

worship were made criminal, though liable to the fate of treason and not of heresy. Plots of all kinds went on till the execution of Mary Stewart in 1587. After that time there was less material for plots; but the persecution went on on both sides. But by this time the foreign relations of the kingdom had become even more important than the condition of things at home.

At the death of Mary Tudor, England was at war with France and in close alliance with Spain. This state of things lasted during the early part of Elizabeth's reign. She helped the French Protestants; but she concluded peace in 1564. During the rest of her reign the old enmity towards France died out. Elizabeth was at one time almost ready to accept a Catholic husband; at another time she again encouraged the French Protestants. But the accession of Henry of Navarre made France and England friends. Henry and Elizabeth had a common enemy. As enmity against France died out, so friendship for Spain died out also. Philip, Elizabeth's first suitor, gradually changed into her most dangerous enemy, the assertor of the claims of Mary, and, after her death, her would-be avenger, and moreover the assertor of the claims of his own daughter as a remote descendant of John of Gaunt. The Armada, the dealings of England with the insurgents in the Netherlands, the expedition to Cadiz, are all events which stand out on the surface of English history. England now stood out as the great Protestant power of Europe, the maintainer of the Protestant cause everywhere. In short, the reign of Elizabeth finally gave to England and Englishmen their special religious character, as earlier times had given them their special political character. That special political character, overshadowed for a while by Tudor despotism, showed itself again towards the end of her reign. The England of the seventeenth century, free and Protestant, was now fully formed. The course of the century of which Elizabeth only saw the opening was to win back the freedom of England, to confirm the national Protestantism, and to take the first steps towards that religious toleration on both sides of which the age of Elizabeth had not dreamed.

England the chief Protestant power.

Discoveries and distant commerce.

But another feature in the character of England was added in the reign of Elizabeth. If England now took up a new and definite position as an European power, the first steps were also taken towards making her more than an European power. In the days of Edward and Mary English commerce and maritime enterprise had a new range opened to them by the beginning of intercourse with Russia. That nation, great in earlier days on the Euxine, was now shut out from all southern and western outlets, and access to her one haven of Archangel could be had only by the Frozen Ocean and the White Sea. Under Elizabeth maritime enterprise, commercial and warlike, took a far wider range. American colonization did not as yet begin; Indian dominion was yet more distant; but it was in these times that the first steps were taken towards both. The seamen of England now broke into the preserved maritime empire of Spain, and gave the land which was to give birth to Washington a name in honour of their own virgin queen. The merchants of England, chartered as usual as a company, now first made their way to the great Indian continent, to behold, under the rule of Akbar, that religious toleration which Elizabeth denied to Catholic and Puritan. It is hard for us to conceive the effect which was made on men's minds by a change which was practically an enlargement of the bounds of the physical world. If it is absurd to set up the great seamen of Elizabeth's day, Drake and Gilbert and Cavendish and Raleigh, as though they were faultless heroes, it is equally unfair to decry them as mere pirates. They were the natural creation of a new state of things. It was not theoretically justifiable, but it was in no way wonderful, if men of all nations deemed that, in new and barbarous

lands and seas, they were set free from the obligations of public law which bound them in their European homes. But one stain, deeper and more lasting, dates from Elizabeth's days. At home personal slavery had long been forgotten, and the last traces of villainage can now be discerned only by the most prying eyes. The distant enterprises of England now brought back in a new shape the shame of our earliest days. The kidnapping and selling of negroes now became a chief branch of English commerce. And it must not be forgotten that, till the humane decisions of the last century, the negro, like the British captive or the English criminal of ancient times, was as much a slave on the soil of England as he was on the soil of America.

The completed national character of England dates from the days of the Tudors, and mainly from the reign of Elizabeth. From this time, in dealing with the actors in English history, we seem, more thoroughly than in any earlier time, to be dealing with men who are in all things our own fellows. One main cause of this is that the language of the sixteenth century is the earliest form of English which an ordinary modern reader can understand without an effort. The handwriting of the sixteenth century is harder to read than the handwriting of any age before or since. The spelling of the sixteenth century is more chaotic and unreasonable than the spelling of any age before or since. But the language itself, when taken out of its uncouth clothing, is in the main intelligible, even to those who have not made language a special study. The philologist sees that the language of the nineteenth century is the same, by unbroken personal unity, as the language of the fifth century. He sees that the changes which distinguish the language of the nineteenth century from the language of the fifth century were fully accomplished by the fourteenth. But all this is for the philologist. The ordinary reader, who reads merely for the matter or the style of his book, cannot understand the language of the fifth century at all; he can understand the language of the fourteenth century only with an effort. But the language of the sixteenth century is clear to every one who reads with decent attention. It is near enough to the speech of our own times to be understood; it is far enough removed from the speech of our own times to have an archaic flavour, venerable or quaint according to the matter in hand and its treatment. The literature of the sixteenth century gives us the earliest English writings in prose and verse which we read simply as literature. Spenser and Shakespeare, Hooker and Raleigh, stand to us in a different relation from Chaucer, or even from Chaucer. And, greater than all, the sixteenth century has given us, in our national prayer-book, in our national translation of the Bible,¹ models of the English tongue which, as long as they survive, will survive to rebuke its corrupters. For them we have to thank the reigns of Henry and of Edward. Henry first gave his people the Scriptures in their own tongue, and then restricted their use. But his gift went for more than his restriction. From that day to this, the English Bible has been the only literary, as well as the only religious, food of millions of Englishmen. The Puritan lived in the English Bible, as the mediæval scholar had lived in the Latin Bible. That two great works of sixteenth century English have been familiar to us ever since, while no earlier writing has been commonly known in the like sort, is

¹ The authorized version, as it stands, is, as every one knows, a work of the seventeenth century, not of the sixteenth. But it was the work of men whose minds had been formed in the sixteenth century, and the translation of the sixteenth century was taken as its groundwork. Whenever it departs from that model, however much it may gain as a more accurate representation of the original, it loses as a piece of English and English rhythm. Compare the Psalms in the translation of Henry's day and in that of the days of James.

Language of the sixteenth century.

Elizabethan houses.

Plunder of bishoprics.

doubtless one great reason why the English of the sixteenth century is the earliest English which is commonly intelligible. But this is not the only reason. The reign of Elizabeth is in itself the most marked epoch in English literature. The stirring of men's minds which led to the great political and religious events of the age led also to the sudden burst of a whole literature in verse and prose. In the sixteenth century the English drama began, modern English theology began, the writing of history in the modern sense and in the English tongue began. And with the beginning of a school of new writers came a time of more diligent care towards our ancient writers. The fanatic religionists and greedy spoilers of Henry and Edward's days had destroyed ancient records and chronicles by wholesale. The hand of Elizabeth's first primate, the renowned Matthew Parker, was stretched out to save instead of to destroy, to publish instead of to tear in pieces. To his pious care more than to that of any other man, we owe it that the ancient history of England can be read and written.

And, as it was with language, so it was with everything else which goes to make up the national life. Its modern form is now completed. We feel that the men of Elizabeth's day, her statesmen, her warriors, her poets, and her divines, are men who come near to ourselves in a way which the men of earlier times cannot do. A gap of more than a generation, of more than two generations, seems to part Wolsey from Burghley. The main features of English social life had really been fixed in the fifteenth century; they do not thoroughly come home to us till the sixteenth. We see this in its outward form in the houses of Elizabeth's reign. They are the earliest houses, great or small, in which a modern Englishman of any class can live with any degree of modern comfort. In point of style, they have fallen away from the models of the early part of the century. The architecture of this age is primarily domestic. For ecclesiastical art there was little room in a time when more churches were pulled down than were built. Repairs were commonly done in a rough and clumsy fashion. Still there are a few ecclesiastical buildings, ranging from Edward VI. to James I., such as the tower of Probus in Cornwall and the choir of Wadham College chapel, in which the older style is still faithfully carried on. The revived Italian style was brought in by Protector Somerset; but, as applied to whole buildings, the fashion did not take; the details became a strange mixture of corrupt English and corrupt Italian; but the outlines are purely English. The Elizabethan houses, with their endless shifting of gables, are often actually more picturesque in outline than the houses of the beginning of the century. They are more distinctly houses; the features handed down by tradition from the castle no longer linger, even as survivals. And they are of all sizes, palaces, manor-houses, burgher dwellings in towns, solitary farm-houses, cottages in the village street. And they are of all materials, stone, brick, or timber, according to the district. They are the houses of an age when law was fully established, and when the different ranks of society, though the distinctions between them were far more sharply drawn, were essentially the same as they are now.

The objects of the bounty of founders were now necessarily changed; but their bounty was by no means worn out. Mary restored several monasteries, which were again suppressed by Elizabeth. Mary also restored a great part of the alienated bishops' lands. The plunder of the bishops also went on all through Elizabeth's reign, and Burghley, Hatton, and Raleigh, and other statesmen and courtiers, made themselves great fortunes at the expense of the Church. But all was not spoliation in this age. Mary and Elizabeth restored some of the collegiate churches

which had been suppressed under Edward; the foundation of colleges in the universities went on under both sisters; and this was a special time for the erection of schools and hospitals. Even Leicester has left a memorial of this kind behind him. And it may pass for a kind of charitable foundation on the part of the nation itself, when by statute of Elizabeth a public provision was first made for the relief of the poor.

England and the English people are thus thoroughly formed in the shape which they have kept to this day. Their political constitution has lived through its time of trial, ready to come forth again in its full strength. The religious character of England is fixed; her European position is fixed also. She has become wholly insular, ready to play in European politics the special part of an insular power. At home Wales is incorporated; Ireland, now a kingdom, is brought more nearly than ever under the rule of its queen. The time has now come for a nearer and a friendly union with the other kingdom which hitherto has divided the isle of Britain with England. The lack of direct descendants of Henry, the ill luck of the descendants of his sister Mary, carried the English crown to the descendants of Margaret, and called the king of Scots to the English throne. The union of the crowns led, as a necessary though not an immediate effect, to the union of kingdoms, to the time when England and Scotland, political names, so long rival and hostile names, were merged in the common geographical name of Great Britain.¹ (E. A. F.)

The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 had been the final victory gained on behalf of the independence of the English church and state. The fifteen years which followed had been years of successful war; but they had been also years during which the nation had been preparing itself to conform its institutions to the new circumstances in which it found itself in consequence of the great victory. When James arrived from Scotland to occupy the throne of Elizabeth he found a general desire for change. Especially there was a feeling that there might be some relaxation in the ecclesiastical arrangements. Roman Catholics and Puritans alike wished for a modification of the laws which bore hardly on them. James at first relaxed the penalties under which the Roman Catholics suffered, then he grew frightened by the increase of their numbers and reimposed the penalties. The Gunpowder Plot (1605) was the result, followed by a sharper persecution than ever.

The Puritans were invited to a conference with the king at Hampton Court (1604). They no longer asked, as many of them had asked in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, to substitute the Presbyterian discipline for the Episcopal government. All they demanded was to be allowed permission whilst remaining as ministers in the church to omit the usage of certain ceremonies to which they objected. It was the opinion of Bacon that it would be wise to grant their request. James thought otherwise, and attempted to carry out the Elizabethan conformity more strictly than it had been carried out in his predecessor's reign.

In 1604 the Commons agreed with Bacon. They declared that they were no Puritans themselves, but that in such a dearth of able ministers, it was not well to lose the services of any one who was capable of preaching the gospel. By his refusal to entertain their views James

¹ James I. was very fond of calling himself "King of Great Britain," a geographical description which reminds one of Chut's "King of all England." And the same style was freely used by his successors. But the kingdom of Great Britain did not really begin till Anne's Act of Union. The more accurate, though rarer, style of the Stuarts is "King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland."

placed himself in opposition to the Commons in a matter which touched their deeper feelings. As a necessary consequence every dispute on questions of smaller weight assumed an exaggerated importance. The king had received a scanty revenue with his crown, and he spent freely what little he had. As the Commons offered grudging supplies, the necessity under which he was of filling up the annual deficit led him to an action by which a grave constitutional question was raised.

Question of the impositions.

From the time of Richard II. to the reign of Mary no attempt had been made to raise duties on exports and imports without consent of parliament. But Mary had, under a specious pretext, recommenced to a slight extent the evil practice, and Elizabeth had gone a little further in the same direction. In 1606 a merchant named Bate resisted the payment of an imposition—as duties levied by the sole authority of the crown were then called. The case was argued in the Court of Exchequer, and was there decided in favour of the crown. Shortly afterwards new impositions were set to the amount of £70,000 a year. When parliament met in 1610 the whole subject was discussed, and it was conclusively shown that, if the barons of the exchequer had been right in any sense, it was only in that narrow technical sense which is of no value at all. A compromise attempted broke down, and the difficulty was left to plague the next generation. The king was always able to assert that the judges were on his side, and it was as yet an acknowledged principle of the constitution that parliament could not change the law without the express consent of the crown, even if, which was not the case in this matter, the Lords had sided with the Commons. James's attempt to obtain further supplies from the Commons by opening a bargain for the surrender of some of his old feudal prerogatives, such as wardship and marriage, which had no longer any real meaning except as a means of obtaining money in an oppressive way, broke down, and early in 1611 James dissolved his first parliament in anger. A second parliament, summoned in 1614, met with the same fate after a session of a few weeks.

French between the king and the Commons.

The dissolution of this second parliament was followed by a short imprisonment of some of the more active members, and by a demand made through England for a benevolence to make up the deficiency which parliament had neglected to meet. The court represented that, as no compulsion was used, there was nothing illegal in this proceeding. But as the names of those who refused to pay were taken down, it cannot be said that there was no indirect pressure.

The most important result of the breach with the parliament of 1614, however, was the resolution taken by James to seek refuge from his financial and other troubles in a close alliance with the king of Spain. His own accession had done much to improve the position of England in its relation with the Continental powers. Scotland was no longer available as a possible enemy to England, and though an attempt to bind the union between the two nations by freedom of commercial intercourse had been wrecked upon the jealousy of the English Commons (1607), a legal decision had granted the status of national subjects to all persons born in Scotland after the king's accession in England. Ireland, too, had been thoroughly overpowered at the end of Elizabeth's reign, and the flight of the earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel in 1607 had been followed by the settlement of English and Scottish colonists in Ulster, a measure which, in the way in which it was undertaken, sowed the seeds of future evils, but undoubtedly conducted to increase the immediate strength of the English Government in Ireland.

Attempted union with Scotland.

Without fear of danger at home, therefore, James, who as king of Scotland had taken no part in Elizabeth's quarrel

with Philip II., not only suspended hostilities immediately on his accession, and signed a peace in the following year, but looked favourably on the project of a Spanish alliance, in order that the chief Protestant and the chief Catholic powers might join together to impose peace on Europe, in the place of those hideous religious wars by which the last century had been disfigured. In 1611 circumstances had disgusted him with his new ally, but in 1614 he courted him again, not only on grounds of general policy, but because he hoped that the large portion which would accompany the hand of an infanta would go far to fill the empty treasury.

In this way the Spanish alliance, unpopular in itself, was formed to liberate the king from the shackles imposed on him by the English constitution. Its unpopularity, great from the beginning, became greater when Raleigh's execution (1618) caused the Government to appear before the world as truckling to Spain. The obloquy under which James laboured increased when the Thirty Years' War broke out (1618), and when his daughter Elizabeth, whose husband, the Elector Palatine, was the unhappy claimant to the Bohemian crown (1619), stood forth as the lovely symbol of the deserted Protestantism of Europe. Yet it was not entirely in pity for German Protestants that the heart of Englishmen beat. Men felt that their own security was at stake. The prospect of a Spanish infanta as the bride of the future king of England filled them with suspicious terrors. In Elizabeth's time the danger, if not entirely external, did not come from the Government itself. Now the favour shown to the Roman Catholics by the king opened up a source of mischief which was to some extent real, if it was to a still greater extent imaginary. Whether the danger were real or imaginary, the consequence of the distrust resulting from the suspicion was the reawakening of the slumbering demand for fresh persecution of the Roman Catholics, a demand which made a complete reconciliation between the crown and the Lower House a matter of the greatest difficulty.

The Spanish alliance.

The Thirty Years' War.

In 1621 the third parliament of James was summoned to provide money for the war in defence of his son-in-law's inheritance in the Palatinate, which he now proposed to undertake. But it soon appeared that he was not prepared immediately to come to blows, and the Commons, voting a small sum as a token of their loyalty, passed to other matters.

The third parliament of James I.

Indolent in his temper, James had been in the habit of leaving his patronage in the hands of a confidential favourite, and that position was now filled by George Villiers, marquis and afterwards duke of Buckingham. The natural consequence was that men who paid court to him were promoted, and those who kept at a distance from him had no notice taken of their merits. Further, a system of granting monopolies and other privileges had again sprung up. Many of these grants embodied some scheme which was intended to serve the interests of the public, and many actions which appear startling to us were covered by the extreme protectionist theories then in vogue. But abuses of every kind had clustered round them, and in many cases the profits had gone into the pockets of hangers-on of the court, whilst officials had given their assistance to the grantors even beyond their legal powers. James was driven by the outcry raised to abandon these monopolies, and an Act of Parliament in 1624 placed the future grant of protections to new inventions under the safeguard of the judges.

Monopolies attacked.

The attack on the monopolies was followed by charges brought by the Commons before the Lords against persons implicated in carrying them into execution, and subsequently against Lord Chancellor Bacon as guilty of corruption. The sentence passed by the Lords vindicated

the right of parliament to punish officials who had enjoyed the favour of the crown, which had fallen into disuse since the accession of the House of York. There was no open contest between parliament and king in this matter. But the initiative of demanding justice had passed from the crown to the Commons. It is impossible to overestimate the effect of these proceedings on the position of parliament. The crown could never again be regarded as the sun of the governmental system.

When the Commons met after the summer adjournment a new constitutional question was raised. The king was at last determined to find troops for the defence of the Palatinate, and asked the Commons for money to pay them. They in turn petitioned the crown to abandon the Spanish alliance, which they regarded as the source of all the mischief. James told them that they had no right to discuss business on which he had not asked their opinion. They declared that they were privileged to discuss any matter relating to the commonwealth which they chose to take in hand, and embodied their opinion in a protest, which they entered on their journals. The king tore the protest out of the book, and dissolved parliament.

The journey to Madrid.

Then followed a fresh call for a benevolence, this time more sparingly answered than before. A year of fruitless diplomacy failed to save the Palatinate from total loss. The ill-considered journey to Madrid, in which Prince Charles, accompanied by Buckingham, hoped to wring from the Spanish statesmen a promise to restore the Palatinate in compliment for his marriage with the infanta, ended also in total failure. In the autumn of 1623 Charles returned to England without a wife, and without hope of regaining the Palatinate with Spanish aid.

The French alliance.

He came back resolved to take vengeance upon Spain. The parliament elected in 1624 was ready to second him. It voted some supplies on the understanding that, when the king had matured his plans for carrying on the war, it should come together in the autumn to vote the necessary subsidies. It never met again. Charles had promised that, if he married a Roman Catholic lady, he would grant no toleration to the English Catholics in consideration of the marriage. In the autumn he had engaged himself to marry Henrietta Maria, the sister of the king of France, and had bound himself to grant the very conditions which he had declared to the Commons that he never would concede. Hence it was that he did not venture to recommend his father to summon parliament till the marriage was over. But though there was but little money to dispose of, he and Buckingham, who, now that James was sick and infirm, were the real leaders of the Government, could not endure to abstain from the prosecution of the war. Early in 1625 an expedition, under Count Mansfeld, was sent to Holland, that it might ultimately cut its way to the Palatinate. Left without pay and without supplies, the men perished by thousands, and when James died in March, the new king had to meet his first parliament burthened by a broken promise and a disastrous failure.

The first years of Charles.

When parliament met (1625) the Commons at first contented themselves with voting a sum of money far too small to carry on the extensive military and naval operation in which Charles had embarked. When the king explained his necessities, they intimated that they had no confidence in Buckingham, and asked that, before they granted further supply, the king would name counsellors whom they could trust, to advise him on its employment. Charles at once dissolved parliament. He knew that the demand for ministerial responsibility would in the end involve his own responsibility, and, believing as he did that Buckingham's arrangements had been merely unlucky, he declined to sacrifice the minister whom he trusted.

Charles and Buckingham did their best to win back

popularity by strenuous exertion. They attempted to found a great Protestant alliance on the Continent, and they sent a great expedition to Cadiz. The Protestant alliance and the expedition to Cadiz ended in equal failure. The second parliament of the reign (1626) impeached Buckingham for crimes against the state. As Charles would not dismiss him simply because the Commons were dissatisfied with him as a minister, they fell back on charging him with criminal designs. Once more Charles dissolved parliament to save Buckingham. Then came fresh enterprises and fresh failures. A fleet under Lord Willoughby was almost ruined by a storm. The king of Denmark, trusting to supplies from England which never came, was defeated at Lutter. A new war, in addition to the Spanish war, broke out with France. A great expedition to Rhé, under Buckingham's command (1627), intended to succour the Huguenots of Rochelle against their sovereign, ended in disaster. In order to enable himself to meet expenditure on so vast a scale, Charles had levied a forced loan from his subjects. Men of high rank in society who refused to pay were imprisoned. Soldiers were billeted by force in private houses, and military officers executed martial law on civilians. When the imprisoned gentlemen appealed to the King's Bench for a writ of *habeas corpus*, it appeared that no cause of committal had been assigned, and the judges therefore refused to liberate them. Still Charles believed it possible to carry on the war, and especially to send relief to Rochelle, now strictly blockaded by the French Government. In order to find the means for this object he summoned his third parliament (1628). The Commons at once proceeded to draw a line which should cut off the possibility of a repetition of the injuries of which they complained. Charles was willing to surrender his claim to billet soldiers by force, to order the execution of martial law in time of peace, and to exact forced loans, benevolences, or any kind of taxation, without consent of parliament; but he protested against the demand that he should surrender the right to imprison without showing cause. It was argued on his behalf that in case of a great conspiracy, it would be necessary to trust the crown with unusual powers to enable it to preserve the peace. The Commons, who knew that the crown had used the powers which it claimed, not against conspirators, but against the commonwealth itself, refused to listen to the argument, and insisted on the acceptance of the whole Petition of Right, in which they demanded redress for all their grievances. The king at last gave his consent to it, as he could obtain money in no other way. In after times, when any real danger occurred which needed a suspension of the ordinary safeguards of liberty, a remedy was found in the suspension of the law by Act of Parliament; such a remedy, however, only became possible when king and parliament were on good terms of agreement with one another.

The Petition of Right.

That time was as yet far distant. The House of Commons brought fresh charges against Buckingham, whose murder soon after the prorogation removed one subject of dispute. But when they met again (1629) they had two quarrels left over from the preceding session. About a third part of the king's revenue was derived from customs duties, which had for many generations been granted by parliament to each sovereign for life. Charles held that this grant was little more than a matter of form, whilst the Commons held that it was a matter of right. But for the other dispute the difficulty would probably have been got over. The strong Protestantism of Elizabeth's reign had assumed a distinctly Calvinistic form, and the country gentlemen who formed the majority of the House of Commons were resolutely determined that no other theology than the Calvinistic should be taught in England. In the last few years a reaction against it had arisen, especially in

Disputes on religion and taxation.

the universities, and those who adopted an unpopular creed, and who at the same time showed tendencies to a more ceremonial form of worship, naturally fell back on the support of the crown. Charles, who might reasonably have exerted himself to secure a fair liberty for all opinions, promoted these unpopular divines to bishoprics and livings, and the divines in turn exalted the royal prerogative above parliamentary rights. He now proposed that both sides should keep silence on the points in dispute. The Commons rejected his scheme, and prepared to call in question the most obnoxious of the clergy. In this irritated temper they took up the question of tonnage and poundage, and instead of confining themselves to the great public question, they called to the bar some custom-house officers who happened to have seized the goods of one of their members. Charles declared that the seizure had taken place by his orders. When they refused to accept the excuse, he dissolved parliament, but not before a tumult took place in the House, and the speaker was forcibly held down in his chair whilst resolutions hostile to the Government were put to the vote.

Eleven years without a parliament.

For eleven years no parliament met again. The extreme action of the Lower House was not supported by the people, and the king had the opportunity, if he chose to use it, of putting himself right with the nation after no long delay. But he never understood that power only attends sympathetic leadership. He contented himself with putting himself technically in the right, and with resting his case on the favourable decisions of the judges. Under any circumstances, neither the training nor the position of judges is such as to make them fit to be the final arbiters of political disputes. They are accustomed to declare what the law is, not what it ought to be. These judges, moreover, were not in the position to be impartial. They had been selected by the king, and were liable to be deprived of their office when he saw fit. In the course of Charles's reign two chief justices and one chief baron were dismissed or suspended. Besides the ordinary judges there were the extraordinary tribunals, the court of High Commission nominated by the crown to punish ecclesiastical offenders, and the court of Star Chamber, composed of the privy councillors and the chief justices, and therefore also nominated by the crown, to inflict fine, imprisonment, and even corporal mutilation on lay offenders. Those who rose up in any way against the established order were sharply punished.

Ship-money.

The harsh treatment of individuals only calls forth resistance when constitutional morality has sunk deeply into the popular mind. The ignoring of the feelings and prejudices of large classes has a deeper effect. Charles's foreign policy, and his pretentious claim to the sovereignty of the British seas, demanded the support of a fleet, which might indeed be turned to good purpose in offering a counterpoise to the growing navies of France and Holland. The increasing estrangement between him and the nation made him averse to the natural remedy of a parliament, and he reverted to the absolute practices of the Middle Ages, in order that he might strain them far beyond the warrant of precedent to levy a tax under the name of ship-money, first on the port towns and then on the whole of England. Payment was resisted by John Hampden, a Buckinghamshire squire; but the judges declared that the king was in the right (1638). Yet the arguments used by Hampden's lawyers sunk deeply into the popular mind, and almost every man in England who was called on to pay the tax looked upon the king as a wrong-doer under the forms of law.

Any Government which, from want of sympathy with the feelings of the masses, offends the sense of right by the levy of taxes for which it does not venture to ask their

consent, is also likely to treat with unfeeling harshness the religion of thinking men. So it was in the reign of Charles. He gave authority to William Laud, since 1633 archbishop of Canterbury, to carry out his design of reducing the English Church to complete uniformity of ceremonial. The practice in most churches differed from the laws under which public worship was intended to be guided. Laud did his best to carry out the letter of the law, under the belief that uniformity of worship would produce unity of spirit, and in some cases he explained away the law in the direction in which he wished it to be bent. The communion table was removed from the centre of the church to the east end, was spoken of as an altar, and was fenced in with rails, at which communicants were expected to kneel. At the same time offence was given to the Puritans by an order that every clergyman should read the Declaration of Sports, in which the king directed that no hindrance should be thrown in the way of those who wished to dance or shoot at the butts on Sunday afternoon. Many of the clergy were suspended or deprived, many emigrated to Holland or New England, and of those who remained a large part bore the yoke with feelings of ill-concealed dissatisfaction. Suspicion was easily aroused that a deep plot existed, of which Laud was believed to be the centre, for carrying the nation over to the Church of Rome, a suspicion which seemed to be converted into a certainty when it was known that Panzani and Con, two agents of the pope, had access to Charles, and that in 1637 there was a sudden accession to the number of converts to the Papal Church amongst the lords and ladies of the court. The rising feeling may be traced in the poems of Milton. *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*—probably written in 1632—are full of thoughts which denote him to have been at that time of no special school. The *Comus*, written in 1634 is stamped with the impress of the Puritan ideal without the Puritan asperity; whilst the *Lycidas*, in 1637, contains lines directed aggressively against the system of Laud as serving merely as a stepping-stone to Rome.

In the summer of 1638 Charles had long ceased to reign in the affections of his subjects. But their traditional loyalty had not yet failed, and if he had not called on them for fresh exertions, it is possible that the coming revolution would have been long delayed. Men were ready to shout applause in honour of Puritan martyrs like Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, whose ears were cut off in 1637, or in honour of the lawyers who argued such a case as that of Hampden. But no signs of active resistance had yet appeared. Unluckily for Charles, he was likely to stand in need of the active co-operation of Englishmen. He had attempted to force a new Prayer-Book upon the Scottish nation. A riot at Edinburgh in 1637 quickly led to national resistance, and when in November 1638 the General Assembly at Glasgow set Charles's orders at defiance, he was compelled to choose between tame submission and immediate war. In 1639 he gathered an English force, and marched towards the border. But English laymen, though asked to supply the money which he needed for the support of his army, deliberately kept it in their pockets, and the contributions of the clergy and of official persons were not sufficient to enable him to keep his troops long in the field. The king therefore thought it best to agree to terms of pacification. Misunderstandings broke out as to the interpretation of the treaty, and Charles having discovered that the Scotch were intriguing with France, fancied that England, in hatred of its ancient foe, would now be ready to rally to his standard. After an interval of eleven years, in April 1640 he once more called a parliament.

The Scotch resistance

The Short Parliament, as it was called, demanded the redress of grievances, the abandonment of the claim to levy ship-money, and a complete change in the ecclesiastical

The Short Parliament

system. Charles thought that it would not be worth while even to conquer Scotland on such terms, and dissolved parliament. A fresh war with Scotland followed. Wentworth, now earl of Strafford, became the leading adviser of the king. With all the energy of his disposition he threw himself into Charles's plans, and left no stone unturned to furnish the new expedition with supplies and money. But no skilfulness of a commander can avail when soldiers are determined not to fight. The Scotch crossed the Tweed, and Charles's army was well pleased to fly before them. In a short time the whole of Northumberland and Durham were in the hands of the invaders. Charles was obliged to leave these two counties in their hands as a pledge for the payment of their expenses; and he was also obliged to summon parliament to grant him the supplies which he needed for that object.

The Scotch invasion.

Meeting of Long Parliament.

When the Long Parliament met in November 1640, they were in a position in which no parliament had been before. Though nominally the Houses did not command a single soldier, they had in reality the whole Scottish army at their back. By refusing supplies they would put it out of the king's power to fulfil his engagements to that army, and it would immediately pursue its onward march to claim its rights.

Attainder of Strafford.

Hence there was scarcely anything which the king could venture to deny the Commons. Under Pym's leadership, they began by asking the head of Strafford. Nominally he was accused of a number of acts of oppression in the north of England and in Ireland. His real offence lay in his attempt to make the king absolute, and in the design with which he was credited of intending to bring over an Irish army to crush the liberties of England. If he had been a man of moderate abilities he might have escaped. But the Commons feared his commanding genius too much to let him go free. They began with an impeachment. Difficulties arose, and the impeachment was turned into a bill of attainder. The king abandoned his minister, and the execution of Strafford left Charles without a single man of supreme ability on his side. Then came rapidly a succession of blows at the supports by which the Tudor monarchy had been upheld. The courts of Star Chamber and High Commission and the Council of the North were abolished. The raising of tonnage and poundage without a parliamentary grant was declared illegal. The judges who had given obnoxious decisions were called to answer for their fault, and were taught that they were responsible to the House of Commons as well as the king. Finally, a bill was passed providing that the existing House should not be dissolved without its own consent.

Overthrow of arbitrary government.

Division of the House into parties.

It was clearly a revolutionary position which the House had assumed. But it was assumed because it was impossible to expect that a king who had ruled as Charles had ruled could take up a new position as the exponent of the feelings which were represented in the Commons. As long as Charles lived he could not be otherwise than an object of suspicion; and yet if he were dethroned there was no one available to fill his place. There arose therefore two parties in the House, one ready to trust the king, the other disinclined to put any confidence in him at all. The division was the sharper because it coincided with a difference in matters of religion. Scarcely any one wished to see the Laudian ceremonies upheld. But the members who favoured the king, and who formed a considerable minority, wished to see a certain liberty of religious thought, together with a return under a modified Episcopacy to the forms of worship which prevailed before Laud had taken the church in hand. The other side, which had the majority by a few votes, wished to see the Puritan creed prevail in all its strictness, and were favourable to the establishment of the Presbyterian discipline. The king,

by his unwise action, threw power into the hands of his opponents. He listened with tolerable calmness to their Grand Remonstrance, but his attempt to seize the five members whom he accused of high treason made a good understanding impossible. The Scottish army had been paid off some months before, and civil war was the only means of deciding the quarrel.

At first the fortune of war wavered. Edgehill was a drawn battle (1642), and the campaign of 1643, though it was on the whole favourable to the king, gave no decisive results. Before the year was at an end parliament invited a new Scottish army to intervene in England. As an inducement, the Solemn League and Covenant was signed by all Parliamentary Englishmen, the terms of which were interpreted by the Scotch to bind England to submit to Presbyterianism, though the most important clauses had been purposely left vague, so as to afford a loophole of escape.

The civil war.

The battle of Marston Moor, with the defeat of the Royalist forces in the north, was the result. But the battle did not improve the position of the Scots. They had been repulsed, and the victory was justly ascribed to the English contingent. The composition of that contingent was such as to have a special political significance. Its leader was Oliver Cromwell. It was formed by men who were fierce Puritan enthusiasts, and who for the very reason that the intensity of their religion separated them from the mass of their countrymen, had learnt to uphold with all the energy of zeal the doctrine that neither church nor state had a right to interfere with the forms of worship which each congregation might select for itself. They were commonly known as Independents, from the communities which had sprung up under the name of Separatists in the reign of Elizabeth, and which maintained the principle of congregational independence; though many other sects found a place in their ranks.

Presbyterians and Independents.

The principle advocated by the army, and opposed by the Scotch and the majority of the House of Commons, was liberty of sectarian association. Some years earlier, under the dominion of Laud, another principle had been proclaimed by Chillingworth and Hales, that of liberty of thought to be maintained within the unity of the church. Both these movements conducted to the ultimate establishment of toleration,—the one by permitting those to worship as they saw fit whose faith was too definite to enable them to be content with outward forms by which their particular belief was not clearly expressed, the other by allowing those whose charity was greater than their polemical zeal to find a common ground to worship side by side with others whose beliefs did not entirely coincide with their own.

Comprehension and toleration.

For the present the Independents were to have their way. The Presbyterian leaders, Essex and Manchester, were not successful leaders. The army was remodelled after Cromwell's pattern, and the king was finally crushed at Naseby (1645). The next year (1646) he surrendered to the Scots. Then followed two years of fruitless negotiation, in which after the Scotch abandoned the king to the English parliament, the army took him out of the hands of the parliament, whilst each in turn tried to find some basis of arrangement on which he might appear to sit on the throne without again misdirecting the government. Such a basis could not be found, and when Charles stirred up a fresh civil war and a Scottish invasion (1648), the leaders of the army vowed that, if victory was theirs, they would bring him to justice. To do this it was necessary to drive out a large number of the members of the House of Commons, by what was known as Pride's Purge, and to obtain from the mutilated Commons the dismissal of the House of Lords, and the establishment of a high court of justice, before which the king was brought to trial, and sentenced

Overthrow of the king.

The second civil war.