Charles Essay, Research Paper

Charles might have ruled indefinitely without Parliament had his religious policies not provoked a war with Scotland. Whereas James I had allowed varius religious practices throughout Scotland, Ireland and England, Charles hoped to dictate religious conformity. And so. Charles faced strong opposition from both the English Puritans and the Presbyterian Scots when he tried to impose the English Episcopal system. on Scotland

Without sufficient war resources needed to handle the Scottish Rebellion, Charles was pressed to call upon Parliament, who refused to even consider funding a war until the King rectified several religious and political injustices. Charles, in response, promptly dismissed the Parliament. However, when the Scots defeated an English Army in the summer of 1640, Charles re-assembled Parliament, this time on their terms, for a lengthy and ominous duration.

The Landowners and the merchant class represented by Parliament had long taken offense at Charles financial measures and paternalistic rule and the Puritans distrusted the influence of his Roman Catholic wife. On December 4, 1641 Parliament introduced the king with the Grand Remonstrance, which was a summary of popular grievances against the crown. Charles retaliated by invading Parliament in 1642, intending to arrest certain members, who were able to flee. The king retreated from London, and began raising an Army. Startled, the House of Commons passed a Militia Ordinance which granted Parliament the right to assemble an Army of its own. Reconciliation was no longer attainable, and for the next four years England was immersed in Civil War.

It seems that every time Parliament presented the King with a grievance his responses were promptly impulsive.

..Parliament refused to even consider funds for war until the King agreed to redress a long list of political and religious grievances. The King, in response immediately dissolved parliament … Perhaps had Charles been more diplomatic, such drastic war measures could have been avoided.

The Glorious Revolution was a bloodless conflict between James II and Parliament. When James II become king in 1685 he demanded the repeal of the Test Act. When Parliament refused, he adjourned it and proceeded to openly appoint Catholics to high-level positions in both his Courts and the Army. James was essentially trying to subject all institutions to the power of the Monarchy. When James second wife bore a male hier to the throne, Parliamentary opposition invited William of Orange to invade England and restore traditional liberties. When his forces arrived James fled to France, ending the Glorious Revolution.

From the 1600s to the 1700s one common trend is apparent, that is, the continuation of the limiting of the power of the King in England s gradual movement towards a cabinet system. This is evident in the Bill of Rights, which when accepted by William III limited the power s of the monarchy and guaranteed the civil liberties of the English privileged classes.