

the courts were liable to be intimidated by an influential suitor, it being an ancient rule of our Constitution that the subject who failed to obtain justice in the ordinary courts might in all cases petition to the King to exercise his royal prerogative in his behalf. As the Empire increased, this right has been gradually extended to all the King's subjects. Those residing in the United Kingdom have apparently found the custom of presenting their petitions to the King in Parliament the most convenient, and this practice is now confirmed by statute, the House of Lords being the court of last resort for the United Kingdom. The King's subjects beyond the seas, on the other hand, found that their petitions were more speedily heard if addressed to the King in Council, which has thus gradually become the tribunal of final appeal for India and the Colonies. The statutes which have been enacted from time to time regulating the power and procedure of the Council are of a most interesting character and clearly reflect the popular opinion of the day. One of the most interesting is that of 24 Henry VIII., passed in 1532, which provides "that appeals in such cases as have been used to be pursued to the See of Rome, shall not be from henceforth taken, but within this realm."

The power thus conferred upon the Council of hearing appeals in all cases was greatly abused, and by statute I., Charles I., ch. 10, passed in the year 1646, it is enacted that neither His Majesty or Privy Council have any jurisdiction or power to draw into question any matter of any of the subjects of this Kingdom, but that the same ought to be tried in ordinary courts of law, thus transferring the appellate authority of the King in the United Kingdom from the Council to the Parliament or House of Lords. It will be noticed that the words of this statute do not apply to the King's subjects outside the United Kingdom, and in the same year we find mention made in the records of the Council of proceedings in a matter from the Island of Guernsey. The Council was put on its present basis and the Judicial Committee formed by 3 & 4 Wm. IV., 1833, and by subsequent statutes jurisdiction has been given to the Judicial Committee in