although thoroughly conscientious, he was narrow and stubborn to the last degree.

His mother, who had seen how ministers and parties ruled in England (§ 583), resolved that her son should have the control. Her constant injunction to the young prince was, "Be King, George, be King!" so that when he came to power George was determined to be King if self-will could make him one.[1]

But beneath this spirit of self-will there was moral principle. In being King, George III intended to carry out a reform such as neither George I nor George II could have accomplished, supposing that either one had possessed the will to undertake it.

The great Whig (§§ 531, 581) families of rank and wealth had now held uninterrupted possession of the government for nearly half a century. Their influence was so supreme that the sovereign had practically become a mere cipher, dependent for his authority on the political support which he received. The King was resolved that this state of things should continue no longer. He was determined to reassert the royal authority, secure a government which should reflect his principles, and have a ministry to whom he could dictate, instead of one that dictated to him.

For a long time he struggled in vain, but at last succeeded, and found in Lord North a Prime Minister who bowed to the royal will, and endeavored to carry out George III's favorite policy of "governing for, but never by, the people." That policy finally resulted in calling forth Mr. Dunning's famous resolution in the House of Commons (1780) that the King's influence "had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished." But it had other consequences, which, as we shall presently see, were more far-reaching and disastrous than any one in the House of Commons then imagined.

598. Taxation of the American Colonies. — The wars of the two preceding reigns had largely increased the National Debt (§ 552), and the Government resolved to compel the American colonies to share in a more direct degree than they had yet done the

[1] See Summary of Constitutional History in the Appendix, page xxv, § 28.

constantly increasing burden of taxation. England then, like all other European countries, regarded her colonies in a totally different way from what she does at present.

It was an open question at that time whether colonial legislative rights existed save as a matter of concession or favor on the part of the Home Government. It is true that the Government had found it expedient to grant or recognize such rights, but it had seldom defined them clearly, and in many important respects no one knew just what the settlers of Virginia or Massachusetts might or might not do.[1]

The general theory of the mother-country was that the colonies were convenient receptacles for the surplus population, good or bad, of the British Islands; next, that they were valuable as sources of revenue and profit, politically and commercially; and lastly, that they furnished excellent opportunities for the king's friends to get office and make fortunes. Such was the feeling about India, and such, modified by difference of circumstances, it was respecting America.

Politically the English colonists in America enjoyed a large measure of liberty. So far as local legislation was concerned, they were in most cases practically self-governing and independent. So, too, their personal rights were carefully safeguarded. On the other hand, the commercial policy of England toward her colonies, though severely restrictive, was far less so than that of Spain or France toward theirs. The Navigation Laws (§ 511) compelled the Americans to confine their trade to England alone, or to such foreign ports as she directed. If they sent a hogshead of tobacco or a barrel of salt fish to another country by any but an English or a colonial built vessel, they were legally liable to forfeit their goods. But, as a matter of fact, this law had not been rigidly enforced for a long time, and the New England colonists generally treated it as a dead letter.

When George III came to the throne he resolved to revive the enforcement of the Navigation Laws, and to restrict the colonial trade with the Spanish and French West Indies. This was done,

[1] See Story's Constitution of the United States.

not with the view of crippling American commerce, but either to increase English revenue or to inflict injury on foreign rivals or enemies.

Furthermore, British manufacturers had at an earlier period induced the English Government to restrict American home products. In accordance with that policy, Parliament had enacted statutes which virtually forbade the colonists making their own woollen cloth, or their own beaver hats, except on a very limited scale. They had a few iron works, but they were forbidden to erect another furnace, or a mill for manufacturing iron rods or plates, and such industries were declared to be a nuisance. Pitt, who was one of the warmest friends that America had, openly advocated this narrow policy, saying that if British interests demanded it he would not permit the colonists to make so much as a "horseshoe nail." He did not need to add, "or let them print a copy of the English Bible," since they were already prohibited from doing that. Adam Smith, the eminent political economist (§ 612), vehemently condemned the English colonial mercantile system as suicidal; but unfortunately his condemnation came too late to have any effect. The truth was that the world was not ready then to receive the gospel of "Live and let live."

599. The Stamp Act, 1765. — In accordance with these theories about the colonies, and to meet the pressing needs of the Home Government, the English ministry proceeded to levy a tax on the colonies (1764), in return for the protection they granted them against the French and the Indians. The colonists had paid, however, as they believed, their full proportion of the expense of the French and Indian wars out of their own pockets, and they now felt abundantly able to protect themselves.

But notwithstanding this plea, a specially obnoxious form of direct tax, called the "Stamp Act," was brought forward in 1765. It required that all legal documents, such as deeds, wills, notes, receipts, and the like, should be written upon paper bearing stamps, purchased from the agents of the Home Government. Not only the leading men among the colonists, but the colonists generally, protested against the act, and Benjamin Franklin, with other

agents, was sent to England to sustain their protests by argument and remonstrance. But in spite of their efforts the law was passed, and the stamps were duly sent over to America. The people, however, were determined not to use them, and serious riots ensued.

In England strong sympathy with the colonists was expressed by William Pitt (who was shortly after created Earl of Chatham), Burke, Fox, and generally by what was well called "the brains of Parliament." Pitt in particular was extremely indignant. He urged the immediate repeal of the act, saying, "I rejoice that America has resisted."

Pitt further declared that any taxation of the colonies without their representation in Parliament was tyranny, and that opposition to such taxation was a duty. He vehemently insisted that the spirit shown by the Americans was the same which had withstood the despotism of the Stuarts in England, and established the principle once for all that the king cannot take his subject's money without that subject's consent (§ 484). So, too, Fox ardently defended the American colonists, and boldly maintained that the stand they had taken helped "to preserve the liberties of mankind." [1]

Against such opposition the law could not stand. The act was accordingly repealed (1766), amid great rejoicing in London; the church bells rang a peal of triumph, and the shipping in the Thames was illuminated. But the good effect on America was lost by the passage of another act which maintained the unconditional right of Parliament to legislate for the colonies, or, in other words, to tax them, if it saw fit, without their consent.

600. The Tea Tax and the "Boston Tea Party," 1773, with its Results. — Another plan was now devised for getting money from the colonies. Parliament enacted a law (1767) compelling the Americans to pay taxes on a number of imports, such as glass, paper, and tea. In opposition to this law, the

[1] See Bancroft's United States, III, 107–108; Columbia University Studies, III, No. 2, "The Commercial Policy of England toward the American Colonies"; and Lecky's American Revolution, edited by Prof. J. A. Woodburn.

colonists formed leagues refusing to use these taxed articles, while at the same time they encouraged smugglers to secretly land them, and the regular trade suffered accordingly.

Parliament, finding that this was bad both for the government and for commerce, now abolished all of these duties except that on tea (1770). That duty was retained for a double purpose: first, and chiefly, to maintain the principle of the right of Great Britain to tax the colonies,[1] and, next, to aid the East India Company, which was pleading piteously for help.

In consequence mainly of the refusal of the American colonists to buy tea, the London warehouses of the East India Company were full to overflowing with surplus stock, and the company itself was in a half-bankrupt condition. The custom had been for the company to bring the tea to England, pay a tax on it, and then sell it to be reshipped to America. To aid the company in its embarrassment, the Government now agreed to remit this first duty altogether, and to impose a tax of only threepence (six cents) a pound on the consumers in America.

Such an arrangement would, they argued, be an advantage all around, for, first, it would aid the company to dispose of its stock; next, it would enable the colonists to get tea at a far cheaper rate than before; and, lastly, and most important of all, it would keep the principle of colonial taxation in force. But the colonists did not accept this reasoning. In itself the threepenny tax was a trifle, as the ship-money tax of twenty shillings was to John Hampden (§ 488); but underlying it was a principle which seemed to the Americans, as it had seemed to Hampden, no trifle; for such principles revolutions had been fought in the past; for such they would be fought in the future.

The colonists resolved not to have the tea at any price. A number of ships laden with the hated taxed herb arrived at the port of Boston. The tea was seized by a band of men disguised as Indians, and thrown into the harbor, 1773. The news of that action made the King and his ministry furious.

[1] "There must be one tax," said the King, "to keep up the right."

THE NELSON MONUMENT, TRAFALGAR SQUARE, LONDON

Parliament sympathized with the Government, and in retaliation passed four acts unparalleled for their severity.

The first was the "Boston Port Act," which closed the harbor to all trade; the second was the "Regulating Act," which virtually annulled the charter of Massachusetts, took the government away from the people and gave it to the King; the third measure was the "Administration of Justice Act," which ordered that Americans who committed murder in resistance to oppression should be sent to England for trial; the fourth, the "Quebec Act," declared the country north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi a part of Canada.[1] The object of this last act was to conciliate the French Canadians, and secure their help against the colonists in case of rebellion.

Even after this unjust action on the part of the Home Government a compromise might have been effected, and peace maintained, if the counsels of the best men had been followed; but George III would listen to no policy short of coercion. His brain was not well balanced, he was subject to attacks of mental derangement, and his one idea of *being King* at all hazards had become a kind of monomania (§ 597). Burke denounced the inexpediency of such oppression, and Fox, another prominent member of Parliament, wrote, "It is intolerable to think that it should be in the power of one blockhead to do so much mischief."

For the time, at least, the King was as unreasonable as any of the Stuarts. The obstinacy of Charles I cost him his head, that of James II his kingdom, that of George III resulted in a war which saddled the English tax-payer with an additional debt of £120,000,000, and forever detached from Great Britain the fairest and richest dominions that she ever possessed.

601. The American Revolution, 1775; Recognition of the Independence of the United States, 1782. — In 1775 war began, and the stand made by the patriots at Lexington and the fighting which followed at Concord and Bunker Hill showed that the Americans were in earnest. The cry of the colonists had been,

[1] Embracing territory now divided into the five states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, with Eastern Minnesota.

"No taxation without representation"; now they had got beyond that, and demanded, "No legislation without representation." But events moved so fast that even this did not long suffice, and on July 4, 1776, the colonies, in Congress assembled, solemnly declared themselves free and independent.[1]

As far back as the French war there was at least one man who foresaw this declaration. After the English had taken Quebec (§ 594), Vergennes,[2] an eminent French statesman, said of the American colonies with respect to Great Britain, "They stand no longer in need of her protection; she will call on them to contribute toward supporting the burdens they have helped to bring on her; and they will answer by striking off all dependence."[3]

This prophecy was now fulfilled. After the Americans had defeated Burgoyne (1777) the English ministry became alarmed; they declared themselves ready to make terms; they offered to grant anything but independence;[4] but they had opened their eyes to the facts too late, and nothing short of independence would now satisfy the colonists. It is said that attempts were made to open negotiations with General Washington, but the commander-in-chief declined to receive a letter from the English Government addressed to him, not in his official capacity, but as "George Washington, Esq.," and so the matter came to nothing.

The war was never really popular in England. From the outset great numbers refused to enlist to fight the Americans, and spoke of the contest as the "King's War" to show that the bulk of the English people did not encourage it. The struggle went on with varying success through seven heavy years, until, with the aid of the French, the Americans defeated Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781.[5] By that battle France got her revenge

[1] See Summary of Constitutional History in the Appendix, page xxv, § 29.
[2] Vergennes (Vĕr′zhĕn′). [3] Bancroft's History of the United States.
[4] This was after France had recognized the independence of the United States, 1778.
[5] It is pleasant to know that a hundred years later, in the autumn of 1881, a number of English gentlemen were present at the centennial celebration of the taking of Yorktown to express their hearty good will toward the nation which their ancestors had tried in vain to keep a part of Great Britain.

for the loss of Quebec in 1759 (§ 594), and America finally won the cause for which she had spent so much life and treasure.

On a foggy December morning in 1782, George III entered the House of Lords, and with a faltering voice read a paper in which he acknowledged the independence of the United States of America. He closed his reading with the prayer that neither Great Britain nor America might suffer from the separation; and he expressed the hope that religion, language, interest, and affection might prove an effectual bond of union between the two countries.

Eventually the separation proved, as Goldwin Smith says,[1] "a mutual advantage, since it removed to a great extent the arbitrary restrictions on trade, gave a new impetus to commerce, and immensely increased the wealth of both nations."

602. The Lord George Gordon Riots (1780). — While the American war was in progress, England had not been entirely quiet at home. In consequence of the repeal of the most stringent of the unwise and unjust laws against the Roman Catholics (§ 548), Lord George Gordon, a half-crazed Scotch fanatic, now led an attack upon the Government (1780).

For six days London was at the mercy of a furious mob, which set fire to Catholic chapels, pillaged many dwellings, and committed every species of outrage. Newgate prison was broken into, the prisoners released, and the prison burned. No one was safe from attack who did not wear a blue cockade to show that he was a Protestant, and no man's house was secure unless he chalked "No Popery" on the door in conspicuous letters; or, as one individual did in order to make doubly sure, "No Religion whatever." Before the riot was subdued a large amount of property had been destroyed and many lives sacrificed.

603. Impeachment of Warren Hastings (1788). — Six years after the American Revolution came to an end Warren Hastings,

[1] Goldwin Smith's Lectures on Modern History, "The Foundation of the American Colonies." On the colonial and revolutionary period in general see Lecky's American Revolution, edited by Prof. J. A. Woodburn, and Montgomery's Leading Facts of American History or his Student's American History.

Governor-General of India, was impeached for corrupt and cruel government, and was tried before the House of Lords, gathered in Westminster Hall. On the side of Hastings was the powerful East India Company, ruling over a territory many times larger than the whole of Great Britain. Against him were arrayed the three ablest and most eloquent men in England, — Burke, Fox, and Sheridan.

The trial was continued at intervals for over seven years. It resulted in the acquittal of the accused (1795); but it was proved that the chief business of those who went out to India was to wring fortunes from the natives, and then go back to England to live like "nabobs," and spend their ill-gotten money in a life of luxury. This fact, and the stupendous corruption that was shown to exist, eventually broke down the gigantic monopoly, and British India was thrown open to the trade of all nations.[1]

604. Liberty of the Press; Law and Prison Reforms; Abolition of the Slave Trade. — Since the discontinuance of the censorship of the press (§ 550), though newspapers were nominally free to discuss public affairs, yet the Government had no intention of permitting any severe criticism (§ 563). On the other hand, there were men who were determined to speak their minds through the press on political as on all other matters. In the early part of the reign, John Wilkes, an able but scurrilous writer, attacked the policy of the Crown in violent terms (1763).

Some years later (1769), a writer, who signed himself "Junius," began a series of letters in a daily paper, in which he handled the King and the "King's friends" still more roughly. An attempt was made by the Government to punish Wilkes and the publisher of the "Junius" letters, but it signally failed in both cases. Public feeling was plainly in favor of the right of the freest political expression,[2] which was eventually conceded.

Up to this time parliamentary debates had rarely been reported. In fact, under the Stuarts and the Tudors, members of Parliament

[1] See Burke's Speeches, also Macaulay's Essay on Warren Hastings.

[2] Later, during the excitement caused by the French Revolution, there was a reaction from this feeling, but it was only temporary.

would have run the risk of imprisonment if their criticisms of royalty had been made public; but now (1771) the papers began to contain the speeches and votes of both Houses on important questions. Every effort was made to suppress these reports, but again the press gained the day. Henceforth the nation could learn how far its representatives really represented the will of the people, and so could hold them strictly accountable, — a matter of vital importance in every free government.[1]

Another field of reform was also found. The times were brutal. The pillory still stood in the centre of London;[2] and if the unfortunate offender who was put in it escaped with a shower of mud and other unsavory missiles, instead of clubs and brickbats, he was lucky indeed. Gentlemen of fashion arranged pleasure parties to visit the penitentiaries to see the wretched women whipped. The whole code of criminal law was savagely vindictive. Capital punishment was inflicted for upwards of two hundred offences, many of which would now be thought to be sufficiently punished by one or two months' imprisonment in the house of correction.

Not only men, but women and children even, were hanged for pilfering goods or food worth a few shillings.[3] The jails were crowded with poor wretches whom want had driven to theft, and who were "worked off" on the gallows every Monday morning in batches of a dozen or twenty, in sight of the jeering, drunken crowds who gathered to witness their death agonies.

Through the efforts of Sir Samuel Romilly, Jeremy Bentham, and others, a reform was effected in this bloody code. Next, the labors of the philanthropic John Howard, and later of Elizabeth Fry, purified the jails of abuses which had made them not only dens of suffering and disease, but schools of crime as well.

The laws respecting punishment for debt were also changed for the better, and thousands of miserable beings who were without

[1] See Summary of Constitutional History in the Appendix, page xxvi, § 30.

[2] The pillory (see § 580) was not abolished until the accession of Queen Victoria.

[3] Five shillings, or $1.25, was the hanging limit; anything stolen above that sum in money or goods might send the thief to the gallows.

means to satisfy their creditors were set free, instead of being kept in useless life-long imprisonment. At the same time Clarkson, Wilberforce, Fox, and Pitt were endeavoring to abolish that relic of barbarism, the African slave trade. After twenty years of persistent effort both in Parliament and out, they at last accomplished that great and beneficent work (1807).

605. War with France (1793–1805); Battle of the Nile; Trafalgar; Spain. — Near the close of the century (1789) the French Revolution broke out. It was a violent and successful attempt to destroy those feudal institutions which France had outgrown, and which had, as we have seen, disappeared gradually in England after the rebellion of Wat Tyler (§§ 304, 368, 534). At first the revolutionists received the hearty sympathy of many of the Whig party, but after the execution of Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette,[1] England became alarmed not only at the horrible scenes of the Reign of Terror but at the establishment of that democratic republic which seemed to justify them, and joined an alliance of the principal European powers for the purpose of restoring the French monarchy.

Napoleon had now become the real head of the French nation, and seemed bent on making himself master of all Europe. He undertook an expedition against Egypt and the East which was intended as a stepping-stone toward the ultimate conquest of the English empire in India, but his plans were frustrated by Nelson's victory over the French fleet at the battle of the Nile.

With the assistance of Spain, Napoleon next prepared to invade England, and was so confident of success that he caused a gold medal to be struck, bearing the inscription, "Descent upon England." "Struck at London, 1804." But the combined French and Spanish fleets on whose coöperation Napoleon was depending were driven by the English into the harbor of Cadiz, and the great expedition was postponed for another year.[2] When,

[1] See Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution, "Death of Marie Antoinette."

[2] In 1801 Robert Fulton proposed to Napoleon that he should build war-ships to be propelled by steam. The proposal was submitted to a committee of French scientists, who reported that it was absurd. Had Napoleon acted on Fulton's suggestion, his descent on England might have been successful.

in the autumn of 1805, they left Cadiz harbor, Lord Nelson lay waiting for them off Cape Trafalgar,[1] near by.

Two days later he descried the enemy at daybreak. The men on both sides felt that the decisive struggle was at hand. With the exception of a long, heavy swell the sea was calm, with a light breeze, but sufficient to bring the two fleets gradually within range.

> "As they drifted on their path
> There was silence deep as death;
> And the boldest held his breath
> For a time."[2]

Just before the action Nelson ran up this signal to the mast-head of his ship, where all might see it: "ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN TO DO HIS DUTY." The answer to it was three ringing cheers from the entire fleet, and the fight began. When it ended, Napoleon's boasted navy was no more. Trafalgar Square, in the heart of London, with its tall column bearing aloft a statue of Nelson, commemorates the decisive victory, which was dearly bought with the life of the great admiral.

The battle of Trafalgar snuffed out Napoleon's projected invasion of England. He had lost his ships, and their commander in his despair committed suicide. The French emperor could no longer hope to bridge "the ditch," as he derisively called the boisterous Channel, whose waves rose like a wall between him and the island which he hated (§ 35). A few years later, Napoleon, who had taken possession of Spain, and placed his brother on the throne, was driven from that country by Sir Arthur Wellesley, destined to be better known as the Duke of Wellington, and the crown was restored to the Spanish nation.

606. Second War with the United States, 1812–1815. — The United States waged its first war with Great Britain to gain an independent national existence; in 1812 it declared a second war to secure its personal and maritime rights. During the long and desperate struggle between England and France, each nation

[1] Cape Trafalgar (Traf-al'gar), on the southern coast of Spain.

[2] Campbell's Battle of the Baltic, but applicable as well to Trafalgar.

had prohibited neutral powers from commercial intercourse with the other, or with any country friendly to the other.

Furthermore, the English Government had laid down the principle that a person born on British soil could not become a citizen of another nation, but that "once an Englishman always an Englishman" was the only true doctrine. In accordance with that theory, it claimed the right to search American ships and take from them and force into their own service any seaman supposed to be of British birth. In this way Great Britain had seized more than six thousand men, and notwithstanding their protest that they were American citizens, either by birth or by naturalization, had compelled them to enter the English navy.

Other points in dispute between the two countries were in a fair way of being settled amicably, but there appeared to be no method of coming to terms in regard to the question of search and impressment, which was the most important of all, since, though the demand of the United States was, in the popular phrase of the day, for "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights," it was the last which was especially emphasized.

In 1812 war against Great Britain was declared, and an attack made on Canada which resulted in the American forces being driven back. During the war British troops landed in Maryland, burned the Capitol and other public buildings in Washington, and destroyed the Congressional Library.

On the other hand, the American navy had unexpected and extraordinary successes on the ocean and the lakes. Out of fifteen sea combats with approximately equal forces, the Americans gained twelve.[1] The contest closed with the signal defeat of the English at New Orleans, when General Andrew Jackson (1815) completely routed the forces led by Sir Edward Pakenham, brother-in-law of the Duke of Wellington. The right of search was thenceforth dropped, although it was not formally abandoned by Great Britain until more than forty years later (1856).

607. Battle of Waterloo, 1815. — On Sunday, June 18, 1815, the English war against Napoleon, which had been carried on

[1] Montgomery's Leading Facts of American History, § 228.

almost constantly since his accession to power, culminated in the decisive battle of Waterloo.[1] Napoleon had crossed the Belgian frontier, in order that he might come up with the British before they could form a junction with their Prussian allies. All the previous night the rain had fallen in torrents, and when the soldiers rose from their cheerless bivouac in the trampled and muddy fields of rye, a drizzling rain was still falling.

Napoleon planned the battle with the purpose of destroying first the English and then the Prussian forces, but Wellington held his own against the furious attacks of the French. It was evident, however, that even the "Iron Duke," as he was called, could not continue to withstand the terrible assaults many hours longer.

As time passed on, and he saw his solid squares melting away under the murderous French fire, as line after line of his soldiers coming forward silently stepped into the places of their fallen comrades, while the expected Prussian reinforcements still delayed their appearance, the English commander exclaimed, "O that night or Blücher[2] would come!" At last Blücher with his Prussians did come, and as Grouchy,[3] the leader of a division on which Napoleon was counting, did not, Waterloo was finally won by the combined strength of the allies. Not long afterward Napoleon was sent to die a prisoner on the desolate rock of St. Helena.

When all was over, Wellington said to Blücher, as he stood by him on a little eminence looking down upon the field covered with the dead and dying, "A great victory is the saddest thing on earth, except a great defeat."

With that victory ended the second Hundred Years' War of England with France, which began with the War of the Spanish Succession (1704) (§ 557) under Marlborough. The original object of the war was, first, to humble the power that threatened the independence of England, and, secondly, to protect those colonies which had now separated from the mother-country

[1] Waterloo: near Brussels, Belgium.

[2] Blücher (Bloo'ker).

[3] Grouchy (Grou'she').

and had become, partly through French help, the republic of the United States of America.

608. Increase of the National Debt; Taxation. — Owing to these hundred years and more of war, the National Debt of Great Britain and Ireland (§ 552), which in 1688 was much less than a million of pounds, had now reached the enormous amount of over nine hundred millions (or $4,500,000,000), bearing yearly interest at the rate of more than $160,000,000.[1] So great had been the strain on the finances of the country, that the Bank of England suspended payment, and many heavy failures occurred. In addition to this, a succession of bad harvests sent up the price of wheat to such a point that at one time an ordinary sized loaf of bread cost the farm laborer more than half a day's wages.

Taxes had gone on increasing until it seemed as though the people could not endure the burden. As Sydney Smith declared, with entire truth, there were duties on everything. They began, he said, in childhood with "the boy's taxed top"; they followed to old age, until at last "the dying Englishman, pouring his taxed medicine into a taxed spoon, flung himself back on a taxed bed, and died in the arms of an apothecary who had paid a tax of a hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death."[2]

609. The Irish Parliament; the Irish Rebellion (1798); Union of Great Britain and Ireland (1800). — For a century after the battle of the Boyne (§ 551) Ireland can hardly be said to have had a history. The iron hand of English despotism had crushed the spirit out of the inhabitants, and they suffered in silence. During the first part of the eighteenth century the destitution of the people was so great that Dean Swift, in bitter mockery of the Government's neglect, published what he called his "Modest Proposal." He suggested that the misery of the half-starved peasants might be relieved by allowing them to eat their own children or else sell them to the butchers.

But a new attempt was now made to improve the political condition of the wretched country. Burke (§ 599) had already tried

[1] Encyclopædia Britannica, "National Debt."

[2] Sydney Smith's Essays, "Review of Seybert's Annals of the United States."

to secure a fair measure of commercial liberty for the island, but without success. Since the reign of Henry VII the so-called "free Parliament" of Ireland had been bound hand and foot by Poynings' Act (§ 381, note). The eminent Irish orator, Henry Grattan, now urged the repeal of that law with all his impassioned eloquence. He was seconded in his efforts by the powerful influence of Fox, in the English House of Commons. Finally, the obnoxious act was repealed (1782), and an independent Irish Parliament, to which Grattan was elected, met in Dublin.

But although more than three-quarters of the Irish people were Catholics, no person of that faith was permitted to sit in the new Parliament, or to vote for the election of a member. This was not the only injustice, for many Protestants in Belfast and the north of Ireland had no right to be represented in it. Such a state of things could not fail to excite angry protest, and Grattan, with other Protestants in Parliament, labored for reform. The discontent finally led to the organization of an association called the "Society of United Irishmen." The leaders of that movement hoped to secure the coöperation of Catholics and Protestants, and to obtain fair and full representation for both in the Irish Parliament. A measure of political reform was secured (1793), but it did not go far enough to give the relief desired.

Eventually the Society of United Irishmen became a revolutionary organization which sought, by the help of the French, to make Ireland an independent republic. The sprigs of shamrock or the shamrock-colored badges displayed by these men gave a new significance to "the wearing of the green."[1] By this time many Protestants had withdrawn from the organization, and many Catholics refused to ask help from the French revolutionary party, who were hostile to all churches and to all religion.

Then a devoted band of Catholics in the south of Ireland resolved to rise and, trusting to their own right arms, to strike for independence. A frightful rebellion broke out (1798), marked by all the intense hatred springing from rival races and rival creeds,

[1] See the famous Irish song of the "Wearin' o' the Green"; see, too, in Montgomery's Heroic Ballads, the "Shan Van Vocht," Ginn & Company.

and aggravated by the peasants' hatred of oppressive landlords. Both sides perpetrated horrible atrocities. The Government employed a large force of Orangemen,[1] or extreme Protestants, to help suppress the insurrection. They did it with such remorseless cruelty that History shrinks from staining her pages with the story of its horrors.

Matters now came to a crisis. William Pitt, son of the late Earl of Chatham (§ 599), was Prime Minister. He believed that the best interests of both Ireland and England demanded their political union. He devoted all his energies to accomplishing the work. The result was that in the last year of the eighteenth century the English Government succeeded, by the most unscrupulous use of money, in gaining the desired end. Lord Cornwallis, acting as Pitt's agent, confessed with shame that he bought up a sufficient number of members of the Irish Parliament to secure a vote in favor of union with Great Britain. In 1800 the two countries were joined — in name at least — under the title of the "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland."[2]

Pitt used all his powerful influence to obtain for Ireland a full and fair representation in the united Parliament (1801). He urged that Catholics as well as Protestants should be eligible for election to that body. But the King positively refused to listen to his Prime Minister. He even declared that it would be a violation of his coronation oath for him to grant such a request. The consequence was that not a single Catholic was admitted to the Imperial Parliament until thirty years later (§ 618).

Two years after the first Imperial Parliament met in London the Irish patriot Robert Emmet made a desperate effort to free his country (1803). To his mind the union of England with Ireland was simply "the union of the shark with its prey." He staked his life on the cause of independence; he lost, and paid the forfeit on the scaffold.

[1] Orangemen: the Protestants of the north of Ireland, who had taken the side of William of Orange in the Revolution of 1688–1689. See § 551. They wore an "orange ribbon" as their badge, to distinguish them from the Catholic party, who wore green badges.

[2] The first Parliament of the United Kingdom met in 1801.

But notwithstanding Emmet's hatred of the union, it resulted advantageously to Ireland in at least two respects. First, more permanent peace was secured to that distracted and long-suffering country. Secondly, the Irish people made decided gains commercially. The duties on their farm products were removed, at least in large degree, and the English ports hitherto closed against them were thrown open. The duties on their manufactured goods seem to have been taken off at that time only in part.[1] Later, absolute freedom of trade was secured.

610. Material Progress; Canals; the Steam Engine, 1785; Distress of the Working Class; the North of England. — The reign of George III was in several directions one of marked progress, especially in England. Just after the King's accession the Duke of Bridgewater constructed a canal from his coal mine in Worsley to Manchester, a distance of seven miles. Later, he extended it to Liverpool, and it has recently become the "Manchester Ship Canal." The Duke of Bridgewater's work was practically the commencement of a system which has since developed so widely that the canals of England now exceed in length its navigable rivers. The two form such a complete network of water communication that it is said that no place in the realm is more than fifteen miles distant from this means of transportation, which connects all the large towns with each other and with the chief ports.

In the last half of the eighteenth century James Watt obtained the first patent (1769) for his improved steam engine (§ 570), but did not succeed in making it a business success until 1785. The story is told[2] that he took a working model of it to show to

[1] See May's Constitutional History of England, Lecky's England in the Eighteenth Century; but compare O'Connor Morris' recent work on "Ireland, from 1798–1898," page 58.

[2] This story is told also of Boulton, Watt's partner. See Smiles' Lives of Boulton and Watt, page 1. Newcomen had invented a rude steam engine in 1705, which in 1712 came into use to some extent for pumping water out of coal mines. But his engine was too clumsy and too wasteful of fuel to be used by manufacturers. Boulton and Watt built the first steam-engine works in England at Soho, a suburb of Birmingham, in 1775; but it was not until 1785 that they began to do sufficient business to make it evident that they were on their way to success.