that it was now moved by the same feeling which animated the continent.

238. The Results of the Crusades: Educational, Social, Political. — In many respects the civilization of the East was far in advance of the West. One result of the crusades was to open the eyes of Europe to this fact. When Richard and his followers set out, they looked upon the Mohammedans as barbarians; before they returned, many were ready to acknowledge that the barbarians were chiefly among themselves. At that time England had few Latin and no Greek scholars. The Arabians, however, had long been familiar with the classics, and had translated them into their own tongue. Not only did England gain its first knowledge of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle from Mohammedan teachers, but it received from them also the elements of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and astronomy. This new knowledge gave an impulse to education, and had a most important influence on the growth of the universities of Cambridge and Oxford, though these did not become prominent until more than a century later. Had these been the only results, they would perhaps have been worth the blood and treasure spent in vain attempts to recover possession of the sepulchre of Christ; but these were by no means all. The crusades brought about a social and political revolution. They conferred benefits and removed evils. When they began, the greater part of the inhabitants of Europe, including England, were chained to the soil. They had neither freedom, property, nor knowledge.

There were in fact but two classes, the churchmen and the nobles, who really deserved the name of citizens and men. We have seen that the crusades compelled kings like Richard to grant charters of freedom to towns. The nobles conferred similar privileges on those in their power. Thus their great estates were, in a measure, broken up and from this period the common people began to acquire rights, and, what is more, to defend them.[1]

[1] Gibbon's Rome.

239. Summary.—We may say in closing that the central fact in Richard's reign was his embarking in the crusades. From them, directly or indirectly, England gained two important results: first, a greater degree of political liberty, especially in the case of the towns; second, a new intellectual and educational impulse.

JOHN. — 1199–1216.

240. John Lackland. — When Henry II. in dividing his realm left his youngest son John dependent on the generosity of his brothers, he jestingly gave him the surname of "Lackland." As John never received any principality, the nickname continued to cling to him even after he had become king through the death of his brother Richard.

241. The Quarrels of the King. — The reign of the new king was taken up mainly with three momentous quarrels: first, with France; next, with the Pope; lastly, with the barons. By his quarrel with France he lost Normandy and the greater part of the adjoining provinces, thus becoming in a new sense John Lackland. By his quarrel with the Pope he was humbled to the earth. By his quarrel with the barons he was forced to grant England the Great Charter.

242. Murder of Prince Arthur. — Shortly after John's accession the nobles of a part of the English possessions in France expressed their desire that John's nephew, Arthur, a boy of twelve, should become their ruler. John refused to grant their request. War ensued, and Arthur fell into his uncle's hands, who imprisoned him in the castle of Rouen. A number of those who had been captured with the young prince were starved to death in the dungeons of the same castle, and not long after Arthur himself mysteriously disappeared. Shakespeare represents John as ordering the keeper of the castle to put out the lad's eyes, and then tells us that he was killed in an attempt to escape. The earlier belief, however, was that the king murdered him.

243. John's Loss of Normandy. — Philip of France accused John of the crime, and ordered him as Duke of Normandy, and hence as a feudal dependant, to appear at Paris for trial.[1] He refused. The court was convened, John was declared a traitor and sentenced to forfeit all his lands on the continent. For a long time he made no attempt to defend his dominions, but left his Norman nobles to carry on a war against Philip as best they could. At last, after much territory had been lost, the English king made an attempt to regain it. The result was a humiliating and crushing defeat, in which Philip seized Normandy and followed up the victory by depriving John of all his possessions north of the river Loire.

244. Good Results of the Loss of Normandy. — From that period the Norman nobles were compelled to choose between the island of England and the continent for their home. Before that time the Norman contempt for the Saxon was so great, that his most indignant exclamation was, "Do you take me for an Englishman?" Now, however, shut in by the sea, with the people he had hitherto oppressed and despised, he gradually came to regard England as his country, and Englishmen as his countrymen. Thus the two races so long hostile found at last that they had common interests and common enemies.[2]

245. The King's Despotism. — Hitherto our sympathies have been mainly with the kings. We have watched them struggling against the lawless nobles, and every gain which they have made in power we have felt to be so much for the cause of good government; but we are coming to a period when our sympathies will be the other way. Henceforth the welfare of the nation will depend largely on the resistance of these very barons to the despotic encroachments of the crown.[3]

[1] It is proper to state in this connection that a recent French writer on this period — M. Bémont — is satisfied that John's condemnation and the forfeiture of Normandy took place before Arthur's death, for tyranny in Poitou.

[2] Macaulay.

[3] Ransome's Constitutional History of England.

246. Quarrel of the King with the Church. — Shortly after his defeat in France, John entered upon his second quarrel. Pope Innocent III. had commanded a delegation of the monks of Canterbury to choose Stephen Langton archbishop in place of a person whom the king had compelled them to elect. When the news reached John, he forbade Langton's landing in England, although it was his native country. The Pope forthwith declared the kingdom under an interdict, or suspension of religious services. For two years the churches were hung in mourning, the bells ceased to ring, the doors were shut fast. For two years the priests denied the sacraments to the living and funeral prayers for the dead. At the end of that time the Pope, by a bull of excommunication,[1] cut off the king as a withered branch from the church. John laughed at the interdict, and met the decree of excommunication with such cruel treatment of the priests, that they fled terrified from the land. The Pope now took a third step; he deposed John, and ordered Philip of France to seize the English crown. Then John, knowing that he stood alone, made a virtue of necessity. He kneeled at the feet of the Pope's legate, or representative, accepted Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury, and promised to pay a yearly tax to Rome of 1000 marks (about $64,000 in modern money) for permission to keep his crown. The Pope was satisfied with the victory he had gained over his ignoble foe, and peace was made.

247. The Great Charter. — But peace in one direction did not mean peace in all. John's tyranny, brutality, and disregard of his subjects' welfare had gone too far. He had refused the church both the right to fill its offices and to enjoy its revenues. He had extorted exorbitant sums from the barons. He had violated the charters of London and other cities. He had compelled merchants to pay large sums for the privilege of carrying on their business unmolested. He had imprisoned men on false or frivolous charges, and refused to bring them to trial. He had unjustly

[1] Bull (Latin *bulla*, a leaden seal): a decree issued by the Pope, bearing his seal.

claimed heavy sums from serfs and other poor men; and when they could not pay, had seized their carts and tools, thus depriving them of their means of livelihood. Those who had suffered these and greater wrongs were determined to have reformation, and to have it in the form of a written charter or pledge bearing the king's seal. The new archbishop was not less determined. He no sooner landed than he demanded of the king that he should swear to observe the laws of Edward the Confessor,[1] a phrase in which the whole of the national liberties was summed up.

248. Preliminary Meeting at St. Albans. — In the summer of 1213, a council was held at St. Albans, near London, composed of representatives from all parts of the kingdom. It was the first assembly of the kind on record. It convened to consider what claims should be made on the king in the interest of the nobles, the clergy, and the country. Their deliberations took shape probably under Langton's guiding hand. He had obtained a copy of the charter granted by Henry I.[2] This was used as a model for drawing up a new one of similar character, but in every respect fuller and stronger in its provisions.

249. Second Meeting. — Late in the autumn of the following year, the barons met in the abbey church of Bury St. Edmund's, in Suffolk, under their leader, Robert Fitz-Walter, of London. Advancing one by one up the church to the high altar, they solemnly swore that they would oblige John to grant the new charter, or they would declare war against him.

250. The King grants the Charter. — At Easter, 1215, the same barons, attended by two thousand armed knights, met the king at Oxford, and made known to him their demands. John tried to evade giving a direct answer. Seeing that to be impossible, and finding that London was on the side of the barons, he yielded, and requested them to name the day and place for the

[1] Laws of Edward the Confessor: not necessarily the laws made by that king, but rather the customs and rights enjoyed by the people during his reign.

[2] See Paragraph No. 185, and note.

ratification of the charter. "Let the day be the 15th of June, the place Runnymede," [1] was the reply. In accordance therewith, we read at the foot of the shrivelled parchment preserved in the British museum, "Given under our hand * * in the meadow called Runnymede, between Windsor and Staines, on the 15th June, in the 17th year of our reign."

251. Terms and Value of the Charter. — By the terms of that document, henceforth to be known as Magna Carta,[2] or the Great Charter, — a term used to emphatically distinguish it from all previous and partial charters, — it was stipulated that the following grievances should be redressed: first, those of the church; second, those of the barons and their vassals or tenants; third, those of citizens and tradesmen; fourth, those of freemen and serfs. This, then, was the first agreement entered into between the king and all classes of his people. Of the sixty-three articles which constituted it, the greater part, owing to the changes of time, are now obsolete; but three possess imperishable value. These provide first, that no free man shall be imprisoned or proceeded against except by his peers, or the law of the land;[3] second, that justice shall neither be sold, denied, nor delayed; third, that all dues from the people to the king, unless otherwise distinctly specified, shall be imposed only with the consent of the National Council — an expedient which converted the power of taxation into the shield of liberty.[4] Thus, for the first time, the interests of all classes were protected, and for the first time the English people appear in the constitutional history of the country as a united body. So highly was this charter esteemed, that in the course of the next two centuries it was confirmed no less than thirty-seven

[1] Runnymede: about twenty miles southwest of London, on the south bank of the Thames, in Surrey.

[2] Magna Carta: *carta* is the spelling in the mediæval Latin of this and the preceding charters.

[3] Peers (from Latin *pares*), equals. This secures trial by jury.

[4] Mackintosh. This provision was, however, dropped in the next reign; but later the principle it laid down was firmly established.

times: and the very day that Charles II. entered London, after the civil wars of the seventeenth century, the House of Commons asked him to confirm it again.

252. John's Efforts to break the Charter. — But John had no sooner set his hand to this document than he determined to repudiate it. He hired bands of soldiers on the continent to come to his aid. The Pope also used his influence, and threatened the barons with excommunication if they persisted in enforcing the provisions of the charter.

253. The Barons invite Louis of France to aid them. — In their desperation, — for the king's mercenaries were now ravaging the country, — the barons despatched a messenger to John's sworn enemy, Philip of France, inviting him to send over his son, Louis, to free them from tyranny, and become ruler of the kingdom. He came with all speed, and soon made himself master of the southern counties.

254. The King's Death. — John had styled himself on his great seal "King of England"; thus formally claiming the actual ownership of the realm. He was now to find that the sovereign who has no place in his subjects' hearts has small hold of their possessions.

The rest of his ignominious reign was spent in war against the barons and Louis of France. "They have placed twenty-four kings over me!" he shouted, in his fury, referring to the twenty-four leading men who had been appointed to see that the charter did not become a dead letter. But the twenty-four did their duty, and the battle went on. In the midst of it John suddenly died, as the old record said, "a knight without truth, a king without justice, a Christian without faith." He was buried in Worcester Cathedral, wrapped in a monk's gown, and placed, for further protection, between the bodies of two Saxon saints.

255. Summary. — John's reign may be regarded as a turning-point in English history.

1. Through the loss of Normandy, the Norman nobility found it for their interest to make the welfare of England and of the English race one with their own. Thus the two peoples became more and more united, until finally all differences ceased.

2. In demanding and obtaining the Great Charter, the church and the nobility made common cause with the people. That document represents the victory, not of a class, but of the nation. The next eighty years will be mainly taken up with the effort of the nation to hold fast what it has gained.

HENRY III. — 1216–1272.

256. Accession and Character. — John's eldest son Henry was crowned at the age of nine. During his long and feeble reign England's motto might well have been the words of Ecclesiastes, "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child!" since a child he remained to the last; for if John's heart was of millstone, Henry's was of wax. In one of his poems, written perhaps not long after Henry's death, Dante represents him as he sees him in imagination just on the borderland of purgatory. The king is not in suffering, for as he has done no particular good, so he has done no great harm; he appears, therefore, "as a man of simple life, spending his time singing psalms in a narrow valley."[1]

That shows one side of his negative character; the other was love of extravagance and vain display joined to instability of purpose.

257. Reissue of the Great Charter. — Louis, the French prince who had come to England in John's reign as an armed claimant to the throne, finding that both the barons and the church preferred an English to a foreign king, now retired. During his minority Henry's guardians twice reissued the great charter: first, with the omission of the article which reserved the power of taxation to the National Council, and finally with an addition declaring that no man should lose life or limb for hunting in the royal forests.

[1] Dante's Purgatory, vii. 131.

On the last occasion the council granted the king in return a fifteenth of their movable or personal property. This tax, as it reached a large class of people like merchants in towns, who were not landholders, had a decided influence in making them desire to have a voice in the National Council, or Parliament, as it began to be called in this reign (1246). It thus helped, as we shall see later on, to prepare the way for an important change in that body.[1]

258. Henry's Extravagance. — When Henry became of age he entered upon a course of extravagant expenditure. This, with unwise and unsuccessful wars, finally piled up debts to the amount of nearly a million of marks, or, in modern money, upwards of £13,000,000 ($65,000,000). To satisfy the clamors of his creditors he mortgaged the Jews, or rather the right of extorting money from them, to his brother Richard. He also violated charters and treaties in order to compel the nation to purchase their reissue. On the birth of his first son, Prince Edward, he showed himself so eager for congratulatory gifts, that one of the nobles present at court said, "Heaven gave us this child, but the king sells him to us."

259. His Church Building. — Still, not all of the king's extravagance was money thrown away. Everywhere on the continent magnificent churches were rising. The heavy and sombre Norman architecture, with its round arches and square, massive towers, was giving place to the more graceful Gothic style, with its pointed arch and lofty, tapering spire. The king shared the religious enthusiasm of those who built the grand cathedrals of Salisbury, Lincoln, and Ely. He himself rebuilt the greater part of Westminster Abbey as it now stands. A monument so glorious ought to make us willing to overlook some faults in the builder. Yet the expense and taxation incurred in erecting the great minster

[1] The first tax on movable or personal property appears to have been levied by Henry II., in 1188, for the support of the crusades. Under Henry III. the idea began to become general that no class should be taxed without their consent; out of this grew the representation of townspeople in Parliament.

must be reckoned among the causes that bred discontent and led to civil war.

260. Religious Reformation; the Friars; Roger Bacon. — While this movement, which covered the land with religious edifices, was in progress, religion itself was undergoing a change. The old monastic orders had grown rich, indolent, and corrupt. The priests had well-nigh ceased to do missionary work; preaching had almost died out. At this period a reform sprang up within the church itself. A new order of monks had arisen calling themselves in Norman French Frères,[1] or Brothers, a word which the English turned into Friars. These Brothers bound themselves to a life of self-denial and good works. From their living on charity they came to be known as Mendicant Friars. They went from place to place exhorting men to repentance, and proclaiming the almost forgotten Gospel of Christ. Others, like Roger Bacon at Oxford, took an important part in education, and endeavored to rouse the sluggish monks to make efforts in the same direction. Bacon's experiments in physical science, which was then neglected and despised, got him the reputation of being a magician. He was driven into exile, imprisoned for many years, and deprived of books and writing materials. But, as nothing could check the religious fervor of his mendicant brothers, so no hardship or suffering could daunt the intellectual enthusiasm of Bacon. When he emerged from captivity he issued his Opus Majus,[2] an "inquiry" as he called it "into the roots of knowledge." It was especially devoted to mathematics and the sciences, and deserves the name of the encyclopædia of the thirteenth century.

261. The Provisions of Oxford. — But the prodigal expenditure and mismanagement of Henry kept on increasing. At last the burden of taxation became too great to bear. Bad harvests had caused a famine, and multitudes perished even in London.

[1] Frères (frâr).

[2] Opus Majus: Greater Work, to distinguish it from a later summary entitled the Opus Minus, or Lesser Work.

Confronted by these evils, Parliament met in the Great Hall at Westminster. Many of the barons were in complete armor. As the king entered there was an ominous clatter of swords. Henry looking around, asked timidly, "Am I a prisoner?"

"No, sire," answered Earl Bigod; "but we must have reform." The king agreed to summon a Parliament to meet at Oxford and consider what should be done. Their enemies nicknamed the assembly the "Mad Parliament"; but there was both method and determination in their madness, for which the country was grateful. With Simon de Montfort, the king's brother-in-law, at their head, they drew up a set of articles or provisions to which Henry gave an unwilling assent, which practically took the government out of his inefficient hands and vested it in the control of three committees, or councils.

262. Renewal of the Great Charter. — Even this was not enough. The king was now compelled to reaffirm that Great Charter which his father had unwillingly granted at Runnymede. Standing in St. Catherine's Chapel within the partially finished church of Westminster Abbey, Henry, holding a lighted taper in his hand, in company with the chief men of the realm, swore to observe the provisions of the covenant. At the close he exclaimed, as he dashed the taper on the pavement, while all present repeated the words and the action, "So go out with smoke and stench the accursed souls of those who break or pervert this charter." There is no evidence that the king was insincere in his oath; but unfortunately his piety was that of impulse, not of principle. The compact was soon broken, and the land again stripped by taxes extorted by violence, partly to cover Henry's own extravagance, but largely to swell the coffers of the Pope, who had promised to make his son Prince Edward ruler over Sicily.

263. Growing Feeling of Discontent. — During this time the barons were daily growing more mutinous and defiant, saying that they would rather die than be ruined by the "Romans," as they called the papal power. To a fresh demand for money Earl Bigod gave a flat refusal. "Then I will send reapers and reap your fields for you," cried the king to him. "And I will send you back the heads of your reapers," retorted the angry earl.

It was evident that the nobles would make no concessions. The same spirit was abroad which, at an earlier date, made the parliament of Merton declare, when asked to alter the customs of the country to suit the ordinances of the church of Rome, "We will not change the laws of England." So now they were equally resolved not to pay the Pope money in behalf of the king's son.

264. Civil War; Battle of Lewes. — In 1264 the crisis was reached, and war broke out between the king and his brother-in-law, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, better known by his popular name of Sir Simon the Righteous.

With fifteen thousand Londoners, and a number of the barons, he met Henry, who had a stronger force, on the heights above the town of Lewes, in Sussex. The result of the great battle fought there, was as decisive as that fought two centuries before by William the Conqueror, not many miles distant on the same coast.[1]

265. De Montfort's Parliament; the House of Commons (1265). — Bracton, the foremost jurist of that day, said in his comments on the dangerous state of the times, "If the king were without a bridle, — that is, the law, — his subjects ought to put a bridle on him."

Earl Simon had that bridle ready, or rather he saw clearly where to get it. The battle of Lewes had gone against Henry, who had fallen captive to De Montfort. As head of the state the earl now called a parliament, which differed from all its predecessors in the fact that for the first time two citizens from each city, and two townsmen from each borough, or town, together with two knights, or country gentlemen, from each county, were summoned to London to join the barons and clergy in their deliberations. Thus, in the winter of 1266, that House of Commons, or legislative

[1] The village of Battle, which marks the spot where the battle of Hastings was fought, 1066, is less than twenty miles east of Lewes.

assembly of the people, originated, which, when fully established in the next reign, was to sit for more than three hundred years in the chapter-house[1] of Westminster Abbey. At last those who had neither land nor rank, but who paid taxes on personal property only, had obtained representation. Henceforth the king had a bridle which he could not shake off. Henceforth Magna Carta was no longer to be a dead parchment promise of reform, rolled up and hidden away, but was to become a living, ever-present, effective truth.

From this date the Parliament of England began to lose its exclusive character and to become a true representative body standing for the whole nation, and hence the model of every such assembly which now meets, whether in the old world or the new; the beginning of what President Lincoln called, "government of the people, by the people, for the people."

266. Earl Simon's Death. — Yet the same year brought for the earl a fatal reaction. The barons, jealous of his power, fell away from him. Edward, the king's eldest son, gathered them round the royal standard to attack and crush the man who had humiliated his father. De Montfort was at Evesham;[2] from the top of the church tower he saw the prince approaching. "Commend your souls to God," he said to the faithful few who stood by him; "for our bodies are the foes'!" There he fell. In the north aisle of Westminster Abbey, not far from Henry's tomb, may be seen the emblazoned arms of the brave earl. England, so rich in effigies of her great men, so faithful, too, in her remembrance of them, has not yet set up in the vestibule of the House of Commons among the statues of her statesmen, the image of him who was in many respects the leader of them all, and the real originator and founder of the House itself.

267. Summary. — Henry's reign lasted over half a century. During that period England, as we have seen, was not standing

[1] Chapter-house: the building where the chapter or governing body of an abbey or cathedral meet to transact business.

[2] Evesham. Worcestershire.

still. It was an age of reform. In religion, the Mendicant Friars were exhorting men to better lives. In education, Roger Bacon and other devoted scholars were laboring to broaden knowledge and deepen thought. In political affairs the people through the House of Commons now first obtained a voice. Henceforth the laws will be in a measure their work, and the government will reflect in an ever-increasing degree their will.

EDWARD I. — 1272–1307.[1]

268. Edward I. and the Crusades. — Henry's son, Prince Edward, was in the East, fighting the battles of the crusades, at the time of his father's death. According to an account given in an old Spanish chronicle, his life was saved by the devotion of his wife Eleanor, who, when her husband was assassinated with a poisoned dagger, heroically sucked the poison from the wound.

269. Edward's First Parliament. — Shortly after his return to England, he convened a parliament, to which the representatives of the people were summoned. This body declared that all previous laws should be impartially executed, and that there should be no interference with elections.[2] Thus it will be seen that though Earl Simon was dead, his work went on. Edward had the wisdom to adopt and perfect the example his father's conqueror had left. By him, though not until near the close of his reign (1295), Parliament was firmly established, in its twofold form, of Lords and Commons,[3] and became "a complete image of the nation."

270. Conquest of Wales; Birth of the first Prince of Wales. — Henry II. had labored to secure unity of law for England. Edward's aim was to bring the whole island of Britain under one ruler. On the West, Wales only half acknowledged the power of the English king, while on the north, Scotland was practically an

[1] Edward I. was not crowned until 1274.

[2] The First Statute of Westminster.

[3] Lords: this term should be understood to include the higher clergy.

independent sovereignty. The new king determined to begin by annexing the first-named country to the crown. He accordingly led an army thither, and, after several victorious battles, considered that he had gained his end. To make sure of his new possessions, he erected the magnificent castles of Conway, Beaumaris, Harlech, and Caernarvon, all of which were permanently garrisoned with bodies of troops ready to check revolt.

In the last-named stronghold, tradition still points out a little dark chamber, more like a state-prison cell than a royal apartment, where Edward's son, the first Prince of Wales, was born. The Welsh had vowed that they would never accept an Englishman as king; but the young prince was a native of their soil, and certainly in his cradle, at least, spoke as good Welsh as their own children of the same age. No objection, therefore, could be made to him; by this happy compromise, it is said, Wales became a principality joined to the English crown.[1]

271. Conquest of Scotland; the Stone of Scone. — An opportunity now presented itself for Edward to assert his power in Scotland. Two claimants, both of Norman descent, had come forward demanding the crown.[2] One was John Baliol; the other, Robert Bruce, an ancestor of the famous king and general of that name, who comes prominently forward some years later. Edward

[1] Wales was not wholly incorporated with England until two centuries later, in the reign of Henry VIII. It then obtained local self-government and representation in Parliament.

[2] Scotland: At the time of the Roman conquest of Britain, Scotland was inhabited by a Celtic race nearly akin to the primitive Irish, and more distantly so to the Britons. In time, the Saxons from the continent invaded the country, and settled on the lowlands of the East, driving back the Celts to the western highlands. Later, many English emigrated to Scotland, especially at the time of the Norman Conquest, where they found a hearty welcome. In 1072, William the Conqueror compelled the Scottish king to acknowledge him as overlord; and eventually so many Norman nobles established themselves in Scotland, that they constituted the chief landed aristocracy of the country. The modern Scottish nation, though it keeps its Celtic name (Scotland), is made up in great measure of inhabitants of English descent, the pure Scotch being confined mostly to the Highlands, and ranking in population only as about one to three of the former.

was invited by the contestants to settle the dispute. He decided in Baliol's favor, but insisted, before doing so, that the latter should acknowledge the overlordship of England, as the king of Scotland had done to William I. Baliol made a virtue of necessity, and agreed to the terms; but shortly after formed a secret alliance with France against Edward, which was renewed from time to time, and kept up between the two countries for three hundred years. It is the key to most of the wars in which England was involved during that period. Having made this treaty, Baliol now openly renounced his allegiance to the English king. Edward at once organized a force, attacked Baliol, and compelled the country to acknowledge him as ruler. At the Abbey of Scone, near Perth, the English seized the famous "Stone of Destiny," the palladium of Scotland, on which her kings were crowned. Carrying the trophy to Westminster Abbey, Edward enclosed it in that ancient coronation chair which has been used by every sovereign since, from his son's accession down to that of Victoria.

272. Confirmation of the Charters. — Edward next prepared to attack France. In great need of money, he demanded a large sum from the clergy, and seized a quantity of wool in the hands of the merchants. The barons, alarmed at these arbitrary measures, insisted on the king's reaffirming all previous charters of liberties, including the Great Charter, with certain additions expressly providing that no money or goods should be taken by the crown except by the consent of the people. Thus out of the war, England "gained the one thing it needed to give the finishing touch to the building-up of Parliament; namely, a solemn acknowledgment by the king that the nation alone had power to levy taxes."[1]

273. Revolt and Death of Wallace. — Scotland, however, was not wholly subdued. The patriot, William Wallace rose and led his countrymen against the English — led them with that impetuous valor which breathes in Burns' lines: —

[1] Rowley, Rise of the English People.

"Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled."

But fate was against him. After eight years of desperate fighting, the valiant soldier was captured, executed on Tower Hill as a traitor, and his head, crowned in mockery with a wreath of laurel, set on a pike on London Bridge.

But though the hero who perished on the scaffold could not prevent his country from becoming one day a part of England, he did hinder its becoming so on unfair and tyrannical terms. "Scotland is not Ireland. No; because brave men arose there, and said, 'Behold, ye must not tread us down like slaves,—and ye shall not, — and ye cannot!'"[1]

274. Expulsion of the Jews. — The darkest stain on Edward's reign was his treatment of the Jews. Up to this period that unfortunate race had been protected by the kings of England as men protect the cattle which they fatten for slaughter. So long as they accumulated money, and so long as the sovereign could rob them of their accumulations when he saw fit, they were worth guarding. A time had now come when the populace demanded their expulsion from the island, on the ground that their usury and extortion were ruining the country. Edward yielded to the clamor, and first stripping the Jews of their possessions, he prepared to drive them into exile. It is said that even their books were taken from them and given to the libraries of Oxford. Thus pillaged, they were forced to leave the realm — a miserable procession, numbering some sixteen thousand. Many perished on the way, and so few ventured to return, that for four centuries and a half, until Cromwell came to power, they practically disappear from English history.

275. Death of Queen Eleanor. — Shortly after this event, Queen Eleanor died. The king showed the love he bore her in the crosses he raised to her memory, three of which still stand.[2]

[1] Carlyle, Past and Present.

[2] Originally there were thirteen of these crosses. Of these, three remain; viz., at Northampton, at Geddington, near by, and at Waltham, about twelve miles northeast of London.

These were erected at the places where her body was set down, in its transit from Grantham, in Lincolnshire, where she died, to the little village of Charing (now Charing Cross, the geographical centre of London), its last station before reaching its final resting-place, in that abbey at Westminster, which holds such wealth of historic dust. Around her tomb wax-lights were kept constantly burning, until the Protestant Reformation extinguished them, three hundred years later.

276. Edward's Reforms; Statute of Winchester. — The condition of England when Edward came to the throne was far from settled. The country was overrun with marauders. To suppress these, the Statute of Winchester made the inhabitants of every district punishable by fines for crimes committed within their limits. Every walled town had to close its gates at sunset, and no stranger could be admitted during the night unless some citizen would be responsible for him.

To clear the roads of the robbers that infested them, it was ordered that all highways between market towns should be kept free of underbrush for two hundred feet on each side, in order that desperadoes might not lie in ambush for travellers.

Every citizen was required to keep arms and armor, according to his condition in life, and to join in the pursuit and arrest of criminals.

277. Land Legislation. — Two important statutes were passed during this reign, respecting the free sale or transfer of land.[1]

Their effect was to confine the great estates to the hands of their owners and direct descendants, or, when land changed hands, to keep alive the claims of the great lords or the crown upon it. These laws rendered it difficult for landholders to evade, as they hitherto frequently had, their feudal duties to the king by the sale

[1] These laws may be regarded as the foundation of the English system of landed property: they completed the feudal claim to the soil established by William the Conqueror. They are known as the Second Statute of Westminster (De Donis, or Entail, 1285) and the Third Statute of Westminster (Quia Emptores, 1290).