this desolate and dangerous waste, there was to be found a little patch of tilled land, which men had cut out of the forest; and in order to guard their crops, their folds, and themselves from the savage animals, which lurked so close on all sides, they had fenced these clearings with a wall or hedge. The country in those wild times was too full of perils for a man to live by himself, so men congregated in these enclosures, in which they built the hovels that served them for houses.

3. **Saxon and Celt.** In such enclosures, or townships, lived the Teutonic race that has given to England its name, much of its national character, and many of its fundamental institutions. We know how this race had come over the sea from Germany in three great swarms; how it had driven the Celtic inhabitants of Britain to take refuge in Ireland, in the mountains of Scotland and Wales, and in the Devonian and Cornish hills; how they had come as pirates and marauders, and how they had settled down and made their home in the new country. Whether they destroyed all the Celts who did not manage to escape to the mountains, or whether some of these remained as slaves among the conquerors, we have no means of knowing; but we know that, not long after the first landing of the English, "the Briton had disappeared from the greater part of the land which had been his own, and the tongue, the

religion, and the laws of his English conqueror reigned without a rival from Essex to the Severn, and from the British Channel to the Firth of Forth."* We must not forget, however, the existence in the more barren, rugged and inaccessible parts of the country, and in Ireland, of the Celtic refugees. Here, long before the Normans came, was a sharp division of races; a division destined to exercise a lasting and powerful influence on the fortunes of the United Kingdom.

4. The English Before They Came to Britain. So far as we can judge from the accounts of the English in their German home by contemporary historians, they were a handsome race, a race of tall and stalwart people. Their most marked characteristic was the jealousy with which each man guarded his personal independence—a trait which, often dimmed, never wholly obscured, is the guiding-star of English History. The English were a nation of independent land-owners, dwelling in free and independent communities. Freedom was inseparable in their minds from the ownership of land. They lived in tribes, each tribe under its own chieftain or "ealdorman;" but the existence of a chieftain implies no interference with the freedom of the tribe, for the tribe chose its own chief (This chief must not be confused with the war-leader referred to above: he was quite another person.) There was no central government to unite the various tribes; there was no king. If a man was wronged he could not seek redress in any public manner, but had to exact vengeance privately;

*Green.

(though we may discern traces of a growing sense of *public* justice in the rule, which gradually became a national custom or law, that the *kinsmen* of the wronged man might demand compensation from the *kinsmen* of the wrong-doer). The nation was simply a collection of independent units. There was no organisation.

4. **The Aristocracy.** Though all freemen who owned land had equal rights, we must not suppose that there were no social distinctions among the English. There was one very marked distinction. The mass of the tribesmen were simply freemen, or "churls," but in every tribe there were men who owned larger pieces of land than the rest; these were called "earls," and they were "men distinguished among their fellows by noble blood, who were held in hereditary reverence, and from whom the ealdormen of the village were chosen as leaders."* Here was an aristocracy, but an aristocracy which enjoyed no single right or privilege not possessed by every free member of the tribe. The sovereign power of the tribe resided, not in ealdormen nor in earls, but in the tribe itself, which met round a "moot-hill" to make its own laws.

5. **Organisation.** But when these separate self-governing tribes came to Britain and settled there, they quickly discovered that, if they were to hold their own against the Celtic inhabitants of the island, they must unite. And so it became the custom for various tribes to join together, under a common leader, who thus occupied a position of greater power and majesty than he could have held as the

*Green.

chieftain of a single tribe. Thus the necessities of war gave birth to the kingship—an institution of which the English knew nothing until they came to Britain. Many tribes would unite to form one kingdom, and thus were produced the seven kingdoms known as the Heptarchy.*

6. The Celtic races subdued, we know how the English kingdoms struggled with one another for supremacy; how Mercia for a time prevailed; how in the end Wessex, the south-western kingdom, succeeded in making herself supreme, and founded the Kingdom of England. We must now return to the condition of England as the Normans found it.

7. **The Township.** The enclosure, or township, was a miniature of the whole nation, for the township was a cluster of kinsmen, and the bond that united the townsmen was kinship. This will explain the name of many an English town; for the town was very often called by the name of the family that inhabited it, as for instance, Billingham; *i.e.*, the *ham* or *home* of the Billings. England was made up of such townships which formed independent communities and had little to do with one another; the state of the country made communication between the various villages extremely difficult; for the roads were mere tracks through the forest, except for the one or two real roads which the Romans had built with their usual magnificent thoroughness. But, as we have seen, the villages were not entirely separate; *organisation* of some

*Though this term has been shown to be misleading; there were not at any one time exactly seven kingdoms in England. But there *were* seven kingdoms which figured prominently at *various periods* of early English history. Hence the word may be retained.

kind was found necessary; and the English Kingdom was organised in the following way.

8. **Organisation of the Town.** Each township was a little kingdom in itself. It had its own Parliament and its own ruler. The Parliament was the *town-moot*, which simply meant a meeting of the freemen of the town (for we must not forget that there were then many slaves in England) to discuss the management of the town affairs. And the ruler was the *reeve*, one of whose duties was to call the town-moot together when he thought it necessary. So the town was an organisation complete in itself.

9. **Organisation of the Kingdom.** But further, the townships were grouped together in larger organisations called *hundreds*; and the hundred, or group of townships, had also its moot, the *hundred-moot*, called together by the *hundred-man*. Then again, a certain number of hundreds made up a *shire*; and accordingly we find the *shire-moot*, presided over by the *alderman* (or elder man); but beside him sat the *shire-reeve* and, in Christian times, the bishop. And, finally, the shires collectively made up the Kingdom, governed by the Great Moot, or *witenagemote* (meeting of wise men), presided over by the King. This Great Moot was the contribution of the Saxons to the problem of government. It was made up of the nobles and the bishops, and dealt with all matters which concerned, not any particular shire or township, but the kingdom as a whole.

10. **How the Organisation Worked.** What happened when war was to be made was something like this: The King sent word to the aldermen; each

alderman sent word to all the hundred-men in his shire; each hundred-man sent word to all the town-reeves in his hundred; and each town-reeve summoned all the grown men of his town to march with him to an appointed place. Thus the whole fighting strength of the nation could be brought together to one spot; and the army so collected was the national militia or Fyrd. Thus for purposes of war—and it is in war time that the organisation of a kingdom is most severely tested—the English Kingdom appears to have been completely organised.

11. Allusion has already been made to the inroads of the **Danish pirates**. When the crown of England passed to a Dane (Canute), it may seem that the division of races must have become three-fold, for there were now in England the Celts, the English, and the Danes. In reality, however, the new division was not sharp, for the Danes spoke a language very closely akin to the English, and their general way of life was much the same. One measure of Canute's we must notice: recognising that England was very imperfectly welded together, and could scarcely be controlled by one central government, he divided the kingdom into four great earldoms. This was really a backward step—a step toward that disunion from which the nation was slowly emerging. It encouraged provincial feeling—devotion to one's own particular division of the nation—at the expense of patriotism—devotion to the good of the nation as a whole. And though it appears to have worked well enough under the firm government of Canute, it was in the end disastrous to the life of the English nation. For it set up four

powers which speedily became too strong for the King to control, and thus contributed to the internal weakness which tempted the Normans to invade England.

CHAPTER III.

THE CONQUEST AND ITS RESULTS.

1. **The Northmen** were great founders of states—military states of the kind described above; and all the states they founded were the result of armed migrations such as we have dealt with in Chapter I. “In the ninth century the Northmen became the ruling power in Russia; in the tenth founded the Duchy of Normandy; in the eleventh the new Kingdom of England; in the twelfth the Kingdom of the Sicilies, and the short-lived Kingdom of Jerusalem.”*

2. **Normandy.** On France the Northmen had made a raid more terrible than even the Danish raids on England, and the French had been glad to buy peace at the price of a large tract of land which came to be called Normandy, “the Northman’s land.” This was nominally a Duchy, held by the terms of a treaty or agreement, with the King of France; and nominally the Duke of Normandy had to do homage to the King of France; that is, the Duke was supposed to be merely one of the King’s Barons. But we have noticed the tendency of barons to become too strong for their sovereign to control.

*Professor Jenks.

This was especially the case in France; and, in actual fact, the Dukes of Normandy soon became monarchs as powerful as the Kings whose servants they were supposed to be.

3. The Norman Character. The Normans, when they first came from Scandinavia, came as simple pirates, and as pirates they long continued to be regarded by the French. But they had in them one trait which we do not usually associate with pirates—an extraordinary readiness to receive new ideas, and adapt themselves to new conditions. When they acquired lands of their own among the more civilised peoples, they ceased to be pirates, and rose to be knights, statesmen, and scholars. This feature of their character, whereby they were able to absorb from the people among whom they settled the nobler influences of civilisation, is perhaps the most admirable of their qualities—even more admirable than their unconquerable energy and dauntless courage. Contrast their history with that of the English. The pirates who swept down on Britain drove out or exterminated the Celtic races, retained their own language and customs, and remained English. The pirates who swept down on France adopted the French language and customs, ceased to be Norsemen, and became Frenchmen. Not only did they learn refinement from the French; they soon became the most refined race in France. Not only did they embrace Christianity; they became the most fervidly religious race in Europe. It is a wonderful evidence of the flexibility of their character, that in so short a time they were able to change from freebooters to chivalrous knights, from pirate chiefs to great soldiers and

statesmen, from ignorant savages to enlightened scholars, from marauders to crusaders; all the while retaining the best of their original qualities, the energy that nothing could tame, and the valour that sought for danger and rejoiced to find it. They retained also, it must be added, no small part of the brutality which had made their sails dreaded when, as pirates, they swept down the Channel in their terrible galleys. They were ruthless tyrants to the race they conquered; nevertheless it was from the Normans that the English nation derived the idea of chivalry, which has survived the Feudal System and is with us still as the honour "which feels a stain like a wound."



A Norman Knight.

4. It is easy to see that contact with a people so remarkable must have wrought many deep and lasting changes on any race with whom they had to do; and the English had been in contact with the Normans for many years before the Conquest. Norman refinement, Norman politeness, had

long been imitated by the English nobles, and the Norman language had long been fashionable at the English Court. But the Battle of Hastings, and the events which followed, brought the whole English population into close and unpleasant contact with the Normans. Once again we have in England the spectacle of one race subjugated by another. The Celts were avenged: it was now the turn of the English to groan under an invader's tyranny.

5. It is a question much discussed by historians, whether the Norman Conquest was really a blessing or a curse. There was certainly no such question in the minds of Englishmen who saw their lands taken from them and given to Norman courtiers, and themselves reduced to a state of slavery. A curse the Conquest must certainly have seemed to the Northumbrian outcast, as he looked on the blackened desolation where his homestead had been. But to us, who look back, the good effects are plainly visible. To see them clearly, however, we must consider in detail the political and social results of the invasion.

6. Political Results. When William had made himself absolute master of his new kingdom—a process which took some time, and was carried out with merciless thoroughness—he set himself to form a system of government which should fit that stormy time. The problem which every military conqueror had to face was, as we have seen, twofold: he must endeavour to reconcile the conquered race to his rule, and he must make himself strong enough to nip in the bud any attempt at insurrection. One way of solving the first problem was, we saw, to retain as

many as possible of the ancient institutions of the conquered race. William saw that some of the existing institutions of the English were admirable, and he kept as many as he could. He kept, for instance, the old division of shire, hundred, and township, with their assemblies (though he changed the name "shire" to "county.") He retained the English laws. He tried to appear, not as a conqueror, but as lawful King of England; he had himself elected by the Witenagemote with all the usual ceremonies, and was crowned by an English archbishop. He married his niece to an Englishman, and in various other ways tried to persuade the English to like his rule.

7. Norman Justice. But what really went farther than all else to reconcile the English was the stern justice of William's rule. He would stand no violation of his laws either by Norman or by Saxon. He gave to a land that had been torn by anarchy for hundreds of years the priceless gift of order. The English system was an admirable one for quieter times; but what the England of that age needed above all was firm government, and William's government was nothing if not firm. The result of his firmness was "a good peace in his land, so that a man might fare over his realm with a bosom full of gold." He was pitiless to those who opposed his will; when rebellion occurred in the north, he marched northward with his army, slaying, plundering, and burning, and reduced all that part of England to a state of desolation from which it took hundreds of years to recover. But he was equally stern to all who broke the laws of the land, and even the most patriotic Englishmen had to admit that Wil-

liam had brought order to a land where disorder had long reigned.

8. **William's Safeguards.** The other problem—how to secure his position against future insurrections—William solved by the establishment of Feudalism. First of all, he abolished the great earldoms of Canute, which, as we have seen, had grown too strong and become a menace to the throne. There were already traces of feudalism in England. Indeed, the condition of that age must have produced a kind of feudal system throughout Europe; for it was an age of lawlessness and violence, and everywhere the “free man” must have found it necessary to sell his independence for protection, to make himself the servant of someone strong enough to guard him from the attacks of the marauding bands which were a continual terror to him. This was what had happened in England. The havoc wrought by the Danes had driven free men all over the country to this practice of “commendation,” as it is called, which is an essential part of feudalism. The free man, or *churl*, was gradually becoming the servant, or *villein*. Evidently, then, feudalism was not an altogether new idea to the English.

9. We have seen that feudalism arose by the giving of rewards to a “war-band” by its leader. What had William to give? His first step was a vast confiscation of estates all over the kingdom. He dispossessed the owners of these estates, and took the whole country into his possession. He then parcelled it out among his followers. That is to say, he took the land away from its English owners and gave it

to Normans. But he did not give away a single acre as an absolute gift: he gave it on what is called "military tenure"; *i.e.*, he gave an estate to a man, only on condition that that man would, if called upon, come out to fight for his king, and bring a certain number of mailed horsemen with him. William insisted upon being regarded as supreme landlord of all England, who allowed people to hold land only if they would be his servants. When he called for an army, he could, in this way, collect sixty thousand Norman knights, and thus secure himself against possible rebellions of the English.

10. The Completeness of the Conquest. By parcelling out the land among these followers of his (who were called Barons) and giving each of them a district to rule over, with a strong castle to live in, he made rebellion impossible. For each baron parcelled out *his* land among his inferiors very much as the King had parcelled out the kingdom among the barons; and nobody was allowed to hold any land at all without swearing allegiance to the baron in whose domain that land lay. The sub-tenant had to be ready to come out and fight at the baron's order, just as the baron had to fight at the King's order. This, then, was the Feudal System; a system of land-owners holding their land from a superior on a military tenure. It threw enormous power into the hands of the King, provided it worked as it was intended to work.

11. Peculiarity of English Feudalism. But William clearly foresaw that the system might work quite otherwise: for, if the barons liked to unite against the King, they had simply to call out their vassals, and they had an army behind them. To

prevent this he made a law, that the vassal should swear allegiance not only to the baron, but also to the King. Thus every land-owner in England became a vassal of the King, and if his baron called him out and the King also called him, he was bound to obey the King. This is a point peculiar to English Feudalism—it was unknown on the Continent—and we owe it to the statesmanship of William. He took many other measures for the repression of turbulent barons, among which we may note, that the national *fyrð*, or militia, was left in existence, so that the King might still have an army even if not a single baron should obey his summons. The result of this measure is to be seen in the two succeeding reigns; the lawlessness of the barons threw both William Rufus and Henry I. on the support of the English, and their appeal to the conquered people was not in vain. For, if the English did not love their Norman Kings, they loved the Norman barons still less; they saw that the Kings gave them peace and prosperity, and that the barons gave them nothing but lawless oppression.

12. **The Great Council.** Three times a year William gathered his barons round him, and asked their advice on the affairs of the kingdom. This was the Great Council of the Realm, and it took the place of the old Witenagemote. Out of it developed our Parliament. Its consent was considered necessary to make any act of the King lawful, but at this time its consent was never withheld. Besides this Great Council, the King had a small circle of advisers, by means of whom he governed the realm and administered justice.

CHAPTER IV.

RESULTS OF THE CONQUEST (CONTINUED).

13. **Commercial Results.** We may say that the Conquest enslaved England, but in such a way that it became possible for the English to win a fuller liberty than they had ever known. We have seen how, before the Conquest, the freeman, the original basis of the Saxon Kingdom, had come to lose his freedom; how he had been forced in self-defence to seek protection from his lord, to whom he surrendered his independence. The churl passed into the serf; and freedom passed into the hands of the English nobles. These nobles the Conquest deprived of their estates and their power; it levelled them with the churls whom they had dispossessed; the two classes, thus united, formed a great middle-class, whose struggle for freedom began at once and lasted many centuries. We can best examine the beginnings of this great conflict by watching *the towns*, and observing the rise in them of a great trading class. The Conquest practically created this class; the Normans, tyrants as they were, put into the hands of England the weapon by which it was to regain the freedom which they had swept away. Let us see how this came about.

14. **Encouragement of Commerce.** How can it be said that the Normans *created* the trading class? First, by their justice and firm government; for it may be laid down as an unvarying law, that without a settled government no country can have a

flourishing trade, and that, amid violence and anarchy, trade must necessarily decline. Secondly, William and his successors were often in want of money to carry out their plans, and it was obviously useful to have rich merchants in the country from whom they might borrow or exact money. For this reason they encouraged merchants by every means in their power. For instance, William was followed to England by hundreds of Jews, and he allowed no-one (except himself) to interfere with them. Now, the Jewish merchants were the great money-lenders of Europe; and though they lent only at an exorbitant rate of interest, still the influx of so much money into England gave an enormous impulse to commerce.

15. How Commerce Made for Freedom. But many Norman merchants, as well as Jews, followed William from Normandy; they settled not only in London, but in every town where the Norman baron had his castle, or the Norman churchman his abbey. The towns, under the impulse of this new trading class, grew in wealth and importance; towns which had been mere handfuls of hovels when the Normans came were able, by the time of Henry I., to buy their freedom from the King. It was in the towns that the traditions of the older English liberties still lived when they had died everywhere else. "The rights of self-government, of free speech in free meeting, of equal justice by one's equals, were brought safely across the ages of Norman tyranny by the traders and shopkeepers of the towns"*; and it was only through Norman protection that the towns were able to do it. The charter of liberties

*Green.

granted to London by Henry I. may be taken as a sample of the charters by which town after town won its freedom. By it the city was given the freedom to raise its own taxes, which were fixed in amount, without the sheriff's interference; and every citizen was given the right to be tried by his fellow-citizens in the town-court, which was just the old town-moot under another name. Charter after charter raised townsmen, from mere vassals, who had to pay whatever their lord demanded to freemen, who paid a fixed tax to the Crown, and gathered in town-moot to deliberate on their own affairs, and administer justice. To sum up: under the Normans trade flourished; with trade the towns grew in wealth and importance; and by the towns the right of self-government, lost by the nation long before the Conquest, began to be won back.

16. Blending of Races. English and Norman traders had constant dealings with one another, and the distinction between the races gradually disappeared in the towns. In the country the same process went on more slowly. It is not possible for us to trace with any exactness the stages in this union of the two peoples; we only know that it was rapid and complete, and that, by the accession of Henry II., the name of Norman had fallen into disuse. "In the time of Richard I., the ordinary imprecation of a Norman gentleman was: 'May I become an Englishman!' His ordinary form of indignant denial was: 'Do you take me for an Englishman?' The descendant of such a gentleman a hundred years later was proud of the English name."*

*Macaulay.

17. Social Results. The Conquest brought England into close relations with more civilised nations of Western Europe. Its educational effects were great and many-sided. The Normans taught the English many arts; for instance, the art of building. Substantial stone houses began to supersede the mere hovels of the English. Stately cathedrals rose in the great towns, and the building of castles (a doubtful blessing) went on all over the country. The English now began to study art and literature as they had never been studied in England before; the University of Oxford was founded, and many schools were established. Englishmen began to study medicine; primitive as medical ideas then were in France and Italy, they were yet far ahead of anything hitherto known in England. In a word, the Conquest made social life in England more refined, more cultured, more civilised. It is useless to argue that these changes would have come in time without Norman aid; all we know is, that it was through the Normans that they did come.

18. Language. The conquered people did not adopt the language of their conquerors; when the distinction between the two races died away, English was still the national speech. But the ruling race had for a long time spoken a different language from that of the subject race; and this had a great effect upon the language of the latter. So the English language, as it emerges from the Norman period, is by no means the tongue spoken before the Conquest. That tongue was a pure Teutonic language with little foreign admixture; it was, indeed, very like the German spoken to-day. It was an inflected language; *e.g.*, its nouns had four different endings

to indicate the four different cases. The effect of the conquest was to destroy inflections; we still have some (as in pronouns: *he, his, him*, etc.), but, generally speaking, the language became uninflected. The Conquest also introduced an infusion of Norman-French words. The new words were, for the most part, the names of new things—things introduced by the Normans. Thus the word *curtain* was unknown before the Conquest, because the thing itself was unknown; the same may be said of such words as *vassal, fealty*, etc. Thus by examining the history of our language we get some interesting sidelights on the social history of England.

19. **Norman Words.** The chief words introduced related to law, to war, to feudalism, and to domestic life. Chief among the last are terms of cookery. It is a curious point, that in many instances the live animal kept its Saxon name, but, when cooked, received a Norman name. This is doubtless due to the fact that the live animals were tended by English slaves, and were noticed by the Norman only when they appeared on his table. Thus the live *sheep* (English) becomes, when cooked, *mutton* (Norman). The *calf* becomes *veal*, the *ox* becomes *beef*, the *pig* becomes *pork*, the *deer* becomes *venison*.

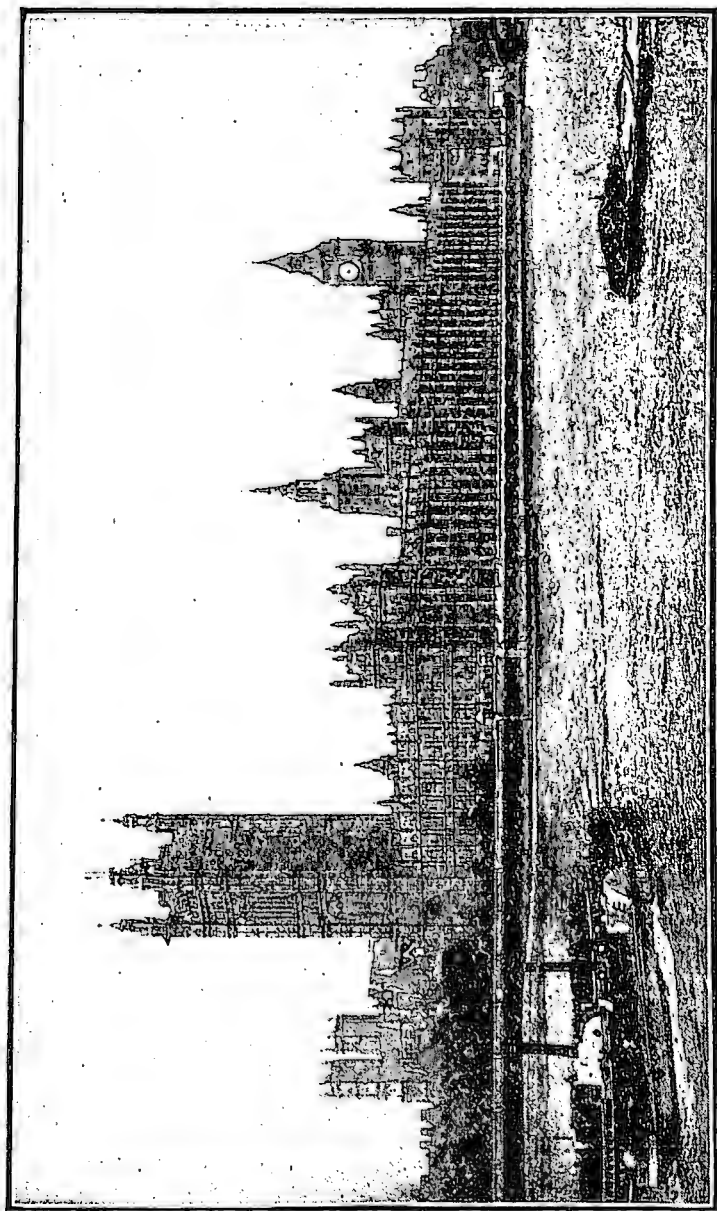
20. But the Conquest did far more than introduce a few Norman-French words. The close connection which it formed between England and France resulted in a constant stream of fresh words being carried into the English tongue for several centuries. Now French is a "Romance" language; that is, it is formed from Latin. So that many Latin words were brought into English *through French*; and as, later on, the English began to form words direct

from the Latin, we have many pairs of similar words, one coming straight from the Latin, and one from the Latin through the French. Instances of such pairs are *captive* and *caitiff*, the former coming directly from the Latin word *captivus*, the latter from the same word through the Old French word *caitif*; *acquire* and *conquer*, both from Latin *quaerere*, but the latter through the French. Thus the Normans found English an inflected language, and left it uninflected. They found it a pure Teutonic language, and left it a mixed speech, with the capacity of enriching itself by borrowing from other languages, a power which it has freely used, and is still using. At the present day we use words derived not only from French and Latin, but also from Greek, Spanish, Italian, Persian, Hindustanee, and even Chinese.

CHAPTER V.

THE ORIGIN OF PARLIAMENT.

1. **In Germany.** To trace the dim beginnings of our modern Parliament, the instrument by which England has sought to solve the problem of government, we must cast our eyes back to the villages of our Germanic ancestors. We have seen that the sovereign power of each village resided in the whole body of its free landholders. The whole village met round a "moot-hill," or a sacred tree, to deliberate on their affairs, to try offenders, and to make laws.



The British Houses of Parliament.

When a certain law was proposed, the villagers signified their opinion of it by clashing their arms, or by shouting "yea, yea," or "nay, nay." That was their way of voting for or against. The preliminary discussion may have rested with the higher rank of freemen, but the final decision had to be made by the whole community.

2. **The Witena-gemote.** We have seen how, when they settled in England, the villagers found it necessary to unite, and how the various units were combined into higher and higher organisations—how villages joined together to form a hundred, hundreds to form a shire, and shires to form a kingdom—and how each of these organisations had its own moot—hundred-moot, shire-moot, great moot or Witena-gemote. And when the final act of union was brought about, the various English kingdoms united to form the Kingdom of England, the moot principle remained, and there was one Witena-gemote of the whole realm. The individual freeman still remained, in theory, the ruling power of the realm; for every freeman had as much right to take part in the great moot of the whole Kingdom as in the moot of his own town. England was still, in theory, governed by the English nation, under the leadership of a king.

3. **Self-government.** Here, then, we seem to have already a solution of the problem propounded in the Introductory Chapter—the problem of satisfying at once the need of government, and the need of freedom. For here was the one kind of government which does not interfere with personal freedom, namely, *self-government*. Our Saxon ancestor was

free because he obeyed laws of his own making. You count it no infringement of your liberty to obey an order which you have yourself given. But a moment's reflection shows that this was no true solution of the difficulty, because it was a form of government that would not work. It was easy for all the free inhabitants of one village to meet together to frame a law: but when the inhabitants of several villages had to assemble it became more difficult; and for all the inhabitants of all the villages in the kingdom to come together was obviously impossible. It is clear that no law would ever be passed if the whole kingdom had first to meet, and secondly to discuss it. Thus self-government became impossible the moment our Saxon forefathers began to unite and form a nation.

4. Power Transferred to the Crown. Now we have seen how the settlement in Britain gave birth to the Kingship. At first the King was regarded as merely the leader in time of war, and in time of peace merely the president of the great council of the realm. But as self-government was no longer possible, and as *some* government was imperatively necessary, the work of governing gradually slipped away from the nation into the hands of the King. Accordingly we find the Witenagemote very soon lost its original character as a meeting of the "wise men" of the realm, at which every freeman had the right to vote on the measures proposed by the wise men. It ceased to be a national body, and became a mere instrument in the hands of the King; it came to consist merely of the King's officers and servants. In theory it remained the sovereign power; it could depose the King; to it belonged the administration of

justice, the imposing of taxes, the declaration of war, the making of peace, and so on. In theory, the King could do nothing without its consent; in reality, its consent was never refused.

5. Thus the English gave up their ancient liberties in order to become a nation. It was very desirable that they should remain free, but it was absolutely necessary to their very existence as a nation that they should act unitedly, and to act unitedly they required a strong central government. Self-government became impossible; and the only other form of government available limited their liberty. The original free landholder, who "knew no superior save God and the laws," sank into a condition little different from slavery, as we have seen, and sold his freedom to any "lord" strong enough to protect him. The lords, in their turn, were more or less subject to the tyranny of the King; and although, as in the case of the earls created by Canute, they were sometimes strong enough to oppose the king, yet it may be said generally that the sovereign power passed from the hands of the nation at large into the hands of the King.

6. **Political Representation.** Here we are met by an obvious question. Was it really necessary that the English should give up self-government? True, it was out of the question for a whole nation to attend one great meeting as a whole village might attend a meeting: but might not each village have chosen one man to attend the meeting for it? In this way, though the people no longer made the laws, the laws would have been made by men whom the people chose for the purpose, and that would have been only another way of governing themselves.

This idea of *representative government* is familiar enough to us, and is so extremely important that we shall have to return to it several times; but meanwhile, let us merely answer that it was an idea that had occurred to no one at the stage of history we are now concerned with.

7. **The Great Council.** The Norman Conquest put an end to the Witenagemote. Its place was taken by the Great Council of the Barons already mentioned. This Council was supposed to consist of all those who held their land directly from the Crown, in actual practice, however, the majority of these found it too expensive and troublesome a business to attend the meetings of the Council; and so a distinction soon arose between the "Greater Barons" and the "Lesser Barons." The former attended the meetings of the Council, the latter did not, though their right to do so remained undisputed. The Council consisted simply of the Greater Barons and the Bishops. It was no more a National Assembly than the Witenagemote had been under the later English kings. As we have seen, its functions were limited to giving its consent to the King's measures, and its chief duty was to sanction grants of money demanded from it by the King. We should note that, though its consent was never refused, still the idea, that its consent was necessary, was never lost sight of, but remained a fundamental part of the British constitution. When Parliament claimed, later on, that the King had no right to impose taxes to which it had not given its sanction, it was not propounding a new idea, but was simply enforcing a custom that had existed from the remotest period of English history.

8. For two centuries after the Conquest, this assembly of Barons and Bishops, meeting three times a year, was all that England possessed in the way of Parliament; and it was not a Parliament in our sense of the word, for it did not represent the people. The first Parliament that really deserved the name was that summoned by Simon de Montfort, in 1265, almost exactly 200 years after William's landing. In this Parliament there was at last an effort after the political representation of the nation. Before considering it, however, let us enquire how the idea of such representation, an idea unknown, as we saw, in the old English Kingdom, originated.

9. **Origin of the Idea of Representation.** If the first English settlers had never had the idea of one man acting as the *agent* or *representative* of another, they were quite familiar with the idea that one man might be *liable* for the debts of another. Thus if a murder were done, we have already noticed the custom whereby the *kinsmen* of the murdered had to pay the "blood-wite," or murder-fine. And as his kinsmen meant, in the earliest times, just the inhabitants of his own village, this custom really implied that a whole village was liable for the money-debt incurred by one of the villagers. When the Kingship arose, this idea of joint liability was immensely widened; whenever the King wished to levy a tax, he did not proclaim the amount that each individual must pay—for he could never have found out how much each individual in the kingdom was able to contribute—but he proclaimed the amount that each town as a whole must pay.

10. The town as a whole, then, was made respon-

sible for the raising of the money required by the King. But this would naturally lead to endless quarrels among the townsmen as to the share that each ought to contribute; many would refuse to pay what they considered an unfair amount; and in the end the town would fail to raise the required amount. Paid the tax must be: what was the King to do? He could not come to each town and hear every grievance till he found what part each man ought, according to his wealth, to bear in the general burden. That would have taken too long; a quicker and easier way was to seize the chief men of the town and keep them in prison till the tax was paid. The town would then manage to scrape together the money, so as to ransom its chief men. This was what actually happened, not in England only, but all over Europe; and it still happens in many uncivilised countries. It is strange to think that in such forcible seizure of leading townsmen, in order to raise a tax, lay the germ of representative government; yet, as we shall see, such was the case.

11. Development of the Idea. Now, this practice was so disagreeable to the towns that they soon hit upon an expedient for doing without the forcible seizure of anyone. Roughly speaking, the expedient was this: When the King's officers came to the town to collect the money or to carry off the chiefs, the most respectable men of the town would come together to meet the royal officers, and would say: "As it is evident that the town will have to pay, it may as well pay without anyone going to prison. What is the smallest sum that will satisfy you? And we shall see whether we can raise it." There would then ensue, no doubt, much arguing as to the

amount that could be got together; in the end a sum would be agreed to, and the meeting pledged itself, on behalf of the town, to find that sum. Here, then, we have arrived at a further stage: a meeting of the elders of a town, *as representatives of the town, to grant money to the King.*

12. Parliaments. Then, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the idea sprang up, not in England only, but all over Europe, of having instead of meetings of each town with the King's officers, a great meeting of the whole nation with the King himself. Not, of course, a meeting of everybody concerned; but a meeting of men selected by the various towns to represent them. Let each town choose two men to speak for it; and let all these men come together and discuss with the King the amount the whole kingdom is to pay him by way of taxes. In this way, all over Europe, Parliament was born. We shall now return to the special case of England; let us remember, however, that Parliament was originally concerned, not with the making of laws, but simply with the granting of money to the King.

13. Early Parliaments. The first real Parliament in England was, as already said, the one summoned by Simon de Montfort, in 1265, just after the Battle of Lewes. The great patriot wished to strengthen his hands in his struggle with the Royalist party; he therefore required a more truly national assembly than the old Council of the Barons and Clergy. This Parliament was, indeed, the old Council, but with a new element added, which entirely changed its character; for Simon ordered some cities and towns to choose men who would represent them in the Council. Thus for the first time the middle classes,

the traders or "*Commons*," as they were called, were represented in the great Council, as well as the nobility and clergy. This changed the Council into a real Parliament. "But this was not made a precedent; and, in fact, it was not till thirty years after that the representatives of the towns begin to sit regularly in Parliament."*

14. We may therefore disregard Earl Simon's Parliament, and say that the first *complete* Parliament, the same in all essential respects as that which sits in London to-day, was that of 1295, in the reign of Edward I. The English Parliament like every other, originated in the King's need of money. Edward was a great warrior, and the expenses of his wars made him feel the need of money more keenly than any of his predecessors; it was therefore very important to him that he should find the quickest and easiest way of getting money. He could, it is true, get the Council to grant him so much, but the Barons and Bishops who sat in the Council, not being representatives of anyone else, could answer only for themselves; and there were other great classes to be taxed—namely, the lesser Barons, the farmers, the lesser clergy, and the inhabitants of towns (or boroughs, as the greater towns were now called). With all these classes the King had to negotiate separately; for example, his officers had to go to each town and deal with it separately, as we have already shown. Now Edward found that all these separate negotiations meant endless time and trouble, and he saw clearly that it would mean an immense saving if all these other classes whom he wished to

*Stubbs.

tax were *represented in the Council*. This was not an original idea, for Parliaments were springing up all over Europe; but the idea did not take firm root in the rest of Europe whereas in England it was destined to live and grow into a mighty tree. What made the difference?

CHAPTER VI.

THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION OF PARLIAMENT.

1. **Origin of Political Representation.** The Lesser Barons had, as we have seen, long ceased to attend the meeting of the Great Council. They found it too troublesome and expensive to leave their homes three times a year and travel a long distance to attend a meeting whose only purpose was, so far as they could see, to give money to the King. Let the King come and get his money; nothing would induce them to go to him. But Edward urgently needed their attendance, for, by the time he came to the throne, these Lesser Barons—or country squires, as we should now call them—had become a much more numerous, wealthy and important class than they had been under the early Norman Kings, and contributed a larger share of the general taxation. How was Edward to induce them to attend the Council? He saw at once to induce them *all* to attend was impossible, but it would serve his purpose if he could get some of them to come, *as representatives of the rest*. But how were these representatives to be chosen? An easy means of doing so Edward found ready to his

hand in an institution which dated from Saxon times.

2. **Knights of the Shire.** The old Shire Moot still met regularly, though under a new name; it was now called the County Court. In that court the principle of representation was already in use; for it did not consist of *all* the land-owners in the Shire, but of deputies or agents sent by all the hundreds in the Shire, twelve men from each hundred. The County Court was thus what may be called a *representative body*. Edward simply extended this principle, by asking the County Court to choose from its number a few men to act for them in the Great Council of the Realm. The men thus elected were called "Knights of the Shire," and henceforth each Shire, or county, was to be represented in Parliament by its own Knights.

3. We must not fail to notice a very important point about the election of these Knights. We have seen that it was only the Lesser Barons, or squires, who had a right to sit with the Greater Barons in the Great Council; not the smaller landholders, or "yeomen." But, as a matter of fact, the County Court, which elected these Knights, was made up of yeomen as well as squires, and the yeomen had as much voice in the election of the Knights as the squires had. So that the Knights of the Shire were really representative of all classes of land-owners; in fact, they may be said to have represented the country districts generally.

4. **The Burgesses.** Edward had now secured that the *County* should be represented in Parliament; his next step was to see that the *Towns* were represented

also. The boroughs, or larger towns, had become immensely wealthy through the growth of trade; there was much money to be got out of the boroughs. It was just as necessary, therefore, that the boroughs should send representatives to Parliament as that the counties should. Here Edward simply made use of the lesson he had learnt from Earl Simon; he ordered each "city, borough, and larger town" in the kingdom to send two men—"Burgesses" as they were called—to attend the Great Council. There they sat side by side with the Greater Barons, the Bishops, and the Knights of the Shire.

5. **The Clergy.** One class was still unrepresented—the clergy. For we must not suppose that the Bishops represented the clergy. They sat in the Council, not because they were clergymen, but because they owned vast estates, and were therefore to be counted as Barons. But Edward was not going to let the clergy escape taxation; he therefore bade them choose representatives—called in this case "proctors"—to act for them as the Burgesses acted for the boroughs, and the Knights of the Shire for the county. This plan, however, was resolutely opposed by the clergy themselves, who wished to keep themselves apart from the other classes. They were forced to come to the Council meetings, but they refused, when they did come, to "vote supplies"—that is, to grant the King's demand for money. They declared that they would grant these demands in their own separate council, called Convocation, but not in the Parliament of the Realm. If they would not grant money, the King could have no reason for wishing them to attend; accordingly we find that, by the end of the fifteenth century, their attendance had

entirely ceased, and the clergy have never since been represented, as a separate class, in Parliament.

6. **The Three Estates.** The completed Parliament of Edward I. consisted, then, of three different classes of men, the *Three Estates*, as they were called. (a) The Lords (including Barons and Bishops, "Lords Temporal" and "Lords Spiritual.") (b) The Commons (including Knights of the Shire, representing the country people, and Burgesses, representing the townspeople). (c) The Clergy. These last, as we saw, soon dropped out, leaving the two great elements, Lord and Commons. These two sat in separate rooms almost from the first.

7. **Unpopularity of Parliament.** The King had now set in motion an admirable piece of machinery for wresting money from the people, and it probably never occurred to him that, by means of this machinery, the people would ultimately wrest the sovereign power from the Crown, and win back the liberty that had been lost. Yet such was destined to be the case. But no-one realised that at the time, and, though we now consider Parliament as the great safeguard of our freedom, at the outset it was decidedly unpopular. Nowadays a man will make great efforts to get himself elected to a seat in Parliament, but in Edward's reign, a man would make great efforts to avoid being chosen. The country squire hated leaving his estate to go to Westminster in order to grant money to the King. The merchant hated leaving his business. And if the representatives were unwilling to go, the counties and towns were no less unwilling to send them. The old idea of a forcible seizure of hostages was still present in men's minds; and besides, the counties and towns had to

pay so much a day to defray the expenses of their representatives while Parliament was sitting. And, finally, the name of Parliament was universally detested, because the summoning of Parliament simply meant fresh taxation. Can we wonder, then, if at first there was no competition for the post, now so much sought after, of representative?

8. **Its Powers.** For Parliament was not, at the commencement, a powerful or influential body. It met simply to grant money—not to advise the King. The Lords were, indeed, looked upon as the King's councillors or advisers; but the Commons could make no claim to be anything of the kind. They had no voice in the making of laws. But if they could not legislate, they could *petition* the King; and it was soon perceived, that this power of petition really amounted to a power of legislation or law-making. For a petition generally meant a declaration that a good custom had been violated, coupled with a request that that custom should be confirmed. If the King granted such a petition, he really set the seal of his approval on the custom mentioned; *i.e.*, gave it the force of a *law*. Even to this day, nothing can become law without the King's consent, so that we may still regard laws as petitions presented to the King, and granted by him.

9. **The Chief Weapon of Parliament.** Before Parliament could, in this way, have the power of making laws (or of getting the King to make laws, rather) one thing was necessary: it must have some way of compelling the King to listen to its petitions. Had the English Parliament any hold over the King, any means of forcing him to take notice of its requests? It had. When the King summoned repre-

sentatives of the people *to grant him money*, he thereby silently acknowledged that he could not take money from the people by force, and that, if the representatives refused to grant him money, he could not get it. If, then, the Parliament could refuse to give the King money whenever he refused to hear their petitions, we see at once what a strong hold they had over the King. If Parliament was to become really powerful it must firmly establish this principle,—that *without its consent the King could have no money*. And if the nation as a whole was to become the ruling power, it must see that *the house that represented it*,—namely the House of Commons,—should be the House that controlled the national purse. To establish this principle required centuries of bloodshed.

10. A Twofold Struggle. The grand struggle for national liberty may be divided into two periods. In the first period, the object was to take away the power of the King and to give it to Parliament, and especially to the House of Commons as representing the people. To gain this object it was necessary to secure *freedom of election*—that is, that the people should be allowed to elect whom they pleased, and should not be dictated to by the King, who would naturally wish to put into Parliament those who would do his bidding. It was necessary, also, to secure *freedom of debate*—that those who were elected should be allowed to say what they liked in Parliament, without any interference from the King. But, above all, it was necessary to secure to Parliament complete control of the money. When once it was firmly established that the King could not get one penny from the nation if Parliament refused to

grant it, Parliament became the supreme power in the Kingdom. To attain this object, many patriots had to die; one King had to be put to death, and another to be driven from the throne and the country: but in the end the nation won. This period of the struggle—the period of Parliament against Crown—ends with the Bill of Rights, in 1689.

11. The second period of the struggle was marked by little bloodshed, but was none the less long and bitter. In it the object sought was, that the Parliament, which had thus become supreme, should really represent the people. In Edward's Parliament the whole nation was not represented; for the peasants, or serfs, had no voice in the election of the Knights of the Shire, nor had the poorer people of the towns any voice in the election of the Burgesses. Now, it is plain that national self-government,—the rule of the nation by itself,—was impossible until the poor as well as the rich were represented in the governing body. Moreover, we are to remember that only the larger towns, or boroughs, were represented in Edward's Parliament. The smaller towns were unrepresented; and many of them grew into large cities without being given the power of sending men to Parliament. To make Parliament express the will of the whole nation, not merely of a certain section of the nation,—that was the object of the second struggle. Though we can hardly say that this conflict—the conflict between the Many and the Few,—ended at any definite date, yet the Reform Bill of 1832 practically closed the period; that great victory, if it was not the end, brought the end in view.

CHAPTER VII.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS UNDER THE PLANTAGENETS.

THE CRAFT-GILDS.

1. **Two Revolutions.** When the Plantagenet period opens, with the accession of Henry II., we find that one great social revolution has almost reached completion—the revolution which effected the amalgamation of the Norman and English races. There was no definite law to bring this about, and, of course, we can name no exact date at which the change became complete; but it seems certain that the distinction between the Norman and the Saxon had disappeared in the early years of Plantagenet rule. A more odious distinction still remained; it was during the reigns of the later Plantagenets that another silent revolution abolished the distinction between master and slave. This great social change was twofold. (*a*) In the country, we note the disappearance of villeinage and the rise of free labourers. (*b*) In the towns, we note the victory of the poorer craftsmen over the wealthy merchants. We shall consider first the case of the towns. The two revolutions were going on simultaneously, but it was in the towns that the change was most rapidly completed.

2. **The Town.** We have already traced the process whereby the English towns won their freedom. The English town was originally a part of the domain of a Lord, and every town had to have a

Lord, by laws passed as early as the reign of Athelstan (925-940). In many cases the Lord was the King himself; in many others the town formed part of the domain of a Baron. Very often it arose out of the need for protection which caused people to come and live near their lord's castle. In any case, it was a mere collection of houses within the estate of a lord, and its inhabitants were treated in the same way as the other tenants who did not live within this cluster of houses. That is to say, the townsmen held their land on the condition of rendering him military service, and of labouring on his private estate. The inhabitants of a town had, for example, to reap their lord's cornfield for him, and to grind his corn, besides giving him a part of their own produce. We find a similar state of things, but tenfold more oppressive, in France at the end of the eighteenth century, just before the Great Revolution. We may put it simply: the townsmen, instead of paying rent *in money* to the King, or the great noble who might happen to be their lord, paid it *in labour*.

3. **External Freedom.** But the towns were natural centres of trade, and their trade made them wealthy and important,—so wealthy that they were soon able to buy their freedom. Their first step was to bargain that they should pay for their land in money instead of personal services. They next secured that the amount the whole town was required to pay should be a fixed sum, and that the townsmen should be allowed to raise that sum in any way they thought fit, without interference by the lord or the sheriff. Then they bought the right to their own justice—that is, the right of every townsman accused of crime

to be tried by his fellow-townsmen. Finally, they purchased the right to choose their own magistrates, and to manage their own affairs. Having now the rights of self-taxation and self-government, they were practically free. This they were enabled to do through the fact that their lord, whether he were King, baron, or abbot, was constantly in need of money for some enterprise or other, and was consequently willing to sell some one or other of his privileges for hard cash.

4. **Internal Tyranny.** But while the town was thus securing its freedom from outside influence, the state of things within the town was far from satisfactory. Though the town itself was now freed from the tyranny of its lord, it was not free from an internal tyranny of class over class. The rights which the town had bought were enjoyed by one class only—the wealthier class. The town, we say, had secured the right of self-government; but it was not really governed by itself—that is, by representatives chosen by the whole town,—but by the wealthy merchants united in the “merchant-gild.” The gild is so important a feature of this era that we had better examine it carefully.

5. **Origin of the Gild.** In primitive society we have seen that the bond holding men together was the bond of kinship. In early England the men who lived near one another were members of the same family, and a man could look to his kinsmen for protection. But as civilisation advances, people begin to move about, to change their place of residence; and the tie of kinship gradually disappears. The family of Billing originally, no doubt, inhabited Billingham; but before many centuries had passed

the family had scattered, so that there were Billings all over the country, and men of many different names in Billingham itself. And, as men could no longer look to their kinsmen for protection, they began to form voluntary associations, which they called gilds. This happened not only in the towns but all over the country. The gild was simply the outcome of men's instinct to unite in self-defence.

6. **The Merchant Gild.** But in the towns the gild took a peculiar character. At first the English town was made up of farmers as well as traders; but, as the state of the country became more settled and orderly, and it became safe to live at a little distance from others, the farmers naturally began to go out into the country to live, and the town became more and more the home of the traders only. And so the town-gild—the society to which all the free townsmen belonged—became known as the merchant-gild.

7. Now, we saw that in early English society freedom went hand in hand with the ownership of land. The man who owned no land, though not necessarily a slave, had almost none of the rights or privileges of the freeman. This principle was as firmly established within the towns as without; the "townsmen" were the men who owned land in the town. It was these alone who formed the "merchant-gild," and it was the merchant-gild that managed the affairs of the town. The men who owned no land had no voice in the matter.

8. **The Craftsmen.** But as the towns grew in size, the men who did not own land became far more numerous than the men who did. We shall presently read of a law whereby a serf became a free man when he had lived for a year in a town; this,

of course, attracted to the towns multitudes of escaped serfs, who formed a working-class with no land of their own. There were also many tradesmen who came to the towns to pursue their calling, but could not afford to buy a piece of land in it. Thus there came to be two classes in every town, a landed class and a landless. And there gradually arose a further distinction between the man whose business implied the handling of large sums of money,—the merchant,—and the man who worked with his hand,—the craftsman. The cloth-dealer, for instance, was a merchant; the tailor, a craftsman. And it was the wealthy land-owners—the merchants—who possessed the whole governing power of the town. The craftsmen were almost slaves.

9. The Craft-Gild. In self-defence, the craftsmen began to form associations of their own: "craft-gilds" as they were called, or "trade-unions," as we should call them. Each craft, or trade, had its own gild, and the gild imposed rules on all its craftsmen—rules relating, for example, to the hours of labour, the quality of work, and the prices to be charged for work. Every craftsman was compelled to belong to the gild of his craft, but no one was admitted to membership who had not served an apprenticeship of seven years. Members paid a fixed sum annually to the common fund of their gild, a fund which was mainly devoted to the protection of the trade.

10. The Towns Secure Popular Government. A long struggle for supremacy now ensued between the craft-gilds and the merchant-gilds. Some blood was shed in the conflict, which raged fiercest in London, where the merchant class had attained to a wealth and influence unknown elsewhere. It is needless to

go into the details of the strife; when Edward I. came to the throne, it was practically over. The craftsmen had won, the merchant-gild was beaten. So complete was the victory that the wealthy merchants themselves began to join the gilds they had despised. Such was the power and dignity which the craft-gilds reached that King Edward III. actually enrolled himself as a member of one of them, that of the Armourers. The towns had now reached a really popular form of government, real liberty. This liberty they were destined to lose again, but to regain after many days.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS UNDER THE PLANTAGENETS.

THE PEASANTS.

1. In the last chapter we discussed the social revolution by which, in the towns, the poorer craftsmen rose from a position akin to slavery, and won power from the wealthier merchants who had hitherto monopolised the assessment of taxes, the regulation of trade, the administration of justice, and the general government of the town. In this chapter we shall show how, by a similar revolution, there arose in the country a new class of tenant-farmers, and a new class of free labourers, and how the old institutions of villeinage and serfdom disappeared.

2. **The Villein or Serf.** We have already seen

how, before the Norman Conquest, the class of "churls," or freemen, had sunk to a position of dependence. They did not, indeed, fall to the condition of the slave-class—a class which had existed in England from the earliest time. There was at first a clear distinction between the "slave" and the "villein"*; but this distinction appears to have died away. The slave gained by the loss of the distinction; the villein suffered. There were, no doubt, different ranks among the villeins, some of whom enjoyed rights and privileges denied to the others. But, for general purposes, we may say that the villein and the serf are the same, though the serf (Latin: *servus*, slave) had rights which we do not usually associate with our idea of slavery.

3. **The Manorial System.** The whole of England (except the towns), when the Plantagenet Period opened, was divided into large feudal estates, known as *manors*; and the holder of one of these estates was known as the *lord of the manor*. One portion of the manor the lord kept for himself; the rest he distributed among tenants. But he did not make his tenants pay a rent of so much money per year, as a modern landlord does. Instead, he made them work on the piece of land he had kept for himself—the home-farm, or "demesne," as it was called. It seems, at first sight, no great hardship to have to pay for your farm in labour instead of money; the hardship consisted in the fact that this was *forced labour*. If a modern tenant thinks he pays too much for his land or his house,

*This spelling of the word is retained, because the modern associations which cling to the word "villain" might lead to confusion in the mind of the student.

he may stop paying it, and go away to a cheaper house or farm. But the villein could not go away; if he tried to go away, he could be pursued by his lord, brought back, and punished for the attempt; and the labour he had to render in return for his land was forced upon him; he had to do it, whether he would or not. The villein was born to the piece of land he tilled, and strict laws existed to prevent his leaving it; on the other hand, the laws prevented the lord from separating the villein from his land.

4. The Services of Villeinage. That the villein was really a slave is shown by the fact that he could be sold by his lord. On the other hand, if the lord wished to sell a villein, he must also sell the piece of land which the villein held. The villein went with the land. The exact services which he must render to his lord cannot now be ascertained; from a historian of the time we learn that he "has to pay a quarter of seed-wheat at Michaelmas; a peck of wheat, four bushels of oats, and three hens on November 12th; and at Christmas a cock and two hens, and two pennyworth of bread. He is to plough, sow, and till half an acre of his lord's land, and give his services, as he is bidden by the bailiff, except on Sundays and feast-days. He is not to marry son or daughter, to sell ox, calf, or colt, to cut down oak or ash, without the lord's consent." Practically he was compelled to render whatever services his lord demanded of him. On the other hand, the lord who killed a serf had to pay a fine to the King; and, by an extraordinary enactment, the serf who lost an eye or a tooth, by the violence of his lord, thereby won his liberty. In short, the serf was almost absolutely at the mercy of his lord, and we

know that there were many instances of gross tyranny and brutal inhumanity.

5. Service Fixed by Custom. But, step by step, the condition of the villein improved. The first improvement which we must note was the fixing by custom of the amount of service to be rendered by the tenant to his lord. Custom, if it goes on long enough without interruption, gradually acquires the force of law. Gradually it became lawful, in this way, to claim certain services of the tenants; unlawful to claim more. The amount of work that each villein must do on the home-farm became rigidly established, and was, indeed, written down in the "court-roll" kept by the lord. A copy of this was given to the tenant, and constituted the title-deed by which he held his land; for this reason, he came later to be known as a "copyholder." For the villein this was a great step in advance. He was not yet free, for he was still *forced* to render certain services to his lord. But he was not forced to do, whatever was demanded by a tyrannous master: when he had once done what the law required of him, he was independent of his lord, and practically a free man.

6. Gradual Emancipation. Meanwhile other causes were steadily doing away with villeinage. A law, already mentioned, gave freedom to the serf who had lived for a year and a day in a free town. Thousands thus gained their freedom. Moreover, the Church always used her great influence for the emancipation of the serf; many great landowners were, on their death-beds, persuaded by the clergy to set free the bondsmen on their estates. A still more important factor in the abolition of villeinage was a circumstance which we have seen also working

toward the freedom of the towns. This was the lord's need of money. In the reign of Edward III., we see this influence at work everywhere. The fashion of the time required knights and barons to live in great luxury, and the long wars were a constant drain on their purses. Under these conditions, the lords found it convenient to go to their tenants and sell to them, for so much hard cash, freedom from service. By this step the villein became completely free; he was no longer tied to the land where he had been born; he could go whither he would, and take service with any master he liked—wherever, in fact, he could get the best wages. To the want of money on the part of the great land-owners we traced the rise of the free town. To the same cause we now trace the rise of the free labourer. The lord of the manor, instead of being a feudal master, cultivating his demesne by the forced labour of his tenant, was now in the position of a landlord of our own times, receiving from his tenant a rent in money, and cultivating his own farm, if he had not let it also, by hired labour. We may be sure that the superiority of paid to forced labour gradually made itself felt, as it has in the Southern States of America. So long as there were enough free labourers to make competition keen and keep wages down, the land-owner had no reason to complain of the changed state of things.

7. The Black Death. The process of emancipation was thus going steadily forward when an event occurred which brought it to an abrupt end. About the middle of Edward III.'s reign appeared, for the first time, the terrible scourge known as the Black Death. This pestilence—which is thought to have come to Europe from China, and to have been akin

to the *bubonic plague* so well known in Asia at the present time, and not unknown in Australia—visited England in 1348, again in 1369, and again in 1407. It swept away more than half of the population of England; agriculture came to a standstill; and, when the plague was over, the number of labourers was so reduced that those who survived could get almost any wages they liked to ask. The landowners were threatened with ruin by the sudden enormous rise in the price of labour, and they, of course, began to wish that they had never emancipated their serfs. Parliament endeavoured to help them by passing a law known as the Statute of Labourers, whereby every man who had no land was forced to serve any land-owner who might require him to do so, and at the same wages as were given two years before the plague. This law failed, as it was sure to do, for all the Parliaments in the world could not have kept wages down to the old rates. The Statute was re-enacted with severer clauses. The labourer was once more tied to the soil; he was not allowed to leave his own district and wander about in search of work; if he disobeyed, he might be put in prison. But men who have once known freedom will not be enslaved again without a struggle. The law had to be passed again and again, always in a sterner form. The employer who paid wages above the standard fixed by law was fined; and the runaway who was caught was branded on the forehead with a hot iron. Finally, the lawyers, by ingenious quibbling, managed to prove that the freeing of villeins had not been strictly legal, and thus many men, who had long been free, were brought back to absolute serfdom.

8. Social Discontent. All this tyranny and injustice on the part of the land-owning class brought about a bad and dangerous state of things throughout the country; everywhere the poor were stung to a bitter spirit of resistance. The social discontent of the time found a voice in the preaching of a Kentish priest, John Ball, who went about the country expressing his belief that things would never go well in England so long as there were villeins and gentlemen. By what right, he asked, did one man hold another in bondage? Were not all men equal in the sight of God?

“When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?”

This rhyme, which expressed in a nutshell all the preaching of John Ball, and all the vague social discontent that was in the air, was soon in every mouth. To return to the simplicity of the earliest times, of the days of Adam and Eve—that was the dream of the peasantry; and they thought to realise it by force, by exterminating the governing class. We cannot but sympathise with them in their bitter sense of the unjust inequalities of England as they knew it: but the way they dreamed of taking was a false way. Had they succeeded in exterminating the governing class, they would only have introduced anarchy, tenfold more intolerable than the tyranny under which they suffered.

9. The Peasants' Revolt. In 1380 Parliament imposed a poll-tax, the most unjust of all forms of taxation; for by it the poorest man in the kingdom had to pay as much as the wealthiest. This brought to a head all the discontent which had been gradu-

ally increasing since the Black Death. The Peasant revolt broke out, the most dangerous social storm that has ever threatened England. Beginning in Kent, the revolt spread over all the southern and eastern counties, at that time by far the most populous part of England. The rapidity with which it spread shows how deep and real was the discontent which caused it. There ensued a few terrible days, to find a parallel for which we must look to the French Revolution four hundred years later. London, and England, was saved by the courage and tact of the young King, Richard II., who boldly placed himself at the head of the rebels, calling himself their captain, and promising to grant all their demands, and to make them all free men. They dispersed to their homes, and the rebellion collapsed almost as suddenly as it had arisen.

10. Finding the revolt over, the governing classes, headed by the King, who had made so many fair promises, took terrible vengeance on the peasants. The King had promised them freedom, but Parliament asserted that the King could not grant it without their consent, "and this consent we have never given, and never will give, were we all to die in one day." The King himself marched through Essex with an army of 40,000 men, slaughtering and torturing the peasantry wherever he passed. The Peasants' Revolt seemed to have been a total failure.

11. **Results of the Revolt.** A total failure, however, it was not. The insurrection did not succeed, certainly, in restoring the state of society as it was "when Adam delved." But it was not without deep and lasting results, two of which we may notice:—
(a) It did not succeed in abolishing villeinage all

at once, but a hundred years later there were practically no bondsmen left in England. We may, therefore, set down as one of its results the total, though not immediate, abolition of villeinage. (b) The great land-owners, as villeinage died away, and they could not get *forced* labour for their farms, and as wages remained at least double what they had been before the Black Death, began to give up tilling their farms, and to throw their land into sheep-runs. One man could look after a large flock of sheep on a piece of land it would have needed fifty men to till. The land-owner, therefore, found it convenient to turn out all his smaller tenants, and to mass all his smaller holdings together as one large sheep-run. The tenants who were turned out joined the ranks of the free labourer; but there was now not nearly so much work for this class, since the sheep-run required so few men. Hence arose a large class of labourers who wandered over the country in search of employment, finding none and becoming merely lawless vagrants. Had we such a class in Australia to-day, we should probably dignify them with the title of "the unemployed"; under the Plantagenets they were known as the "sturdy beggars." The presence of this lawless element in the country was a grave social danger, of which we shall hear more.

12. **The Action of Parliament.** We may notice, in conclusion, two rather significant things about the action of Parliament in connection with this peasant revolt. (a) By passing the Statutes of Labourers, by its consistent severity in enforcing those statutes, and by refusing to give its consent to the King's grant of freedom to the rebels, it showed

plainly that it was the organ of the governing class—that it represented the wealthy and powerful, and that the poor were not represented in it at all. Its consistent effort to hurl the peasantry back into a state of slavery brings home to us the fact that the nation as a whole cannot be free till *the whole nation* is represented in Parliament. (b) Parliament was quite right in refusing, if it thought fit, its consent to what King Richard had promised. If it had allowed the King to grant what he pleased without seeking the consent of his Parliament, the peasants might have rejoiced at the time, but England in the end would not have rejoiced. Honour is due to those who, unjust to the poorer classes as they were, upheld the great principle, that without the consent of Parliament the King can make or alter no law whatsoever.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TUDOR PERIOD.

1. **An Age of Change.** The period of English History which begins with the accession of Henry VII. and ends with the death of Elizabeth—a period including the whole of the sixteenth century—is a time of deep and momentous changes, which affect not England alone, but the whole of Europe. During this period, it has been well said, men discovered a new Heaven and a new Earth. Great astronomers then laid bare, for the first time, the secret of the earth's place in the universe; and great adventurers

added a New World to that which was already known. To this age belong the greatest intellectual movement and the greatest religious movement of modern times. The invention of printing is one of the great events in the history of the human race. Less momentous, but still of profound importance, is the decay of Feudalism. Great social revolutions change the face of England; and it is from this age that we date the rise of that spirit of commercial enterprise which has made London the mercantile capital of the globe, and the rise of that colonising spirit which has given us the world-wide Empire of to-day.

2. **The End of Feudalism.** The Feudal System had long been on the wane, and indeed its death-knell had been rung by the Battle of Crecy. For that great victory had shown the world that a force of humble peasants, armed with long bows and cloth-yard arrows, was too strong for the mailed knights of Feudalism. Feudalism as a system rested, be it remembered, wholly on military strength; and military strength now passed from the baronage to the peasantry. But the final extinction of Feudalism must be attributed to the Wars of the Roses, which ended with the Battle of Bosworth. In that thirty years' struggle for power, the great baronial houses dashed themselves to pieces. When the war ended, it was found that most of the great barons were killed, or at least ruined in fortunes and despoiled of power. The few great houses that remained were too weak by themselves to cope with the rising power of the Crown; and the kings, finding themselves at last in a position to control the barons, decided to deprive them, once for all, of that which made them

dangerous. Their power had always lain in the armies of retainers they had kept round their castles; Edward IV. ordered that these household armies should be disbanded, and Henry VII. completed what Edward had begun. The Earl of Oxford was fined £10,000 for disobeying this order. By such stern measures Feudalism was swept away; and of the baronage, as a power for good or evil, we hear no more. No more castles are built in England: their place is taken by the peaceful manor-house with its many windows and its trim garden.

3. The Revival of Learning. The great intellectual movement known as the "Renaissance" may be described as an awakening of men's minds. It is not possible to say precisely when this movement began; it was already in progress when, in 1453, Constantinople was taken by the Turks. But that event gave it impetus. In various Italian cities, and notably in Florence, Greek scholars who had fled from Constantinople found homes, and formed centres of Greek learning, and introduced to western Europe the works of the great Greek writers of antiquity. The fame of the new learning soon passed to England, and young English students flocked to Italy to learn Greek. The literature of Greece and of Rome was studied with a passionate eagerness which showed how ready the world was, at that moment, to receive new ideas. "I have given up my whole soul to Greek learning," writes the great Erasmus in his youth, "and, as soon as I get any money, I shall buy Greek books, and *afterwards* I shall buy some clothes." When these students carried the new ideas back to England, the result soon became visible. The effects of all this study of the

noble writings of antiquity were too far-reaching to be set down in a few words; perhaps we may best describe the movement as, what we have already called it, a mental awakening. Men were no longer satisfied to have their thinking done for them by others; they began to think for themselves on all sorts of subjects—on government, on religion, on education, on everything of highest moment to the human race. It was no longer enough that a certain belief had been accepted for centuries; men began to ask whether it was true. In other words, people began to use their reason—a faculty which the vast majority of men and women had, during the Dark Ages, allowed to slumber.

4. **Education.** Those who directed the new movement in England—chief among whom were Colet, Erasmus, and Sir Thomas More—aimed at nothing less than the education of the whole people of England; and luckily they were aided in their efforts by Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, who were both scholars themselves. The outcome was the foundation of the modern educational system. Schools sprang up all over England: it has been said that “in the latter years of Henry more grammar-schools were founded than in the three centuries before;” and many were added during the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth. Moreover, the great Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, which had become dull and lifeless institutions, teaching badly what was not worth teaching at all, were entirely reformed, and became centres of learning where not only classical literature, but ultimately mathematics and natural science, were studied with whole-hearted enthusiasm.

5. **Discovery.** Side by side with this enormous increase of mental activity went an enormous increase in men's knowledge of the world they lived in. It was the age of daring seamen. In 1492, the caravels of Columbus reached the West Indies. In 1497, the Italian, John Cabot, with a crew of English sailors, discovered the mainland of North America, landing in Labrador. In the same year the Portuguese, Vasco da Gama, doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and reached India by sea. Next year John Cabot's son, Sebastian, explored the American coast from Maryland to Hudson's Bay. In 1498, Columbus discovered South America. Europe was filled with the strange tales of returned mariners; and this sudden knowledge of new races stirred men's minds profoundly—awakened men to a new interest in life, a new curiosity about the world.

6. **Printing and Gunpowder.** Two great inventions mark the period—the invention of printing and the invention of gunpowder. The latter of course revolutionised warfare; we may note particularly that it shattered the last remnants of Feudalism. The feudal knight, no matter how heavy his mail might be, found himself defenceless against the bullet; the feudal baron, no matter how large an army he could muster, was helpless before artillery, and the king possessed the only artillery in England. Caxton's introduction of the printing-press into England took place before the Tudor Period opened, but it was in that period that its effects began to be felt. Without the press, with its enormous cheapening of books, the new learning itself would not have amounted to much. Hitherto all books had been copied by hand, and copies were

accessible only by the wealthy. Books now became cheap and plentiful, and the effect on civilisation cannot be over-estimated. These two great inventions fittingly mark the transition from mediæval to modern England.

7. **Social Dangers.** These revolutions affected, more or less deeply, the whole of western Europe; we must now turn to changes peculiar to England. We have seen how the rise in the price of labour, consequent on the Black Death, induced land-owners to turn their farms into sheep-runs, which required far fewer hired labourers; and how this policy created a dangerous class of "sturdy beggars," labourers who could find no employment, and who wandered over the country begging and stealing. The land-owners found that sheep paid handsomely, and England became the greatest wool-producing country in Europe. The steady rise in the price of wool made the land-owners more and more anxious to get rid of their smaller tenants, and to give all their land to sheep. The wealthy merchants of the cities began to invest in land, and these were the most merciless in turning the small tenant-farmers out of their farms. The process of "enclosure"—the throwing together of smaller holdings into one immense sheep-run—went on; the eviction of the tenant-farmer went on also. These farmers were turned out, too, by the most unjust means, "by fraud or force," says More; and went away, with a bitter sense of wrong and injustice in their hearts, to join the ranks of the "sturdy beggars." The land was gradually cleared of people: where two hundred labourers used to be in regular employment, two or three herdsmen were found to be sufficient; houses

and even whole villages were pulled down to make room for the all-devouring sheep. "Your sheep," writes More with biting irony, "that were wont to be so mild and tame, and so small eaters—now, as I say, are become so great devourers, and so wild, that they eat up and swallow down the very men themselves." The disbanding of the great military households of the barons sent crowds of dangerous ruffians to swell the ranks of the unemployed; and the soldiers who returned from the French wars, finding no honest employment available, added perhaps the worst element of all.

8. The Poor Laws. Here, then, we have a grave social danger; a vast army of men, with nothing to do, wandering at large over the country. The earlier Tudor Period is accordingly a period of great social disorder. These lawless vagabonds became thieves and murderers; they made all the roads unsafe for travelling, and they formed gangs of robbers which were the terror of the country-side. If a rebellion was organised, they flocked to join it; and thus they were a perpetual danger to the throne itself. Wolsey, in Henry VIII.'s reign, saw the evil, but could not cure it. He devised a law against the further extension of sheep-runs, but it had no effect. He ordered more and more severe punishments for lawlessness, so that we hear of forty being hanged in one day; but all in vain. For, as More pointed out, the punishment of thieves must always be fruitless unless we remedy the evils which produce thieves. Early in Elizabeth's reign the evil had grown to intolerable dimensions; and in 1562 a select body of men, called a Royal Commission, was appointed to enquire into the whole matter. From

this Commission we date the beginning of a wiser and more humane mode of dealing with the difficulty. Various statutes were made, providing in various ways for the relief of the poor; and finally, near the end of the reign, was passed the great *Poor Law*, which remained in force with few alterations till the reign of Victoria. By this law every inhabitant of every parish was taxed for the aid of the poor. Those who could not work were maintained at the expense of their parish, and those who could were compelled to earn their living, work being provided for them by means of "a convenient stock of flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron, and other necessary ware and stuff."

9. **Social Changes.** No law, however, could have dealt successfully with this great social danger if the conditions which produced that danger had continued to exist. The evil in great measure righted itself. In the first place, people began to see that a greater number of sheep could be kept on an acre of land if that land were carefully cultivated; and a more thorough system of cultivation required more men to carry it out: hence the labourers who had been driven from the land when the sheep-breeding industry began, were now recalled. In the second place, a much more important outlet for surplus labour was found in the new manufacturing industries, and especially in the woollen manufactures.* At first all the wool grown in England was sent abroad to be made into cloth; by the middle of Elizabeth's reign this had ceased; England wove its own cloth; and thousands of men found employment

* More had suggested the woollen manufacture as a solution of this social problem a hundred years before.

in the new industry. We may note also that England began to grow a proper proportion of grain to wool; and this not only employed more hands, but it also lowered the price of bread, and so made the condition of the poor less intolerable.

10. **Commerce.** Some of the "sturdy beggars," then, were recalled to work on the land; some found employment in manufacturing towns. A third sphere of labour remains to be noted, namely *commerce*. Nothing in the history of this period is more striking than the sudden rise of England to a position of mercantile importance. "It was under Elizabeth that English commerce began the rapid career of development which has made us the carriers of the world," writes an English historian.† The daring of the Elizabethan sailors opened up new markets all over the world for the English merchant. The trading company, so well known in our times, now first made its appearance; such companies received a Royal Charter, *i.e.*, the sovereign gave them, by written document, the exclusive right to a certain trade. The company known as the Merchant Adventurers received a charter of this kind, enabling them to trade with the Netherlands; the Russia Company and the Turkey Company were founded later; and in 1600 Elizabeth granted a charter to the East India Company, which thus began that wonderful and romantic career that was to end only with the Indian Mutiny. Bristol became wealthy through its trade with Ireland, Southampton through its trade with West Africa. The cod fisheries of Newfoundland and the whale fisheries of the far north employed an ever-increasing number of English seamen.

† Green.

11. All this new enterprise and activity, with its consequent enormous increase of wealth, could not but have its effect on the daily life of the people. The life of the wealthy became more luxurious, of the poor more comfortable. The trade with India and the Levant introduced many luxuries hitherto unknown. Even among the poorer classes feather pillows began to be used instead of logs of wood, and carpets were laid on the floors instead of rushes. Glass became cheap, and the houses built in Elizabethan times are notable for the number and size of their windows—a change by which the general health of the people must have benefited greatly. Feudalism having disappeared, the builders no longer needed to think of defence, and were able to pay some attention to beauty: the beautiful mansions which took the place of gloomy battlement and tower, were carved and adorned within and without; and the art of gardening was introduced from Italy. Queen Elizabeth's three thousand robes serve to mark the new care bestowed on dress.

12. **Summary.** The Tudor Period, we have said, was the period of transition from Mediæval England to the England of to-day. Shakespeare's plays, written in Elizabeth's time, show us a life in which we are conscious of no very steep difference from the life we ourselves lead; whereas, the verses of Langland, written in Richard II.'s time, strike us almost as an account of a foreign nation, written in a foreign language: such changes, both in language and in life, had taken place during the interval between the two writers. The most important social change we may summarise by saying that the country squire, his tenant farmers on their homesteads, and the

farm labourers in their cottages with the right to aid from their parish when old age should make them unfit for labour, together form the system which took the place of feudalism.

CHAPTER X.

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN PARLIAMENT AND CROWN.

1. **Principles of the British Constitution.** We have seen that the first Parliament, in the reign of Edward I., was not an absolutely new institution; it was simply the old Council of the Realm with a new element added; an element, however, which wholly changed its character. It had formerly been an hereditary body of nobles: there was now added a *representative* body of knights and burgesses. But the addition of this representative element gave to the assemblage no rights, no privileges, which had not belonged to it before. We may say briefly that Parliament *inherited* certain rights that had belonged to the Great Council of Barons which it superseded; that the Council had inherited these rights from the Witenagemote which it superseded; and that the Witenagemote had enjoyed these rights from a time earlier than any of which we have an exact knowledge. The great principles of liberty had existed in the English constitution from time immemorial. We cannot say when they were first introduced.

2. These great principles—which may be looked upon as the fundamental checks upon the power of

the sovereign—are three in number:—(a) The principle that the king cannot make laws without the consent of Parliament; (b) the principle that when such laws have been made, the king must govern in accordance with them; (c) the principle that the king cannot levy taxes, that is, take any of the nation's money, without the consent of Parliament.

3. **Evasions of These Principles.** These principles were a part of the English constitution from the very first, but there were many kings who were strong enough to take no notice of them. In the case of William I., for example, the Council of Barons dared not oppose the will of the sovereign; if he wished to levy a tax, the Council dared not refuse its consent. And for long after these principles appeared to be firmly established, the kings of England found ways of evading them. For instance, the king could not legislate without Parliament; true, but he could pardon those who broke the laws, and this practically amounted to *dispensing* with any law that Parliament might have made. He could not levy taxes without consent of Parliament; true, but he could *ask* for money from private individuals; and when a powerful king asked for money, the private individual usually thought it prudent to comply, however reluctantly, with the request. The king could not imprison people unjustly; true, but he could appoint judges who would utter whatever judgment the king wished, and he could put into juries men who would do his bidding. So these great principles of liberty were again and again set at naught by English monarchs, and it was

in defence of them that the long battle between Parliament and Crown was waged.*

4. **Taxation.** Of these three principles, the last—that the king must not levy taxes without the consent of Parliament—was by far the most important, and indeed may be said to include the others; for if the king could once be made to feel that he could get money only through Parliament, it would then be easy to force him to respect the other principles of the constitution. The power that controls the nation's money must ultimately become the supreme power in the nation; if the king could get money whenever and however he pleased, he could do anything else he pleased. So it was round this question—the control of the national purse—that the great struggle chiefly raged. And if the nation was to be really free—was to have real self-government, which we have seen to be the only form of government compatible with freedom—the *control of the national purse must be in the hands of the representatives of the nation*, that is, in the hands of the commons. The really vital question, then, over which Parliament struggled with the Crown for over six hundred years, was whether the king or the commons should have control of the nation's money. Let us keep that central issue in mind while we rapidly survey the course of the contest.

5. **Edward I.** Edward I., as we have seen, created Parliament simply as a machine by which he might more rapidly and easily get money from the nation; but he does not appear to have understood the nature of his own machinery; for, to meet

* See Macaulay, History of England, Chapter I.

the expenses of the wars at the close of his reign, he attempted to wring money from the nation without asking leave of Parliament. He was met by a storm of resistance so fierce that, strong as he was, he had to bend before it; and, with tears in his eyes, he confessed that he had taken his people's money "without warrant of law," and threw himself on the nation's loyalty. We should note that it was not the commons who resisted, but the barons. The commons were not yet strong enough; it was the barons who, at this period and for some time to come, were the defenders of liberty against the tyranny of the Crown.

6. **Edward II.** In the next reign the weakness of the sovereign enabled the barons to assert their strength still more decisively. Parliament appears to be growing stronger under Edward II., but it is still the barons, not the commons, in whose hands the power of Parliament rests; and the barons find armed resistance more potent than parliamentary discussion. They established the principle, that if the king did not govern in accordance with the laws of the land, his advisers, or "ministers," were responsible to the nation; and illustrated the principle by beheading one royal favourite and hanging another. In the end they exercised the right, which had belonged to the Saxon Witenagemote, of *deposing* a worthless monarch. The action of the leading barons in this reign was probably dictated by personal ambitions and jealousies, rather than by patriotism; but the hands of Parliament were strengthened none the less.

7. **Edward III.** The reign of Edward III. marks an important stage in the growth of parliamentary

power. In this reign began the Hundred Years War with France, and the devouring expenses of that foolish and mischievous war put the king in constant need of money. Edward, like his predecessors, adopted all sorts of tricks for extorting money from the nation without Parliament's consent. In 1362 a statute (or law) was passed, declaring that "no imposition, tallage, nor charge whatsoever is to be made without the grant and consent of the Commons in Parliament." The king found that the Commons meant what they said, and that, to obtain money, he had to listen and yield to their demands, and thus, however unwillingly, to increase the power of the Commons. Thus *the Commons* asserted the principle of self-taxation.

8. Some other events of this reign are to be carefully noted.

(a) Parliament was in this reign, for the first time, definitely divided into Lords and Commons, sitting in separate rooms or "Houses." The House of Commons had its "Speaker," to be its mouthpiece in addressing the king, and to preside over all its meetings.

(b) In this reign the Knights of the Shire definitely threw in their lot with the Burgesses, to form the united Commons. Hitherto the knights had been closely connected with the barons; but, at the beginning of this reign, we find them grouped with the burgesses under the name of "the Commons." This union of the two classes of *representative*, as opposed to the *hereditary*, members of Parliament is of immense importance; without this union Parliament would never have risen to great power, but would probably have sunk into insignificance like

the rest of the Parliaments of Europe, in which no such union took place.

(c) Hitherto the Commons had been mainly concerned with the granting of money; they had not been considered a legislative (or law-making) body. But in this reign they forced the king to agree that, when he consented to their petitions, those petitions should, *without alteration*, be enrolled among the laws of the land. That is, "petitions" now became statutes or laws. Thus the House of Commons secured its legislative authority.

(d) The "Good Parliament" of 1376 insisted on a reform which lay at the root of all: freedom of election. Hitherto the sheriff had been able to say who might and who might not be chosen as knights of the shire; and in this way the king had been able, through the sheriff, to "pack" Parliament: that is, to keep out of it men who would be likely to oppose his will. The Good Parliament asserted that such elections must be absolutely *free*, that neither the sheriff nor anyone else was to dictate to the electors.

It was one thing to get the king to agree to such reforms; it was another thing to secure that the king and his successors should abide by them.

9. Richard II. and Henry IV. We may pass briefly over the varying fortunes of the struggle during the next few reigns. In Richard II.'s reign Parliament once more asserted its right to hold the king's advisers responsible for the king's misdeeds—the right of Impeachment. (Impeachment is a form of trial in which the House of Commons acts as prosecutor, the House of Lords as judge and jury.) Richard's principal ministers were impeached, some of them unjustly put to death; and, in the end, Par-

liament once more exercised its power of deposing the sovereign. Under his successor, whose sole title to the throne was that Parliament had set him upon it, the two Houses rose to the highest position they were destined to reach in the Middle Ages. "The tone of Henry IV. is that of humble compliance with the prayers of the Parliament."* He acknowledged the power of the Commons, and allowed them to inquire into the mismanagement of his household, and to dismiss the queen's foreign attendants. The Commons insisted on their right to examine the king's accounts, to see how the money they granted had been spent. In this reign, also, the Commons succeeded in gaining a momentous advantage over the Lords; they insisted that, as representatives of the nation, they had the sole right to dispose of the nation's money, and that all grants of money must therefore originate in the House of Commons. We have already noted the importance of this point.

10. Decline of Parliament. But while under the Lancastrian kings the House of Commons seemed to be gaining in strength, it was really ceasing to be a national body, and the real power of Parliament was passing again into the hands of the barons and wealthy land-owners. The strength of the Lower House depended on its being truly representative of the nation, and this it was gradually ceasing to be. During the reign of Henry VI. the right of choosing representatives of the towns or boroughs passed into the hands of the wealthy citizens who formed the town councils; so that the burgesses who sat in Parliament were no longer representative of, because

* Green; p. 258.

they were no longer chosen by, the great mass of the townspeople. During the same reign, a law was passed that only those who had land of their own of a certain value should have a vote for knights of the shire; by this measure the great bulk of the existing voters lost their votes, and so the knights, too, ceased to be representative of the mass of the people. Thus the House of Commons, ceasing to be representative, lost its strength; the real strength passed into the hands of the baronage; and, when the Wars of the Roses reduced the baronage to a handful, and made shipwreck of their power, the kings were left supreme. After the Wars of the Roses, in fact, there was a long period in which the sovereign was almost enabled to do without Parliament altogether. This period has been called by some a period of Absolute Monarchy.

CHAPTER XI.

CONTINUATION OF THE STRUGGLE.

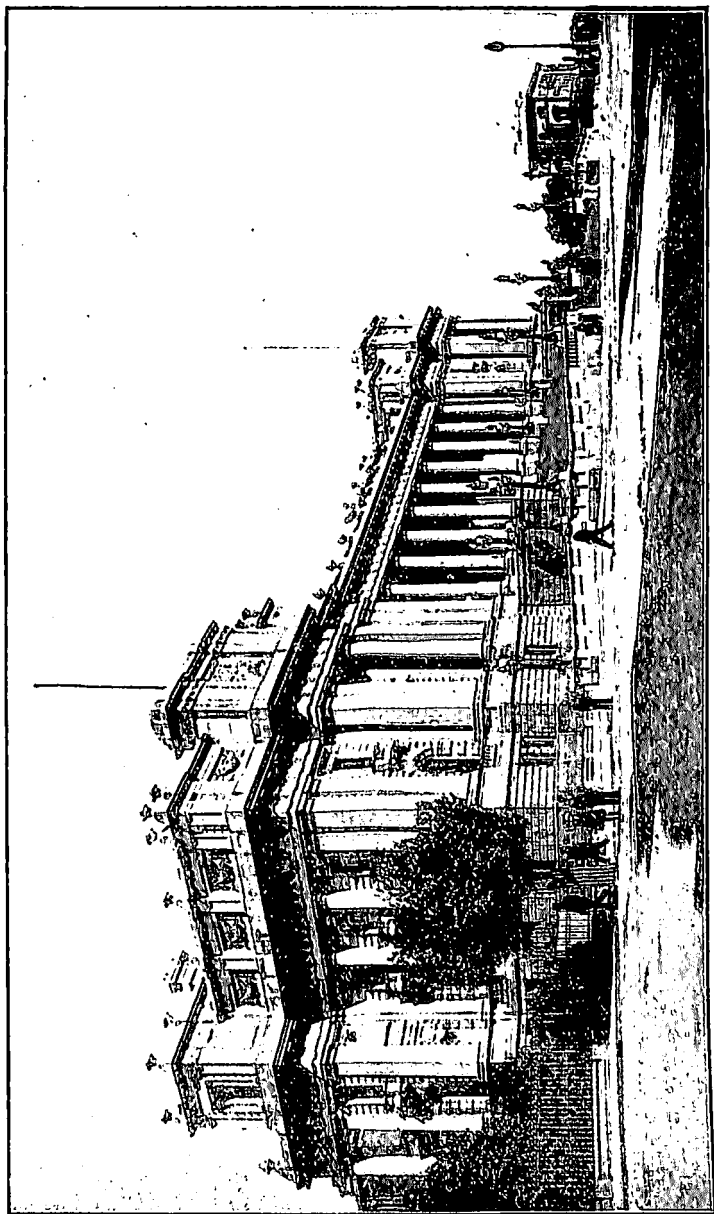
1. **Edward IV.** The first of the absolute monarchs was Edward IV., and the secret of his enormous power lies in the fact that he was able to do without Parliament because he was not in need of money. In the first place, many great houses had become extinct during the war, and their estates had fallen into the king's hands; and he also stripped of their estates the chief barons who had fought against him. It is calculated that about one-fifth of the whole country passed into the king's possession, and, by the

sale of this vast property, he was able to accumulate immense wealth. In the second place, he had ships of his own, and engaged in trade on such a large scale that he became known as the Merchant-King. Thirdly, he got Parliament, early in his reign, to grant him money for a war with France, and, though the war never took place, he kept the money. Fourthly, though he could not tax the country without Parliament's consent, he managed to wring money from his people by summoning before him the wealthy merchants of the cities, and asking them for contributions, which were ironically called "benevolences," though there was no good-will on the part of the givers. But they dared not refuse; for personal liberty in this reign had well nigh disappeared. No one dared to speak a word against the king, for his spies were everywhere; and he had introduced a rack into the Tower of London, with which he could torture those who ventured to oppose him. In all these ways Edward made himself independent of Parliament, which, indeed, hardly ever met during his reign. The work of governing the country was carried on by the King and the Royal Council, which was simply a small body of the king's ministers and advisers.

2. **Henry VIII.** Henry VII. imitated the policy of Edward IV.; that is to say, he endeavoured to make himself so wealthy that he could afford to do without Parliament, and he succeeded so well that Parliament met only once during the last thirteen years of his reign. But it is in the reign of his successor that the Monarchy reaches the climax of its power, and Parliament the lowest depth of degradation. Henry VIII.'s first important Parliament did,

indeed, show some independence by refusing Wolsey a grant of money which he came in person to demand; but this only caused the system of "benevolences" to be re-introduced. All the succeeding Parliaments were mere tools of the king. The "packing" of the House of Commons was carried on shamelessly, that is to say, the House was made to consist simply of such members as the king desired. Under Henry's two powerful ministers, Wolsey and Cromwell, parliamentary government was swept away in England. The form of it remained, but the reality was gone. One Parliament was so debased as to enact that the king's proclamations should be as binding on the nation as Acts of Parliament, thus deliberately selling its birthright, and the birthright of the nation.

3. **Elizabeth.** In the reign of Elizabeth we note the first signs of a revival of parliamentary power. This sovereign was occasionally in need of money, and was therefore forced to have recourse to the House of Commons; and the House of Commons succeeded in forcing its will on the sovereign in two points:—(a) Freedom of members from arrest, and (b) Freedom of speech in the House. An important indication of the growing power of Parliament is afforded by a struggle at the end of the reign. The Queen had granted to many individuals the exclusive right to deal in certain articles: for instance, for a sum of money a man would buy from the Queen the sole right to sell salt; nobody else was allowed to sell it, and the man who had bought the right could fix what price he liked. This system of "monopolies" had raised the price of all sorts of articles, and had become an intolerable burden. Parliament de-



Houses of Parliament of the Commonwealth, Melbourne.

Photo by Dargé.

manded the abolition of monopolies, and the Queen felt that in this matter Parliament had the nation behind it; so, after a stormy debate, she tactfully gave way. Evidently the House of Commons was beginning to lift its head again.

4. **James I.** In the reign of James I. the long contest began anew with bitter intensity; the reign was indeed one long contest between the King and the House of Commons. The theory of James was that a king was appointed by God, and was responsible not to his subjects but to God alone; the duty of a subject began and ended with obedience. Thus he aimed at a more absolute despotism than even the Tudors had dreamed of; and if the ancient rights and liberties of Englishmen were not to perish utterly, it was high time to get ready to fight in their defence. Luckily James was in constant need of money, and Parliament thus possessed again its old weapon. The House of Commons now began to act on the great principle that no money should be granted to the King till he had redressed some grievance or other. Thwarted in this way, James had recourse to all the old illegal tricks for raising money, and some new ones. Like Edward IV., he extorted "benevolences" from wealthy men. He revived the "monopolies" which Elizabeth had done away with. He demanded that himself and his court should be maintained, without expense to themselves, when they travelled through the country. He increased the customs duties, and forbade the Commons to discuss the lawfulness of his doing so. For seven years he ruled without a Parliament at all. But it was all in vain; and when he was forced at last in (1621) to summon the Houses again, he found that they

had met in a spirit bitterly hostile to himself. They at once swept away monopolies, and impeached the King's chief ministers. They declared that "their liberties and privileges were the undoubted birth-right of the subjects of England," and were not to be given or withheld by the sovereign. James sent for the Journal of the House of Commons, and with his own hand tore out the pages on which this declaration had been entered. The words had to be written in blood before the Stuarts could be made to understand the depth and strength of their people's devotion to liberty.

5. **Charles I.** Charles I., who inherited his father's theories of the divine right of kings, dismissed his first two Parliaments because they refused him money till he should dismiss his favourites; and he extorted money by the same illegal means as his father had used. His third Parliament, before it would grant him a penny, drew up the famous *Petition of Right*, which demanded that no man should be compelled to pay anything without Parliament's consent, and that no subject should be imprisoned without a cause being shown. The King was forced to agree in order to get his money; but no sooner had he got it, than he began to break through the terms of the *Petition*; and when Parliament remonstrated it was at once dissolved, and several leading members of the Lower House thrown into the Tower. For the next eleven years the King, assisted by Strafford and Laud, did without Parliament altogether; but the want of money was a constant difficulty, and all the old tricks proved insufficient. At last they hit upon the expedient of reviving an old tax known as Ship-money. It was a

tax which had been imposed in the time of the Danish forays. It was intended for time of war, and this was a time of peace; it was intended to be levied on the maritime counties only, and Charles levied it on the whole country; it was intended to pay for ships, and Charles wanted it to pay for a standing army with which to make himself all-powerful. But the chief objection was that it was levied without consent of Parliament, and therefore violated a fundamental principle of the constitution. Hampden's heroic refusal to submit to this illegal exaction set the whole country aflame; and when Charles was at length forced, by troubles with Scotland, to summon a fourth Parliament, he found it so bitterly opposed to him that he dismissed it in three weeks. But the Scots became still more troublesome, and later in the same year (1640) he had to summon a Parliament which was destined to send him to the scaffold, and which is known to history as the Long Parliament.

6. The Grand Remonstrance. The large majority of the members of this memorable Parliament were men who had personally tasted of the King's tyranny, and were bitterly opposed to him both in politics and religion; the most notable names being Pym, Hampden, and Cromwell. They at once declared that Ship-money was illegal; liberated those who had been imprisoned by Strafford; impeached and executed Strafford; and issued the "Grand Remonstrance" against the tyranny and misgovernment of Charles. The King attempted to arrest five of the leading members of the House of Commons, but they escaped into the city. Charles thereupon left London, and both sides took arms to decide once

for all whether Britain was to be governed by an Absolute or a Constitutional Monarchy.

7. **Charles II.** We need not go into the details of that fierce struggle which ended with the Battle of Naseby, and resulted in the execution of the King; nor need we delay over the years during which Britain was governed by the masterful will of one man, Oliver Cromwell. With the Restoration (1660) the struggle begins anew between Crown and Parliament. At first, indeed, it seemed that the strife was over; for Charles II.'s first Parliament was extremely loyal, and the country at large had come to hate the rule of Cromwell, and was very glad to have a King again. Thirteen of those who had been responsible for the execution of Charles I. were put to death, and many of those who had suffered in the Royalist cause now had their estates restored to them. The body of Cromwell was dragged from its grave and hung on a gibbet. The work of the Long Parliament seemed to be undone.

8. All the while, however, hatred of tyranny was burning as fiercely as ever in men's hearts, and Charles II. soon managed to alienate the loyalty of his people. The confused history of this and the next reign may be very briefly summarised. Charles II. was too sagacious to think much of his grandfather's theory of the divine right of kings, and too indolent and good-natured to wish for an active tyranny; but, as he himself put it, "he did not think he was a king so long as a company of fellows were looking into his actions, and examining his Ministers as well as his accounts." But he recognised the strength of the "company of fellows," *i.e.*, the House of Commons, and he never came into open opposi-

tion with Parliament. What he sought was by secret ways to make himself independent of them. For this purpose he saw that military strength was necessary; and though he dared not propose to keep a standing army—for Cromwell had made the nation hate the very idea of such a thing—he quietly and steadily increased the number of his guards till he had ten thousand men at his disposal. But he saw, too, that such a force was not in itself nearly sufficient to destroy British liberty; and to accomplish his aims, he turned to foreign aid. France was now the first nation in Europe; and from the French King, Louis XIV., Charles accepted, by secret negotiations and on shameful terms, large grants of money. By so doing he degraded Britain to a humble position among the nations; and when his negotiations with Louis came to light, he had to face fierce opposition at home. But opposition was formidable only when it came through Parliament; and of Parliament Charles was now, thanks to French aid, independent. During the last few years of his reign the Houses were never called together.

9. **James II.** James II. had a despotic temper, of which we cannot accuse his brother; but happily for British freedom, he had little of his brother's shrewdness. Charles worked secretly and succeeded; James struck out boldly and failed. Like Charles, James became a pensioner on the bounty of France; and, like Charles, he aimed at the establishment of a large standing army. We may say thus much to his credit, that he worked zealously for the cause of his religion, which was that of Rome. His chief aim was to break down British Protestantism—the religion of the great majority of the nation. In

order to put Roman Catholics in high places, he had to violate the Test Act, a law which had been passed in the preceding reign against not only Roman Catholics but also Nonconformists (Protestants who did not belong to the Church of England). He claimed that he had a perfect right to do this—that the King is above the laws, and may do as he will with them. “He here openly set his foot upon all law. If by his fiat he could suspend one statute, he could suspend all.”* It is plain, that, if the King were granted the right to dispense with any law that did not suit him, there would be no limit to the royal authority.

10. The Revolution. We know how James II.’s blundering attempts at tyranny at last broke down the patience of the people; how the Prince of Orange was invited to come over and “deliver the nation”; and how, the moment the Prince landed, James’s power fell down like a castle of cards. But amid the general joy which hailed the coming of William, there was a feeling that the liberties of the nation must be more securely safeguarded, and that no king must be accepted who did not clearly understand on what conditions he held the throne, and who did not frankly accept those conditions. Accordingly the Parliament which William summoned began its work by writing out a short summary of the British constitution, which it asked William to sign before it offered him the crown. This summary is known as the Declaration of Right.

11. The Declaration of Right. There was nothing new in this Declaration; it was simply a statement of the rights which belonged to the British nation,

* Goldwin Smith.

the rights which had been constantly violated by British sovereigns. It simply "set forth, in the most distinct and solemn manner, the fundamental principles of the constitution."* It declared once for all that the power, which James had assumed, of dispensing with the laws, was illegal. It declared that to maintain an army without consent of Parliament, as James and Charles had done, was illegal. It declared that to raise money except through Parliament was illegal; this, as we have seen, was the most important point of all. It asserted the right of the subjects to choose whom they pleased to represent them in Parliament; the right of those who were elected to say what they pleased in Parliament; the right of all British subjects to a fair and impartial administration of justice. This declaration is one of the most important documents in British history. When William and Mary had set their names to it—as they did without hesitation—the long struggle between Crown and Parliament was at an end. Parliament had won.

CHAPTER XII.

COLONIES.

1. **What is a Colony?** When, for any reason, a number of persons, belonging to a certain country, leave that country and settle in another country, thus forming a new and separate society of their own,

* Macaulay.

they are said to have founded a colony. The word colony, however, is used vaguely, and in many different senses: it is important that we should clearly understand what we mean by it. The term has been defined as "a community politically dependent on the mother-country to which the majority or the dominant portion of its members belong by birth and origin, such persons having no intention to return to the mother-country." This definition, though rather long, may be accepted as substantially correct. We see then that it does not matter whether the original settlers have come to the new country of their own accord, as so many Australian settlers did, or have been sent out by the government of their own country, as many of the early American settlers were sent. Nor does it matter whether they settle in an uninhabited country, or expel the previous inhabitants, or settle down in the midst of the previous inhabitants.

2. We notice in our definition the words "politically dependent on the mother-country," and it may be objected that, if that be the case, Australia is not a colony, because we have our own parliaments and govern ourselves. But we must remember that Australians are all subjects of King George—British subjects—and this is the only kind of political dependence necessary to form a colony. Apply the definition to the United States of America: this country is not a British colony, because, though the majority of its members are British in origin, they are not British subjects—political dependence is wanting. India, again, is not a colony in the true sense, because, though the British are the dominant or ruling race, they do not, as a rule, settle perman-

ently there; most of them "have the intention of returning to the mother-country" before they die. India, moreover, was won, not by settlement, but by the sword. South Africa, on the other hand, is a true colony; for, though the native races are in the majority there, they are not "the dominant portion of the members."*

3. **Causes of England's colonising greatness.** If we ask why the British have become the greatest colonising race in the world, why the colonising spirit took hold more powerfully of Britain than of any other nation, the answer will be found partly in our ancestry. The Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes were colonists in spirit; though it would not be correct to describe England as a German colony, because these settlers did not preserve any political tie with the country they had left. The Normans, again, were colonists who did preserve such a tie; though here, again, it would not be correct to describe England as a Norman colony, because as we have seen, the conquering race was soon absorbed by the conquered. But the colonising spirit was at work in both cases; and the qualities of endurance and enterprise, which have founded the colonies of Australia, Africa, and America, are the qualities which founded the kingdom of England.

4. Partly, too, we must look at the geography of Britain, which operated powerfully in two ways. (a) The British Isles are too small to contain a great and growing nation. As the population swelled, it became impossible for such a small coun-

* Our definition does not apply with absolute strictness, however, to United South Africa, which is at present (1911) governed by a *Dutch* majority.

try to provide the means of livelihood to all. As steam must escape from the boiler, as the seed must burst from the shell or die, so the expanding population of Britain had to pass out of the narrow limits of the mother-land. To understand how necessary this "expansion of England" was, let us try to imagine what would happen if all the people of British origin now scattered over the globe, including eighty millions from the United States, were by some means driven back into the British Isles!

(b) Britain has an extremely long coast-line in proportion to its size, and its coasts have so many and so deep indentations, that it is said that no spot in England or Scotland is more than fifty miles from the sea. It is this fact, as well as the fact that our early ancestors were sea-rovers and pirates, that has made the British a sea-faring nation. British sailors, moreover, have had to do business, not in the quiet waters of the Mediterranean, but in the fiercest gales of the Atlantic and the North Sea. Trained in such a stern school, English sailors could not but be bold and venturesome beyond all others; and it is thus to her shape and position, no less than to the character of her people, that we must attribute Britain's maritime supremacy. Now it is the sea-faring race that will discover new lands; it is by sea settlers must proceed to those lands, and it is by sea that trade is carried on between colony and mother-land. Hence the greatest sea-faring nation may be expected to be the greatest colonising nation also. If we consult our geography, we shall easily perceive how it was that Spain was England's most formidable rival in the early days of colonisation.

5. **Origin of Colonies.** Let us examine very

briefly the beginnings of English colonisation, and we shall quickly perceive the connection between the first colonies and various events which have been already dwelt on in this book.

(a) *Love of Adventure.* There can be little doubt that sheer love of adventure, for adventure's sake, had great influence with the hardy and reckless "sea-dogs" of Elizabeth's time. We have seen how men's minds were stirred by the great burst of discovery in the earlier part of the Tudor Period; and the marvellous tales, which flew from lip to lip, of the strange new lands beyond the sea soon set all the young men of England longing to go out and see for themselves. But adventure, though it may be loved for itself, loses half its charm if there be no object to be sought, no prize to be won: and we must, therefore, connect the mere desire for strange adventures in strange places with two other motives.

(b) *Patriotism.* Love of England meant, in Elizabeth's reign, hatred of Spain. The enmity of the two countries neither began nor ended when Spain tried to strike a death-blow at England with the Great Armada; all through the reign Englishmen thought of the King of Spain as the deadly enemy of their Queen, continually hatching conspiracies against her, continually trying to stir up civil war in her kingdom. A later day was to see Englishmen and Spaniards standing shoulder to shoulder in defence of the liberties of Europe; but that day was not yet; and, on the whole, it need not surprise us that the subjects of Queen Elizabeth spoke and thought of these enemies of their country as if they were the enemies also of God. Many Englishmen of good family became simply pirates,

attacking Spanish ships whenever they fell in with them. As English seamen became more daring, they ventured to attack Spain through her American colonies, and the Carribean Sea—or Spanish Main, as it was called—became the scene of many deadly fights. This drew the attention of England to the colonies of Spain, and suggested that she should found similar colonies for herself. Gilbert's attempted settlement in 1576 was intended simply as an outpost from which to attack the Spanish fleets.

(c) *Greed of Gold.* We must not suppose, however, that many men turned buccaneers simply from hatred of Spain, and from that alone. The desire to “sing the beard of the king of Spain” was combined with the desire to lighten the king of Spain's purse, by taking possession of the Spanish galleons as they returned home laden with gold and silver from Mexico and Peru. Captured galleons were brought home to English ports to fire the imaginations and excite the avarice of the younger and bolder spirits. And when Englishmen turned from attacking the Spanish colonies to found colonies of their own, the same greed of gold was, doubtless, the motive: not the legitimate desire to earn money and become rich by trade, but the delusive dream of making a fortune in a day, by gold, or silver, or precious stones. Men falsely thought that these were the greatest wealth a country could possess, and they believed that America was a country teeming with these. We know how Raleigh closed his career with an expedition in search of El Dorado, an imaginary city of gold. Doubtless the tales of Spanish wealth were much exaggerated, but it is known that, at the end of Elizabeth's reign, Spain was drawing over

£60,000 a year from her American colonies—a vast sum, as it seemed in those times.

6. Francis Bacon, one of the wisest and most far-seeing of men, wrote in James I.'s reign an essay on Plantations, as colonies were then called; and, in this essay, he gave the colonists a piece of excellent advice: "Moil not too much underground, for the hope of mines is very uncertain, and useth to make the planters (*i.e.*, colonists) lazy in other things." It was this hope of mines that wrecked the first attempts at English colonisation. Raleigh, indeed, was wise enough to see that success depended on industry, and, in founding Virginia, he took care to plant his colony where it might maintain itself by agriculture. But he could not induce his settlers to give up their dream of sudden wealth; and his two attempts to form permanent settlements in Virginia failed in consequence. In fact Englishmen did not succeed, during Elizabeth's reign, in establishing a single lasting settlement in America. Nothing lasting could be founded on the ignoble desire to become rich without working for it: and it was only when men put that desire behind them, and turned to honest labour as the key to the conquest of the world, that successful colonisation became possible.

7. **Commerce.** We have seen the remarkable expansion of English trade under Elizabeth. In her reign England rose to a position of commercial supremacy; and, as commerce developed, English merchants began to look about for new countries to trade with, new markets for their goods, new and shorter routes to the markets they already had. They wished for a short cut to India, and English sailors began to roam the seas in search of it. The

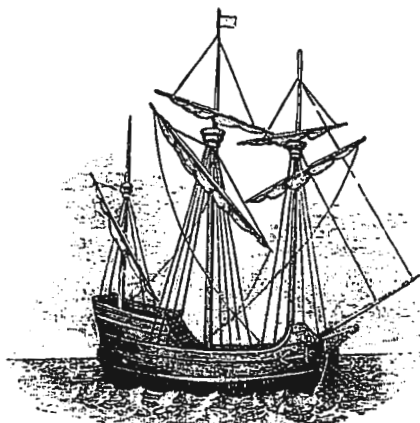
idea of a passage by the north of Europe sent Willoughby to perish in Lapland, and founded the Russian trade. The idea of a north-west passage to India sent Frobisher to Labrador. It was by two companies of merchants that Virginia was first successfully settled, and it was by a company of merchants that our empire of India was founded. Commercial enterprise supplied the capital without which our earliest colonies could not have been founded.

8. **Social Distress.** We have already watched the rise in England of a class of "sturdy beggars," men who, from various causes, had been thrown out of work, and who wandered about the country in bands of robbers. We saw that, in Elizabeth's reign, the difficulty partly righted itself. Not wholly, however; for population was increasing rapidly, and England became less and less able to provide work and wages for all; and there was, at the accession of James I., a great deal of poverty and a great deal of idleness—the two great incentives to crime. Confronted with this grave social danger, men began to think of the rich and empty lands beyond the sea as offering a home for those who could find none in England. It was this class that provided, to a great extent, the settlers whom the merchant companies sent out to cultivate the new lands. Thus the true "expansion" of England began; the departure from England of her surplus population.

9. **Love of Freedom.** But while the poor were thus turning their eyes to a country in which they would be able to earn their bread by honest toil, others were beginning to look to it as a refuge from tyranny. We have seen the nature of the Stuart rule and the life-and-death struggle for freedom during

the Stuart Period. All through that period there was a steady stream of emigration to America, and it was nothing but the love of freedom that set it flowing. But it was not so much from political tyranny that men were fleeing as from tyranny in religious matters: the freedom they sought was freedom to worship God in their own way. The Church of England had been firmly established by Elizabeth; but the Church of England was by no means the only Church in England. There were the Roman Catholics, who would not give up their old faith, and were ready to die for it. And there were the Puritans, who wished to go even farther from the Church of Rome than the English Church had gone; they, too, were ready to die for their faith. Both Catholics and Puritans turned to America as a refuge from persecution. Maryland was founded (in 1634) by Lord Baltimore, a Roman Catholic; and though most of his fellow-colonists were Roman Catholics, Maryland read England a noble lesson in religious toleration, for one of its first laws enacted that "no person within this province professing to believe in Jesus Christ shall be in any way troubled or molested for his or her religion, or in the free exercise thereof." It is, however, round the Puritans that our interest chiefly centres. In Elizabeth's reign several severe measures were passed against them, forbidding them to hold religious meetings. In James I.'s reign still harsher measures were enacted. The result was to drive them in large numbers to Holland, where they found religious freedom. But they were never satisfied in Holland; they had to live in cities, and they longed for a country life; the customs and language of the Dutch were strange to them, and they longed

for a home where they would hear nothing but English spoken, a home that would be like England in everything but religion. They determined to found such a home in America; and in 1620 the little company of "Pilgrim Fathers" disembarked from the *Mayflower* on the coast of Massachusetts. The



The Mayflower.

Puritans in England watched the progress of the colony with eager interest; and ten years later John Winthrop with a thousand followers founded Boston. Hundreds followed. Such was the origin of New England.

10. Loss of the Colonies. We need

not follow in detail the history of these earliest offshoots from England, nor the mistakes by which she lost America. There is one point, however, that we must not fail to note. In watching the struggle between Parliament and Crown, we have noticed again and again how intimately the freedom of a nation is connected with control of the nation's money. This is shown still more clearly by the history of the American colonies. The British nation had taught their kings, by many stern lessons, that a free people must be free to tax itself, must have no taxes imposed on it without its own consent. But the nation itself, strangely enough, forgot to apply

its own teachings to its colonies, and endeavoured to impose taxes on the colonists without asking for their consent. Britain herself had to be taught the same lesson, and she learned it by the loss of her most precious possession. But she learned it thoroughly, and all her important colonies to-day have complete control over their own trade and their own money.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STRUGGLE FOR EMPIRE.

CLIVE.

1. **The Need of Expansion.** History is full of struggles. We have traced the struggle of the British people for liberty—for freedom to govern themselves; we now turn to their struggle for empire—for freedom to expand beyond their island boundaries. All through the history of Britain's foreign possessions, we must bear in mind that she was not sending her armies out to subjugate weaker races, and take forcible possession of their land from the mere lust of power; rather we must regard the struggle for empire as an effort, forced on her by the smallness of her own territory, to find in other parts of the world secure homes for her overflowing population, or to find new outlets for the trade by which her home-population is fed. Our possession of India has provided a livelihood not only for thousands of Englishmen employed in India itself, but for millions in England who live by the trade with India.

2. **America.** We have already noted the beginnings of this expansion in the American colonies. In America, long after the colonies were firmly established, two great contests awaited Britain. In the first, she had to face the determined effort of France to expel her from the continent; but the strife was short, and the fate of it was practically decided by the taking of Quebec—an event consecrated to all our hearts by the heroic death of Wolfe in the moment of victory. In the second contest, which was much longer and much more deadly, Britain's object was not to win but to retain an empire. Here she had to face the consequences of her own injustice; and here she suffered the greatest humiliation in her history. It is some consolation to Britain, that this humiliation was inflicted on her, not by foreigners, but by Britons fighting against tyranny as she had taught them to fight. To-day Britons and Americans join in revering the memory of Washington, in whom we all recognise another Hampden.

3. **India.** But if we find little satisfaction in recalling the story of our dealings with the American colonists, in the whole history of our struggle for empire no episode is so glorious as the conquest of India. Napoleon taunted the English with being "a nation of shopkeepers"; the wonderful and romantic history of the East India Company—a mere association of traders, one of those commercial companies which we have seen springing up during the reign of Elizabeth—is a sufficient reply to the taunt. For this company of traders drove France from India, and laid the foundations of Britain's empire in the East. The man by whose genius this was, in the first in-

stance, brought about was a poor clerk in the service of the Company, by name Robert Clive, who stands for all time as the embodiment of the qualities that



Clive.

have given Britain her empire and fitted her to retain it.

4. **The Company.**

The East India Company had three "factories" or trading centres in India—one at Madras, one at Bombay, one at Calcutta. Each factory consisted

of a number of warehouses, a fort to guard them, and a number of houses in which the Company's clerks and soldiers lived. Some of the soldiers were Englishmen, but the majority were paid native troops, known as "Sepoys." Clive was a clerk at Madras.

5. **Dupleix,** The Company did an enormous trade with the natives, but it had a keen competitor in the French India Company, whose principal station was at Pondicherry, and at whose head was a brilliant soldier and far-seeing statesman, Francois Dupleix. To understand Dupleix's plans, we must remember that India was a continent rather than a nation. For a time, indeed, it had all been controlled by one empire, that of the Mughals; but that empire had broken up, and India had become simply a collection of states ruled over by independent princes, in many

cases hostile to one another. Dupleix was the first European to see that in this disunion lay the opportunity for a European nation to gain the mastery of the whole country, and he determined that the French should be that nation. His plan was to weaken the native princes by continually setting one against the other. He also devised the plan, which the British soon copied, of drilling native troops in the European way; and he saw that with comparatively small armies, so trained, he would be able to defeat the huge but undisciplined hosts of the native rulers. His plan, in short, was to conquer India by means of Indian money and Indian soldiers. The French government told him that his scheme was impracticable, but the British showed how sound his ideas were by following them out to the letter.

6. **Beginning of the Struggle.** The presence of the English Company was of course an obstacle in the way of the French conquest of India; and Dupleix made up his mind to expel them. In 1746, the French took Madras, seized the contents of the Company's warehouses, levelled the buildings with the ground, and carried many of the merchants and clerks as prisoners to Pondicherry. Clive was among the prisoners; but he soon managed, in the disguise of a native, to escape to Fort St. David, a small English settlement near Madras. Here he found the Company busily organising a force for self-defence; and he at once threw up his clerkship and became an officer in that force. By his skill and courage he soon attracted the notice of his superior officers.

7. **Arkat.** Hitherto the successes had all been with the French; and the natives had come to look upon that nation with dread and reverence, while

they despised the English as mere traders who could not fight. Clive now came forward with a bold scheme for attacking in his own capital, Arkat, a native prince, the Nawab of the Carnatic, who had been set upon the throne by the influence of Dupleix, and was a mere puppet in his hands. The authorities approved of the plan, and put Clive at the head of an expedition against Arkat. He was given a force of two hundred British and three hundred native soldiers, and with this little army he approached Arkat amid a violent thunderstorm. The garrison, astonished at his boldness in facing a storm, ran away at his approach, and the fort was taken without a blow.

8. Shortly, however, a force of about ten thousand men, including some French soldiers sent by Dupleix, laid siege to the fort. Clive's garrison was now reduced to about three hundred men; and for fifty days this mere handful held the fort against an army of ten thousand. During this siege an incident occurred which shows how a leader who knows how to deal with them can win the devotion of another race. When the garrison was all but starving, the Sepoys came to Clive and asked that the small portion of rice that remained might *all* be used by the Englishmen; they themselves, they said, could live on the water in which the rice was boiled, as they did not need so much nourishment as Europeans.

9. For fifty days the siege lasted. At last Rajah Sahib, the commander of the besieging force, determined to make a desperate and sustained assault on the fort. The enemy advanced in full force, in front came elephants with iron plates bound on their foreheads, to batter down the gates. But "the huge

beasts no sooner felt the English musket-balls than they turned round and rushed furiously away, trampling on the multitude which had urged them forward."* After an hour's struggle the enemy retired; and when the morrow dawned, the besieging army had disappeared. So ended the first of the two most glorious events in Clive's life. After this he won triumph after triumph; and when, in 1754, he returned with broken health to England, he had established British supremacy throughout the south of India. .

10. **The Black Hole.** In 1756 he came out again as governor of Fort St. David. When he arrived, he heard bad news from Bengal, the great state in the north of India. Suraja Daula, the Nawab of Bengal, had long hated the British, and had long coveted the wealth of the British merchants at Calcutta. In 1756, instigated by the French, he had marched against the settlement and seized the Company's possessions. Many of the servants of the Company made their escape: those who did not were made prisoners by the Nawab, and treated by him in a way which has given his name a terrible immortality in the memories of Englishmen. We are all familiar with the story of the Black Hole of Calcutta: how one hundred and forty-six prisoners were thrust into a cell twenty feet square, and that, too, in one of the hottest regions in the world, at its hottest season. It was little wonder that the prisoners went mad with thirst and suffocation, and trampled one another down in their struggles to reach the window of the cell. Only twenty-three were able to stagger out when the guards opened the door in the morning;

* Macaulay: Essay on Clive.

the rest were dead. When the tidings reached Madras, it was instantly determined to send an expedition under Clive to take vengeance on the perpetrator of this hideous crime.

11. **Clive's Tactics.** When Clive reached Bengal, the first months were spent in negotiations, by which he finally induced Suraja Daula's commander-in-chief, Mir Jafar, to promise to desert his master. We need not go into the details of Clive's negotiations. They are the one stain upon the honour of his name; for, skilfully as he conducted them, we cannot excuse him for stooping to fight Hindu chiefs with their own favourite weapons, lying and treachery.

12. **Plassy,** At last, on June 23rd, 1757, the armies met at Plassy. Clive had only 3,000 men, of whom 2,100 were natives. Opposed to him was an army of 55,000 men! It had been arranged that Mir Jafar should desert the Nawab, and bring over to Clive his division of the army: but he failed to keep his promise. The day before the battle, Clive held a council of his officers, and the majority decided that, with such tremendous odds against them, they ought not to risk a battle. Clive retired to a grove of trees near by, and spent an hour in thought. When he returned, he gave orders to make ready for an advance.

13. The battle itself was decided with almost comical rapidity. The first fire of the British cannon threw the enemy into confusion; and some of the traitors, of whom Suraja Daula's camp was full, at once advised him to fall back. His terrors inclined to the same point; he gave the word to retire, and, at that moment, Clive ordered an advance. In

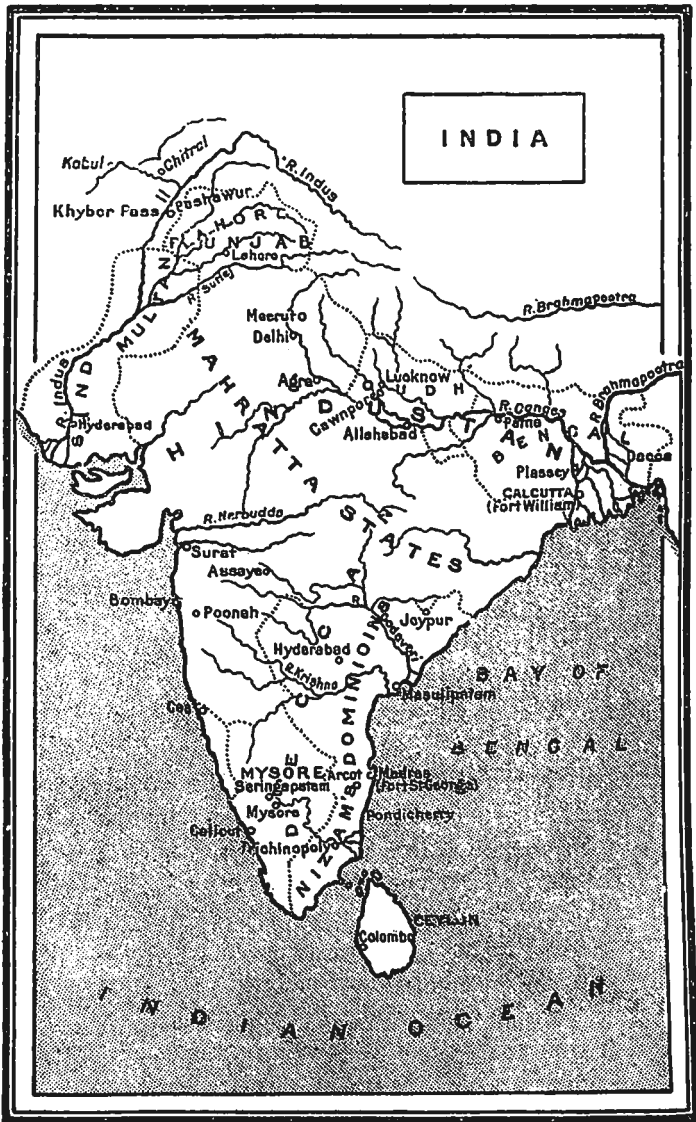
a few minutes the huge army of the Nawab was being driven in headlong rout by a force of one-twentieth its size. The whole engagement lasted only an hour; of Suraja Daula's men only 500 men were killed, Clive lost only twenty-two. Never, surely, was a battle so decisive won with so little bloodshed. With the victory of Plassy begins the British supremacy in India.

14. Misgovernment by the Company. The Company's servants were now practically the rulers of Bengal, and they used their power in a dishonest way. They were all in haste to become rich and return to England; and they wrung money from the natives by all sorts of tyranny and fraud. The Company was shortsighted enough to pay its servants badly, on the understanding that they might increase their incomes by private trading. But private trading, in their hands, became private swindling; they accumulated fortunes rapidly, and returned to England to purchase estates, and live as country gentlemen on the plunder they had brought from India. The increasing number of these wealthy "nabobs," as they were nick-named, drew public attention to the misgovernment of Bengal, and in 1764 Clive—Lord Clive, as he now was—was sent out to correct the evil. This was his third visit to India, and it lasted for two years, during which he did as memorable service to Britain as in either of his former visits. This time it was his own countrymen he had to struggle with. He put down the private trade of the Company's servants, and he forbade them to receive anything, even as a present, from a native. The men who saw the source of their wealth taken away from them resisted fiercely;

the army mutinied; but, in the teeth of all opposition, Clive persisted in his reforms; and he succeeded at last in putting our government of India on an honourable footing.

15. In 1767 he left India for the last time. When he reached England, he found that his reforms had raised up many enemies. The House of Commons set on foot an inquiry into Indian affairs; Clive's whole career was passed in review, and those dishonourable transactions, in which he engaged just before Plassy, were severely censured, though it was also declared "that Robert, Lord Clive, did at the same time render great and meritorious services to his country." Broken in health by the Indian climate, broken in temper by the attacks of his enemies, Clive put an end to his own life in November, 1774.

16. Nothing in the history of warfare is more striking than the achievements of the British armies in India. Plassy was won by 3,000 against 55,000. Assaye was won by 4,500 against 50,000 in a strong position. The enemy's troops had, in many cases, been trained by European officers on European methods; their arms were as good as ours; and our men had to make long marches, under the broiling Indian sun to which they were not accustomed, loaded with the heavy accoutrements of those times. Clive's men were partly "recruits who ran away at the first sound of a gun," partly "sepoys who hid themselves as soon as the cannon opened fire." But the fact, of which perhaps we should be most proud, is that Britain's greatest victory in India was won by a general who had had no training as a soldier, whose youth had been spent at a desk in the office of a trading company.



CHAPTER XIV.

THE STRUGGLE FOR EMPIRE.

WARREN HASTINGS.

1. **Robert Clive** was the man who may be said to have won India for Britain. **Warren Hastings** was the man who was the means of saving for us the empire Clive had won, and who laid the foundations of a just and beneficent government in the new possession. Hastings was the first and, in many respects, the greatest British ruler of India. Like Clive, he began as a clerk in the service of the East India Company. Clive left his office desk to show himself one of the greatest generals of his time; Hastings left his desk to become one of the greatest statesmen who have ever served Britain in distant parts of the world. He made mistakes, no doubt; though it is now agreed, by those who have most carefully studied the story of his Indian career, that he was innocent of the crimes which the malice of his enemies laid to his charge. But had his errors been as grave as his enemies declared they were, we should still think with gratitude of his splendid services to Britain at a time when her fortunes were at their lowest ebb; and we should still admire the firmness which bore down all opposition, the justice which won the respect of those over whom he ruled, the sagacity which found a resource in every extremity, and, above all, the serene courage which

never failed him, and which shone ever the clearer as danger became more appalling.*

2. Hastings was a prisoner in the hands of Suraja Daula at the time of the Black Hole of Calcutta, and after that crime he was one of the Company's agents engaged in hatching conspiracies against the Nawab amongst the Nawab's own followers. When Hastings arrived in Bengal, he enlisted in Clive's force, and for some time served in the ranks; but Clive, who had a keen eye for talent, saw that the young man might be more useful in another way than as a soldier. When Mir Jafar was made Nawab of Bengal, Hastings was appointed Resident at his Court: that is, he was agent of the Company, to watch the Nawab's doings and look after the Company's interests. During the terrible period of cruel oppression and shameless greed which followed Clive's second departure to England, Hastings kept his hands clean. He rose step by step to a high position; and, in 1765, with a small fortune and a high reputation for ability, he returned to England. Here his money was soon spent, and he once more offered his services to the Company. In 1769 he was sent out to Madras. When he had been there for two years, the Directors of the Company showed their appreciation of his services by making him Governor of Bengal. (The Company's territory was at

* Those who wish to read the story of Warren Hastings in detail should consult the biography by Sir Alfred Lyall, or that by Captain Trotter. Macaulay's well-known essay is eloquent and picturesque, but it has been shown to be entirely misleading. Sir John Strachey's "Hastings and the Rohilla War" and Sir James Stephen's "Nuncomar and Impey" have done much to set the reputation of Hastings right with posterity. "Some dirt," says Cardinal Newman, "sticks longer than other dirt; but no dirt is immortal."

that time under three independent rulers, the governors of Madras, Bombay, and Bengal; each assisted by a Council.)



Warren Hastings.

3. Hastings found the work of governing seriously hampered by the lack of money, and to obtain money he had recourse to methods, some of which gave an opening to his enemies in after years. The blame, however, should not have been put upon

Hastings, but upon the Company whose servant he was. The Directors of the Company, living in London, had very little idea of the real condition of India; and they seem to have been determined that, whether it were governed well or ill, it must furnish them with wealth. India was thought of as a country overflowing with gold and diamonds; whereas in truth the people of India were incomparably poorer than the people of England, in spite of the magnificence with which the native princes surrounded themselves. The Directors continued to press Hastings for money, while exhorting him to establish a just and good government. He found that to govern justly and well was an expensive affair; but he managed to raise enough money, not only for the purposes of government, but also to

meet the demands of the Directors. He sent home half a million every year; and yet he laid no additional burdens on the mass of the people. It is plain that, to do this, he must have raised vast sums by other means than taxation.

4. **The Rohillas.** One such means was this. Bengal, though really under the rule of the Company, was still nominally ruled by native princes, to whom the Company paid a great sum yearly by way of tribute. Hastings at one stroke did away with this, and abolished the government of the native princes, in this way saving many hundred thousands of pounds yearly. But the step was a wise one apart altogether from the money question; for Hastings saw that these princes stood in the way of all his plans for good government, and that if the British wished to preserve their influence in Bengal, they must boldly take the whole work of governing into their own hands.

5. Two districts which he considered could be of no use to the Company he sold to the Nawab of Oudh for £500,000. His next dealings with this same Nawab were the source of endless trouble to himself in later years. For £400,000 he lent a British army to the Nawab, for the purpose of invading the country of Rohilkhand and driving out the tribe which ruled it, the Rohillas. The Rohillas were beaten; and the Nawab's people, who had left most of the fighting to their new allies, followed up the victory with a cruelty which has always been common in Oriental warfare. The enemies of Hastings in England afterwards declared that he had lent a British force for the extermination of a brave, innocent, and poetic people who had done nothing

to deserve anything but the friendliest treatment. The truth is that the Rohillas were a race of treacherous and turbulent Afghan robbers; that they were not exterminated, but merely driven out of a land which they had themselves conquered a few years before; and that they deserved punishment for refusing to fulfil their promises to the Nawab of Oudh. Hastings was bound to help this prince, because he regarded him as the great bulwark against the attacks of the warlike Marathas, in whom he saw the greatest danger to British security in India. But he should undoubtedly have seen to it that his ally carried out the conquest without the cruelties which followed.

6. In the meantime the British Parliament had been giving some attention to Indian affairs, and the result of long discussions in the House of Commons was a law, passed in 1773, known as the Regulating Act. By this law the governor of Bengal was made chief ruler of the British possessions in India, the governors of Madras and Bombay to act under his orders. This was a wise measure, for a divided government cannot be a strong government, and it is recognised that every organisation should have one head, not three. Hastings, being governor of Bengal when the Act was passed, became in this way the first Governor-General of India, a position which he held for twelve years. During those twelve years Britain was engaged in a deadly struggle, not for supremacy, but for her very existence, with the greatest nations of Europe. France, Spain, and Holland all attacked her at the moment when all her strength was needed for her grapple with America. She maintained her maritime supremacy through

the most terrible crisis in her history, but she lost some possessions in every quarter of the world save one. In India she not only did not lose ground during those twelve years, she actually extended her influence and made her empire secure. That she did not lose India was due most of all to the energy and courage of Warren Hastings.

7. Hastings was, probably, the first statesman to conceive the idea that India might be made, not merely a base for British trade, but a British possession from Ceylon to the Himalayas. His schemes were to be carried out by later rulers, but he was the first clearly to foresee the Indian Empire of to-day. And he adhered to his plans in spite of the most determined opposition in a quarter where it might have been least expected—among his fellow-rulers. For, unfortunately, the Regulating Act, which made him Governor-General, limited his power by appointing a Council, whose advice he was to take on all measures; and three of the members of this Council, forming a majority in it, were men newly arrived from England, with no knowledge of Indian life, or of what kind of government was needed in such a country, and, indeed, with the fixed belief that Hastings was a tyrant and a robber. For some years, this Council thwarted all his wishes, and upset all his plans; but gradually he bore down all opposition, and became supreme. He then threw himself with boundless energy into the work of strengthening the position of the English.

8. **The Marathas.** His first struggle was with the Marathas, a warlike clan of Hindoo blood, who had established themselves in Central India. They were divided into several small chieftaincies, but their

chiefs were always ready to join forces for the sake of plunder; and their strength was a constant menace to the Company, and also to the natives whom the Company felt bound to protect. The struggle was renewed from time to time, and Hastings suffered many reverses; but he held on with wonderful resolution, and was at last within sight of success, when a new and much more formidable danger arose in Southern India.

9. **Haidar Ali.** Here a great native soldier, Haidar Ali, had made himself master in Mysore. The Governor of Madras, who could never bring himself to obey the orders of Hastings, by blunder after blunder succeeded in provoking this ruler to war. Haidar swept through the Company's possessions in the Carnatic, burning and pillaging, and the miserable inhabitants were slaughtered or enslaved by thousands. Assisted by the French, he at length appeared with a vast army before Madras. Hastings was at this moment on the eve of triumph over the Marathas; but, when he heard that Madras was in danger, he hastily patched up a peace with the Marathas, and sent the army, under Sir Eyre Coote, to meet the new enemy. Coote won a great victory at *Porto Novo*, and the greatest danger that ever threatened Britain's power in India, since that power was established by Clive, was thus averted.

10. **Hastings's Reforms.** But Hastings is chiefly to be remembered for the system of law and government which he gave to India; a system rough and incomplete, indeed, when compared with the system of to-day, but, as the work of one man, a marvellous achievement. He found the Company's territory in a state of miserable anarchy; he removed the native

rulers who misgoverned it; and then, with little skilled assistance, and in spite of strong opposition, he organised a government which gave to the natives the blessings of order and justice. He showed all future rulers of India the way to deal with native races. He learned many of the languages of India, and, by so doing, was enabled to understand and to sympathise with the Hindoo mind better than any man of his time. He put down corruption among the Company's servants as firmly as Clive had done, and yet he won their respect and love. The British soldiers in India believed in him thoroughly, and the natives felt for him an affection which they have felt for no other ruler of India.

11. **His Reward.** In 1785 Hastings returned to England, justly expecting that his great services would be recognised and honoured by the nation. But his enemies had long been busy, and his acts were now made the subject of a parliamentary inquiry, as Clive's had been. The inquiry ended by an impeachment: that is, he was accused by the House of Commons before the House of Lords as judges. The trial lasted for eight years, and some of the greatest speakers of the day—notably Burke, Fox, and Sheridan—spoke against him. His various methods of extorting money from native princes were brought to light, and his mistakes were magnified into the blackest crimes. We can still read Burke's eloquent speeches; and, if we believed all that Burke said, we could not fail to regard Hastings as a monster of cruelty. The long trial ended, however, with his acquittal. He was a ruined man, but the Company he had served so well helped him liberally, and gave him £4,000 a year for the rest of his

life. He complained bitterly that he, who had saved Britain's empire in India, was poorly rewarded by an impeachment. He certainly deserved a better reward; but we can hardly look upon the impeachment as a blot on the honour of Britain. Rather it showed the nation's firm determination, which has never altered, that British rule should be a beneficent rule; that Britain was not going to treat the natives of India as Spain had treated the unfortunate natives of South America; that tyranny and injustice were not to be tolerated under the British flag. The mistake lay in supposing that Hastings had been guilty of tyranny and injustice. The impeachment was a cruel injustice, but it did great good by showing people that the government of India ought to be in the hands of Parliament, not of a trading company.

CHAPTER XV.

LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT.

1. We have seen that the Declaration of Right settled once for all the question who was to make the laws of Britain. The problem that remained was, how the laws made by Parliament were to be carried out, and this problem was solved, during William III.'s reign, by the political device known as the Cabinet. But before we trace the history of the

Cabinet, we must make sure that we understand what a Cabinet means.

2. Legislation and Administration. In our Introductory Chapter we saw that government consists, first, of making laws, and, second, of getting them obeyed. The making of laws is called the legislative function of the government; the administering or carrying out of those laws is its executive function. Now, it is evidently impossible for the whole Parliament to perform the executive work of government. In order to get its will carried into effect, Parliament finds it necessary to appoint a few of its members to do the actual work of governing. To understand this clearly, let us consider the government of a society much smaller and simpler than a state—say, of a cricket-club. In most cricket-clubs, the members choose a few of their number to form a *committee* of management to regulate the affairs of the whole club, or in other words, to *govern* the club. But this committee in its turn chooses from its number certain officers—a secretary, for instance, and a treasurer. The members of the committee make rules for the club, and decide what fines are to be paid by those who break the rules; these fines are collected, not by the whole committee, but by the treasurer. Again, the committee decides that all members of the club shall pay a certain yearly subscription: it is part of the treasurer's work to collect those subscriptions. Or again, the committee decides to challenge another club to a match; obviously the whole committee could not have a hand in the writing of the challenge; the committee decides that it is to be written, and the actual writing of it is left to the secretary. The committee is a

legislative body: the secretary and treasurer *executive* officers.

3. **The Cabinet.** Now this is something like the way in which government is carried on in Britain and in all the countries which have imitated the British way of governing; for instance, in Australia. Parliament, like the cricket-club committee, makes laws, and a few specially able men from among its own number are appointed, in a way which we shall explain later on, to see that those laws are carried out. These men form the executive body; they are sometimes called "the Cabinet," a name given them in England, long ago, from the small room or *cabinet* in which they met; sometimes they are called "the Ministry," because they are really the servants, or *ministers*, of the country.* and sometimes they are called "the Government," because the actual work of government is done by them.†

4. **Ministers of State.** Each of these ministers has his own special work to do, his own "department" to manage; and each has a great number of men at work under his command. In Victoria, for instance, the Minister of Railways has a whole army of men under him—porters, guards, engine-drivers, station-masters, clerks, navvies, and so on—each doing his own work, each obeying the orders of a superior officer, and all under the control of the Minister

* There is, strictly speaking, a difference between the Cabinet and the Ministry, the former being an "inner ring" of the latter. In the British Ministry in office in 1903, for example, there were about fifty Ministers, of whom only eighteen were in the Cabinet.

† In actual practice the Cabinet is far more than an executive body. With few exceptions, all important legislation is proposed by the Cabinet.

appointed by Parliament. When we drop a letter in a pillar-box, with complete confidence that it will, in a few weeks, be handed to a friend in London, eleven thousand miles away, we do not, perhaps, realise how much thought and management have been necessary to bring this about, what a triumph of organisation the Post Office is. Here is another great department of government, and the minister who manages it is called the Postmaster-General.

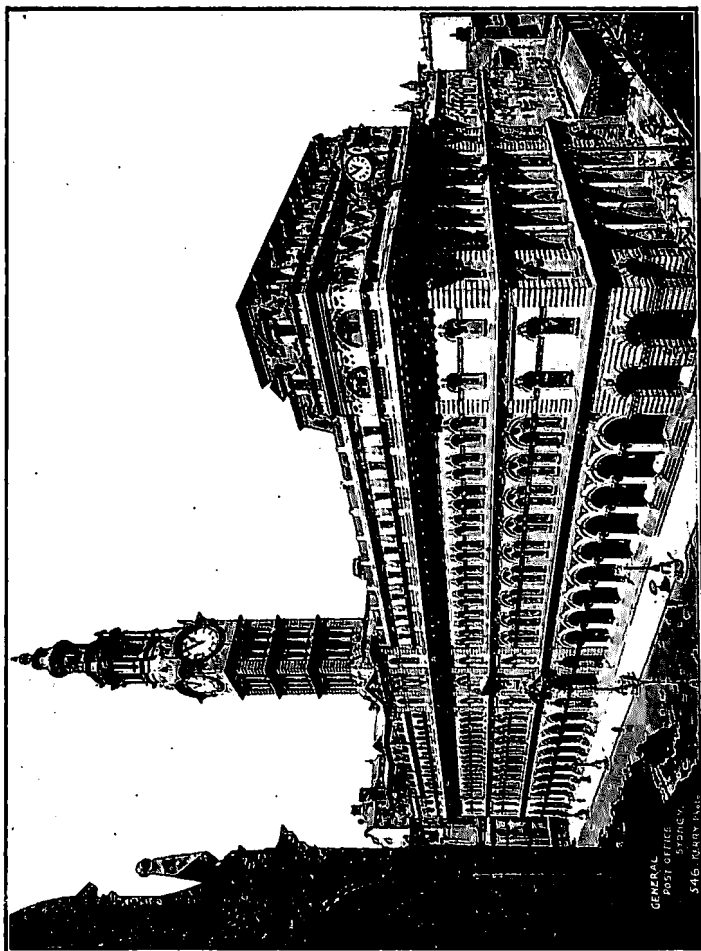
5. **The Treasury.** The most important department in every State is the Treasury, for on the proper management of it the prosperity of the country largely depends. In Britain there is a minister, called the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose business it is to deal with the nation's money: he has to consider the best way of spending the money voted by Parliament for the expenses of government; and he has to inform Parliament how taxes may best be levied, and what amount of taxation will be necessary each year. In the Commonwealth of Australia, and in each of the Australian States, there is a Minister, called the Treasurer, in charge of the finances. The Treasurer of Victoria has, like the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Britain, to consider what taxes the people of Victoria should pay, how much the country can afford to spend on the various departments, whether the country will need to borrow money, and, if so, how much—and so on. Each year he has to make a statement to Parliament showing how much money has been received during the year, and how it has been spent; he has also to say how much money is likely to be needed during the following year, suggest how Parliament is to get it, and obtain the consent of Parliament to raise it in

the way he suggests. We know that a large business firm employs hundreds of clerks constantly at work keeping the books of the firm, and from that we can get some idea of the number of clerks and the amount of bookkeeping necessary to the successful management of the business side of a great State.

6. Then there is, in Victoria, the Minister of Education, whose business it is to see that the money voted by Parliament for the keeping up of the State schools is properly spent. There is the Chief Secretary, who controls the great public institutions such as prisons, lunatic asylums, etc.; the police force is under his control. There is the Minister of Lands, who manages the land that belongs to the State, not to private individuals. There is the Minister of Mines, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Public Works, and so forth: each of them appointed to see that the laws relating to his special department of governing are properly carried out.

7. **Federal Ministers.** In the Commonwealth of Australia there are some ministers not found in the Cabinet of each State, for reasons which we shall presently consider. For example: the Minister of Defence, who directs the management of our forts and our Defence Force, including our Cadet Corps; the Minister of Customs, who sees that the amounts ordered by Parliament to be paid by those who bring goods into the country are duly collected; and the Minister of External Affairs, who decides on all questions affecting our relations with foreign countries.

8. **The Prime Minister.** The Cabinet, then, is a body of men who are appointed to see that the laws made by Parliament are properly carried out. At



General Post Office, Sydney.

the head of the Cabinet is the Prime Minister (or Premier), who appoints all the other ministers, and who really controls the policy of the country. And as the Cabinet does the real work of governing, and as the Prime Minister directs and controls the Cabinet, it may be thought that the Prime Minister is pretty much in the position of one of the Tudor kings—that is, an absolute monarch. A moment's thought shows us, however, that this is the opposite of the truth. The Cabinet governs the country, it is true; and the Prime Minister controls the Cabinet. But who controls the Prime Minister? The Parliament of which he is a member. And who controls that Parliament? The people who elect the members of Parliament:—the whole country in short. So that it is literally true that Cabinet government is self-government. How the country controls the Cabinet we shall see in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PARTY SYSTEM.

1. **Government by Majority.** We have spoken much about self-government, and of Parliament as a machine for governing according to the will of the people. But this needs some modification, for self-government, in the sense of governing according to the wishes of the *whole* people, is and always will be impossible. Take, as an example, any war in which Britain may engage: there are always some people

in Britain who wish that she should engage in that war, and also some people who think she ought not to do so. No machine, however perfect, will enable a country both to go to war and *not* to go to war at the same time: therefore, whatever the governing body may decide to do, it must act against the wishes of a large part of the nation. In all such disputes, the rule, in Britain and in every free country, is that *the will of the greater number shall prevail*. The only kind of self-government we can imagine is government by the will of the majority. For this reason our British system is sometimes called "majority government."

2. **Origin of Majorities.** How does it come about that Parliament represents the majority of the nation? From the fact that every member of that Parliament represents the majority in his *electorate*, as we call the body of people who elect him. The majority principle is at the root of parliamentary government, because in every place which sends a representative to Parliament, it is the majority that decides who shall be chosen. If we look for the origin of this system, we shall find it in a very simple fact. "In the Middle Ages the contested election ended in a fight."* That is to say, the people who wished to choose A fought with the people who wished to choose B, and, if victorious, carried A to the sheriff, who declared him duly elected. This absurd way of deciding did not of course last long; it must very soon have occurred to people to settle the dispute "by counting heads, instead of breaking them." The rule, however, that the will of the majority ought to prevail, really rests on this very

* Jenks.

simple principle—that if it came to a fight, the will of the majority *would* prevail.

3. **Political Equality.** Of course this leaves out of account the qualities of the combatants: in an actual battle the larger army by no means always prevails; in the Battle of Plassy four thousand trained soldiers put to flight an army of fifty thousand men who were untrained. But in any battle, if the quality of all the soldiers and of the generals on both sides was exactly the same, the larger army would necessarily win. Now, in politics *we assume this exact equality*; the majority principle rests on the assumption that all men who vote are *politically equal*,—that is, have an equal right to direct the government of the country.

4. **Majorities in Parliament.** Now, when Parliament comes to debate a proposed law, the same principle is adhered to: the *majority* carries the day. If, out of one hundred members, sixty are in favour of that law being passed, it is passed; and rightly so, because the majority in Parliament is taken as representing a majority of the nation. As those who care to read the note at the end of this chapter will see, it is not always true that the greater number in Parliament represents the greater number of voters; but in most cases it is so. Therefore, to have self-government, it is necessary that the will of the majority in Parliament, as representing the majority of the nation, shall prevail.

5. In the matter of *legislation*, indeed, that principle has been admitted since Parliaments began; but legislation, as we have seen, is only one side of government: there is not much use in arranging that a certain thing shall be done, unless we have the

power to see that it is done. It was of little use for the Parliament to pass laws, if the ministers, who had the carrying out of those laws in their hands, could please themselves as to whether they obeyed Parliament or not. And for centuries that was the case: the ministers were appointed by the king, quite independently of Parliament, and, as we have seen, they very often did the opposite of what Parliament wished. Self-government,—government by the majority of the nation,—was plainly impossible until Parliament got the executive power, as well as the legislative, into its own hands.

6. That is now the case. The ministers are now appointed, not really by the king (though nominally he still appoints them), but by the Prime Minister from among the majority in Parliament. But the majority in Parliament, it may be said, must constantly change; men who vote with the majority on one question will vote with the minority on another; how, then, can one man continue through all these changes to represent the majority? or are ministers to be changed every day? The answer to this question is to be found in another fundamental principle in the British way of governing—the *party system*.

7. **The Party System.** *Party government* may be said to be a British invention, but *party* itself has been found in every nation of which we know the history, and, indeed, it rests on a deep-seated difference in human nature. There will always be—there always have been—people dissatisfied with the existing state of things, people who desire change, who want to see things managed better than they have been hitherto. And there always have been,

and always will be, people who respect the past, and who dislike the idea of change. The distinction between Liberals and Conservatives—though the names are not a century old—is really as ancient as mankind. Roughly speaking, we may say that the Conservative is the man who is deeply impressed with what has been done in the past, and fully alive to the danger of violent change; the Liberal is the man whose mind dwells on the evils of the present, and the necessity of reform. The danger of Liberalism is in its tendency to make rash changes which may turn out ill; the danger of Conservatism is in its tendency to resist all change, even change for the better.

8. Now the party system takes advantage of this difference among men, and supposes the whole country divided into two opposing camps or parties. At most elections in Britain there are two candidates—a Liberal and a Conservative. Suppose, then, that the Liberals win the day—that is, send a majority to Parliament: it is then considered that the Liberals form a majority in the nation, and that, therefore, the country ought to be governed by Liberals. The king therefore “sends for” the leader of the Liberal party in Parliament, and asks him to form a Cabinet; that leader becomes Prime Minister, and he chooses from among the Liberal members men whom he thinks suitable, and asks them to become Ministers. In that way is formed what we call a *Liberal Government*; a Cabinet, that is, which represents the majority of the members when it happens to be a Liberal majority.

9. **Responsible Government.** Meanwhile we must remember that the Liberals have not won in *every*

electorate; the Conservatives have also sent some men to Parliament, though not so many as the Liberals. This minority is called the Opposition; its business is to criticise the action of the new ministry. The criticism by the Opposition may often be very unjust, but it is one of the great benefits of the party system that there always is an Opposition; the ministers will not be likely to act rashly, or foolishly, or carelessly, when they know that there is a body of men in Parliament always ready to point out their mistakes. And for every mistake that ministers make they will lose some supporters in Parliament; members will continually leave their party and join the Opposition; until at last it is noticed that the Opposition—in this case the Conservatives—are more numerous than the Liberals. Then the ministers will have to resign their offices, and Conservative ministers will be put in their place. When ministers cease to represent the majority in Parliament, they are turned out. That is why party government is sometimes called “responsible government”; the ministers are responsible to Parliament, have to answer for their acts to Parliament, and, if Parliament disapprove of their acts, they cease to be ministers. In the same sense, Parliament is responsible to the nation, and, if the nation disapproves of its acts, it will show its disapproval at the next elections by not choosing again the men who acted in a manner it thinks wrong or unwise. Thus the ministers—the men who govern the nation—are really responsible to the nation they govern; and so we come to a full understanding of what we mean when we speak of *self-government*.

NOTE 1. Majorities. Suppose a small State with 500 voters in it, divided into ten electorates with 50 voters in each, each electorate sending one man to Parliament, which thus consists of ten men. Suppose the country divided into two parties, the *Blues* and the *Reds*. Twenty-six votes will be a majority in an electorate. In six of the electorates Blues win by 26 to 24. In the four other electorates the Reds win by 30 to 20. If we work this out, we find that 264 of the voters were Reds, and only 236 Blues. But in Parliament there will be six Blues and only four Reds. Thus a majority in Parliament will *not*, in this case, represent a majority of the people. Readers of this book are recommended to see if they can think of any way out of this difficulty, which is one of the puzzles of modern politics.

NOTE 2. Parties. For many years the two parties in Australia were, not Liberals and Conservatives, but Free-traders and Protectionists. That is, the question which divided the country was whether people should be allowed to bring goods into Australia from other countries free of customs duties, or not. But to the working of party government it does not matter what the nation is divided about, so long as there is some great principle at stake on which people think differently.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE HISTORY OF THE CABINET.

1. We have now arrived at a clear idea of what the *word* Cabinet means; let us inquire next how the *thing* itself arose. We have traced the long struggle between Parliament and Crown for LEGISLATIVE supremacy—the power of making all the laws of England. That supremacy was definitely resigned to Parliament by the Declaration of Right. But it was not at first seen that legislative supremacy was scarcely worth fighting for if EXECUTIVE supremacy did not accompany it—the power of administering or carrying out the laws. When the one power was gained, however, the other soon followed: we shall

see how. The question at issue was: by whom were the ministers—the men who did the actual work of governing—to be appointed: by the king, or by the Parliament?

2. If we wish to find the origin of the Cabinet, we shall have to look far back; indeed, to the origin of the kingship; for we may be sure that no king ever tried to govern England without helpers, and in the body of these helpers and advisers lay the germ of the modern Cabinet. Let us go back no farther, however, than to the Norman Conquest.

3. **Norman Period.** Under the Norman kings, besides the Great Council of the Barons (out of which sprang our Parliament), we have noticed the existence of a smaller council, which was simply an assembly of the great officers of the king's household, his personal advisers, men in whom he confided. This council first took definite shape under Henry I., in whose reign it became at once a ministry of finance and a court of justice. As a court of justice it formed the supreme court of appeal; that is, men could appeal to it from the verdict of any other court of law, and it could upset the decision of any other court. As a ministry of finance, it took the name of Court of Exchequer from the table, *chequered* like a chess-board, at which its members sat when they were going over the accounts). The Barons of the Exchequer, as they were called, received all the taxes collected for the king by the sheriffs, and kept the king's accounts; and, in order to settle all cases in dispute, a number of these barons travelled over the country from shire to shire. Out of this originated the custom of judges going "on circuit," as it is called; a custom which prevails to

this day, though the judges have now nothing to do with the King's Council, nor indeed with Parliament. At the head of the Exchequer was the Chancellor; at the head of the whole court was the Justiciar, who was the most powerful minister in the kingdom, and acted as Regent when the king was away in another country.

4. **Plantagenet Period.** When Edward I. established Parliament as we know it, he did not, of course, do away with this council. It remained as the executive body, the body whose business it was to carry out the king's will. Its members were appointed by the King, and could, with few exceptions, be dismissed by him; so that it was entirely dependent on the will of the king. It was simply the instrument by means of which the king governed; so that we may say the king held the executive power in his own hands.

5. **Privy Council.** It is not necessary to trace in detail the history of this council, which in Henry V.'s time began to be called the *Privy Council*. What is important to note is that this council was too large for the king to take *all* its members into his confidence, and so it gradually came to be the custom for a few powerful members to form, as it were, an inner circle within the council, holding the highest offices and forming a ring of confidential advisers around the king. When this happened, the governing power of the king was committed to a *ministry*, a ministry in the modern sense, except for the fact that the ministers held office at the king's pleasure. This custom became most firmly established in the reign of Charles II., because that king, as we saw, had many secret dealings with France, which it



The Hon. Alfred Deakin,
Second Prime Minister of the Commonwealth.

would not have been safe to confide to more than one or two men whom he thoroughly trusted.

6. Control of Ministers. But though the king could appoint his own ministers, he could not always keep them in office. From early times the barons claimed the right to drive from the king's side anyone who, in their opinion, was giving him bad advice: we recall how they banished Piers Gaveston, the favourite minister of Edward II.; and how, when the king re-appointed him, the barons put him to death. This power of getting rid of bad ministers passed from the barons to Parliament; and Henry IV., as we have noticed, even went so far as to allow Parliament to decide who his ministers should be; but his example was not followed by his successors, and the Tudor monarchs were too strong to allow any interference with any appointments they might make.

7. Impeachments. With the coming of the Stuarts, however, Parliament re-asserted its right to dismiss objectionable ministers by impeaching them. In James I.'s reign, for example, the Lord Chancellor, Francis Bacon, was impeached and driven from office. Charles I. forbade the House of Commons to impeach his favourite adviser, the Duke of Buckingham; his doing so was one of the violations of the constitution, for which he paid with his life. In Charles II.'s reign impeachment followed impeachment, the king never denying Parliament's right to attack ministers. But he retained his own right to appoint the new minister when an old one had been attacked and dismissed; and in that way he retained the full executive power. How completely the governing power remained in the king's

hands, we may understand by the fact that though probably every single member of Parliament hated France, yet England entered into an alliance with France simply because the king desired it.

8. **The Revolution.** When William III. came to the throne, then, the position was this: the House of Commons had now the sole right to tax the nation, and it was therefore only from the House of Commons that money could be got wherewith to carry on the work of government; but the House of Commons, though its will was now law, had no means of securing that its will should be carried out; for though the House could remove a minister who refused to do its will, it had no power to appoint in his stead a minister who *would* do its will. The result was that the Commons, conscious of their power, continually grumbled at the acts of the ministers, continually thwarted them, and threw obstacles in their way, and thus made government difficult and well-nigh impossible. And though the House was always grumbling, it was hard for the king to find out what it really wanted; its mood, he said, changed from day to day; one day most of the Whigs* might be absent, and the Tory majority would want a certain course followed; next day the Tories might stay away, and there would be a Whig majority, in favour of an opposite course. There was no pleasing a Parliament which changed its opinions daily; and there was no governing in opposition to it.

9. **Sunderland's Plan.** In the midst of this confusion, when the king was in despair, the Earl of Sunderland—a man whose life was a tissue of lying,

*Whigs and Tories = Liberals and Conservatives.

treachery, and cowardice, but who showed that he had the intellect of a great statesman,—suggested to William that he should choose his ministers from among the members themselves, and that they should all belong to that party which had a majority in Parliament. This advice the king took, and, as the majority of members of Parliament were Whigs, he dismissed those of his ministers who were Tories, and put Whigs in their places; and he gradually made his ministry consist wholly of members of Parliament. "What William hoped by this change was that, by having ministers who were of one mind, he would be able to have a House of Commons of one mind. Whig members would think it worth while to attend the House steadily, at personal inconvenience to themselves, not only because they wished to keep their friends in office, but because those friends, as long as they remained in office, would dispose of plenty of well-paid posts and rewards of various kinds, and were more likely to give them to men who voted steadily for them than to those who did not."* Is the Cabinet, then, based on bribery? Not now; but in its origin bribery certainly had a great deal to do with it.

10. **What is the Cabinet?** Thus we may date the modern Cabinet from William III.'s reign; and we are now in a position to say exactly what the Cabinet is. *The Cabinet is an Executive Committee of Parliament, chosen, by the leader of the party which has a majority in the Lower House, from among the members of that party in both Houses; and its object is to govern in accordance with the will of that majority.*

* Gardiner.

11. **Parliament controls the Cabinet.** What William did not see was that, by making the Cabinet representative of the majority in the House of Commons, he was really giving away to that House the power of appointing ministers. This was only gradually recognised. George III. came to the throne with a firm resolve to appoint his own ministers; over and over again he chose men whom he personally liked, but who had not a majority in Parliament behind them; and in every case he found that it was impossible for such men to govern Britain. Over and over again he had to admit to power men whom he hated, simply because the majority in the House of Commons wanted them. William IV. was the last British sovereign to dismiss a ministry at his own pleasure, and he did it only once. It is now clearly recognised that the leader of the party which is in the majority in the House of Commons names the ministers, and that the sovereign has really no voice in the matter; and so the whole government of Britain has passed from Crown to Parliament. This does not mean the same thing as if we said that it passed into the hands of *the nation*; how that was brought about must be reserved for a chapter on Parliamentary Reform.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHATHAM.

"Among the eminent men whose bones lie near his, scarcely one has left a more stainless, and none a more splendid name."
—MACAULAY.

1. **Transition.** The Revolution which set William III. upon the throne of England gave, as we

have seen, the supreme legislative power to the House of Commons; and the introduction of the Cabinet system gave the executive power also to that House. The governing power had passed from the hands of the king to the hands of Parliament; but the change did not at first seem to do much for English liberty. The tyranny of kings had simply given place to the tyranny of Parliament; and the nation as a whole seemed as far as ever from self-government. For Parliament did not as yet represent the mass of the people. The power of electing members of Parliament was given to very few, and those few were in the habit of selling their votes to anyone rich enough to buy them. The whole power of Parliament passed into the hands of a few wealthy and powerful families. Almost every member owed his seat in Parliament to bribery. The cause of this evil, and its cure, will be discussed in a later chapter.

2. Political Corruption. It was impossible that a House of Commons, owing its election to money, should be a very respectable body. On the contrary, that House became an assembly of men with few convictions, no conscience, and a devouring thirst for money. Members were ready to support any government that would pay them well for their support. When Robert Walpole—who has been called the first Prime Minister—came to power in George I.'s reign, he found it necessary to practise bribery of members on a large scale. He is not to be blamed for this, because there was really no other way to govern the country. As we have seen, a ministry requires to be steadily backed by a majority in Parliament. How was Walpole to secure this backing? Parliament was no longer to be controlled by fear

of the king's displeasure, for the power of the king was broken; and it was not yet controlled by the opinion of the nation, for the nation had as yet little voice in elections. There was only one power by which it could be controlled—the power of the purse. Walpole spent large sums of money in securing the votes of members, and he was forced to the belief that everyone could be brought to support him if he made the bribe large enough. "All these men," he said, scornfully pointing to those who were opposing him in the House, "have their price."

3. It is not to be wondered at that men turned in disgust from a political struggle which had degenerated into a mere shameless scramble for money: or that men reflected bitterly that Hampden and Pym and Cromwell had lived in vain if the power for which they fought was to be inherited by a set of corrupt and greedy self-seekers. But for the time there seemed no remedy, and the ministries that followed Walpole continued his system even more openly and shamelessly.

4. **The Evils of the System.** Now it is obvious that such a system was not likely to put the best men in power. Walpole, indeed, was a great and wise statesman, though he retained power, not through his greatness or wisdom, but through his adroit use of money. But the evils of the system are fully shown by the fact that, soon after Walpole's retirement, the Prime Ministership fell into the hands of the Duke of Newcastle, a man of no ability and of extraordinary ignorance. Laughed at by every able man of the time for his incompetence and childishness, Newcastle was yet a powerful minister for nearly forty years, simply because he had an im-

mense fortune, and spent it in bribing members of Parliament! And the worst feature of the whole system was that it was not his own fortune only that the Prime Minister spent, for no private fortune could have stood the drain: it was also the public money, the money paid by the nation for the carrying on of government.

5. So long as the country remained at peace, the great danger of having an ignorant and incapable minister at the head of affairs was not fully realised. It is war that tries the strength of government: the conduct of a great war is a balance in which many ministers have been weighed and found wanting. Unfortunately for Newcastle, one of the greatest contests in which Britain has ever been engaged broke out while he was in power: and his utter incapacity was at once revealed. 'The Seven Years' War found the government quite unprepared, and Newcastle added blunder to blunder. And so this struggle, in which Britain was destined to win some of her most brilliant triumphs, opened with a series of disasters which drove the nation to despair. An expedition against the French in America ended in signal failure; a British army was defeated at Hastenbeck, in Hanover; and, worst of all, Minorca, a much-valued British possession in the Mediterranean, was taken by the French, Byng, who was sent to relieve it, retreating without striking a blow because he found the French fleet larger than his own. This event awoke the nation to a sense of its degradation; the universal storm of indignation frightened Newcastle into resigning; and the country, with one voice, called for **William Pitt** to take his place.

6. Pitt was disliked by the king, and not much

liked by the House of Commons, but the voice of the nation was so loud and so unanimous that he had to be admitted to power. He soon found, however, that he could not command a majority in Parliament; Newcastle's money alone could do that. Accordingly Pitt, though he was now by far the most popular man in England, had to resign; and for eleven weeks Britain was without a government. At last a good arrangement was made: Newcastle and Pitt combined; Newcastle was called Prime Minister, while Pitt was the real head of the government. This was a most fortunate combination, for Newcastle's bribes continued to keep a parliamentary majority at the back of the ministry, while Pitt, who turned with contempt from the task of bribing members, was thus enabled to throw his whole energies into the conduct of the war.

7. **Pitt as War-Minister.** He was firmly convinced that Britain was equal to the emergency, if only the war were properly managed; and to the task of managing it he set himself with serene self-confidence. "I am sure that I can save this country," he said, "and that nobody else can." This confidence he instilled into the whole nation, and the general despondency passed away as soon as he took office. The army was largely officered by old and incompetent men; Pitt at once removed such men from command, and put younger officers, whose ability he detected, in their places. His sure eye for merit was shown in all his appointments, especially in the case of Wolfe, a young man of whom no one but Pitt thought very much. Into the officers thus selected he breathed his own spirit of courage and patriotism. It was said that no one ever entered

Pitt's room who did not come out of it a braver man. His vigorous management of the war soon put a new aspect on the face of affairs.. Defeat was turned to triumph; at Minden, at Lagos, at Quiberon, at Quebec, the thoroughness of Pitt's measures and the wisdom of his selection of generals were gloriously proved. When the war ended, Canada had been won, the foundations of our em-



William Pitt, Earl of Chatham.

pire in India had been laid, and the power of France had been broken by land and sea. "We are forced to ask every morning what victory there is," says a writer of the time, "for fear of missing one."

8. A. Popular Statesman. Pitt had kept his word; he had saved the country. But it is not merely his greatness as a war-minister that gives

him his importance in history; it is rather the fact that he was the first statesman to rise to power simply because the nation believed in him. The title of "the great commoner," affectionately bestowed on him, marks the fact that he was the first minister forced into power by public opinion. The great middle class—the merchants and shopkeepers of the great towns—stood by him through good and evil report, and, though this class was almost entirely unrepresented in Parliament, it succeeded in making itself felt. The king personally disliked Pitt, but he had to accept him as a minister. The ma-

majority in Parliament, headed by Newcastle, was against him, but it had to accept him as its leader. "It is the people who have sent me here," he said proudly to his fellow-ministers; and he was right. He was the first statesman who represented the will of the people, and as such he marks an important stage in the progress of the nation towards self-government.

9. If we ask for the cause of his boundless popularity, we shall find it in two facts equally honourable to Pitt. He was one of the first to protest against the corruption of Walpole's government and of the governments that succeeded Walpole's; and his protest was not a matter of words only. He kept his hands clean when all around him were taking bribes. Almost at the beginning of his career, he was made Paymaster of the Forces, a position in which it was possible to reap an enormous fortune, by means which were not thought grossly dishonest; but Pitt refused to accept a farthing beyond his salary, and that although he was a poor man. The nation at once perceived that amid the almost universal corruption, here was one honest man; and they respected and trusted him accordingly.

10. In the second place, when all other statesmen seemed to be animated by the love of money or the love of power, Pitt was seen to be inspired by a nobler feeling—love of his country. He was a true patriot when patriotism seemed to be unknown to politicians. "He loved England with an intense and personal love. He believed in her power, her glory, her public virtue, till England learned to believe in herself."* It was little wonder that Englishmen

* Green.

loved the man who had awakened them from the apathy of despair, and who rose above all selfish considerations in his desire for the public good.

11. His love of his country was the patriotism not only of a soldier but of a statesman. Much as he thought of Britain's glory among the nations, he thought yet more of the liberty of the whole people: and his struggles on behalf of freedom give him a better claim to our remembrance than all the victories of the Seven Years' War. He was the first statesman who endeavoured to bring about parliamentary reform, to make the House of Commons more truly representative of the people. When the Middlesex electors chose John Wilkes as their member, and the House of Commons refused to allow him to sit among them, and gave the seat to the opponent whom he had defeated, Pitt raised his voice in noble protest against this interference with freedom of election. And finally, when the House of Commons resolved to tax the American colonies against their will, Pitt, in spite of his love of England, supported the Americans, and declared that they were right to resist such tyranny. In one of his latest utterances he declared—"If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, I would never lay down my arms—never, never, never!"

12. When George III. came to the throne, it was with the fixed determination to be a king after the fashion of the Tudors, and to appoint what ministers he chose: and Pitt was almost immediately dismissed. The king was taught, by many bitter lessons, that he could not appoint what ministers he chose; and before many years had passed, he was glad to call Pitt to office once more. The country

was wild with joy at the news of his return to power; but the joy vanished, and most of Pitt's popularity went with it, when it was learned that he was returning not as "the great commoner," but as the Earl of Chatham. It was said on all sides that he had sold himself to the king and betrayed the cause of the people. The truth was that he was now bowed with age and disease; and though he felt himself still capable of taking the lead in governing the country, he no longer felt fit to take part in the fiery and violent debates of the House of Commons, and therefore chose to become a peer, and sit in the quieter and smaller House of Lords. This consideration was not taken into account at the time; but his death a few years later restored him to his old place in the nation's heart; and there is probably no man whose name to-day is held in more affectionate remembrance by Englishmen than the name of Chatham.

CHAPTER XIX.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

1. **Transition.** We have now to study the second stage in the progress of the British people to self-government. We have traced in earlier chapters the long struggle of Parliament against Crown. With the Revolution of 1688 that struggle ended. Parliament had won the supreme legislative power, and with the introduction of the Cabinet system, it won the supreme executive power also. But, as we have

already noted, this great change did not at first seem to have done much for the liberties of the nation as a whole, because the House of Commons did not represent the will of the nation as a whole. All that the great Revolution seemed to have brought about was that the country was no longer governed by one man, but by a small body of wealthy aristocrats. The great mass of the people had no voice in the government of the country, because they had no votes in the election of members of Parliament. We have seen the result in the corruption and selfishness of the House of Commons. For more than a century after the Revolution, it was still possible for England to be governed by men whom the majority of the nation detested. And so long as the people had no voice in the election of the House of Commons, they could not hope to reform that House. The only hope of reform lay in a thorough alteration of the whole system by which the House was elected. Such alterations are called Parliamentary Reform.

2. Unrepresentative Parliaments. We need not trace again the steps by which the House of Commons ceased to be representative of the nation, and had degenerated into a body representing one class only, the wealthy landowners. The process of degeneration began in the reigns of the Lancastrian kings, and especially of Henry VI. Formerly the burgesses had been chosen by the votes of practically all the townspeople, but in his reign the voting power had passed into the hands of the wealthier merchants. So in the shires, the voting had formerly been in the hands of all the inhabitants, yeoman and squire alike; but by an Act in Henry VI.'s reign only those who possessed land of a certain value were allowed to

vote, and the great bulk of the voters were thus deprived of their "franchise," or freedom to vote.

3. Pocket Boroughs. Moreover, from the very foundation of the House of Commons, it had lain with the king to say what boroughs should have the right to elect members. Later kings used this power when they wished for a "packed" Parliament—that is, one made up of men who would do their bidding. With this object, a great many insignificant little places had been named boroughs, and allowed to return two members each—places so small that it was easy to frighten or to bribe all the electors. In this way one man, if he were wealthy, could control an election, and send two members to Parliament. The king's power of giving the franchise to new boroughs was taken away by an Act in the reign of Charles II., and so the system became petrified at that point. New towns might rise, but they would have no votes; the old ones might grow smaller and smaller, but they would still have the power of sending two members each to the House of Commons.

4. Movement of Population. By the end of the eighteenth century there had come into existence a third reason why Parliament could not be considered representative of the nation. England had become a great manufacturing country.* By a long line of inventors the cotton, woollen, iron, and pottery manufactures had been developed, and in all these industries machinery had taken the place of hands, and steam had become the motive power. The great coal-fields were in the north; the steam-engine had gone where coal was to be had; and the result was a vast transference of population from the southern to

* See Chap. XXII.

the northern counties. Till now the south-east had been the only thickly populated part of England, but now the once lonely wolds of Yorkshire and Lancashire were the abode of an immense manufacturing population. The factory system, with its great body of intelligent workmen, added a new element to the national life—an element entirely unrepresented in Parliament. Large cities had sprung into existence, but they could send not a single member to represent their interests in the House of Commons, simply because they had not existed, or had not been boroughs, when the system of boroughs had been fixed in the reign of Charles II.

5. **Earlier Efforts.** Even before Parliament had made itself supreme, men had been thinking of Parliamentary reform. Perhaps the first reformer was Oliver Cromwell. The Long Parliament gave representatives to Halifax, Manchester, and Leeds, which were becoming important cities, and took away members from places which had fallen into decay: London was given a greater number of members; and in the counties all who owned land, no matter how little, were given votes. Cromwell, in summoning the Protectorate Parliament, went even further in the way of reform, but his projects were not carried out by the parliaments which followed the Restoration.

6. **Chatham.** After the Revolution, the first statesman to speak of parliamentary reform was Chatham. He, in one of his speeches on the American War, uttered an eloquent protest against a system that left many thousands of people unrepresented, while boroughs remained which represented no one but their owners. Speaking of these boroughs, he said: "This is what is called the rotten part of the

constitution. It cannot continue a century. If it does not drop, it must be amputated." He was right: the amputation took place within a century from the time he spoke.

7. **Pitt's Reform Bill.** Chatham's son, William Pitt the Younger, adopted his fathers' views, and endeavoured to have a committee appointed to inquire into the need for reform, but he was defeated. In 1785, when he was Prime Minister, he again appeared as a reformer, with a proposal to spend a million pounds in buying up 72 seats which were practically in private hands, and to give these seats to the large towns. The idea of buying seats in Parliament seems extraordinary to us, but Pitt perceived that it was the only way of getting his plan of reform carried out; and, when this proposal was rejected, he saw that he could not pass any Reform Bill at all: so the matter was dropped. Pitt afterwards became hostile to reform.

8. In 1789 the **French Revolution** began. That great event,—the greatest in modern history,—filled the governing classes with hatred of "the rabble," as they called the mass of the people, and with fear of what the rabble might do if power passed into their hands; but it also filled the mass of the people with hopes of winning power by persistent effort, and above all by uniting. A powerful society, known as "Friends of the People," was formed for the purpose of bringing about Parliamentary reform. In 1793 this society presented a petition to the House of Commons, showing the great injustice of the existing system, and the urgent need of a change. But it was impossible to get the House to pass a measure which would deprive many of its members

of their seats; and the matter was put by. It was brought up again and again, and again and again it was put by.

9. **Famine.** Then events occurred which made the nation demand reform with such a voice that the matter could be put by no longer. Napoleon Bonaparte once said that hunger was at the root of most political revolutions; and, though that may not be wholly true, it was certainly hunger which forced reform on the Parliament of Britain. Men who are prosperous and well-governed will not greatly care how the governing body is elected: depression and misgovernment are the things that excite men to political revolt. After 1815—the year of Waterloo—there was great and widespread distress in England, in spite of a great increase in wealth. There came a terrible crisis of misery, during which many people died of actual starvation, after having tried to live on boiled grass and nettles. Many were out of work; many were working twelve hours a day for threepence a day. How did this crisis arrive?

10. Some minor causes were the heavy taxation to pay the enormous expenses of the war; the selfish greed of employers, especially in mines and factories; and the general neglect of the poor by the rich. But the great cause was the dearness of food. During the war the English farmers had had a monopoly of the food-supply, as no grain was available from foreign countries. The farmers had thus been able to raise the price of wheat to famine-rates; and by getting high prices, they had been enabled to pay high rents to their landlords. The land-owners and the farmers thus became rich through the war; and Parliament, as we have seen, principally represented the land-

owners. When the war was over, rents began to fall, as foreign wheat came in and brought down the prices. Parliament then passed a *Corn-law* (1815) forbidding the importation of foreign corn unless the price of wheat rose to 80s. a quarter. In passing this measure, Parliament acted entirely in the interests of land-owners and farmers, and paid no heed to the distress that was bound to follow among the poorer classes. The law was exceedingly hurtful in another way: England now stood alone as a manufacturing country, and might have given her manufactures in exchange for foreign food-stuffs, thereby developing her own industries and giving employment to thousands of men, if the Corn-law had not interfered.

11. In their distress people saw that they would never be treated fairly till the governing body ceased to represent land-owners alone, and became representative of the whole nation. The cry for reform became louder and deeper. A body of poor men, called Blanketeers, because they carried their blankets strapped to their shoulders, marched from Manchester to lay their grievances before Parliament. Riots occurred here and there; the governing classes, their minds still full of the French Revolution, grew frightened, and thought only of putting down disturbances by force. A great meeting at St. Peter's Fields, near Manchester, afterwards known as **Peterloo**. in Manchester, was charged and ridden down by a body of soldiers: eleven persons were killed and many were hurt. This stupid and cruel blunder brought much sympathy to the reform party. Many people hitherto opposed to reform began to ask themselves if this was the proper way to deal with public discontents—to ride men down

and kill them in order to make the rest more contented! The demand for reform became more general.

12. At last, in 1830, **Earl Grey**, the leader of the Whigs, became Prime Minister. His ministry was made up of men favourable to reform; and on March 1st, 1831, Lord John Russell brought in the great Reform Bill. He had an easy task in showing where the old system was at fault. Its faults were glaring. There were many great and important cities—Birmingham and Manchester among the number—which sent no members to Parliament, while many insignificant villages sent two members apiece. Sometimes, indeed, there were no villages to vote, but the right of returning two members still remained with the place where the village had once been,—that is, with the gentleman who owned the place. For instance, Old Sarum was but a green mound, without a single house upon it; yet two members went to Parliament to represent that mound. Gatton was only a ruined wall: the owner of that wall had two seats in the House of Commons to give away to friends. These strange electorates were known as rotten boroughs, because the life had departed from them, and they were corrupt. Many of them had not more than a dozen inhabitants, all tenants of one man, and therefore voting as he pleased. Such boroughs were openly bought and sold for hard cash. Macaulay describes the “nabobs,” who brought home fortunes acquired in India, as frequently buying seats in Parliament by this means. “They raised the price of everything in their neighbourhood, from fresh eggs to rotten boroughs.”

13. The case of the counties was equally bad, for

the numbers of their representatives were quite out of proportion to their relative populations. Rutland, for instance, the smallest county in England, sent as many members as Yorkshire, the largest. Cornwall, which was full of rotten boroughs, sent more members than Yorkshire, Rutland, and Middlesex put together. Moreover, the county vote was in the hands of landowners only. In the county of Bute, in Scotland, there were only twenty-one electors. At one election only one of these appeared. He voted for himself, and so became one of Scotland's representatives. No more striking proof of the absurdity of the system could be found than that. And yet, absurd as the system was, many real patriots, among them the Duke of Wellington, were opposed to all reform, because they thought that, if a great number of people were given a vote, they would use their power to seize the property of the rich.

14. The case may be put in a nutshell by the statement that a majority of the House of Commons, supposed to be representative of a nation numbering 22,000,000 was really elected by less than 15,000 persons. Russell's Reform Bill proposed to sweep away sixty small boroughs, and to give one member apiece, instead of two, to forty-seven other boroughs which were a little larger than the first sixty. This would deprive one hundred and sixty-eight members of their seats, and these seats were to be given to the large towns and the large counties. The right of voting was no longer to be in the hands of the richer classes only; in the towns, all householders who paid at least £10 a year in rent were given votes; and in the counties all who paid at least £50 a year for their land. Thus, though the Bill did not give

the voting power to the whole nation, it gave votes to a large number of people who had never had them before. Though it did not give much power to the working classes, it gave a great deal to the middle class in towns, and was thus a step in the direction of making the House of Commons representative of the whole nation.

15. The Bill was carried in the Commons, but only by a majority of one vote. Not satisfied with this majority, the ministry dissolved Parliament, and new elections took place. Even with the bad system of election already described, the general feeling of the country in favour of "the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill," made itself felt. The Reformers in the new House of Commons had an enormous majority, and the Bill was passed. But the House of Lords had still to be met. Many of the lords were owners of rotten boroughs, and this, of course, gave the Upper House a great influence over the Lower. This influence the Lords were unwilling to give up; so they threw out the Bill. The House of Commons was, however, in earnest; it passed the Bill once more, and the ministers persuaded the king (William IV.) to let it be known that he would, if necessary, create enough new peers to carry the Bill. The Lords, not wishing to see their House swamped with new peers, thereupon allowed the Bill to pass, and it became law in 1832. This contest between the Lords and Commons is important, because it shows that if the Lower House sets its heart upon any measure it must, in the end, get its way.

CHAPTER XX.

LEGISLATION CONSEQUENT UPON THE REFORM ACT.

1. The Tories, who had opposed the Reform Bill, described its passing as a revolution, and a revolution indeed it was. Its immediate results may be shortly set down, but its indirect results are of incalculable importance; it may be said to have paved the way for all further reforms. At first its effects seemed to be limited to the taking of power from the land-owning aristocracy, who had governed Britain since the Revolution of 1688, and the giving of that power to the middle classes; under the new system we may say, roughly, that the country members of the House of Commons were elected by the farmers, and the borough members by the shop-keepers, and in some cases by the manufacturers. The working classes, both in town and country, were still left without a vote. But the later reforms, which gave political power to the working-men, would not have been possible in a House of Commons composed of wealthy land-owners. We owe them to the Reform Act of 1832. In this chapter, however, we shall consider only some of the *immediate* results of that great measure.

2. **The Reformed House.** Before the end of 1832 there was a general election, at which the new electors voted. The new House of Commons, therefore, more truly represented the nation than any previous Parliament. Of course the Whigs—the party which had carried the Reform Act—were in an immense majority; Lord Grey was still Prime

Minister; and the whole party was determined to make use of its victory by introducing practical reforms. Unfortunately the party was not united; a section of it, called the Radicals, wished to make radical and sweeping changes, far beyond anything that the rest of the Whigs thought desirable. To cover up this split in their ranks, the Whigs and Radicals together adopted the name of *Liberals*; while at the same time their opponents dropped the unpopular name of Tories, and began to call themselves *Conservatives*.

3. **Slavery.** One of the first reforms made by the new Parliament was the abolition of slavery throughout British dominions. In Britain itself slavery had long been extinct. In 1775, one of the greatest of English judges, Lord Mansfield, had solemnly declared that, by the law of England, every man was free the moment he set foot on England's shores. The slave-trade—the carrying of negroes from Africa to the West Indies, and other places where slaves were employed by British traders, was forever put down by an Act of Parliament passed in 1807. But in various British colonies—chiefly West Indian islands—slavery was still allowed. Some members of Parliament had long been trying to get it done away with; and the conscience of Britain was at last set on fire by the brutal cruelty practised on helpless men and women in her own colonies. The planters kept their slaves in order by a constant use of the whip and the branding-iron; and the horrors of the slave-colonies were, in Parliament, pictured forcibly, but without exaggeration, for exaggeration was impossible. In 1833, Stanley, Colonial Secretary in Grey's ministry, carried a Bill for the complete abolition of

slavery throughout the British Empire. It is now a recognised principle that the moment a slave can place himself under the protection of the British flag he is free, and no man can claim him. All civilised nations have now given up the slave-trade, and most of the great powers of Europe have agreed to put it down wherever they can, but Britain is, of course, with her great navy, able to do more than any other nation. The Arabs are now the principal traders, and it is one of the duties of British naval officers, cruising, in African waters, to keep a sharp look-out for Arab "dhows," or slave-ships, to capture them and set free the slaves who are aboard, and to hand over the traders for punishment. It is honourable to the British people that they have demanded, next to their own liberty, the emancipation of the slave.

4. Factory Legislation. The next great measure of the new Parliament was an effort to help a class quite as helpless as the negroes,—the children employed in factories. These children were kept at work, in bad air, for as many as thirteen hours a day. In 1833, Ashley, afterwards better known as Lord Shaftesbury, carried a Bill which made it illegal to keep children under thirteen at work longer than eight hours a day. This seems but a small reform, but it led the way to further measures. In 1842, a committee was appointed to enquire into the working of mines, and it was found that women and even young children were forced to work underground, dragging heavy trucks, for ten and sometimes twelve hours a day. Ashley appeared again as the champion of the helpless, and carried a Bill enacting that no woman, and no child under ten, should be employed underground. In 1847, after a long struggle, Ashley

succeeded in carrying another Bill forbidding the employment of women and children for more than ten hours a day. In these beneficent laws we find the beginning of what is called Factory Legislation.

5. **Poor Laws.** The next great reform was carried in 1834. The Poor Law already in existence had a great many imperfections. By it paupers were given relief by their parish whether they were earning wages or not; and many employers were selfish enough to take advantage of this and employ paupers, paying them low wages because they would receive something from the parish rates. The more children a pauper had, the more he received from his parish; so that if a man had a large family, it was a distinct advantage to be a pauper. Many men were thus brought to believe that it was better to be dependent on the parish than to save money and work hard and make a bold push for independence. The number of paupers was increasing rapidly, and the poor-rates (the money a parish had to pay to support its poor) were becoming a crushing burden; so that a law which was meant to relieve had ended by degrading the poor. The Act of 1834 put an end to much of the evil. This new Poor Law tried to enforce the distinction between the really destitute and the merely lazy, by establishing *workhouses*, and enacting that no one was to receive relief who would not live in them. Only the really destitute would consent to go into a workhouse. In these houses everyone was required to work; and *outdoor relief* was allowed only in cases where a man was too old or too ill to work. The smaller parishes were grouped together in *unions*, with one workhouse, big enough to be well managed, between them: this helped to

bring down the poor rates. From this date pauperism began to decrease.

6. **Education.** It was perhaps as well that the working class had as yet no share in the government of the country, for the majority of that class could neither read nor write. It is obviously dangerous to give power to people too ignorant to know what to do with it; and in every country a national system of education must precede a national system of government. When the Reform Act was passed, education in England was at a very low ebb. Few children of the lower classes in England were receiving any instruction. (Scotland was more advanced: every parish had had its school for over a century; and, ever since the time of John Knox, Scotland had led Europe in matters of education.) The reformed House of Commons at once took the question in hand, and 1833 is notable as the first year in which public money was applied by Parliament to educational purposes, £20,000 per year being voted for the building of school-houses and their maintenance. In 1839, the yearly grant was increased to £30,000, and a body, similar to the Education Department in an Australian State, was established under the name of "the Committee of the Privy Council on Education." This body gave place, in 1899, to the "Board of Education," whose President and parliamentary Secretary are always members of the ministry. The Committee was established to see that the public money thus granted was properly employed.

7. These reforms, and others like them, were the immediate results of the Reform Act. That Act, as we have seen, brought into power the middle class in town and country, and the legislation which followed

was such as suited that class. The working man was not yet represented in Parliament, and Parliament did little to alleviate his miseries. The years following the Reform Act were a succession of bad seasons, and the price of bread rose while wages fell. Even without this misfortune the lot of the poor was wretched enough. Bad as the "slums" of London and other great cities in England still are, one gets from them no idea of the conditions prevailing in 1832. "In Manchester one-tenth of the population lived in cellars The cellar itself was dark, filled with a horrible stench. Here a whole family lived in a single room, the children lying on the damp—nay, wet—brick floor, through which the stagnant moisture oozed up. Overcrowding added to the horrors of such a life. One small cellar, measuring four yards by five, contained two rooms and eight persons. . . . In some parts of the country similar evils prevailed. In one parish in Dorset thirty-six persons dwelt, on an average, in each house. . . . People living in such a way were sure to be ignorant and vicious. They were badly paid, and even for their low wages were very much at the mercy of their employers. In spite of the law against 'truck,' as it was called, employers often persisted in paying their men in goods charged above their real prices instead of in money. In one instance a man was obliged to take a piece of cloth worth only 11s. in payment of his wages of 35s."* Although no remedy could for the time be found for such evils, the Reform Act, as we shall see, paved the way for further Reform Acts, which gave the workmen political power, and improved their condition in a thousand ways.

* Gardiner. See Kingsley's novels, "Yeast" and "Alton Locke."

CHAPTER XXI.

LATER EFFORTS AT REFORM.

1. The Reform Act of 1832 was carried in response to the demand of the whole nation, but the working classes found that they had not done much for themselves; though they had taken away power from the upper class, it was only to give it to the middle class; and the lower class, after the struggle was over, found themselves little better off than before. They found that a Parliament of country gentlemen, manufacturers, merchants, and successful professional men was as little in sympathy with their needs as a Parliament of wealthy landlords. The importance of the first Reform Act lies mainly in the fact that it pointed the way to a further extension of the voting-power. "It is the first step that costs," says a French proverb. The first step had now been taken; the rest was only a matter of time. The terrible state of things described at the close of the last chapter could not continue, and immediately after the passing of the Reform Act people began to clamour for further reforms.

2. **Chartism.** In 1838, a conference was held between some Liberal members of Parliament and some leaders of the working men; and a programme was drawn up, in which certain reforms were set forth as desirable and necessary. This programme, which soon became immensely popular, was known as "The People's Charter," and those who tried to carry it into effect were called "Chartists." The Charter contained six principal "points" or proposals;

and though they were looked upon at the time as dangerous and revolutionary, most of them have since been made part of the British constitution. The Charter, therefore, though it seemed to fail ludicrously, is really one of the most important historical documents. The six points were:—

(1) *Manhood Suffrage*: every man in the kingdom, over 21 years of age, to have a vote: Parliament thus to become thoroughly representative of the whole nation. This was rightly set in the front of the Charter; for the people felt that their grievances would never be redressed till they could send their own representatives to Parliament. This reform was afterwards carried, as we shall see.

(2) *Annual Parliaments*: an election to the House of Commons to take place every year. Only in this way, it was thought, could Parliament be kept in touch with the nation, and members who turned out unsatisfactory be got rid of before they had time to do any harm. This proposal has never been favoured; an election every year would be an intolerable nuisance, and a needless expense. In Britain, elections take place every seven years; in Australasia, every three.

(3) *Vote by Ballot*: an arrangement by which voting should be secret: necessary, it was thought, to secure perfect freedom of election. This was afterwards adopted, as we shall see, and is now the rule in Britain and Australasia.

(4) *Abolition of the Property Qualification* for members of Parliament. Then, and for many years after, a man had to possess some property to become a member of Parliament, and it was thus impossible for the working class to be represented by a member

of their own class. This point has been adopted; indeed, the law was constantly evaded long before the Chartists proposed to do away with it.

(5) *Payment of Members*: another measure thought necessary to enable poor men to sit in Parliament; for no working man could be expected to leave his work, and give his time and energy to parliamentary duties, unless he were paid for it. This is the rule in Australasia, and will probably be the rule in Britain before long.

(6) *Equal Electoral Districts*: the country to be divided into "electorates," each containing an equal number of voters, each returning one member to Parliament. This, as a moment's thought will show, was necessary if Parliament was to represent the will of a majority of the electors. This principle, or something as near it as possible, has been carried into effect both in Great Britain and Australasia.

3. All of these proposals were perfectly reasonable, and in Britain four out of the six, in Australasia five out of the six, have since been adopted, and have produced none of the bad results predicted by the opponents of the Charter. But, for the time being, they were dismissed as violent and dangerous. The Britain of that day was sharply divided into two classes, the rich and the poor. The working men believed that the country was governed by rich men who were absolutely indifferent to the sufferings of the poor; while the ruling class believed that the poor were fierce and violent savages, who would make shipwreck of society if they got power into their hands. With so little sympathy between the two classes, there was little chance for the People's Charter. The government took stern

measures to repress Chartism. The leading Chartists all over the country were prosecuted and imprisoned by hundreds. The imprisonment of one of these, Henry Vincent, led to an attack on Newport by a body of 10,000 men, armed with guns, pikes, swords, pickaxes, and any other weapons they could lay hands on. But this armed rebellion was badly managed, and was easily put down; the ring-leaders were arrested and condemned to death, though the sentence was not carried out; and Chartism seemed for the time to be crushed. The Chartists made a great mistake in trying to carry their reforms by violence; and they were mistaken in wishing to attain their objects in such haste, for the working classes were not yet sufficiently educated to know how to use political power if they could have got it.

4. In 1848, a year in which political revolutions occurred in almost every country in Europe except Britain, the Chartists made a last attempt to carry their measures; not this time by armed rebellion, but by holding great meetings, and presenting petitions to Parliament. But the result was again failure; and, after 1848, the increasing prosperity of the country did away with much of the discontent which had given birth to Chartism. All later reforms have been slowly and peaceably.

5. But, though Chartism may be said to have died in 1848, the desire for political power on the part of the working classes was by no means dead, and many British statesmen clearly saw that reform of some kind could not be put off much longer. Accordingly, in 1854, Lord John Russell brought in a Reform Bill; but the outbreak of the Crimean War carried all minds in another direction, and the subject was

dropped. In 1859, Disraeli took up the question, but his Bill was rejected. In 1860, Russell tried again, with as little success. These failures were chiefly due to the opposition of Lord Palmerston, then the most popular man in Parliament. In 1865, Palmerston died; Russell became Prime Minister, and Gladstone once more brought in a Reform Bill; but the opposition to it was so determined that the ministry resigned. They were followed by a Conservative ministry, but even the Conservatives had now made up their minds that reform was no longer to be shelved; and, in 1867, Disraeli brought in and carried a sweeping measure known as **The Second Reform Act**.

6. This Act gave the vote, in boroughs, to every man who paid rates; that is, to every householder, rich and poor alike. Even lodgers were allowed to vote, provided they paid not less than £10 a year for their lodgings, and had lived in the same lodgings for a year. In the counties the voting power was given to all who paid not less than £12 a year rent. This meant that the working-men got a voice in the government of the nation, if they lived in towns large enough to have separate members; in small towns and villages, which had votes only for the county member, the £12 rental was too high to give the lower orders any power. Still, it may be said that by this Act votes were given to millions of men who had been formerly unrepresented. It was plain that the working men in counties would soon get their votes now that the working men in boroughs had got them. We may say, then, that the Act of 1832 had placed political power in the hands of the middle class; the Act of 1867 placed it in the hands of the working class.

7. Gladstone's **Third Reform Act**, in 1884, completed what the Act of 1867 had begun. It conferred votes on all householders in counties, as the Second Reform Act had conferred votes on all householders in boroughs. It also cut up the whole country into electorates, each containing about 50,000 voters, and each (with a few exceptions) returning one member only to Parliament. By this great Act Britain became a democracy,—a country governed by the mass of its inhabitants,—founded on household suffrage, with almost equal electoral districts. The long process, which it has been our principal business in this book to trace, was now complete; self-government was won.

8. Besides the Reform Acts, dealing with parliamentary representation, two other great measures of reform must be noted. The first is the great **Education Act** of 1870, which we associate with the name of W. E. Forster, one of the ministers at that time. The Second Reform Act had given power to the working classes; and it was at once seen that if the working classes were to use their power wisely they must be educated. Forster's Act was the first sign that Parliament recognised the duty of a State to educate its own citizens. Hitherto schools had been supported by fees and voluntary contributions, assisted by parliamentary grants of money. The new Act allowed districts to elect School Boards, to levy a rate, and to compel all children to attend school. Thus a really national system of education was introduced; and though many changes have since been made, we may look upon Forster as the founder of national education in England.

9. The other reform to be noticed is the **Ballot Act** of 1872; this, also, was introduced by Forster. Vote by Ballot, it will be remembered, had been one of the "six points" of the People's Charter; but for thirty-five years it had remained an idea only. In this year it became a fact. It established the secrecy of voting for members of Parliament; it was henceforth impossible for anyone to know how anyone else had voted. Under the old system an employer might order all his employes to vote for a certain candidate, and threaten them with dismissal if they voted for anyone else; working men were thus "intimidated" into voting against their consciences or inclinations. But with secret voting it was no use to threaten a man with dismissal if he voted against your wishes, because you could never find out how he had voted: thus the ballot system, though it seems at first sight an underhand way of doing things, secured freedom of election. It was thought that it would also check bribery at elections, because it would be no use paying a man to vote for you if you could never find out whether he kept his word or not. But as a matter of fact, bribery was not much diminished, and in 1883 a new law was passed "for the better prevention of corrupt and illegal practices at parliamentary elections." "Thenceforward, without running grave risks which no prudent man would readily encounter, corruption on a large scale became almost impossible."* The Ballot Act and this Act of 1883 have the same purpose as the Reform Acts: to make the House of Commons really and truly represent the nation.

* Spencer Walpole: *Electorate and Legislature*, p. 89.

SUMMARY OF THE THREE REFORM ACTS.

I. (1832) All boroughs with less than 2,000 inhabitants disfranchised. All boroughs with between 2,000 and 4,000 inhabitants cut down to *one* member: 143 seats, thus made vacant, given to the larger counties and the large manufacturing cities. Votes given in the counties to £50 leaseholders, and in the boroughs to £10 householders. (Grey's ministry.)

II. (1867) County vote given to £12 leaseholders. Borough vote given to *all* male householders, and to lodgers paying £10 a year. Household suffrage thus brought in in the boroughs. (Disraeli's ministry.)

III. (1884) Made the franchise in counties the same as in boroughs. Disfranchised all boroughs with under 15,000 inhabitants, and reduced all under 50,000 to one member. Cut up the whole country into single-member electorates, each having about 50,000 inhabitants; exceptions being old boroughs with between 50,000 and 165,000 inhabitants returning two members apiece. (Gladstone's ministry.)

CHAPTER XXII.

ENGLISH INDUSTRY UNDER GEORGE III.

1. This book is an attempt to trace the steps by which the British people rose from a condition of servitude to a condition of liberty and self-government. With this progress the invention of the spinning-jenny and the construction of the Bridgewater Canal may seem, at first sight, to have no connection. In reality the connection is so close and vital, that we may say that the political revolution at the beginning of the nineteenth century cannot be understood until we have considered the longer industrial revolution of the eighteenth. The Reform Act of 1832,—which settled once for all the question whether Parliament should owe its origin to the people at large or to a

small ring of wealthy land-owners,—could not have been passed if a new and populous manufacturing England had not been called for reform. It was the steam-engine and the power loom that carried the Reform Act.

2. It is, of course, impossible for us even to allude to all the inventions and discoveries by which this revolution was brought about. We can but glance at some of the leading facts. Let us take the year 1815—the year of Waterloo—and consider briefly the state of English industry at that time. British victories had cleared the sea of enemies, and brought comparative safety to British shipping. Britain had now possessions in all parts of the world, and so her merchants had markets for their goods in the most distant quarters; and all nations, civilised and uncivilised, were buying the products of her factories. And, as the traders were continually finding new outlets for trade, the manufacturers were continually stimulated to produce more goods, and inventive minds were everywhere at work to find cheaper and speedier methods of producing those goods.

3. **Wool.** The woollen trade was, of all English manufactures, the most ancient and the most important, and many allusions have already been made to it. We have seen how English sovereigns, from William I. onwards, encouraged the industry: how the establishment of large sheep-runs, throwing many labourers out of employment, had caused a grave social danger; and how the rise of the woollen manufacture had done much to remove that danger. At first, English fleeces had been for the most part carried over to Flanders, there to be worked up into cloth; but many Flemish weavers were induced to

settle in England, and finally the decay of Flanders left England the first wool-manufacturing country in Europe. At the time of which we are speaking, however, wool grown in England had begun to deteriorate in quality, and the manufacturers were forced to mix foreign wool with the home-grown article. Ignorant statesmen had put a heavy duty on all foreign wool entering the country, and so the woollen manufacture was at this time crippled, and another industry was gaining upon it by great strides.

4. **Cotton.** Cotton had been used in India and America from the earliest times of which we have any knowledge. A very ancient Greek historian,* writing about India 2000 years ago, said—"there are trees which grow wild there, the fruit whereof is a wool exceeding in beauty and goodness that of sheep. The natives made their clothes of this tree-wool." And, when the Spaniards discovered America, they found the Mexicans dressed in the same material. It was long, however, before cotton goods were imported into Europe; and, when they first began to be used in England, Parliament tried to defend the woollen manufacturers by forbidding the importation of calicoes into England. But the taste for Indian calicoes grew, in spite of Acts of Parliament; and the demand for cotton cloth gradually introduced the manufacture of it into thousands of English homes. For it was not in factories with hundreds of workmen, but in the homes of the peasants, that this great industry began in England. The head of the family wove into cloth, at a hand-loom, cotton thread spun by his wife and daughters. Spinning became the universal occupation of girls of the peasant class; to

* Herodotus.

this day an unmarried woman is known as a "spinster."

5. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the cotton-manufacture was in a primitive state. The English spinners had not yet found out a way of making cotton thread which was both thin and strong; accordingly no cloth made entirely of cotton had yet been woven in England. It was found that cotton thread was not strong enough to form both the longitudinal threads and the cross threads—the warp and the weft. The warp was, therefore, always either of wool or of linen. The superior skill of the Indians enabled them to use cotton both for warp and weft; and the English weaver was at a further disadvantage from the fact that he could weave much more rapidly than his wives and daughters could spin, so that he had great difficulty in obtaining sufficient yarn. In 1738, John Kay invented the "flying shuttle," and a further improvement, made by Kay's son, some years later, enabled the weaver to weave twice as rapidly as before; and the spinners found it still more difficult to supply the weavers with thread. The spinning machines then in use "only admitted of one thread being spun at one time by one pair of hands, and the slowness of the operation, and consequent expensiveness of the yarn, formed a great obstacle to the establishment of a new manufacture."* Now began a series of astonishing inventions.

6. In 1767, a poor weaver named **Hargreaves** noticed that one day, when his wife, Jenny, upset her spinning-machine, the spindle, now in an upright position, continued to revolve, and the thread to spin in her hand. The idea at once occurred to him of

*Baines's *History of the Cotton Manufacture*.

connecting a number of upright spindles with one wheel, and thus making one machine do the work of many. He succeeded in constructing a machine, which was called, in honour of his wife, the spinning-jenny; it enabled one spinner to produce more than a hundred threads at the same time. Hitherto the spinners had not been able to keep up with the weavers, but this invention turned the tables; more thread was now produced than the weavers could use. But the jenny could not spin thread fit to be used as warp, and so cotton continued to be mixed with wool or linen.

7. This disadvantage was removed by **Arkwright**, who, in 1769, patented a machine for spinning by rollers. This invention, which worked on a very simple principle, produced thread fine enough and hard enough to be employed as warp, so that we may take this year as the date of the manufacture of the first real cotton goods in England. The mill which Arkwright used to drive his machine was worked by a water-wheel, and his machine was in consequence known as the "water-frame."

8. This machine spun thread strong enough for warps, but not fine enough for the finest kinds of stuff. The most delicate cotton cloths had still to be brought from India. But, in 1779, **Crompton** perfected an astonishingly ingenious contrivance known as the "mule," which produced a thread finer than had ever been spun in India. The Indians could spin a pound of cotton into a thread 119 miles long, but Crompton's machine succeeded in spinning the same quantity into a thread 160 miles long.

9. By means of the inventions of Hargreaves, Arkwright, and Crompton, the spinners had hope-

lessly distanced the weavers. The weaver had now more yarn at his disposal than he could possibly use, even with Kay's improved fly-shuttle; and it seemed likely that most of the spinners would be thrown out of employment, and most of the spinning-machines stand idle, because so much cotton would soon be spun that hands could not be found to weave it. This disaster was averted by **Edmund Cartwright**, a clergyman, who, in 1785, patented a weaving-mill, known as the "power-loom," which wove with such rapidity as to keep all the spinners in the country hard at work to supply sufficient yarn.

10. It is not necessary to go into all the other inventions in this one industry—machines for bleaching, machines for printing, and so on—which made the cotton-manufacture the foremost industry in England, and England the foremost manufacturing country in the world. "When we undertook the cotton manufacture we had comparatively few facilities for its prosecution, and had to struggle with the greatest difficulties. The raw material was produced at an immense distance from our shores, and in Hindustan and China the inhabitants had arrived at such perfection in the arts of spinning and weaving, that the lightness and delicacy of their finest cloths emulated the web of the gossamer, and seemed to set competition at defiance. Such, however has been the influence of the inventions of Hargreaves, Arkwright, Crompton, Cartwright, and others, that we have overcome all these difficulties—that neither the extreme cheapness of labour in Hindustan, nor the excellence to which the natives had attained, has enabled them to withstand the competition of those who buy their cotton, and who,

after carrying it 5000 miles to be manufactured, carry back the goods to them.”*

11. It would take us too long to trace the history of all the other manufactures, but let us remember that, though we have dwelt only on the cotton-manufacture, as the most important, the others had developed at the same time, though not with the same astonishing rapidity. At the period of which we are speaking, ingenious men had invented labour-saving machinery in every branch of industry known to Englishmen. But machinery is of no use without a motive power to drive it; and, before George III.'s time, the only motive powers applied were air and water; machines were driven by wind-mills or water-wheels. Neither force is very satisfactory. The machine driven by wind is at the mercy of the weather: if the wind drops, the mill stops; and, if the wind rises too high, the machinery is apt to be thrown out of order. The water-wheel lies idle in the drought, and is often wrecked in time of flood. In 1769, **James Watt** introduced a new power, which was to revolutionise the world. Steam-engines had, indeed, been used before his time, chiefly for pumping water out of mines; but they had consumed so much fuel as to be practically useless. Watt's first invention saved three-fourths of the fuel, and increased the power by one-fourth, so that a pound of coal now did five times the amount of work formerly obtained from it. He added improvement after improvement to his original invention; and, by the year 1815, steam had been thoroughly established as *the* force to drive manufacturing machinery, while **George Stephenson** was just beginning to apply it to

*McCulloch: *Commercial Dictionary*.

locomotion. His first locomotive, constructed in 1814, was not, however, a success.

12. The development of machinery driven by steam implies a development of the production of coal. For the steam-engine requires fuel, both to smelt the iron of which it is made, and to drive it when it is made. For iron-smelting wood alone was for many centuries employed; but the forests would not have supplied enough fuel to drive the machinery of the factories, in 1815, for a single year, especially when so much wood was required for ship-building. In the seventeenth century coal had begun to be used for smelting; but right up to the end of the eighteenth century, coal-mining was handicapped in two ways. In the first place, the roof of the mine had to be propped, and no one had thought of using timber for that purpose; coal itself was used, so that only two-thirds of the coal actually mined was ever brought to the surface. In the second place, explosions of fire-damp were constantly taking place, and many miners every year met their deaths from this cause. The first defect was got rid of at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when props of timber were substituted for pillars of coal, so that *all* the coal dug by the miner could now be brought out of the mine. The second defect was removed, in the very year of which we are speaking, by **Davy's** invention of the safety lamp. By this contrivance the most dangerous mines were made safe, and the supply of coal available was thus increased enormously.

13. The spinning-jenny, the power-loom, and the other machines of which we have spoken, as well as the hundreds of machines of which we have not spoken, would have been almost useless but for the

invention of the steam-engine, steam-engines would have been useless without an abundant supply of coal; and this supply could not have been obtained, without terrible loss of life, but for Davy's safety-lamp. Coal was the thing that changed the face of England, and made her the wealthiest nation in the world; coal, indeed, revolutionised the industry of the whole world. We are accustomed to speak of 1815 as the year of Waterloo; would it not be more intelligent to speak of it as the year of the safety-lamp?

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE IRISH UNION AND ROMAN CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.

1. The Parliament which passed the Reform Act of 1832 was a very different body from the Parliament which set William of Orange on the British throne in 1689. In the interval two great events, which we have not yet mentioned, had materially changed the constitution of both Houses. The House of Commons had received 145 additional members, 45 representing the Scots, and 100 the Irish. In like manner, Scotland had sent 16 peers, Ireland 32 bishops and peers, to the House of Lords. In 1689, three Parliaments were sitting within the British Isles—one at Westminster, one at Edinburgh, and one at Dublin; in 1832, there was one united Parliament for the United Kingdom. Scotland had been united to England in 1707, Ireland in 1800.

We are now to consider the latter union, and the events leading up to it.

2. The Conquest of Ireland. It would take us too long to trace the history of the connection between the two nations since the annexation of Ireland by Henry II.—one of the saddest histories in the world, and one about which neither nation can afford to feel much pride. If Henry II. had only been able to make his conquest of Ireland as complete as William I. had made his conquest of England, a complete blending of the conquering with the conquered race would doubtless have taken place in Ireland as it took place in England, with the same happy result. But Henry was called away by trouble elsewhere before his work in Ireland was well begun; the country was left with a fatal division of races, neither race strong enough to subdue the other; and the result was seven centuries of bloodshed and disorder, unexampled poverty throughout the island, and a hatred and disgust of England so deep and lasting that it has not yet died out. So long as Ireland remained half-conquered, so long did the Irish remain a danger to their English rulers; so long as they were dangerous, they were feared and hated; so long as they were feared and hated, they were unjustly and tyrannically governed; and, so long as they were thus governed, they had good cause to hate their rulers. There, in a few words, is a summary of Irish history.

3. Condition of Ireland at the Revolution. When William III. came to the throne, he found Ireland torn by a division of races and a division of religions. Three-fourths of the population consisted of the Irish descendants of those Celtic and other clansmen who

had possessed Ireland before Henry II. annexed it. The remainder consisted of men of English and Scottish descent, who were in possession of all the best land in the north of the island. All through the Tudor period the English government had pursued the policy of "confiscation"—taking land from the Irish clans and giving it to English settlers; and in James I.'s reign more than two-thirds of Ulster had passed into the hands of Englishmen and Scots. From the days of Henry II., the native clans had remained apart from the English settlement, ceaselessly warring with the intruders, ceaselessly warring with one another; and the two races fell into a settled habit of hatred. After the Reformation, in Henry VIII.'s reign, there was a religious division, which exactly coincided with the racial division; the native Irish remained Catholic almost to a man: the English settlers, almost to a man, were Protestant. Thus the Irish population hated the English settlers, first because they were of a different race, secondly because they were of a different religion, and thirdly because they considered themselves the rightful owners of the land, and looked upon those who had dispossessed them as tyrants and robbers. Acts of lawlessness and ferocity on both sides every year deepened the intensity of hate with which each race looked upon the other.

4. **The Catholic Parliament.** In Ireland James II. made his last desperate attempt to save his Crown; and the Catholic Irish rose as one man to support him. They cared not a farthing for the political principles which had driven James from England, nor had they any affectionate feeling for James himself. But they looked upon him as the champion of

their religion; they knew that he would be supported by France, then the most powerful country in Europe; and they perceived an opportunity of expelling the hated intruders, and making their country independent of England. They assembled a Parliament at Dublin, and this Parliament passed an Act which, had it been carried out, would have re-confiscated the lands of the English settlers, and given them back to the native Irish. An Act of Attainder followed; "embracing between two and three thousand names, and including, with half the peerage of Ireland, baronets, clergymen, squires, merchants, yeomen, artisans, women and children."* Everyone whose name was on the list was required to come, before a fixed day, to Dublin, and there hand himself over to the tender mercies of his enemies; anyone failing to appear in time was to be hanged without trial, and his lands taken from his family. This Act has been described as "a law without a parallel in the history of civilised countries."† Protestants everywhere fled in panic from their homes, and a general massacre was expected.

5. Protestant Victory. In Ulster the Protestant minority turned to bay, and at *Newtown Butler*, and at *Londonderry*, gave memorable proof of its courage and endurance. In 1690, William himself came over, and, at the *Battle of the Boyne*, overthrew the army of James. James, who had shown neither courage nor skill in the field, fled to France, never to return; but the struggle was not yet over. The Irish army was again defeated at *Athlone* and *Aughrim*,

*Goldwin Smith.

Macaulay's *History of England*, Vol. 1, p. 761.

but redeemed its reputation by its last gallant stand, under Sarsfield, behind the weak mud walls of *Limerick*, which "looked as if they could be knocked down with roasted apples." In the end *Limerick* surrendered, and the flower of the Irish soldiery went over to France, where many of them rose to high command in the armies of King Louis.

6. Protestant Retaliation. The Protestants were now established as rulers of the country, and proceeded to take terrible vengeance. William III. was the steady friend of religious toleration, but could not restrain the lately panic-stricken and now triumphant Protestant party in Ireland. A *Penal Code* was drawn up—a series of laws which appears to have been designed to make life intolerable for Roman Catholics in Ireland. (It is only fair to remember that these laws were modelled on the laws by which the Protestants in France had been persecuted by Louis XIV.) Catholics were shut out from Parliament and all public offices. No Catholic could vote in any election. Catholics were barred from all the higher branches of trade. No Catholic could have any arms in his possession, nor a horse worth more than £5. A Catholic could send his sons to no school but such as taught the Protestant faith; and, if one of his sons turned Protestant, that son became the possessor of his father's lands. Catholic priests were ordered to take an oath which no conscientious man could consent to take; and those who refused were liable to death. Thus the best of the priests and bishops of the Roman Catholic Church were forced to lurk, like felons, in hiding-places on the mountains or among the marshes, and priest-hunting became a trade. The property-clauses

in this Code ended by leaving only one-tenth of Ireland in Catholic hands. The best and bravest of the Catholics went abroad, and in Continental armies gave signal proofs of a fighting-quality that Britain could ill afford to lose. The majority, however, lived on at home a miserable and hopeless existence; but, through all extremities, clung to their religion, and supported in secret the priests of their church.

7. **Church Establishment.** To fill the cup of bitterness to overflowing, the English Church was "established" in Ireland—that is, it was made the national church, and every man, whether he belonged to it or not, had to contribute to its support. The Church of England, as it worked in Ireland in the eighteenth century, is not a pleasant spectacle. The clergyman would, in some cases, not visit his church for years, but he drew an income from it all the time. One clergyman would sometimes be the incumbent of five or six different parishes, and, though the parish church might have fallen into ruin, the parishioners had to go on paying tithes to a clergyman whom they never saw, and who very likely lived at his ease in Dublin or even in London. Some of the clergymen who did live in their parishes set by no means a good example to their flocks; they were, for the most part, indifferent to everything but the punctual payment of their tithes. "Excellent and moral men," wrote Dean Swift with polite irony, "have been selected on every vacancy; but it unfortunately has uniformly happened that, as these worthy divines crossed Hounslow Heath to take possession of their bishoprics, they have been regularly robbed and murdered by the highwaymen frequenting that com-

mon, who seize upon their robes and patents, come over to Ireland, and are consecrated bishops in their stead." Had the English clergymen, however, been the best of men, (as some of them were,) the establishment in Ireland of a church which was hateful to five-sixths of the population would have been none the less a crime. It was also a blunder, for it was hard upon the Presbyterians of the north as it was upon the Catholics of the south, and tended to make those two sections join forces against a church which they both had to support, and which was of no use to either.

8. **Suppression of Commerce.** The British government, hated by the Catholics, took, in the reign of Anne, a step which made it hateful to the Protestant Irish also. *Poynings Law*, passed in the reign of Henry VII., enacted that no law should be proposed in the Irish Parliament which had not first been approved by the English Privy Council; and gave to the English Parliament power to pass laws binding on the Irish. The British government made the most of the power thus given to it. In Anne's reign it forbade the export of woollen goods to any other country than England, and, as it was no use sending such goods to England because of the heavy customs duties which were imposed, this practically killed the Irish woollen trade. In Charles II.'s time the importation of cattle and sheep from Ireland had been forbidden by Act of Parliament. Ireland is, for the most part, too wet for agriculture, but is admirably suited for the raising of stock; so that these two laws barred the only natural pathway to prosperity for the Irish, and crushed their commerce; and the people who felt this most were the Protestant

landowners. The Protestants, however, were dependent on English support to maintain their position against the Catholic majority, and therefore could not resist these enactments; but the seeds of bitterness thus sown were to bear fruit for many a year to come. The reason of these enactments was, of course, the commercial jealousy of the English land-owners and manufacturers, who feared that Irish competition would bring down their profits.

9. **Grattan's Parliament.** In 1778, the Irish Parliament showed its desire to conciliate the Catholics by passing a *Relief Bill*, which stopped the worst of the persecutions to which the Catholics had been subjected. A young Irish orator, *Henry Grattan*, saw that "Irish Protestants could never be free till Irish Catholics had ceased to be slaves." He also saw that, if Ireland was ever to be prosperous, it must be free to carry its products wherever it pleased, and that, to bring this about, the Irish Parliament must become independent of the British, and Poynings Law must be repealed. The example of the Americans roused the Irish to strike for independence, and, when Britain became engaged in war with France, Ireland's opportunity came. On the pretext of warding off French invasion, a force of volunteers was raised. By the end of 1781, there were 80,000 men in arms; and the Irish Parliament, with this force behind it, asked for independence. The British government had just been taught a severe lesson by the Americans, and gave in at once. All Acts binding Irishmen to obey laws made in England were repealed, and Ireland was now tied to England by no other bond than allegiance to a common sovereign. But the new Irish Parliament—Grattan's

Parliament, as it was called—had two sources of weakness. In the first place, it represented only the Protestants, as no Catholic had as yet a vote; and, in the second place, the executive power was not in its hands, for there was no Cabinet responsible to Parliament, but only a Lord-Lieutenant, who was appointed by the British Cabinet. And, though England nominally gave up all authority over Ireland, yet the British government, through the Lord-Lieutenant, exercised great influence on the elections; for in Ireland there was even greater need of Parliamentary reform than in England; there were a greater number of rotten boroughs; and no

fewer than 200 out of the 300 seats in Parliament were in the hands of 100 persons.

10. Commercial Union proposed. In 1785, William Pitt, Chatham's son, who was then Prime Minister of Britain, and who was the first British statesman to believe in the principle of free trade, proposed a



William Pitt (1759-1806).

commercial union with Ireland. There was to be complete freedom of trade between the two countries, and, in return for this benefit, Ireland was to pay something towards the keeping-up of the navy,

by which both countries were protected. The Irish Parliament agreed, but the English manufacturers resisted so strenuously that Pitt had to change his proposal, and to the proposal, as thus changed, the Irish Parliament would not agree. So the scheme fell through.

11. The great French Revolution gave another stimulus to those among the Irish who wished for complete independence, and, in 1791, the Society of *United Irishmen* was formed, with Wolfe Tone at its head. Its object was to unite Catholics and Protestants, and to clamour for Parliamentary reform. In 1793, a great Catholic Relief Act was passed, giving to Catholics the right of voting, though it did not give them the right to become members of Parliament. Grattan brought in a further Bill for allowing Catholics to sit in Parliament; it was rejected; and its rejection was followed by an outburst of violence. The religious war, which had never been quite extinguished, blazed up again with great fierceness. In 1795, the Catholic peasantry, never a law-abiding class, committed many outrages on Protestants. On the other hand, the Protestants formed a society of *Orangemen*, calling themselves after William of Orange, who would have been the last to justify some of their acts. The United Irishmen took up the cause of the Catholics, and sent Wolfe Tone to France to invite the French to send an army over to Ireland, in order to set up a free republic there. Nothing came of this; General Hoche did, indeed, set sail from France with 20,000 men, but his fleet, like the Armada two centuries before, was scattered by storms.

12. **The Rebellion.** In 1798, after a series of horrible atrocities on both sides, a regular Catholic

rebellion broke out; but, though the rebel army was of immense size, it was badly armed, badly trained, and badly led, and could not stand against regular troops. General Lake defeated the rebels at Vinegar Hill, near Wexford; and a small French force, which had come to their aid, though it put to flight the first troops sent against it, was at last forced to surrender. From that moment the rebellion was at an end.

13. **A Reign of Terror.** It was now the turn of the Protestant *Yeomanry*—irregular troops which the government had, for lack of regular soldiers, allowed the Protestants to organise—to take vengeance on the rebels. Of the methods they adopted, it is enough to say that the practice of torturing suspected rebels, in order to make them confess, became common. Amid the reign of terror which ensued, Lord Cornwallis, a just and merciful man, who had been one of the English commanders in the American War, came over as Lord-Lieutenant. He has left us a graphic account of the horrible state of affairs which he found in Ireland, and of how he tried to “put a stop to the burning of houses and murder of the inhabitants by the Yeomen, or any other person who delighted in that amusement.” There is good evidence that the regular soldiers, who had been sent over to quell the rebellion, now occupied all their time in protecting the rebels from the savage excesses of the *Yeomanry*. Lord Cornwallis and the regulars between them did their best “to prevent the two races from flying at one another’s throats.”

14. **The Union.** The government of Ireland by a Protestant Parliament, independent of the British Parliament, had failed lamentably; and Cornwallis considered that the true solution of the problem lay

in a Parliamentary Union of Britain and Ireland. Pitt, who had sent Cornwallis over, agreed with him. With a united Parliament, it would be safe to allow the Catholics to become members, because there would be no danger of their having a majority in that Parliament, as they might in an Irish Parliament. To carry out such a scheme, it was necessary to obtain the consent of the Irish Parliament, and the Irish Parliament was strongly opposed to its own extinction. In the end, Pitt, or Pitt's agents in Ireland, prevailed on the majority of the members to accept the scheme. The owner of a borough received £15,000 compensation for the loss of his property, and many borough-owners were given peerages as payment for supporting the Union. Finally the **Act of Union** was carried by forty-six votes, and received the king's assent in August, 1800. On January 1st, 1801,—exactly a century before the foundation of the Australian Commonwealth,—Great Britain and Ireland became one country, in so far as a single Parliament could make them one.

15. **Catholic Emancipation.** Pitt had allowed it to be understood in Ireland that if the Union came about, he would support Catholic emancipation; he intended to admit Catholics to Parliament, to provide out of the public funds for the Catholic clergy, and to modify, if not do away with, the tithe system, by which an impoverished Catholic peasantry was forced to pay for the maintenance of a church they hated. Unhappily the king was opposed to this; and though he had now no legislative power, had still much influence. But George III., old, blind, and half-mad, would not have been an insuperable obstacle; Pitt, however, found that the nation sided with the king

in his hatred of Catholicism. Seeing that the day for Catholic emancipation had not yet come, Pitt saved his honour with the Irish people by resigning. If his schemes had succeeded, incalculable good would have been done: the Union would have been a real union of hearts, and not merely a political tie.

16. During the remainder of George III.'s reign the question was allowed to smoulder: after his death it broke again into flame. The Catholics had now an eloquent champion in Daniel O'Connell—the Liberator, as he was called,—a brilliant Irish lawyer and a devout Catholic. He was the leading spirit in the great Catholic Association, formed in 1823 to support emancipation. This Association was dissolved in 1825, when Canning, a friend of emancipation, became a member of the ministry; it was revived in 1828, when the Tory ministry of Wellington and Peel came into power. The Tories were, as a party, against the Catholics, the Whigs were in favour of their claims. The County of Clare returned O'Connell as their representative, though they knew that as a Catholic he could not take his seat in the House of Commons. This brought matters to a head; Wellington believed that further resistance to the Catholic claims would bring about civil war, from which the great soldier shrank; and the ministry, to the disgust of the Tories, but to their own everlasting honour, brought in a Bill throwing open Parliament and almost all offices of State to the Roman Catholics. The Bill became law in 1829. It affected, of course, a large body of Englishmen as well as the majority of Irishmen; for from the English Catholics even the voting-power had hitherto been withheld. The Act did not mean complete relief for the Irish

Catholics, since the English Church established in Ireland continued to wring its tithes from the Catholic people. But the passing of this Act was a memorable event in the progress toward liberty, for it embodied the great principle that a man's religious belief should be no bar to the full exercise of his political rights: that all men, however their creeds may differ, are politically equal, have an equal right to a voice in the government of their country.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CONSTITUTION OF AN AUSTRALIAN STATE.

1. **The Constitution** of any State simply means *the way it is governed*. The Australian States have all adopted pretty much the same method of government; or at least, the points of difference between their constitutions are small and unimportant compared with their points of similarity. We need not therefore consider each State separately; we shall take one as typical of all, and that one shall be Victoria.

2. Victoria, then, is one of those colonies to which Britain long ago granted self-government. We now understand what self-government means. We mean that the country is governed by a committee, or Parliament, chosen by the whole people and representing the majority of the people. This Parliament is divided into two Houses, an Upper and a Lower. These two Houses make the laws of Victoria, and those laws are carried into effect by a Cabinet of

Ministers chosen from both Houses, and representing the party which has the majority in the Lower House. At the head of the State is the Governor, who is sent out by the king to represent him, to act for him, in this distant part of his dominions.

3. It is clear, then, that the Constitution of Victoria is modelled very closely indeed on the British Constitution. Like Britain, we have government by the majority of the people; like Britain, we have a Parliament consisting of two Houses; like Britain, we have the party-system, and a ministry representing the more powerful party in the State. The likeness is made more complete by our having someone to represent the king. It shows how skilfully the British have applied themselves to the problem of government; that not only the British colonies, but almost all the civilized nations of the world, have copied more or less faithfully the British Constitution.

4. **How the Laws are made.** Parliament makes the laws of Victoria; not the Upper House, nor the Lower, but both Houses. When a member of either House wishes a certain course to be taken or a certain rule to become law, he writes out his proposal, and reads it to the house of which he is a member. In this first stage it is called a Bill. There is generally no opposition to this "First Reading," as it is called, because the House has not yet had time to consider whether the Bill is good or bad. The Bill is now printed and handed round among the members, who have had some days to read it and think it over. Then it is read a second time; and it is on the second reading that the debate occurs. The member who proposed it makes a speech to explain why it is desir-

able; another member makes a speech to show why it should not be accepted; other speeches follow, for and against the Bill. When the debate is over,—and it may last for many days,—the House is asked to *vote*, to show whether it considers the Bill *as a whole* is a good one. If a majority of the members vote for it, it is said to have “passed the second reading.” The House now takes the Bill part by part, clause by clause, and discusses each clause separately. If a member thinks one clause might be bettered, he proposes an “amendment” on that clause, and the House votes on each amendment. After all the amendments or alterations proposed have been either agreed to or rejected, the Bill “passes its third reading.” It may now be a very different Bill from what it was when its proposer had it printed, because the House may have made some alteration in each clause. But in its main purpose, of course, it remains the same.

5. As thus amended, it is taken now to the other House, where it has to go through the same process. The majority in this House may not like the Bill, in which case they “throw it out”; in other words, they refuse to allow it to become law. Or they may like it on the whole, but object to certain parts of it; in that case they “amend” it in these points. Then, if they pass the Bill, it must go, with the new amendments, back to the House from which it came, where these new amendments have to be discussed. If this House thinks it can accept the amendments made by the other House, then the Bill has passed both Houses of Parliament; but, even now, it is still only a Bill, not a law. It has to get the assent of the king, through his representative, the governor. That is,

the sovereign, as well as both Houses of Parliament, has to pass the Bill. But, now-a-days, the sovereign never refuses to agree to anything that Parliament may decide, so we may say that, if a Bill passes both Houses of Parliament, it becomes an "Act of Parliament," and takes its place among the laws of the land, and must be obeyed by every citizen.

6. **Use of an Upper House.** We see, then, that, generally speaking, a law may originate in either House, and may be thrown out by either House: so that it is possible for one House to prevent the will of the other from being carried into effect. In English history, we find the House of Lords, over and over again, standing in the way of the House of Commons, refusing to pass Bills which the House of Commons had set its heart on passing. This cannot fail to suggest the question, what is the use of having two Houses? In the matter of the Reform Bill of 1832, the House of Lords ventured to oppose the House of Commons, which represented the will of the whole nation. How is it, then, that a nation, which has fought for and won the right of self-government, has not long ago done away with a House which could oppose its will, and which is not representative of it in any sense? And why is it that we in Victoria, with the belief that self-government is the only form of government for free men, and although we had no peers to make up a House of Lords, have yet deliberately set up an Upper House in imitation of the House of Lords?

7. The House of Lords is, for the most part, hereditary, not elective: that is to say, a man does not obtain a seat in it by being chosen by the people, but simply by succeeding to his father's title when his

father dies. Members of the House of Commons know that there will be a new election before long, and that, if they wish to remain in Parliament, they will have to go back to their electorates, and get themselves re-elected: they know that if they do not in the meantime rule the nation as the nation wishes to be ruled, when the next election comes they will be *dismissed*—that is, they will not be elected again. Thus the House of Commons is responsible to the nation, and can be dismissed by the nation. But the nation has no power to dismiss the Lords; they are not elected by the people, and are, therefore, not dependent on the people's will; and so they have no reason to be timid about resisting the people's will if they think it right to do so.

8. Now the British people have had the wisdom to see that it is not always good to get their own way at once, and that it is beneficial to have a House not dependent on their pleasure, a House which will dare sometimes to resist their wishes. The business of the House of Commons is to do the bidding of the people; but the bidding of the people only means, as we have seen, the bidding of the majority, and the majority is not always the wisest class of people. Sometimes the majority clamour for a law which would not really be a good law, and the House of Commons might be apt to pass that law hurriedly because it saw that the nation wanted it. This is where the House of Lords is useful; it is a *checking* or *steadying* power; it prevents the Lower House from taking a hasty step or passing a law without sufficient thought. And though, in the long run, the Lower House can always get its way if the nation insist on it, yet the House of Lords can delay the process, and so give people time

to think the matter over. An American writer has called the Upper House "the saucer into which we pour our cup of tea to cool it."

9. **The Legislative Council.** In Victoria there is no House of Lords, because there are no lords; that is, no body of men whose titles descend to their sons, and who by their possession of a title have a seat in Parliament. But those who framed the Victorian constitution saw that some substitute for the House of Lords was desirable, so they devised an Upper House which in many ways resembles the House of Lords. This is called, in Victoria, the Legislative Council, and it differs from the Lower House in this, that whereas almost anyone can be chosen to sit in the Lower House, only those possessing some property can become members of the Upper; that whereas almost anyone can vote in the elections for the Lower House, only those possessing some property have votes for the Upper; and that while the members of the Lower House have to retire or be re-elected every three years, there is never a general election for the Upper House. The arrangement is that only a few members of the Upper House have to seek re-election at one time: the House, *as a whole*, has never to be elected, and therefore it can never, *as a whole*, be dismissed. The two great differences between the two Houses are—(a) the Upper House does not represent the whole people, but only a section, and (b) the Upper House, through its different system of election, is not so dependent on the people's will as the Lower. It is not liable to be dismissed every time it opposes the people's will, and in this way it is intended to exercise the same influence on the government of Victoria as the House

of Lords exercises on the government of Great Britain—a steady, slowing, checking influence.

10. The Lower House, corresponding to the House of Commons in England, is called in Victoria the **Legislative Assembly**. We have seen that Bills might originate in either House: there is one kind of Bill, however, which can originate only in the Assembly, and that is the money-bill, the Bill dealing with taxation or with the spending of the money obtained by taxation. Hence the Assembly, like the House of Commons, has the sole control of the national purse. The Assembly represents the whole people, for almost every grown-up man in the country—every man who is not a lunatic and not a criminal—has a vote for the Assembly. As the whole country is taxed, it is only fair that the whole country should control the spending of the money, through the House which is responsible to the country. We have seen the importance of this point in the struggle between Parliament and the Crown in Great Britain.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH.

1. **Dual Citizenship.** Everyone who lives in Australia is now a citizen of two States. First, he is a citizen of the particular State in which he lives—of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, West Australia, or Tasmania; and in the second place he is a citizen of the Australian Commonwealth, which is made up of those six States.

This is not really a new or unfamiliar idea—the idea of a man belonging to two States at once; for everyone knows that we can be members of a school cricket club without ceasing to be members also of the school; that in fact we cannot belong to the cricket club unless we also belong to the school. Just so, no man can now be a citizen of one of the Australian States without being also a member of the Commonwealth of Australia.

2. Those who have read the history of Australia, will remember that both Victoria and Queensland were once parts of New South Wales. It is not much more than 50 years since Victoria became a separate State, and the separation of Queensland took place nine years later; yet now we see these three States once more united under the Commonwealth. Is this a confession that the separation was a mistake? By no means. Victoria and New South Wales were 50 years ago *one* State; they will never be one State again. True, they have united: but in such a way that they remain, and so far as we can see, always will remain, *separate States*.

3. The truth is that, in any large society, there are always two forces at work — which we may call, shortly, the “separating” and the “joining” forces.* We may see the former force at work in the British Isles to-day, where a great many people wish Ireland to separate from England and Scotland, and to be governed by a parliament of its own. It was this separating force which made the Victorians cut themselves loose from New South Wales; and the same force finds its expression in *Local Government*,

*Garrahan (*Coming Commonwealth*, p. 20), calls them the “centrifugal and centripetal” forces.



Photo, Kerry & Co.

The Hon. J. C. Watson.
Third Prime Minister of the Commonwealth.

by which every shire and every town in Australia has its own Council to manage its own affairs.

4. But in these six separate States, with their separate Parliaments, and Cabinets, and governors, the joining force gradually began to make itself felt. It began to be perceived that all of them had many common interests and common dangers, and when that is so, some kind of union is very much to be desired. And so Australian statesmen set themselves more and more resolutely to find some kind of union that would satisfy the needs of the country. They had to keep two facts in mind: one was that the Australian States were quite determined to remain separate States; the other was that they desired to act unitedly. That is, the joining force and the separating force were both to be allowed to act. How could these States be bound together under one government, and yet retain their separate governments?

5. The solution was found in **Federation**; a kind of union of which Switzerland, Canada, and the United States of America already furnished examples. The principle of federation is, roughly, this. In all matters which concern *all* the States—where united action is necessary, where, in fact, *union is strength*—there is one central government, which makes and carries out laws dealing with such matters. But in all matters where union is not necessary, where each State may safely be left to manage for itself, the separate governments continue to be supreme. "How," someone may ask, "are we to belong to two States?—for two States mean two governments, and how can we tell which laws to obey, the laws passed by the State government, or those passed by the

Commonwealth government?" The answer is—obey *both*; for the two governments do not make laws about the same things. The Victorian Parliament still manages the affairs of Victoria, the Queensland Parliament still manages the affairs of Queensland. The Commonwealth Parliament does not deal with the affairs of New South Wales, or Queensland, or Victoria; it deals only with such affairs as concern the whole Australian nation.

6. What these affairs are has been clearly written down in the Constitution of the Commonwealth; but we can see for ourselves, if we think, in what particulars it is useful to have a central government, in what ways Union is Strength.

(a) The weakest nation in Europe, we may safely say, could easily beat Britain in war, if the British army consisted simply of separate regiments, each under its own commander, with his own notion of how the war should be conducted, and if there were no communication between the different commanders. Clive would probably not have won Plassey if the enemy's army had not been disunited by treachery. History furnishes a thousand examples of weakness springing from disunion. For purposes of **defence**, *union is strength*.

(b) The farmers of Victoria used to make butter each on his own farm, but nowadays there are butter-factories in all dairying districts. To these the farmers who live near bring their milk. In the factories, the best butter-making machinery is used—machinery which no single farmer could possibly afford to buy. And so the butter is made on a large scale, and is carried out of the district in large quantities; the cost of production and the cost of

carrying to where it is wanted are both reduced, and the farmers gain. This kind of union pays the farmers, and it pays the public. But, indeed, every trading company is an expression of the same truth—a truth exemplified by the merchant-gilds and craft-gilds of which we have already spoken—that in commerce, union is strength. These two things, Defence and Commerce, are the principal matters deal with by the Commonwealth Parliament.

7. **Federal Constitution.** The Constitution of the Commonwealth is modelled closely on the Constitutions of the separate States,—that is, on the British Constitution. Thus, there is a representative of the king, the governor-general of Australia; there are two Houses of Parliament, both elected by the people; and there is a Cabinet to do the will of this Parliament, made up of ministers who represent the majority in the Lower House. But of course the Federal ministers are named differently from the State ministers; for instance, the Federal Cabinet contains a Minister of Defence, whereas the State Cabinets have none; that is because defence is one of the things the Commonwealth Parliament manages for the whole of Australia and Tasmania. The Post Office is also a Commonwealth concern; so the post-master-general is a Federal minister. The Minister of Customs is another important member of the Federal Cabinet, for the collection of customs duties is one of the principal matters controlled by the Commonwealth government. There is also, of course, a Federal Treasurer to deal with the spending of the money so collected, and a Federal Prime Minister who is responsible for the acts of the Cabinet as a whole.

8. A curious and delicate question, which gave much trouble to those who framed the Constitution of the Commonwealth, was this: Is Parliament to be elected by the people, or by the States? Are we to treat all men as equal, or all the States? We may not see the meaning of this at once, but if we look into it closely, we perceive its importance. If the Commonwealth is to be governed by the people,—that is, of course, by the majority,—then it is plain that New South Wales, with a population of nearly a million and a half, must be given far more power than Tasmania, which has only about 172,000 people. If, on the other hand, the Commonwealth is to be governed by the States, that means that Tasmania must send as many members to Parliament as New South Wales. It is obvious that neither of these ways would be quite just. It would be plainly unjust that 172,000 people, because they happened to live in Tasmania, should have as big a share of power as a million and a half who happened to live in New South Wales. That would mean that a voter living in Tasmania would have *eight times* the share in governing the country that a voter in New South Wales had. And, on the other hand, if power went by population only, then the two large States, New South Wales and Victoria, would have between them more power than all the other States put together. Plainly, we could hardly expect small States to join a union in which the two largest States, if they agreed, could have it all their own way.

9. The statesmen who drew up the Constitution of the United States of America had exactly the same problem to solve. They had to face, on the one hand, the general conviction that the will of the majority

ought to prevail, and on the other, the refusal, on the part of small or thinly-populated States, to join the Union unless they were given equal power with the larger and more populous States. The expedient they hit upon was a remarkable piece of political ingenuity. They were of course familiar with the British system of two Houses of Parliament; and they decided to keep this system, but to fit it to new uses. They decided to make the Lower House meet the demand that the will of the majority should prevail, and to make the Upper House meet the demand that all the States should have equal power.

10. This plan has been followed in the Constitution of our Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Parliament consists of an Upper House—the Senate, and a Lower—the House of Representatives. The Senate represents the States; all the States send the same number of members to the Senate, so that in this House Tasmania is as strong as New South Wales or Victoria. The House of Representatives represents the nation: to it each state sends a number of members proportioned, as nearly as possible, to its population; so that in this House Tasmania is not nearly so strong as New South Wales or Victoria.

11. To show how this works:—Suppose some Bill were being discussed in the Senate, and suppose the members chosen by Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia, and West Australia voted *for* the Bill, and those chosen by Victoria and New South Wales voted *against* it. Each state sends six members to the Senate: so there would be twenty-four members *for* and twelve *against* the Bill. Thus it would be carried, and would, if the Senate had its way, become law; and yet it would be against the will of the majority of



Opening of the First Parliament of the Commonwealth.
By H R,H. the Duke of Cornwall and York, now King George V.

the Australian people, for Victoria and New South Wales have together a greater number of people than the other four States put together.

12. But in the House of Representatives, when Victoria and New South Wales send forty-nine members between them, the other four states together send only twenty-six. Here then, supposing the members voted in the same way, the members representing the two large States would beat the rest by twenty-three votes. Thus the representatives of the majority of the Australian nation form an actual majority in this House. And as a Bill has to be approved by *both Houses* before it becomes law, it is evident that, by this plan, every law which is made must be desired not only by a majority of the whole population, but also by a majority of the States. In this fact lies the great principle of Federation; for Federation is just a compromise between the idea of separate States and the idea of one undivided nation.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

1. In dealing with the Australian Commonwealth, we spoke of two forces which are felt in every State—the joining and the separating force. We may put this in another way: we may say that while there are some affairs which everyone recognises to be a matter of concern to the whole nation, there are other affairs which concern only some particular locality. The former affairs must of course be dealt with by a

Central Government—a ruling body which represents the whole State. The other affairs cannot be dealt with—or at least cannot be *well* dealt with—by the central government; it would be difficult for the central government to understand the need of each particular district, more difficult still to satisfy those needs. But, happily, it is not necessary that such affairs should be so dealt with, because they can be excellently managed by local governing bodies. Hence arises *Local Government*.

2. To cure some pains, the physician may give his patient a medicine which affects the whole body; but in the case of a cut or a burn, we do not think of using such medicine, but apply healing drugs to the spot where the pain is felt; we employ “local treatment.” It is the same in that other organism which we call the State; some evils require legislation which will affect the whole State, some call for local treatment only. And it is a principle in most modern States, that local treatment ought as far as possible to be applied by local governing bodies. It would be very awkward if, whenever a street in Ballarat needed repairing, the matter had to be referred to a Parliament sitting in Melbourne; and even if we had a central Parliament large enough to deal with all the streets of all the towns in the State, yet it is evident that the people who live in Ballarat must always know far better than any Parliament in Melbourne what streets need repairing in their town. Let Ballarat mend its own streets,—that is the principle of local government.

3. We may bring out the distinction clearly by looking at the history of Ancient Greece. At first we are tempted to say that there was no such thing as

central government, for we find no assembly to deal with the affairs of Greece as a whole. Athens was governed by its own assembly, Sparta by its own assembly; and at first we are inclined to wonder how the Greeks can have got on without a government of the whole State. But when we look closer, we perceive that Greece never was a State at all. The distinction between local and central government did not exist among the Greeks; the Athenian assembly dealt with the affairs of the city, but it also dealt with the affairs of the State, for *the city was the State*. Greece was thus not one large State, but a collection of little "City-States," with no political bond of union whatsoever. It was because they were thus disunited, and therefore incapable of opposing a united front to a common foe, that the Greeks, who seemed by character and intellect fitted to found one of the enduring empires of the world, were swept away so easily by the Romans.

4. And so it was with the German tribes from among whom our Saxon ancestors came. As we have seen, the free men of each settlement managed the affairs of that settlement; no other form of government was known to them. Each settlement was a State in itself. Adjoining settlements might belong to the same race, speak the same language, worship the same gods; but it did not occur to them to unite in obedience to the same ruler. Germany was thus, in those early times, not one great State as it is now, but a great collection of very small States. The distinction between local and central government did not exist among them; but to us, in whose minds the distinction is so clear-cut, it seems that with them

local government was all-in-all, central government non-existent.

5. But the separate tribes found it necessary at last, if they were to remain independent, to act unitedly in face of a common danger. To the separate tribes in England, this necessity soon became pressing; in self-defence they had to combine into one State; a central government had to be formed. When the Danes first came to England, they met with a feeble resistance, because the English tribes were disunited, and therefore weak. But the danger soon began to weld them together; and in their resistance under the leadership of Alfred, we find the first really *national* movement. But the welding process was not complete; the different kingdoms of England still remained more or less separate units; and this was the cause of the weakness which made the Norman Conquest a comparatively easy task. Then, at last, under William the Conqueror, England had a strong *central government*, and became a modern State.

6. We saw (in Chapter I.) that the modern State is founded on military allegiance. It was the pressure of war that first made the separate English tribes combine for common action; it is the danger of war that holds the separate parts of a State together, in allegiance to a common government. That is to say, the possibility of war makes central government absolutely necessary. Were it not for that possibility, a nation of separate cities, each governed by itself, like the Greek cities, might exist and flourish: but so long as war is possible, a nation without a central government could not exist as an independent nation for a week.

7. But if central government is absolutely essential to a State's existence, local government, as we have seen, is also very necessary if the State is to be happy and prosperous. Some States in modern times have failed to see this, and have tried to put all the affairs of the country into the hands of a central authority. Not long ago France carried this idea of *centralisation*, as it is called, to absurd lengths; the result was mismanagement and unhappiness. All the great modern States now recognise that there are many things which each town or district ought to be left to manage for itself.

8. As an example of a State in which the principle of local government is fully recognised, let us take the British Empire itself. If the affairs of Britain's colonies were managed by the Colonial Secretary from his office in London, we should call the system "centralisation." Instead of that, all the more important colonies have been granted self-government: they have constitutions of their own, and parliaments of their own, and Britain leaves to them the entire management of their own affairs. That is the principle of local government shewing itself, and it shows itself again in the constitution of the Australian Commonwealth; for here, as we have seen, there is a central governing body to deal with such matters as concern all the States, but each State has its own Parliament to attend to its own affairs. The separation of Victoria from New South Wales, in 1851, was a triumph for Local Government. The federation of the Australian States, fifty years later, was not so much a triumph for Central Government as a recognition that both forms of government are necessary.

9. But the term Local Government is not usually employed in this wide sense. When we use the term in ordinary conversation, we mean the system of dividing up a country into counties or departments of some kind, and making these and the larger towns "units of government": that is, the central government of the State hands over its authority in certain matters to a ruling body in each such division or town.

10. In England, as we already know, local government came before central government, and continued to exist after a central government was firmly established. We have noticed that William the Conqueror retained the old system of shire, hundred, etc. But the shire, the hundred, and the town were simply units of local government; and the modern local governing bodies—the county council and the town council—are the lineal descendants of the shire-moot and town-moot of Saxon times.

11. There is no need to trace again the steps by which the English towns won their way to freedom, to the right of self-taxation, and the right of self-government; we remember, too, how the victory of the craft-gilds over the merchant-gilds secured for the towns a really popular form of government. It would take us too long to recount in detail how that popular form of government came to be lost; it is enough to say that the governing powers gradually slipped back into the hands of the richer citizens. At the time of the great Reform Act of 1832, the right of voting in elections for towns councils got into the hands of "close corporations"—that is, of small rings composed of the wealthier merchants. The great majority of the rate-payers, those who paid the taxes by which

the affairs of the town were carried on—had no voice in the town government. The management by these self-chosen rulers was scandalously bad; they used the public money for purposes of their own, sold appointments, and regularly put up to auction the seat in Parliament to which the town had a right. When the Reform Act was passed, a committee was appointed to inquire into these abuses; and it was soon seen that the “little Parliaments” of the towns stood in as great need of reform as the Parliament of the realm had. Accordingly, one of the first measures of the reformed Parliament was the **Municipal Reform Act** of 1835. This gave to all the large towns a system of government by *town councils*, whose members were elected by the votes of all the rate-payers; thus applying to local government the great political principle, that those who provide the money have a right to choose their own governing body. It was long before the same principle was extended to the rural districts; but at last, in 1888, the **Local Government Act** established *county councils*, elected in the same way as the town councils, throughout the country. The passing of this Act marks the completion of the system of local government in England.

12. This system, as it at present exists in England, is rather complicated by the number of governing bodies varying in the extent of the territory ruled by them. Thus, in towns there are corporations, town councils, borough councils, and local boards; in the country there are county councils, district councils, parish councils, parish meetings, etc. These different bodies come sometimes into conflict with one another, and there is no doubt that the whole system will

before long be simplified, made less clumsy and more efficient. We can study local government in a much simpler form in one of our Australian States. Victoria, we may say roughly, is subdivided into shires, and each shire has a council of its own. (In Australia the shire is not the same thing as the county: there are 37 counties in Victoria, but 134 shires.) Besides the shires, however, there are 60 "municipalities"—called cities, towns, or boroughs—each of which has a council of its own, and is independent of the council of the shire in which it happens to be situated. Thus, if you live in a town, such of your affairs as come under the sway of local government, are administered by the town council; but if you live outside the town boundaries, such affairs are in the hands of the shire council.

13. The councillors are chosen from among the rate-payers by the rate-payers themselves. The rates—the taxes by which the public expenses of a town or shire are met—are paid by those who own or occupy houses or land in the town or shire. Thus we notice that those who vote in a council election are not quite the same people as those who vote in an election for Parliament. Suppose, for instance, that a man who owns a house in a certain town has a grown-up son living with him, and another man lodging with him: both the son and the lodger have votes for Parliament; but, as neither pays rates, neither has a vote in the election of town councillors. Again, in voting for Parliament, everyone has a vote, and nobody has more than one vote; in voting for councils, you have a number of votes corresponding

to the amount of the rates you pay, that is to the property you own or occupy.

14. The councillors choose from among themselves a chairman, called in towns the *Mayor*, in shires the *President of the Shire*. The mayor has other duties besides that of presiding at meetings of the council: he calls together public meetings when asked to do so by a sufficient number of citizens; he presides at all public meetings held in his town; when a distinguished visitor comes to the town, he is welcomed by the mayor; and so on. He is, during the year in which he holds office, the public representative of the town.

15. The government of the town is carried on in a building known as the Town Hall. In this hall, which is the property of the town, the council holds its meetings; here the various officers of the council have their rooms; and here, as a general rule, the great public meetings of the town are held. It is the centre of municipal life, and corresponds to the "moot hill" round which our German ancestors met to carry on *their* form of local government.

16. Now we have got an idea of the machinery of local government; what work does it do? What are the duties of the town councillors? It is impossible for us to do more than glance at the more important of their many duties. Let us remember that the local governing body is not a supreme power like Parliament; it merely exercises whatever authority Parliament likes to entrust to it, and Parliament may at any moment enlarge that authority or curtail it. Parliament may at any moment step in and forbid some course of action which the town council has decided on; and we very often find the town council

asking permission from Parliament before embarking on some great undertaking. For instance, the Liverpool council not long ago spent £2,000,000 on a gigantic enterprise—the bringing of water to the city from a lake in Wales. Before doing so, permission had to be obtained from Parliament.

17. We shall notice only three of the many duties of the town council. The first in importance is the care of the public health. This is of course a much more important matter in large towns than it is in country districts; for where people live close together, infectious diseases are apt to spread with terrible rapidity. To cope with such diseases the council takes various measures. The medical men of the town are required to report all infectious cases occurring in their practice; and one medical man is employed by the council as health officer. The council takes his advice in matters pertaining to the health of the town. But the council does more than try to stop the spread of infectious diseases: it goes to the root of the matter and tries to remove the causes of disease. The most fruitful causes of disease in towns are over-crowding, bad drainage, and filth. The council deals with all of these: it pays special attention to the housing of the poor—one of the greatest problems of every great city. It spends large sums of money in supplying a good system of drainage. And it endeavours to impress upon all the necessity of cleanliness in domestic matters: to give to ignorant people an idea of the first principles of health. It pays an inspector to look after the sanitary arrangements of all houses; and if anyone is so ignorant or so careless as to allow decaying vegetable matter to accumulate in his yard, the

council, when it is informed, requires him to remove the litter without delay.

18. A plentiful supply of good water has done much to lessen the danger of an epidemic in our modern cities, and therefore the care of the water-supply is one of the most important duties of the town council. Large sums of money have to be spent on this. A reservoir has often to be built; an aqueduct has to be constructed to bring the water from this reservoir to the town; and pipes have to be laid down to conduct the water to each house. To meet the expense of all this a special "water-rate" is levied.

19. The care of the streets is another duty. In the country, we often see roads which in winter are almost impassable for mud, and in summer are ankle-deep in dust. In large towns where there is a constant stream of traffic along the streets such a state of things would be intolerable: to prevent it the streets have to be paved. This is done either with blocks of stone, blocks of wood, or broken stone, called macadam; and this paving, strong as it is, has to be constantly renewed. The channels along the sides of the street, and the footpaths, also require careful supervision. The surface of the street has to be watered in summer, and in some towns it is sanded in winter to prevent the horses from slipping. The streets have to be lighted with gas or electricity. The town council pays to have all these things done, and it is expected to see that they are done well.

20. These are only a few samples of the work that our councillors are expected to do. In England the local bodies have a greater number of duties than in Australia; the town council controls the police force

of the town, the county council controls the schools, the lunatic asylums, etc. We ought to add that, both in Britain and Australia, the local council has the power of saying what the local rates shall amount to—within limits fixed by Parliament—and has to see that those rates are paid. That is to say, the shire and town has the right of *self-taxation*.

21. All this suggests one remark in conclusion. We all agree that local government is a good thing—that it is better for a town to manage its own affairs than to have them managed for it by a Parliament sitting perhaps a hundred miles away. Can we not carry the principle farther?—can we not say, that it is better for *each of us* to manage his own affairs than to have them managed for him by a Parliament, however well-meaning that Parliament may be? Britons in the past have greatly resented all interference with their private lives—all attempts to make them live exactly as the governing body thinks they ought to live. Such interference may prevent some harm being done, but it does great harm itself, by weakening the spirit of self-reliance which has made Britain great. It is better that we should not get into the habit of looking to the State for help; it is better that we should throw ourselves whole-heartedly into all our enterprises, feeling that success depends on ourselves, and that the State will neither help us nor hinder us. Some people even go so far as to say that the State exists simply to protect life and property, and that it should do that and nothing more. This is going too far; it would mean, of course, the abolition of all public libraries, museums, and picture galleries, by which the State gives to its citizens the opportunity of leading wiser and nobler

lives. But a constant dependence on State help in all our undertakings would most surely lead to a weakening of the national character, and ultimately to national decay.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

1. In Great Britain, and throughout the British Empire, the press is free. By the freedom of the press we do not mean that any man may print, in book or newspaper, exactly what he pleases, irrespective of its effect on other people. If that were so, it would be easy for a man, in a country where the press is free, to print in a newspaper a number of malicious lies about his neighbour, sufficient perhaps to ruin him in his business. You may inflict as deadly an injury by a newspaper article as by a revolver bullet; and, as there must be laws to prevent people from injuring others with revolvers, so there must be laws to restrain people from using this other weapon in a wrong way. We have seen already that without obedience to laws no social life is possible; that liberty in the sense of lawlessness is infinitely worse than tyranny. But throughout the British Empire, the press is completely free in the true sense of freedom, for we are free to print what we please so long as we do not use our freedom to injure or annoy others. If we do that, the law steps in and punishes us. This is not an interference with our right to freedom; it is a defence of the rights of others.

2. The liberty of the press has been described as

“ of all liberties the most precious, and the surest guardian of the rest.”* So true is this, that if we wish to find out whether a country is really free, we have only to enquire whether its press is free. If its newspapers are only allowed to print what the government pleases, we may be quite sure it is governed tyrannically in every other way as well. But if its newspapers are allowed to print what they please, we feel at once that tyranny is impossible in that country. So it is only natural to expect that a great revolution which frees a country from tyranny will set free the press; and in England this was what happened. The Revolution of 1688 marked the triumph of Parliament and the overthrow of the Stuart tyranny; and, in 1695, the press became free.

3. **Prynne.** It was chiefly on matters of religion that the Stuart tyranny actively interfered with the liberty of the press. One instance of their interference must suffice. When Charles I. was governing Britain through his ministers, Strafford and Laud, in their zeal for the Church of England these rulers forbade the Puritans to publish anything. Among those who disobeyed was a Puritan lawyer, William Prynne. As a penalty for his disobedience, Prynne was fined £5000, was forbidden to practice as a lawyer any more, was made to stand in the pillory, had his ears cut off, was branded in the cheek with a red-hot iron, and was finally thrown into a remote and lonely dungeon. The severity of the punishment shows how important it is for a king who is trying to destroy a country's freedom to destroy first the freedom of the press.

*Goldwin Smith.

4. **Milton.** We should naturally be prepared to find that when the Commonwealth came, the press was set free: but that was not so. Cromwell's government had too many enemies to allow perfectly unrestrained publication. In time of war, at the present day, it is found necessary for what is called martial law to step in and interfere, for the time being, with the liberty of the press: otherwise things might become known to the enemy which would help them in one way or another. Now the whole duration of the Commonwealth was really a time of war, and in that fact we may find an excuse for Cromwell's refusal to liberate the press. One of the great champions of British liberty, John Milton, did indeed come forward, and, in some of the noblest sentences in the language, plead with the Lords and Commons of England on behalf of a free press; and his book, "*Areopagitica*," has had a lasting influence on the public mind; but for the time it was unsuccessful.

5. **The Censorship.** When the Restoration took place, success seemed farther away than ever; for, in 1662, the censorship was established. This meant that, before anything could be printed, it had to be submitted to the censor, a servant of the Crown; and to print without his permission was illegal. That is to say, any criticism of the king's government, or anything in the slightest degree displeasing to the king or his ministers, had no chance of being printed unless its author took the risk of breaking the law. Enormous numbers of books and pamphlets continued to appear in defiance of the law, and severe punishments to be inflicted on offenders who were unlucky enough to be caught.

6. **Freedom of the Press.** The censorship was established only for a limited period, and had to be renewed from time to time. In 1695, Parliament allowed it to lapse, and did not renew it; and by this means the press became free. From this event we date the birth of the modern newspaper. The full effects of the liberation of the press were not foreseen by the Parliament which brought it about, nor were they felt till long afterwards. One effect, however, was immediate, and is worth noting.

7. **Results.** If anyone had asked Charles I. or James II. what would happen if the press were set free and no restraint whatever were imposed on publication, he would have been told that in that case a rebellion would be sure to occur, because all the enemies of the government would at once write, and print, and circulate violent attacks upon the king's rule, and would stir up the nation to revolt; that the only way for a king to keep his enemies in check was to restrain their tongues and pens. And when the press was actually set free many people were afraid that the attacks upon the government would become too violent to be allowed to continue. As a matter of fact, just the opposite result followed the liberation of the press, and we can easily see why. To print an attack upon the government had hitherto been a violation of the law. Now those who break the laws—even bad laws—are, taking them as a class, the worst class of men in the State. So that attacks upon the government had hitherto, as a general rule, been carried out by the worst men in the State. With the freeing of the press, the work of criticising the government passed into better hands, and was done in a more temperate and dignified manner. It

is now recognised that a vigilant and unrestrained press, so far from being the enemy of good government, is its most important friend.

8. Freedom of Reporting. We must not suppose, however, that the press had all its fetters struck off in one day. The governing body still resented any criticism of its actions, and again and again took active measures to suppress outspoken publications. And especially was the press curbed in the matter of parliamentary reporting. In its struggle with the Crown, the Parliament had developed a habit of secrecy. Unfortunately the habit remained after the power of the Crown was broken. As we have seen, Parliament, after its struggle with the Crown was over, entered upon its struggle with the rising spirit of the nation; having no longer to conceal its doings from the king, it endeavoured, with all its might, to conceal its doings from the public; and with this purpose it sternly forbade the publication of its debates, or of criticism of its actions, in the newspapers, and threatened to proceed with the utmost severity against printers and publishers who disobeyed. Many newspapers evaded the law by the curious expedient of reporting the debates as if they had taken place in some imaginary assembly; "The Gentleman's Magazine," for instance, published "The Debates of the Senate of Lilliput." Members' names, again, were not printed in full, but with the vowels left out: Pitt became "Mr. P.tt," Rockingham, "the M. rqu . s of R . ck . ngh . m." The House of Commons naturally resented such tricks, and in 1771 made the last serious attempt to prevent the reporting of debates. Onslow, in that year, proposed to prosecute the publishers and the printers of every

reporting newspaper. The proposal was adopted, and was carried out, but this success was won at the price of such universal opposition, that members perceived the uselessness of continuing the struggle, and from that time onward they abstained from taking any notice of the reporting of their speeches.

9. It was soon found that the influence of Parliament was greatly increased by publicity, and very soon both Houses, instead of jealously excluding reporters, were making special arrangements for their comfort and convenience. Hitherto men had come and listened to the debates, and then gone away and written down as much as they could remember; very incorrect reports were, of course, the result. But when reporting became lawful, the newspapers sent shorthand writers—men who could take down, word for word, the speech of the most rapid speaker. Hence the public were allowed to know exactly what each speaker said, instead of receiving a garbled account, containing very often a great deal that had not been said at all. Members quickly perceived that it was better for them to be reported accurately than to be misrepresented; and so reporters came to be a regular part of the machinery of Parliament.

10. The freedom of reporting has done much to bring Parliament into closer touch with the nation. It has increased the influence of Parliament to a remarkable degree; for the member of Parliament who makes a speech no longer addresses merely his few hundred fellow-members; he addresses the millions who read newspapers. On the morning after his speech, the substance of it, if not the exact words, may be had for a penny all over the country. When a British minister speaks in the House of

Commons, his arguments are cabled to the remotest parts of the British Empire; and we in Australia read, and are influenced by, his speech a few hours after its delivery. So reporting has increased the influence of Parliament on the nation; but it has also increased the nation's influence on Parliament. Every elector, if he reads his newspaper, knows exactly how his representative speaks and votes in the House. The whole country is able to keep a vigilant eye on the doings of all the members; and we can see at once that this fact gives the country a control over its Parliament such as was impossible when parliamentary debates were carried on in secret.

11. Freedom of Comment. But the newspapers are not only free to report the speeches of members, they are also free to criticise the actions of the government. This freedom was won, like the other, only gradually and by a severe struggle. In William III.'s reign, a pamphlet by no less a person than the King's friend Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, was ordered by Parliament to be burned by the common hangman. Early in Anne's reign Defoe (the author of "Robinson Crusoe") attacked the Tory party in a book: his book was burned, and he himself had to stand in the pillory for three days, and was then imprisoned for a year. At the close of the same reign, Steele published, in "The Crisis," an attack on the Tory party, then in power. He was at once impeached for "seditious utterances" and expelled from the House of Commons, of which he was a member. Early in George III.'s reign another member, John Wilkes, was expelled from the House, and afterwards imprisoned, because he had attacked

the government in a newspaper called the *North Briton*. His subsequent struggle with the government has given him, bad as his personal character was, an honourable place among the champions of free speech. The last great sufferer in the same cause was William Cobbett. At the beginning of the nineteenth century he was the publisher of a newspaper, the *Political Register*. It happened that some English soldiers mutinied: a German regiment assisted in suppressing the mutiny, and some of the Germans were told off to flog the ringleaders. Cobbett, the most violent of writers when his indignation was aroused, published a fierce attack on the authorities for allowing Germans to flog Englishmen. The Tory Government of the day prosecuted him on the usual charge—uttering a seditious libel. He was sentenced to pay a fine of £2000 and to suffer two years' imprisonment.

12. But such cases were rare; and, as early as 1741, David Hume had been able to write: "Nothing is more apt to surprise a foreigner than the extreme liberty which we enjoy in this country of communicating whatever we please to the public, and of openly censuring every measure entered into by the king or his ministers. If the ministers resolve on war, it is affirmed that, either wilfully or ignorantly, they mistake the interests of the nation; and that peace, in the present situation of affairs, is infinitely preferable. If the passion of the ministers lie towards peace, our political writers breathe nothing but war and devastation, and represent the conduct of the government as mean and pusillanimous."* Such

*Hume's *Essays: Of the Liberty of the Press*.

words were perhaps a slight exaggeration in the middle of the eighteenth century, but they are emphatically true at the beginning of the twentieth.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE DUTIES OF A CITIZEN.

1. Once upon a time (the story runs) the human race resolved to send a message to Mars; and in order to be heard at such an immense distance, it was decided that all the inhabitants of the earth, man, woman, and child, should at the self-same moment utter a loud shout. The time was agreed upon, and all the arrangements made: but when the hour struck no shout arose. When inquiries were made to find out the cause of the failure, it was discovered that everyone had decided privately that one voice more or less would make no difference amid such a tremendous noise, and had therefore resolved to be silent so as the better to hear the shout. The result was, that at the appointed moment there was such a silence on the earth as never had been before and never will be again.

Or here is another story with the same moral.

Some German villagers agreed to give their clergyman a present of a cask of wine, each person contributing one quart. The barrel was sent round from house to house, and the contributions were poured into it; when it was full it was sent to the house of the clergyman, who was much pleased by the gift, and invited the givers to come and have a glass of the wine with him. The guests arrived, glasses were brought with due ceremony, the tap was turned, and out flowed—pure water. The mystery was not explained till one of the contributors confessed that being a poor man and not having much wine to spare, he had thought that a quart of water would make no difference in such a large quantity of wine. The idea was good, but unfortunately all the other contributors had struck upon the same theory.

2. **Public Spirit.** Both of these stories point in the same direction; both present a vivid picture of the temptation which assails everyone when he is called upon to fulfil the duties of a citizen—the temptation to think that his own individual action, or inaction, is of no account one way or the other. “In so much wine,” we are apt to think, “it will make no perceptible difference if *my* little contribution consists of water.” True; but how if everyone else thinks the same, and acts accordingly? “Amid so many thousand votes, it will make no difference whether *my* vote be given or not.” True, perhaps; but if everyone thought the same, there could be no elections, and the self-governing State would be an impossibility. That such States exist and endure is due to the fact that the majority of citizens resist this temptation and are animated by *public spirit*. The term, public spirit, covers the whole duty of a citizen.



John Hampden (1591-1643).

3. Hampden.

It is, happily, very easy to find instances of this spirit in English history. John Hampden is a shining example. When so many people all round him were submitting to an illegal order and paying their Ship-

money, it may very well have occurred to Hampden that the resistance of one man would be of no avail; and he must certainly have clearly foreseen that resistance would mean endless trouble and expense to himself, and that it would be much easier and cheaper to pay the money and have done with it. But Hampden cast such considerations to the winds: he determined that, whoever submitted, he at least would resist that illegal demand to the last drop of his blood. We call his action public-spirited, because it is evident that had he been governed by a selfish spirit, he would have acted quite otherwise. He gave up his own ease and comfort for the sake of the nation, in order that a heritage of freedom might be handed down to those who were to come. In the end he gave his life in the same good cause; so that from the selfish point of view his effort was a failure; but it is on such failures that the success of a State is built.

4. We can put this in the form of a rule—a rule which covers all the actions of a citizen, and which admits of no exception. The first man who put water into the barrel would probably not have done so if he had taken time to ask himself the question, “What if all the others do the same?” And so, whenever we are in doubt as to whether an action is, or is not, the act of a good citizen, it will be well to ask ourselves what would happen if all our fellow-citizens acted in the way we think of acting. The whole duty of a citizen may be summed up in this rule:—*Act in such a way as, upon mature consideration, you think it would be good for the State that all the citizens should act.* Thus, we may be tempted to give our vote at a parliamentary election without taking the trouble to find out which candidate is the better man; but suppose we ask ourselves what would happen to the State if all its citizens were so careless. We see at once that a parliament so elected would not be likely to govern wisely—that, in fact, a State governed by such a parliament would be in a fair way to ruin. Or, again, we may see a way of saving money, or avoiding trouble, by evading a law: but we see at once that if all the citizens thought it right to evade the laws whenever it suited them, peace and order would be impossible. We shall be good citizens when, and only when, we act as we could wish all our fellow-citizens to act in similar circumstances.

5. Though this rule tells us nothing about what our particular duties as citizens are, yet it will serve to remind us of the spirit that should animate every citizen. If we forget the rule, and act in such a way that our example, if generally followed, would do harm to the State, consider in what position we place

ourselves. Our debt to the State is immensely greater than we are in the habit of realising. As we walk unmolested down a clean and orderly city street, we are apt to take its quietness for granted; it never occurs to us that things could be different. But things *would* be different, and enormously different, if it were not for the self-sacrifice of many past generations, and the continued strain of unselfish effort at the present moment. It never occurs to us as possible that someone may come down the same street and pack us off to prison without a trial because he has taken a fancy to a piece of land which we possess; and yet, what has made such arbitrary tyranny impossible, if not the self-sacrifice of hundreds of men, who have given their lives for the cause of our civil liberty? It never occurs to us that any moment a band of ruffians may come round the next corner and rob us, and even murder us; and yet what is to prevent such an occurrence? Only the patient efforts of those who have bequeathed us a system of law and order, the continued efforts of those who administer the laws in our land, the loyalty of the police who protect us, and the loyalty of the great mass of citizens to the laws under which we live. Who made the street on which we are walking? Who keeps the city in a healthy condition? A single walk down the street should reveal to us, if we keep our eyes open, a thousand ways in which we are indebted to the fact that we are members of a State. To the State we owe our continued existence in a condition above the condition of savages; and it may even be doubted if there exists a race of savages so low that they have not seen the necessity of some sort of society, some sort of State in fact.

6. It must be admitted, then, that the peace, and security, and comfort of our lives depends on the fact that we are members of a State; and that the very existence of that State is founded on the loyalty and public spirit of its members. If, then, we do not devote a similar loyalty and public spirit to the service of the State, we are taking advantage every day of the unselfishness of others without making any return. The man who cheats in business is taking advantage of the trustfulness of others; and this trustfulness arises from the fact that most men are honest and worthy of trust; he is thus using the honesty of others to make possible his own dishonesty. Could a meaner form of selfishness possibly be found? and yet, is it not exactly the position of a citizen, the member of a State, and owing his continued existence in peace and security to the unselfishness of others, who refuses to take his share in the duties by which that State is maintained? He is *cheating society*.

7. There are few in Australia, we may hope, who are not proud of their connection with Britain. There are few who can read unmoved the heroic history of that land, who can hear without a thrill the story of the Invincible Armada, or think without pride of Nelson or of Gordon, of Hampden or of Chatham. And we are all proud of the country in which we live, and hope with all our hearts that the young Australian nation will become a great nation, worthy of its great ancestry. But how does a nation become great? An American poet has answered that question in words which we should all learn by heart. "A great city," he says, "is that which has the greatest men and women; though it be a few ragged huts it is still the greatest city in the whole

world." A nation's greatness, that is, depends on the character of the individuals who make up that nation. A good system of government is useless without good citizens. The most perfect political machinery in the world will not turn foolish persons into a wise nation; nor will any imaginable number of idlers, by joining together and having a parliament, become an industrious and prosperous State. More especially is this the case in countries such as Australia, where we all have a voice in the government; such a country, of course, will be well or ill governed according as its citizens are well or ill fitted to govern. There is but one way, then, in which we can all help to make Australia great among the nations; and that is by becoming good citizens ourselves by finding out what the duties of a citizen are, and by loyally trying to fulfil those duties.

8. As every State rises to greatness or sinks to insignificance according as it is governed righteously and wisely, or wickedly and foolishly, it is obviously our first duty as citizens to learn to govern. "Stop a moment!" someone may say, "I have no intention of becoming a member of Parliament; I would rather begin with some humbler duty, as I am not going to govern the country." Oh, yes! you *are* going to govern the country; you are going to make the laws of the country, and you are going to manage the affairs of the country. If we have read this book with understanding, we cannot fail to see that the long struggle for liberty has resulted in just this,—that we are no longer governed by a king or his ministers, but by *ourselves*; it is you and I who make the laws and see that they are carried out properly. It is we who choose the men to do the actual work of

government, it is we who pay them for doing it, and it is we who turn them out if they do not do it as we think it ought to be done. We call this system Responsible Government, because the governing body is responsible to the whole nation for its actions, but the name might also serve to remind us that it is *we*—we who chose those men—who are in the end responsible for their actions. If the country is governed badly, and continues for any length of time to be governed badly, the blame rests with us, and the saving of the country rests with us.

9. We may think that by abstaining from voting at elections we can evade the responsibility of government; but it is not so: for what responsible government really comes to mean is—government by *public opinion*. You remember that long before the Reform Bill, long before the House of Commons represented the votes of a majority of the nation, public opinion was able to make itself felt with such strength that it forced the elder Pitt into power in the teeth of a hostile Parliament and a hostile king. And public opinion is far more powerful now than it was in the days of Pitt: it is now of supreme importance to a State that public opinion should be on the right side. Now, whether we vote or not, we have our opinions; and our opinions influence, whether we like it or not, the opinions of others; and moreover, our opinions go to make up the collective view of things which we call public opinion. If, then, it is of supreme importance to a State that its public opinion should be right opinion, then it is obvious—if we have not forgotten our great rule—that *our* duty is to see that our opinions are right opinions. We said the first duty of a citizen was to

learn to govern. We may now put the same thing another way: we may say that a citizen's first duty is to get into the way of forming right opinions on matters that concern the welfare of the State.

10. And how can we get into the way of forming right opinions? Let us answer this question by asking another. Why is it that in Britain, and Australia, and America, and almost all self-governing States, the State itself provides schools and teachers and insists that its young citizens shall go to school and be taught? One reason is, because the State sees that if it is to be governed by the majority of the people, it is necessary that the majority of the people should be capable of forming right opinions; that they should be persons of trained mind. The modern State sees that it simply cannot afford to take the risk of entrusting governing powers to a mass of ignorant persons. If the people are to govern, it is necessary that the people be educated; therefore the State provides the best education available, and insists that all its citizens shall take advantage of the education provided. Here, then, at last we arrive at a very plain and obvious duty: the duty of getting ourselves educated. By this we do not mean simply to obey the *letter* of the law by coming to school, but to obey the *spirit* of the law by doing our utmost when we get there. Every boy or girl who puts whole-hearted diligence into school work is not only learning to be a good citizen in the future, but is a good citizen already; for to obey the will of the State is to be a good citizen.

11. And when we leave school, we find that the State has trained our intelligence, but it has not furnished us with a set of opinions on matters that

concern the State's welfare. These we must form for ourselves as occasions rise. Our school has sharpened our intellects: it rests with ourselves to use them. It is hardly possible to speak too emphatically of the duty of *thinking*—especially when we grow old enough to have votes. For, consider once again: the greatness and prosperity of our country depend on wise government; wise government cannot be expected from a foolish Parliament; and how can we be sure of having a Parliament other than foolish if we choose our representatives thoughtlessly? We remember how Pitt, at a grave crisis in his country's history, came forward declaring that he could save the country, and that he was the only man who could; and how he kept his word. Now think what would have happened if that crisis had occurred in our own time, and if Pitt had had to stand for Parliament in one of our electorates; think what a tremendous responsibility would have rested with the voters in that electorate—what blame would have rested on them if they had rejected him, what splendid service they would have done the country by electing him. It is our duty so to exercise our minds on public affairs that we shall recognise a Pitt when we see one. Not to trouble about voting at all is, of course, a gross neglect of our duty as citizens; but it is better not to vote at all than to vote thoughtlessly.

12. Moreover, it is the duty of every citizen, in giving his vote, to consult the interests of the whole State. Suppose two candidates are before you for election; one of them has shown by his speeches that he possesses a true understanding of the needs of the country, and you think, from what you know of him, that his voice will always be given on the right side

in any question that may come before Parliament; the other has shown no particular wisdom, but he has promised to do his best to bring a railway to your town, which will greatly increase its prosperity. Which candidate is to have your vote? Apply our rule once more; think of what would happen if voters all over the country thought only of their own town or district, and nobody thought of the State as a whole; you see at once what sort of a Parliament would be the result. In giving our votes, we must rise above all narrow local considerations, and think only of the State. Loyalty to the State must at all times come before loyalty to the town or district in which we live.

13. We have put the duty of *thinking* first, because if we perform that duty we shall not be likely to neglect any others that are important. There is one other duty so important, that some may think it ought to come first: the duty of obedience to the laws of our country. The struggle, of which we have been tracing the steps, we have called the struggle for Freedom; but we might have called it by a longer name—the effort to make the will of the majority prevail. When a State is so governed that the will of the majority is always supreme in it, that State has got as near to liberty as it is possible to get—to the only kind of liberty possible to a State. Now the laws are simply the written expression of the will of the majority, so that by loyal obedience to the laws we are showing ourselves worthy of the freedom for which our fathers fought; and opposition to law is opposition to freedom! It does not matter in the least whether the law be a good or a bad one; we must obey it as long as it is the law. If it be a bad

one, let us by all means try and get it altered; let us point out its badness to our friends; let us try to influence public opinion against it; if it be truly an unjust law, we may be quite sure that in the end the majority of people will come round to our view of it, and Parliament will alter it. But until that happens we must obey it.

14. There is an excellent example of good citizenship in the history of Ancient Greece. Socrates, one of the best and wisest men that ever lived, a man who had spent his life in teaching wisdom and virtue to the young men of Athens, was accused of enmity to the national religion, tried by a jury of his fellow-citizens, and by a small majority condemned to death. In the interval between the trial and the carrying out of the sentence, his friends were allowed to visit him daily in the prison. At length some of his friends showed him a way of escape; they had planned it carefully, and there was no reason for him to be afraid of failure. He was aware that the charge on which he had been condemned was utterly untrue, and that he was not only undeserving of death, but deserving rather of a splendid reward from the State for a life spent in its service; and yet he declined to save his life by breaking the laws. He thought that no amount of good he might do in what remained to him of his life would counterbalance the harm of his example if he broke the laws of his State. And so he went to his death, an example for all time of the devotion to the public welfare which ought to animate every citizen.

15. We are not to suppose, however, that obedience to law is of itself enough to constitute good citizenship. It depends on the spirit in which one obeys

them. If a man refrains from breaking the law because he is afraid of being found out and punished, all we can say of him is that he is not a member of the criminal class; nothing more. There are plenty of people who go through life without a single illegal action, whom yet we should never call good citizens, because their motive is a selfish motive, and they do nothing from an unselfish desire for the public good. But when a man obeys the law because he reverences it as the will of his State, then we may say that he has at least the roots of good citizenship in him; the spirit of loyalty which makes him keep the law is likely to make him perform many other services to the State which are not required by the law.

16. For it is in such services that good citizenship consists—services done without hope of reward or fear of punishment—in unselfish devotion to the public good. It was not through hope of reward, but to save the country, that Pitt worked, though of course he had his reward,—and a greater reward than his countrymen could have given him,—in the satisfaction of feeling that he *had* saved the country. We cannot all save our country, but we can all serve it: the citizen can never find himself in a situation where there are no duties to do or to neglect. The boy who does his work well in school, the statesman who does his work well in the cabinet; the man who gives a large sum of money to a hospital, the woman who nurses a sick neighbour; the member of Parliament who tries to abolish an unjust law, the man who kicks from the pavement a piece of orange peel on which the next comer might slip; the soldier who fights bravely in war, the writer who risks his popularity by

opposing a war which he feels to be unnecessary; in great or little ways all these are good citizens. And you observe what is common to all these different cases: devotion to the good of others. We say that such devotion is at the root of good citizenship, because without such devotion the State could not exist. Look no farther than your own town: what sort of streets would you have, what sort of lighting, what sort of water-supply, and how long would your town remain clean and healthy, if it were not for the public spirit of those who have taken upon themselves, without hope of reward, the work of town councillors?

17. Enough has been said to make plain the principles which should govern the conduct of the citizen. The sum of the whole matter rests in one word—*loyalty*. It is loyalty to the State which has given us liberty by securing for us our present system of government. Doubtless that system is far from perfect; but if the same spirit continues to inspire us, it will be found potent to improve that system, and to give to liberty a wider meaning than we yet dream of. In closing let us repeat once more, that the greatness of a State depends upon each citizen's doing his duty. Other people's conduct does not concern us; what we have to make sure of is that we are playing our own part, however small and insignificant it may appear, as well as we can. Let us have the satisfaction of feeling, when that part is played, that whoever else may have put water into the barrel, *we* at least have put wine—and the best wine we had. Only when its citizens think and act in that spirit can a State be called truly great and truly free.

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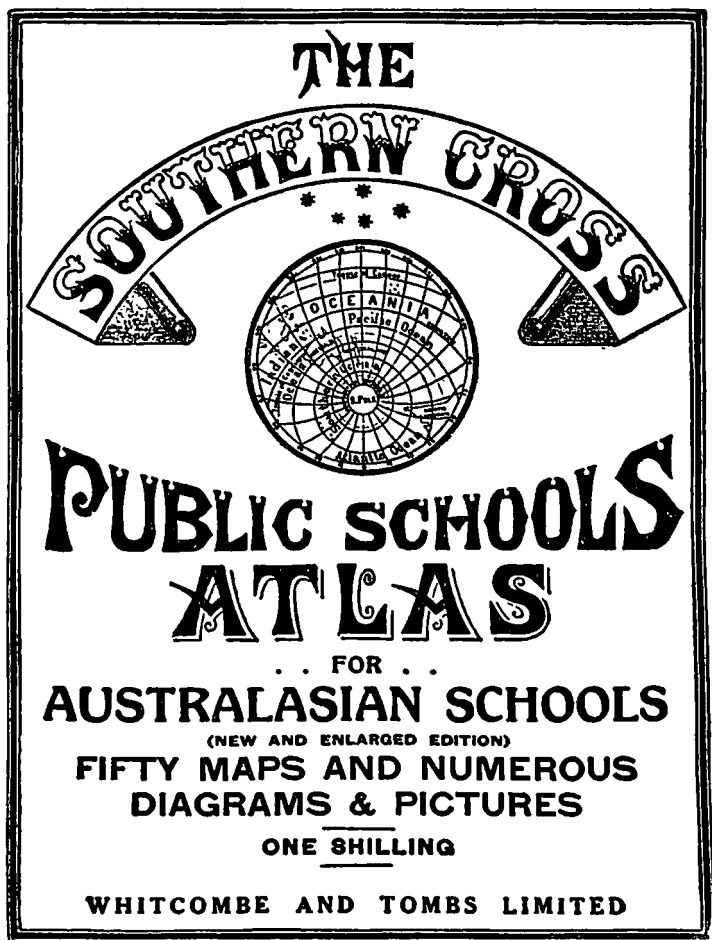
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