

12. THE CIVIL WAR

The Civil War

The conflict between Charles and the Parliamentarians was about to collapse England. The country split into two supporting the king and the Parliament respectively. The Roman Catholics who lived in northern and western parts of England supported the king. The southern and eastern parts of England supported the Parliament.

Causes of the Civil War

Though various causes may be stated for the Civil War, it is the heavy taxes levied and the king's hatred for the Puritans are the chief reasons. That was how the nation split. The Catholics who supported the king got the name Royalists or Cavaliers. Puritans supported the Parliament along with the industrial and the merchant classes. They called themselves as Roundheads. Apart from these two issues the unsuccessful but expensive foreign wars also became a reason for the Civil War.

Happenings of Civil War :

Initially the King's army was victorious with the help of Prince Rupert, the King's nephew. Later Oliver Cromwell's Parliament won the battle by giving incentives to the soldiers. The army of Cromwell gained the name New model Army. The strong support of his followers helped Cromwell to win the king. More over Cromwell got the support of the Scots because he helped presbyterianism to come to power. The Royal Army was defeated at Marston Moor, Newbury and Naseby. Charles surrendered in 1646 to the Scots.

Course of Civil War :

Charles tried for compromise with the help of Presbyterians. The Presbyterians tried the level best to make the Charles king with lesser power. This was not agreed by the Puritans. They actually wanted to execute the king. This agitated Charles and so he escaped to the Isle of Wight. However, Charles was captured again in Warrington. A trial was conducted. Charles was executed on January 30, 1649.

Effects (or) Results of the Civil War

People were sympathetic for the King Charles. A sense of horror spread all through Europe mainly because the execution was carried out at the Front Yard of the King's own Palace. The House of Lords was abolished. The supporters of Charles I and their property was seized. Puritanism gained momentum in England. Political parties emerged. The Royalists and the Roundheads were the first parties. The king was forced by an Act passed in the Parliament to commence the Parliament at least in one three years certainly irritated the king. Moreover the king was to seek the permission of the Parliament before dissolving it. The Root and Branch Act placed the Church under the control of a committee. The king was not allowed to appoint anybody without the approval of the Parliament as the ministers. The King's right to solve the religious problems was also curtailed. However Royalist Bishops were arrested. This injured Charles mentally. He gave a speech in the House of Commons but it was of no use. Above all the Parliament sought to control the army by passing the Mylitia Bill. When Charles did not accept it, it ended in Civil War.

13. PURITANISM

Introduction

Queen Elizabeth made the religious settlement, but the extreme Protestants were not satisfied with the settlement. They wanted to purify the Church from all Roman Catholic practices. They were known as Puritans. They were called the Separatists. Puritanism was the extreme form of Protestantism. Puritans hated the rule by Bishops. The age of Puritanism extended up to 1660. The restoration of the monarchy in England put an end to Puritan attempt to establish a theoretical state.

The Attitude of Puritans

When the Puritans ruled the country, a new moral impulse bound together people of all portions. Life had a serious tone. The attitude of the people was quite different. They were against the pretensions of Kings, Bishops or Clergy. The Bible was for spiritual guidance. They had a diary. In the diary, they noted down the important evidence of Divine Grace. The Puritanism was not liked by many. This is evident from the reference which Shakespeare makes in his play Twelfth Night.

The Rigorous Puritan Spirit

Later on, the Puritan spirit became rigorous. They closed down all theatres and places of amusement. In 1642, a law was passed and all the theatres were closed. They abolished all sports like wrestling and dancing. In 1650, an act was passed punishing adultery with death. Hence the Puritanism was hated by the pleasure seeking English people.

Puritan Contribution to English Literature

Milton was a typical Puritan. He wrote the greatest epic in English. His 'Paradise Lost' and 'Paradise Regained' made record in the literary history. Milton's idea in writing the poem was "To

assert Eternal Providence and justify the ways of God to men". Milton wrote 'Lycidas'. This elegy was written to mourn the death of Edward king, his class mate. In this poem, one could see the Puritan hatred of the corrupt Anglican clergy. John Bunyan's 'The Pilgrim's Progress' was the greatest prose work of this period. He was a Puritan. He derived the inspiration from the reading of the English Bible. It is the greatest allegory. The work is remarkable for its beauty. It has been translated into one hundred and eight languages. It made an extraordinary appeal to the human mind.

The Repressive Policy of James I

Puritanism had its impact on politics. Queen Elizabeth died in 1603. King James of Scotland became the King of England with the title of James I. The Puritans believed that he might show them same favour in England. They wanted to reform the Church. They sent a petition to the king. But the King turned down the Puritan plea. He was a believer in the dictum "No Bishop, No King". Hence he followed a repressive policy.

A Dangerous Turn

Some of the Puritans went to Amsterdam. There they became the earliest group of Baptists. Some Puritans wanted to be in England. They adopted a middle portion and they were called Non-Separatists. Then in 1625, Charles I ascended the throne. Things took a dangerous turn. During his regime, William Laud was the Arch Bishop of Canterbury. He adopted stern measures. Hence Scotland rose in revolt and invaded England in 1639. Charles was without financial resources. His rule of eleven years ended. The Parliament was summoned. The Parliament was supported by Roundheads and the King was supported by Royalists.

Conclusion

The civil war broke out in 1642. In 1643, a new religious settlement was drafted for the nation. But the proposals were unsatisfactory. The Parliament became divided. There was a change in the political arena under the leadership of Cromwell. The Royalists were defeated and the King was executed. Cromwell became the lord protector. After his death, there was restoration of Charles II as King of England. The Puritan attempt to form a state was brought to an end.

MODEL QUESTIONS

SECTION - A

Answer in 30 words

1. What was the condition of the nation when the Puritans ruled the country?
2. What was the Repressive Policy of James I?
3. Who were Roundheads and who were Royalists?

SECTION - B

Answer in 100 words

1. Write on Puritan contribution to English literature.
2. Write about the rigorous Puritan spirit.

SECTION - C

Answer in about 500 words

1. Write an essay on Puritanism.