

were incalculable. The country was dragged out of its old isolation, and brought into closer touch with European politics and the Roman Church: the organisation of government and Church, the land tenure, trade, art, literature of England,—all were influenced.

WILLIAM I. 1066-1087 The personality of the man by whom this great event was brought about was most striking. Ambitious, determined, far-seeing, stern and ruthless at times, he was a skilled warrior, a great statesman, and withal a friend of the Church and irreproachable in his private life. It was his policy to prevent the establishment of the evils of feudalism in England by curbing the power of the barons. This policy was continued by his sons.

WILLIAM II. 1087-1100 William II., though he defied the Church, held his own against the barons by the support of the English.

HENRY I. 1100-1135 Henry I. carried on the same work by the help of Church and people. By the battle of Tenchebrai (1106) he recovered Normandy, which on the Conqueror's death had fallen to his eldest son Robert. He settled the dispute with the Church on the investiture question by a compromise, and strengthened the strong central government which the Conqueror had founded while retaining the old English local courts.

STEPHEN 1135-1154 On his death civil war followed between his heiress Matilda and her cousin Stephen, and in the weak reign of Stephen the worst evils of Feudalism took root in England. The barons built castles and oppressed the people unchecked, until "men said openly that Christ and His saints slept."

HENRY II. 1154-1189 With the accession of Matilda's son Henry II. matters were changed. Henry, the ruler of Normandy, Anjou, Aquitaine and their dependencies, was a con-