

voluntary customs of the people ; they are supposed to be only in the nature of temporary and limited regulations, not altering the permanent relationships of citizens to one another. Such regulations are the beginning of the modern 'Orders in Council,' before alluded to (p. 14) ; and it is claimed that the Crown has still a right, within certain limits, of issuing such 'prerogative' ordinances. But, for the most part, Orders in Council are now issued under the express authority of Parliament.

PARLIAMENT

For the appearance of the English Parliament at the end of the thirteenth century gradually transformed the practice of legislation from a rare and mysterious event into a methodical and regular process. Though at first intended only as a tax-granting body, at any rate as far as the elected or representative part of it was concerned, the English Parliament soon became very much more. The King in fact, early found, that it is often easier to call an institution into life than to destroy it afterwards, and that an institution created for one purpose may speedily learn how to act for quite other purposes. Both these discoveries are useful items of state-craft ; here they are only mentioned to explain the fact that the English Parliament, and especially the House of Commons, soon became, not merely a tax-granting body, but a powerful agency for the removal of grievances, and, ultimately, a stern critic of the policy of the Crown.

PETITIONS TO THE KING

In the former capacity, it presented petitions to the King, based, usually, on the complaints of its electors, and threatened to withhold 'supplies,' i.e. taxes demanded by the Crown, until these petitions were