

when her brave sailors were driving away the Armada, it was a great struggle to persuade her to spend what was necessary. Her worst fault was that her word could not be trusted. On the other hand, she really loved her country, and she meant sincerely to do her best for England. She chose wise men for her advisers. She was a Tudor and meant to have her own way, but she invariably yielded when she saw that she was acting against the wishes of the nation. She had many great qualities—wisdom, foresight, moderation; and these qualities were just the ones that the nation needed at that time to unite England and to make the country great in politics, discovery, literature, and in material and social progress.

148. **Parliament under Elizabeth.**—During the reigns of the early Tudors, Parliament was little more than an instrument for registering the personal will of the sovereign. In Elizabeth's reign, however, the House of Commons assumed an importance and independence that it had not possessed for many years. The members were no longer content to do as they were told, but vigorously insisted upon the full and free discussion of all public questions. There were but thirteen sessions of Parliament in the forty-four years of Elizabeth's reign, but on many occasions, during these sessions, the Commons ventured to dispute the will of the queen and even to register its protests against her actions. The representatives of the people in Parliament were beginning to think for themselves, and were not slow in giving expression to their desires.

In 1601 Parliament gained a conspicuous victory over the crown. Elizabeth, as much as possible, avoided taxing the people directly. One way she had of raising money was by the sale of monopolies. For example, the Earl of Essex was the only man in England who was allowed to sell sweet wines, and for this privilege he paid a certain sum to the queen. So many monopolies were granted that they became a great burden, and Parliament petitioned her to make an end of them. When she saw that Parliament was determined, she gracefully gave way and promised to remedy the abuse.