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## **THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION – RESULTS(PART-II)**

The English Revolution of 1688 was the significant milestone in the constitutional history of England. It gave a death knell to the absolute monarchy in England and paved the way for the supremacy of Parliament, popular sovereignty and democratic system in England.

### **End of strife between the King and Parliament:**

The struggle between the king and Parliament commenced in 1603 A.D. With the accession of the Stuart dynasty it came to an end in 1688 A.D. It was the victory of Parliament, and the success of the ‘Rule of Law’. With the departure of the Staunch Catholic Monarch James II, for France, the throne was presented jointly to his Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange, a protestant ruler, from Holland, who accepted the conditions laid down in the ‘Declaration of Rights’. In this regard, Trevelyan remarked, “*The Long and revolutionary conflict of Crown and Parliament gave place to cooperation between the two powers, with Parliament as the leading partner*”.

### **The Establishment of the Constitutional Monarchy**

The English Revolution 1688 upheld the supremacy of parliament and put an end to royal absolutism. Thus began the era of constitutional monarchy in England. It kept a check on the arbitrary rule of the monarch. The king was now not in a position to act on his own terms, nor could he impose new taxes or maintain an army without the consent of Parliament. Parliament reserved the authority to enact a legislation or to suspend it. Thus, the powers of the monarch were limited and

Parliament became more powerful. Thenceforth, the king became a constitutional head and the political power passed into the hands of Parliament, thus, paving the way for true democracy.

### **Death Blow to the theory of Divine Rights of the king**

The Divine Right of Kings supported the monarchical absolutism. The Stuart kings believed in the theory of the Divine Rights of the King, which asserted that kings derived their authority from God and so they considered themselves as the representatives of God on earth. They could not, therefore, be held accountable for their deeds by any earthly authority, such as parliament. No one could question their authority. They claimed that they had the right to suspend and dispense powers. But the English Revolution of 1688 gave a shattering blow to the theory of the Divine Rights of Kings which affirmed that the King's powers are based on the will of the general public and he is not above the law. He can be enthroned and dethroned by the people.

### **Autonomy of Judiciary**

The English Revolution of 1688 established the independence of the judiciary. Earlier, judges had to honour the wishes of the kings while deciding cases, because they were appointed and could be dismissed by them, and there was a fear looming large over them that they might be dismissed if the king was displeased. But the English Revolution freed the judges from the control of kings. Now, the judges could not be removed from office unless they were found guilty or unless both the Houses of Parliament presented an address to the king for their removal. So they were now in a position to give even-handed justice to the people

### **Upheld the liberties of people**

William and Mary were offered the vacant throne to rule according to the conditions laid down in the Declaration of Rights. The revolution settlement, however, made monarchy clearly conditional on the will of Parliament and provided freedom from arbitrary government. It also laid restrictions on the royal privileges of dispensing with the law in certain cases and complete suspension of laws without the consent of Parliament. The king now, could not impose taxes or maintain a standing army in peacetime, without the explicit authorization of Parliament. A number of clauses were sought to eliminate royal

interference in parliamentary matters, stressing that elections must be free and that members must enjoy complete freedom of speech. Freedom of the Press was also ensured. The people were granted an opportunity to refute the charges levelled against them. These provisions safe-guarded the liberties of the people.

### **Triumph of the Protestants**

The Glorious Revolution marked the victory of the Protestants. It was laid down in the Bill of Rights of 1689 A.D. that a Roman Catholic or a person married to a Roman Catholic could not occupy the throne of England. It is true that all religions except Roman Catholics were granted freedom of worship by the Toleration Act of 1689 A.D. The Catholics were, however, persecuted and had to undergo hardships for more than a century.

### **Increase in the Prestige of England**

The Stuart Kings, who eventually had become tools in the hands of France, followed a very weak Foreign Policy. The accession of William III enabled England to follow an independent and vigorous Foreign Policy. It enabled England to play a dominant role in European politics. William successfully waged a war against France and checked her ambitious designs on Belgium and Holland. He forced Louis XIV to sign the Treaty of Ryswick by which the latter recognized him as the legal ruler of England. Later on, he formed A Grand Alliance against France. As a result, France was defeated very badly in the War of the Spanish Succession and, for the most part, got the bitter end of the deal. However, this victory brought England the largest portion of colonial and commercial rewards and made her the super naval power in Europe, while procuring a foremost position in world trade.

About the importance of the English Revolution, Trevelyan remarked, “The Revolution of 1688 A.D. ....decided that the king’s title was based on the popular will and not on any Divine Right and the people had the right to impose on him any limitations they liked. *In short, the Revolution established constitutional monarchy and finally decided that neither the king nor the Parliament was the lawful sovereign of England. The sovereign henceforth, was to be a King-in-Parliament.*”

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