

An Hour with the Editor

ENGLISH SOVEREIGNS

Richard II. was a man in many respects resembling his father, Edward III. He had the same great personal courage, the same faculty of rising to the demands of an emergency, the same weakness of resolution, the same disregard of his promises, the same absence of diplomacy. He was very handsome. He loved pleasures, but not to excess. He was indolent. Such a king, confronted with a baronage, which was jealous of its own power, and a Commonalty, which had learned how to exercise authority, ascending the throne while he was yet a lad, and surrounded with advisers more influenced by personal rivalry than by a desire to promote the welfare either of the sovereign or the kingdom, was foredoomed to difficulties. As though the domestic affairs of the kingdom were not in themselves sufficiently serious, the war in France dragged along its inglorious course. Richard is not usually regarded as one of our great kings, but when it is remembered that he inherited an insecure crown, a profitless war, an empty treasury and a dangerous and difficult mass of social questions with which he was forced to deal, the wonder is not that he did no more, but that he was able to keep the kingdom from absolute anarchy.

Parliament was not slow to assert its authority. The King being a minor, there was not unnaturally much apprehension as to the men who should compose his Council, and the demands of the war calling for money, the necessary grants were not made until after a statute had been passed declaring the barons should have the right to nominate the privy council, and that the Commons should have the right, by commissioners appointed for that purpose, to audit the public accounts. It was also enacted that when once a Bill had been passed by both Houses of Parliament, it should receive the royal assent without any change in its provisions. Here we find the foundation laid of responsible government, or, as the expression used most commonly in England puts it, parliamentary government. A notable thing about the rules thus laid down is that they were accompanied by the declaration that they were in accordance with the ancient customs of the realm.

When the King came of age, and after his return from France, to which country he went to be married, he resolved to free himself from parliamentary control, and for a time he seemed likely to be successful; but his ambitions in this direction were destined to be thwarted, and in the end they cost him his crown. He was formally deposed by Act of Parliament; and here we note what may be regarded as the strongest possible expression of the sovereignty of the English people. As a rule laws can only be enacted by the conjoint assent of the Commons, Lords and King; but here we have a demonstration that royal assent is not necessary for there was no king to assent to the statute declaring Richard to be no longer sovereign and that the crown should pass to Henry Bolingbroke, his cousin and son of John of Gaunt, the powerful and ambitious son of Edward III. The great event of Richard's reign was this assumption of absolute power by Parliament, and it was the answer of the people of England to the claim of the king that he was, to use his own language "quite as able to manage his own affairs without any assistance from any one."

We saw in the sketch of the reign of Edward III that the result of the Plague was to plunge England in labor troubles. These in turn led to the abolition of serfdom. On the other hand they suggested a new source of taxation. Money was badly needed for the French war, and every other channel being exhausted, recourse was had to a head tax. Against this the peasants revolted, and with Wat Tyler at their head marched upon London. Most people are familiar with the story of how the boy king met them, and offered to be their leader, but it is not as generally known that the redress claimed by them was not exemption from taxation, but exemption from serfdom, a request which the king granted, although later he revoked it, but too late to restore the ancient institution. Speaking in general terms, it may be said that from that time onward the English people were a nation of freemen. The old customs born of serfdom may have lingered long in some parts of the country, and perhaps have not yet wholly passed away; but Wat Tyler's rebellion to all intents and purposes put an end to the feudal system as established by William the Conqueror. Three centuries of progress had been necessary to bring about this change and make England a land of freemen ruled by their own Parliament to which even the kings were subject. The foundations of freedom were well and truly laid, so that although afterwards kings endeavored to assert absolute power, the freedom gained was never wholly lost.

The reign of Richard was marked by the spread of the great religious movement begun in the time of his father. We saw that in the reign of Edward the English Church, backed up by Parliament, refused to recognize the authority of the Pope in many essential particulars. Wyclif advocated not only the independence of England from papal control, but that the Pope should divest himself of any claim to temporal power. His influence spread to Germany by way of Flanders, where Huss took it up and began the movement which Luther afterward carried through successfully. Wyclif's efforts were chiefly confined to England. It is not necessary to give an account of Lollardism, for to do so would be to enter upon controversial ground. It will be sufficient to indicate some of the results. One of these was the translation of the Bible into English.

The sacred canon was thus brought into the possession of the masses, and as one of the claims of the Lollards was for freedom of individual interpretation of the Scriptures, a wonderful impetus was given to thought. But more than this followed from Wyclif's labors. An English Bible meant the fixing of the standard of the English speech. For years there had been a gradual evolution of the language, the Saxon forcing out the Norman, but as the Church conducted its services in Latin and the courts carried on their proceedings in French, there was no basis upon which the language of the common people could rest. This Wyclif's Bible supplied. About the same time the courts began to use English, and the proceedings of Parliament were in the vulgar tongue, but as yet there was no book in general use that would serve to fix the standard of speech. True the English of Wyclif would not be very intelligible to most of us today, but it determined the course upon which English was to be evolved. Chaucer's poems attained a wide vogue at the same time, and as they were written in the popular speech, they also had their influence in determining what English should be.

Thus we see that the reign of Richard II, though inglorious from the militant point of view, was of vast importance to the English nation. It gave the people parliamentary government in the fullest meaning of the term; it witnessed the abolition of serfdom; it was marked by the successful assertion of the right of parliament to supervise expenditure as well as to grant money to the Crown; it saw the beginning of religious freedom and the establishment of the English language as we have it today. During the time of Richard the part taken by the Church in political affairs was much less prominent than it had been during the reign of some of its predecessors. The Church seemed to be passing through a change not altogether dissimilar to that which was taking place in secular affairs. But the process was slower. The right to punish heresy with death had not yet been asserted. Wyclif, as we have seen, was never prevented from officiating as a priest, although his teachings were hostile to the Papacy. It was doubtless this freedom of opinion, tolerated in high ecclesiastical circles, that delayed the movement which made England Protestant. In religious as well as in political development, it seems necessary that there shall be an exercise of extreme power to stimulate an advance towards complete freedom.

THE JEWS.

The Jewish conquest of Palestine under the leadership of Joshua was, on the surface of things, fairly complete, and at its close they were in possession of a region about as large as Vancouver Island, with a coast line of about 100 miles. It extended east of the Jordan an indefinite distance, the boundaries never being well defined, for the tribes that remained there were pastoral, moving from place to place as the requirements of their cattle and sheep demanded. But although the conquest was apparently complete it was not so in point of fact for the natives rose against them repeatedly and with such success that it seemed as if they would achieve their independence.

Up to this time the political system of the Jews had been what has been called theocratic. Each tribe was a species of republic managing its own affairs as best it could, but acknowledging from time to time a common leader. Moses was the first of these and Joshua the next. After a period of disaster Othniel put himself at their head and so successfully conducted affairs that "the land had rest for forty years." But the tribes were independent to each other. They looked upon Jehovah as their king, and upon the priests as His representatives, and they were intolerant of the idea of any ruler. This in theory at least, was their system, but as a matter of fact they were not very greatly different from the native races. They abandoned the wishes of Jehovah and became followers of Baal. They intermarried with other people and adopted many of their customs. For a period of three hundred years their history was not one in the least in keeping with their national traditions and aspirations. Then there arose leaders who were known as judges, of whom the greatest were Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Samson and Samuel. The exact political status of the judges must remain a matter of surmise. Whether they were chosen by the people or forced themselves to the front by the strength of their own ability we do not know. Of Ehud we are told that the Lord raised him up as a deliverer. Deborah comes on the scene, as it is related in the Book of Judges, without any introduction. We are simply told "And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time." Gideon is introduced by the statement that when he was threshing wheat the Angel of the Lord came and said "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." At this time the Jews were in a transition stage. The patriarchal or tribal system was proving inadequate to their needs. They had fallen away from their dependence upon Jehovah, and were beginning to realize the need of what we call in these days a strong government. The judges were not kings, but they were very much like dictators, and Abimelech succeeded his father Gideon without any question being raised as to his right to do so. His successor Tola was judge for 23 years and his successor Jair for 22. Samson's term of office was twenty years. After Samson there came a period of anarchy, or as the Book of Judges says: "In those days there was no king of Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." The last of the judges was Samuel. He was a wise, useful and patriotic ruler. He seems to afford an example of pre-natal in-

fluence for we are told that his mother, a woman of remarkable gifts, consecrated him to the service of the Lord before his birth. He was trained in his youth for the work of government, and there seems to have been a general expectation among the people that in due time he would be at the head of the nation. He came to the front in a campaign against the Philistines, which was his only military operation. Having given his country peace, he began to introduce domestic reforms, and organized schools for the teaching of religious doctrines and practices. The mass of the people had at this time fallen very far away from the simple monotheism of their ancestors, and appear, in fact to have had no religious faith at all. Samuel by the establishment of schools saved the ancient religion from being wholly lost. He also welded the people into a nation. His popularity was great, and if he had seen fit so to do, he might easily have made himself king. In order to lighten his personal labors he inducted his two sons into office as assistants; but they "walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre and took bribes and perverted judgment." This incensed the people and they demanded that Samuel should give them a king so that they might be "as other nations," and in consequence Saul was selected and duly installed in office by Samuel.

The history of the Jews from the invasion of Canaan to the reign of Saul, as related in the Bible, is one of the things most relied upon by non-believers in Christianity as showing that it rests upon an untenable foundation. We read of the Lord commanding acts of startling cruelty, and of His punishing the people because they would not perform them, and critics tell us that notwithstanding all this, the effort to make a nation out of the Jews was a disastrous failure. It seems right to observe in this connection that the history of the Jewish race has for the most part been preserved by persons, who represented the theocratic idea. To them every national calamity was due to the direct interposition of the Lord. If the Philistines came down upon the Jews, it was the Lord who sent them. If they were driven back, it was the Lord who vanquished them. At every stage these writers professed to see the hand of the Lord, and to be able to discern his mind. We have no popular account of what took place, neither have we the side of the story which the Philistines could tell. There is no doubt, however, that the development of the Jewish nation was very slow, and that from the very outset it was distracted by internal differences, which finally rent it in twain. From the date usually assigned to the exodus to the inauguration of Saul as king years elapsed. It was a period of very great activity in the history of the world and during it great progress was made in civilization in all parts of Western Asia as well as in Egypt.

SURNAMES.

When John Smith marries Mary Brown the officiating clergyman, in most of the churches at least, says and the parties repeat after him: "I John, take thee, Mary," and "I Mary take thee, John," and so on to the end. To the church John is John, not John Smith, and Mary is Mary only. These being the names given them in baptism, they are their Christian names and by them alone does the Church, in theory at least, recognize them. Like many other things, clerical and otherwise, this is a survival of the times when there were no surnames. Note the prefix "sur." We have heard lately a good deal about the German "sur-tax," which was an addition to the normal tariff upon imports. A surname is an additional name, and we suppose there is really no reason, in common law at least, why a man should not change his surname whenever he felt so disposed. The origin of surnames is various. Sometimes they were assumed, in other cases they were given by neighbors; in others they were used to show family relationship; in others they were descriptive of employment; in others they were taken from localities where the parties lived. There are other cases where there is no means of even guessing at the origin, and these are almost always very old names. Some surnames are simply ancient personal names preserved under a slight changed form. Thus the family name Lawrence is derived from the old Latin Laurentius; so also Stevens or Stephens and various others that may suggest themselves to readers have a like origin. The commonly received idea that such names as Smith, Carter, Turner, Carpenter and the like were descriptive of the employment of the person, who originally held them, is subject to a great deal of qualification. In many instances they have been perverted first by pronunciation and afterwards by spelling. Many people can recall instances where names have been changed in this way during two generations. Again in many cases the spelling has been preserved but the pronunciation has been altered. The oft-quoted cases of Chomondley and Majoribanks need only be mentioned. It may be recalled by some that when General Pole-Carew was here there was some uncertainty as to how his name ought to be pronounced. It was a matter upon which he alone had the right to speak with authority, for every man ought to be able to say how he wishes to be called. Members of the same family pronounce their names differently. Thus Walter Besant, the author, pronounced his name without any accent; his sister Annie, also known to fame, gave the final syllable a pronounced accent.

Most surnames are relatively modern. A recent writer on the subject says that very few of them can be traced in the same families beyond the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, and that of the whole British nobility only twenty-five claim to be able to trace

their family names to a date before the Norman Conquest, and in nearly every one of them there is a good deal more doubt than certainty. The well-known Lancashire family of Towneley claims that its name can be traced with some changes to the time of Alfred the Great, and the whole story was at one time set out in Burke, but a good deal of doubt has been thrown upon it. If the record is correct this is undoubtedly the oldest English family name. Of course all families are alike old in one sense of the word, but they are not all alike old in respect to their existence as a distinct group of individuals of common descent.

We have nothing corresponding in English to the French prefix "de" because our ancestors dropped the use of it long ago. John of Chesterfield, for example, became John Chesterfield. So also while the French preserved the prefix "le" in many cases, the English dropped it. John the Baker became John Baker. Nowadays we are accustomed to look upon these prefixes as a mark of aristocratic lineage, but they are not necessarily so. Many families have dropped them; others, have merged them into the remainder of their surnames. Almost any one with a place name has a right to place "de" before it. The prefixes Mac, O and Fitz do not necessarily imply a common descent for those who bear them. They indicate community of interest quite as often as a common origin. The adherents of a chieftain assumed them or received them from persons attached to other leaders. The history of the clans of Scotland is not the history of a family, but of a group of people who from time immemorial were banded together for mutual advantage. The same is true of the Irish.

Many surnames now quite unlike were originally the same but were changed in spelling before the standard of the language was fixed. Henderson and Anderson are thought to have been the same originally and to have been derived from Andrew's son, although this, as is the case with most names, is not by any means certain. In a history of English names, Ellis is said to have been derived from Esther and Babbitt from Barbara, both these names having been traced back to the time when their holders were tenants in the one case of the Abbess of St. Esther and in the other case of the Abbess of St. Barbara. The spelling of names is arbitrary. Thus there are Atwoods, Attwoods, Attwoods and perhaps other varieties of the name which originally was Atte-the-wood. Comyn, Comyns, Cummings, and Cummings were all originally Comyn. Beecham is Beauchamp misspelled; but Johnson and Johnston were originally different, although doubtless each family has not been careful to preserve the distinction. Johnson was originally John's son; whereas Johnston doubtless meant one who lived in John's town or tun, as it was once called.

Of late years it has come about that men are apt to be indignant if addressed by strangers without the prefix "Mr." As a matter of fact it is rather a mark of distinction to be spoken to without it. A surname, when it once became fixed, was as much a mark of distinction as a title is regarded nowadays. The Duke of Argyll signs himself Argyll; the latest baron drops everything else than the name he assumed when elevated to the peerage. Most peerages being very modern, the man or woman whose surname has come down through the centuries need ask no other patent of nobility.

A Century of Fiction

XXIV.

(N. de Bertrand Lugan)

Mrs. Humphrey Ward.

It seems to be the prevailing fashion nowadays with the larger class of popular novelists, particularly those whose serial stories run in many magazines, to write what they are pleased to term analytical novels, in which they depict men and women in all the littleness of their least worthy emotions, taking as subject for very serious discussion indeed, the pettiest details of married life, which by themselves are not harmonious, but which when taken in conjunction with larger, nobler issues, fill a necessary place in human existence and adjust the balance of things. In this "analysis" wrongly so-called, important things that go to the real building of character are lost sight of; passing moods of the hero and heroine are magnified out of all proportion to their significance, and the result is that sensible people have no patience with most modern romances, and silly people find them such delightful reading and "so true to life" that they consciously or unconsciously adopt the pose of their favorite man or woman in fiction, and proceed to make life a farce of false sentimentality. The fact of the matter is, that almost any woman, for women form the chief object of discussion in the latter-day books, can, if she be so minded, after reading a story like so many that are turned out nowadays, place herself in the position of the "Soulful lady so-and-so" and fancy she is quite as interesting an object to the world in general as the lady in the book is to her circle of readers. In reality the average woman, no matter what an exalted opinion she may have of herself, is not a subject of very much interest to anyone outside her own immediate family circle. Of course we all think we are noticed more than we are, but while our influence may be very far-reaching indeed, personality has in most cases nothing like so much of an effect. In

fact very often the less we strive to impress our personality upon people the deeper is the influence we exert. That is one evil that modern novels are responsible for, giving people a false opinion of themselves and closing their eyes to the things that are of real worth, modesty, chastity, cheerfulness and unselfishness, and vaunting exaggerated independence and brazenness, cynicism and affection as if they were worth cultivating.

Mrs. Humphrey Ward is a clever writer, though in some respects she belongs to the class mentioned above, and one or two of her stories at least have done no sort of good whatever. Her manner and style of writing however have improved with the years. She always uses good English, and does not offend the taste by too much realism. Her stories are for the most part "society novels." We cannot, at least the most of us cannot expect to live up to the atmosphere which surrounds them; we cannot by any fond stretch of the imagination garb ourselves in the costly simplicity which distinguishes the ladies who move through her pages, or hope to have the luxurious surroundings which somehow or other Mrs. Ward makes us feel should be the ordinary environment of ordinary men and women; we cannot, or we don't anyway, have only titled ladies and gentlemen, leaders of public opinion or leaders of fashion for our friends; therefore perhaps happily we cannot get on a level with her emotional female types or her lordly male types, and we can read to be amused and be little the worse for that amusement. On the other hand there are a great many people who consider Mrs. Ward quite above criticism. She has a host of admirers who cannot say enough in her praise, and all of her books have an enormous reading public, while she commands the highest prices for all of her work. In various phases she touches upon nearly all subjects in her books, religious, philosophical, political and social, and while she is apt to magnify trivialities of character she handles her characters well. She has produced a few admirable types, her women are usually of the "new" order, expecting and as a rule receiving equal rights with men. From a criticism by an admirer we quote as follows:

"Mrs. Ward's birth, education and social environment, fit her to do this large serious work. Born Mary Arnold, she is the daughter of Dr. Arnold of Rugby, the niece of Mathew Arnold, the wife of a cultivated editor and essayist. Her natal place was the Tasmanian Hobart Town, with its extra insular viewpoint; she was reared in a social atmosphere in the best sense stimulating and productive of enlightened activities and fine thought. Like George Eliot, her contact with literature and life has been broad and fruitful, her outlook has not felt the restriction of a limited nature. Her scholarship was indicated a dozen years ago by the admirable translation of the French thinker 'Amiel.' Mrs. Ward has done two important and serviceable things; she has proved that the content of fiction is wide enough to include politics and religion as legitimate artistic material; and she has drawn modern women who have brains as well as hearts, and the capacity to keep even step with men in the higher social activities. She has done this as George Meredith and Ibsen have done it and has shown thereby that she grasps one meaning of the late nineteenth century."

Sir George Trevelyan.

This story concerns itself largely with modern problems, and its heroine Marcella, was also the heroine of an earlier story which took its title from her name. In "Sir George Trevelyan" Marcella who has been married to Aldous Reburn, meets the baronet who is so married and the two form an intimate friendship which ripens into love on Sir George Trevelyan's side. Marcella however remains steadfast to her husband through all temptation and in the end her influence tends to soften Trevelyan's feelings towards his own wife, who, though frivolous, silly and vain, is very much in love with her husband. The story ends with the death of the hero during the labor troubles in his mines.

The people on Mars have their eyes on Canada and are making canals.

Last they had Dr. Cook in a warm place, and now they locate him in a place that is Chili.

The United States Senate is still trying to find out how much the producer gets and how much the consumer.

"Who ever heard of any one getting into trouble by following a good example?" "I did. He was a counterfeiter."

Old Gentleman (as funeral procession is passing)—"My good boy, can you tell me who is dead?" Good Boy—"Yes, sir. The person inside the hearse, sir."

UNSUBDUED

I have hoped, I have planned, I have striven, To the will I have added the deed; The best that was in me I've given, I have prayed, but the gods would not heed.

I have dared and reached only disaster, I have battled and broken my lance; I am bruised by a pitiless master That the weak and the timid call Chance.

I am old, I am bent, I am cheated Of all that Youth urged me to win; But name me not with the defeated, Tomorrow, again, I begin.

S. E. Kiser.