

obey laws, both divine and human, when honouring their fathers and their mothers. It is almost inconceivable that the British subject who is curious as to the history and doings of his father should, unless grossly ignorant and apathetic, be indifferent as to the history and doings of his national ancestors, to whom, and not to his immediate parents, he is indebted for liberties, rights and privileges equal to, if not greater than, those enjoyed by the subjects of any other nation, whether ancient or modern.

British sovereignty is now vested in the Crown, the Lords spiritual and temporal, and the Commons as assembled in Parliament. Regarding the Crown as one unit, the Lords as the second unit, and the Commons as the third unit, it may be said that individually each is powerless, collectively they are sovereign. It was not always so. It was not so under our early Norman and Plantagenet kings, for they were feudal lords.

Stated roundly, the essence of feudalism as introduced into this country by William I.—for it is at that point that we must start—was nothing more nor less than secular monarchy, properly so called. The sovereignty was assumed to be in a single individual, the king; to him the entire territory was declared to belong, by him it was parcelled out to his feudatories, in such quantities and on such conditions as he thought fit. I use the expression "secular monarchy" advisedly, and emphasize it, for at that period the sovereign spiritual power was admittedly in the Pope. There was an *imperium in imperio* which lasted till the reign of Henry VIII. The influence of the Church in 1066, in matters temporal as well as spiritual, may be gauged by the fact that of the 62,215 knights fees into which the country was divided, 28,015 were in its hands.

It is not possible to understand the history of England preceding the Tudor period, to comprehend the legislation of the reigns of Edward I. and Henry VIII. and the final abolition of feudal tenure in England in 1660, without thoroughly realizing the original theory and effect of feudality, the gradual decay of the system, and the cause of that decay. The study of the history of real property in respect of its alienability brings together a series of legislative enactments extending at distant intervals over hundreds of years, which collectively expound each other, whereas individually to the modern Englishman they are barely intelligible. The preamble to the Statute of Uses throws a strong light upon some matters as they then stood.

In my opinion, the quickest and best way of studying any species of a genus is to contrast it with another or other species of the same genus. Correct views concerning anything can only result from comparison of that thing, be it what it may, with some other *ejusdem generis*. To know what English constitutional government is, and its value, we must contrast it with Monarchy on the one side and Democracy on the other. Good and evil, right and wrong, are relative terms. We cannot say that Monarchy is good and Democracy bad, or *vice versa*. Circumstances may make Monarchy the best form of government, or indeed the only possible form of government, at a given period for a given people. So with Democracy. But, as these two forms of government are the extremes, each must necessarily have advantages and disadvantages.

An intermediate form, one that combines the advantages of Monarchy and Democracy, and at the same time avoids the disadvantages of each, is obviously, when possible, better than either. Such a form of govern-