GENERAL VIEW OF THE STUART PERIOD

1603–1649 (Commonwealth, 1649–1660); 1660–1714

I. GOVERNMENT. — II. RELIGION. — III. MILITARY AFFAIRS. — IV. LITERATURE, LEARNING, AND ART. — V. GENERAL INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE. — VI. MODE OF LIFE, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS.

GOVERNMENT

566. **Divine Right of Kings; the Civil War; the Revolution of 1688.** — The period began with the attempt of James I to carry out his theory that the king derives his right to rule directly from God, and in no wise from the people. Charles I adopted this disastrous theory, and was supported in it by Manwaring and other clergymen, who declared that the king represents God on earth, and that the subject who resists his will, or refuses a tax or loan to him, does so at the everlasting peril of his soul.

Charles' arbitrary methods of government and levies of illegal taxes, with the imprisonment of those who refused to pay them, led to the meeting of the Long Parliament and the enactment in 1628 of the statute of the Petition of Right, or second great charter of English liberties.

The same Parliament abolished the despotic courts of Star-Chamber and High Commission, which had been used by Strafford and Laud to carry out their tyrannical scheme called "Thorough."

Charles' renewed acts of oppression and open violation of the laws, with his levies of Ship Money, led to the Grand Remonstrance, an appeal to the nation to support Parliament in its struggle with the King. The attempt of the King to arrest five members who had taken a prominent part in drawing up the Remonstrance brought on the Civil War and the establishment of a Republic which declared, in opposition to the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, that "the people are, under God, the origin of all just power." Eventually, Cromwell became Protector of the nation, and ruled by means of a strong military power.

On the restoration of the Stuarts, Feudal Tenure and the Right of Purveyance were abolished by Parliament (1660). Charles II endeavored to rule without Parliament by selling his influence to Louis XIV, by the secret Treaty of Dover. During his reign, the Habeas Corpus Act was passed, and feudalism practically abolished.

James II endeavored to restore the Roman Catholic religion. His treatment of the University of Oxford, and imprisonment of the Seven Bishops, with the birth of a son who would be educated as a Roman Catholic, caused the Revolution of 1688, and placed William and Mary on the throne.

Parliament now, 1689, passed the Bill of Rights, the third great charter for the protection of the English people, and later confirmed it, 1701, by the Act of Settlement, which secured the crown to a line of Protestant sovereigns. The Mutiny Bill, passed at the beginning of William III's reign, made the army dependent on Parliament. These measures practically put the government in the hands of the House of Commons, where it has ever since remained. The Long Parliament had passed a Triennial Act (1641) requiring a new Parliament to be summoned within three years from the dissolution of the last Parliament, which was to sit not longer than three years. This law was repealed in 1664 and reënacted under William III in 1694. William's war caused the beginning of the National Debt and the establishment of the Bank of England.

In the reign of Anne, 1707, Scotland and England were united under the name of Great Britain. During her sovereignty the Whig and Tory parties, which came into existence in the time of Charles II, became especially prominent, and they have since (though lately under the name of Liberals and Conservatives) continued to divide the parliamentary government between them, — the Whigs seeking to extend the power of the people; the Tories, that of the Crown and the Church.

RELIGION

567. **Religious Parties and Religious Legislation.** — At the beginning of this period we find four religious parties in England: 1. The Roman Catholics. 2. The Episcopalians, or supporters of the National Church of England. 3. The Puritans, who were seeking to "purify" the Church from certain Roman Catholic customs and modes of worship. 4. The Independents, who were endeavoring to establish independent congregational societies. In Scotland the Puritans established their religion in a Church governed by elders, or presbyters, instead of bishops, which on that account got the name of Presbyterian.

James I persecuted all who dissented from the Church of England; and after the Gunpowder Plot the Roman Catholics were practically deprived of the protection of the law, and subject to terrible oppression. In James' reign Bartholomew Legate, a Unitarian, was burned at West Smithfield Market, London (1612), for denying the doctrine of the Trinity. He was the last English martyr. Charles I greatly exasperated the Puritans in the English Church by his Declaration of Sports, which recommended games in the churchyards after service on Sunday. Clergymen who refused to read the Declaration to their congregations were dismissed from their places.

During the period of the Civil War and the Commonwealth, Presbyterianism was established as the national worship of England and Scotland by the Solemn League and Covenant. A great many Episcopal clergymen were deprived of their parishes. At the Restoration severe laws against the Scotch Covenanters and other Dissenters were enforced, and retaliatory legislation drove two thousand clergymen from their parishes to starve; on the other hand, the pretended Popish Plot caused the exclusion of Roman Catholics from both houses of Parliament, and all persons holding office were obliged to partake of the sacrament according to the Church of England. James II's futile attempt to restore Catholicism ended in the Revolution and the passage of the Toleration Act, granting liberty of worship to all Protestant Trinitarians. Stringent laws were passed against Catholics (1700); but they were not regularly enforced. Under Anne the Occasional Conformity Act (1711) and the Schism Act (1714) were aimed at Dissenters, but they were repealed a few years later (1718).

MILITARY AFFAIRS

568. Armor and Arms. — Armor still continued to be worn in some degree during this period, but it consisted chiefly of the helmet with breast-plates and back-plates. Firearms of various kinds were in general use; also hand-grenades, or small bombs, and the bayonet. The chief wars of the period were the Civil War, the wars with the Dutch, William's war with France, and that of the Spanish Succession.

LEARNING, LITERATURE, AND ART

569. Great Writers. — The most eminent prose writers of this period were Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Bacon, Sir Isaac Newton,

John Bunyan, Jeremy Taylor, John Locke, Hobbes, Dean Swift, Defoe, and Addison; the chief poets, Shakespeare and Jonson (mentioned under the preceding period), Milton, Dryden, Pope, Butler, and Beaumont and Fletcher, with a class of writers known as the "Comic Dramatists of the Restoration," whose works, though not lacking in genius, exhibit many of the worst features of the licentious age in which they were produced. Three other great writers were born in the latter part of this period, — Fielding, the novelist, Hume, the historian, and Butler,[1] the ablest thinker of his time in the English Church, — but their productions belong to the time of the Georges.

570. Progress in Science and Invention. — Sir Isaac Newton revolutionized natural philosophy by his discovery and demonstration of the law of gravitation, and Dr. William Harvey accomplished as great a change in physiological science by his discovery of the circulation of the blood. The most remarkable invention of the age was a rude steam engine, patented in 1698 by Captain Savery, and so far improved by Thomas Newcomen in 1712 that it was used for pumping water in coal mines for many years. Both were destined to be superseded by James Watt's engine, which belongs to a later period (1765).

571. Architecture. — The Gothic style of the preceding periods was followed by the Italian, or classical, represented in the works of Inigo Jones and Sir Christopher Wren. It was a revival, in modified form, of the ancient Greek and Roman architecture. St. Paul's Cathedral, the grandest church ever built in England for Protestant worship, is the best example of this style. Many beautiful manor-houses were built in the early part of this period, which, like the churches of the time, are often ornamented with the exquisite wood-carving of Grinling Gibbons. There were no great artists in England in this age, though Charles I employed Rubens and other foreign painters to decorate the palace of Whitehall and Windsor Castle.

572. Education. — The higher education of the period was confined almost wholly to the study of Latin and Greek. The discipline of all schools was extremely harsh. Nearly every lesson was emphasized by a liberal application of the rod, and the highest recommendation a teacher could have was that he was known as "a learned and lashing master."

[1] Bishop Butler, author of The Analogy of Religion (1736), a work which gained for him the title of "The Bacon of Theology."

GENERAL INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

573. **Manufactures.** — Woollen goods continued to be a chief article of manufacture. Silks were also produced by thousands of Huguenot weavers, who fled from France to escape the persecutions of Louis XIV. Coal was now extensively mined, and iron and pottery works were giving industrial importance to Birmingham and other growing towns in the midlands.

574. **Commerce.** — A permanent English colony was established in America in 1607, and by 1714 the number of such colonies had increased to twelve. During a great part of this period intense commercial rivalry existed between England and Holland, each of which was anxious to get the monopoly of the colonial import and export trade. Parliament passed stringent navigation laws, under Cromwell and later, to prevent the Dutch from competing with English merchants and shippers. The East India and South Sea companies were means of greatly extending English commercial enterprise, as was also the tobacco culture of Virginia.

575. **Roads and Travel.** — Good roads were still unknown in England. Stage coaches carried a few passengers at exorbitant rates, requiring an entire day to go a distance which an express train now travels in less than an hour. Goods were carried on pack-horses or in cumbrous wagons, and so great was the expense of transportation that farmers often let their produce rot on the ground rather than attempt to get it to the nearest market town.

In London a few coaches were in use, but covered chairs, carried on poles by two men and called "sedan chairs," were the favorite vehicles. Although London had been in great part rebuilt since the fire of 1666, the streets were still very narrow, without sidewalks, heaped with filth, and miserably lighted.

576. **Agriculture; Pauperism.** — Agriculture generally made no marked improvement, but gardening did, and many vegetables and fruits were introduced which had not before been cultivated.

Pauperism remained a problem which the Government had not yet found a practical method of dealing with. There was little freedom of movement; the poor man's parish was virtually his prison, and if he left it to seek work elsewhere, and required help on the way, he was certain to be sent back to the place where he was legally settled.

MODE OF LIFE, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS

577. **Dress.** — In the time of Charles II and his successors the dress of the wealthy and fashionable classes was most elaborate and costly. Gentlemen wore their hair long, in ringlets, with an abundance of gold lace and ruffles, and carried long, slender swords, known as rapiers. Later, wigs came into use, and no man of any social standing thought of appearing without one.

In Queen Anne's reign ladies painted their faces and ornamented them with minute black patches, which served not only for "beauty spots," but also showed, by their arrangement, with which political party they sympathized.

578. **Coffee-Houses.** — Up to the middle of the seventeenth century ale and beer were the common drink of all classes; but about that time coffee was introduced, and coffee-houses became a fashionable resort for gentlemen and for all who wished to learn the news of the day. Tea had not yet come into use; but, in 1660, Pepys says in his diary: "Sept. 25. I did send for a cup of tee (a China drink) of which I never had drank before."

579. **The Streets of London.** — No efficient police existed in London, and at night the streets were infested with brutal ruffians; and as late as Queen Anne's time, by bands of "fine gentlemen" not less brutal, who amused themselves by overturning sedan chairs, rolling women down hill in barrels, and compelling men to dance jigs, under the stimulus of repeated pricks from a circle of sword points, until they fell fainting from exhaustion. Duels were frequent, on the slightest provocation. Highwaymen abounded both in the city and without, and it was dangerous to travel any distance, even by day, without an armed guard.

580. **Brutal Laws.** — Hanging was the common punishment for theft and many other crimes. The public whipping of both men and women through the streets was frequent. Debtors were shut up in prison, and left to beg from the passers-by or starve; and ordinary offenders were fastened in a wooden frame called the "pillory" and exposed on a stage, where they were pelted by the mob, and their bones not infrequently broken with clubs and brickbats. The pillory continued in use until the accession of Victoria in 1837.