

tion of those in the Church would not conform in all respects, and many threatened to leave the Church altogether. In the year 1583 she issued a new Commission, by which the bishops and their lay associates in the High Commission might carry out their purposes by the rack, torture, or by any ways and means they might devise.

When the little company of Independents that met in Southwark were discovered and imprisoned, one of them (Barrowe) before his execution, in his supplication to the queen, on behalf of himself and associates, said:—"These bloody men, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, will allow us neither meat, drink, fire, lodging, nor suffer any whose hearts the Lord would stir up for our relief to have access to us. Their barbarous usage of women, children, &c., we are forced to omit. That which we crave is the liberty to die openly or live openly in the land of our nativity."

When we speak of the fires of Smithfield, we are accustomed to associate them with the religion of Rome. They were not quenched, however, when Mary died. The last account that the writer can come across in relation to the Smithfield fires, is the roasting to death, in 1611, of one Bartholomew Legate, a layman, who held heretical views, and who was delivered over to the secular powers by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. He was buried at the stake in the presence of a great concourse of people. There were burnings in other places as late as the reign of James II.

Lord Clarendon, a high churchman and a royalist, a hater of the Puritans, says that in the reign of James the First the High Commission Court had grown into a court of revenue, and detained men for many months in prison without ever bringing them to the mockery of a trial. Sir Edward Coke says that "persons of honor and great quality were every day cited (in the reign of Charles I.) into the High Commission, and very heavy fines levied upon them."

This court was introduced into Scotland, and Hetherington says it was the occasion of great suffering. "It was regulated by no fixed laws or forms of justice, and was armed with the united terrors of civil and ecclesiastical despotism. It put the king in possession of absolute power to use the bodies of his subjects at pleasure, without form or process of law."

Another engine of tyranny was the Star Chamber. It received its name from being conducted in a chamber of the king's palace. It had its origin long before the time of the High Commission. It was made use of for tyrannical purposes in the time of Henry the Eighth. Its name is execrated at the present day by almost the whole Anglo-Saxon race, although a certain class of literature has styled it "that once honored but now maligned court." It was made up of noblemen, judges, bishops, &c., appointed by the monarch, who was at the head of the court. Lord Clarendon says that in the time of Elizabeth there were very few persons of quality who had not felt its weight. Neal states that the Star Chamber and the High Commission Courts rode triumphant over all laws, imprisoning, banishing, hanging and burning men at their pleasure till they became as terrible as the Spanish Inquisition.

The celebrated case of Prynne is known to all readers of history. Prynne was a lawyer, and because he wrote a book against theatres, may-poles, Christmas, &c., he was summoned into the Star Chamber Court, fined £5,000, forbidden to practice at the bar, was whipped in the pillory, had his ears cut off and was thrown into prison. And a book having been published against bishops, Prynne was afterwards suspected of being its author, was fined another £5,000, had the stumps of his ears sawed off by the hangman, and