

barons personally; and all others tenants in chief, by the sheriffs and bailiffs, within forty days, to assess aids and scutages when necessary."

*Obs.*—The earliest *existing* writs for summoning knights, citizens, and burghesses to parliament, are of the 49th of Henry III. or in 1266.

26. The Parliament is assembled by the King's writ, and the interval between its sessions must not exceed three years. The constituent parts of a parliament are the King, and the three estates of the realm; of the latter, the Lords *spiritual* and *temporal*, sit in one house, and vote in one body; while the Commons debate and vote in a separate house.

*Obs.*—Originally the lords and commons assembled in one hall; but for many centuries past, they have been accustomed to sit in separate apartments.

27. The Lords spiritual consist of two archbishops, 24 bishops of England and Wales, and four elected bishops from Ireland.

The Lords temporal, of dukes, marquisses, earls, viscounts, and barons, all of whom in England sit by their own right, and the rest by election; namely, the 16 peers who represent the nobility of Scotland, and the 28 peers who represent the nobility of Ireland.

The number of peers is about 400.

*Obs.*—Besides these, the judges of England sit by virtue of the King's writ of assistance; the masters of chancery, by virtue of their office; and his majesty's attorney and solicitor-general, and counsel learned in the law, attend on requisite occasions to give advice; none, however, but peers in parliament, can vote on any question.