

You know how it was settled by King Edward I. that all the large towns, which in his reign were called burghs, should choose one or two persons to go to Parliament and help to make the laws. This was nearly six hundred years ago, and since that time a great many little hamlets and villages had grown into large towns, and a great many of the old burghs had dwindled away until only a few houses were left in them, or even none. The people, who were now living in the towns that had grown so large, thought it very hard not to be able to send members to Parliament to tell what was wanted in their towns; and they also thought it was useless for the little burghs, where only a few people lived, to continue sending members. So it was proposed that the large towns or boroughs should be allowed to send members to the House of Commons, according to the number of people in each town, and that the little decayed towns should leave off sending members. This new plan was called the "Reform Bill." It was talked over a long time in Parliament before it was agreed to; for, although there were a great many people who wished for the change, there were many others who thought it would be dangerous to the welfare of Old England, and both sides had to tell all their reasons for what they thought. At last it was put to the vote whether the Bill should pass or not; and as the greatest number were for making the change, the Bill became law. But I shall have to tell you of another Reform of Parliament under Queen Victoria.

Nearly the next thing that was done was to put an end to slavery in all the colonies belonging to England. A good man, named William Wilberforce, had tried to do this many years ago, in George III.'s