

be the chief joy and glory of the monarch to learn and enforce the voice of the people, here is something new under the sun, revealing a new time, and ushering in a new age.

Considering the run of human history, it is indeed a wonder the people should have a voice, a united voice, and that they should have organic life enough to utter it. That this insular British nation, itself composed of various tribes and tongues, shut in by itself, should, through the centuries, advance from step to step in the problems of self-government, till the question is solved in liberty and progress on the one side, and security and stability on the other, and honour and happiness on both, is a marvellous benediction under divine providence, and an object lesson to mankind.

The throne of Egbert and Alfred was Saxon, and popular; the throne of William the Conqueror and Richard the Lion-hearted was French, and absolute. Whatever other nations are doing, the British people are building constitution, institution and law. They are fixing the limitations of regal power and extending and settling the rights of the people. They are evolving parliaments from primal germs of freedom, and expanding courts from the healthful stock of sovereign grace and power.

Sometimes it was compulsory grace, of course; but benefactions, charters, and privileges came down from the Crown, as well as that right and claim and power rose up from the ranks of the commonalty. "Mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace kissed each other." It may have been after battles on bloody fields, and after sharp contests in determined parliaments; but with the advance of the generations the liberties of the people grew,

and the prerogatives of the Crown were further and further defined.

John was waked up by an early note at Runnymede, and the Henries and Edwards, the Plantagenets and Tudors, heard the call, shrill, well-sustained and clear, as the morning brightened into day. The Stuarts strove to stifle its clarion shout, defied its warning, denied its summons, and went down under the forces it rallied for national progress and popular right. Charles, with the loss of his head, and James, with the loss of his kingdom and crown, were possibly lessons enough for absolutism in Britain. Ecclesiastical aggression and exaction received their rebuke and chastisement, as well as proud assumptions of royal prerogative.

The British people vastly prefer a monarchy, but they will have only a monarchy with its constitutional limitations. The British people are true to religion and to the Church of God; but they will not have a Church ruled from foreign parts, intermeddling in national affairs, and receiving its dictates and offices from alien potentates. A Crown with the people and for the people, and a Church from God among the people, are about the British ideas, and in them is the vitality of national regeneration.

William the Conqueror brought in a continental, absolute monarchy, and planted it solid. William of Orange, again a continentalist, brought in a limited constitutional monarchy, a parliamentary monarchy into which the centuries had ripened and mellowed. This was the precious heritage of our noble Queen Victoria. After the instructive career of the Georges and another William, it was there to mar or to magnify. What was required was a ruler that would give constitutional, parliamentary government