

THE ENGLISH UNDER CHARLES II.

The English received Charles with great joy and merrymaking. Charles was fond of pleasure, and spent the money of the nation in wasteful amusements. He did many shameful things to get money.

In the Dutch War there was no money to fit out ships and pay sailors. Charles had spent it. So the Dutch sailed up the Thames at their pleasure, and burned English ships.

The Great Plague broke out in 1665. More than one hundred thousand people died in London alone. The bodies were flung into pits. London became so deserted that grass grew in the streets.

Next year the Great Fire broke out and destroyed half the city. But the Plague was burned out, and never came again. In 1678 the Popish Plot disturbed the country. It was said that the Roman Catholics meant to kill the King and overturn the Government. It was quite untrue, but many innocent persons were put to death on suspicion.

THE ENGLISH TURN AWAY THEIR KING.

James II. followed his brother, Charles II. The Duke of Monmouth tried to take the throne from James. There was a rising in the west of England, but it failed. Monmouth was beheaded, and his followers were punished in a terrible fashion. The cruel Judge Jeffreys sent hundreds of them to be hanged, and great numbers were sold as slaves.

James tried to make England a Roman Catholic country. This made the people angry with him, but they remained quiet, expecting that the next ruler would be a Protestant. A son was born to James in 1688, and now the English leaders asked a Protestant Prince—William of Orange, son-in-law of James—to come to England and help them. William came, and James fled, for he had no one to help him.

THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT BECOMES SUPREME.

When William and Mary came to the throne they agreed to an Act called the Bill of Rights. This Act made it impossible for a ruler ever again to place himself above the law or above the will of Parliament. After Mary's death, William reigned alone.

There was much fighting with Louis of France, a great enemy of England. This fighting went on in the next reign, that of Queen Anne. A famous English general, beat the French in many great battles.

After the death of Anne, a German Prince, George, King of Hanover, came to the throne.

THE ENGLISH UNDER GERMAN KINGS.

George I. and George II. loved Hanover better than England. They took little interest in English affairs, and the rule of the country passed into the hands of Ministers. The Prime Minister is the chief man in governing the country. The first man to be called Prime Minister was Sir Robert Walpole.