

## Lesson 6

### The Stuarts (1603- 1714)

#### **Part III: The Parliament and the Crown**

##### **1. Republican Britain (1649-1660): The Protectorate:**

- ❖ **Britain** → a **republic** under the rule of **Oliver Cromwell** ‘**Lord Protector**’.
- Republican Britain → **unsuccessful**:
  - He established a more **severe government** and had **greater power**.
  - He got rid of **the monarchy** and **Anglican Church**.
  - He **governed** the country **alone** without the parliament which was dissolved in **1653**.
  - He used **the arm to keep law and order** which was an **unpopular idea**.
  - He forbade people **to celebrate Christmas, Easter or to play games** on Sundays.
  - His attempts to impose Puritan practices were unpopular.
- ❖ **Cromwell died in 1658**.
- ❖ His son **Richard** was **not a good leader** as his father. So, **he called Charles II** to become a monarch, and the **republic was over**.

##### **2. The Restoration 1660:**

- ❖ **Charles II (1660-1685)** became **king** (son of Charles I). Like the Stuarts, he believed in the **divine rights** of kings.
- ❖ He had **plenty of conflicts and disagreements with the parliament** mainly over religion. He was **attracted to Catholicism** and **parliament was strongly Anglican**.
- ❖ But, there **was no clash between the two**.

**Result: Emergence of two political parties which became the basis of British two-party system:**

- **Whigs:** They **feared absolute monarchy** & believed in **religious freedom**. For them, **monarchy should depend on parliament**.
- **Tories:** They supported **the authority of the crown and church**.
- ❖ **James II (1685-1688)** became **king of Britain** (Charles II's brother). He **disliked Protestants**. He attempted to **bring back the Catholic Church** and allow it to **co-exist with the Anglican Church** (to reintroduce Catholicism).

❖ **The parliament, the Tories, the Whigs, the Puritans and the Anglican Church were angry at the king.**

❖ After three years of conflict, **James II was obliged to leave his monarchy.**

### **3. The Glorious Revolution 1688:**

❖ The parliament invited **James II's Protestant daughter Mary II and her husband William III**, Prince of Holland, to rule the country from 1689 to 1702.

❖ **Not really a revolution** → more like **'a coup d'état'** by the ruling class.

❖ **What was revolutionary** at that time → the parliament made William king **not by inheritance** but **by choice.**

**The parliament, more powerful than ever, passed laws to secure its powers:**

#### **a. Bill of Rights 1689:**

The monarch could not raise taxes, keep an army, and dissolve the parliament without its agreement. Moreover, the monarch could not act against any MP or annul laws made by the parliament.

#### **b. Act of Settlement 1701:**

This act stipulated that only a Protestant could inherit the crown → to prevent any future conflicts over religion. This act remained in force ever since.

### **4. Britain in the Seventeenth Century:**

❖ **Empire:** During the seventeenth century, **Britain** started developing its **empire: West Indies, India, and America** (e.g. the first permanent British colony was **Jamestown** in Virginia, founded by Captain John Smith in 1607, and **the Pilgrim Fathers** in 1620 Massachusetts)

❖ **Science:** This era witnessed the **development of scientific thinking** and were encouraged by the Stuarts who established the **'Royal Society'** that became a vital center of thinkers and scientists:

➤ **Francis Bacon** introduced the idea that **every scientific idea must be tested by experiment** eventually leading to understand the natural world.

➤ **William Harvey** discovered the **circulation of the blood** leading to tremendous advances in medicine.

➤ **Isaac Newton** studied **gravity** and published **'Principia'**, one of the greatest books in the history of science.

➤ **Astrology and Geometry:** The discovery of the **geometric movement of stars and planets** destroying old beliefs in magic and witchcraft.

#### **Culture and Society:**

➤ With the rapid **speed of literacy** and the improvement in **printing techniques**, **the first newspaper appeared** in the 17<sup>th</sup> century spreading religious, scientific and literary ideas.

- **Prices fell** compared with wages, so **life conditions of the poor improved**.
- **Trade** improved within Britain thanks to the **waterways** which became an important means of transportation.
- **The emergence of shops** in most towns in the 17<sup>th</sup> century thanks to the improved transportation. Furthermore, **towns with shops grew larger** while ones without shops remained villages.
- **The emergence of coffeehouses in London** which became meeting places for conversation and politics of **the rich class of aristocrats**.