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MAKING A NATION

BOOK TWO: NATIONAL AFFAIRS

MAKING A NATION

BOOK TWO

National Affairs

By ERNEST SHORT

With diagrams by W. EARNSHAW

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MAKING A NATION
is published in two books:

BOOK ONE: LOCAL AFFAIRS

BOOK TWO: NATIONAL AFFAIRS

This book was first published in 1951
Second Impression . . . 1955

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES

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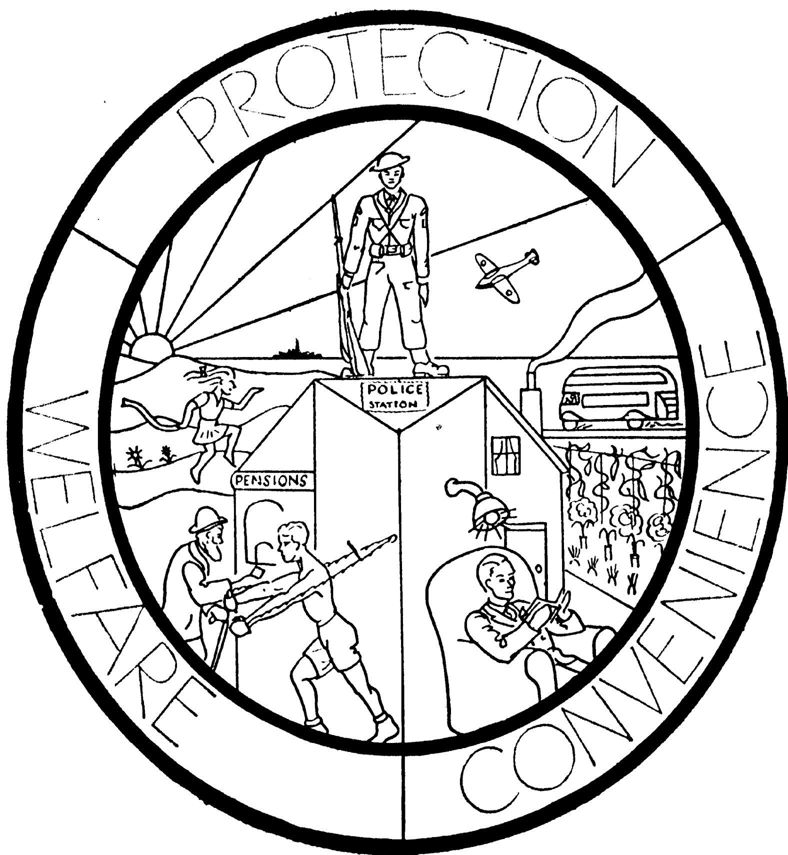

PROTECTION
WELFARE
CONVENIENCE
POLICE STATION
PENSIONS

I

PARLIAMENT THROUGH THE CENTURIES

ALL government may be divided into three great classes. One is the protection of citizens; the second is the welfare of citizens; and the third is the provision by the community for the needs and convenience of citizens. The armed Services in central government and the police in local government illustrate the protective side of government, while health services and old-age pensions illustrate the welfare side. The provision of buses and of cheap houses and allotments are better grouped with the services which the community does for the convenience of its members.

The mention of the three departments of government work suggests that almost every part of local government calls for guidance and financial help from the citizens as a whole and, therefore, from the central government in London. If local government in town or country is one great part of Making a Nation, the central or national government in London is another and no less important part.

There are very many matters on which no

District Council, County Council or County Borough Council can properly decide, because citizens outside its own boundaries are affected. Moreover, no village, county or borough is rich enough to pay for all its desirable reforms. Even if it maintains the smaller roads, it can hardly maintain the bigger highways, and certainly not the biggest highway of all, that which carries the railway trains of Britain. Hence the importance of a Parliament, or speaking-place, where matters of national importance can be debated.

The earliest Parliament in Britain seems to have been the Anglo-Saxon Witan, a gathering of leaders which elected the English kings and advised them regarding new laws and taxation, and which was a development of the local debates upon communal affairs in the Anglo-Saxon *tuns* or villages.

After the Anglo-Saxon Witan came William the Conqueror's Great Council. We read in the Chronicles :

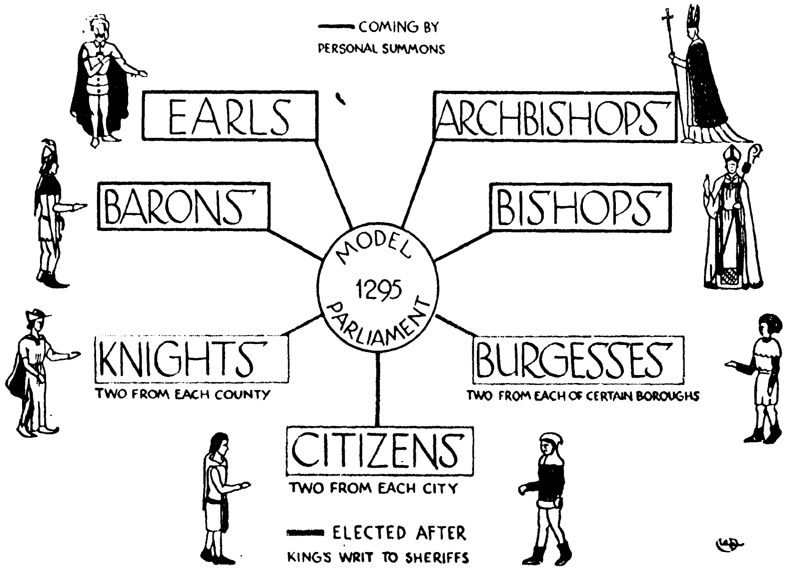
> Thrice a year King William wore his crown every year he was in England. At Easter he wore it at Winchester, at Pentecost at Westminster and at Christmas at Gloucester. And at these times the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, thanes and knights were with him.

What did the Great Council talk about ? Chiefly about taxes, as Parliament does to-day. In A.D. 1085 the chroniclers tell that King William I had

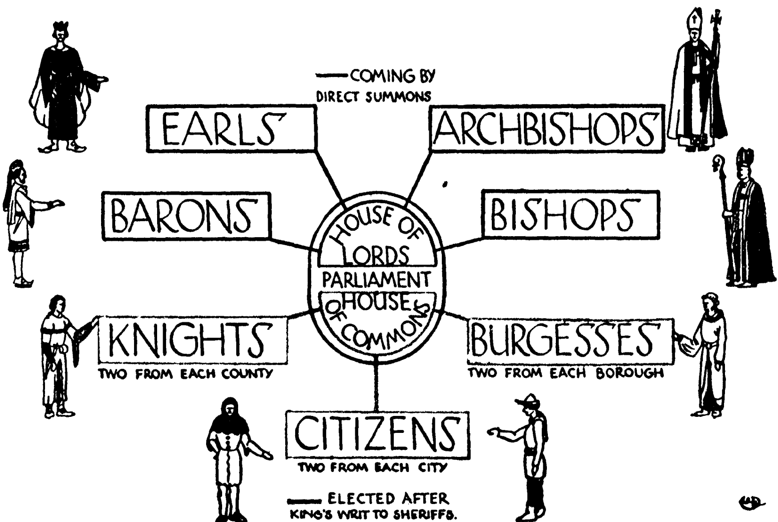
"deep speech" with his Wise Men touching the land; how it was peopled and with how many men. Then the King sent his servants all over England into every shire to find what land and cattle belonged to the King and what taxes he could gather. Calling together the reeve, the parish priest and representative villeins (peasants) from each manor, the King's commissioners required of them a full description of every holding of arable, pasture and wood land in their district. These facts were set down in Domesday Book, which included a survey of all the woods, pastures, and fields, the livestock in them, together with the names of those who owned them and what taxes could be levied on the land of each man.

The meetings of the Witan or of the Great Council—such as the gathering of the barons and churchmen at Runnymede which forced King John to sign the Great Charter—cannot properly be called meetings of Parliament, as we understand the word to-day. Something more like a modern Parliament, however, met in 1265, after the barons, under Simon de Montfort, had defeated Henry III in the battle of Lewes. Simon called upon the sheriffs of each English county, together with two knights from each shire, two citizens of each city and two burgesses of each borough which supported him, to come to Westminster Hall on January 20th, 1265. Thus representatives of the

" commons " were called as well as barons and churchmen. The word " commons " is an old English word for communities, and thus it means the delegates or representatives sent by the people living in the counties and boroughs. Where Simon's Parliament differed from the Parliament of to-day was that he invited only members favourable to his cause. Moreover, all the members sat together, as in a Great Council. The most famous of the early Parliaments was Edward I's which met in 1295—it became the " Model Parliament." But the real House of Commons only came into being when the representatives of the commoners met apart from the King and the lords.

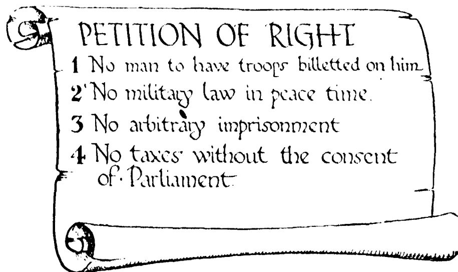


Curiously enough, in these early times electing Members of Parliament was not popular in the counties and boroughs, chiefly because it helped the King to levy taxes. The sheriffs, who were disliked as the King's tax-gatherers, issued orders to town and county to send Members to meet the King. Often the great towns disliked the sheriff's collections so much that they drove bargains with the King. For an agreed sum of money every year they " bought " a charter of self-government from the King, and a charter of this kind created the first boroughs.



HOW PARLIAMENT DIVIDED INTO THE TWO HOUSES.

Sitting in Parliament was not popular, either. The members had to undertake what were often long, lonely and even dangerous journeys which took them away from their ordinary business for weeks or even months at a time. In the fifteenth century two men fled the country rather than take the seats to which they had been elected. Probably a great many boroughs did not obey the sheriff's precept and refused to elect Members. What we call the constituencies—the counties and towns which elected M.P.s—had to pay the expenses of their Members to persuade them to go at all. But slowly the people whom the Commons represented came to see the value of Parliament.



The testing time came just before the revolution which ended in the execution of Charles I. For a time the King ruled without any Parliament, and levied customs, though he had promised to respect the Petition of Right presented by Parliament in 1628. This famous Petition asserted that no freeman should be forced to give loan or pay tax

without the consent of Parliament and that no freeman should be imprisoned contrary to the law.

After eleven years Charles was forced to summon Parliament to get money to fight the Scots, who were invading northern England. Instead of giving the King the money, Parliament chose to talk about the "ancient and undoubted liberties and privileges of the people of England." In the end, Parliament proved so powerful that King Charles had to agree to the execution of his chief minister, Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford.

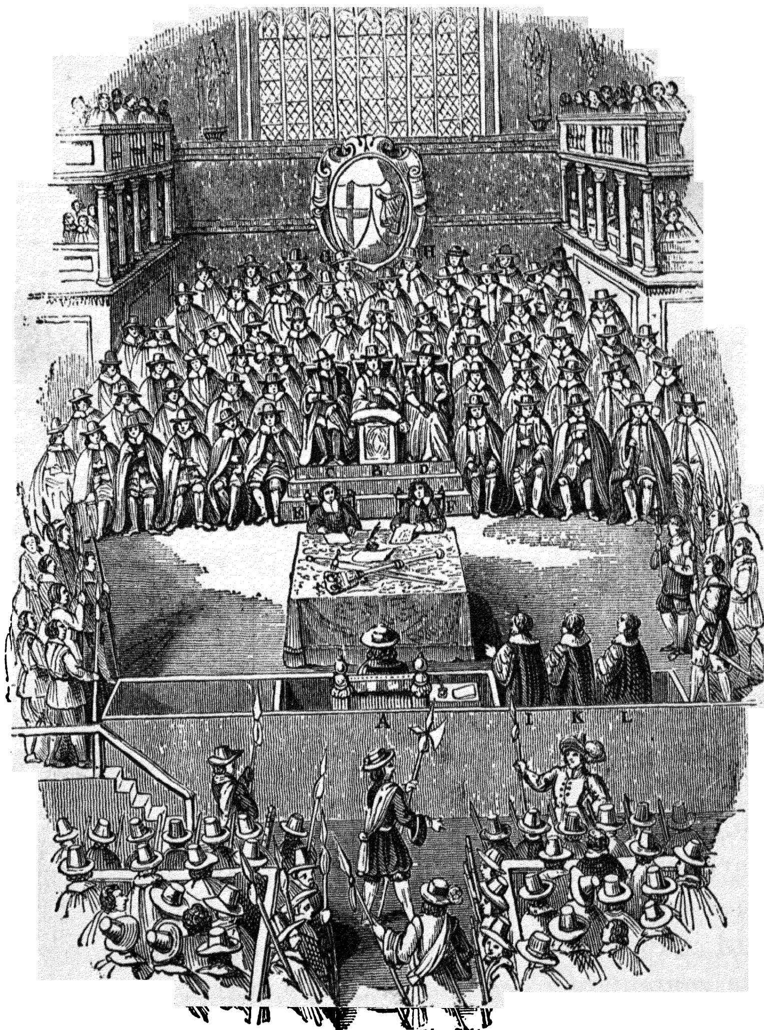
For a time Charles was really frightened, but in January 1642 he tried to arrest five Members of Parliament who, he said, had defied the Crown. The question was whether England and Scotland should be ruled by an *absolute* monarchy or by a *limited* monarchy. An absolute monarchy is one in which the King is able to do exactly as he chooses, without the interference of anyone else; in a limited monarchy the power of the King is limited by the power of some other body, such as Parliament, to the performance of certain duties. Parliament was by now feeling strong enough to assert that it had rights which no King could take away, while the King said that Divine Right gave him powers which could admit of no interference.

In general, the lawyers and merchants of the City of London supported Hampden, Pym and the other Puritan and Parliament leaders, who

John Hampden.

Charles I.

argued that the rights of Parliament must be preserved ; while the gentry and countryfolk in the north and west of England favoured Charles. The King's first action was to come to Westminster with a body of soldiers. Taking the Speaker's chair, he called for Pym, Hampden and the other Commoners. But the " birds had flown " ; they had hidden themselves in the City of London. As Charles left the House there were cries of " Privilege ! Privilege ! " ; and when the King left Whitehall a few days later for Hampton Court, the five Members were brought back to Westminster in triumph. Charles' next visit to London was as a prisoner to stand his trial.



[*Spencer Arnold*

THE TRIAL OF CHARLES I.

The King is seated with his back to us. The trial was in Westminster Hall. This is copied from a drawing made during the trial.

2

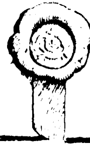
LIBERTY LANDMARKS

THE House of Commons was thus victorious in the opening stages of the long fight which led to the Civil War and to the defeat and execution of Charles I. When Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660, the British crown no longer attempted to exercise unlimited power, but instead studied public opinion carefully, as Charles expressed his determination never again to go " on his travels." It was only the utter stupidity of James II and his religious bias which cost him the throne, and this time there was to be no mistake. In 1689 William III, the Dutch husband of Queen Mary, the daughter of James II, accepted Parliament's Declaration of Rights, which was later embodied in the famous Bill of Rights. This laid it down that the Crown had no right *without the consent of Parliament* to levy taxes, to suspend laws or to keep an army in peace-time. On the other hand, all subjects of the British crown had the right to demand regular meetings of Parliament

BILL OF RIGHTS

1. THE KING LOST POWERS OF SUSPENSION & DISPENSATION.
2. THE KING LOST RIGHT TO A STANDING ARMY IN PEACETIME.
3. THE KING MUST NOT LEVY ANY TAX WITHOUT CONSENT OF PARLIAMENT.
4. THE KING MUST BE A PROTESTANT.

1689

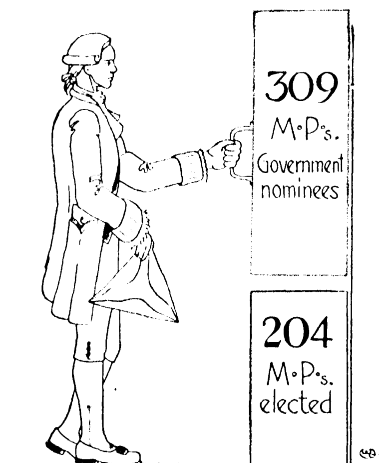


where their elected representatives could debate all matters openly.

These rights are to-day your rights as British citizens, and it is worth while remembering that the citizens of the so-called totalitarian states at the time of the Second World War had no such rights. The same is true of Communist Russia to-day. Nazi and Fascist rulers in Germany and Italy in 1939 could levy taxes, suspend laws and deny justice to political opponents as they chose. One reason for the long struggle which began in 1939 was to make it certain that the Bill of Rights should continue to be the law of the land in Britain.

One thing remained for settlement before the political liberties of the British people were assured. How could members of the House of Commons be

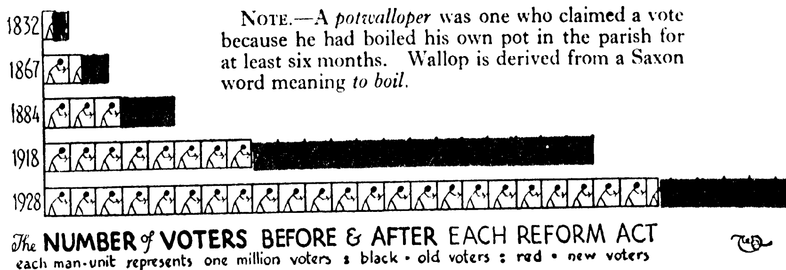
elected so that they would fully reflect the will of the British people, as opposed to the will of the Crown or the members of the Government?



1793 309 of the 513 Members of Parliament were nominated by the Government.

In 1793, about the time of the French Revolution, it was estimated that out of 513 Members returned to Parliament, 309 were nominated by the Government and so were really little more than their servants. By this time such towns as Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford were quite big cities, yet still they had no Member of Parliament representing their many interests in the House of Commons. Many parliamentary boroughs, on the other hand, each returning two Members, were tiny hamlets; others had ceased to exist, such as Old Sarum which was a grass-covered mound, and Dunwich, which had fallen into the North Sea and where the elections were held in a boat. Again, it was never quite certain who was to be allowed to vote. In some cases it was all rate-payers; in others the corporation; in others the "potwallopers," or owners of a

separate hearth; and there were several other qualifications in other places.



The NUMBER of VOTERS BEFORE & AFTER EACH REFORM ACT

The first Reform Act, passed in 1832, helped to correct these evils. It gave seats in Parliament to the larger towns, as well as two to each county, and gave a parliamentary vote to most property owners and to all householders in towns of a house worth more than £10 a year. The second Reform Act (1867) gave a vote to *all* town householders and to householders in country districts of a home worth more than £12 a year. The third Reform Act, that of 1884–5, extended the vote to agricultural labourers, who because of their cheap and poor housing conditions had been denied the right under the earlier Acts.

Finally, the Parliament Act of 1911 took away from the House of Lords the right to reject Bills which were directly concerned with money matters, particularly the annual Budget, which the Commons had long regarded as their own privilege.

Thus the House of Commons, and through them the electors of Britain, gained complete and final control over taxation. At the same time it was laid down that there was to be a new Parliament elected at least once in every five years and that no Bill passed three times by the Commons could be delayed by the Lords for more than two years.

It only remained to give the parliamentary vote to women; and, after a picturesque and often violent campaign by the Suffragettes, this was done by two Acts of Parliament passed in 1918 and 1928. The first Act also allowed women to become M.P.s, and Lady Astor appeared in the House in 1919. An Irish Sinn Feiner had been elected a year earlier, but, like all her party, refused to take her seat. The importance of women in the political scene to-day can be judged from the fact that well over half the 34 million people qualified to vote at the General Election of 1950 were women.

One important aspect of Britain's struggle for constitutional liberty and reform is that most of her hard-won rights were later adopted by the English-speaking peoples overseas. Thus liberties throughout the English-speaking world are firmly based upon such laws as Habeas Corpus, the Bill of Rights and the Reform Acts. "For centuries we have enjoyed certain blessings: a stable law, before which the poor man and the rich man were equal; freedom within that law to believe what

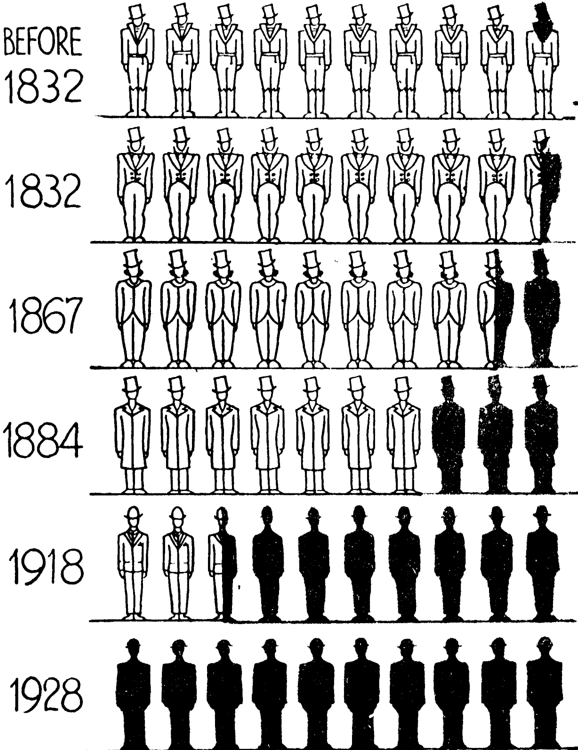
we pleased, to write what we pleased, to say what we pleased ; a system of government which gave the ultimate power to the ordinary man. We have lived by toleration, rational compromise and freely expressed opinion, and we have lived very well." So wrote John Buchan, the English writer who, as Lord Tweedsmuir, became Governor-General of Canada.

The British view of life is that the State exists to give individual citizens the power to develop all that is best in their various capacities. That is why the dignity of the individual voter looms so largely in the British idea of right politics. And this same sense of the dignity of the individual voter has been passed on to the British peoples overseas and to the citizens of the United States. Here is the sentence which Jefferson put into the Declaration of American Independence (1776) :

> We hold these truths to be self-evident : that all men are created equal ; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness ; that to secure these rights governments are instituted amongst men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

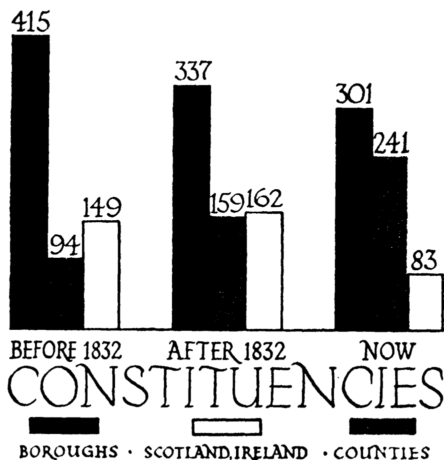
But note carefully that, in politics, liberty does not mean the absence of control, but the giving of control to those whom the majority of the voters trust. Accordingly, the party which suffers defeat in a General Election in Britain, in America, or the

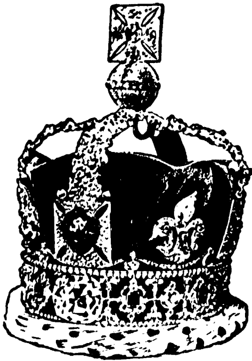
Dominions overseas does not take up arms and fight for the control of Parliament. It is content to hope and work for a different verdict by the nation at the next General Election. This sense of fair-play is not to be learnt in a few years. As the liberty landmarks show, it is a growth of centuries. And things which take long to mature usually have



a long life. Another great American, Abraham Lincoln, in dedicating a memorial to the dead in the American Civil War battle of Gettysburg, enshrined our ideals of government in words :

> The world will little note nor long remember what *we say* here, but it can never forget what *they did* here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion ; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain ; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom ; and that the government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.





3

CROWNED KING

WITH the British ideas about political and social liberty go the modern British idea of kingship, which does so much to bind the British Commonwealth of Nations into a great whole.

To-day no king is *ruler* of Britain. Still less is he the ruler of the British Commonwealth of Nations. He no longer makes laws or decrees taxes. He is not a war leader any longer, though nominally he is at the head of the Navy, Army and Air Force. The Prime Minister and his colleagues in the Cabinet decide whether and where the armed forces shall fight and on what terms peace shall be made. Nevertheless, the King still signs any declaration of war and the sailors, soldiers and airmen are proud that he is at the head of the armed forces of the Crown. Though Britain is not ruled *by* her King, she is largely ruled *through* him, and this has been so ever since the Bill of Rights was passed in the reign of William III and Mary.

One very important duty and privilege still remains to the King or Queen. When a Government is defeated in the House of Commons it is the King's duty to send for another leading statesman and ask him to form a new Cabinet and ministry, so that the King's Government may go on. Usually, the King sends for the Leader of the Opposition, but he has the right to choose any outstanding statesman. The selected statesman then, in his turn, decides who shall take over the management of each of the great Departments of State. Only when each receives his Seal of Office from the King can he get on with the work of governing in place of the retiring minister. But remember this: though the King in a sense selects the Prime Minister, he cannot dismiss him. That is the privilege of the House of Commons. When a majority of the Commoners vote against the Prime Minister or his Cabinet, it indicates that there will be no more money forthcoming to carry on State affairs until a new Cabinet is approved. Consequently, the Government must resign and the King or Queen must find ministers who can persuade the Commons to vote the necessary money.

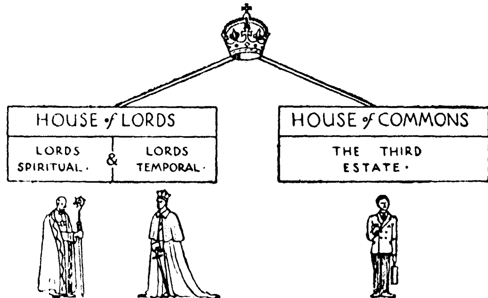
Thus we see that the Parliament of the United Kingdom (the ruling body) is really composed of the King or Queen and what are called the three estates of the realm, that is to say the Lords

Spiritual (the bishops), the Lords Temporal and the Commons. The Lords Spiritual (represented by the two archbishops and twenty-four bishops) and the Lords Temporal sit together in the House of Lords, while the Commons, or third estate, sit in the House of Commons.

The relations between the three estates, particularly as they affect taxation, are set out every year in the preamble (introduction) to the annual Finance Act, and they should be studied with care. The preamble reads :

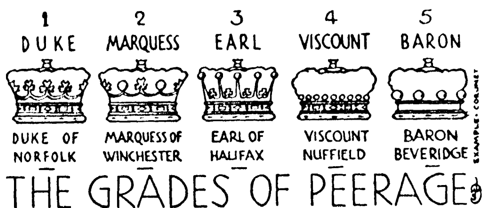
Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom in Parliament assembled, towards raising the necessary supplies to defray Your Majesty's public expenses, and making an addition to the public revenue, have freely and voluntarily resolved to give and grant unto Your Majesty the several duties hereinafter mentioned : and do therefore most humbly beseech Your Majesty that it may be enacted, and be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows. . . ."



What is the position of a King in relation to Parliament? The question cannot be answered simply. A British King no longer dictates or controls national policy; he follows the advice of his ministers. Nevertheless, a wise Prime Minister listens to what a King or Queen may say. Queen Victoria exercised considerable influence upon national policy in the later years of her long reign, just because she had been a Queen for so many years and had a very intimate knowledge of national and international politics.

How is an English King paid for his work? To-day the King of Britain receives a fixed amount from Parliament. King George VI receives £410,000 a year from Parliament, the greater part being spent upon the upkeep of Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace and Holyrood. This large sum, called the Civil List, still does not meet all the many expenses which have to be spent in order that the King and Royal Family can do all the things expected of them. At present the King is spending £20,000 a year out of his own considerable private fortune.



4 THE HOUSE OF LORDS

THE Sovereign and the elected House of Commons are branches on the mighty bough of the Tree of Britain which represents Government. Another branch is the House of Lords. Whereas the House of Commons had its origin in the Saxon Folkmoot, which decided matters of local importance, the House of Lords is in the direct descent from the Great Council of feudal times, which advised the King and the officers of the Crown what should be done or not done in matters of national importance.

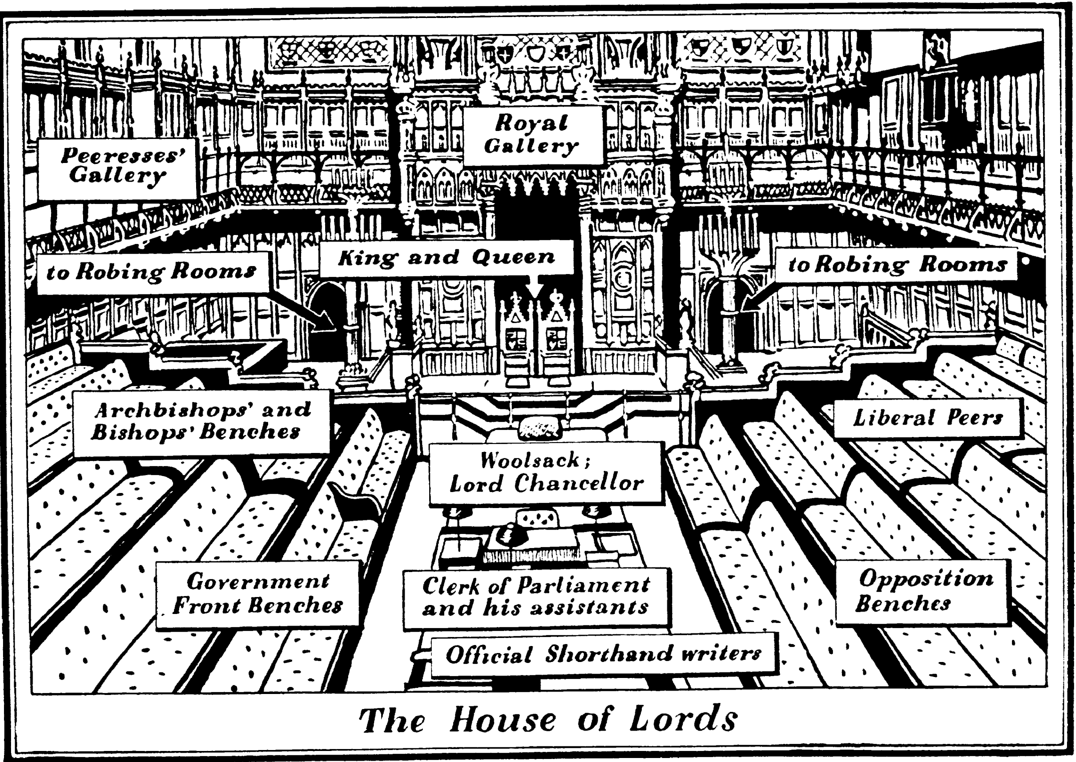
As the English kings became less and less concerned with their family possessions in France, the meetings between the King and his advisers tended to take place in the Palace at Westminster. Here Edward I, during one of his Scottish campaigns, required the principal landowners (the Lords Temporal) and the bishops and abbots (the Lords Spiritual) to meet and advise him. The King's summons ran thus :

Edward, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, Greeting.

Inasmuch as we wish to hold a special consultation with you and the other lords of this realm, touching certain establishments to be made concerning our land of Scotland, we strictly enjoin you by the love and fidelity by which you are bound to us and command that you shall put aside all other business and appear before us at our palace of Westminster on the Sunday after the Feast of St. Matthew the Apostle next evening, personally, there to treat with us on these matters, in order that we may weigh your Counsel.

It would seem that, at first, the King only summoned those among the nobles whom he could trust and whose advice he valued. But in time it became the custom to summon *any* nobleman who had once been called to the Great Council. Moreover, this right to attend passed from father to son. Membership of the House of Lords thus became hereditary (the word meaning " descending by inheritance "). Until the end of the eighteenth century the membership was small. Only in the ninteenth century was the number of Peers raised to more than six hundred.

To this day the House of Lords is best regarded as a source of advice for the King rather than as a source of legislation. It is true that Parliamentary bills can originate in the House of Lords, but the Lords have no control over taxation, and therefore their legislative powers are secondary to those of the House of Commons. In the fifteenth century the Commons asserted their right to propose any



The House of Lords

new form of taxation, and by 1860 the only thing the Lords could do with any bill involving taxation was to reject it. In 1860 the Lords actually rejected a Bill for the repeal of the duty upon paper, and Mr. Gladstone, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, determined that this should not happen again. Next year he collected all his Government's taxation proposals into a single Bill, that is into the Finance Bill or Budget.

In 1909 the Lords made their last effort to interfere in matters of taxation and *rejected* the Budget proposed by Mr. Asquith's Government. Two years later, in 1911, an Act was passed depriving the Lords of their right to reject a Budget. Thus the last fragment of control over the national finances vanished. The House of Lords, however, retains considerable powers. It can delay legislation, though it cannot prevent a Bill becoming law if the Commons insist. That is to say, the Lords can reject a Bill twice, but only twice. One year and one month after a Bill has passed the Second Reading in the House of Commons, it can be sent to the King for his approval and thus becomes the law of the land.

At present there are about 840 members of the House of Lords, including princes of the King's family. Two archbishops, of Canterbury and York, and twenty-four bishops have seats in

Parliament as the Lords Spiritual, and represent the bishops and abbots who were called to the Great Council of days gone by. Only the Church of England, as the State Church to which the King belongs, is represented.

The Lords Temporal are divided into dukes, marquesses, earls, viscounts and barons, and the majority of the titles pass from father to son or from one holder to the next heir. There are a few life Peers, prominent lawyers whom the House of Lords are glad to have among them because, in addition to its law-making powers, the House of Lords is the highest court of justice in Great Britain. Though there are women members of the House of Commons, women Peers are not allowed to take part in debates or vote. Another interesting point is that the Scottish and Irish Peers do not sit as a right, but only if they have been elected by their fellow Peers to occupy one of the number of seats allotted to them ; sixteen Scottish Peers are elected for each Parliament, and there are still eight Irish Peers.

The House of Lords is at its best when some great problem of statecraft is being debated. Many of its members have been in the House of Commons and many others have served as ambassadors or held military or civil offices in different parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The actual number in attendance for any debate is

small—hardly ever over a hundred, and usually under fifty—and is made up of those Peers who are really able and interested in affairs. Regarded as the place where wise and patriotic men can express their opinions upon matters of state, there is much to be said for the House of Lords, though many people consider that the hereditary principle should be done away with and the number of Peers with the right to assist in the making of laws should be greatly reduced.

In theory, the King is always present when the House of Lords is in session. He is supposed to preside at the meetings and his throne stands at the head of the Chamber in evidence of this. In fact, the King only presides when a new session is opening. Usually, the Lord High Chancellor presides, seated on the Woolsack, which is a great cushion filled with British and Dominion wool, recalling the times when wool was the primary product upon which the wealth of England was firmly based. In his robes of state the Lord Chancellor preserves an orderly debate, sometimes speaking himself, particularly when some legal matter is under discussion.

Deeply interesting and very beautiful is the spectacle in the House of Lords when the King comes to Parliament to open in person a new session. Picture the scene in the Gilded Chamber, where the Lords Spiritual and the Lords Temporal

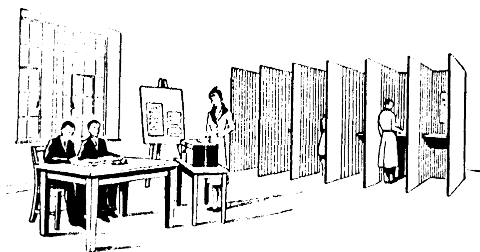
meet. The empty Throne; the golden Chair of State for the Queen; and, facing them, the Woolsack, upon which the black-robed Lord Chancellor is seated. Surrounding the Woolsack are the red-robed Peers on their crimson leather seats. The Lords Spiritual are in full clerical dress, and some of the Law Lords are in black and gold, others in scarlet. In the galleries the Ambassadors of foreign nations make a brilliant group, and so do the wives of the Peers, in full evening dress and jewelled tiaras—small crowns.

As the moment for the King's entry is reached, the lights in the giant candelabra hanging from the roof of the Chamber are dimmed. There is a hush; then a sudden stir. The beplumed Gentlemen-at-Arms spring to attention with their halberds, a combination of spear and battleaxe, as the Heralds enter the house. Once more the lights are in full strength, for the King and Queen have entered and are moving towards the Throne, accompanied by officials and courtiers, such as the Keeper of the Privy Purse, the Lord Privy Seal and the bearers of the great Sword of State, the Cap of Maintenance and the Imperial Crown. The King himself is wearing a robe of crimson with a cape of white fur; his train is carried by two pages of honour, dressed in scarlet. The Queen is wearing a crimson velvet robe over a golden robe, and with it the blue ribbon of the Garter.

The King speaks:

" My Lords, pray be seated." Then he commands the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, through the Lord Chamberlain, to let the Commons know that it is his royal pleasure that they attend him immediately. The members of the House of Commons are led in by their Speaker to listen to the Speech from the Throne, which outlines past achievements and the business of the coming months. A new Session of Parliament is in being.

There is something lovable in a spectacle which enshrines so much of British history. The evening before the opening of Parliament twelve Yeomen of the Guard from the Tower of London solemnly search the vaults lest there should be a repetition of the Gunpowder Plot. Each Yeoman is furnished with a wax candle. This is a quaint survival from the distant past, as the vaults are fully illuminated with electric light. Many people consider that the traditional ceremonial of Parliament is a silly survival, but it all had its purpose originally, and even the most revolutionary Member of Parliament falls under the spell and finds himself obeying the dignified rules of procedure, sometimes almost against his will.



5
A GENERAL ELECTION

WE have learnt something of the British Crown and the House of Lords, but still we have not reached the principle of elected representatives which lies at the root of British democratic government. For this element in political life we must look to the House of Commons, the third estate of the realm.

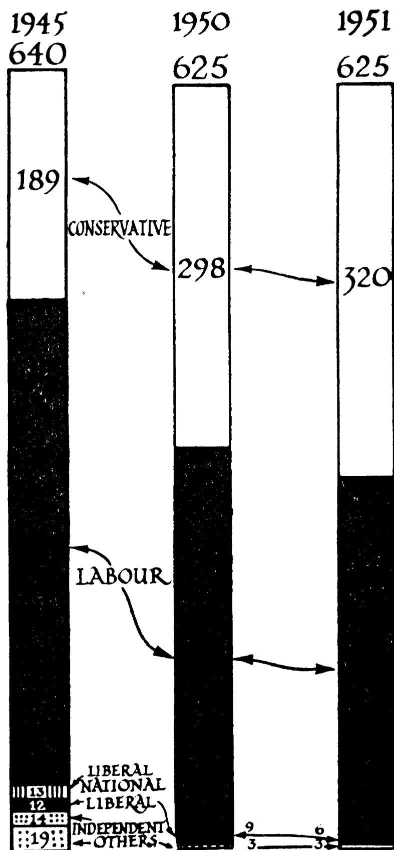
How do the thirty-four million grown men and women in Britain maintain the rights which their forefathers won in the centuries-long struggle for political liberty? The answer is by choosing suitable men or women to represent them in the House of Commons. In making their choice, the thirty-four million electors are helped by the political parties, Conservative, Labour or Liberal. The parties selected in 1950 nearly 1,900 candidates from the large numbers of men and women who would like to be elected one of the 625 members of Parliament.

Very few voters could make a proper choice between one candidate and another if scores of

names appeared on each voting paper. Accordingly, there is a branch of each of the parties in most constituencies, and these select the man or woman who seems best qualified to represent the views of their party in the coming Parliament. Thus the candidates are reduced to two or three in each constituency. The great majority of electors prefer to vote for one or another of the three parties, so there is no real injustice. But any man or woman can stand for Parliament if he wants, provided he can find electors to nominate him He has to make a deposit of £150, however, which he loses if he does not poll one-eighth of the votes cast. In this way " freak " candidates are discouraged, but not prevented.

You may ask, why should there be political parties at all ? Why should not the best men or the best women take the offices for which they are best fitted ? Well, party government has many practical advantages. In the first place, it keeps many voters interested in politics. Fighting a General Election on party lines brings brisk argument. If men and women are to be interested in politics and keep interested, it is no bad thing that occasionally they should have the fun of a fight. Moreover, most men and women tend to be interested in only a limited section of the country's affairs. But a Government has to run all the country's affairs and needs the support of a majority

in Parliament in all its doings. If Members of Parliament had no party allegiance and had subscribed to no party " platform " or general statement of policy, the Government would never know in advance on any new issue whether it was going to be defeated or not. A government of all parties may be formed if all parties agree that there is some overwhelmingly important aim to be attained, such as the winning of a war, or if the problems of the government, as in a very small country, are not very complicated ; but in a great country like Britain there is little hope of long life for a government which tries to forget party rivalries.



The proper way to look at party government is to regard the result of each General Election as an expression of the people's wish. Even if one

thinks the people should have voted otherwise, there is always an *Opposition* in the elected House of Commons to keep the victors in check. Moreover, every now and then there will be a by-election, which will show what the voters in one constituency at least think of what is being done, and make the Government think twice when some difficult decision must be made. A by-election in any constituency is, of course, necessary if the elected member dies or resigns his seat or becomes a Peer.

During an election the candidates go up and down each constituency, making speeches and talking to electors, so that their political views may become well known. Talking to electors is called " canvassing." Sometimes the leaders of the three great parties—Conservative, Labour and Liberal—visit constituencies where the voting is likely to be close, further adding to the interest of the struggle. It is always worth listening to the Prime Minister or to any of the great Ministers of the Crown or to the leading members of the Opposition party. Lucky electors who have been able to secure a seat at such meetings feel they have been " making history " when they applaud some speech which is printed at length in the newspapers or even broadcast on the radio round the world.

Then comes the day of the *polling*, that is to say, the day of the counting of heads, for poll is only

another word for head. Each elector goes to a polling-booth, gives his or her name to an official (to make sure that he does not vote twice) and receives a paper on which are printed the names of the candidates. The elector, who must be over twenty-one, goes to a private booth in the hall, puts a " X " against the name of the chosen delegate, folds the paper so that no one can see for whom he has given his vote and slips the paper into a big locked box. This is what is known as voting by *secret ballot*.

In the bad old days, before voting by secret ballot was introduced, a general election was an unruly affair. We can see this by comparing a modern polling booth with one of the " Election Pictures " of Hogarth, to be seen at the Sloane Museum, Lincoln's Inn Fields. In the picture of *The Canvassing for Votes* we see the open bribery of electors, and in the picture of *The Polling* a deaf idiot, a dying man and other undesirable voters are shown being forced to record their votes, as the election promises to be a near thing and every possible vote is judged necessary. Lastly, in *The Chairing the Member* picture there is a general riot, very different from the orderly speeches which the candidates deliver to-day after the result of the polling has been declared. When everyone knew for whom each vote was given, bribery and corruption were easy. It is no longer

worth while to bribe a voter, as one can no longer be sure he will give his vote to the candidate who bribed him. Voting by secret ballot is another of the safeguards of liberty in Britain.

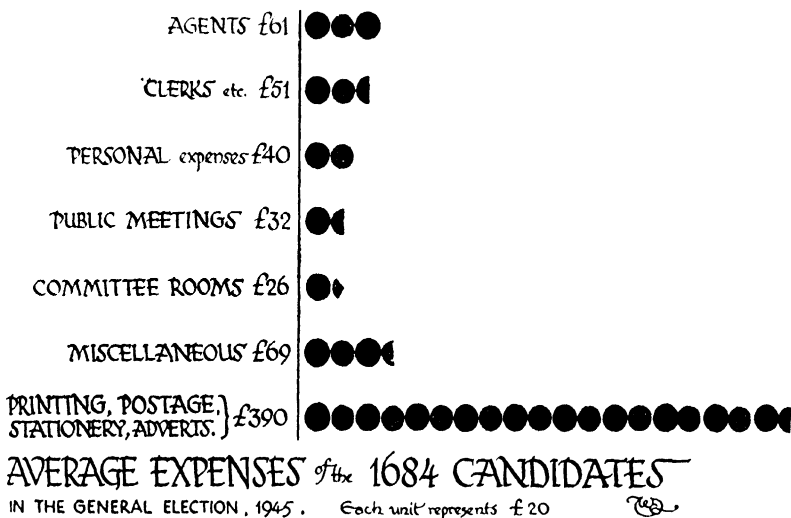
Here is a typical ballot paper, with space at the side where the elector must make a cross against the name of the selected candidate. If he adds his signature, the vote will not be counted ; just one " X " and no more ! Note also that the ballot paper gives no evidence of the party to which the three candidates belong. The voter must remember the name of the man or woman he wants to represent him in the House of Commons.

Counterfoil No. 476. Election for Parliamentary Borough of Huddersfield, July 1945.			Space for X
	1.	BAILEY (William Blake Bailey, 116 North Street, Huddersfield. Trade Union Official.)	
	2.	JAMES (Mary James, 25 South Street, Huddersfield. Married Woman.)	
	3.	SMART (Henry James Smart, Abernethey, Cuddesdon, Oxon. Factory Owner.)	

In the evening, the ballot boxes are collected from the different polling places and taken to the town hall, or some other convenient office, where the votes are counted.

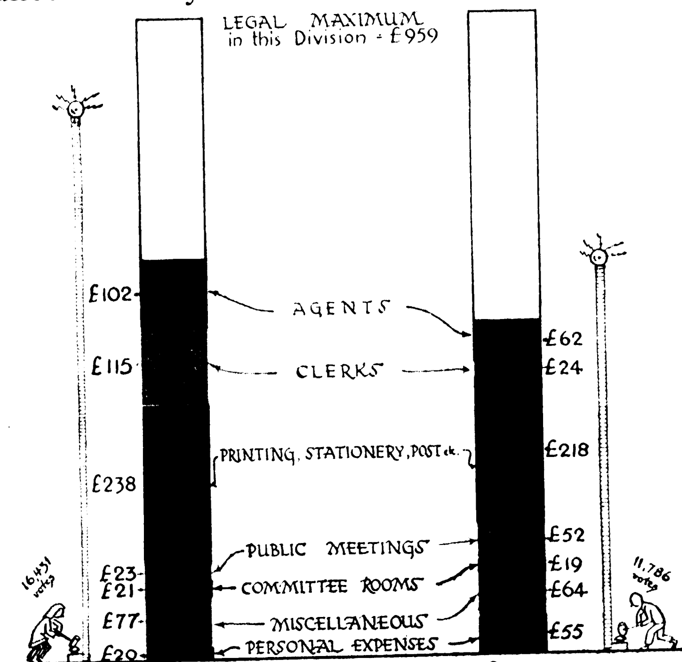
Bundles of votes are brought in, counted by the sorters and laid out in long lines, one for each candidate. Soon the lines look like great snakes, growing ever longer, the victory going to the snake which is longest perhaps two hours later, when the counting closes. It may be that only at the very end can any candidate hear the comforting whisper, " You're in ! " He is sure when the returning officer finally adds up the figures, opens the window of the hall and announces them to the big crowd outside.

It has all been vastly exciting. Even an old member of Parliament who has fought many hard electioneering battles will feel a thrill when he is elected to yet another Parliament. And the



AVERAGE EXPENSES of the 1684 CANDIDATES
IN THE GENERAL ELECTION, 1945. Each unit represents £20

excitement extends far beyond the particular constituency. In far-away London great crowds are gathered in Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly or around the newspaper offices in Fleet Street. As each result is flashed on big screens there are great cheerings, possibly answered by great booings. Audiences in the theatres, music-halls and cinemas wait on for hours while election results are announced as they come in. And there are similar



£596 — TOTAL — £494

EXPENSES of CANDIDATES in GENERAL ELECTION – 1945

in the Hexham Division, Northumberland, where the successful candidate (on left) was Col. D. Clifton Brown, Speaker of House of Commons

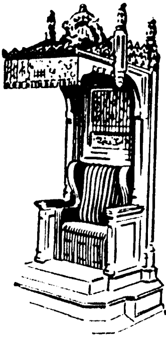
scenes in all the big cities of Britain. Even family groups, sitting round the radio, feel some of the prevailing tension.

A General Election is not only exciting but costly. About £1,500,000 is spent, apart from registration expenses and any moneys privately subscribed by members of the various political parties. The returning officers' fees alone amount to about £750,000, this being spent upon hiring halls for the voting and paying those who count the votes. The party candidates are also allowed to advertise their views, and £1,000 may be spent in a large borough without the candidate exceeding the legal limit.

The salary of a member of Parliament is £1,000, less income-tax, so there is very little margin for these election expenses. This means that M.P.s must usually have some other private or earned income, as well as considerable leisure. Parliament sits about thirty-five weeks in a year, from 2.45 p.m. to 11 p.m. on four days of the week, and for a rather shorter time on Fridays. But there are also many Committees to be attended, and hundreds of letters from constituents to be answered. Many busy men can spare neither the time nor the money. Similarly, many young men who are interested in politics cannot afford to become M.P.s. In 1950 the average age of a Member of Parliament was about fifty, while the average age of most members of a Government is over sixty.

What makes a man or woman voter support one party rather than another ? The question is not easy to answer. Some people tend to be adventurous—they welcome changes ; people with this outlook tend to be Liberal or Labour. There are others who consider the unknown somewhat dangerous—they prefer the familiar things ; such people tend to Conservatism in politics. In general, the older men and women become, the more conservative they are. But there are many other factors, among them birth, education or connection with a particular industry.

In the past, owing to faulty methods of election and the choice of the wrong sort of Member, reforms were often slow in coming. Now that practically every grown Briton has a vote, he or she cannot reasonably complain if changes are not made. It is always in their power to call for changes in the law after full and free discussion. People who accept the British tradition welcome this open discussion as the best approach to political freedom yet devised. Ours may justly be called a democratic constitution. The word " democratic " is derived from a Greek word *demos* meaning " the people," and thus a democratic constitution is one which allows of government by the people and for the people.



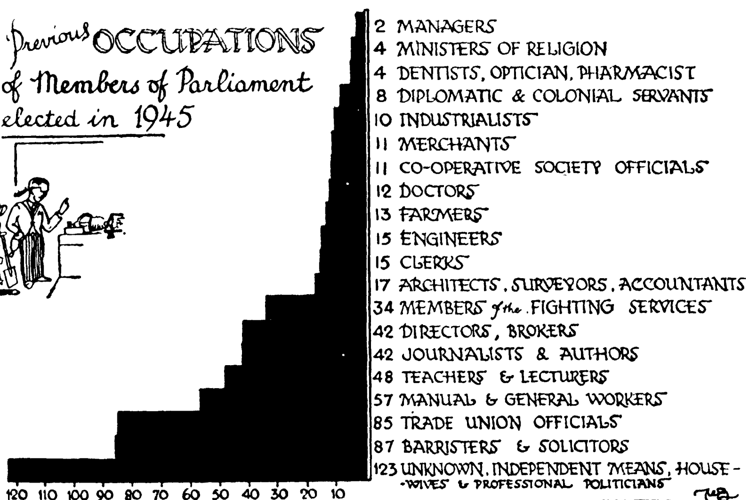
6

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

WE have seen that the leading political parties choose candidates for Parliament, who then canvass for the necessary number of votes to take them to Westminster with the magic letters M.P. after their names. We have learned of some of the difficulties of time and money which stand in the way of many would-be candidates. Who, then, are the men and women who enter Parliament and perform the work which settles how our country is to be run? A few are professional politicians, trained from their youth for no other work. These few are usually lucky enough to have a sufficient private income to remove all financial worries. Most Members have attained prominence in some walk of life or other, and that prominence has brought them to the notice of the selection committee for the party candidate.

Many candidates come from the world of business: some are company directors, whose duties allow them time for the work of Parliament; some

are owners of businesses which can temporarily be left in the care of managers, partners or wives. Some work at professions in which they can fix their own working hours : they may be barristers or journalists or architects. Many, particularly in the Labour Party, are officials of trade unions, which are willing to allow their secretaries to sit in Parliament and do their union work at other times. Not a few Members have served in other spheres of national life, including many from the Services, and have the time for Parliament simply because they have retired. In other cases the Member, before he was elected, did an ordinary job of work with fixed hours, like the great majority of his fellow countrymen. He may have been a miner or an engine-driver, a teacher or an accountant ; in



that case he must on election resign his job and hope that at each General Election he can secure his seat once more. If he is unlucky, he has no guaranteed pension as a retired M.P.—he must look round again for a job in order to live. His salary as a Member will not have made him a rich man, for Britain does not like the idea of a man making himself rich by politics. The ordinary Member is paid £1,000 a year ; a junior minister about £1,500. Even the Prime Minister is only paid £10,000 a year, a salary which is much less than that of many big business men, though the Prime Minister's salary is free of income tax. Some eminent lawyers who take office in the Government may surrender an income of £30,000 or £40,000 a year for one less than a quarter as great.

But money is not the first consideration of Members. To be elected to the House of Commons is an honour reserved for the very few, and therefore greatly coveted. It has been called " The finest club in the world." In that " club " are all the amenities of any club—dining-rooms, bars, smoke-rooms, libraries, writing-rooms, even a barber's shop and a chapel. This " club life " takes away much of the bitterness of politics. Members meet and discuss their differences over a pipe or a meal, and much agreement can be reached outside the actual debating chamber.

The main rewards come from their share in

controlling the destinies of the nation, the confidence reposed in them by their constituents and the possibility of a seat in the Government. Pitt and Disraeli had to face hostile Houses of Commons in their early days. Every Member feels that he may one day be among the great statesmen whose names are on all lips.

When an elected Member comes to Westminster after a general election, his first act is to be introduced to the Speaker and take an oath of allegiance to the King or Queen. The Christian form of swearing on the Bible is usually followed, but those who are not Christians can make a solemn promise of allegiance. Then the new Member will probably listen to the debate on the Speech from the Throne which opens each new session of Parliament and largely foreshadows the Bills which will come up for consideration. The first duty of a newly elected Commoner is to remember that when he is speaking in the House he must always address the chairman as " Mr. Speaker."

The Speaker is in some ways the most important of all the Members. He sits in black robes and full-bottomed wig, ready to see that the debates are orderly and that no one indulges in personal abuse or breaks the rules of the House. His name is peculiar, for, unlike the chairman of the House of Lords (the Lord Chancellor), he is not allowed to speak in any debate. In the days

when the Commons sat in secret for fear of the King, it was necessary to have one Member to speak for them as a whole in reporting their decisions to the King; this Member was the "Speaker" for all the Members. His job was often unpopular, for no King liked to receive unpleasant news from the Commons, and its bearer would naturally be in disfavour. This leads to a very peculiar ceremony when a new Speaker is chosen. The office of Speaker, which will only go to a Member of long service who commands the respect and confidence of all parties, is worth £5,000 a year and a house in the Palace of Westminster, and each retiring Speaker is made a viscount. This would seem an attractive office! Yet when the new Speaker is elected in the Commons, his proposer and seconder go to his place and drag him to the Chair, while he appears to struggle against them. This recalls the unpopularity of the office in old times and reminds us, as does the searching of the cellars, of the more tolerant days in which we live. Now the Speaker, sitting with the Great Mace in front of him as an emblem of his authority, chooses the speakers in the debates of the House and, as we have seen, watches that all Members obey the rules of the House.

To prevent heated argument from developing, if the Speaker is standing all other Members must sit. The Speaker's rising thus brings the House to

order, and any Member who incurs his displeasure by any improper conduct can be expelled from the House—if necessary by force. This, naturally, does not happen often. The normal work of the Speaker is to see that the debate continues in an interesting manner ; that not all the speakers shall be on the same side ; and that the views of the minority are given proper weight. This means that Members who wish to " catch the Speaker's eye " usually tell him beforehand. A whole debate may even be arranged by agreement between the Government and the Opposition, so that no " casual " speaker has a chance to join in. To allow as many as possible to speak, the Speaker must see that all speeches keep to the point under discussion. Speaking " out of order " is regarded as a parliamentary crime, and if the Speaker is not vigilant he will have other Members jumping to their feet and asking whether the " Honourable Member for Loamshire " is in order in what he has just said. If a Member uses another's name, or if he refers to the " House of Lords " instead of to " another place," he is " out of order." He must not step over the carpet which runs along the House just in front of the Front Benches—this is another reminder that Members on opposite sides of the House may feel provoked to fight each other. The tact and patience required by the Speaker are surely obvious.

Not every Member can become the Speaker—not every one wishes to, for then his chance of becoming Prime Minister would have gone. Not every Member can become Prime Minister, or even a Minister. But every Member hopes to be a Member again at the next election—except the few who are ready for retirement—so what must the ordinary Member do to satisfy his constituents ? We might imagine that his first duty is always to be in his place in the House. But he has no place !

The Commons Chamber has seats for only about two-thirds of the Members. Part of the reason for this is that a Chamber with a seat for every Member would look very bare during the average debate.

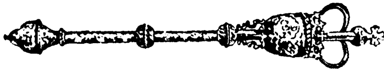
There are so many debates on so many different subjects that no M.P. hopes to be expert, or even interested, in all. He will specialize in a few subjects as well as attending all the very important debates, such as those on the Budget or on some serious problem of foreign affairs. The debates in which he hopes to speak will probably only cover four or five subjects, unless he is an unusually gifted Member. These he will study carefully in the little spare time available to him. To secure the most modern and accurate information on problems, for instance, of the Colonies, Parliament sends missions of a few Members from time to time, and the Members who have specialized will have a good chance of selection. The rest of the

Member's " official " work will consist of sitting on various committees.

In addition, a good M.P. is expected to be available to assist his constituents, both those who voted for him and the rest ; for with the secret ballot in operation, no one need say which way he has voted. Some Members regularly hold meetings in their constituencies ; others are available for private consultation at fixed hours. Others prefer to conduct all their business by post. A few never go near their constituencies and never bother to answer letters—even if a stamped envelope is enclosed ! These are the ones who are not likely to be re-elected. Last of all—and in many ways this is his most important duty—the Member must think of his constituency as a whole. The local council may have a new and ambitious scheme to develop their town as a holiday resort—and the Member will be expected to help in negotiations with Government Departments and others to bring it to a successful conclusion. He may be asked to be chairman of the local football club or president of the music festival, or any one of a hundred jobs. From early morning to late at night—sometimes early the next morning, when the cry " Who goes home ? " rings through the Palace of Westminster—the conscientious M.P. finds more than enough to occupy his time.

The Members we have so far mentioned are

those elected by the people as their representatives. There are many other men and women who work at Westminster without any of the glamour of the M.P.s. A great staff of workmen, cleaners, waiters, policemen, clerks and office workers of all kinds is always on the premises. Also we must not forget the men who see that you and I know what is going on under the great tower of Big Ben. Every word which is spoken in both Houses is taken down in shorthand by a staff of shorthand writers, sitting in a little gallery in relays, two at a time, and being relieved every few minutes, so arduous is the task. In addition to these men who produce the daily report on Parliament (called *Hansard* after the man who printed one of the earliest records), every important newspaper and press agency has a Parliamentary or Lobby Correspondent—sometimes both—who produces a summary of the most important and interesting business. The British Broadcasting Corporation is also a way by which many hear of the doings of Parliament. When the Houses are sitting, there is a report every night on "To-day in Parliament" and once a week a talk by an M.P. on "The Week in Westminster."

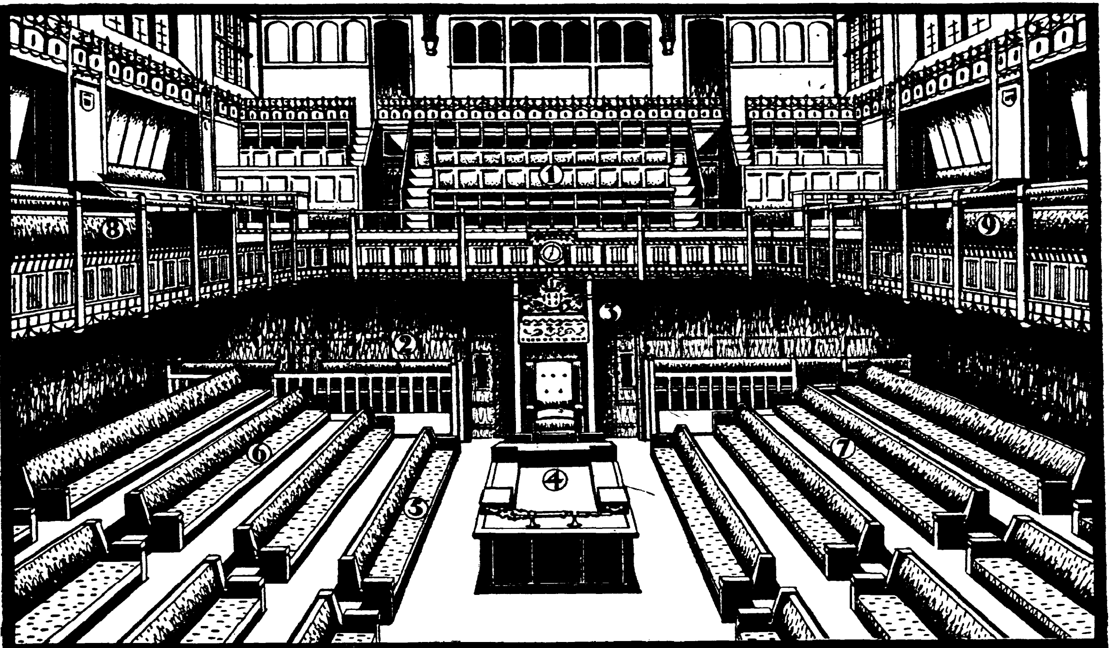


7

THE WORK OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

WHEN the House of Commons is sitting, the Members take their places on rows of ascending benches on either side of the Speaker. The Government supporters sit on the right and the Opposition Members, who dislike the policy of the Government and hope to replace it with a Government selected from their own numbers, sit on the left of the Speaker's chair. It is a rather surprising feature of British government that, while the King's Ministers are appointed and paid to run the country's affairs, the Leader of the Opposition is paid a salary of £2,000 a year to organize the task of upsetting the Government! This is not quite the whole truth, of course. The system of government we enjoy depends on free and frank discussion and on the Government being kept "up to scratch" by the presence of another party which is only too eager to form a different Government. Thus the presence of an efficient Opposition is essential, and therefore its Leader, who has much work to do to secure that efficiency, is compensated for his trouble.

The bench on the right nearest the Speaker's chair is reserved for Ministers of the Crown. On

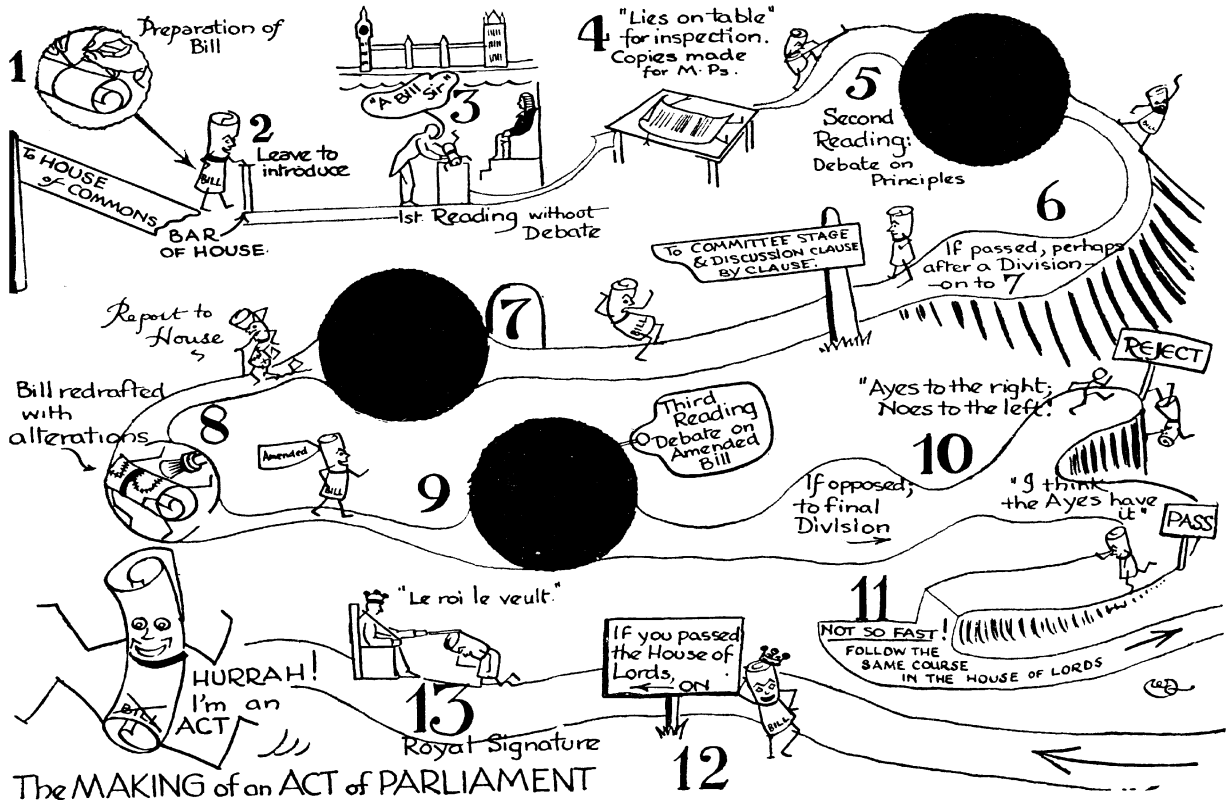


THE NEW HOUSE OF COMMONS.

1. Reporters' Gallery.
2. Gallery for Civil Servants.
3. Speaker's Chair.
4. Table of the House.
5. Government Bench.
6. Government Back Benches.
7. Opposition Benches.
8. Government Side Gallery.
9. Opposition Side Gallery.

the opposite bench are the Opposition leaders, men who have held ministerial rank in former Governments or who have come to the front in their party since it last held office. Behind the "front benches" are the "back-benchers"—the ordinary Members who hold no official position. Above the Speaker's chair is the press gallery, where the reporters sit. There are also galleries for the general public and for distinguished strangers, while the seat over the clock is reserved for the Heir to the Throne if he (or she) wishes to attend a debate. It is right that a King should know how Acts of Parliament are discussed before he becomes King, as he is not allowed to attend Commons debates afterwards. Why is the King not allowed to be present when the Bills, to which he has later to give his assent, are being discussed? Because in past days it was thought that Members might be influenced if the King was in the House, and thus parliamentary discussion might not be fully free.

Much of the important work of Parliament consists in passing laws. This is done by a rather complicated process, which ensures adequate discussion of all the difficulties which may be involved. But if Parliament is really in a hurry (as it was, for instance, in September 1939) Acts can be passed with great speed if Members agree not to talk much. The Act of Parliament is the finished



The MAKING of an ACT of PARLIAMENT

article; when it starts it is called a Bill, and may be introduced in either House and by either the Government or a private Member. Most of the time of Parliament has in recent years been entirely taken up by the Government, and it is difficult for a private Member's Bill to go far unless the Government helps it along by granting time for its discussion. Some Bills, known as Private Bills, are introduced for the benefit of a particular town or company or even a private person, and they are usually passed without much discussion, except in Committee. The rest of the Bills are called Public Bills, and they are by far the most numerous.

When a Bill has been introduced, it is given its First Reading without a debate. This is a pure formality, to ensure that the Bill appears in print and is available for the consideration of Members and of anyone outside Parliament who is interested enough to buy a copy. Members will now be prepared for the Second Reading, during which there is a full debate on the principles of the Bill. The debate is usually opened by a minister, and may take several days if the subject is of great importance. If the Second Reading is approved, the Bill then goes "into Committee," to be discussed clause by clause and amended if necessary. Committees are of two kinds and their sittings, which often take place in the mornings, occupy much of a

conscientious Member's time. Some of the Committees are comparatively small groups of Members, meeting in rooms "upstairs," as it is called. More important Bills are considered in a Committee of the whole House, which sits in the Commons Chamber, but without the Speaker and with the Great Mace hidden under the table. The Chairman of Committees is in the chair; the discussion is more conversational and Members may speak as often as they like. Thus many facts and arguments—often involving points of great detail—may be introduced which would have been out of place in the formal Second Reading debate, and sometimes a long discussion may turn on a single word.

When a Bill has passed through Committee, it is "reported" to the House and still more discussion may take place. Finally comes the Third Reading, when the Bill as amended is once more reviewed to make sure that it is approved in its final shape. The Speaker now puts the question whether the Bill shall pass. If any members object, the House "divides." Those who want the Bill to pass go into the "Ayes" (Yes) lobby and those who oppose the Bill into the "No" lobby.

Directly it is certain the House desires a division, one of the Clerks of the House, seated at the table in front of the Speaker, turns a minute-glass filled with sand and electric bells are set ringing all over

the Houses of Parliament—a signal to Members that their votes are required. There is hurrying and scurrying, for the sand in the glass takes exactly two minutes to run out. It is easy for slow-moving members outside to be locked out. As the last grain falls to the bottom the doors of the House are closed by the Serjeant-at-Arms and the Speaker tells Members how to record their votes: "*Ayes* to the right; *Noes* to the left."[1]

Those voting in favour of the Bill pass into the lobby behind the Speaker's Chair, while the Noes go through a small door at the lower end of the House. As the Members return from the division lobbies their names are taken down by the Tellers, who report the numbers in each lobby to the Speaker. If the Ayes have a majority, the Bill goes to the Lords and eventually may become an Act of Parliament. If the Noes have it, there may be a Cabinet crisis and a new Government may be formed by the victorious Opposition, all of which is very exciting.

The English political system has always laid stress upon enquiry into public grievances through departmental and royal commissions. Thus legislation is based upon accurate knowledge rather than upon prejudiced guesses. But many evils are put to rights by the privilege of Question and

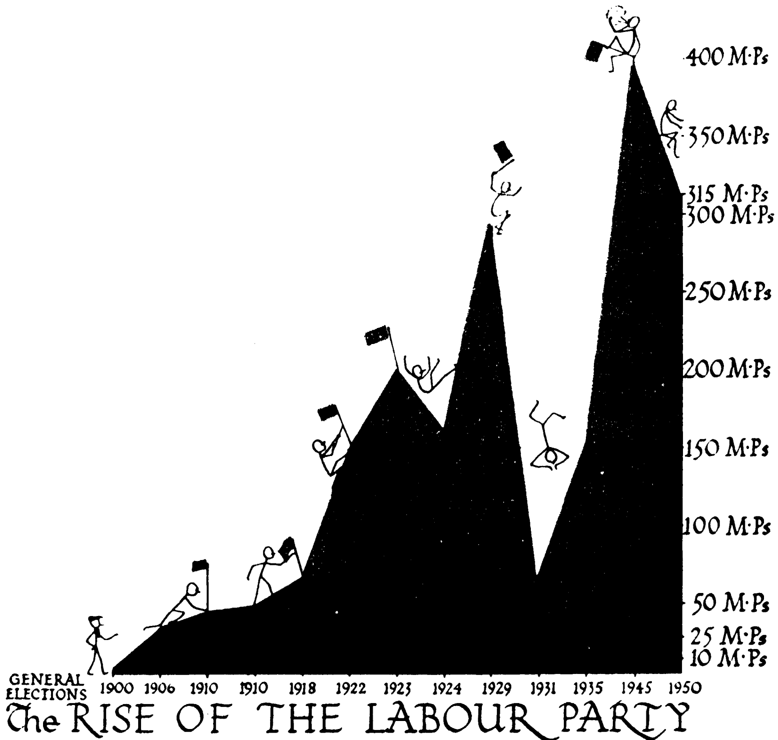
[1] Although the division here described is one to decide the final fate of a Bill, divisions occur frequently during the whole progress of a Bill, and may be on only one clause or one amendment, not on the whole Bill.

Answer, which takes up about an hour of parliamentary time every day. Any Member can question any minister upon matters which relate to the minister's department, and as every part of national life is covered by one or another of the Ministries, every grievance can be brought to the attention of the Government at once. A voter has only to write to his Member and, if the grievance is truly stated, he can be sure that the Member (if he cannot settle the matter by private discussions) will put a suitable question and see to it that a satisfactory answer is given. If the minister's answer is unsatisfactory, the Member can demand that the House should " adjourn," and if thirty or so members support him in the demand, the House must be given an opportunity to debate the matter before the sitting ends.

Members of the Civil Service in the different Ministries prepare the answers for their ministers, and thus the Civil Servants are also kept in touch with public opinion and possible grievances. Visiting the House of Commons and listening to the questions and answers, the uninstructed may think that the matters raised are of trifling importance, but remember that this is the way every voter in the country has a chance of making his grievance known and perhaps put to rights. The hour devoted to Questions is one of the safeguards of liberty in Britain and in no way can it be regarded

as a waste of time. Many things happen in a big country which may not call for an Act of Parliament. A timely question and the promise of a minister that he will look into the matter usually ensures that enough is done.

Another important part of the House of Commons, as we have seen, is the Press Gallery, where the reporters of the London and provincial newspapers follow the debates and send an account of parliamentary doings all over the country and



all over the world. In the eighteenth century the House of Commons did not allow shorthand writers to take a note of debates, so men with good memories were employed, and they gave the public a rough idea of what had been done in Parliament. To-day, the House of Commons and the House of Lords are wiser and encourage full reports of their proceedings. Good citizens must be advised of what is being done if they are to vote aright and keep their Members busy about national affairs. Every Member is very anxious that his speeches shall be fully reported, and this particularly applies to his own constituency. Even if the great London newspapers cannot give space to a speech, it will be fully reported in the local newspaper or newspapers serving special localities.

Until the beginning of this century there was no Labour Party in the House of Commons, and in the general election of 1900 only 62,000 voters supported Labour candidates. But there were one or two Members representing the Labour point of view, and as they were poor men, a levy of a penny per head each year was made by trade union and other societies, and the railway workers and miners contributed a shilling a head towards their salaries. Following these efforts, there were 29 Labour Members in the 1906 Parliament and 40 in the 1910 Parliament, and by 1922 there were 142 Labour Members representing more than

four million voters. In the early days of the movement, the Parliamentary Labour Party owed much to Keir Hardie, the first Labour Leader in the House of Commons. Later came Ramsay MacDonald, the first Labour Prime Minister, who led the party at the time of the 1929 election, in which 8,300,000 people voted Labour and there were 287 Labour Members in the House of Commons.

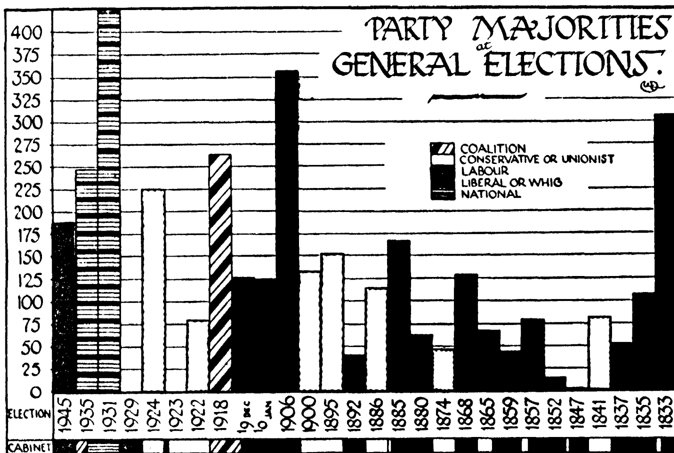
The coming of a Labour Prime Minister and a Labour Government was a fact of high importance in British history. It meant that the great body of voters who had been voiceless in the early years of the industrial revolution were directly represented in the House of Commons. Included in Mr MacDonald's ministry was Margaret Bondfield, the first woman to become a Cabinet Minister in Britain. Miss Bondfield began as assistant secretary of the Shop Assistants Union before the women of Britain ever had a vote at all. Twenty years later she was Minister of Labour.

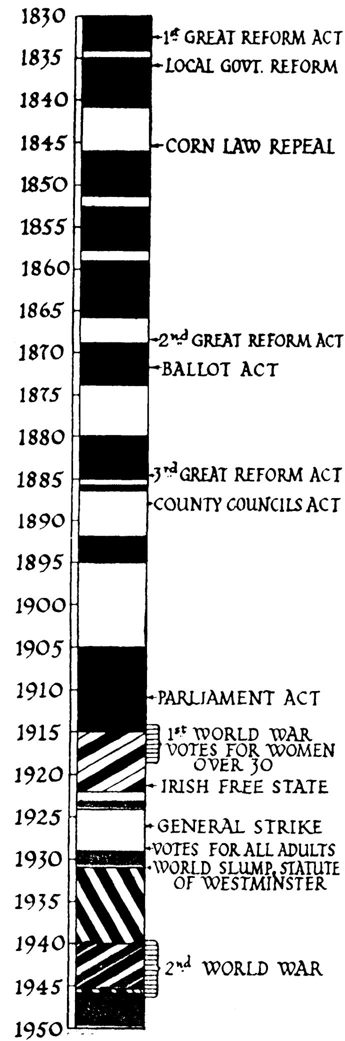
In 1945, after the Second World War, the Labour Party had for the first time a majority over all other parties in the House of Commons, with 393 Members out of 640.

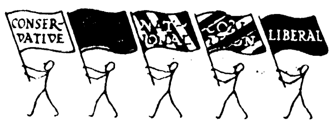
8 THE GOVERNMENT

THE debating and " legislative " work of the Lords and Commons is supplemented by what is called the " executive " or the " doing " side of Government. The Executive carries out the orders given by Parliament and consists of the Cabinet, the other ministers, the Civil Service and the forces of law and order, which include the Navy, the Army and the Air Force, as well as the police.

In all management which concerns many people, whether in a business or an army or a club, there







must be a source of final decision. In Britain this is not the will of a dictator, but is the majority vote of the grown men and women recorded in a General Election, assisted by debates in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, where Members advise the Government what action should be taken.

There was a time when a British king was not only his own law-maker but was the principal executive officer in the country. Alfred the Great had these powers. But very soon, even clever English kings found they could do little administrative work. At the most, a king could lead an army in the field—as Henry V did at Agincourt. When Parliament took over the task of controlling the State, it quickly found

itself in the same position as the King had been in : it could make laws, but suitable officials had to bring these laws into effect. By slow degrees through the centuries executive positions were taken away from the friends of the King, and to-day a Cabinet representing the majority party in a General Election is put in control of the Civil Service.

Though the King does not choose the ministers in any Cabinet (this being the duty and privilege of the Prime Minister), ministers become servants of the Crown when they take office. Indeed, the symbol of each minister's authority is the seal which he receives from the King after he has taken an oath of allegiance. When he has accepted his seal every Cabinet Minister owes full courtesy and full frankness to the King or Queen as the Head of the State, and this means that he, in turn, must listen to the King's views upon the conduct of his department, though he is in no way bound to accept the opinion of the King or Queen. The minister himself is bound in the last resort by the decision of the Cabinet, and if he refuses to accept it, he must resign.

Here are the principal ministers :

Prime Minister, also First Lord of the Treasury.
Chancellor of the Exchequer.
Lord Chancellor, who is always a lawyer.
Lord President of the Council.

Secretary of State for Home Affairs.
Secretary of State for Scotland.
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Minister of Defence.
First Lord of the Admiralty.
Secretary of State for War.
Secretary of State for Air.

President of the Board of Trade.
Postmaster-General.
Minister of Labour and National Service.
Minister of Fuel and Power.
Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation.
Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Minister of Supply.
Minister of Works.
Minister of Education.

Minister of Health.
Minister of Housing and Local Government.
Minister of Pensions and National Insurance.

Most of these high officers of State are identified with their political duties by their names. Thus the President of the *Board of Trade* is in charge of

the commerce and trade of the country; the First Lord of the *Admiralty* and the Secretaries for *War* and for *Air* look after defence; for some years there has been a Minister of *Defence* to co-ordinate their work.

The Secretary of State for *Foreign Affairs* keeps in touch with foreign countries, possible enemies as well as allies, and in this work he is helped by ambassadors, who live in the capitals of the great powers.

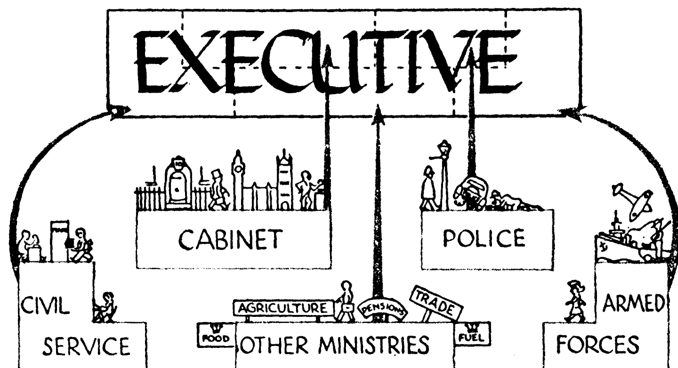
The Chancellor of the *Exchequer* is in charge of the Pay Department and economics of the country, and not the First Lord of the Treasury, as might be expected. The reason is plain. The First Lord of the Treasury is Prime Minister and has not time to look after so important a part of State affairs as the Exchequer. At one time he did so—hence the name of his office; but to-day a special Chancellor of the Exchequer is called for.

The Secretary of State for *Home Affairs* has very miscellaneous duties, largely the growth of the last seventy-five years. Thus, he arranges for the inspection of factories and shops, and his inspectors see that the factory and similar laws are obeyed. The Home Secretary also controls the Metropolitan Police.

The meetings of the Cabinet Ministers are held in the Cabinet Room at "Number Ten" Downing Street. The only outsider present as a

rule is the secretary to the Cabinet, who keeps notes of the decisions reached. The Cabinet may, however, call to its aid anyone who has expert knowledge of the subject under discussion, for instance, a high naval officer or the ambassador to a foreign power. It is a matter of honour that members of the Cabinet shall never reveal Cabinet discussions to outsiders. A Cabinet discussion is not a debate. There are no set speeches. Every member quietly puts his views before the Prime Minister, until a decision, which all accept, is reached. If any minister cannot accept the decision of the Cabinet on any important matter, he resigns.

It will be seen that members of the Cabinet are half politicians and half administrators. That is to say, while they are party politicians they are also responsible for seeing that decisions reached by Parliament are carried into practical effect with the aid of the Civil Servants and the heads of the



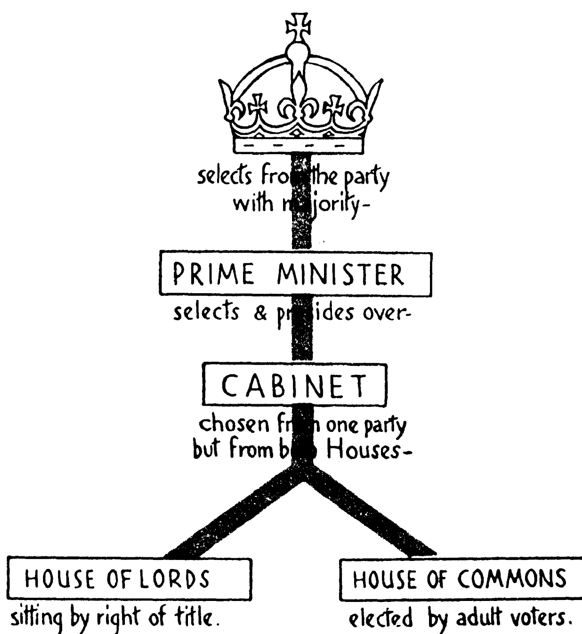
Navy, Army and Air Force. For this reason every member of a Cabinet should have *general* knowledge of the country and its needs, combined with parliamentary ability and a quick understanding of public opinion, so that he may help to determine the general lines along which the country should be governed. But in addition to these duties of general guidance, most of the principal members of the Cabinet are in charge of a Government department. Some, however, have no particular duties in a department ; the Prime Minister, for instance, is too busy to be so tied. He may act as a departmental minister if one of his Cabinet is ill, but most of his work is concerned with co-ordinating the work of all the departments.

If the head of every department was given a seat in the Cabinet, it would become a very large body, and such bodies do not always do their work very well. In war-time it has been usual for the Prime Minister to appoint a very small War Cabinet of fewer than ten members, so that discussion and decision may be rapid and secret. In peace-time the need for this is not so urgent, but it is generally felt that a Cabinet of more than twenty members is not very satisfactory. While some of the more important Ministers may always be sure of a seat in the Cabinet, there are many others who are invited to sit by one Prime Minister and left out by another. In addition there are a large number of

junior ministers. The work of the great departments is too much for one man, and so Under-Secretaries or Parliamentary Secretaries, as they are called, are appointed for most departments. These are usually younger men, who may later rise to the greatest offices of state. They learn the routine work of their departments, speak for them in Parliament, answer questions if the Minister is away, and often help to pilot Bills through their many stages. It sometimes happens that the Minister is in the Lords ; then it is very useful to have this second-in-command in the Commons, where the most important debates are bound to take place.

Thus is built up the Government—a body of men and women, some of great name and some hardly known outside their own constituencies—who grow together into a team which is responsible for the government of the country so long as they retain the confidence of the House of Commons. This team must act together as a whole ; there is no room for divided opinions. When a member of the team feels that he cannot agree with the policy which is being followed, he must resign his place. Thus a consistent policy is assured and a strong body of Members of both Houses of Parliament is gathered together to present it in Parliament and to appeal for the support of the ordinary " back-bench " Members. But when the policy fails to

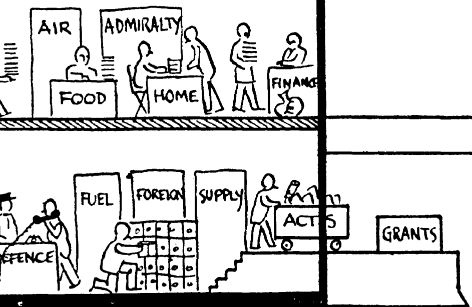
secure that support or when such breaches appear in the ranks of the Ministry that a split occurs, the Government of the day "falls." If it continues to be supported by a majority of the House of Commons, the Government will hold office until the expiration of its five years, and then it will ask the electors to return it for a further term.



9 THE CIVIL SERVICE

IT has been said that the House of Lords and the House of Commons make up the debating and advisory side of Government, while the Cabinet can best be described as the brain which listens to the advice and then translates it into action by telling the actual workers what has been decided and how the work can best be carried through. Plainly, members of the Cabinet cannot themselves do all the work of governing, any more than the head of a big business can keep a whole factory going without foremen and managers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer can deliver a Budget Speech, but the detailed figures must have been collected by other people, working under the Treasury experts and the Chancellor's Controller of Finance. The officials of the Civil Service and the Armed Services are responsible for this part of national government.

Remember that the Ministers only hold office for a few months or years, whereas the officials have made a life study of their particular departments. In this sense the officials are experts, though some



Useless ideas
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HOUSE OF LORDS
CABINET
CIVIL SERVICE
HOUSE OF COMMONS
AIR
ADMIRALTY
FOOD
HOME
FINANCE
FUEL
FOREIGN
SUPPLY
DEFENCE
ACTS
GRANTS
DEBATING DEPARTMENT
DEPT. for Translating WORDS into ACTIONS
DEPT. of WORKERS carrying out Cabinet decision

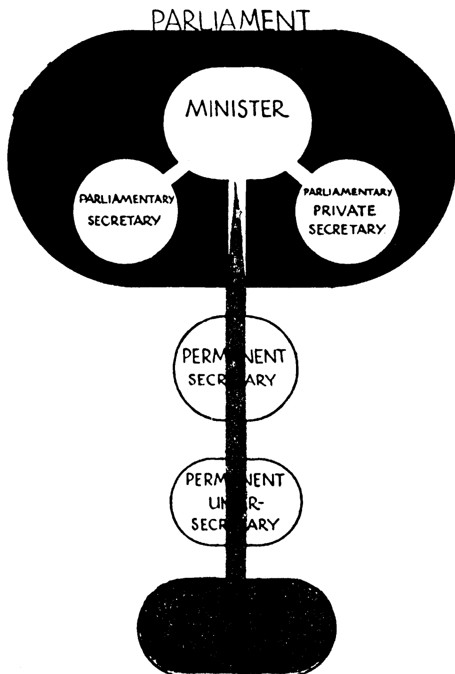
ministers have had such a long and full experience of public life that they can keep the permanent officials right on many doubtful points.

Most Civil Servants are chosen after public examination and personal interviews. This great reform was initiated between 1853 and 1855, to avoid the evils which had arisen when civil servants were chosen by the King or the political leaders. When Sir Robert Peel took office as Prime Minister in 1841 he spent six hours every day (including Christmas Day) doing nothing else except answering applications for jobs. As the majority were from members of his own political party, the evils of the non-examination system were plain. About the same time, Army commissions were bought and sold and " the fool of a well-to-do family " frequently drifted into the Army merely because he was not fitted for any other profession.

About the time of the Crimean War (1854–5) the Government realized that personal nomination of officers in the fighting forces was a bad system and army examinations were initiated. Soon afterwards members of the Civil Service were also required to show their ability to do their work by success in competitive examinations, and gradually the public examination system was extended to the whole body of public servants. To-day these examinations are very stiff for the higher branches, and education at a university is almost essential.

A list of the principal Ministers has already been given. As every minister, except the Prime Minister, usually has a department, the list of the ministers roughly corresponds with the types of public servants. Picture each department with a Permanent Secretary, or Under-Secretary, at its head [1] and a well-paid and well-educated man in charge of each of its various sections, all continually

[1] He must not be confused with the *Secretary of State* or with the *Parliamentary* Secretary, both of whom are politicians and not Civil Servants.



COMPOSITION OF A MINISTRY

in touch with each other and their political chief, who, in turn, keeps the department in touch with the wishes of Parliament. The British Civil Service is there to do the will of the electors, as expressed in the laws passed by Parliament.

In order that there may be no suspicion of political bias, no member of the Civil Service and no soldier or sailor or airman on the Active List is permitted to become a Member of Parliament. He can vote in an election, but he must not make party speeches or write letters to the newspapers dealing with aspects of party politics. Thus, whatever their political opinions may be privately, officials of the Civil Service and the Armed Services can serve ministers of all parties faithfully and advise them how best to carry out the task of government.

The Civil Service has members of many different grades. Some do the sort of work that has to be done in any office: there must be typists and filing clerks. These are known as the Clerical Class. Some have considerable responsibility—the local representatives of the Ministry of Labour who find jobs for the unemployed or the Customs Officers at the great ports; these are the Executive Class. But the real "bosses" of the Civil Service, the Administrative Class, are few in number—only about 1,500—and recruited as a rule straight from a university career. It is possible for promotion to

be won through different grades, but normally the grades are kept separate. The man in the Administrative Class may rise through the steps of Assistant Principal, Principal, Assistant Secretary, Under Secretary until he earns £3,000 a year or more. In addition, there are honours to be won by such men, who usually earn at least a C.B. and perhaps a Knighthood in one of the great Orders with which the Sovereign rewards his faithful servants.

In comparison with posts of similar responsibility and requiring similar abilities in the business world, civil servants do not get extravagant salaries, but their pensions are fairly generous. A civil servant on sick leave is entitled to full pay for six months, followed by half-pay for a further six months. Few men or women become Government officials after they are twenty-four years old, and most of them retire upon a pension when they are sixty. It may be that a proportion of older men and women with actual experience in business should be added to the civil servants. For example, our relations with other countries sometimes require the services of men who have lived abroad for many years, often as business men in those countries. Steps are being taken also to admit to the Civil Service men of proved ability whose early life has not followed an academic course. They may not be able to pass written examinations,

but their administrative abilities and their easy handling of awkward situations can make them invaluable servants of their country. Competitive interviews before a board of shrewd men and women is the method adopted for making such appointments. In addition, posts requiring specialist qualifications, such as scientists and doctors or lawyers, inspectors of schools or engineers, are filled by interview from applicants whose previous record proves them to be suitable.

The Civil Service, like Parliament itself, arose out of the business of managing the royal estates or collecting the taxes paid by the people at large. When the royal estates were small, a king did not need special tax-collectors. He left the uncomfortable work to his bishops and barons and knights. But under the Norman and Plantagenet Kings, taxation became so important that Henry II established a tax-collecting office at his Palace at Westminster and gave it into the charge of one of his chamberlains or chaplains. The same chaplain was entrusted with a copy of the King's seal so that State business might go on even if the King was travelling or fighting abroad, and he was called the *Chancellor*. Really he was the King's secretary. Now, if a clever man was always writing the royal letters and probably remembered a great deal better than the King himself what had been written in earlier letters, it is easy to see how he

became quite as influential a person as the King himself on such matters as taxation and the law of taxation.

In Norman and Plantagenet times the servants of the King were not paid specially for their help in the task of governing. They followed the King about England and France and had lodging, food, drink and clothing at the royal expense. They were members of the King's household, and many of them were churchmen or, as we might say, King's chaplains.

Why was this ? To do the clerical work necessary for fair taxation, one must read and write

TAX-PAYING IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

easily, and at the time of William the Conqueror and Henry Plantagenet, almost the only educated Englishmen and Normans were in the Church. Education was the more necessary because the records, registers and " rolls " (of parchment) were written in Latin. Indeed, the very word " clerk " means " clergyman." We still say " a clerk in the Civil Service " and thus remind ourselves that there was a time when almost all civil servants were clergymen. We also say " clerk in a shipping office," reminding ourselves that the chief part of the work of all clerks is writing and book-keeping, and there was a time when clergymen were almost the only expert writers and book-keepers in Britain.

As the work of taxation increased, the King's Chancellor needed helpers, and gradually a whole staff of taxing officials came into being, and the chief chancellor became the Lord Chancellor.

Later in British history the law department of State became so important that one official could not look after both law and order and national finance. Accordingly, the Chancellor of the Exchequer took on the work of superintending taxation and spending, while the Lord Chancellor became the head of the courts of law.

To this day in Britain, Civil Servants, like the soldiers, sailors, and airmen in the defence departments, continue to be servants of the Crown.

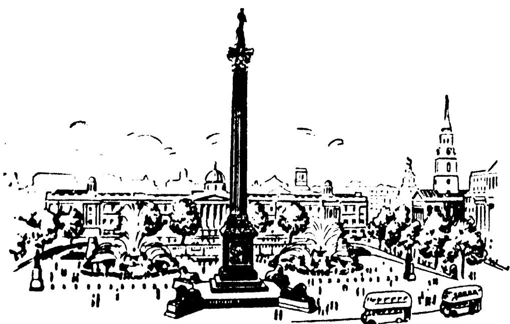
They are not servants of Parliament and Parliament cannot dismiss them. If Parliament appointed and dismissed government officials, trouble would arise. As we have seen, whenever one party is defeated in a General Election, another party provides the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The victors would almost certainly want to turn out all the permanent officials and appoint men and women of their own party in their places.

Moreover, the fact that government officials hold their jobs permanently makes it possible for any party leader to accept almost any administrative appointment. If a First Lord of the Admiralty has never been to sea, he has Sea Lords to advise him. Similarly, a Minister of the Crown can preside over the Ministry of Health or the Board of Trade without any special experience of medicine or world trade ; the officials in his department will have the necessary detailed knowledge.

We have agreed that a minister, in the nature of things, cannot be an expert in all the departments of government which an active politician may have to administer. Mr Winston Churchill in his long political life was President of the Board of Trade, Home Secretary, First Lord of the Admiralty, Minister of Munitions, Secretary of State for War, Secretary of State for Air, Secretary for the Colonies, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, though his first training was to be a soldier.

His countrymen saw the value of the British system of government during the Second World War, when he was able to lead the national effort backed with experience gained in widely different offices. In none of them was Winston Churchill an expert, but he contributed to government what was much more valuable, the widest experience of public life as a great whole.

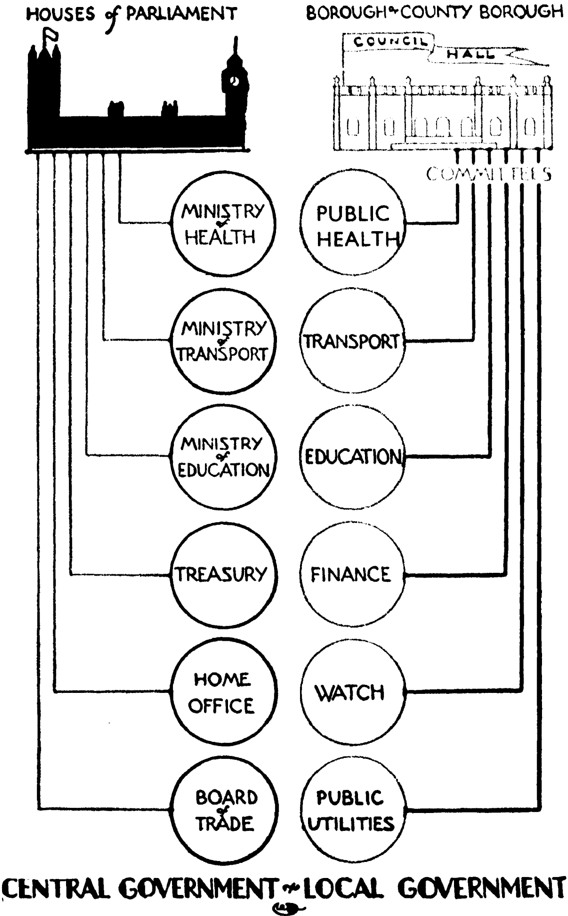
Thus we see that central government in Britain is a mixture of parliamentary, ministerial and Civil Service control. All act in partnership. The Minister of Health, being a politician, necessarily relies largely upon the advice of full-time professional officials in his department, but he is also influenced by criticism of his schemes in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Similarly, the full-time professional officials shape or reshape their action as the minister directs.



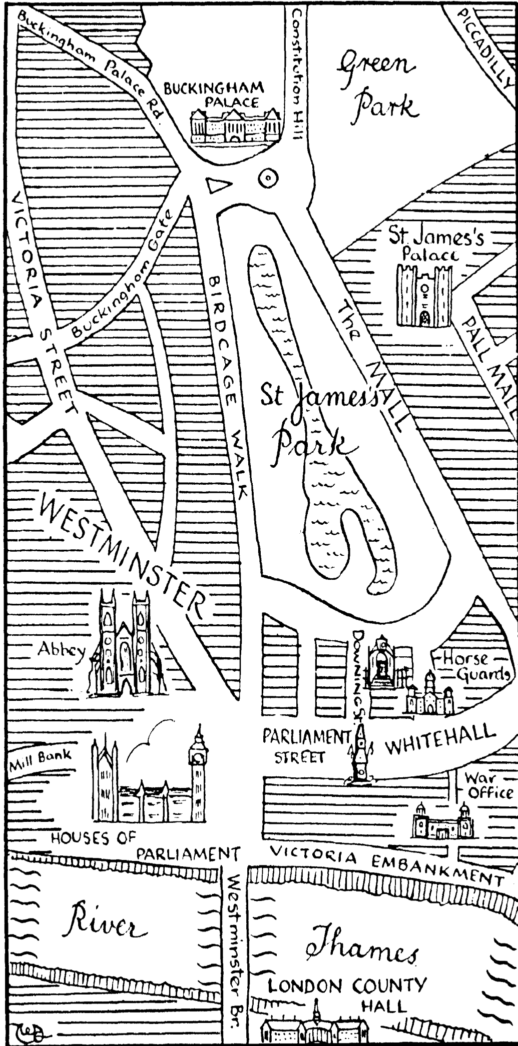
10 WESTMINSTER AND WHITEHALL

WE have surveyed most of the work of the Government of our country, but we have said little of the bricks and mortar of government—our concern has been mostly with people and institutions. They cannot work without buildings. It is true, of course, that there are government buildings in most of the towns and villages of this country. First there are the Local Government buildings—the town hall, the council offices, the castle, or whatever name they are known by. But also there are buildings of the central Government. There is usually a post office, representing a great national service which has developed from the relays of horses used to carry the King's private and official correspondence around the country. It is often forgotten that there are still King's Messengers—men who are employed to take personally very important government documents or property all over the world. But such service is a rarity—the Royal Mail takes care of most official

and private letters and parcels. Then there are the many offices of the Ministry of Labour and National Service. The ports of the country have Customs Houses; there are Coastguard Stations all around our coasts. We do not need to go far



WESTMINSTER AND WHITEHALL

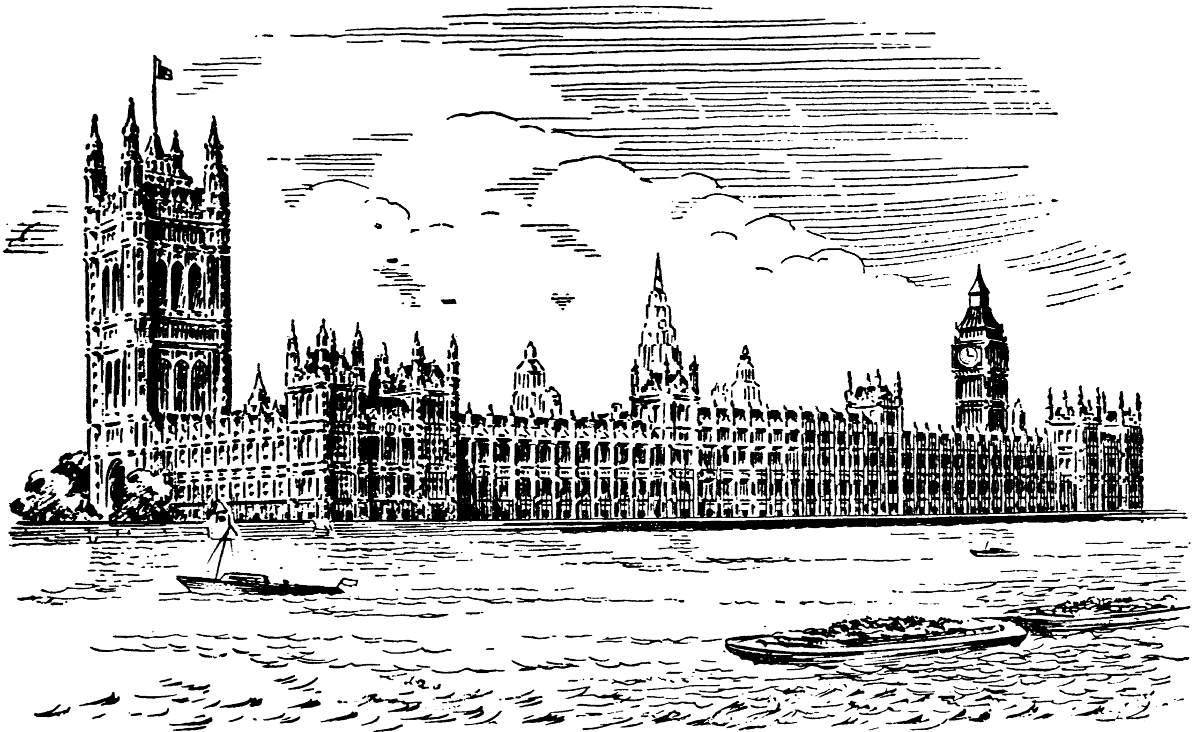


THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT

to see an office occupied by those officials who collect the taxes on our incomes. All these and many more are visible signs of the presence in our midst of the central government machine.

The local offices all need direction from the centre. We often read in our papers, "Opinion at Westminster was. . . ." Or we sometimes hear someone say, "Of course, that is really the policy of Whitehall." What do they mean? Near the great Abbey of St. Peter, to the west of the City of London, was built many centuries ago the royal palace of Westminster. To-day, on and near the same site, stand the Houses of Parliament. Thus Westminster is often used to mean the place where the Government and Parliament meet to pass laws. From Parliament Square to Trafalgar Square stretches the broad and dignified street known as Whitehall. Along it are built many of the grea offices which house the Departments of State. Thus Whitehall stands for the administrative side of government. Westminster, then, is Parliament; Whitehall is the Civil Service.

Many of the earliest meetings of Parliament, including de Montfort's Parliament of 1265, were held at Westminster, and we can still see in the Commons Lobby a model of the Old Palace. In 1834 a disastrous fire, caused by the heating apparatus, swept the buildings. Led by the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, firemen, soldiers and



THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, WESTMINSTER.

many Londoners struggled to save what they could, but all was destroyed except Westminster Hall. Around that a new building was erected. Ninety-seven designs were sent in to compete, and that of Charles Barry was accepted. Barry set to work, with Augustus Welby Pugin as his not always friendly assistant, and in 1840 the foundation stone was laid. In 1847 the House of Lords was ready, and the House of Commons five years later. The work occupied an army of labourers, engineers, designers and the rest; it cost over £3,000,000; it contained over 500 rooms, eleven quadrangles and eighteen separate houses for officials. In 1941 the Chamber of the House of Commons was completely destroyed in an air-raid After the war it was entirely rebuilt in a way that is like the old House but more modern in its decoration and conveniences.

A visit to the House of Parliament, even when the Members are not sitting, is an education in the problems of our Government. Then, as we leave, we walk across Parliament Square into Whitehall and we remember how the decisions taken at Westminster have to be translated into action in the different Ministries. On our way we notice the statues of some notable Parliamentarians, among them Disraeli, Canning, Palmerston, Peel, and one American, Abraham Lincoln, who received this honour because parliamentarians of all nations revere his name as a great lover of liberty.

A little way up Whitehall is *Downing Street*, where the Prime Minister has his office in Number 10. It is the smallest of all the government offices—just a few rooms for the Premier's private secretaries and a large room where the Cabinet meet. Much British history has been made in Number 10 Downing Street.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has his offices in the Treasury, a low and old-fashioned building almost opposite Inigo Jones's Banqueting Hall. Of all the government offices, the Treasury is the most interesting. The Board Room, where the Chancellor of the Exchequer sits and prepares his Budget, looks out upon Downing Street, and here George III used to preside over meetings of the Treasury Board, the last king to do this. The carved chair in which he sat is still in the room. The very ink-stand in which the Chancellor dips his pen bears the crest and initials of William III of Orange. Twelve carved chairs date from the days of Sir Robert Walpole, who was a famous Treasury official in his day. The Banqueting Hall is the most beautiful architectural object in Whitehall and one of the few parts of the old palace which escaped the great fires. Inside is a famous ceiling painting by Rubens and his pupils. Next door, on the same side of the road, is the War Office and, opposite, the Admiralty, though the greater part of this vast building can best be seen

from St. James's Park. Note the big wireless installation which keeps My Lords of the Admiralty in touch with His Majesty's ships of war in all parts of the world.

The Air Ministry, the Ministry of Labour, the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Transport are housed in another big block recently built behind and to the south of the Banqueting Hall. The overcrowding of Whitehall is a serious problem, and some ministries have found permanent homes in other great cities; the Ministry of National Insurance, for instance, is housed at Newcastle.

One other building calls for mention—*New Scotland Yard*, the headquarters of the Metropolitan Police, which stands on the Thames Embankment, behind Whitehall.

Lastly, we must turn back and look again at *Westminster Hall*, the only part of the old parliament buildings which escaped the fire of 1834. First built by William Rufus, Westminster Hall was used as a feasting place by the Plantagenet kings. The hall of Rufus was rebuilt by Richard II, who added the famous Gothic roof of "cobwebless" oak beams. Westminster Hall was the scene of State trials. Here Sir Thomas More was tried; here Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, was judged; and here King Charles was sentenced to death for denying what the people of Britain regarded as their rights (see picture on page 9).

II

LAW AND ORDER

LOOKING back upon what we have learnt of local and national government we see that it is concerned with three outstanding matters—that is to say with the protection, the welfare and the public needs of citizens. Can you imagine every citizen being left to defend himself and his family, to keep healthy as best he can and to provide the methods of transport which serve him best? Civilized man has slowly devised a system by which community control enters largely into all these departments of social life, so that we all now understand what is meant by the phrase " law and order." The life of the jungle is sometimes used as an example of " might is right "—no account is taken of right or wrong there ; the strongest survive, the weak are killed. But in our community we have a great institution—the law. John Pym, writing three hundred years ago about the crimes of the Earl of Strafford, said what the Law can do :

" The Law is that which puts a difference

betwixt good and evil, betwixt just and unjust. If you take away the Law, all things will fall into a confusion ; every man will become a Law to himself, which in the depraved conditions of human nature must needs produce many great enormities. Lust will become a Law, and envy will become a Law, covetousness and ambition will become Laws. The Law hath a power to prevent, to restrain, to repair evils ; without this, all kinds of mischiefs and distempers will break in upon a State."

In the beginnings of community life, when the ruler was very like the father of a very large family, the ruler himself could keep order and had the power to punish. Later, criminals were punished by the King and his Council. In Norman times, such a King as William the Conqueror kept order through fear, being helped by the feudal barons who equally ruled through fear. But as the English kingdom grew in size, the King wanted an executive to enforce order, as he wanted an executive to deal with taxation. A member of the royal household was chosen as an expert in law-enforcement. By degrees this came to be the recognized work of the Lord Chancellor, especially after a Chancellor of the Exchequer was appointed as an expert in taxation.

When the Lord Chancellor was just the King's servant he was not greatly concerned with any

wrongs which did not harm the King. Nevertheless, many wrongs were suffered by private individuals, and these called for treatment. In early times such wrongs were avenged by personal force. If a man was killed, that man's family or friends would try to kill the murderer, or they might try to kill the murderer's family, a form of "justice" known as the "blood feud." The duel, in which two men tried to kill or wound one another with sword or pistol, was another form of private justice—and, indeed, lasted until about a hundred years ago. Then men began to see the folly of deciding a right or a wrong by a sword-thrust or a pistol bullet.

Again, there was trial by combat, which was common under the feudal system in the Middle Ages. One knight fought another, armed with a spear and mounted on horseback. Of course, the winner was the stronger man, not always the person whose cause was righteous. Sometimes a direct appeal to divine judgment was made; the accused might be made to undergo an ordeal, such as picking up red-hot metal or being flung bound into a pond; God could be trusted, it was felt, to prove the man's guilt or innocence. Still another method was that of "compurgation"—bringing many friends or relations to swear to the accused's innocence; it was generally believed that a false or uncertain oath would bring divine punishment, and so no one

would be prepared to swear to a man's innocence unless he was quite sure of it.

In order to stop the worst consequences of private justice, and particularly " blood feuds," the Church instituted the right of sanctuary. A fugitive from justice came to the altar of a church, and it was felt he could not be killed in so sacred a place. Later, there were special places of sanctuary agreed upon, such as one door of a cathedral or a certain seat in a church. For example, the Frith Stool, which you can see in Hexham Abbey, was a place of sanctuary until the Reformation. There is a remarkable Sanctuary Knocker in Durham Cathedral. The right of sanctuary was an improvement upon the " blood feud," but it is not good sense that a criminal should go unpunished just so long as he could hold on to the Sanctuary Knocker at Durham Cathedral.

Old-time manuscripts include many pictures of law and order in the Middle Ages ; in those days punishments were usually cruel and were made as public as possible, in order to frighten other wrong-doers. To-day we do not favour cruel punishment, holding that the proper purpose of law and order is the prevention of crime and not revenge.

Such follies regarding law and order went on until it was recognized that most crimes of violence were not committed against the individual alone, but against the whole community, and therefore it

was the community which should judge guilt and wrongdoing. If a burglar breaks into a house and steals something from John Smith, he is arrested, taken before a magistrate and charged with having committed a crime. John Smith appears in court as a witness, but he gains nothing personally. He is just doing his duty as a citizen. The crime has been committed against " the peace of our Lord the King, his Crown and dignity," to use the old legal wording. All that we call *Criminal Law* to-day comes under this heading, and we can see the King's interest in the way the charge is worded. R. *v*. John Brown means *Rex versus* (King against) John Brown.

But suppose John Smith finds that he has been injured because Albert Saunders left the gates of his farm open, so that cattle strayed into John Smith's market garden and broke his tomato frames. In that case Albert Saunders is not regarded as a criminal, but can be sued in a *civil court*. In civil cases the judge and jury listen to the evidence and award proper " damages," but they do not fine or imprison the wrongdoer, for the wrong has been done against the individual, John Smith, not against the community as a whole represented by the King.

There are many divisions of the law which every citizen must obey, but they need not detain us for long. We must remember that there is civil law

and criminal law. Further, some laws are made by Act of Parliament, while some owe their origin to the custom of many centuries ; these two kinds are known as Statute Law and Common Law. When Common Law clashes with Statute Law, Statute Law must win, as it represents the direct will of Parliament. Lawyers will tell you of many other kinds, but these are all we need to remember.

We have already seen in connection with local and central government that law-making is one thing and assuring that the laws are put into effect and obeyed is quite a different matter. Therefore there must be officers of justice to make it certain that citizens are protected in accordance with the will of Parliament, that redress for wrongs may be obtained and that the punishments laid down for various offences are not escaped. These officers of law and order are of many different kinds. The most familiar to us are the police. The office of Constable of the Parish dates from at least the thirteenth century. The man appointed held office for a year, he was not paid, and if he did not wish to serve he provided a deputy, often a cheap and inefficient old man. His task has been described as to act as the eyes and hands of the Justices of the Peace—the eyes notice offences being committed ; the hands arrest the offenders and carry out the sentences passed on them. The inefficiency of the police was a favourite joke in Shakespeare's

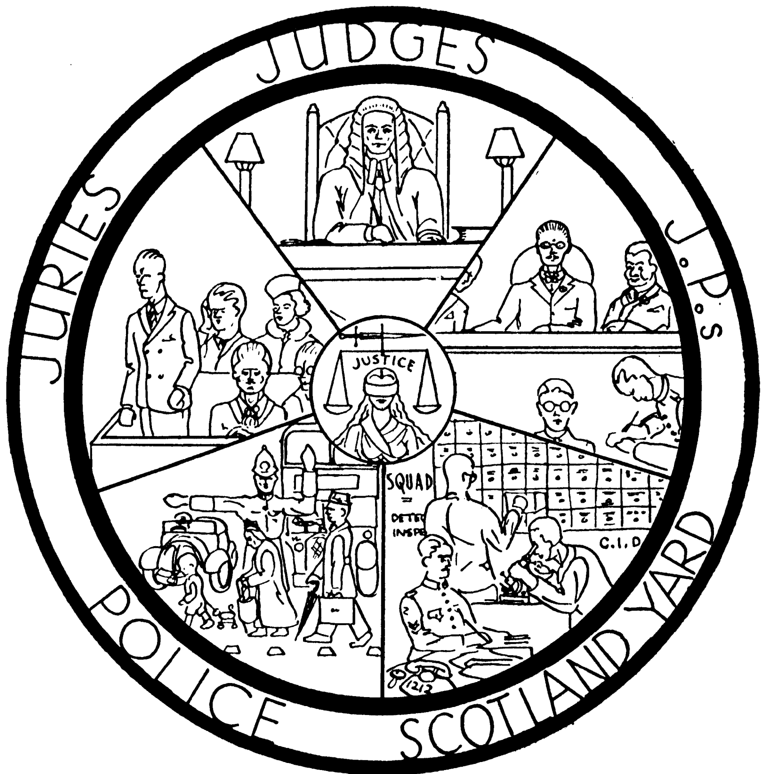
plays, and it was not until the Bow Street Runners of the eighteenth century and the " Peelers " or " Bobbies " organized by Sir Robert Peel as Home Secretary in 1829, that anything like an efficient police force came into being. Each county and many of the great towns of Britain have their own police force, the best known being the Metropolitan Police Force, whose headquarters are at New Scotland Yard and whose Criminal Investigation Department, with its great files of criminal records and finger-prints, is often called in by local police to assist them in particularly difficult cases, although it has no right to interfere unless asked. There are about 80,000 police men and women in Britain, and their job is by no means confined to crime ; for instance, they do a great deal of work in controlling traffic and in helping citizens to find their way in strange towns.

British justice never assumes that a man has committed a crime. It is always necessary for an accusation to be made against the *alleged* criminal, either by a private citizen or on behalf of the King. This accusation will then be heard by someone whose task it is to act as a judge in the case. Most of these judges are ordinary citizens who, without pay, give up their time for the good of the community. They are called Justices of the Peace. Originally, in the fourteenth century, rather superior constables who were given power

by the King to try small cases, they have gathered during the centuries many different functions. Until about 1800 they not only controlled the police and tried most cases, but carried out most of the duties now performed by Local Authorities, such as the care of the poor and the upkeep of the roads. Most of these Justices are appointed by the Lord Chancellor on the recommendation of a local advisory committee, but a few sit because they have been chosen for some important office, such as mayor, or chairman of the local council. The facts that courts sit in the morning and that J.P.s are unpaid make it usual for magistrates to be on the whole both elderly and fairly wealthy, for it is difficult for a man who has to earn his own living to attend court once or twice a week until he has retired or until he is so well established in business that he can leave it in the care of someone else. Men and women who earn weekly wages in ordinary posts and those, such as teachers, who have to attend to their work at fixed hours, find it difficult to be J.P.s, even if they are qualified on other grounds.

Some of the more serious crimes are sent for trial before professional judges, who are, unlike most J.P.s, trained lawyers. Even these men are not allowed in most serious cases to make the final decision themselves. They conduct the case and " sum up " the evidence, but the verdict is

given by the jury. This consists usually of twelve men and women, chosen by lot from voters' lists, who have to come and listen to the evidence and decide whether it is enough to convict the accused. If they decide that the man is not guilty, he is free, and can never be charged again with the same offence, even if new evidence comes to light. If he



OFFICERS OF LAW & ORDER

is found guilty, he may appeal to a higher court and his case will be heard again. The jury gives the " verdict " but the judge passes the " sentence," that is, decides what fine or period of imprisonment shall be the punishment for the crime.

Trial by jury means that every accused person can claim to be tried by his fellow citizens, and therefore by those who may be expected to understand his actions most clearly. The right of trial by jury is properly described as equality before the law, and is one of the most treasured rights of British citizens. No fairer method of judging guilt or innocence has yet been discovered. In practice the right of trial by jury is often forgone, for it delays cases and therefore makes them more expensive ; lawyers feel bound to make their points more clearly if they have to convince twelve ordinary people instead of one professional judge or a small body of experienced magistrates. But this does not alter the fact that the right is there to be exercised, if desired.

To-day, largely because the laws governing public and private wrongs have been made in open Parliament by delegates of the people, most Britons respect the law. This is well, because private wishes and desires are always clashing with communal duties, and the law is there to teach us that the individual in certain things must give way to the community.

Apart from the law, there is another restraining influence which all should accept—good manners. This is worth thinking about. In the everyday business of trade and manufacture, we are again and again brought up against the ugly fact of hard bargaining, and the obvious fact that if one party to the bargain does not look after his own interests, he will suffer. There is a Latin proverb *caveat emptor* which means *Let the buyer beware*, and it really means that the buyer must not grumble if a bargain does not work out exactly as he expected at the time he agreed to it.

Is this principle, Let the buyer beware, a just and right one? Consider this carefully, as well as another Latin proverb, *uberrima fides*, which means *The utmost good faith*. Which principle are you going to follow if and when you become a manufacturer or trader—" Let the buyer beware " or " The utmost good faith " on the part of both bargainers ? It may be that your reputation as a good or a bad citizen will depend upon your decision. Never forget that, apart from the law of the land, there is another restraining influence which every good citizen should accept, the Law of Good Manners and Fair Dealing.

12

THE COURTS AND THE PRISONS

JUDGE, jury, plaintiff, defendant, witnesses, police, reporters, spectators—all these and more may attend the hearing of a case. It is clear that there is need for some place for them to meet and some machinery to ensure that they all appear at the same time. So there has been built up in Britain a great system of law courts, which is shown in the diagram on the next page. If we start at the bottom we will notice first the Courts of Summary Jurisdiction—the courts where the case can be dealt with on the spot. They are often called " police courts," but we should avoid that name. The police are present in nearly all courts ; often they are there merely to add to the convenience of two citizens who want a dispute between them to be decided ; often, again, they are there to represent the King as the accuser of an alleged criminal ; but always they are there as only one part of the case—if they accuse, there will be a defendant, and he can be sure that he will have a fair hearing before an impartial Bench.

In the Courts of Summary Jurisdiction, the case

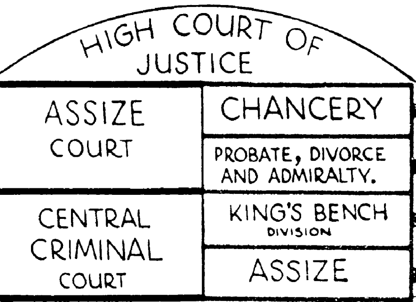
COURTS of JUSTICE

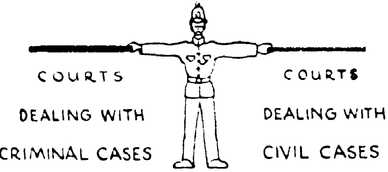
COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL (LORD CHIEF JUSTICE)

QUARTER SESSIONS (COUNTY J.Ps or COUNTY BOROUGH RECORDERS)

COURTS OF SUMMARY JURISDICTION (JUSTICES OF THE PEACE OR STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES)

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL (AS FOR HOUSE OF LORDS + DOMINIONS' EX-JUDGES)





HOUSE of LORDS (LORD CHANCELLOR AND 7 LORDS OF APPEAL IN ORDINARY)

COURT OF APPEAL (MASTER of the ROLLS & Lords Justices)

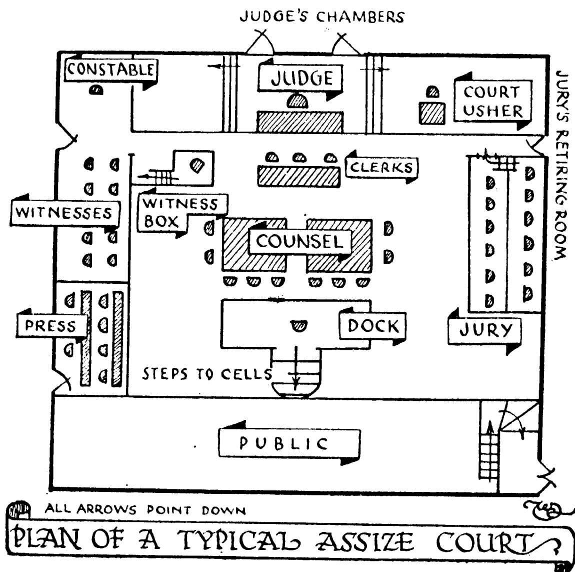
COUNTY COURT (COUNTY COURT JUDGES)

will be heard by one or more Justices of the Peace, or in busy courts by a trained and paid lawyer known as a Stipendiary Magistrate. These courts cannot impose heavy fines or long sentences of imprisonment, and they can therefore only hear the less serious cases. In many of what we may call " medium-serious " cases, the choice of summary jurisdiction or committal for trial is left to the prisoner, and only about 15 per cent of these cases go before a jury in a higher court. The most serious cases of all, such as murder or treason, must be sent for trial before professional judges. As the J.P.s often know little of the law except what they have learned on the Bench, an important official is the Justices' Clerk, who may be a full-time official or a local solicitor who is paid fees for the time he devotes to the work of the court. It is his task to keep the magistrates informed on the proper procedure, the law involved in the case before them and the sentences which may be imposed if the accused is found guilty.

Four times a year in each county or county borough is held a more important court known as Quarter Sessions. Here on the Bench sit a group, often about a dozen in number, of the J.P.s of the county, sometimes with a professional lawyer as their chairman. In most county boroughs their place will be taken by a Recorder, who, like the Stipendiary Magistrate, is a paid professional—in

this case a barrister who is paid a salary for the few days' work a year he puts in as Recorder, and then for the rest of the year usually practises at the Bar. At Quarter Sessions are heard, usually with a jury, many of the cases committed for trial by the J.P.s and appeals from decisions of the Courts of Summary Jurisdiction.

It sometimes happens—not nearly so often as detective stories might make you believe—that a really serious crime is committed or one in which a very difficult legal question is raised. To deal with such serious cases there are Assize Courts and the Central Criminal Court—the Old Bailey. Here come the King's judges on circuit, dressed in



PLAN OF A TYPICAL ASSIZE COURT

black or scarlet robes, with their long wigs, and all the dignity and ceremony which mark many of Britain's ancient institutions. Sometimes even they are not sure that justice has been done, so there is still a Court of Criminal Appeal, where the Lord Chief Justice of England presides.

So far we have assumed in most cases that crimes have been committed, but we have also made it clear that there are many cases in which there is merely a dispute between citizens which requires to be settled. In all the courts we have mentioned so far many civil, as opposed to criminal, cases are heard—in many of the courts the civil business will be greater than the criminal. There are many other courts which have no criminal jurisdiction at all. First come the County Courts, established in 1846 to provide a cheap way for poor people to have simple cases heard. County Court judges are appointed from the ranks of senior barristers, and they hear cases concerned with workmen's compensation and accidents, hire-purchase agreements and small debts. The more important civil cases also come before the High Court of Justice, of which the Assizes and the Central Criminal Court are a part. Here there is a great deal of specialization : in the Chancery Division are heard cases concerning trusts, mortgages and partnerships ; wills, divorces and collisions at sea are argued before the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty

Division ; and all other civil cases come before King's Bench Division.

Just as a Court of Criminal Appeal exists to give a further hearing to doubtful cases, so there is a Court of Appeal for civil cases, presided over by a judge known as the Master of the Rolls. Finally, above all the courts and subject only to the High Court of Parliament—the law-maker of the land—is the House of Lords, acting in its capacity as a legal body. Though there is nothing in the law to prevent any Peer from taking a seat, by custom only the Lord Chancellor and the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary sit. Appeals right through all the courts to the House of Lords are very expensive, and therefore comparatively rare. In criminal cases they are most unusual. The same body of judges, with the addition of some from British territories abroad, sit as the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, to hear appeals from some of the Courts of the Commonwealth.

From the medieval trial by combat or ordeal to the cold, searching atmosphere of a modern court of law is a long journey. It is natural that on that journey our attitude to the penalties imposed by the law should have changed. One of the things we have learnt about justice is to distinguish between things which are merely troublesome to the community and those which are wrongs done to the community. For example, in times past

the poor were often punished just because they were poor. Thus the punishment for being out of work in 1530 was to be taken to the nearest market-town, " tied to the end of a cart naked, and to be beaten with whips throughout the same market town till his body be bloody by reason of such whipping." Then the " vagabond " was sent home and there set to work, while parishes which did not deal properly with such " vagabonds " were fined. Wandering scholars and soldiers too old for fighting were regarded as vagabonds in 1530. For a second offence an ear might be cut off and for a third offence the second ear. Of course, a cruel law did not stop vagabondage, so the law became still more cruel. In 1547 it was enacted that a " vagabond " might be branded with a hot iron or sold as a slave to a master, who had the right to put an iron collar on his neck.

As for the aged poor, they were put in almshouses and the curate in each parish had to preach a sermon every year, asking for charity to keep up the almshouses. Gradually, " houses of correction " gave way to " workhouses," but these workhouses persisted until the remodelling of the poor law system and the formation of Public Assistance Committees were undertaken in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Until the early years of the nineteenth century petty theft in England was punishable with death—

for example, stealing five shillings' worth of goods from a shop. Even children were hanged for theft. While the bill abolishing capital punishment for such offences was being debated in the House of Commons in 1823, a child of ten was under sentence of death in Newgate Prison for petty theft.

If the law itself could be so unthinking and unfeeling, it is not surprising that prisons in Britain became dreadful places. Prison reform was due largely to Elizabeth Fry and to John Howard, who became Sheriff of Bedford in 1773 and as sheriff was responsible for the conditions of prisons and prisoners. John Howard determined that his office as sheriff was not to be neglected. He found that again and again men who had been declared innocent were kept in prison because they had not paid their gaolers for "board and lodging" while in prison. Again, in some places Assize Courts were only held once in seven years. It was possible for an innocent man to spend all this time in gaol, his case unheard. The cruelty of gaolers and the shocking dirtiness of rat-infested prison cells were other evils into which Howard enquired. In three years he travelled 10,000 miles, to see prison conditions not only in Britain but in France, Germany, Switzerland and even Turkey.

Elizabeth Fry was the daughter of a rich banker and a member of the Society of Friends (the

Quakers). After her marriage and when she had had eleven children, she began to visit Newgate Prison, and found the women prisoners and their children often with nothing but the bare floor to sleep upon without even blankets. From that time prison reform was the chief object in Elizabeth Fry's life; and, following upon her reports, Parliament did much to improve the life of the unhappy prisoners. Elizabeth Fry's example shows that women can do just as good work as men in bringing about social reform, particularly now when all grown women have votes and can elect women to the House of Commons.

And this was not all. Criminal law was often not only cruel but unjust, particularly for those who had no vote and could not bring their grievances before the House of Commons.

It will be remembered that in the first half of the nineteenth century agricultural labourers had no vote. With the coming of the agricultural revolution and the introduction of machinery in place of hand tools, not a few agricultural labourers found themselves without work. In anger, some of the labourers broke up the threshing and other machines. As punishment, many of these labourers were transported overseas to Australia and elsewhere; others were imprisoned in England. Some were even hanged. This was a cruel wrong. These men had broken up some unoffend-

ing machines and, no doubt, it was a silly thing to do. But the real truth was that the magistrates, who owned the threshing machines, were afraid. They thought that if they hanged a few of the agricultural labourers, the rest would submit. Even transportation was far more than the offence deserved. The men were placed in convict ships, quite unfit for human beings, and taken overseas from wives and children.

Nowadays Members of Parliament who make the penal laws and can dismiss a Home Secretary who is not just and humane, have come to see that not all prisoners need to be punished. Many of them have committed a crime in a fit of passion and are only too anxious to atone for their wrongdoing. Others, maybe, have given way to a sudden temptation, which is due rather more to bad social conditions than to any real evil in their nature. Should we imprison a man who is out of work and steals a loaf of bread for his children ? The answer is sometimes, No. Perhaps instead we can find ways of enabling him to work steadily and not be tempted again. The more good citizens think about the punishments laid down by the law, the more they will feel that reform is better than revenge. Law reforms have made impossible the transportation of angry strikers, and law reforms should do even more to help men and women to do right, by making the wrong thing difficult

instead of easy. There are such people as confirmed criminals, but they are few in number. Even to-day many men and women in prisons want our help and sympathy at least as much as our punishments.

This attitude has led to great changes in the punishments we inflict for crime. There are very few capital offences left, and the death sentence has been abolished in many other countries. Life in prison is being made less likely to turn out bitter men and women at the end of their sentences. Best of all, many men and women under the First Offenders Act are not sentenced at all. Instead, they may be released on condition that they do not commit any further offences. This encouragement of a second chance has halted many people when a savage sentence might have turned them into hardened criminals. Young offenders, too, are sent to boarding schools, where they learn to become good citizens. In many cases most of their trouble was their life at home, often in slum conditions. Removal to another atmosphere, with regular meals and hours, often effects a speedy cure. The whole system of punishments in modern Britain aims at reforming the criminal rather than punishing him for the wrongdoing into which he has fallen.

13

DEMOCRACY AND ITS RIVALS

THE form of government which we have been studying is that adopted in Britain, but it is by no means the only possible form or even the only form found in the world to-day. We must not close this book, therefore, without considering why we have built up this government, what we believe its essentials to be and what alternatives are to be found. Our government is a democracy ; that means that we believe in the people ruling themselves, or at least agreeing with what is done by the people whom they choose from time to time to rule over them. It may be that our democracy is not perfect—for instance, it is easier for a rich man than a poor man to become a Member of Parliament or a Justice of the Peace ; and the views of a crank who owns a newspaper may be more widely spread over the country than those of a very clever student of politics who can do no more than write books. But it is true to say that our country is much more nearly a democracy than it was a hundred or even fifty years ago ; and also that there are very few, if any, countries in the world that can produce a more democratic constitution.

What, then, are the signs of democracy ? First, it is necessary for all adult citizens to play a part in the choice of those who are to carry on the government ; for self-government does not mean, in a large state, that all should share in such work —that would lead to confusion and inefficiency. Certain people must govern, just as certain people must hew coal or drive trains ; it would be a poor and dangerous trip if every passenger took over the controls for half a mile. The " governors," however, must be chosen, and we all share in this choice. It is true to say that constituencies are unequal in size. There are frequent changes, however, in the arrangement of constituencies and a body called the Boundary Commission is constantly on the look-out for constituencies which have grown too large or too small, so that a Member may be taken away from one county and one added to another county.

Probably the chief failure of this test of democracy in our country lies with the voters themselves. Far too many people just do not bother to use the votes to which they are entitled : in the 1945 General Election there were 32,836,419 voters on the register ; of these only 24,973,298 actually voted. Of the rest some, of course, were too ill to vote ; some had moved away from their former homes and could not afford to go back just to vote ; some had even died after the register was made

up ; but many of these eight million were just too lazy to walk (or be driven) to the poll or were so indifferent that they could not make up their minds which way to vote.

Once the government is chosen, it is not enough to allow it to go to work. It may truly represent the wishes of the people when it is chosen, but it may not continue to do so for years. The people must think about the problems of government and so far as possible take some small part, or their judgment will become faulty, and they will not govern themselves but merely let others do it for them. It is one thing to choose a set of men to govern you in the way you choose for yourselves ; it is quite another to choose a set of men and allow them to govern you in the way they choose. The first way is democracy ; the second is merely the election of autocrats, or men of absolute power.

In Britain the ways of taking part in government are many. The first is always exercising your right to vote whenever it is offered. The second is making your judgment sound, so that your vote may be given in the right way ; this can be done by reading, by going to political meetings, by listening

to political debates on the wireless, and by thinking carefully about what you hear. The third way is more practical, but cannot be followed by so many. It is to learn, by membership of some body, how government works. You may be on the committee of a tennis or football club ; you may serve on a local authority or on a parish church council ; your district may have a model parliament, whose meetings you may attend ; if all these fail, you can organize a debating society at school or among your friends, and you will at once realize that you cannot all talk at once—you must elect a chairman, who will say who is to speak next, and you must have some rules about when the society will meet, what you are going to talk about, and who is to be allowed to come. Such experience of " government " will put you face to face with some of the problems your Members of Parliament solve.

If the government does not continue to represent fully the wishes of those who elected it, then it must change. The next sign of a democracy is that changes take place peaceably, with no great fuss and without any unusual steps having to be taken. And while the government continues to hold office, it must remember that there were many people who voted against it at the last election who, in spite of their opposition, must not be persecuted. These men and women, too, the opposition, must remember that the majority

elected the government, and that when a dispute arises the only way of avoiding trouble, and even bloodshed, is to respect the wishes of that majority. The right to persuade people to change their views is one which we must guard jealously, and if enough votes are won over at the next election a new and different government will be elected. This implies that any government which refuses to allow criticism of its words and actions cannot claim to be democratic. It may be a kind government; it may do a great deal of good to most of the citizens; but it cannot be said to be democratic.

It may be possible to imagine a government chosen by the people, and following such a perfect course that no one had a word of criticism to offer. Then there would be no more need of political arguments and meetings; every five years the members would return to their constituencies and would be re-elected unopposed; the only changes would be by death or retirement. It may be possible to *imagine* such a government—but do you think it could *exist*? If not, then free criticism and regular change are essential to a democracy.

From such a democracy—a body of equals, thinking and speaking as they choose, and governing themselves in the only way possible for a large body, by their elected representatives—we must expect great things. If it works well, its influence must be for good; if it works indifferently or even

badly, the judgment of its citizens must be sharpened and the urge to improve developed. If that judgment is to be accurate it must be based on keen observation—on facts. The proper presentation of facts and honesty in their preparation for discussion is another lesson which democracy may teach. A dishonest government, afraid of its life, will corrupt facts to suit its own ends and will suppress all knowledge which may unseat it. In a country where free criticism is allowed, the opposition may be trusted to bring to light those things which a government might be tempted to conceal.

But some people may not be ready for democracy. It is quite possible that some people, entrusted with all the privileges and all the duties which it demands, may grasp at the privileges, but refuse to carry out the duties. That is why any nation trying to become the perfect democracy must place education of all kinds in the front of its programme for progress.

The failure to work democracy efficiently may lead to another form of government. Toleration in a democracy may be interpreted as weakness; governments may shrink from the use of force to suppress a vicious but determined group; the solution of urgent problems may be delayed by the honest desire to consider all sides of the question in order to avoid injustice. When these

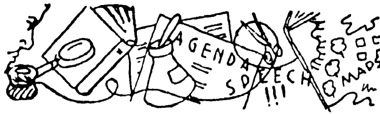
come together to confront a nation which, perhaps, is for the first time experimenting with true democracy, as were Germany and Italy after the First World War, serious trouble may occur and out of the trouble may emerge a government based on force, with immediate action as its watchword.

The end of such a State is its own glorification. It is a poor State whose citizens do not feel pride in it ; but when that pride demands that all other states be regarded as not only inferior, but worthy objects of conquest, nationalism is going too far. Sacrifice of liberty is the price dictators demand for the right to belong to the race of supermen ; yet it is a price which is far too high.

We have seen the need for law and order inside our own nation. No less necessary are law and order in the international field. If a nation forces its will on another, belief that violence is efficient will grow ; but there cannot be a victor without a vanquished, and next time victor and vanquished may change places. Better far to find a peaceful solution of " give and take " which can take the bitterness out of the affairs of nations. Over and above the law and order of one nation should be the law and order of United Nations.

In believing in democracy as the best form of government yet devised we must not become complacent. The idea of human progress is one which we may take as an ideal. One great

historian, A. J. Toynbee, has interpreted the course of history as a one-way street. The nations which stand still impede the progress of those behind; those which attempt to reverse either collide with others and are destroyed—often dragging down with them those with whom they come into collision—or else are warned off the road as dangerous. Only by refusing to stand still or to move backwards may we hope to take a place in the course of history which will not impede ourselves or others—we must progress.



CLASS ACTIVITIES AND DEBATES

CHAPTER ONE

Find out if your town or district is mentioned in Domesday Book. If so, try to get a copy of the record and trace any buildings or farms mentioned in it. Were the men and women living on those farms interested in the work of Parliament? Why or why not?

Try to work out—on paper or as an impromptu play—the imaginary adventures of a fifteenth-century M.P. coming to Westminster from Cornwall or Durham.

Argue the rights and wrongs of Charles I's struggle with Parliament. There are a few churches in England dedicated to King Charles the Martyr: do you agree with this? (You may be able to see one on your travels; for instance, at Tunbridge Wells.)

CHAPTER TWO

Compare maps of Parliamentary Representation before and after 1832: this will teach you a lot about places of great importance in the middle ages which had shrunk to insignificance by 1832. Try to find out what they were famous for.

Try to find out some more about the great struggle over the Parliament Act which was "big news" in 1909, 1910 and 1911.

Debate the "rights of women" in politics.

Imagine the scene at Gettysburg and let someone read the whole of Lincoln's speech—it will not take long.

CHAPTER THREE

Try to make a record of the activities of the principal members of the Royal Family for a week or a month—the newspapers will help. This will tell you something of the life they lead and their official duties. Think how difficult it is for them to have any private life.

Work out the scene when the King sends for the man he has chosen as Prime Minister.

CHAPTER FOUR

Make a list of a few Peers who live in your neighbourhood or have some special connection with it. Why are they Peers—are they hereditary or have they earned their title ? Find out the activities which earned the title—either recently or many years ago. You may be able to trace the history of the title—if it is an old one—through records and tombs in the local church.

See if you can obtain some of the printed papers of business in the House of Lords. This will show you how the House works.

CHAPTER FIVE

Organize a mock election in your class-room, with polling booths. (If there is some office to be filled by election, such as form captain, so much the better.) First the candidates must be nominated. Let them make speeches presenting their case. Afterwards, distribute ballot papers with the names in alphabetical order, surnames first ; and when they have been marked secretly and dropped into a box, have them counted and checked. The result of the poll will be declared by the returning officer, who will have been responsible for conducting the election. The winning candidate must thank the electors.

If there is any representative body in your school, such as a School Council, an election could be held at the same time throughout the school ; this would make it seem much more like a General Election, as there would be many contests at once.

CHAPTER SIX

Find out what you can about the local M.P. and his rival candidates at the last election. Make a record, similar to the one about the Royal Family, of his activities. Some of the class may know him or have heard him speak. He may even be persuaded to come to your school, or to a meeting of schoolchildren in the town hall or a big local cinema, to speak about his work as an M.P. See if this can be arranged. If so, think out some questions which you would like to ask him. Have a long list ready, for many of them may be answered during his speech, and it would be a pity not to have any fresh ones ready. Obtain the exhibition " Meet Your M.P." from the Bureau of Current Affairs, Piccadilly, London, W.7.

CHAPTER SEVEN

You should have some copies of *Hansard*—either the daily or the weekly edition. Your teacher will have marked some of the more interesting passages, and these may be read out, including a number of questions and answers.

Organize a parliamentary debate on some important topic in the life of the school—e.g. should games be compulsory ? Make up a short Bill on the subject and try to pass it through a " House " composed of your class.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Make a list of the ministers in the present Government, with the names of the offices and their holders in two columns.

Choose one important ministry which is very much in the news at the moment, and see what its objects are and why the papers are always writing about it.

CHAPTER NINE

Obtain all the particulars you can about entry into the Civil Service. See if you think you could pass any of the examinations in a few years' time.

Find out about the work of some of the special officers—customs, income tax, employment exchange. Some of the local officers may come and talk to you about their work.

CHAPTER TEN

Organize a tour—in person, if possible; if not, by pictures on the epidiascope—of Westminster and Whitehall. Collect all the books, magazines and postcards you can find with pictures of the buildings and the people who work in them.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Organize a debate on "taking the law into your own hands." You should be able to see why that is bad policy.

Try to get a local J.P. to come and talk to you about his work; it will be especially interesting if he (or she) sits on the Bench at the Juvenile Court.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Arrange the room as a magistrates' court. Work out the details of a "crime," select the "criminal" and "witnesses." Then have the case heard, with magistrates, police, criminal, witnesses, reporters and the general public present. Have the "criminal" committed for trial.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Britain shares many ideas about political liberty with the United States and France. All three countries have had fierce internal wars for liberty. We are reminded of these wars in France and America by the famous Statue of Liberty at New York, which was the gift of the French Republic to the United States. The statue is one of the largest in the world and shows Liberty holding aloft the great torch of freedom, and thus giving light and guidance to the world. The figure of Liberty is 152 feet high, stands upon an 89-foot pedestal, and cost £120,000. The woman's first finger alone measures 8 feet, and twelve people can stand in the great torch, so the cost is explained. The sculptor, Bartholdi, used his mother as a model and worked for nine years before the statue was ready for shipment to New York in 214 separate packing-cases.

Write a short speech which might be made by Liberty if a copper statue could come to life and tell its message to the world. Remember that it commemorates the centenary of American Independence and stands on an island at the entrance to one of the best known American harbours, and is the first thing which every visitor from Europe sees when he reaches New York by sea.