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Введение

Начало 21 века отмечено бурным развитием культурологических связей и огромным интересом к изучению социокультурного языкового контекста. Все в большей мере стали преобладать взгляды на язык как на средство общения. Расширяются рамки в обучении общению на иностранном языке за счет включения элементов социокультурной коммуникации. Становится аксиомой высказывание о том, что "любой язык несет отпечаток культуры и менталитета, и это, в первую очередь, отражается на речевом этикете".

Хорошие навыки межкультурной коммуникации в значительной мере зависят от наличия у студентов не только устойчивых языковых навыков, но и достаточных социокультурных фоновых знаний и адекватного представления о культуре и мире тех людей, где данный язык функционирует, в частности Великобритании. Формирование социокультурной компетенции, под которой понимается комплекс знаний о ценностях, верованиях, поведенческих образцах, обычаях, традициях, языке, достижениях культуры, свойственных определенному обществу и характеризующих его, происходит в процессах социокультурного воспитания и обучения. На формирование комплекса знаний о культуре, традициях, государственном устройстве, социальной жизни Великобритании и умений использовать страноведческие знания в профессиональной деятельности и направлен курс лекций «Страноведение Великобритании».

Курс лекций состоит из двух частей. В первой части содержатся сведения о географическом положении страны, отражен процесс формирования нации, раскрываются государственное и политическое устройство, этнический состав, демографические тенденции и социальные проблемы населения, система школьного и университетского образования, тем самым формируется целостное представление о жизни страны изучаемого языка с выявлением основопологающих черт, определяющих национальный характер народа и отражающихся во всех аспектах его общественной и частной жизни.

Курс лекций «Страноведение Великобритании» представляет собой систематическое изложение широкого круга вопросов, входящих в систему социокультурных знаний о современной Великобритании и адресован студентам специальности 1 – 02 03 06 01 "Английский язык".

1 Britain: Physical Features

1.1 Geographical Position of the British Isles. Territory and Structure
1.2 Physical Structure and Relief. Highland and Lowland Britain
1.3 Rivers and Lakes
1.4 Climate and Weather

1.1 Geographical Position of the British Isles. Territory and Structure

The British Isles are situated on the continental shelf off the north-west coast of Europe and comprise a group of islands lying between latitudes 50° and 60°N and longitudes 1°45' and 8°10' West, the prime meridian of 0 passing through the old observatory of Greenwich (London). The total area of the British Isles is 322,246 square km.

Britain, formally known as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, constitutes the greater part of the islands. It comprises the mainland of England, Wales and Scotland (Great Britain) and the northern part of Ireland (Northern Ireland). The southern part of Ireland, the second largest island of the group, is the Irish Republic or Eire. All in all there are over 5,000 islands in the system of the British Isles.

The United Kingdom's area is some 244,100 square km, of which about; 99 per cent is land and the remainder inland water. This is nearly the same size as the Federal Republic of Germany, New Zealand and half the size of France. From south to north it stretches for over 900 km, and is just under 500 km across in the widest part and 60 km in the narrowest. Due to the numerous bays and inlets no place in Britain is as much as 120 km from the sea coast line. The combined population of the British Isles – 59,5 million people (including that of the Republic of Ireland) makes the islands one of the most densely populated parts of the earth's surface and the United Kingdom, at least, one of the most

densely populated countries.

With nearly 59 million people, Great Britain ranks about fourteenth in the world in terms of population. The high density of population (about 250 per square kilometre) sets a problem of land use and of livelihood. Within the British Isles it implies a pressure on land, a pressure reflected both in competition for space and in intensive agriculture. The problems of supporting such a large population on such a small land area are obvious. In fact, this became possible with the emergence of Britain as the world's first industrial nation during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It was during this period that Britain acquaired vast overseas colonial territories, ruthlessly robbed and exploited them. This enabled her to become the wealthiest nation on earth.

Off the north-western coast of Great Britain there is a group of islands known as the Hebrides. They are divided into the Inner and Outer Hebrides, the groups of islands, separated from each other by the Sea of the Hebrides and the Little Minch. These groups of islands represent the higher unsubmerged portions of a dissected block broadly similar to the main highland mass.

Life in the Hebrides very much resembles that of the West coast of the mainland. Many of the people are crofters, and farming combined with fishing is the main occupation. The island of Lewis-Harris, the largest and most northerly of the Outer Hebrides, is particularly notable for the traditional domestic Industry of spinning wool from local sheep and the weaving it into tweeds. This Industry is largely concentrated in Storno-way, which is also a minor fishing port. Out of over the total of 500 islands of the Hebrides more than half are inhabitable. Only several families live on some of them.

Separated from the mainland by the stormy seven-mile wide Pentland Firth there are the Orkney Islands, comprising about a hundred islands, though only a third are Inhabited, by about 19,500 people. Most of the people are engaged in dairy- and poultry farming. Bacon, cheese and eggs are exported to Central Scotland.

Situated about 70 miles north of the Orkneys are the Shetland Islands, which provide thin, infertile soils suitable only for rough pasture. The total population is about 18,000. The Shetland farmers are essentially crofters, but during the summer months they are

actively engaged in herring-fishing. Apart from fish, the only exports from the islands are Shetland ponies and lace knitted from the wool of local sheep. Lerwick, the chief settlement, contains about 5,000 people, but the Shetlands are far from prosperous, and the population is still steadily decreasing.

In the middle of the Irish Sea there is the Isle of Man (571 square km). The island is administered by its own Manx Parliament and has a population of about 50.000 chiefly engaged in farming, fishing and tourist trade. The only settlement of any size is the holiday resort of Douglas (23,000). Another important island in the Irish Sea is Anglesey, situated off the north coast of Wales. Anglesey contains only 52,000 people, and more of the working population are now engaged in industry than in fishing and agriculture. This is due partly to an increase in the tourist trade and partly to the introduction of several new industries, for example, the construction and eventual operation of the nuclear power station at Wylfa.

The Isle of Wight is in the English Channel. It is diamond-shaped, 40 km from west to east, and about half as much from north to south. The Isle of Wight lies across the southern end of Southampton Water, and is separated from the mainland by the Solent. With its sunny beaches and pleasant varied countryside, the island forms one of the South Coast's most important tourist resorts. It is linked to London by ferry and rail services. The decline of light and other industries has presented serious problems of employment for the island, and at present the population is being reduced by migration to the mainland, where the situation is far from being better.

Off the extreme south-western coast of Great Britain there is a tiny group of the Isles of Scilly.

The Channel Islands lie to the south-west on the French side of the English Channel. They are known to the French as the Isles Normandes, and their position can indeed be best seen from a map of north-west France than southern England.

The Channel Islands form an archipelago, detached by shallow waters from the Cotentin peninsula in Normandy. As part of the Duchy of Normandy, they have been attached to the English Crown since the Norman Conquest (1066).

The population of the Channel Islands (over 133,000) is distributed over a total area of only 194 sq.km. This results in a high density of population – 686 per sq km – throughout the islands, greatly increased in summer by holiday-makers. Here there is a strict legislation over immigration and the purchase of property.

In the rural areas many of the people speak a French-Norman dialect. but the official languages are English and French, the former gradually becoming, the more important.

The chief industry on the islands Is tourism. Each one has its own coastal attractions, but their main asset, as far as holiday visitors are concerned, la their climate. They enjoy very mild winters compared with the rest of the British Isles. Moreover, the duration of sunshine is high-over five hours per day throughout the year, while rainfall is about the same as that of the Hampshire Basin (southern England) – 700-1000 mm annually. These factors, coupled with a long growing season, give favourable conditions for agriculture as well as holiday-making.

The chief Islands of the group are Jersey and Guernsey. Jersey (76,000) is the largest and most populous island, it occupies 60 per cent of the total area and has almost 60 per cent of the population. Its northern coast is lined with granite cliffs, and the land slopes down to low sandy bays on the north coast. This southerly aspect helps the cultivation of early potatoes and tomatoes in the open air. Jersey also raises and exports the dairy cattle named after it. The chief town of the island, St.Helier, is on the south coast.

Guernsey (53,000) slopes gradually downwards in the opposite direction, the plateau descending from the cliff-lined south coast to the north. Market gardening is largely carried out under glass. Tomatoes and flowers are leading crops. Guernsey is famous for its native breed of cattle. The chief town is St. Peter Port on the east coast.

Smaller islands include Alderney (2,000) and Sark (600)-the islands without motor-cars.

The British Isles are of the continental origin. Situated off the north-west coast of Europe, they once formed part of that continent. The only became islands when they were separated from it. The separation took place thousands of years ago, after the last Ice Age. When the ice melted, the level of the oceans rose and drowned the

low-lying coastlands round the continents. This was when the English Channel, which was formerly a westward extension of the North European Plain, became a shallow stretch of sea. It was a change which greatly affected the history as well as the geography of these islands.

It seems probable that the last glacial advance was at its maximum about 20,000 years ago. Since then a general warming of the climate has caused the glaciers to shrink, until today they have disappeared entirely from the British Isles. The withdrawal of the ice had an influence on the development of coastal features, for with the melting of the ice much water "locked up" in the glaciers was returned to the sea. As a result, sea-level during the post-glacial period rose by over 60 m. It was during this rise in sea-level that Britain was separated from the continent of Europe by the formation of the Strait of Dover. Other coastal areas suffered "drowning" with various results. In western Scotland glaciated valleys were flooded to form sea-lochs, the smaller islands were separated from Great Britain and Ireland, and in England the lower parts of many river valleys were submerged to form deeply penetrating inlets.

Around the coasts of north-west Europe the land slopes gently down into the sea. At a certain depth of sea the slope becomes steeper, and the sea bed descends to much deeper levels. This change of slope takes place at a sea depth of about 200 m.

The zone of shallow water which at present surrounds the continent thus resembles a shelf above the really deep water of the oceans: it is called the continental shelf. A line joining points at a depth of 200 m shows the approximate boundary of the continental shelf. The British Isles lie entirely on the shelf.

The fact that the British Isles were once part of the European mainland means that their rocks often resemble those of the closest parts of the continent. The ancient hard rocks of the Scottish Highlands, for example, such as granite, are similar to those of Scandinavia. Then there is the chalk of south-east England, seen in the white cliffs of Dover and across the Strait of Dover in northern France. The limestone ridge, or escarpment that crosses England from north-east to south-west also has its counterpart in northern France. And one more important example is the way in which the

European Power Belt is continued into Britain.

From the European continent the British Isles are separated by the English Channel and the North Sea. The English Channel, in its widest part in the west is 220 km wide, and in the narrowest, what is called the Strait of Dover, only 32 km. The average depth of the Channel is 60 m, and that of the Strait of Dover – 30 m. Here the two opposite coasts of England and France come so near, that on a clear day the cliffs of each side can be quite well seen from the opposite shore.

There were a number of schemes in the past how to connect the two coasts. Were Napoleaon alive today, he would be gratified that an idea he contemplated almost two centuries ago is to be translated into reality.

Despite the fact that the people in Kent, the south of England, were not enthusiastic about the venture as they feared damage to the environment, the old idea prevailed and major industrial and financial corporations swung into action. The final decision was made. Meeting at Lille, France, on January 20, 1986, the President of France and the Prime Minister of Great Britain chose one of the four projects which had been submitted.

This scheme, put forward by the Anglo-French Channel Tunnel – France Manche consortium, envisaged the construction of two rail tunnels 40 metres under the Channel bed. The tunnels are 7,3 metres in diameter and about 50 km long, of which 37 km are under the Channel. Cars, trucks and coaches drive into specially built flat-cars and high-speed trains (160 km ph) leave every few minutes, reaching the terminal on the opposite side in 30 minutes.

In the west the British Isles are washed by the Atlantic Ocean, in the east – by the North Sea, the average depth of which is 95 m. The two largest islands of the British Archipelago, Great Britain and Ireland, are separated from each other by the Irish Sea and the two straits, the North Channel – 20 km wide, and St. George's Channel – over 100 km wide. The distance between the ports of Liverpool and Dublin is 230 km.

Apart from Britain the territories of six European countries look into the coasts of the North Sea – France, Belgium, the Netherlands, the Federative Republic of Germany, Denmark and Norway and for some of them this sea is the only exit to the World Ocean. The most important sea routes pass through the English Channel and the North Sea linking Europe with the Americas and other continents. The advantageous geographical position of Great Britain created favourable conditions for the development of her shipping, trade and the economy as a whole.

A place on the continental shelf has been of great advantage to the British fishing industry. Edible fish feed largely on plankton, the minute organism which abound in the shallow waters above the continental shelf, so that stretches of water such as the North Sea have long been rich fishing-grounds. Catches have been reduced by over-fishing, but other valuable resources have been discovered and exploited beneath the continental shelf – oil and natural gas.

The North Atlantic Current, the drift of warm water which reaches the islands from across the Atlantic, spreads out over the shelf magnifying its amiliorating effect on the British Isles. This rather shallow skin of surface water, light because it is warm, is driven north-eastward across the ocean by the westerly winds. It forms part of the Gulf Stream system, which begins where Florida Current pours vast quantities of remarkably warm water into the circulation of the North Atlantic. In its journey across that ocean the water loses part of its heat, but retains enough to keep the ocean surface west of the British Isles warm in winter. During the winter months water which has been heated in far lower latitudes is arriving in the North Atlantic. Furthermore, the ocean surface becomes warmer or cooler, according to season, far more slowly than does a land surface in similar latitudes. The maximum surface temperature off the British coasts is reached in August; or even as late as September. Thus, when winter comes, there is much heat available to warm the air of the westerlies, and the seasonal fall of air temperature over Britain is slow and slight.

The British Isles are known for their greatly indented coastline. Therefore there are many bays and harbours, peninsulas and capes on the coast, which were formed as a result of the raising and submerging of the land surface in the process of the geological development of the islands. The indentity pattern of the island of Great Britain greatly resembles that of the Norwegian coast abounding in numerous deep and winding, like rivers, fiords. Due to its extreme indentity the coastline of Great Britain despite its relatively modest size, is 8.000 km long.

Very much indented is the western coast, especially the coasts of Scotland and Wales. The highlands here rise quite abruptly from sea level, so that westward – flowing rivers are short end swift. Many long narrow lochs, or lakes, especially in the North-West Highlands, are finger lakes. Along the west coast are many inlets that are called lochs, such as Loch Fyne. These are sea lochs, or fiords: the ends of glaciated valleys which have been submerged by the sea.

The east coast is less lofty and more regular than the west coast. land sloping gradually down to the low sea shore and the coastal lowlands being flooded frequently.

Steep is the English coast of the Strait of Dover, where the chalk ridge comes right up to the sea repeating the chalk break of the French coast on the other side of the English Channel.

The Irish coasts are more like those of England. The west coast is more indented with long rias and peninsulas, while the south coast conforms more with the general run of the relief. The east is relatively smooth with a few major estuaries in the north but it is only in the southeast; that lowland coasts with spite and bars blocking the estuaries are found. Cliffed coasts predominate here, and some are very beautiful.

The majority of the British ports have grown up at the mouths, wide estuaries of rivers which give sheltered water, deep enough to take the comparatively large ships. These sites are usually tidal and, from the eighteenth century onwards it became usual to construct dock basins which could be isolated from the sea or river by closing their gates. This meant that, as the tide ebbed and the water level in the estuary began to fall, the gates could by closed and the water level in the dock could be maintained at a high level, so that loading or unloading could continue regardless of the state of the tide. Many of the dock systems built during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries became too small to handle the larger vessels afloat today and this resulted in the abandonment of old port areas and the building of new docks nearer the open sea, or even the constructions of entirely new ports, called outports. Apart from site, the most important factor in the growth of a port is its accessibility to a large and prosperous area of the country. Such an area, the area served by a port, is called the hinterland and it can vary in size from a few hundred square kilometres in the case of a small local port to virtually the whole of Britain in the case of London.

Of great importance for the port activity are tides when the rising water reaches its maximum mark (high tide) of 6 m in the lower Thames (London), 8,5 a in the Mersey estuary (Liverpool), 10 m in the Bristol Channel (Cardiff) and 12 m at Bristol. Thanks to the high tides many of the towns which are situated dozens of kilometres from the coast (London-64, Glasgow – 55, Hull – 32, and many others) have become sea ports.

Questions

1 Outline the geographical position of the British Isles in the world.

2 Examine the territory and structure of the British Isles.

3 Examine the origin of the British Isles. Define the term "continental shelf" and estimate its importance to the British economy.

4 Discuss the evidence which suggests that Britain is geologically part of the continent of Europe. Outline the scheme of the Channel tunnel.

5 Give the account of the importance of the surrounding seas to Great Britain.

6 Describe the main features of the coastline of Great Britain. Contrast the nature of the eastern and western coasts.

7 Examine the factors which have influenced the growth and activity of ports.

1.2 Physical Structure and Relief. Highland and Lowland Britain

Britain has a great diversity of physical characteristics and, despite its small area, contains rocks of nearly all the main geological periods. There is a contrast between the generally high relief of western and northern Britain and the lowland areas of the south and east. In general, the oldest rocks appear in the highland regions and the youngest in the lowland regions.

1.2.1 England

Though England cannot be considered as a very hilly country still it is far from being flat everywhere. The most important range of mountains is the Pennine range, regarded as "the backbone of England". It stretches from the Tyne valley in the north to the Trent valley in the south – a distance of about 250 km. The whole range forms a large table-land the highest point of which is Cross Fell (893 m), in east Cumbria above the Eden valley. Being an upland region the Pennines form a watershed separating the westward-flowing from the eastward-flowing rivers of Northern England. They also form a barrier between industrial areas (Lancashire and Yorkshire) on their opposite sides. Both sets of rivers have out valleys into the uplands, two of which have created important gaps – the Tyne Gap and the Aire Gap. They have road and rail routes, which follow the rivers and link West Yorkshire with Lancashire and Cumbria. Some rivers flowing from the central Pennines have cut long open valleys, known as dales, which attract tourists because of their picturesque scenery. Rainfall in the Pennines is abundant, and their swiftly flowing streams used to provide power for woollen mills. Today the area is used for water storage: reservoirs in the uplands supply water to the industrial towns on each side of the Pennines.

Across the north end of the Pennine Range there are the grassy Cheviot Hills. The highest point is The Cheviot (816 m), near the Scottish border. The Cheviot Hills serve as a natural borderland between England and Scotland.

In north-weste England, separated from the Pennines by the valley of the river Eden lie the Cumbrian mountains. These mountains form a ring round the peak of Helvellyn (950 m). Other peaks are Scafell (978 m) and Skiddaw (931 m).

The valleys which separate the various mountains from each other contain some beautiful lakes (Windermere, Grasmere, Coniston Water, Ennerdale Water, Thirlmere, Ullswater, Hawswater). This is the celebrated Lake District, where many tourists resort every year, and where the famous poets Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey. Quincey lived and wrote.

Thirlmere and Haws Water are in use as reservoire for the Manchester area, and permission has been granted for Manchester to take water from Ullswater and Windermere. Crummock Water supplies Workington and other towns of West Cumberland.

The region is sparsely populated and sheep rearing is the main occupation of the farmers. A typical lakeland farmhouse is built of stone, quarried locally, and roofed with slate, also obtained in the region. Around it are a number of small fields, separated from one another by dry stone walls.

The Lake Listrict is exposed to the westerly winds and rainfall is exceptionally high. The village of Seathwaite, with an annual average rainfall of 3300 mm, claims to be the wettest inhabited place in the British Isles.

The South-West Peninsula of Great Britain includes the counties of Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. The region is made up of a number of upland masses separated by lowlands, which, apart from the Plain of Somerset, are of limited extent. The uplands of the South-west Peninsula are not ranges of mountains or hills, but areas of high moorland, the most extensive being Dartmoor and Exmooor. On the north side of Dartmoor the land rises to over 600 m (Yes Tor – 619 m. High Willhays – 621 m). These are the highest summits in England south of the Pennines. Much of the area bas been eroded, resulting in a series of platforms between 150 and 300 metres.

The South-West region is essentially an agricultural area. The areas of best soil occur around the southern borders of Dartmoor, in northern Devon and in the Vale of Taunton. On the Lower land between the moors, both in Cornwall and Devon, are fertile river valleys.

The westernmost point of the English mainland is Land's End, a mass of granite cliffs which plunge with dramatic steep-ness into the sea. The most southerly point of Great Britain Is Lizard Point, a mass of serpentine, greenish metamorphic rock, which people living in the neighbourhood carve and polish into attractive ornaments.

The South-west Peninsula presents numerous attractions for the holiday-makers and the artists, and tourism is one of the most important activities of the region.

1.2.2 Wales

Wales is the largest of the peninsulas on the western side of Britain. It consists of a complex of worn down mountain ranges, representing high plateaux. They are called the Cambrian mountains. The highest and most glaciated area occurs in the north, especially around Snowdon (1,085 m), and often the mountains approach close to the sea.

The Cambrians largely comprise the upland areas, generally and collectively described as the Welsh Massif. In the south the massif includes an important coal-field, on which an industrial area has grown. It is the most densely populated part of Wales with some two-thirds of the total population of 2.8 million inhabiting about one-eighth of the area. Two relief divisions may be distinguished in South Wales: a coastal plain which in the south-eastern part around Cardiff becomes up to 16 km wide, and the upland areas of the coalfield proper, which rise between 245 and 380 metres. In recent years the region has experienced very acute problems with the decline in the coal industry and high unemployment rates.

Much of the remainder of Wales consits of bare rock, barren moorland and rough pasture, with only a few people to the square kilometre. But this region constitutes the heartland of Wales, for centered upon the massif is the Welsh culture where the traditions and language of a Celtic people are best preserved.

In the upland areas sheep are the basis of the rural economy, and in the low-lying parts near the coast and in the valley bottoms dairy farming predominates.

1.2.3 Scotland

Scotland may be divided into three major physical regions: the Highlands, the Southern Uplands and the Central Lowlands.

The Scottish Highlands lie west of a line from Aberdeen to the mouth of the Clyde. They form the most extensive and the most sparsely populated of the three regions. The mountains are separated into two parts by Glen More, or the Great Glen, a long crack in the earth's crust, running from north-east to south-west. To the south are the Grampians, which are generally higher than the North-west highlands, and contain the loftiest summits, including Ben Nevis (1,347 m), the highest peak in the British Isles, and Ben Macdhui (1,309 m). They have also been more deeply cut by the action of glaciers and rivers. Glen More contains three lakes: Loch Ness, Loch Oich and Loch Lochy, and the first is said to be the home of a "monster". In the early nineteenth century the lochs were joined to form the Caledonian Canal which was equipped with 29 lochs and was almost 100 km in total length. Along the west coast the highlands rise quite abruptly from sea level, so that westward-flowing rivers are short and swift. Rivers which flow generally east, such as the Tay and the Dee, have a relatively long course.

Climatically the region has some of the most severe weather experienced in Britain. The highly dissected nature of the landscape means that there are considerable local variations in climate over quite small distances and these variations are important.

The Highlands comprise forty-seven per cent of the land area of Scotland. At the same time, they house less than fifteen per cent of the Scottish population. The population is largely concentrated on the periphery of the massif, and nowhere else in Britain are the problems of depopulation and economic decline seen so clearly.

The economy of the region has traditionally been that of crofting, subsistent farming, in which the farmer (crofter) and his family consume all the produce. The crofter grows crops on a patch of land near his cottage, the main crops being potatoes, oats and hay. His sheep graze on the nearby hill slopes, and be may have one or two cows, to keep the family supplied with milk and some poultry.

The Southern Uplands extend from the Central Valley of Scotland in the north to the Pennine Hills and Lake District in the South. Although for the most part an upland area, the boundaries of the region are not clear-cut in physical terms. The Cheviot Hills, composed largely of volcanic rocks, mark the central part of the

Установа адукацыі
"Гомельскі дзяржаўны універсітэт
імя Францыска Скарыны"
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boundary between England and Scotland. Upland areas extend into the Central Valley, just as the Cheviots merge into the Pennines and the lowlands on both east and west coasts merge into the lowlands of Northumbria and those that surround the dome of the Lake Distrist.

These uplands form a plateau, which glaciation has eroded into smooth, rounded hills. The general level of this plateau-like surface descends from the higher northern margins in a series of steps. The hills ries to 800-900 m, but for the most part they lie between 450 and 610 metres.

The present-day economy of the region is dominated by agriculture. The region is clearly divided between the sheep pastures of the uplands and the more diversified farming areas of the lowlands. Sheep have been grazed on the uplands for the past six centuries and hard local breeds, such as Cheviot and Black-face have been developed which can withstand the snows of winter and produce excellent mutton as well as wool.

Throughout the uplands population distribution is sparse and limited to isolated farmsteads and occasional villages and towns usually clustered in the valleys on the periphery of the uplands, particularly in Galloway, the name is given to the dales and lowlands of the south-west, and in the Tweed Basin.

The Central Lowlands of Scotland, sometimes known as the Midland Valley, lie between the Highland and the Southern Uplands. For the most part this region is a lower-lying north- east to south-west trending are some eighty kilometres or so wide.

The Central Lowlands are by far the most densely populated of the three main regions of Scotland: they occupy about 15 per cent of its area, but contain about 80 per cent of its people.

Many of the people who left the highlands during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries settled in the Central Lowlands, particularly in the Glasgow region where industrial development as taking place at a rapid rate. The area was one of the major industrial centres of Britain, with important coal, steel, shipbuilding and engineering industries. The twentieth century has seen increasing problems in these industries and there has been a movement of population from the area.

On the fertile sandy soils in the south-west the farmers grow early potatoes. They also cultivate oats and in the sheltered Clyde Valley many are engaged in fruit growing and market gardening. Throughout the region sheep are reared on the hills.

1.2.4 Ireland

Ireland is predominantly a rural island, with a generally low density of population and indeed few large towns other than those situated on the coast. The regional geography of the island is simpler than that of Great Britain, and especially than the regional geography of England.

The Central Plain of Ireland stretches west-east across the country from coast to coast. Glacial action has created hollows, enlarged by solution of the underlying limestone by rain water, and many shallow lakes have been forced. A large proportion of Ireland's terrain consists of either bleak and uninhabitable mountain masses, or valleys and lowlands containing large loughs, innumerable smaller sheets of water, and great peat bogs that are useless except as a source of fuel. Lough Derg, on the River Shannon, is narrow, irregular, and nearly forty kilometres in length.

Around the plain is a broken rim of mountains. In the extreme north-east is the Antrim Plateau or Mountains of Antrim, which rise above 400 m and are composed of basalt. Off the north coast is the famous Giant's Causeway, where the basalt solidified in remarkable hexagonal columns. In the north and north-west are the Sperrin Mountains and the Ox Mountains, which with several other uplands reach more than 500 m in height. The loftiest mountains of Ireland are in the south-west – the Macgillycuddy Reeks, which contain Carrantuohill (1,041 m), the highest peak on the island. In the south-east the Wicklow Mountains rise to 926 m in Lugnaquillia. They form one of the most extensive masses of granite in the British Isles. And in the north-east there are the Mourne Mountains which rise steeply from Carlingford Lough to reach a height of 852 m in Slieve Donard.

Being geographically an island and a single unit, Ireland is politically divided into the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland, comprising six counties of Ulster, which was one of the four provinces of ancient Ireland: Antrim, Londonderry, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Armagh and Down.

1.2.5 Lowland Britain

Lowland Britain offers a striking contrast in many ways. Though so much less rugged, there are few parts where level land is uninterrupted by hills. One of the most extensive plains in the British Isles is in the English Midlands, consisting of river valleys and plains interspersed with scattered hills. It is the Midland Plain, which is best described as an undulating lowland rarely rising above 100 metres. To the north of it are the Pennines, to the south the Thames Basin, to the east East Anglia and to the West the Welsh Borderlands.

Another important plain in Britain is the London Basin in South East England. The master stream of the basin is Britain's second longest river, the Thames, which enters the region from the west. The Hampshire Basin includes a wide plain area of central southern England.

The geographical region described as the Lancashire and Cheshire Plain, includes the lowlands to the west of the Central and Southern Pennines. The Lowlands themselves are linked to the Midland Plain by a broad gap between the Welsh mountains and the Pennines, known as the Midland Gate. In Yorkshire, along the eastern edge of the Pennines lies the extensive Yorkshire Lowland.

The chief characteristic of East Anglia is its low relief with few hills, the area is mainly founded on chalk.

1.3 Rivers and Lakes

There is a fairly wide network of rivers in the British Isles, though generally short in length and navigable but in their lower reaches, especially during high tides. Mild maritime climate keeps them free of ice throughout the winter months.

In the Middle Ages, river transport played a major role in the British internal transport system, and all the large towns of the time were situated on navigable rivers. But since the beginning of the nineteenth century the waterways, including numerous canals, have steadily declined in importance, and many have fallen into disuse.

The drainage map of the British Isles seems to contain no very clear pattern. The largest river of Great Britain, the Severn (350 km), for example, follows a particularly puzzling course. After rising on the slopes of Plynlimmon, in central Wales, it flows at first north-eastwards, but later turns sharply through the Ironbridge gorge and then runs southwards and south-westwards to the Bristol Channel. The courses of the Trent (274 km) and the upper Thames (346 km) also show many changes of direction. Many of the largest rivers in Scotland, such as the Tweed, Forth, Dee and Spay, drain directly to the North Sea. Scotland's longest river, the River Tay, some 170 km long, also follows this course. Among other important rivers, which flow eastwards, to the North Sea, are the rivers Trent, Tyne, Tees, Humber, Ouse in England.

A number of streams flow down to the west coast, to the Irish Sea, including the Clyde in Scotland, the Eden, Ribble, Mersey and the Severn. A few small rivers flow to the English Channel.

There are many rivers in Ireland. They are short but navigable due to an abundant and even distribution of precipitation throughout the year. The longest river of the British Isles is the River Shannon (384 km), flowing from north to south of Ireland. Among other more or less important rivers are the Foyle, flowing to the north, the Lagan, Boyne, Liffey, Slaney to the east, the Barrow and the Blackwater – to the south.

Most of the British lakes are in part the result of glacial erosion and in part due to chemical solution of the underlying limestone. There is a host of small winding lakes in Scotland, in Cumbria and in Ireland.

The largest lake in Great Britain and the biggest inland loch in Scotland is Loch Lomond, covering a surface area of 70 square km, although the longest lake is Loch Ness (56 square km) which also has the greatest volume of water. In England the largest lake is Lake Windermere (the Lake District) with a surface area of 15 square km.

The largest fresh water lake in the British Isles is Lough Neagh in Northern Ireland (381 square km).

The Quaternary glaciation has further modified the river patterns in many areas. This is especially true of central Ireland, where the uneven surface of the drift cover has led, as in the basin of the Shannon, to much bad drainage, many peat bogs and numerous large lakes, such as Loughs Ree and Derg.

Questions

1 Briefly outline the main features of the physical geography of the British Isles.

2 Describe the relief features of England, referring to mountainous areas.

3 Examine the relief features of Wales.

4 Describe the varied relief features of Scotland.

5 Describe and account for the main relief characteristics of Ireland.

6 Describe the major plains of lowland Britain.

7 Give an account of the drainage features of the British Isles, their chief rivers and lakes.

1.4 Climate and Weather

Weather is not the same as climate. The weather at a place is the state of the atmosphere there at a given time or over a short period. The weather of the British Isles is notoriously variable. The climate of a place or region, on the other hand, represents the average weather conditions through the year. In every part of the British Isles obvious changes are taking place as winter passes into spring, spring into summer, and so through autumn to winter.

The position of the British Isles within latitudes 50° to 61°N is a basic factor in determining the main characteristics of the climate. Within the limits of the general climatic type – maritime, temperate, with no dry season and with summers only moderately warm – there is, however, room for considerable variation between one region and another.

The climate of any place results from the interaction of a number of determining factors, of which the most important are latitude, distance from the sea, relief and the direction of the prevailing winds. These factors must be distinguished from the actual features of the climate such as temperature, precipitation, wind, sunshine, fog, the humidity of the air.

Britain has a generally mild and temperate climate, which is dominated by marine influences and is rainy and equable. Britain's climate is much milder than that in any other country in the same latitudes. This is due partly to the presence of the North Atlantic Drift which begins as the Gulf Stream, in the Gulf of Mexico, crosses the Atlantic Ocean, and so reaches the shores of Europe as a warm current, and partly to the fact that north-west Europe lies in a predominantly westerly wind-belt. This means that not only do marine influences warm the land in winter and cool it in summer, but also that the winds blowing over the Atlantic have a similar effect and at the same time carry large amounts of moisture which is deposited over the land as rain. Britain's climate is generally one of mild winters and cool summers, with rain throughout the year, although there are considerable regional changes.

Latitudes determine the main characteristics of the climate. Temperature, the most important climatic element, depends not only on the angle at which the sun's rays strike the earth's surface, but also on the duration of daylight. The greater the angle of the sun above the horizon, the greater is the heat received and the length of the period between sunrise and sunset. The length of day at London ranges from 16 hours 35 minutes on 21 June to 7 hours 50 minutes on 21 December.

The sea greatly modifies the climate of the British Isles, for their relatively small area and the indented nature of the coastline allow maritime influences to penetrate well inland. The sea, whose waters have a higher specific heat than the rocks of the Land surface, warms up more slowly, but also cools down more slowly than does the land. Consequently, in summer the land tends to be warmer than the sea, and in winter the converse is true. This moderating effect of the sea is, in fact, the cause of the relatively small seasonal contrasts experienced in Britain.

The prevailing winds in the British Isles are westerlies. They are extremely moist, as a result of their long passage over the warm waters of the North Atlantic. On their arrival over Britain, the winds are forced upwards, and as a result large-scale condensation occurs, clouds form and precipitation follows, especially over the mountainous areas.

Relief is the most important factor controlling the distribution of temperature and precipitation within Britain. The actual temperatures experienced in the hilly and mountainous parts are considerably lower than those in the lowlands. The effect of relief on precipitation is even more striking. Average annual rainfall in Britain is about 1,100 mm. But the geographical distribution of rainfall is largely determined by topography, the mountainous areas of the west and north having far more rainfall than the lowlands of the south and east. The western Scottish Highlands, the Lake District, the Welsh uplands and parts of Devon and Cornwall receive more than 2,000 mm of rainfall each year. The greatest annual rainfall recorded in Britain was 6,527 mm at Sprinkling Tarn (Cumbria) in 1954. Much of this precipitation takes the form of snow, and on some of the highest summits of the north a layer of snow may persist for several months of the year.

In contrast, the eastern lowlands, lying in a rain-shadow area, are much drier, and usually receive little precipitation. Much of East Anglia has a rainfall of less than 700 mm run each year, and snow falls on only 15 to 18 days on the average. The lowest annual rainfall was recorded at Margate (Kent) in 1921 (236 MM).

Rainfall is fairly well distributed throughout the year, but, on average, March to June are the driest months and October to January the wettest.

Ireland is in rather a different category, for here the rain-bearing winds have not been deprived of their moisture, and, although low-lying, much of the Irish plain receives up to 1,200 mm of rainfall per year, usually in the form of steady and prolonged drizzle. Snow, on the other hand, is rare, owing to the warming effects of the North Atlantic Drift.

1.4.1 Temperature

Because of the North Atlantic Drift and the predominantly maritime air masses that effect the British Isles, the range in temperature throughout the year is never very great. The annual mean temperature in England and Wales is about 10°C, in Scotland and Northern Ireland about 9°C. The mean January temperature for London is 4°C, and the mean July temperature 17°C.

Near sea level in the west the mean annual temperature ranges from 8°C in the Hebrides to 11°C in the extreme south-west of England. July and August are the warmest months of the year on average and January and February the coldest. The mean summer temperatures throughout Britain increase from north to south.

The mean monthly temperature in the extreme north (the Shetlands) ranges from 3°C during the winter (December, January and February) to 12°C during the summer (June, July and August). The corresponding figures for the Isle of Wight, in the extreme south, are 5°C and 16°C.

During a normal summer the temperature may occasionally rise above 30°C in the south. The highest shade temperature ever recorded in Britain was about 37°C in August 1911 in Northamptonshire, Surrey and Kent. Minimum temperature of – 10°C may occur on a still, clear winter's night in inland arear. Lower temperatures are rare. The lowest temperature (–27,2°C) was recorded at Braemar (the Grampians) in February 1895 and January 1982.

The distribution of sunshine shows a general decrease from south to north, a decrease from the coast inland and a decrease with latitude. During the months of longest daylight (May, June and July) the mean daily duration of sunshine varies from five hours in northern Scotland to eight hours in the Isle of Wight. During November, December and January (the months of shortest daylight) sunshine is at minimum, with an average of half an hour a day in some parts of the Scottish Highlands and two hours a day on the south coast of England. Generally the coasts are everywhere sunnier than neighbouring inland districts. Ireland is subject to frequent cloud and records little sunshine.

1.4.2 Weather

In direct contrast with climate, in which short-term variations disappear with the calculation of averages, the weather of the British

Isles is notoriously variable. Not only is it liable to day-to-day changes – some whole seasons are markedly wet, markedly dry, unusually cold, or unusually warm.

Spring is normally Britain's driest season, even though April is by tradition showery. Cold weather usually lasts no later than mid-April, and there are frequently some very warm days during the second half of the month. By late spring daytime temperature rises considerably, and the thermometer may even reach 21-24°C over a wide area.

June is the brightest month of the year for Britain in general. Rainfall tends to increase during July and August, partly because Atlantic depressions some nearer to the coast during these months and partly also because air, as it becomes warmed, is capable of holding more moisture. Late summer is often noted for vary warm weather, and this way continue into September.

North and north-west winds often bring heavy falls of snow to north Britain during late October and November, but they are usually short-lived.

Continental air sometimes reaches the British Isles in summer as a warm, dry air-stream, but it is more frequently experienced in winter when it crosses the North Sea and brings bitter weather to eastern and inland districts of Great Britain.

In fine, still weather there is occasionally haze in summer and mist and fog in winter.

1.4.3 Vegetation

The present vegetation of great Britain owes much of its character to the influence of man. Only in the more remote parts of Ireland and the Scottish Highlands do remnants of the natural vegetation still exist. The "natural vegetation" in the true sense of the term has practically disappeared from Britain, and most of the present cover is loosely known as semi-natural in the unfenced rough, grazing and in the woodland.

With its mild climate, a wide variety of relief and soils Britain once had a diverse pattern of vegetation. The original natural vegetation consisted of forest, fen and marsh in the wet lowlands, especially where the drainage was poor, and shrub, heath and moorland on the uplands where soils were thin. In the lowland areas the oak forest must have bean the natural vegetation.

Over the centuries, however, the forests have had to make way for agriculture and settlement. But a systematic and barbaric destruction of the forests took place in the 16-18th centuries with the construction of factories and roads, the development of mineral resources, the production of char-coal for iron-smelting, as well as to provide timber for shipbuilding and constructional purpose generally.

Apart from oak other trees of the wooded lowlands were ash, maple, elm and hazel. Today only a few scattered areas of extensive woodland remain, such as the New Forest in Hampshire and Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire, which owe their survival largely to the fact that in the Middle Ages they were set aside "Royal Forests" for hunting. The greatest density of woodland occurs in the north and the east of Scotland, in some parts of south-east England and on the Welsh border. Throughout most of England and parts of Wales and Scotland, where temperatures are high enough to permit trees to complete their annual cycle of growth between spring and autumn, deciduous varieties (such as oak, birch, beech and ash) are more numerous. In the north and on higher ground in the west these are replaced by coniferous species, pine, fir and spruce.

By the beginning of the twentieth century Britain's timber reserves had been so seriously depleted that in 1919 the Government set up a permanent Forestry Commission charged with the task of improving the position. It carries out a programme of planting in places which are not now forested, and of improving existing woodland, mainly on the acquired land in Scotland, Wales, the English Lake district and East Anglia. Today forest and woodland occupy only about 9 per cent of the surface of the country (out of the total 43 per cent in England, 43 in Scotland, 11 per cent in Wales and the remainder in Northern Ireland). Fifty-six per cent of forest and woodland belong to private landowners. Over 90 per cent of the timber used in the United Kingdom is imported.

Most of Britain is agricultural land of which about one-third is arable, and the rest pasture and meadow. Areas of permanent grassland are widespread in practically all parts of Britain except East Anglia, where arable farming is predominant, and in the highest parts of Scotland and Wales. These pastures form the chief grazing lands on which cattle and sheep are reared and fattened.

In certain areas of the country, particularly parts of the Highlands of Scotland, relief and climatic conditions are not conducive to arable farming, and such areas are therefore characterised by extensive moorland. Moorlands are found in the upland areas of north and west England, where soils are thin, drainage is poor and rainfall heavy. Large areas are commonly covered with peat and contain numerous bogs.

The hilly moorlands provide several types of wild vegetation, such as heather, fern, other hill grasses and these are to be found in the Highlands of Scotland, the Pennines, the Lake District, the mountains of Wales and elsewhere with a surface of thin poor soils.

The soils of the British Isles vary from the thin poor podzolic ones of highland regions to the rich fertile brown forest soils of low-lying areas like the fenlands of eastern England, southern England and the western Midlands.

Questions

1 Which factors influence the variations in Britain's climate?

2 Show how for the advantages deriving from the climate and weather of the British Isles outweigh the disadvantages.

3 Describe and account for the major features of the distribution of mean seasonal temperatures and rainfall over the British Isles.

4 Which areas of Britain have the greatest mean annual temperature range, and which areas the least? Can you suggest reasons for these differences?

5 Give reasons why South-east England is the warmest part of the British Isles in summer and Cornwall is the warmest part of the British Isles in winter.

6 Explain why Britain has very variable weather, commenting on seasonal changes.

7 Discuss the vegetation of the British Isles, its distribution in relation to relief and climate.

8 Examine the reasons why the "natural vegetation" in the true sense of the term has practically disappeared from Britain.

2 Britain: the Making of the Nation

2.1 The Iberians and Celtic Tribes
2.2 Roman Britain
2.3 The Anglo-Saxon Conquest and the Danish Invasions
2.4 The Norman Conquest. The Growth of Feudalism

2.1 The Iberians and Celtic Tribes

Britain has not always been an island. It became one only after the end of the last ice age. The temperature rose and the ice cap melted, flooding the lower-lying land that is now under the North Sea and the English Channel.

The Ice Age was not just one long equally cold period. There were warmer times when the ice cap retreated, and colder periods when the ice cap reached as far south as the River Thames. Our first evidence of human life is a few stone tools, dating from one of the warmer periods, about 250,000 BC. These simple objects show that there were two different kinds of inhabitant. The earlier group made their tools from flakes of flint, similar in kind to stone tools found across the north European plain as far as Russia. The other group made tools from a central core of flint, probably the earliest method of human tool making, which spread from Africa to Europe. Hand axes made in this way have been found widely, as far north as Yorkshire and as far west as Wales.

However, the ice advanced again and Britain became hardly habitable until another milder period, probably around 50,000 BC. During this time a new type of human being seems to have arrived, who was the ancestor of the modern British. These people looked similar to the modern British, but were probably smaller and had a life span of only about thirty years.

Around 10,000 BC, as the Ice Age drew to a close, Britain was peopled by small groups of hunters, gatherers and fishers. Few had settled homes, and they seemed to have followed herds of deer which provided them with food and clothing. By about 5000 BC Britain had finally become an island, and had also become heavily forested For the wanderer-hunter culture this was a disaster, for the cold loving deer and other animals on which they lived largely died out.

About 3000 BC Neolithic (or New Stone Age) people crossed the narrow sea from Europe in small round boats of bent wood covered with animal skins. Each could carry one or two persons These people kept animals and grew corn crops, and knew how to make pottery. They probably came from either the Iberian (Spanish peninsula or even the North African coast. They were small, dark and long-headed people, and may be the forefathers of dark-haired inhabitants of Wales and Cornwall today. They settled in the western parts of Britain and Ireland, from Cornwall at the southwest end of Britain all the way to the far north.

These were the first of several waves of invaders before the first arrival of the Romans in 55 BC. It used to be thought that these waves of invaders marked fresh stages in British development However, although they must have brought new ideas and methods, it is now thought that the changing pattern of Britain's prehistory was the result of local economic and social forces.

The great "public works" of this time, which needed a huge organization of labour, tell us a little of how prehistoric Britain was developing. The earlier of these works were great "barrows", or burial mounds, made of earth or stone. Most of these barrows are found on the chalk uplands of south Britain. Today these uplands have poor soil and few trees, but they were not like that then. They were airy woodlands that could easily be cleared for farming, and as a result were the most easily habitable part of the countryside. Eventually, and over a very long period, these areas became overfarmed, while by 1400 BC the climate became drier, and as a result this land could no longer support many people. It is difficult today to imagine these areas, particularly the uplands of Wiltshire and Dorset, as heavily peopled areas.

Yet the monuments remain. After 3000 BC the chalkland people started building great circles of earth banks and ditches. Inside, they built wooden buildings and stone circles. These "henges", as they are called, were centres or religious, political and economic power. By far the most spectacular, both then and now, was Stonehenge, which was built in separate stages over a period of more than a thousand years. The precise purposes of Stonehenge remain a mystery, but during the second phase of building, after about 2400 BC, huge bluestones were brought to the site from south Wales. This could only have been achieved because the political authority of the area surrounding Stonehenge was recognised over a very large area, indeed probably over the whole of the British Isles. The movement of these bluestones was an extremely important event, the story of which was passed on from generation to generation. Three thousand years later, these unwritten memories were recorded in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of Britain*, written in 1136.

Stonehenge was almost certainly a sort of capital, to which the chiefs of other groups came from all over Britain. Certainly, earth or stone henges were built in many parts of Britain, as far as the Orkney Islands north of Scotland, and as far south as Cornwall. They seem to have been copies of the great Stonehenge in the south. In Ireland the centre of prehistoric civilisation grew around the River Boyne and at Tara in Ulster. The importance of these places in folk memory far outlasted the builders of the monuments.

After 2400 BC new groups of people arrived in southeast Britain from Europe. They were round-headed and strongly built, taller than Neolithic Britons. It is not known whether they invaded by armed force, or whether they were invited by Neolithic Britons because of their military or metal-working skills. Their influence was soon felt and, as a result, they became leaders of British society. Their arrival is marked by the first individual graves, furnished with pottery beakers, from which these people get their name: the "Beaker" people.

Why did people now decide to be buried separately and give up the old communal burial barrows? It is difficult to be certain, but it is thought that the old barrows were built partly to please the gods of the soil, in the hope that this would stop the chalk upland soil getting poorer. The Beaker people brought with them from Europe a new cereal, barley, which could grow almost anywhere. Perhaps they felt it was no longer necessary to please the gods of the chalk upland soil.

The Beaker people probably spoke an Indo-European language. They seem to have brought a single culture to the whole of Britain. They also brought skills to make bronze tools and these began to replace stone ones. But they accepted many of the old ways, Stonehenge remained the most important centre until 1300 BC. The Beaker people's richest graves were there, and they added a new circle of thirty stone columns, this time connected by stone lintels, or cross-pieces. British society continued to be centred on a number of henges across the countryside.

However, from about 1300 BC onwards the henge civilisation seems to have become less important, and was overtaken by a new form of society in southern England, that of a settled farming class. At first this farming society developed in order to feed the people at the henges, but eventually it became more important and powerful as it grew richer. The new farmers grew wealthy because they learned to enrich the soil with natural waste materials so that it did not become poor and useless. This change probably happened at about the same time that the chalk uplands were becoming drier. Family villages and fortified enclosures appeared across the landscape, in lower-lying areas as well as on the chalk hills, and the old central control of Stonehenge and the other henges was lost. From this time, too, power seems to have shifted to the Thames valley and southeast Britain. Except for short periods, political and economic power has remained in the southeast ever since. Hill-forts replaced henges as the centres of local power, and most of these were found in the southeast, suggesting that the land successfully supported more people here than elsewhere.

There was another reason for the shift of power eastwards. A number of better-designed bronze swords have been found in the Thames valley, suggesting that the local people had more advanced metalworking skills. Many of these swords have been found in river beds, almost certainly thrown in for religious reasons. This custom may be the origin of the story of the legendary King Arthur's sword, which was given to him from out of the water and which was thrown back into the water when he died.

2.1.1 The Celts

Around 700 BC, another group of people began to arrive. Many of them were tall, and had fair or red hair and blue eyes. These were the Celts, who probably came from central Europe or further east, from southern Russia, and had moved slowly westwards in earlier centuries. The Celts were technically advanced. They knew how to work with iron, and could make better weapons than the people who used bronze. It is possible that they drove many of the older inhabitants westwards into Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The Celts began to control all the lowland areas of Britain, and were joined by new arrivals from the European mainland. They continued to arrive in one wave after another over the next seven hundred years.

The Celts are important in British history because they are the ancestors of many of the people in Highland Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and Cornwall today. The Iberian people of Wales and Cornwall took on the new Celtic culture. Celtic languages, which have been continuously used in some areas since that time, are still spoken. The British today are often described as Anglo-Saxon. It would be better to call them Anglo-Celt.

Our knowledge of the Celts is slight. As with previous groups of settlers, we do not even know for certain whether the Celts invaded Britain or came peacefully as a result of the lively trade with Europe from about 750 BC onwards. At first most of Celtic Britain seems to have developed in a generally similar way. But from about 500 BC trade contact with Europe declined, and regional differences between northwest and southeast Britain increased. The Celts were organised into different tribes, and tribal chiefs were chosen from each family or tribe, sometimes as the result of fighting matches between individuals, and sometimes by election.

The last Celtic arrivals from Europe were the Belgic tribes. It was natural for them to settle in the southeast of Britain, probably pushing other Celtic tribes northwards as they did so. At any rate, when Julius Caesar briefly visited Britain in 55 BC he saw that the Belgic tribes were different from the older inhabitants. "The interior is inhabited", he wrote, "by peoples who consider themselves indigenous, the coast by people who have crossed from Belgium. Nearly all of these still keep the names of the [European] tribes from which they came."

The Celtic tribes continued the same kind of agriculture as the Bronze Age people before them. But their use of iron technology and their introduction of more advanced ploughing methods made possible for them to farm heavier soils. However, they continued t use, and build, hill-forts. The increase of these, particularly in th southeast, suggests that the Celts were highly successful farmer growing enough food for a much larger population.

The hill-fort remained the centre for local groups. The insides o these hill-forts were filled with houses, and they became the simpl economic capitals and smaller "towns" of the different tribal area into which Britain was now divided. Today the empty hill-forts stan on lonely hilltops. Yet they remained local economic centres lon after the Romans came to Britain, and long after they went.

Within living memory certain annual fairs were associated wit hill-forts. For example, there was an annual September fair on th site of a Dorset hill-fort, which was used by the writer Thoma Hardy in his novel *Far from the Madding Crowd*, published in 1874

The Celts traded across tribal borders and trade was probabl important for political and social contact between the tribes. Trad with Ireland went through the island of Anglesey. The two mai trade outlets eastwards to Europe were the settlements along th Thames River in the south and on the Firth of Forth in the north. It i no accident that the present-day capitals of England and Scotlan stand on or near these two ancient trade centres. Much trade, bot inside and beyond Britain, was conducted by river and sea. Fo money the Celts used iron bars, until they began to copy the Roma coins they saw used in Gaul (France).

According to the Romans, the Celtic men wore shirts an breeches (knee-length trousers), and striped or checked cloak fastened by a pin. It is possible that the Scottish tartan and dres developed from this "striped cloak". The Celts were also "ver careful about cleanliness and neatness", as one Roman wrote "Neither man nor woman," he went on, "however poor, was see either ragged or dirty."

The Celtic tribes were ruled over by a warrior class, of which the priests, or Druids, seem to have been particularly importan members. These Druids could not read or write, but they memorise all the religious teachings, the tribal laws, history, medicine an other knowledge necessary in Celtic society. The Druids fro

different tribes all over Britain probably met once a year. They had no temples, but they met in sacred groves of trees, on certain hills, by rivers or by river sources. We know little of their kind of worship except that at times it included human sacrifice.

During the Celtic period women may have had more independence than they had again for hundreds of years. When the Romans invaded Britain two of the largest tribes were ruled by women who fought from their chariots. The most powerful Celt to stand up to the Romans was a woman, Boadicea. She had become queen of her tribe when her husband had died. She was tall, with long red hair, and had a frightening appearance. In AD 61 she led her tribe against the Romans. She nearly drove them from Britain, and she destroyed London, the Roman capital, before she was defeated and killed. Roman writers commented on the courage and strength of women in battle, and leave an impression of a measure of equality between the sexes among the richer Celts.

2.2 Roman Britain

The name "Britain" comes from the word "Pretani", the Greco-Roman word for the inhabitants of Britain. The Romans mispronounced the word and called the island "Britannia".

The Romans had invaded because the Celts of Britain were working with the Celts of Gaul against them. The British Celts were giving them food, and allowing them to hide in Britain. There was nother reason. The Celts used cattle to pull their ploughs and this meant that richer, heavier land could be farmed. Under the Celts Britain had become an important food producer because of its mild limate. It now exported corn and animals, as well as hunting dogs nd slaves, to the European mainland. The Romans could make use f British food for their own army fighting the Gauls.

The Romans brought the skills of reading and writing to Britain. he written word was important for spreading ideas and also for stablishing power. As early as AD 80, as one Roman at the time oted, the governor Agricola "trained the sons of chiefs in the liberal rts . . . the result was that the people who used to reject Latin began to use it in speech and writing. Further the wearing of our national dress came to be valued and the toga [the Roman cloak] came into fashion." While the Celtic peasantry remained illiterate and only Celtic-speaking, a number of town dwellers spoke Latin and Greek with ease, and the richer landowners in the country almost certainly used Latin. But Latin completely disappeared both in its spoken and written forms when the Anglo-Saxons invaded Britain in the fifth century AD. Britain was probably more literate under the Romans than it was to be again until the fifteenth century.

Julius Caesar first came to Britain in 55 BC, but it was not until almost a century later, in AD 43, that a Roman army actually occupied Britain. The Romans were determined to conquer the whole island. They had little difficulty, apart from Boadicea's revolt, because they had a better trained army and because the Celtic tribes fought among themselves. The Romans considered the Celts as war-mad, "high spirited and quick for battle", a description some would still give the Scots, Irish and Welsh today.

The Romans established a Romano-British culture across the southern half or Britain, from the River Humber to the River Severn. This part of Britain was inside the empire. Beyond were the upland areas, under Roman control but not developed. These areas were watched from the towns of York, Chester and Caerleon in the western peninsula of Britain that later became known as Wales. Each of these towns was held by a Roman legion of about 7.000 men. The total Roman army in Britain was about 40.000 men.

The Romans could not conquer "Caledonia", as they called Scotland, although they spent over a century trying to do so. At last they built a strong wall along the northern border, named after the Emperor Hadrian who planned it. At the time, Hadrian's wall was simply intended to keep out raiders from the north. But it also marked the border between the two later countries, England and Scotland. Eventually, the border was established a few miles further north. Efforts to change it in later centuries did not succeed, mainly because on either side of the border an invading army found its supply line overstretched. A natural point of balance had been found.

Roman control of Britain came to an end as the empire began to collapse. The first signs were the attacks by Celts of Caledonia in AD 367. The Roman legions found it more and more difficult to stop the raiders from crossing Hadrian's wall. The same was happening on the European mainland as Germanic groups, Saxons and Franks, began to raid the coast of Gaul. In AD 409 Rome pulled its last soldiers out of Britain and the Romano-British, the Romanised Celts, were left to fight alone against the Scots, the Irish and Saxon raiders from Germany. The following year Rome itself fell to raiders. When Britain called to Rome for help against the raiders from Saxon Germany in the mid-fifth century, no answer came.

2.2.1 Roman Life

The most obvious characteristic of Roman Britain was its towns, which were the basis of Roman administration and civilisation. Many grew out of Celtic settlements, military camps or market centres. Broadly, there were three different kinds of town in Roman Britain, two of which were towns established by Roman charter. These were the *coloniae*, towns peopled by Roman settlers, and the *municipia*, large cities in which the whole population was given Roman citizenship. The third kind, the *civitas*, included the old Celtic tribal capitals, through which the Romans administered Celtic population in the countryside. At first these towns had no walls. Then, probably from the end of the second century to the end of the hird century AD, almost every town was given walls. At first many of these were no more than earthworks, but by AD 300 all towns had hick stone walls.

The Romans left about twenty large towns of about 5.000 inhabitants, and almost one hundred smaller ones. Many of these towns were at first army camps, and the Latin word for camp, *castra*, has emained part of many town names to this day (with the ending chester, caster or cester): Gloucester, Leicester, Doncaster, Winchester, Chester, Lancaster and many others besides. These towns were built with stone as well as wood, and had planned streets, markets and hops. Some buildings had central heating. They were connected by oads which were so well built that they survived when later roads broke up. These roads continued to be used long after the Romans eft, and became the main roads of modern Britain. Six of these

Roman roads met in London, a capital city of about 20,000 people London was twice the size of Paris, and possibly the most importan trading centre of northern Europe, because southeast Britai produced so much corn for export.

Outside the towns, the biggest change during the Roma occupation was the growth of large farms, called "villas". Thes belonged to the richer Britons who were, like the townspeople, mor Roman than Celt in their manners. Each villa had many worker The villas were usually close to towns so that the crops could be sol easily. There was a growing difference between the rich and thos who did the actual work on the land. These, and most people, stil lived in the same kind of round huts and villages which the Celts ha been living in four hundred years earlier, when the Romans arrived.

In some ways life in Roman Britain seems very civilised, but was also hard for all except the richest. The bodies buried in Roman graveyard at York show that life expectancy was low. Hal the entire population died between the ages of twenty and fort while 15 per cent died before reaching the age of twenty.

It is very difficult to be sure how many people were living i Britain when the Romans left. Probably it was as many as fiv million, partly because of the peace and the increased economic li which the Romans had brought to the country. The new wave o invaders changed all that.

2.3 The Anglo-Saxon Conquest and the Danish Invasions

The wealth of Britain by the fourth century, the result of its mil climate and centuries of peace, was a temptation to the greedy. A first the Germanic tribes only raided Britain, but after AD 430 they began to settle. The newcomers were warlike and illiterate. We ow our knowledge of this period mainly to an English monk name Bede, who lived three hundred years later. His story of events in hi *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* has been prove generally correct by archaeological evidence.

Bede tells us that the invaders came from three powerfu Germanic tribes, the Saxons, Angles and Jutes. The Jutes settle mainly in Kent and along the south coast, and were soon considered no different from the Angles and Saxons. The Angles settled in the east, and also in the north Midlands, while the Saxons settled between the Jutes and the Angles in a band of land from the Thames Estuary westwards. The Anglo-Saxon migrations gave the larger part of Britain its new name, England, "the land of the Angles".

The British Celts fought the raiders and settlers from Germany as well as they could. However, during the next hundred years they were slowly pushed westwards until by 570 they were forced west of Gloucester. Finally most were driven into the mountains in the far west, which the Saxons called "Weallas", or "Wales", meaning "the land of the foreigners". Some Celts were driven into Cornwall, where they later accepted the rule of Saxon lords. In the north, other Celts were driven into the lowlands of the country which became known as Scotland. Some Celts stayed behind, and many became slaves of the Saxons. Hardly anything is left of Celtic language or culture in England, except for the names of some rivers, Thames, Mersey, Severn and Avon, and two large cities, London and Leeds.

The strength of Anglo-Saxon culture is obvious even today. Days of the week were named after Germanic gods: Tig (Tuesday), Wodin (Wednesday), Thor (Thursday), Frei (Friday). New place-names appeared on the map. The first of these show that the earliest Saxon villages, like the Celtic ones, were family villages. The ending -ing meant folk or family, thus "Reading" is the place of the family of Rada, "Hastings" of the family of Hasta. *Ham* means farm, *ton* means settlement. Birmingham, Nottingham or Southampton, for example, are Saxon place-names. Because the Anglo-Saxon kings often established settlements, Kingston is a frequent place-name.

The Anglo-Saxons established a number of kingdoms, some of which still exist in county or regional names to this day: Essex (East Saxons), Sussex (South Saxons), Wessex (West Saxons), Middlesex probably a kingdom of Middle Saxons), East Anglia (East Angles). By the middle of the seventh century the three largest kingdoms, hose of Northumbria, Mercia and Wessex, were the most powerful.

It was not until a century later that one of these kings, King Offa of Mercia (757-96), claimed "kingship of the English". He had good eason to do so. He was powerful enough to employ thousands of men to build a huge dyke, or earth wall, the length of the Welsh border to keep out the troublesome Celts. But although he was the most powerful king of his time, he did not control all of England.

The power of Mercia did not survive after Offa's death. At tha time, a king's power depended on the personal loyalty of hi followers. After his death the next king had to work hard to rebuil these personal feelings of loyalty. Most people still believed, as th Celts had done, that a man's first duty was to his own famil However, things were changing. The Saxon kings began to replac loyalty to family with loyalty to lord and king.

2.3.1 Government and Society

The Saxons created institutions which made the English sta strong for the next 500 years. One of these institutions was th King's Council, called the *Witan*. The Witan probably grew out o informal groups of senior warriors and churchmen to whom king like Offa had turned for advice or support on difficult matters. B the tenth century the Witan was a formal body, issuing laws an charters. It was not at all democratic, and the king could decide t ignore the Witan's advice. But he knew that it might be dangerous t do so. For the Witan's authority was based on its right to choos kings, and to agree the use of the king's laws. Without its support th king's own authority was in danger. The Witan established a syste which remained an important part of the king's method o government. Even today, the king or queen has a *Privy* Council, group of advisers on the affairs of state.

The Saxons divided the land into new administrative areas based on *shires*, or counties. These shires, established by the end o the tenth century, remained almost exactly the same for a thousan years. "Shire" is the Saxon word, "county" the Norman one, but bot are still used. (In 1974 the counties were reorganised, but the ne system is very like the old one.) Over each shire was appointed shire *reeve*, the king's local administrator. In time his name becam shortened to "sheriff".

Anglo-Saxon technology changed the shape of Englis agriculture. The Celts had kept small, square fields which were well suited to the light plough they used, drawn either by an animal or two people. This plough could turn corners easily. The Anglo-Saxons introduced a far heavier plough which was better able to plough in long straight lines across the field. It was particularly useful for cultivating heavier soils. But it required six or eight oxen to pull it, and it was difficult to turn. This heavier plough led to changes in land ownership and organisation. In order to make the best use of village land, it was divided into two or three very large fields. These were then divided again into long thin strips. Each family had a number of strips in each of these fields, amounting probably to a family "holding" of twenty or so acres. Ploughing these long thin strips was easier because it avoided the problem of turning. Few individual families could afford to keep a team of oxen, and these had to be shared on a co-operative basis.

One of these fields would be used for planting spring crops, and another for autumn crops. The third area would be left to rest for a year, and with the other areas after harvest, would be used as common land for animals to feed on. This Anglo-Saxon pattern, which became more and more common, was the basis of English agriculture for a thousand years, until the eighteenth century.

It needs only a moment's thought to recognise that the fair division of land and of teams of oxen, and the sensible management of village land shared out between families, meant that villagers had to work more closely together than they had ever done before.

The Saxons settled previously unfarmed areas. They cut down many forested areas in valleys to farm the richer lowland soil, and they began to drain the wet land. As a result, almost all the villages which appear on eighteenth-century maps already existed by the eleventh century.

In each district was a "manor" or large house. This was a simple building where local villagers came to pay taxes, where justice was administered, and where men met together to join the Anglo-Saxon army, the *fyrd*. The lord of the manor had to organise all this, and make sure village land was properly shared. It was the beginning of the manorial system which reached its fullest development under the Normans.

At first the lords, or *aldermen*, were simply local officials. But by the beginning of the eleventh century they were warlords, an were often called by a new Danish name, *earl*. Both words, alderma and earl, remain with us today: aldermen are elected officers in loc government, and earls are high ranking nobles. It was the beginnin of a class system, made up of king, lords, soldiers and workers o the land. One other important class developed during the Saxo period, the men of learning. These came from the Christian Church.

2.3.2 Christianity: the Partnership of Church and State

We cannot know how or when Christianity first reached Britai but it was certainly well before Christianity was accepted by th Roman Emperor Constantine in the early fourth century AD. In th last hundred years of Roman government Christianity became firm established across Britain, both in Roman-controlled areas an beyond. However, the Anglo-Saxons belonged to an older Germani religion, and they drove the Celts into the west and north. In th Celtic areas Christianity continued to spread, bringing paganism t an end. The map of Wales shows a number of place-name beginning or ending with *llan*, meaning the site of a small Celt monastery around which a village or town grew.

In 597 Pope Gregory the Great sent a monk, Augustine, to establish Christianity in England. He went to Canterbury, the capit of the king of Kent. He did so because the king's wife came fro Europe and was already Christian. Augustine became the firs Archbishop of Canterbury in 601. He was very successful. Severa ruling families in England accepted Christianity. But Augustine an his group of monks made little progress with the ordinary people This was partly because Augustine was interested in establishin Christian authority, and that meant bringing rulers to the new faith.

It was the Celtic Church which brought Christianity to th ordinary people of Britain. The Celtic bishops went out from thei monasteries of Wales, Ireland and Scotland, walking from village t village teaching Christianity. In spite of the differences betwee Anglo-Saxons and Celts, these bishops seem to have been readil accepted in Anglo-Saxon areas. The bishops from the Roma Church lived at the courts of the kings, which they made centres o

Church power across England. The two Christian Churches, Celtic and Roman, could hardly have been more different in character. One was most interested in the hearts of ordinary people, the other was nterested in authority and organisation. The competition between he Celtic and Roman Churches reached a crisis because they disagreed over the date of Easter. In 663 at the Synod (meeting) of Whitby the king of Northumbria decided to support the Roman Church. The Celtic Church retreated as Rome extended its authority over all Christians, even in Celtic parts of the island.

England had become Christian very quickly. By 660 only Sussex and the Isle of Wight had not accepted the new faith. Twenty years ater, English teachers returned to the lands from which the Aglo-Saxons had come, bringing Christianity to much of Germany.

Saxon kings helped the Church to grow, but the Church also ncreased the power of kings. Bishops gave kings their support, which made it harder for royal power to be questioned. Kings had God's approval". The value of Church approval was all the greater because of the uncertainty of the royal succession. An eldest son did ot automatically become king, as kings were chosen from among he members of the royal family, and any member who had enough oldiers might try for the throne. In addition, at a time when one king might try to conquer a neighbouring kingdom, he would probably ave a son to whom he would wish to pass this enlarged kingdom when he died. And so when King Offa arranged for his son to be rowned as his successor, he made sure that this was done at a hristian ceremony led by a bishop. It was good political ropaganda, because it suggested that kings were chosen not only by eople but also by God.

There were other ways in which the Church increased the power the English state. It established monasteries, or minsters, for ample Westminster, which were places of learning and education. hese monasteries trained the men who could read and write, so that ey had the necessary skills for the growth of royal and Church thority. The king who made most use of the Church was Alfred.. e great king who ruled Wessex from 871-899. He used the literate en of the Church to help establish a system of law, to educate the ople and to write down important matters. He started the Anglo-

Saxon *Chronicle,* the most important source, together with Bede Ecclesiastical History *of the English People,* for understanding th period.

During the next hundred years, laws were made on a lar number of matters. By the eleventh century royal authority probabl went wider and deeper in England than in any other Europea country.

This process gave power into the hands of those who could rea and write, and in this way class divisions were increased. The powe of landlords, who had been given land by the king, was increase because their names were written down. Peasants, who could neithe read nor write, could lose their traditional rights to their lan because their rights were not registered.

The Anglo-Saxon kings also preferred the Roman Church to th Celtic Church for economic reasons. Villages and towns gre around the monasteries and increased local trade. Many bishops an monks in England were from the Frankish lands (France an Germany) and elsewhere. They were invited by English rulers wh wished to benefit from closer Church and economic contact wi Europe. Most of these bishops and monks seem to have come fro churches or monasteries along Europe's vital trade routes. In thi way close contact with many parts of Europe was encouraged. I addition they all used Latin, the written language of Rome, and thi encouraged English trade with the continent. Increased literacy itse helped trade. Anglo-Saxon England became well known in Europ for its exports of woollen goods, cheese, hunting dogs, pottery an metal goods. It imported wine, fish, pepper, jewellery and wheel made pottery.

2.3.3 The Vikings

Towards the end of the eighth century new raiders were tempte by Britain's wealth. These were the Vikings, a word which probabl means either "pirates" or "the people of the sea inlets", and the came from Norway and Denmark. Like the Anglo-Saxons they on raided at first. They burnt churches and monasteries along the eas north and west coasts of Britain and Ireland. London was itse

raided in 842.

In 865 the Vikings invaded Britain once it was clear that the quarrelling Anglo-Saxon kingdoms could not keep them out. This time they came to conquer and to settle. The Vikings quickly accepted Christianity and did not disturb the local population. By 875 only King Alfred in the west of Wessex held out against the Vikings, who had already taken most of England. After some serious defeats Alfred won a decisive battle in 878, and eight years later he captured London. He was strong enough to make a treaty with the Vikings.

Viking rule was recognised in the east and north of England. It was called the Danelaw, the land where the law of the Danes ruled. In the rest of the country Alfred was recognised as king. During his struggle against the Danes, he had built walled settlements to keep them out. These were called *burghs.* They became prosperous market towns, and the word, now usually spelt borough, is one of the commonest endings to place names, as well as the name of the unit of municipal or town administration today.

2.3.4 Who Should Be King?

By 950 England seemed rich and peaceful again after the roubles of the Viking invasion. But soon afterwards the Danish Vikings started raiding westwards. The Saxon king, Ethelred, ecided to pay the Vikings to stay away. To find the money he set a ax on all his people, called *Danegeld,* or "Danish money". It was the eginning of a regular tax system of the people which would provide he money for armies. The effects of this tax were most heavily felt y the ordinary villagers, because they had to provide enough money or their village landlord to pay Danegeld.

When Ethelred died Cnut (or Canute), the leader of the Danish ikings, controlled much of England. He became king for the simple eason that the royal council, the Witan, and everyone else, feared isorder. Rule by a Danish king was far better than rule by no one at ll. Cnut died in 1035, and his son died shortly after, in 1040. The Vitan chose Edward, one of Saxon Ethelred's sons, to be king.

Edward, known as "the Confessor", was more interested in the

Church than in kingship. Church building had been going on for ov a century, and he encouraged it. By the time Edward died there w a church in almost every village. The pattern of the English villag with its manor house and church, dates from this time. Edw started a new church fit for a king at Westminster, just outside t city of London. In fact Westminster Abbey was a Norman, not Saxon building, because he had spent almost all his life Normandy, and his mother was a daughter of the duke of Normand As their name suggests, the Normans were people from the nort They were the children and grandchildren of Vikings who ha captured, and settled in, northern France. They had soon becon French in their language and Christian in their religion. But th were still well known for their fighting skills.

Edward only lived until 1066, when he died without an obvio heir. The question of who should follow him as king was one of th most important in English history. Edward had brought ma Normans to his English court from France. These Normans were n liked by the more powerful Saxon nobles, particularly by the m powerful family of Wessex, the Godwinsons. It was a Godwinso Harold, whom the Witan chose to be the next king of Englan Harold had already shown his bravery and ability. He had no roy blood, but he seemed a good choice for the throne of England.

Harold's right to the English throne was challenged by Du William of Normandy. William had two claims to the Engl throne. His first claim was that King Edward had promised it to hi The second claim was that Harold, who had visited William in 106 or 1065, had promised William that he, Harold, would not try to ta the throne for himself. Harold did not deny this second claim, b said that he had been forced to make the promise, and that because was made unwillingly he was not tied by it.

Harold was faced by two dangers, one in the south and one the north. The Danish Vikings had not given up their claim to t English throne. In 1066 Harold had to march north into Yorkshire defeat the Danes. No sooner had he defeated them than he learnt th William had landed in England with an army. His men were tir but they had no time to rest. They marched south as fast as possible

Harold decided not to wait for the whole Saxon army, the *fyr* to gat[illegible] because William's army was small. He thought he could beat them with the men who had done so well against the Danes. However, the Norman soldiers were better armed, better organised, and were mounted on horses. If he had waited, Harold might have won. But he was defeated and killed in battle near Hastings.

William marched to London, which quickly gave in when he egan to burn villages outside the city. He was crowned king of England in Edward's new church of Westminster Abbey on hristmas Day, 1066. A new period had begun.

England has always played the most powerful part in the history f the British Isles. However, the other three countries, Wales, reland and Scotland, have a different history. Until recently few istorians looked at British history except from an English point of iew. But the stories of Wales, Ireland and Scotland are also mportant, because their people still feel different from the Anglo-axon English. The experience of the Welsh, Irish and Scots helps to xplain the feeling they have today.

2.3.5 Wales

By the eighth century most of the Celts had been driven into the Velsh peninsula. They were kept out of England by Offa's Dyke, the uge earth wall built in AD 779. These Celts, called Welsh by the nglo-Saxons, called themselves *cymry*, "fellow countrymen".

Because Wales is a mountainous country, the *cymry* could only ve in the crowded valleys. The rest of the land was rocky and too oor for anything except keeping animals. For this reason the opulation remained small. It only grew to over half a million in the ghteenth century. Life was hard and so was the behaviour of the eople. Slavery was common, as it had been all through Celtic ritain.

Society was based on family groupings, each of which owned ne or more village or farm settlement. One by one in each group a rong leader made himself king. These men must have been tribal iefs to begin with, who later managed to become overlords over ighbouring family groups. Each of these kings tried to conquer the hers, and the idea of a high, or senior, king developed.

The early kings travelled around their kingdoms to remind th people of their control. They travelled with their hungry followe and soldiers. The ordinary people ran away into the hills and wood when the king's men approached their village.

Life was dangerous, treacherous and bloody. In 1043 the king Glamorgan died of old age. It was an unusual event, becau between 949 and 1066 no less than thirty-five Welsh rulers di violently, usually killed by a *cymry*, a fellow countryman.

In 1039 Gruffydd ap (son of) Llewelyn was the first Welsh hig king strong enough to rule over all Wales. He was also the last, ar in order to remain in control he spent almost the whole of his reig fighting his enemies. Like many other Welsh rulers, Gruffydd w killed by a *cymry* while defending Wales against the Saxons. Wel kings after him were able to rule only after they had promis loyalty to Edward the Confessor, king of England. The story of independent and united Wales was over almost as soon as it h begun.

2.3.6 Ireland

Ireland was never invaded by either the Romans or the Angl Saxons. It was a land of monasteries and had a flourishing Celt culture. As in Wales, people were known by the family groupi they belonged to. Outside their tribe they had no protection and name of their own. They had only the name of their tribe. The kin in this tribal society were chosen by election. The idea was that t strongest man should lead. In fact the system led to continuo challenges.

Five kingdoms grew up in Ireland: Ulster in the north, Muns in the southwest, Leinster in the southeast, Connaught in the wes with Tara as the seat of the high kings of Ireland.

Christianity came to Ireland in about AD 430. The beginning Ireland's history dates from that time, because for the first time the were people who could write down events. The message Christianity was spread in Ireland by a British slave, Patrick, w became the "patron saint" of Ireland. Christianity brought writi which weakened the position of the Druids, who depended memory and the spoken word. Christian monasteries grew up, frequently along the coast.

This period is often called Ireland's "golden age". Invaders were unknown and culture flowered. But it is also true that the five kingdoms were often at war, each trying to gain advantage over the other, often with great cruelty.

This "golden age" suddenly ended with the arrival of Viking raiders, who stole all that the monasteries had. Very little was left except the stone memorials that the Vikings could not carry away.

The Vikings, who traded with Constantinople (now Istanbul), Italy, and with central Russia, brought fresh economic and political action into Irish life. Viking raids forced the Irish to unite. In 859 Ireland chose its first high king, but it was not an effective solution because of the quarrels that took place each time a new high king was chosen. Viking trade led to the first towns and ports. For the Celts, who had always lived in small settlements, these were revolutionary. Dublin, Ireland's future capital, was founded by the Vikings.

As an effective method of rule the high kingship of Ireland asted only twelve years, from 1002 to 1014, while Ireland was ruled y Brian Boru. He is still looked back on as Ireland's greatest rule. e tried to create one single Ireland, and encouraged the growth of rganisation – in the Church, in administration, and in learning.

Brian Boru died in battle against the Vikings. One of the five rish kings, the king of Leinster, fought on the Viking's side. Just ver a century later another king of Leinster invited the Normans of ngland to help him against high king. This gave the Normans the xcuse they wanted to enlarge their kingdom.

2.3.7 Scotland

As a result of its geography, Scotland has two different societies. the centre of Scotland mountains stretch to the far north and ross to the west, beyond which lie many islands. To the east and to e south the lowland hills are gentler, and much of the countryside like England, rich, welcoming and east to farm. North of the ighland Line", as the division between highland and lowland is called, people stayed tried to their own family groups. South a east of this line society was more easily influenced by the chang taking place in England.

Scotland was populated by four separate groups of people. T main group, the Picts, lived mostly in the north and northeast. Th spoke Celtic as well as another, probably older, language complete unconnected with any known language today, and they seem to ha been the earliest inhabitants of the land. The Picts were differe from the Celts because they inherited their rights, their names a property from their mothers, not from their fathers.

The non- Pictish inhabitants were mainly Scots. The Scots we Celtic settlers who had started to move into the western Highlan from Ireland in the fourth century.

In 843 the Pictish and Scottish kingdoms were united a Scotti king, who could also probably claim the Pictish throne through h mother, in this way obeying both Scottish and Pictish rules kingship.

The third group were the Britons, who inhabited the Lowland and had been part of the Romano-British world. (The name of the kingdom, Strathclyde, was used again in the county reorganisation 1974.) They had probably given up their old tribal way of life by th sixth century. Finally, there were Angles from Northumbria who ha pushed northwards into the Scottish Lowlands.

Unity between Picts, Scots and Britons was achieved for sever reasons. They all shared a common Celtic culture, language an background. Their economy mainly depended on keeping animal These animals were owned by the tribe as a whole, and for thi reason land was also held by tribes, not by individual people. Th common economic system increased their feeling of belonging to th same king of society and the feeling of difference from th agricultural Lowlands. The sense of common culture may have bee increased by marriage alliances between tribes. This idea of comm landholding remained strong until the tribes of Scotland, calle "clans", collapsed in the eighteenth century.

The spread of Celtic Christianity also helped to unite the peopl The first Christian mission to Scotland in about AD 400. Later, i 563, Columba, known as the "Dove of the Church", came fro

Ireland. Through his work both Highland Scots and Picts were brought to Christianity. He even, so it is said, defeated a monster in Loch Ness, the first mention of this famous creature. By the time of the Synod of Whitby in 663, the Picts, Scots, and Britons had all been brought closer together by Christianity.

The Angles were very different from the Celts. They had arrived in Britain in family groups, but they soon began to accept authority from people outside their own family. This was partly due to their way of life. Although they kept some animals, they spent more time growing crops. This meant that land was held by individual people, each man working in his own field. Land was distributed for farming by the local lord. This system encouraged the Angles of Scotland to develop a non-tribal system of control, as the people of England further south were doing. This increased their feeling of difference from the Celtic tribal Highlanders further north.

Finally, as in Ireland and in Wales, foreign invaders increased the speed of political change. Vikings attacked the coastal areas of Scotland, and they settled on many of the islands, Shetland, the Orkneys, the Hebrides, and the Isle of Man southwest of Scotland. In order to resist them, Picts and Scots fought together against the enemy raiders and settlers. When they could not push them out of he islands and coastal areas, they had to deal with them politically.

At first the Vikings, or "Norsemen", still served the king of Norway. But communications with Norway were difficult. Slowly the earls of Orkney and other areas found it easier to accept the king of Scots as heir overlord, rather than the more distant king of Norway.

However, as the Welsh had also discovered, the English were a reater danger than the Vikings. In 934 the Scots were seriously defeated by a Wessex army pushing northwards. The Scots decided o seek the friendship of the English, because of the likely losses rom war. England was obviously stronger than Scotland but, luckily or the Scots, both the north of England and Scotland were difficult o control from London. The Scots hoped that if they were easonably peaceful the Sassenachs, as they called the Saxon (and till call the English), would leave them alone.

Scotland remained a difficult country to rule even from its apital, Edinburgh. Anyone looking at a map of Scotland can immediately see that control of the Highlands and islands was great problem. Travel was often impossible in winter, and slow an difficult in summer. It was easy for a clan chief or noble to throw o the rule of the king.

2.4 The Norman Conquest. The Growth of Feudalism

William the Conqueror's coronation did not go as planned. Whe the people shouted "God Save the King" the nervous Norman guar at Westminster Abbey thought they were going to attack William. I their fear they set fire to nearby houses and the coronation ceremon ended in disorder.

Although William was now crowned king, his conquest had on just begun, and the fighting lasted for another five years. There wa an Anglo-Saxon rebellion against the Normans every year un 1070. The small Norman army marched from village to villag destroying places it could not control, and building forts to guar others. It was a true army of occupation for at least twenty year The north was particularly hard to control, and the Norman army ha no mercy. When the Saxons fought back, the Normans burn destroyed and killed. Between Durham and York not a single hous was left standing, and it took a century for the north to recover.

Few Saxon lords kept their lands and those who did were th very small number who had accept William immediately. All th others lost everything. By 1086, twenty years after the arrival of th Normans, only two of the greater landlords and only two bishop were Saxon. William gave the Saxon lands to his Norman nobles After each English rebellion there was more land to give away. Hi army included Norman and other French land seekers. Over 4,00 Saxon landlords were replaced by 200 Norman ones.

2.4.1 Feudalism

William was careful in the way he gave land to his nobles. Th king of France was less powerful than many of the great landlords or whom William was the outstanding example. In England, as eac

new area of land was captured, William gave parts of it as a reward to his captains. This meant that they held separate small pieces of land in different parts of the country so that no noble could easily or quickly gather his fighting men to rebel. William only gave some of his nobles larger estates along the troublesome borders with Wales and Scotland. At the same time he kept enough land for himself to make sure he was much stronger than his nobles. Of all the farmland of England he gave half to the Norman nobles, a quarter to the Church, and kept a fifth himself. He kept the Saxon system of sheriffs, and used these as a balance to local nobles. As a result England was different from the rest of Europe because it had one powerful family, instead of a large number of powerful nobles. William, and the kings after him, thought of England as their personal property.

William organised his English kingdom according to the feudal system which had already begun to develop in England before his arrival. The word "feudalism" comes from the French word *feu*, which the Normans used to refer to land held in return for duty or service to a lord. The basis of feudal society was the holding of land, and its main purpose was economic. The central idea was that all land was owned by the king but it was held by others, called vassals", in return for services and goods. The king gave large states to his main nobles in return for a promise to serve him in war or up to forty days. The nobles also had to give part of the produce f the land. The greater nobles gave part of their lands to lesser obles, knights, and other "freemen". Some freemen paid for the and by doing military service, while others paid rent. The noble kept serf" to work on his own land. These were not free to leave the state, and were often little better than slaves.

There were two basic principles to feudalism: every man had a ord, and every lord had land. The king was connected through this chain" of people to the lowest man in the country. At each level a an had to promise loyalty and service to his lord. This promise was sually made with the lord sitting on his chair and his vassal eeling before him, his hands placed between those of his lord. his was called "homage", and has remained part of the coronation remony of British kings and queens until now. On the other hand, each lord had responsibilities to his vassals. He had to give th land and protection.

When a noble died his son usually took over his estate. But f he had to receive permission from the king and make a speci payment. If he was still a child the king would often take the produ of the state until the boy was old enough to look after the est himself. In this way the king could benefit from the death of a nob If all the noble's family died the land went back to the king, w would be expected to give it to another deserving noble. But the ki often kept the land for some years, using its wealth, before giving to another noble.

If the king did not give the nobles land they would not fight f him. Between 1066 and the mid-fourteenth century there were on thirty years of complete peace. So feudal duties were extreme important. The king had to make sure he had enough satisfied nob who would be willing to fight for him.

William gave our land all over England to his nobles. By 10 he wanted to know exactly who owned which piece of land, and ho much it was worth. He needed this information so that he could pl his economy, find out how much was produced and how much could ask in tax. He therefore sent a team of people all throug England to make a complete economic survey. His men asked a kinds of questions at each settlement: How much land was ther Who owned it? How much was it worth? How many familie ploughs and sheep were there? And so on. This survey was the on one of its kind in Europe. Not surprisingly, it was most unpopul with the people, because they felt they could not escape from i findings. It so reminded them of the paintings of the Day Judgement, or "doom", on the walls of their churches that they calle it the "Domesday" Book. The name stuck. The Domesday Book st exists, and gives us an extraordinary amount of information abo England at this time.

Questions

1 What do we know about the Iberians and the Beaker peopl What traces have their culture left on the face of the land?

2 [illegible] were the major achievements of Celtic civilization?

3 [illegible] part of Britain was latinized during the Roman occupation? How did the Roman way of life influence the life of the Celts? What traces are there of Roman rule in Britain?

4 Why is the Germanic Conquest one of the governing events in the English history? What was the fate of the Celts as a result of the Anglo-Saxon conquest? What forms of governance and institutions were created by the Anglo-Saxons? How did the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity facilitate the political unity and influence the cultural development of Britain?

5 What territory of Britain did the Danes manage to conqueur? How did the Danish settlers influence the development of the country in the 10th-11th centuries?

6 What were the reasons and the pretext of the Norman invasion? What were the reasons for the defeat of the Anglo-Saxons at Hastings? What made it possible for William to strengthen his royal power so greatly? What was the Domesday Book? What useful information does it give us about England in the second half of the 11th century? How did the registration consolidate the position of the Norman conquerors in England?

3 Population of Britain Today: the Social Framework

3.1 Ethnic Composition and Language Variation
3.2 Demographic Trends: Age and Sex Structure, Distribution
Population, the Family, the Status of Women
3.3 Ethnic Minorities
3.4 Living Standards

3.1 Ethnic Composition and Language Variation

English is the main language spoken in Britain. although w many regional variations in terms of accept and phraseology. It also one of the most widely used in the world; recent estima suggest that over 337 million people speak it as their first languag with a similar number speaking it as a second language. Mode English derives primarily from one of the dialects of Anglo-Saxo but has been very greatly influenced by other languages over time.

About one-fifth of the population of Wales speak the Wel language, which is of Celtic origin. They are concentrated in t rural north and west, where Welsh remains the first language of mo of the population. Both the Government and voluntary groups hav taken steps to revive the use of Welsh. Bilingual education schools is encouraged and there has been an extended use of Wel for official purposes and in broadcasting. In the context of deali with public authorities and the administration of justice in Wale Welsh and English are treated on an equal basis.

Gaelic, also a language of Celtic origin, is still spoken by som 70,000 people in Scotland; the greatest concentration of Gae speakers is in the islands of the Hebrides. People in the centr lowlands of Scotland have for centuries spoken Scots, a diale derived from the Northumbrian branch of Old English. This has own recognised literary tradition and has seen a revival in poetry in t 20th century. Many words and phrases from the Scots tongue a retained in the everyday English which is spoken throughout Scotlan

Many other languages are spoken by the minority ethnic communities living in Britain.

3.2 Demographic Trends: Age and Sex Structure, Distribution of Population, the Family, the Status of Women

Britain has a population of about 59 million people, the 17th largest in the world. The great majority, 49,3 million, live in England; Scotland has just over 5 million people, Wales 2,9 million and Northern Ireland about 1.7 million.

The population density is well above the European Union average. England is the most densely populated, with 373 people per sq km, and Scotland the least, with 67 people per sq km. The great majority of people are concentrated in towns and cities, although here has been a trend, especially in the capital London, for people to nove away from congested urban centres into the suburbs.

In [illegible] there were 726,000 live births in Britain, compared with 533,000 deaths. The birth rate is relatively low at 12.3 live births per 1,000 population. This in part due to a trend towards later marriage nd towards postponing births.

The average age of women having children has risen to over 8 years in England and Wales. There is also a greater preference for maller families than in the past, which has led to a significant lecline in the proportion of families with four or more children. In ddition, more widespread and effective contraception has mode it asier to plan families.

Life expectancy for men in Britain is about 74 years and for vomen 79 years (compared with 49 years for men and 52 years for vomen at the start of the century). The general death rate is 10,4 per ,000 of the population. There has been a decline in mortality at ost ages, particularly among children, reflecting better nutrition, sing living standards, medical advances and improved health easures, wider education and the smaller size of families.

Deaths caused by circulatory diseases (including heart attacks nd strokes) now account for nearly half of all deaths, and mortality om heart disease in England and Wales remains high compared with that of other development countries.

The next largest cause of death is cancer, which is responsi for one-quarter of deaths. There is a national health strategy addressing the major causes of premature death and preventa illness among people in Britain.

Britain has one of the highest marriage and divorce rates in t European Union. There are 309,000 marriages each year in Brita of which about 40 per cent are remarriages of one or both parties. the population ages 16 or over in England and Wales 55 per cent a married, 28 per cent are single, 9 per cent are widowed and 8 p cent are divorced. The average age for first marriages in Engla and Wales is now 29 for men and 27 for women.

In England and Wales there are about 14 divorces for eve 1,000 married couples.

The average age of spouses at the time of divorce is now abo 38 for men and just over 35 for women. Divorce rates are lower i Scotland and Northern Ireland.

In common with many other Western European countries, the has been an increase in cohabitation (unmarried couples livi together) in Britain. About 14 per cent of non-married men a women aged 16 and over in Great Britain are cohabiting. There some evidence of a growing number of stable non-marri relationships. Over half of all births outside marriage (which accou for over one third of live births in Britain) are registered by bo parents giving a single address as their place of residence.

3.2.1 Elderly People

One of the most significant changes in the age structure Britain's population over the last 30 years has been the increasi proportion of people over retirement age (65 for men and 60 f women) – some 11 million today, and their numbers continued grow. This has important implications for social services provisi into the next century.

Most elderly people in Britain live healthy and independe lives. Nearly all want to be a part of the community, living in the own homes. Many view their later years as an opportunity to do th

things [illegible] ever previously had the time for, or to take on new intere[illegible] challenges. For instance, adult educational and recreati[illegible] courses run by local authorities throughout Britain are well attended by older people, and some sports, such as bowls, attract many elderly participants.

Yet a lot of older people – perhaps living alone, in poor health or isabled in some way – have important needs. In addition to the arge amount of willing help from relatives, neighbours and friends, ractical support for Britain's elderly people is provided by the ocial services authorities, voluntary organisations and, to a lesser xtent, the private sector.

Services for elderly people are designed to help them live at ome whenever possible. In fact, only about 5 per cent of people ged over 65 in Britain live in institutional accommodation. These ervices may include advice and help from visiting social workers, ssistance with domestic chores and the provision of meals in the ome. Day centres and lunch clubs are very popular among older eople as they provide, in addition to a hot meal and facilities such s a laundry, an important focal point for social contact. They may lso offer leisure and educational activities, many of which are run y older people themselves.

Local authorities and voluntary organisations operate special ansport services to enable less mobile elderly people to get to day entres or to visit the shops, the doctor, family or friends. There are oncessionary fares for resident pensioners on most bus services, nd special discounts are available on coach and rail travel.

Special housing needs for the elderly are met by local authorities, ousing associations, voluntary bodies and the private sector. heltered housing schemes may consist of groups of flats or small ouses where older people can live independently but still have the upport of a resident warden. For those people who are too infirm to ntinue to live independently there are residential homes providing ll board, or nursing homes offering 24-hour personal care.

3.2.2 Young people

The home is the central focus of most young people's lives in

Britain, particularly for those who are still attending school. T majority rely upon their home environment as a place of security a upon their parents as the main providers of food, money and oth necessary amenities for life – as well as general advice. You people spend a large proportion of their leisure time in the home w other members of their family or with friends.

After the home, school is the main social environment wh children not only receive their formal education but also deve their identities within peer groups. All school children in Britain encouraged to take up activities which complement their acader and vocational education and help to identify their individual talen such as sports, drama, music and creative pursuits. Many of the from part of school curricula.

The personal development and informal social education young people aged 11-25 is also promoted by the Youth Service Britain. The Service is a partnership between statutory authorit and a large number of voluntary organisations. A recent sur estimated that nearly 6 million young people in this age group either current or past participants in the Service.

Youth clubs and centres are the most common types of You Service provision, encouraging their members to participate in sp cultural and creative activities, and community service. Some a provide information and counselling. Youth clubs may be branch of national or international bodies or they may be entirely lo institutions.

There are many religious groups and churches with specia youth organisations, as well as uniformed organisations such as Guides and Scouts Associations and Boys' and Girls' Brigades.

Finance is provided by many foundations and trusts for activi which develop the latent talents of Britain's young people. T Prince's Trust and the Royal Jubilee Trust, for example, h individuals and organisations active in youth-oriented projects rela to urban deprivation, unemployment, homelessness and you offending. The Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Scheme challen young people to achieve certain standards in community servi expeditions, social and practical skills and physical recreation.

3[illegible] and Sex Structure

The total population has remained relatively stable over the last lecade. The proportion of young people aged under 16 fell steadily n the early 1980s, but numbers in this age group have increased lightly in the last two decades. The proportion of elderly people, specially those aged 85 and over, has continued to increase. The age listribution of the British population in mid-1990 was estimated as ollows:

- 20.2 per cent under 16 years of age;
- 64.1 per cent between 16 and 64 years;
- 15.7 per cent aged 65 and over.

Some 18 per cent of the population were over the normal etirement ages (65 for men and 60 for women) compared with 5 per cent in 1961.

There is ratio of about 105 females to every 100 males. There re about 5 per cent more male than female births every year. ecause of the higher mortality of men at all ages, however, there a turning point, at about 50 years of age, beyond which the umber of women exceeds the number of men. This imbalance ncreases with age so that there are many more women among the lderly.

3.2.4 Distribution of Population

The density of population in Britain is well above the European ommunity average of about 145 per sq km. Since the nineteenth entury there has been a trend, especially in London, for people to ove away from congested urban centres into the suburbs. There has so been a geographical redistribution of the population from cotland and the northern regions of England to the South East, East nglia, the South West and the East Midlands in recent decades. An crease in the rate of retirement migration has also occurred, the ain recipient areas, where in some towns the retired constitute over ne-quarter of the population, being the south coast of England and ast Anglia.

3.2.5 Women

The economic and domestic lives of women have b transformed in the twentieth century. These changes are due par to the removal of much of sex discrimination in political and le rights. At the heart of women's changed role has been the rise in number of women, especially married women, at work. With l marriages and the availability of effective contraception there been a decline in family size. Women are involved in childbear for a shorter time and this, together with technological advan which have made housework less onerous and time-consuming, made it easier for women with children to combine child-rear with paid employment. The growth of part-time and flexible work patterns, and training schemes, allows more women to t advantage of employment opportunities.

Women make up more than two-fifths of the workforce. T proportion of married women working outside the home increased to two-thirds of those between the ages of 16 and 59 quarter of the total labour force compared with only 4 per cent 1921. Married women are most likely to be in full-time work if the are aged 16 to 29 with no children. Over two-fifths of all women employment work part-time, representing almost nine-tenths of part-time workers. By the mid-1990s the numbers of young peo entering the labour market has declined substantially and it resulting shortfall in the labour force is met to a considerable ext by the recruitment of more married women.

There is still a significant difference between men's and wome earnings, but equal pay legislation which came into force in 19 has helped to narrow the gap; in 1990 women's average hou earnings were only 77 per cent of men's, despite a progressive rise women's hourly rates over the last three years. Women's wag remain relatively low because they tend to work in the lower-pa sector of the economy and work fewer hours than men because their domestic commitments. A major reform in the taxation women came into effect in 1990, when their earnings began to taxed separately rather than being treated as part of their husban income for tax purposes.

3.2.[illegible] Equal Opportunities

The Sex Discriminations Acts 1975 and 1986 make iscrimination, in certain circumstances, between men and women nlawful in employment, education, training and the provision of ousing, goods, facilities and services. Discriminatory job ecruitment advertisements are also unlawful. Complaints of iscrimination in employment are dealt with by industrial tribunals; ther complaints are taken before county courts in England and Vales or the Sheriff Court in Scotland. Under the Equal Pay Act 970, as amended in 1984, women in Great Britain are entitled to qual pay with men when doing work that is the same or broadly imilar, or work which is of equal value. Parallel legislation on sex iscrimination and equal pay is in operation in Northern Ireland.

The Equal Opportunities Commission, set up in 1975 (1976 in orthern Ireland under separate laws), has powers to enforce the Sex iscrimination and Equal Pay Acts. Its statutory duties are to work wards eliminating sex discrimination and to promote equality of pportunity. The Commission advises people of their rights under e Acts and may give financial or other assistance to help dividuals conduct a case before a court or tribunal. It is mpowered to carry out investigations and issue notices requiring scriminatory practices to stop. The Commission also keeps gislation under review and submits proposals for amending it to e Government.

3.3 Ethnic Minorities

For centuries people from overseas have settled in Britain, to cape political or religious persecution or in search of better onomic opportunities.

The Irish have long formed a large section of the population. wish refugees who came to Britain towards the end of the neteenth century and in the 1930s were followed by other ropean refugees after 1945. Substantial immigration from the ribbean and the South Asia subcontinent dates principally from the 1950s and 1960s. There are also groups from the United Sta and Canada, as well as Australians, Chinese, Greek and Turk Cypriots, Italians and Spaniards. More recently people from La America, Indo-China and Sri Lanka have sought refuge in Britain.

In 1989-91, according to the results of a sample survey, average ethnic minority population of Great Britain numbered ab 2.7 million (some 4.9 per cent of the total population), of wh 46 per cent were born in Britain. Just over half of the ethnic minor population was of Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin; less th one-fifth was of Afro-Caribbean ethnic origin; and over one in was of mixed ethnic origin.

The sample survey also indicated that the proportion of men working age in Great Britain who were economically active w higher among the white population (89 per cent) than among the from other ethnic groups (84 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans a Indians and 75 per cent of those of Pakistani/Bangladeshi origi Among women the variation was greater: 76 per cent of those fr the Afro-Caribbean ethnic group were economically active, compa with 72 per cent in the white group, 60 per cent in the Indian gro and only 25 per cent in the Pakistani/Bangladeshi group.

3.3.1 Alleviating Racial Disadvantage

Although many members of the black and Asian communiti are concentrated in the inner cities, where there are problems deprivation and social stress, progress has been made over the l 20 years in tackling racial disadvantage in Britain.

Many individuals have achieved distinction in their careers a in public life and the proportion of ethnic minority membe occupying professional and managerial positions is increasing. law, for example, an estimated 6 per cent of practising barristers a of ethnic minority origin. In April 1992 there were six eth minority Members of Parliament, and the number of ethnic minor councillors in local government is growing. There has also been expansion enterprise, and numerous self-help projects in eth minority communities have been established. Black competit have represented Britain in a range of sporting activities, and eth

mino[illegible]s in the arts and in entertainment have increasingly been [illegible]d.

The [illegible]al means of combating disadvantage is through the economi[illegible]environmental, educational and health programmes of central government and local authorities. There are also special llocations, mainly through Home Office grants and the Urban rogramme, which channel extra resources into projects of specific enefit to ethnic minorities. These include, for example, the rovision of specialist teachers for children needing English anguage tuition, business support services and measures to revive ocal economies and improve the inner city environment. Cultural nd recreational schemes and the health and personal social services lso take account of the particular needs of ethnic minorities.

The Government is encouraging the development of black usinesses in inner city areas through the Ethnic Minority Business itiative. It is also promoting equal opportunities for ethnic minorities rough training, including greater provision for unemployed people ho need training in English as a second language.

3.3.2 Ethnic Minorities and the Police

In recognition of the tensions that can arise between the police and hnic minorities, there is statutory consultation between the police d the community. In addition, liaison work is undertaken in schools.

Police training in race relations has received particular attention. specialist unit, launched in 1989 and run by an independent mpany, provides police forces with practical help and support in mmunity and race relations training.

Campaigns are run by the police to encourage the recruitment of ficers from the ethnic minority communities. Racially discriminatory haviour by officers has been made an offence under the police scipline code. All police force are aware of the need to respond to ports of racially motivated crime as a priority.

3.3.3 Race Relations Act 1976

Equal opportunities policies are backed up by legislation against racial discrimination. The Race Relations Act 1976, wh strengthened previous legislation passed in the 1960s, mak discrimination unlawful on groups of colour, race, nationality ethnic or national origin in the provision of goods, facilities services, in employment, in housing and in advertising. T 1976 Act also gave complainants direct access to civil courts and the case of employment complaints, to industrial tribunals.

It is a criminal offence to incite racial hatred under provisions of the Public Order Act 1986.

3.3.4 Commission for Racial Equality

The Commission for Racial Equality was established by 1976 Act. It has power to investigate unlawful discriminat practices and to issue non-discrimination notices, requiring su practices to cease. It has an important educational role and issued codes of practice in employment, education, health care a housing. It also provides the main advice to the general public ab the Race Relations Act and has discretion to assist individuals wi their complaints about racial discrimination. In 1991 the Commissi registered 1,655 applications for assistance and successfully handl 137 cases. It can also undertake or fund research.

The Commission supports the work of over 80 race equal councils, which are autonomous voluntary bodies set up in m areas with a significant ethnic minority population to promote equal of opportunity and good relations at the local level. It helps pay salaries of the race equality officers employed by the council, m of whom also receive funds from their local government authorit and gives grants to ethnic minority self-help groups and to oth projects run by or for the benefit of their communities.

3.4 Living Standards

Marked improvements in the standard of living for people Britain have taken place during the 20th century. According to United Nations, in 1997 Britain ranked fifteenth out of 175 countr on a human development index that combines life expectancy, education levels and basic purchasing power.

Earnings from employment remain the main source of household income for most people, although other sources such as private pensions and annuities have become more important. Disposable income – the amount of money people have available to spend after income tax, National Insurance and contributions to pension schemes have been deducted – is now at its highest-ever level. Since the 1970s there has been little change in the distribution of marketable wealth, half of which is owned by the richest 10 per cent of people. A large proportion of personal wealth in Britain is in residential property. There has also been growth in share ownership in recent years.

Average weekly household spending in Britain is about £311. Food and housing costs constitute 18 and 16 per cent of this. Transport and leisure pursuits account for about 16 per cent each.

3.4.1 Housing

Largely depending on their means, people in Britain live in a diverse range of accommodation ranging from country mansions to single rooms or hostels in the inner cities. The majority, however, ive in houses and (to a lesser extent) flats, either as owner-occupiers or as tenants paying rent. About 19 per cent of houses are detached, 31 per cent are semi-detached and 29 per cent are terraced. Purpose-built flats or maisonettes make up 15 per cent of the housing stock and converted flats or rooms account for 5 per cent.

Owner-occupation more than doubled between 1961 and 1997. The number of owner-occupied homes amounts to over 14 million in England. Most people buy their homes with a mortgage loan, with he property as security. Mortgages are available from building ocieties, banks and other financial institutions.

There are some 3.6 million houses and flats in the public ousing sector. Most of the public housing in Great Britain is rovided by local housing authorities. Over one-third of local uthority tenants live in purpose-built flats or maisonettes, one-third terraced houses and about one-quarter in semi-detached houses.

Most have the right to buy the homes they occupy if they wish.

Housing associations, which are non-profit-making, are now th main providers of additional low-cost housing for rent and for sale those on low incomes and in the greatest housing need. The housin association sector is expanding rapidly; associations now ow manage and maintain over 950,000 homes and about 65,000 hos and special needs bed-spaces in Great Britain, providing homes f well over a million people.

Almost 10 per cent of households are rented from private landlord

3.4.2 Leisure Trends

The most common leisure activities among people in Britain a home-based, or social, such as visiting relatives or friends.

Watching television is by far the most popular leisure pastim Nearly every household has a television set, and average viewi time is over 25 hours a week. The majority of households also ha a video recorder.

Other regular pastimes include listening to the radio and recorder music. About 70 per cent of the population listen to loc and national radio on an average day. There has been a dramatic ri in the sale of compact discs in recent years. The number households with a home computer has increased to over one-quarte

Many people in their spare time enjoy reading (over 50 per ce belong to a library), gardening, do-it-yourself home improvemen undertaking voluntary work, going out for a meal or drink or to t cinema. More daily newspapers, national and regional, are sold f every person in Britain than in most other developed countries. (an average day 56 per cent of people over the age of 15 read national morning paper; 70 per cent read a Sunday newspaper.

The British are renowned as animal lovers, and about half of a household have a pet, most commonly dogs and cats.

3.4.3 Holidays

In 1997,57 million holidays of four or more nights away fro home were taken by British residents, 30 million of them with

Brit[illegible] most popular destinations for summer holidays in Brit[illegible] the West Country, Scotland and Wales. August is the most popular month for taking holidays.

Of the major free seaside attractions, the most frequented were Blackpool Pleasure Beach in Lancashire (with an estimated 7.8 million visitors), the Place Pier in Brighton and the Pleasure Beach at Great Yarmouth.

The most popular destinations for overseas holidays by British residents are France (23 per cent), Spain (26 per cent) and the United States (6.7 per cent). In all, British residents take about 29 million holidays overseas, of which 57 per cent involve 'package' arrangements (covering both transport and accommodation). About 80 per cent of all holidays abroad are taken in Europe.

3.4.4 Eating and Drinking Habits

Although some traditional meals in Britain, like roast beef and Yorkshire pudding or fish and chips, remain popular, there has been a significant shift in eating habits among the population over the last decade or so. This is in part due to a greater emphasis on health and convenience considerations.

Consumption of several items, such as packet sugar, eggs, potatoes and fresh green vegetables, has declined substantially. An ncrease in the consumption of rice and pasta may be partly esponsible for the decline in that of potatoes. Consumption of meat – with the exception of that of poultry which is now at a record level – has also fallen. Skimmed milk now constitutes more than half of the otal household consumption of liquid milk. There has been a lecline in the total consumption of cooking and spreading fats, with arge falls in butter and lard usage being offset by rapid rises in the onsumption of vegetable and salad oils and reduced fat spreads. A witch in fish consumption away from fresh white fish towards nned fish and shellfish has been evident. There has been a small ncrease in the intake of fibre.

Britain has a wide range of restaurants, offering cuisine from irtually every country. Chinese, Indian, Italian and Greek restaurants re among the most popular.

There has been an increase in recent years in the amount alcohol that people drink, particularly among women. Be including lager, is the most popular drink among male drinkers. T largest consumers of alcohol are in the 18 to 24 age range. Ta wine has become more popular, although there has been little char in the consumption of stronger wines such as sherry and port.

Questions

1 What languages are spoken in Britain? Which of the languag of Celtic origin is the strongest?

2 What is the demographic situations in Britain today? What a the statistics for birth rates, life expectancy, age and sex structur What are the latest trends in family life?

3 What is the population of Britain and its major cities? Whi are Britain's largest ethnic minority groups? What is the evidence f discrimination against ethnic minorities in employment, the arm services, housing, education, etc.?

4 In what ways are women still disadvantaged in Britain? Ho does the position of women in Britain compare with that in Belarus

5 How do you explain the popularity of the different types dwelling in Britain?

6 What are the typical leisure trends?

[illegible]sh Political Institutions

4.1 Constitutional Framework
4.2 The Monarchy and the Privy Council
4.3 Parliament, General Elections, the Party Political System, Parliamentary Procedure, Legislative Proceedings
4.4 The Government and the Civil Service

4.1 Constitutional Framework

The history of British politics over the past 800 years has been largely one of breaking down the monarch's former power, and vesting that authority in Parliament as the sovereign legal voice of the people. This struggle has produced bitter conflicts on governmental, social and religious levels, as well as slowly evolving political institutions. The original structures were inevitably monarchical, aristocratic and non-democratic. These have been gradually adapted to the requirements of parliamentary democracy, changing social conditions and the mass franchise of today.

However, the roles of the political institutions are still vigorously debated in contemporary Britain. Governments are frequently accused of being too secretive, too centralized, too party-political, and insufficiently responsive to the wider needs of the country. It is also argued that Parliament has lost its controlling and restraining influence over the Cabinet-led executive. It is felt that political power has shifted overwhelmingly to the sitting government, and to the Prime Minister within the Cabinet. This view suggests that the real authority in the British governmental and political system now rests with the Prime Minister, as it had once belonged predominantly to the monarch.

4.1.1 Political History

Between 1066 and 1199 English monarchs had great power, but generally accepted advice and some limitations on their authority. However later kings, such as King John, often ignored these restrictions and the French-Norman barons eventually united again his dictatorial rule. They forced him to sign Magna Carta in 121 Although this document was initially intended to protect th aristocracy and not the ordinary citizen, it came in time to b regarded as a cornerstone of British liberties, and is one of the olde written constitutional papers. Among other things, it restricted th monarch's powers; forced him to take advice; promoted a aristocratic influence in national affairs; and stipulated that n citizen could be punished or kept in prison without a fair trial. Late monarchs tried to ignore Magna Carta, but could not succe initially against the military strength of the barons.

These developments encouraged the establishment of bas parliamentary structures against royal power. In 1265 Simon d Montfort called England's first parliament, which was composed nobles and minor aristocrats. This was followed in 1295 by th Model Parliament, which was to serve as an example for futu structures. Its two sections consisted of the Lords and Bishops, wh were chosen by the monarch, and the Commons, which comprise elected male representatives. These two units gradually move further apart over time, and eventually evolved into the prese parliamentary division between the House of Lords and the House Commons. However, in the thirteenth century, the combin Parliament of aristocrats and commoners was too large to rule th country effectively. A Privy Council was subsequently create which was an expansion of the traditional small circle of advisers the royal court. In succeeding centuries, this body was to become th dominant royal government outside Parliament, until it also gav way to the present structures in the late eighteenth and earl nineteenth centuries.

Although these early development did give Parliament som limited powers against the monarch, there was a return to roy dominance in Tudor England from 1485. The nobility had bee weakened by wars and internal conflicts, and the Tudor monarc deliberately chose minor aristocratic landed gentry as members their Privy Councils. The nobility were often excluded from polic making, and the gentry inevitably became dependent upon roy patronage. Consequently, Tudor monarchs controlled Parliament a

[illegible] only when they needed to raise money.

sum[illegible]ent began to show more resistance to the monarchy under [illegible] Stuart succession from 1603 by using its gradually acquired weapon of financial control. It was influenced by the gentry, who had now become more independent of royal patronage, had expanded economically in the country, and had a majority in the House of Commons. Parliament began to refuse royal requests for money. It eventually forced Charles I to sign the Petition of Rights in 1628, which further restricted the monarch's powers and was intended to prevent him from raising taxes without Parliament's consent. Charles tried to ignore these political developments, until he was obliged to summon Parliament for finance. Parliament again refused the request.

Realising that he could not control Parliament, Charles next failed in his attempt to arrest Parliamentary leaders in the House of Commons itself. Because of this episode, the monarch was in future prohibited from entering the Commons. Today Black Rod, who is a royal ceremonial appointment, is a reminder of these constitutional changes. He knocks on the door of the Commons after it has been closed against him, in order to summon members of the Commons to the State Opening of Parliament. This is normally performed each autumn by the monarch in the House of Lords.

Charles's rejection of developing political ideals provoked anger against the Crown, and eventually a Civil War broke out in 1642. The mainly Protestant Parliamentarians under Oliver Cromwell won the military struggle against the largely Catholic Royalists. Charles I was beheaded in 1649, the monarchy was abolished, and England was made a republic under the Cromwells (1649-59). During this republican period, Parliament consisted only of the House of Commons, which met every three years.

However, Cromwellian military rule was harsh and increasingly unpopular, so that most people wanted the restoration of the monarchy. The two Houses of Parliament were re-established, and in 1660 they restored the Stuart Charles II to the throne. Initially Charles co-operated with Parliament, but eventually his financial needs, his belief in the divine right of kings to rule without opposition, and his support of the Catholic cause lost him popular and parliamentary backing. Parliament then ended his expens wars; forced him to sign the Test Act of 1673, which exclud Catholics and Protestant dissenters from holding public office; passed the Habeas Corpus Act in 1769, which stipulated that citizen could be imprisoned without a fair and speedy trial.

In addition to this growing power of Parliament against monarch, the seventeenth century also saw the beginning of m organized political parties. These derived largely from ideological and religious conflicts of the Civil War. Two gro became dominant, and this feature was to characterize future Br two-party politics, in which political power has shifted between main parties. The Whigs were mainly Cromwellian Protestants gentry, who refused to accept the Catholic James II as successor Charles II, and who wanted religious freedom for all Protestar The Tries generally supported royalist beliefs, and helped Charles to secure James's right to succeed him.

But James's subsequent behaviour resulted in a further reducti of royal influence. He attempted to rule without Parliament, ignor its laws, and tried to repeal the Test Act. His manipulatio eventually forced the Tories to join the Whigs in inviting Protestant William of Orange to intervene. Supported by Du military help, William arrived in England in 1688, James fled France, and William succeeded to the throne. Since no force w involved, this event has been called the Bloodless or Glori Revolution. The 1688 changes considerably affected the Brit constitution and politics. William III became Britain's fi constitutional monarch and, because of conditions imposed up him, it was in future practically impossible for the monarch to rei without the consent of Parliament.

A series of Acts at this time laid the foundations for la political and constitutional developments. The Declaration of Rig in 1689 tried to establish basic civil liberties, and prevented monarch from making laws or raising an army without Parliamen approval. The Act of Settlement in 1701 gave religious freedom all Protestants, and stipulated that all future English monarchs had be Protestant. A Triennial Act established that Parliament was to called every three years.

[illegible]lorious Revolution effectively abolished the monarch's [illegible]divine right. It also attempted to arrange a division of cl[illegible]etween an executive branch (the monarch through the pow[illegible]t of the Privy Council); a legislative branch (both Houses gov[illegible] of P[illegible]ent and formally the monarch); and the judiciary (a legal body [illegible]dependent of monarch and Parliament). This division, in which the legislature was supposed to control the executive, evolved slowly into its modern counterparts.

Parliamentary power continued to grow gradually in the early eighteenth century, initially because the German-born George I lacked interest in English affairs of state. He also mistrusted the Tories with their Catholic sympathies, and appointed Whig ministers such [illegible]Robert Walpole to his Privy Council. Eventually Walpole becam[illegible]Chief Minister, Leader of the Whig Party and head of the Whig [illegible]ority in the House of Commons, which was now mainly comp[illegible] of wealthy land and property owners. Walpole's resulting contr[illegible] political power enabled him to increase parliamentary influ[illegible] and he has been called Britain's first Prime Minister. But such [illegible]amentary authority was by no means absolute, and later mon[illegible] sought a return to royal dominance. However, George III even[illegible]lost much of his own and royal authority after the loss of the A[illegible]can colonies with their Revolution against Britain in 1775. He [illegible]bliged to appoint William Pitt the Younger as his Tory Chief [illegible]inister, and it was under Pitt that the office of Prime Mini[illegible]eally developed.

[illegible]lthough parliamentary control continued to grow in the late eigh[illegible] and early nineteenth centuries, there was still no wide[illegible]d democracy in Britain. Political authority was now in the hands [illegible] landowners and merchants in Parliament, and the vast majority of the people did not possess the vote. Bribery and corruption were common in this political atmosphere, with the buying of those votes which did exist and the giving away or sale of public offices. The Tories were against electoral reform, as were the Whigs initially. But the country was now rapidly increasing its population and developing industrially and economically, so that pressures for political reform became irresistible. The Whigs extended voting rights to the expanding middle class in the First

Reform Act of 1832. The Tory Disraeli later gave the vote to men with property and a certain income. However, the large majority of the working class were still unrepresented in Parliament because they had no votes. It was only in 1884 that the Whig Gladstone gave the franchise to all male adults. But most women had to wait until 1928 for full voting rights to be established in Britain.

The main elements of modern British government developed somewhat haphazardly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and were based on the 1688 revolution and its division of powers. Government ministers gradually became responsible to the House of Commons rather than to the monarch, and were mainly members of the Commons. A growing collective responsibility meant that they all shared joint responsibility for the policies and acts of government, in addition to their individual responsibility owed to Parliament for the organization of their ministries. The prime ministership developed from the monarch's Chief Minister to 'first among equals' and eventually to the leadership of all ministers. The central force of government was now the parliamentary Cabinet of senior ministers which had grown out of the Privy Council and the monarch's Cabinet. The ministers and the government belonged to the majority party in the House of Commons. The largest minority party became the Official Opposition, striving by its party manifesto and its performance in the Commons and the country to become the next government chosen by the people.

Such constitutional developments were aided by the growth of more sophisticated and organized political parties, in the nineteenth century, which were conditioned by changing social and economic factors. These produced the modern struggle between opposing ideologies as represented by the various political parties. The Tories, who also became known as the Conservatives I around 1830, had been a dominant force in British politics since the eighteenth century. They believed in established values and the preservation of traditions; supported business and commerce; had strong links with the Church of England and the professions; and were opposed to what they saw as radical ideas. The Whigs, however, were developing into a more progressive force. They wanted social reform and economic freedom without government restrictions. In the pe[illegible]owing the parliamentary reforms of 1832, the Whigs were ch[illegible] into what later became the Liberal Party. They were to cre[illegible] enlightened programme of liberalism in the late nineteenth and [illegible] twentieth centuries. The Liberal Party was a mixture of peop[illegible]d ideas, often held together by the principle of utilitarian reform (for the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people).

But a significant feature of the early inter-war years after 1918 was the decline of the Liberal Party, from which it was unable to recover. The new Labour Party, formed in 1906, gradually became the main opposition party to the Conservatives, and continued the traditional two-party system in British politics. It grew rapidly and was supported by the trade unions, the majority of the working class, and some middle-class voters. The first Labour government was formed in 1924 under Ramsay MacDonald, but only achieved real majority power in 1945 under Clement Attlee. It then embarked on a radical programme of social and economic reforms, which were to lay the foundations of the modern corporate and welfare state.

Meanwhile, in this lengthy period of changing political fortunes and the triumph of the House of Commons in the parliamentary system, gradual reforms had been made to the House of Lords. The Parliament Acts of 1911 and 1949, eventually removed much of the Lords' political authority, leaving them with only a slight delaying and amending power over parliamentary bills. They could no longer interfere with financial legislation. These reforms finally demonstrated that political and taxation matters were now decided by the members of the Commons as elected representatives of the people. Other subsequent Acts have allowed the creation of non-hereditary titles, which supplement the old arrangement in which most peerages were hereditary.

A new challenge to parliamentary sovereignty and the political tradition in Britain has arisen due to membership of the European Community (1973). Some legal powers have already been lost to Community institutions, so that Parliament is no longer the sole legislative body in Britain. Further functions will probably be transferred to the Community as it becomes more economically and politically integrated.

4.1.2 The Constitutional Framework

There have been no revolutionary upheavals in the British system of government over the centuries, despite the Civil War and the 1688 changes. Rather, existing institutions have been pragmatically adapted to new conditions. There has likewise been no deliberate attempt to establish a rigidly defined constitution, so that Britain, unlike many other countries, has no written constitution contained in any one document. Instead, the British employ a mixture of statute law (Acts of Parliament); common law (ancient judge-made law); and conventions (or principles and practices of government which, although not legally binding, are generally accepted as having the force of law).

Since Parliament is for most purposes still the supreme legislative authority, save for some European Community legislation law and institutions can be created or changed by a simple Act of Parliament relatively quickly. The common law can be extended by the judges in the legal process, and conventions can be altered, formed or abolished by general agreement. Once a problem has been solved satisfactorily in the British system, that solution tends to be used again in similar situations, and becomes a precedent to govern future actions. Precedents are vital devices in the operation of Parliament, the administrative bodies and the courts of law. These elements, which together with some ancient documents make up the British constitutional framework, are said to be flexible and simple enough to respond quickly to new conditions should that be necessary.

This somewhat haphazard constitutional system, which is largely dependent upon conventions and observing the rules of the game, has been admired in the past. The arrangements were said to combine stability and adaptability, so that a successful balance of authority and toleration was achieved. Most British governments tended to govern pragmatically when in power, in spite of very ideological party manifestos at election time. The emphasis was on whether a particular policy worked and was generally acceptable. Governments were conscious of how far they could go before displeasing their own followers and the electorate, to whom they were accountable at the next general election.

But the system has been increasingly criticized in recent years. Governments have become more radical in their policies, and have been able to implement them because of strong majorities in the Commons. There has been concern at the apparent absence of constitutional safeguards for the individual citizen against state power, especially since there are few legal definitions of civil liberties in Britain. There also appear to be few effective parliamentary restraints upon a strong government which is intent upon carrying out its policies.

The lack of adequate constitutional definitions in the British system has been seen as potentially dangerous, particularly when governments and their administrative bodies have a reputation for being too secretive. There have consequently been campaigns for more effective civil protection in the forms of a bill of rights; a written constitution; greater judicial scrutiny of the merits of parliamentary legislation; a Freedom of Information Act; and the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into British domestic law. But none of these suggested reforms has been achieved, and there is considerable opposition to the various proposals.

Some critics argue that the British political system no longer works satisfactorily. They maintain that its institutions are too centralized, and that the traditional bases are no longer adequate for the organization of a complex, mass society. It is felt that political policies have become too conditioned by party politics at the expense of consensus. Questions have consequently been raised about the democratic and representative basis of national programmes. It is argued that there must be a fundamental reform of the existing political institutions if they are to reflect a contemporary diversity. However, changes do continue to be made to the present apparatus, and it may be that the old evolutionary principles will be successfully adapted to new demands and conditions.

The governmental model that operates in Britain today is usually described as a constitutional monarchy, or parliamentary system. While the monarch still has a role to play on some executive and legislative levels, it is Parliament which possesses the essential legislative power, and the government of the day which governs by initiating and controlling political policy and legislation. The correct constitutional definition of Parliament is the 'Queen-in-Parliament', and all state and governmental business is therefore carried out in the name of the monarch by the politicians and officials of the system. In constitutional theory, the British people hold the political sovereignty to choose their government, while Parliament, consisting partly of their elected representatives in the Commons, possesses the legal sovereignty to make laws.

The various branches of this political system, although easily distinguishable from each other, are not entirely separate. The monarch is formally head of the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. A Member of Parliament (MP) in the House of Commons and a member of the House of Lords may both be in the government of the day. A Law Lord in the House of Lords also serves the House of Lords as the highest appeal court.

The legislature, which consists of both Houses of Parliament and formally the monarch, is for most purposes the supreme law-making body. The executive comprises the sitting government and its Cabinet, together with government ministries or departments headed by ministers or secretaries of state, who all act formally in the name of the monarch. The judiciary is composed mainly of the judges of the higher courts, who determine the common law and interpret Acts of Parliament. The judiciary is supposed to be independent of the legislative and executive branches of government (figure 1).

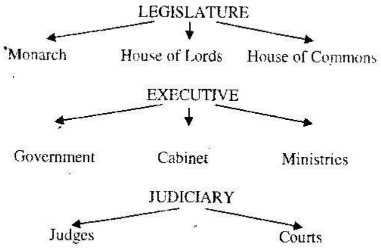

Figure 1

The Monarchy and the Privy Council

[illegible] continuity of the English monarchy has been interrupted [illegible] the Cromwell republic of 1649-59 although there have been [illegible] lines of descent, such as the Stuarts, the Tudors and the Hanoverians. The Crown, as distinct from any particular monarch, is [illegible] of the oldest secular institutions in Britain. Succession to the throne is still hereditary, but only for Protestants in the direct line of descent.

[illegible] monarch has a number of roles, and serves formally as head of [illegible] head of the executive head of the judiciary head of the legislature commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and supreme governor of the Church of England. It follows that all ministers and [illegible] of the central government are the monarch's servants, and [illegible] military officers, peers, and bishops of the Church of England swear allegiance to the Crown. In holding these and other [illegible], the monarch is said to personify the British state.

[illegible] spite of these roles, there are difficulties in defining the [illegible] powers of the monarch, who is supposed to reign but not [illegible] monarch is also expected to be politically neutral, and [illegible] not be seen to be making political decisions. In order to avoid [illegible] constitutional crises, proposals have often been made that [illegible] concerning the real powers of the monarch should be established. Ideally they would clarify the uncertain elements in the monarch's position, and avoid the dangers of involving the Crown in political controversy.

However, for all practical purposes and since the old executive royal authority has been virtually abolished, the monarch acts only on the advice of political ministers, which cannot be ignored. The monarch cannot make laws, impose taxes, spend public money or act unilaterally. In this sense, contemporary Britain is governed by Her Majesty's Government in the name of the Queen.

Nevertheless, the monarch still performs some important executive and legislative duties, which are essential to the smooth running of government. These include the summoning, opening, Proroguing (or adjourning), and dissolving of Parliament; giving the Royal Assent (or signature) to bills which have been passed by both

Houses of Parliament; appointing government ministers and oth public figures; granting honours; holding audiences with the Prin Ministers; convening meetings of the Privy Council; giving pardon to some convicted criminals; and fulfilling international dutie head of state. In practice, most of these functions are performed b the monarch on the advice of the Prime Minister or other ministers.

But central power still possessed by the monarch is the choice an appointment of the Prime Minister. Normally and by convention, th person would be the leader of the political party which has majority in the House of Commons. However, if there is no clea majority or if the political situation is unclear, the monarch could i theory make a free choice. In practice, it appears that advice woul be given by the monarch's advisers and leading politicians in order present a suitable candidate who would be generally acceptable.

The constitutional conventions stipulate that the monarch has th right to be informed of and advised on all aspects of national life b receiving government documents and meeting with the Prim Minister. The monarch also has the right to encourage, warn an advise ministers. This latter role could be a source of potential powe not only in Britain, but also in the Commonwealth of which th monarch is head. It is difficult to know to what extent monarchical advice on formal and informal levels is influential. Some critic suggest that it could be substantial.

The monarch is a permanent fixture in the British political system unlike temporary politicians, and often has a greater knowledge o domestic and international politics. It seems that the monarchy still has a considerable part to play in the operation of government at various levels. Its practical and constitutional importance is stressed by provisions for the appointment of counsellors of state (or a regent in exceptional cases) to perform royal duties, should the monarch be absent from Britain or unable to carry out public tasks.

Most of the costs of the royal family's official duties are met from public funds. This finance is granted from the Civil List – money which previously had to be debated and approved by Parliament each year, but which from 1990 has been frozen at current levels for a 10-year period. The monarch's private expenses as sovereign come from the Privy Purse – finance which is gathered

from [illegible] revenues of some royal estates. Any other costs incurred by the monarch as a private individual must come from the Crown's own sources, which are very considerable.

Arguments against the monarchy as a continuing institution in British life maintain that it is out-of-date, non-democratic, too expensive, too exclusive and too closely associated with aristocratic privilege and establishment thinking. It is argued that the monarchy's alleged aloofness from ordinary daily life contributes to class divisions in society and sustains a hierarchical structure. It is also suggested that, if the monarch's functions today are merely ceremonial and lack power or essential point. the office should be abolished and replaced by a cheaper figurehead presidency.

Arguments in favour of the monarchy suggest that it has developed and adapted to modern requirements, and is not remote. It is argued that it serves as a symbol or personification of the state; demonstrates stability and continuity; has a higher prestige than politicians; is not subject to political manipulations; plays a worthwhile role in political institutions; possesses a neutrality with which people can feel secure; and performs an important ambassadorial function in Britain and overseas. The monarchy is also said to reflect family values, and has a certain glamour (some would say soap-opera quality) about it, which is attractive to many people. The British public shows considerable affection for the royal family beyond its representative role. Public opinion polls from time to time demonstrate majority support for the institution of monarchy as against a republican alternative. But the polls also suggest that the monarchy should adapt more to changes in society; that less public money should be spent on it; and that its income should be subject to income tax.

4.2.1 The Privy Council

The Privy Council developed from a small group of royal advisers at court into the chief source of executive authority. But its powerful position was weakened in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as more of its functions were transferred to a developing parliamentary Cabinet. Its work was later devolved to newly created ministries, which were needed to cope with a rapidly changing society.

Today its main role is to advise the monarch on a range of matters, like the resolution of constitutional issues and the approval of Orders in Council, such as the granting of Royal Charters to public bodies. Its members can be appointed to advisory and problem-solving committees and, because of its international membership and continuing constitutional character, it can be influential.

Cabinet ministers automatically become members on taking government office. Life membership of the council is also given by the monarch, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, to eminent people in Britain and in independent monarchical countries of the Commonwealth. There are about 380 Privy Councillors at present, but the organization tends to work for practical purposes mostly through small groups. A full council is usually only summoned on the death of a monarch; when there are serious constitutional issues at stake; or occasionally when a Commonwealth Heads of State Conference is held in London. In the case of any indisposition of the monarch, counsellors of state or an appointed regent would work partly through the Privy Council.

Apart from its practical duties and its role as a constitutional forum for experienced people, perhaps the most important task of the Privy Council today is performed by its Judicial Committee. This serves as the final court of appeal from those dependencies and Commonwealth countries which have retained this avenue of appeal. It may also be used as an arbiter for a wide range of courts and committees in Britain and overseas, and its rulings can be influential.

4.3 Parliament, General Elections, the Party Political System, Parliamentary Procedure, Legislative Proceedings

Parliament is the supreme legislative authority in Britain and since it is not controlled by a written constitution, it has legal sovereignty in virtually all matters, subject only to some European Community decisions. This means that it can create, abolish or amend laws for all or any part(s) of Britain on any topic. The main [illegible]f Parliament today are to pass laws; to vote on financial [illegible] government can carry on its legitimate business; to [illegible] government policies and administration; and to scrutinize [illegible] Community legislation.

B[illegible]rsuing these powers, Parliament is supposed to legislate acc[illegible] to the rule of law, precedent and tradition. Politicians are gen[illegible] sensitive to these conventions and to public opinion. A set of [illegible]l and informal checks and balances – such as party discip[illegible], the Official Opposition, public reaction and pressure grou[illegible] – normally ensures that Parliament legislates according to its legal [illegible]ponsibilities. A government with a strong majority in the Hou[illegible] Commons may bow to public pressure, face rebellion from its [illegible]MPs and suffer attack by the opposition parties if the pro[illegible]ws are not widely accepted.

[illegible]ment consists of the House of Lords, the House of Co[illegible] and formally the monarch. It assembles as a unified body onl[illegible] ceremonial occasions, such as the State Opening of Pa[illegible] by the monarch in the House of Lords. Here it listens to the [illegible]arch's speech from the throne, which outlines the gov[illegible]nt's broad legislative programme for the coming session. All [illegible] parts of Parliament must normally pass a bill before it can be[illegible]n Act of Parliament and therefore law. A correctly created Act [illegible] be challenged in the law courts on its merits.

[illegible]rliament has a maximum duration of five years, but it is ofte[illegible]olved and a general election called before the end of this term. [illegible] maximum has sometimes been prolonged by special parli[illegible]tary legislation on occasions of national emergency like the [illegible] World Wars. A dissolution of Parliament and the issue of writs [illegible] the ensuing general election are ordered by the monarch on the advice of the Prime Minister. If an individual MP dies, resigns or is given a peerage, a by-election is called only for that member's seat, and Parliament as a whole is not dissolved.

The contemporary *House of Lords* consists of the Lords Temporal and the Lords Spiritual. The Lords Spiritual are the Archbishops of York and Canterbury, together with twenty-four senior diocesan bishops of the Church of England. The Lords Temporal consist of (1) hereditary peers and peeresses who have kept their titles; (2) life peers and peeresses, who have usually been created by political parties; and (3) the Lords of Appeal (Law Lords), who become life peers on their judicial appointments. The latter serve the House of Lords as the ultimate court of appeal for most purposes from most parts of Britain. This appeal court does not consist of the whole House of Lords, but only some nine Law Lords, who have held senior judicial office, who are under the chairmanship of the Lord Chancellor, and who form a quorum of three to five when they hear appeal cases.

There are some 1,200 members of the House of Lords, but the active daily attendance varies from a handful to a few hundred. Peers receive no salary for their parliamentary work, but are eligible for attendance and travelling expenses should they wish to claim them. The House is presided over by the Lord Chancellor, who is a political appointee of the sitting government, who sits on the Woolsack (or stuffed woollen sofa) as Speaker (Chairman) of the House, and who controls the procedure and meetings of the House.

There are frequent demands that the unrepresentative, unelected House of Lords should be abolished and replaced by a second democratically elected chamber. The problem consists of which alternative model to adopt, and there is little agreement on this point. Meanwhile, the House of Lords does its job well as an experienced and less partisan corrective to the House of Commons. It retains an important revising, amending and delaying function. This may be used either to block government legislation for a time, or to persuade governments to have a second look at bills. In this sense, it is a safeguard, against over-hasty legislation by the Commons, and fulfils a considerable constitutional role at times when governments may be very powerful. This function is possible because members of the Lords tend to be more independently minded than MPs in the Commons, and do not suffer such rigid party discipline. Indeed, the House has a considerable number of Independents (or crossbenchers) who do not belong to any political party, although there appears to be a nominal Conservative majority in the total membership.

Attempts to reform the House of Lords were made several times in the course of the 20th century.

The Parliament Act of 1911 removed from the House of Lords [illegible] of veto a bill, except one to prolong the lifetime of a [illegible]. Instead, the Lords could delay a bill by up to two years. [illegible]ament Act of 1949 further reduced the Lord's delaying [illegible] one year.

[illegible] Labour government came tp power in 1997 on a manifesto w[illegible]ed that the House of Lords must be reformed. As an initial, sel[illegible]ained reform, the right of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the [illegible]e of Lords will be ended by statute. This will be the first stage [illegible] process of reform to make the House of Lords more dem[illegible]ic and representative. The legislative powers of the House of L[illegible] will remain unaltered.

[illegible] House of Lords Bill to remove the right of hereditary peers to s[illegible] vote in the house was introduced in the 1998-1999 parliame[illegible]ession. The amendment allowed that 75 hereditary peers wo[illegible]in their seats, and be elected by party groups in proportion to [illegible]rengths. Responsibility for further reform was given to the Ro[illegible]ommission on the Reform of House of Lords. The *House of Co*[illegible] consists of Members of Parliament (MPs) who are elected by [illegible]dult suffrage of the British people, and who are said to re[illegible] the citizen in Parliament. In practice, this means that a g[illegible]nt can be elected with a minority of the popular vote and is ab[illegible]carry out its policies (the mandate theory) because it has ac[illegible] a majority of the seats in the House of Commons. The Co[illegible]s has 650 MPs, of whom under 10 per cent are women. Th[illegible]e 523 parliamentary seats for England, 38 for Wales, 72 for Sc[illegible] and 17 for Northern Ireland.

[illegible]ditional constitutional theory has suggested that Parliament is supposed to control the government or the executive. This might have been true to some degree in the past. But the contemporary reality seems to be that a strong government with a reasonable overall majority in the Commons should be able to carry its policies through Parliament. This is irrespective of what Parliament as a collective body can do to oppose it. It is government that governs in Britain today. Unless there is a small-majority government or rebellion by government MPs, Parliament appears unable to affect that rule in any substantial way. The opposition parties can only oppose in Parliament in the hope of persuading the electorate to dismiss the sitting government at the next general election. Some critics would like to see stronger parliamentary control over the executive, which has been described as an elective dictatorship. But given the existing electoral system and the present organization of Parliament, there seems little chance of this without a fundamental reform of the whole apparatus.

4.3.1 The Parliamentary Electoral System (General Elections)

Britain is divided for electoral purposes into constituencies, or geographical areas of the country, usually containing about 60,000 voters, each of which returns one elected MP to the House of Commons. The constituencies are supposed to be frequently changed in size and location in order to ensure fair representation and to reflect population movements. But such aims are not always successfully achieved.

General elections for parliamentary seats are by secret ballot, but voting is not compulsory. British, Commonwealth and Irish Republic citizens may all vote in the elections provided that they are resident in Britain, registered on the annual register of voters for the constituency, are aged 18 or over, and are not subject to any disqualification. People not entitled to vote include members of the House of Lords; certain mentally ill patients who are detained in hospital or prison; and persons who have been recently convicted of corrupt or illegal election practices.

Each elector casts one vote, normally in person, at a polling station set up on election day. He or she will make a cross on a ballot paper against the name of the candidate for whom the vote is cast. However there are provisions for those who for various reasons are unable to vote in person in their local constituency to register postal or proxy votes. There are also certain voting rights for expatriate Britons.

The turnout of voters averages over 70 per cent at general elections out of a total electorate of some 42 million people. The candidate who wins the most votes in a constituency is elected MP for that area. This system is known as the simple majority or the 'first past the post' system. There is no voting by proportional representation (PR), except for local elections in Northern Ireland.

There has been much debate about the British electoral system [illegible] as unfair to the smaller parties, and campaigns continue [illegible] of PR, which would create a wider selection of parties [illegible] of Commons and cater for minority political interests. [illegible] major parties (Conservative and Labour) have preferred [illegible] system. It gives them a greater chance of achieving [illegible] they have not been prepared to legislate for change. [illegible] Labour Party seems now to be more sympathetic to PR. [illegible] that the British people have traditionally preferred the [illegible] and more certain government which can often, if not [illegible] result from the present arrangements. Defenders of the [illegible] system point to the assumed weaknesses of coalition or [illegible] government as practised on the continent, such as frequent [illegible] a lack of firm policies and power-bargaining between [illegible] parties in order to achieve government status. But weak and [illegible] government can also result from the British system.

[illegible] The Party Political System

[illegible] electoral system depends to a large extent upon the party [illegible] system, which has existed since the seventeenth century. [illegible] political parties present their policies in the form of [illegible] to the electorate for consideration during the intensive [illegible] of canvassing and campaigning before General Election Day. [illegible] candidate in a constituency is elected to Parliament on a [illegible] of election manifesto, the personality of the candidate and [illegible] of the national party. But party activity continues [illegible] election period itself, as the politicians battle for power and [illegible] of the electorate.

[illegible] 1945 there have been seven Labour and eight Conservative governments in Britain. Some have had large majorities in the House of Commons, while others have had small ones. Some, like the Labour governments in the 1970s, have had to rely on the support of smaller parties, such as the Liberals and various nationalist parties, in order to remain in power.

The great majority of the MPs in the House of Commons belong to either the Conservative or the Labour Party, which are the largest political parties. This division emphasizes the continuation of the traditional two-party system in British politics, in which power [illegible] alternated between two major parties.

The Labour Party has traditionally gathered its support from the trade unions, the working class and some middle-class backing. [illegible] electoral strongholds have always been in south Wales, Scotland and the Midland and northern English industrial cities. But, although the 1997 general election continued to reflect this national division, the previous patterns of support are altering as social and job mobility changes. In recent years the Labour Party has embarked on wide-ranging reviews of its policies in order to broaden its appeal, take account of changing economic and social conditions, and remain a major force in British politics.

The Conservative Party has traditionally regarded itself as a national party, which appeals to people across the class barriers. Although it has often criticized what it sees as the dogmatic and ideological fervour of the Labour Party, the Conservative Party has also become more radical in recent years, and has departed from what used to be considered as the consensus view of British politics. The party's support comes mainly from business interests and the middle and upper classes, but a sizeable percentage of skilled and unskilled workers, and women have always voted Conservative. The party's strongholds tend to be in southern England, with scattered support elsewhere in the country, although it has suffered serious setbacks in Scotland.

Smaller political parties also have some representation in the House of Commons. Among these have been the Liberals and Social Democrats; the Scottish National Party; Plaid Cymru (the Welsh National Party); the Protestant Northern Irish parties of the Official Unionists, the Democratic Unionists and the Ulster Popular Unionists; the Social Democratic and Labour Party (moderate Roman Catholic Northern Irish party); and Sinn Fein (Republican Northern Irish party). Other small parties such as the Greens and Communist Party, as well as publicity-seeking fringe groups, may also contest a general election. But a party which does not achieve a certain number of votes in the election loses its deposit – the sum paid when a party registers to fight an election.

An innovation in British party politics during 1982-7 was the

[illegible] of the Alliance as an electoral force. This was formed by [illegible] ation for electoral purposes of the Liberals and the Social [illegible] Party (SDP), which was founded in 1981 by defectors [illegible] Labour Party. The Alliance gained substantial support in [illegible] nion polls, won some dramatic by-elections, and achieved [illegible] ble success in local government elections. But it did not [illegible] omparable breakthrough into national politics and the [illegible] Commons. The Liberals and the SDP saw themselves in [illegible] as an alternative political force to the Conservative and [illegible] rties, based on the centre or centre-left of British politics. [illegible] to 'break the mould' of the traditional two-party system, [illegible] performance in the 1987 general election did not achieve [illegible] In 1988 a majority of the two parties merged into one party [illegible] Social and Liberal Democratic Party (or SLD or Liberal [illegible] for short). But small groups of Liberals and SDP [illegible] ntinued as separate parties, until the SDP ceased to exist [illegible] al party in 1990. At present, the support for the Liberal [illegible] has sunk to some 16 per cent, and it seems that the centre [illegible] British politics has been largely recaptured by the Labour [illegible] vative Parties. However, the SLD and other smaller par- [illegible] low alternative political parties to be represented in the [illegible] Commons (table 1).

[illegible] 1 – General election results, 1997

arty	*Popular vote (%)*	*Members elected*
ive	30	165
L	43	418
L Democrat	17	48
A parties		

The party which wins most parliamentary seats at a general election, or which has the support of a majority of MPs in the House of Commons, usually forms the new government. Under the British system, that government need not have obtained an overall majority of the popular vote (representing the actual number of votes cast by the voting population). It is estimated that a party will generally have to gather more than 33 per cent of the popular vote before winning a substantial number of seats, and nearly 40 per cent in order to expand that representation and have a chance of forming a government with an overall majority. These figures will also depends upon whether support is concentrated in particular geographical areas, for a party may gain seats by its local strength. Smaller parties, which do not approach these percentages, will not gain many seats in the Commons. It is this system of representation that proponents of would like to change, in order to reflect more accurately the Popular vote and the anneal of minority parties.

Once the results of a general election are known, the majority party in the Commons normally forms the new government, and the largest minority party becomes the official opposition. The opposition has its own leader and 'shadow government'. It plays an important constitutional role in the parliamentary system, which is based on adversarial and confrontational politics. The seating arrangements in the House of Commons reflect this system, since leaders of the government and opposition parties sit on facing 'front benches', with their supporting MPs, or 'backbenchers', sitting behind them. The effectiveness of parliamentary arrangements is supposed to rest on the relationship between the government and opposition parties, in which the members are required to observe procedural conventions.

The opposition parties may try to overthrow the government by defeating it on a 'vote of no confidence' or a 'vote of censure'. In general these techniques are not successful if the government has a comfortable majority and can count on the support of its MPs. The opposition parties consequently attempt to influence the formation of national policies by their criticism of pending legislation; by trying to obtain concessions on bills by proposing amendments to them; and by striving to increase support for their performance and policies inside and outside the Commons. They take advantage of any publicity and opportunity which they think might improve their chances at the next general election.

Inside Parliament, party discipline is exercised by the Whips, who are chosen from party MPs by the party leaders, and who are normally under the direction of a Chief Whip. Their duties include informing members of forthcoming parliamentary business;

ing the party's voting strength in the Commons by seeing ir members attend all important debates or are 'paired' with osition (agreed matching numbers so that MPs need not be in the House all the time); as well as conveying backbench to the party leadership.

is line of communication is important if rebellion and disquiet be avoided. MPs will receive notice from the Whips' office of mportant a particular vote is, and the information will be rlined up to three times. For example, a 'three-line whip' fies a crucial vote, and failure to attend or comply with party ctions is usually regarded as a revolt against the party's policy. discipline is very strong in the Commons and less so in the But in both Houses it is essential to the smooth operation of politics. A government with a large majority should not e complacent, nor antagonize its backbenchers. If it does so, a sful rebellion against the government or mass abstention from by its own side may destroy the majority and the party's y.

tside Parliament, party control rests with the national and party organizations, which can be very influential. They te the party at every opportunity, but especially at election when they are in charge of canvassing the public and eering on behalf of their party.

3.3 Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure in both Houses of Parliament is mainly on custom, convention and precedent. It is also contained in ing orders which govern details of procedure, and which have formulated over a long period of time.

The Speaker is the chief officer of the House of Commons, is ected by the MPs, and has full authority to interpret the rules and orders of the House. The Speaker is an elected MP who, on elevation to the Speaker's chair, ceases to be a political representative and becomes a neutral official. The parliamentary seat is not normally contested at a general election, although there have been exceptions to this convention. The Speaker protects the House against any abuse of procedure; may curtail debate in order that a matter can be voted on; has the power to adjourn the House to a later time: may suspend a sitting; controls the voting system; and announces the final result. In cases where there is a tie, the Speaker has the casting vote, but must exercise this choice in such a way that it reflects established conventions. The Speaker's position is very important to the orderly running of the House. MPs can be very combative and often unruly, to an extent that the Speaker is sometimes forced to dismiss or suspend a member from the House.

Debates in Parliament follow normal patterns. They are usually begun with a motion (or proposal) which, if supported, is then debated by the whole House. The matter is eventually decided by a simple majority vote after a division, which is called at the end of the discussion. MPs enter either the 'Yes' or 'No' lobby to record their vote, but they may also abstain from voting. Debates in the House of Commons used to be the occasion for the actual making of policy. But this practice is now impossible because of the weight and complexity of government business.

The proceedings of both Houses of Parliament are normally open to the public, and may be viewed from the public and visitors' galleries. The transactions are published daily in *Hansard* (the Parliamentary 'newspaper'), which records most events verbatim, and are also widely commented upon by the media. The proceedings of both Houses are now televised, and radio transmissions may be broadcast live or at a later time in recorded form.

4.3.4 Legislative Proceedings

The courts may occasionally extend the common law by their decisions. But the creation of new law and fundamental changes to existing law (outside European Community legislation) are the responsibility of Parliament. This mainly means the implementation of the sitting government's policies. But it can also cover wider matters of a non-party nature, and responses to European Community rulings.

A government will usually issue certain documents before the actual parliamentary law-making process commences. A Green

a consultative document which allows interested parties to
ir case before a bill is introduced into Parliament. A White
s not normally consultative in this wide sense, but is a
ary document which itemizes the details of prospective
ment legislation.

draft law, which has usually been drawn up by parliamentary
ernment civil servants, takes the form of a parliamentary bill.
lls are public in that they relate to public or state policies.
bills involve individual, corporate or local interests. Public
may be introduced in either House of Parliament by the
nment or by private MPs in their personal capacity. A private
r's bill, which is usually on a topic of interest to that MP, is
y defeated for lack of parliamentary time or support. But some
nt private members' bills have survived the various hurdles and
become law, such as Acts concerning homosexuality, abortion
xual offences. A government will sometimes prefer a private
r to introduce minor or controversial legislation, with a
se of governmental support in Parliament. As a rule, politically
tious public bills go through the Commons first, but some of
controversial nature may be initiated in the – Lords. Whichever
dure is used, the bill must have passed through both Houses at
tage.

e Commons is normally the most important procedural step in
rocess. A bill will receive a formal first reading when it is
uced into the Commons by the government or a private
ber. After a variable period ranging from one day to several
hs, the bill is given its second reading after a debate on its
ral principles. An alternative at this stage is that an
ntroversial bill may be referred to a committee to see whether it
ants a second reading. After either of these methods, the bill is
usually passed to a standing committee for detailed discussion
amendment. As an alternative it can be referred for detailed
alysis to the whole House sitting as a committee. This committee
stage is followed by the report stage, during which further
amendments to the bill may be suggested. The third reading of the
bill considers it in its final form, usually on a purely formal basis.
However, debate is still possible at this stage if demanded by at least

six MPs. This delaying tactic may sometimes be used by the opposition parties to hold up the passage of a bill. But the government, in its turn, can introduce a 'guillotine motion' which cuts off further debate.

After the third reading, a Commons bill will be sent to the House of Lords. It will then go through broadly the same stages again, except for those steps which are unique to the Commons. The Lords can delay a non-financial bill for two sessions, or roughly one year. It can also propose amendments, and if amended the bill goes back to the Commons for further consideration. This amending function is an important power, and has been frequently used in recent years. But the Lords' role today is to act as a forum for revision, rather than as a rival to the elected Commons. In practice, the Lords' amendments can sometimes lead to the acceptance of changes by the government, or even a withdrawal of the bill.

When the bill has eventually passed through the Lords, it is sent to the monarch for the Royal Assent, which has not been refused since the eighteenth century. After the royal signature has been added, the bill becomes an Act of Parliament and is entered on the statute-book as representing the law of the land at that time.

This process from bill to Act may appear unduly drawn out. But it does normally avoid the dangers of hasty legislation. It ensures that the bill is discussed at all levels. It also allows the opposition parties to join in the legislative process, either by carrying amendments or sometimes by voting down a bill with the help of smaller parties and disaffected members of the government party.

Private bills are usually initiated by groups or organizations outside Parliament, such as local government authorities, which need special powers to carry out their business. The procedure for passing private bills is generally the same as for public bills, although in practice most of the work is done by committees. The sponsors or initiators must demonstrate the particular need for the bill, and any opposing interests must be heard during the legislative process. In theory, any individual can propose a private bill, but the time and expense involved usually render such a step unlikely (figure 2).

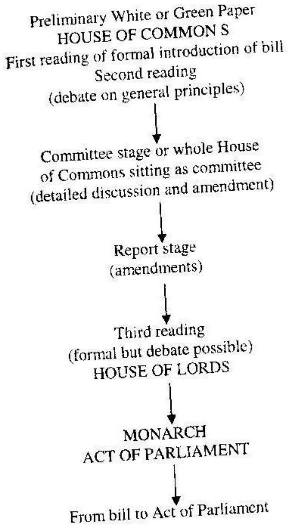
Preliminary White or Green Paper
HOUSE OF COMMON S
First reading of formal introduction of bill
Second reading
(debate on general principles)
Committee stage or whole House
of Commons sitting as committee
(detailed discussion and amendment)
Report stage
(amendments)
Third reading
(formal but debate possible)
HOUSE OF LORDS
MONARCH
ACT OF PARLIAMENT
From bill to Act of Parliament

Figure 2

4.4 The Government and the Civil Service

The British government normally consists of over a hundred ministers and other officials chosen from both Houses of Parliament, who are appointed by the monarch on the advice of the Prime Minister. They belong to the party which forms the majority in the

Commons, and are collectively responsible for the administration of national affairs. The government can vary considerably in the number of ministers and departments set up by the Prime Minister.

The *Prime Minister*, who is appointed by the monarch and is normally the leader of the majority party in the Commons, possesses a great deal of patronage in choosing ministers and deciding on the composition of the government. The Prime Minister's power stems from majority support in Parliament; from the authority to choose and dismiss minister; from the leadership of the party in the country; and from a control over policy-making. The Prime Minister usually sits in the Commons, as do most of the ministers, where they may all be questioned and held accountable for government actions and decisions. The Prime Minister has historically been the connection between the monarch and parliamentary government. This convention continues today in the weekly audience with the monarch, at which the policies and business of the government are discussed.

The Prime Minister consequently has great power within the British system of government, and there are arguments which suggest that the office has become like an all-powerful presidency. But there are considerable checks on this power, both inside and outside the party and Parliament, which make the analogy less than accurate. However, it does seem that there is a greater emphasis upon prime ministerial government in Britain today, rather than the traditional constitutional notions of Cabinet government.

The *Cabinet* is normally composed of up to twenty senior ministers from the government, who are chosen and presided over by the Prime Minister. Examples are the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Finance Minister), the Foreign Secretary, the Home Secretary, the Minister of Defence, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. The Cabinet structure originated historically in meetings that the monarch had with leading ministers in a small royal Cabinet, outside the framework of the Privy Council. As the monarch gradually ceased to play a part in active politics because of the growth of parliamentary government and party politics, the Royal Cabinet developed more authority and independence, and became a

mentary body.

onstitutional theory has traditionally argued that the Cabinet tively initiates and decides government policy. It has control of overnment apparatus and ministries because it is composed of bers of the majority party in the Commons. But the convention government rule is Cabinet rule seems to have become asingly weaker. Since the Prime Minister is responsible for net agendas and for the control of Cabinet proceedings, the net itself can become merely a 'rubber-stamp' to policies which already been decided upon by the Prime Minister, or by a ler group sometimes called the 'Inner Cabinet'. Cabinet nment appears to have lost some of its original impetus. ugh there are frequent demands that more deliberative power d be restored to it.

Much depends upon the personality of Prime Ministers in this tion. Some are strong and like to take the lead. Others have the impression of working within the traditional Cabinet ture. Much of our information about the operation of the net comes from 'leaks', or information divulged by Cabinet sters. Although the Cabinet meets in private and its discussions meant to be secret, the public is usually and reliably informed of net deliberations by the media.

The mass and complexity of government business today, and the that ministers are very busy with their own departments, suggest full debate in Cabinet on every item of policy is impossible. But widely felt that, while all the details cannot be discussed, the d outlines of policy should be more vigorously debated in binet. Critics argue that the present system concentrates too much wer in the hands of the Prime Minister: overloads ministers with k; allows too many crucial decisions to be taken outside the binet; and consequently reduces the notion of collective ponsibility.

Ministerial responsibility is still an important constitutional concept, although some doubt its applicability today. Collective sponsibility is that which all ministers, including those outside the Cabinet, share for government actions and policy. It means that Cabinet and other ministers should be seen to act as one. All must support a government decision in public, even though some may oppose it during the private deliberations. If a minister cannot do this, he or she may feel obliged to resign.

In addition to collective responsibility, a minister also has an individual responsibility for the work of the relevant government department. This means that the minister is answerable for any mistakes, wrongdoing or bad administration which occur, whether personally responsible for them or not. In such cases, the minister may resign, although this is not as common today as in the past. Such responsibility enables Parliament to maintain at least some control over executive actions because the minister is answerable to Parliament. The shadow of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration also hangs over the work of a minister and civil servants.

Government departments (or ministries) are the chief instruments by which central government implements government policy. A change of government does not necessarily alter the number or functions of these departments. However, some governments have occasionally instituted programmes which have involved the reorganization, or replacement of existing ministries. Examples of government departments are the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence, the Home Office. the Department of Education and Science, and the Treasury (of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is head). Most of these central departments are in London and are collectively known as Whitehall.

The government departments are staffed by the *Civil Service*, which consists of career administrators. Civil servants are employed by central government in London and throughout the country, and are involved in a wide range of government activities. They are responsible to the minister in whose department they work for the implementation of government policies. A change of minister or government does not require a change of civil servants, since they are expected to be politically neutral and to serve the sitting government impartially. Restrictions on political activities and publication are consequently imposed upon civil servants in order to ensure neutrality. There are some 600,000 civil servants in Britain today. Nearly half of these are women, but few of them achieve top ranks in the service.

here have been frequent accusations about the efficiency of the Service, and civil servants do not have a particularly good image, in spite of attempts at reform. It is often alleged that rvice imposes a certain mentality upon the implementation of nment policies, which successive ministers have been unable to at. There may be some areas of concern. But the stereotyped of the typical civil servant is not reflected in many who do a ugh, independent job of serving their political masters. The Service is also highly regarded in other countries for its ciency and impartiality.

4.1 Local Government

Some countries, such as the USA and Canada, are federal. They made up of a number of states, each of which has its own nment with its own powers to make laws and collect taxes. In countries the central governments have powers only because state have given them powers. In Britain it is the other way d. Local government authorities (generally known as cils') only have powers because the central government has them powers. Indeed, they only exist because the central nment allows them to exist. Several times in the twentieth ry British governments have recognized local government, lishing some local councils and bringing new ones into existence. The system of local government is very similar to the system of onal government. There are elected representatives, called ncillors (the equivalent of MPs). They meet in a council chamber he Town Hall or Country Hall (the equivalent of Parliament), e they make policy which is implemented by local government cers (the equivalent of civil servants).

Most British people have far more direct dealings with local vernment than they do with national government. Local councils ditionally manage nearly all public services. Taken together, they mploy three times as many people as the national government does. In addition, there is no system in Britain whereby a national government official has responsibility for a particular geographical area. (There is no one like a 'prefect' or 'governor'). In practice, therefore, local councils have traditionally been fairly free from constant central interference in their day to day work.

Local councils are allowed to collect one kind of tax. This is a tax based on property. (All other kinds are collected by central government.) It used to be called 'rates' and was paid only by those who owned property. Its amount varied according to the size and location of the property. In the early 1990s it was replaced by the 'community charge' (known as the 'poll tax'). This charge was the same for everybody who lived in the area covered by a council. It was very unpopular and was quickly replaced by the 'council tax', which is based on the estimated value of a property and the number of people living in it. Local councils are unable to raise enough money in this way for them to provide the services which central government has told them to provide. In addition, recent governments have imposed upper limits on the amount of council tax that councils can charge and now collect the taxes on business properties themselves (and then share the money out between local councils). As a result, well over half of a local council's income is now given to it by central government.

The modern trend has been towards greater and greater control by central government. This is not just a matter of controlling the way local government raises money. There are now more laws governing the way councils can conduct their affairs. On top of this, schools and hospitals can now 'opt out' of local-government control. Perhaps this trend is inevitable now that national party politics dominates local politics. Successful independent candidates (candidates who do not belong to a political party) at local election are becoming rarer and rarer. Most people now vote at local elections according to their national party preferences, if they bother to vote at all, so that these elections become a kind of opinion poll on the performance of the national government.

4.4.1.1 Local Government Services

Most of the numerous services that a modern government provides are run at local level in Britain. These include public hygiene and environment health inspection, the collecting of rubbish

outside people's houses (the people who do this are mistically known as 'dustmen'). and the cleaning and tidying of blic places (which is done by 'street sweepers'). They also le the provision of public swimming pools, which charge sion fees, and public parks, which do not. The latter are mostly green grassy spaces, but they often contain children's rounds and playing fields for sports such as football and cricket can be reserved in advance on payment.

ublic libraries are another well-known service. Anybody can go one of these to consult the books, newspapers and magazines free of charge. If you want to borrow books and take them out e library, you have to have a library card or ticket (these are ble to people living in the area). Sometimes CDs and video tes are also available for hire. The popularity of libraries in n is indicated by the fact that, in a country without identity , a person's library card is the most common means of fication for someone who does not have a driving licence.

Counties are the oldest divisions of the country in England and s. Most of them existed before the Norman conquest. They are used today for local government purposes, although a few have 'invented' this century (e.g. Humberside) and others have no tion in government but are still used for other purposes. One of e is Middlesex, which covers the western part of Greater London ers are still addressed 'Middx') and which is the name of a top-s cricket team. Many countries have 'shire' in their name (e.g. tfordshire, Hampshire, Leicestershire). 'Shires' is what the nties were originally called.

Boroughs were originally towns that had grown large and ortant enough to be given their own government, free of control the country. These days, the name is used for local government poses only in London, but many towns still proudly describe mselves as Royal Boroughs.

Parishes were originally villages centred on a local church. ey became a unit of local government in the nineteenth century. oday they are the smallest unit of local government in England.

The name 'parish' is still used in the organization of the main Christian churches in England (figure 3).

The organization of local government (1995)

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Cities and large towns in England and Wales

36 Metropolitan Districts

32 London Boroughs

Responsible for:
- collection of council tax
- planning
- roads and traffic
- housing
- building regulations
- safety in public places
- collection of rubbish
- disposal of rubbish
- education
- social services
- libraries
- leisure and recreation

In these areas some services, such as transport, the police force and the fire brigade, are run by special authorities, some of whose members are councillors.

The rest of England and Wales and all of Scotland

10 Regions (Scotland)

47 Countries (England and Wales)

Responsible for:
- collection of council tax
- planning
- roads and safety
- disposal of rubbish
- education
- social services
- libraries
- police force
- fire brigade

Districts

Responsible for:
- housing
- local planning
- collection of rubbish
- leisure and recreation
- safety in public places

Parishes (England)

Communities (Scotland and Wales)

These have no legal powers but are recognized as neighbourhood or village-level forums of discussion.

Figure 3

uestions

Why doesn't Britain have a written constitutions? Does it need

The Crown: What are the powers of the monarch?
Westminster: Why did the Commons become more important
the lords? Draw a diagram showing the shape and layout of the
e of Commons debating chamber. Give reasons why you think
arrangement is better or worse than the more common semi-
lar debating chamber. The House of Lords: Do you think the
s has become a more democratic institution after the
titutional reform of 1999?
The electoral and party system: Does Britain have an adequate
mentary electoral system? Explain the main difference between
onservative and Labour Parties.
5 Whitehall: What does "cabinet government" mean? What are
trengths and weaknesses? Examine the role of the Prime
ster in modern Britain. Why are modern British PMs so
erful?
6 Who rules Britain: The Crown, The Commons, The Lords,
Prime Minister, The Cabinet, The Civil Service?
7 What is the range of responsibilities of the local government in
in?

5 British National Economy

5.1 The Structure of Industry and Trade: Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Mechanical Engineering, Electronics, Offshore Industry, Food and Drink, Aerospace
5.2 Financial Services
5.3 Tourism
5.4 Agriculture

5.1 The Structure of Industry and Trade: Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Mechanical Engineering, Electronics, Offshore Industry, Food and Drink, Aerospace

Britain became the world's first industrialised country in the mid 19th century. Wealth was based on manufacturing iron and steel, heavy machinery and cotton textiles, and on coal mining, shipbuilding and trade. Manufacturing still plays an important role and Britain excels in high-technology industries like chemicals, electronics, aerospace and offshore equipment, where British companies are among the world's largest and most successful. The British construction industry has made its mark around the world and continues to be involved in prestigious building projects.

The most important industrial developments in the past 20 years or so in Britain have been the exploitation of North Sea oil and gas, and the rapid development of microelectronic technologies and their widespread application in industry and commerce. At the same time service industries have been assuming ever-increasing importance and now account for around two-thirds of output and employment. There has been a steady rise in the share of output and employment – now around 80 and 75 per cent respectively – accounted for by private-sector enterprises as privatisation of the economy has progressed.

Britain, the world's fifth largest trading nation, belongs to the European Union (EU), the biggest established trade grouping in the world.

The 'modernization' of business and industry happened later in

tain than it did in most other European countries. It was not until 1960s that large corporations started to dominate and that a nagement class', trained at business school, began to emerge. en after that time. many companies still preferred to recruit their nagers from people who had 'worked their way up' through the mpany ranks and/or who were personally known to the directors. ly in the 1980s did graduate business qualifications become the rm for newly-hired managers.

British industry performed poorly during the decades following Second World War (some people blamed this on the above racteristics). In contrast, British agriculture was very successful. this industry, large scale organization (i.e. big farms) had been re common in Britain than in other European countries for quite a g time.

As in all European countries, the economic system in Britain is a xture of private and public enterprise. Exactly how much of the ntry's economy is controlled by the state has fluctuated a great al in the last fifty years and has been the subject of continual litical debate. From 1945 until 1980 the general trend was for the te to have more and more control. Various industries became tionalized (in other words, owned by the government), especially se concerned with the production and distribution of energy. So did the various forms of transport and communication services s well, of course, as the provision of education, social welfare and alth care). By 1980, 'pure' capitalism probably formed a smaller rt of the economy than in any other country in western Europe.

From 1980 the trend started going in the other direction. A major rt of the philosophy of the Conservative government of the 1980s as to let 'market forces' rule (which meant restricting the freedom f business as little as possible) and to turn state-owned companies nto companies owned by individuals (who became shareholders).This pproach was a major part of the thinking of Thatcherism (Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister at that time). Between 1980 and 1994 a large number of companies were privatized (or 'denationalized'). That is, they were sold off by the government. By 1988 there were more shareholders in the country than there were members of unions. In addition, local government authorities were encouraged to 'contract out' their responsibility for services to commercial organizations.

The privatization of services which western people now regard as essential has necessitated the creation of various public 'watchdog' organizations with regulatory powers over the industries which they monitor. For example, Offtel monitors the activities of the privatized telephone industry, and OffWat monitors the privatized water companies.

5.1.1 The Decline of the Unions

In the 1980s the British government passed several laws to restric the power of the unions. One of these abolished the 'closed shop' (arrangement which employers made with unions to hire only people who belonged to a union). Another made strikes illegal unless a postal vote of all union members had been conducted. In 1984 there was a long miners' strike. The National Union of Miners refused to follow the new regulations. Its leader, Arthur Scargill, became a symbol (depending on your point of view) of either all the worst lunacies of unionism or the brave fight of the working classes against the rise of Thatcherism. Previous miners' strikes in the twentieth century had been mostly successful. But this one was not (the miners dad not achieve their aims); a sign of the decline in union power.

5.1.2 How Industry is Organised

In some sectors a small number of large companies and their subsidiaries are responsible for a substantial proportion of total production, notably in the vehicle, aerospace and transport equipment industries. About 250 British industrial companies each have an annual turnover of more than £500 million. The annual turnover of the biggest company, British Petroleum (BP), makes it the 11th largest industrial grouping in the world and the second largest in Europe. Five British firms are among the top 20 European Union (EU) companies in terms of capital employed.

Manufacturing accounted for 22 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1993 and for about the same percentage of employment. About 82 per cent of visible exports consisted of manu-

red or semi-manufactured goods. Virtually all manufacturing is ed out by private-sector businesses. Total capital investment in ufacturing was £12,165 million in 1993, comprising £10,146 mil- in plant and machinery, £1.253 million in new building work £766 million in vehicles.

The construction industry contributed 5 per cent of GDP and loyment about 1.2 million people in 1993, 4 per cent of the total ber of employees. Total domestic fixed capital investment in truction was £812 million.

5.1.3 Industry in Action

5.1.3.1 Chemicals

Britain's chemical industry is the third largest in Europe. The on's fourth biggest manufacturing industry, it provides direct loyment for 303.000 people. Around a half of its output is orted, making it Britain's greatest single export earner; exports in 3 were worth £17,300 million.

Many major chemical companies in Britain are multinationals; eral are subsidiaries of overseas companies and others are cialist manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, such as Glaxo and llcome. Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) is the sixth largest mical company in the world, with a range of 8.000 products. In 93 ICI was demerged into two companies to form 'new' ICI, built und industrial chemicals, paints, materials and explosives, and a arate company, Zeneca, comprising ICI's pharmaceuticals, ochemicals and seeds, and specialities business.

A large proportion of world R & D in agrochemicals is nducted in Britain. Notable British discoveries include diquat and raquat herbicides, pyrethroid insectisides, systemic fungicides and hicides, genetically-engineered microbial pesticides and methods encouraging natural parasites to eradicate common pests.

5.1.3.2 Pharmaceuticals

The British pharmaceuticals industry is one of the biggest in the world. It is the fifth largest manufacturer and fourth largest exporter of medicines. Scientific excellence underpins the success of the pharmaceuticals industry: British firms spend around £1,500 million a year in the search for new technologies, new therapies and new ways to fight disease. In 1992 a quarter of the 20 most prescribed medicine in the world had been discovered by scientists in Britain.

The industry is made up of about 360 companies of all sizes. A small number of very big firms dominate production – the six largest are Glaxo, Zeneca, Wellcome, SmithKline Beecham, Boots and Fisons. The largest 21 account for 70 per cent of production and employment. Smaller firms spend less on R & D and tend to concentrate on producing generic prescription medicines and non-prescription medicines with expired patents.

The industry manufactures the whole range of medicines – human and veterinary medicines, medical dressings and dental materials. In the last ten years or so, the largest growth has been in medicines that act on the respiratory system, followed by cardiovascular, muscular and skeletal, anti-infectives and alimentary tract remedies. Over-the-counter medicines sold most often are cough, cold and sore throat medicines, analgesics, vitamins and gastro-intestinal remedies.

Discoveries by the industry include semi-synthetics and treatments for asthma, coronary heart disease and certain cancers. British researchers are also making breakthroughs in treatments for AIDS, malaria and hepatitis. Biotechnology and a growing understanding of the biology of cells are bringing new medical opportunities. As genes in the human body are gradually sequenced, scientists are beginning to discover the molecular basis of diseases, opening the way to new treatments. Three major research areas in which Britain leads are drug design, biotechnology and gene therapy.

5.1.3.3 Mechanical Engineering

Exports of mechanical machinery represented 13 per cent of total visible exports in 1993. Output includes pressure vessels, heat exchangers and storage tanks for chemical and oil-refining plant, steam-raising boilers (including those for power stations), nuclear reactions, water and sewage treatment plant, and fabricated steelwork for bridges, buildings and industrial installations.

Britain is among the world's major producers of tractors, which e up over three-quarters of total output of agricultural equip-t. Sales of the tractor industry were valued at £1,100 million in 3. Massey Ferguson and Ford are major producers of tractors. nical innovations include computer-controlled tractors, an ultra-cient pesticide sprayer and combined mower/conditioners that ce drying time for grass.

Britain is the world's eighth largest producer of machine tools with l sales of nearly £900 million in 1993. British manufacturers have de technological advances in probes, sensors, co-ordinate suring devices, laser melting and the installation of flexible nufacturing systems. Computer numerical-controlled machines ount for an increasing proportion of output. The 600 Group is the gest British machine tool company.

Most sales of textile machinery are to export markets. British ovations include computerised colour matching and weave ulation, friction spinning, high-speed computer-controlled knitting chines and electronic jacquard attachments for weaving looms.

Britain's mining and tunnelling equipment leads in the production coal-cutting and road-heading (shearing) equipment, hydraulic of supports, conveying equipment, flameproof transformers, itchgear, and subsurface transport equipment and control systems.

5.1.3.4 Electronics

Britain has the fourth largest electronics industry in the world. he computer sector produced an extensive range of systems, central rocessors and peripheral equipment, from large computers for rge-scale data-processing and scientific work to mini-and icrocomputers for control and automation system and for home, ducational and office use. In 1993 exports reached a record level, round £4,000 million.

Britain makes 40 per cent of Europe's desktop computers. Nearly half of these computers and peripheral equipment intended for export are made in Scotland. Several leading overseas manufactures of data-processing equipment – for example, IBM, Unisys and Compaq – have established manufacturing plants in Britain. The biggest computer manufacturer is the largely Japanese-owned ICL. Other companies, such as Psion, have concentrated on developing new products for specialised markets. These include pocket-sized computers and notebook and pen computers.

Another sector of the industry manufactures radio communications equipment, radar, radio and sonar navigational aids for ships and aircraft, thermal imaging systems, alarms and signalling equipment, public broadcasting equipment and other capital goods. Radar was invented in Britain and British firms are still in the forefront of technical advances.

5.1.3.5 Offshore Industry

Britain has substantial oil and gas reserves offshore on the United Kingdom Continental Shelf (UKCS). Before the 1970s it was almost wholly dependent on imports for oil supplies.

Around 34,000 people are employed offshore, while a further 250,000 work in support industries – building oil rigs, designing platforms and pipelines, operating helicopters and boats and so on. Gross capital investment from British sources in oil and gas extraction represents about 20 per cent of British industrial investment.

Output of crude oil and natural gas liquids in Britain average just over 2 million barrels (around 274,000 tonnes) a day in 1993, making Britain the world's tenth largest oil producer.

5.1.3.6 Food and Drink

Britain has large food and drink manufacturing industry, which has accounted for a growing proportion of total domestic food supply in recent decades. Approximately 500,000 people are employed in the industry.

Frozen and prepared children foods, annual sales of which stand at over £3,600 million and £1,800 million respectively, other convenience foods, yoghurts, dairy desserts and instant snacks have formed the fastest-growing sector of the food market in recent years. Demand for health and slimming foods also continues to expand and

e has been a rise in sales of organically-grown produce as well as iety of products for vegetarians (soya-based foods, for instance).

Of major significance among alcoholic drinks produced in in in Scotch whisky, one of Britain's top export earners. there 110 distilleries in Scotland, where the best known brands of ded Scotch whisky, such as J& B. Johnnie Walker, Famous se and Teachers, are made from the products of single malt and e grain whisky distilleries. About four-fifths of Scots whisky uction is exported, to more that 200 countries; the value of orts was £2,100 million in 1993.

The soft drinks industry is the fastest-growing sector of the ery trade, with an annual turnover of about £6,000 million.

5.1.3.7 Aerospace

Britain's aerospace industry is the third largest in the Western ld, after the United States and France. With around 200 com- ies employing 134,500 people, it had a turnover in 1993 of ,300 million.

British Aerospace is one of the world's top defence companies more than four-fifth of its military production was exported in 3. It includes the Harrier, a unique vertical/short take0off and ding (V/STOL) military combat aircraft. BAe has a 33 per cent re in the development of the Eurofighter 2000. The Tornado mbat aircraft is built by a company set up jointly by BAe, Alenia Italy and Deutsche Aerospace. A £5,000 million order for 48 To- ado bombers for Saudi Arabia was confirmed in 1993, making it e of Britain's biggest ever export deals.

Rolls-Royce is one of the world's three major manufacturers of ro-engines, with a turnover in 1993 of £2,100 million for its rospace division. Its RB211-535 engines have been selected by er 80 per cent of airlines for their Boeing 757 airliners.

Over 400 companies in Britain are engaged in space activities. he industry is strong in the manufacture of satellites and ground nfrastructure for satellite systems and in the analysis and exploitation of data from satellites. Matra-Marconi Space is one of the world's leading producers of communications satellites.

5.2 Financial Services

Britain is a major financial centre, home to some of the world's most prestigious banking, insurance, securities, shipping, commodities, futures, and other financial services and markets. Banking, finance, insurance, business services and leasing contributed around 20 per cent of total output in 1993.

Financial institutions' net overseas earnings amounted to £15,600 million in 1993. Banking, finance and insurance accounted for 13 per cent of employment in Great Britain in 1994.

Historically the financial services industry has been located in the 'Square Mile' in the City of London. This remains broadly the case, even though markets for financial and related services have grown and diversified greatly. Manchester, Cardiff, Liverpool, Leeds, Edinburg and Glasgow are also financial centres. The 'City', the collection of markets and institutional around the Square Mile, is noted for having:

– the greatest concentration of foreign banks – 286 – in the world;

– a banking sector that accounts for about 20 per cent of total international bank leading;

– one of the world's biggest international insurance markets, handling about 20 per cent of general insurance business placed on the international market;

– the largest centre in the world for trading overseas equities;

– the world's largest foreign exchange market, with an average daily turnover of about US$300,000 million;

– one of the world's most important financial derivatives markets;

– the greatest concentration of international bond dealers;

– important markets for transactions in commodities;

– a full range of ancillary and support services – legal, accountancy and management consultancy – contributing to London's strength as a financial centre.

5.2.1 Overseas Trade

Britain is fully committed to an open multilateral trading system. It exports more per head than the United States and Japan; overseas

s of goods and services are equivalent to about a quarter of its P. Invisible earnings of British companies place Britain in the top e countries in the international league table of overseas invisibles ers. It is the world's second biggest overseas investor and the ding destination for inward direct investment into the EU.

On 1 January 1994 the EU implemented an agreement with stria, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden on the creation of the opean Economic Area (EEA). The EEA forms a free trade area h 380 million consumers, where there is free movements of ds, services and capital. The new World Trade Organisation was up on 1 January 1995, providing a sounder basis for international de, including implementation measures agreed during the recently npleted GATT Uruguay Round of negotiations.

In 1993 Britain's exports of goods were valued at about 21,400 million and its imports of goods at £134,600 million. nufactures account for 82 per cent of visible exports with chinery and transport equipment contributing about 40 per cent of ports. Aerospace, chemicals and electronics have become creasingly significant export sectors, while textiles have declined in portance. The share of fuels in exports was 7 per cent in 1993. rth Sea oil and gas production has now passed its mid-1980s peak, en exports of fuels accounted for over 20 per cent of total exports. 1993 the surplus on trade oil amounted to a little under £2,500 llion.

Britain's overseas trade is mainly, and increasingly, with veloped countries. In 1972, the year before Britain joined the uropean Community, around a third of its trade was with the other countries which made up the European Union in 1994. The roportion rose to around one-half in 1993. Western Europe as a hole takes three-fifths of Britain exports. EU countries accounted r seven of Britain's top 10 export markets and six of the 10 leading ppliers of goods to Britain in 1993. In 1990 Germany overtook the United States to become Britain's biggest overseas market; Germany s also Britain's largest single supplier. In 1993 it took 13 per cent of Britain's exports and supplied 15 per cent of its imports.

Exports to Japan, which is presently Britain's tenth largest export market, rose by 19 per cent in 1993. Japan has steadily increased its share of Britain's imports and now accounts for around 6 per cent. In 1993 there was also a sizeable increase – about 30 per cent – in Britain's exports to other expanding markets in the Asia-Pacific Rim. Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan and Thailand, together with the People's Republic of China and the Philippines, all showed strong growth in exports from Britain in 1993.

5.3 Tourism

Britain pioneered the development of a professional tourism industry. Around 1.5 million people are employed in the industry in Britain, which contributes £30,000 million annually to the economy – about 5 per cent of GDP. Britain is one of the world's six leading tourist destinations and by the year 2000 tourism was expected to be the biggest industry in the world.

Between 1980 and 1990 the number of overseas visits to Britain increased by 50 per cent. In 1993 over 19 million overseas visitors came to Britain, spending £9,200 million. Business travel accounts for about a fifth of all overseas tourism revenue. An estimated 64 per cent of visitors came from Europe and 17 per cent North America. Britain's tourism attractions include theatres, museums, art galleries and historic houses, as well as shopping, sports and business facilities.

Domestic tourism was valued at £12,400 million in 1992. Around one-half of British residents taking their main holiday in Britain choose a traditional seaside resort. Short breaks, worth about £2,000 million in 1992, make up an increasingly significant part of the market, with shopping accounting for about a third of all expenditure on day trips. Scotland has several skiing resorts.

The largest hotel business in Britain is Forte, which has 344 hotels in the country. At the other end of the scale, numerous guest houses and small hotels have fewer than 20 rooms. Holiday camps offering full board, self-catering centres and holiday caravans are run by Butlins and Pontins; Center Parcs are enclosed holiday centres with swimming pools and other leisure facilities which are not affected by the vagaries of the British climate. Cuisine from virtually every

ntry in the world is available in restaurants in London and ewhere in Britain.

Most British holiday-makers wishing to go abroad buy 'package idays' from travel agencies, where the cost covers transport and ommodation. The most popular package holiday destinations are in, France and Greece. Long-haul holidays to countries like the ited States and Australia are becoming more popular as air fares me down. Winter skiing holidays to resorts in Austria, France, y and Switzerland and other countries continue to attract large mbers of Britons.

There are around 7,200 travel agencies in Britain. Although st travel agents are small businesses, there are a few very large ms, such as Lunn Poly and Thomas Cook, which have hundreds of nches.

5.4 Agriculture

Agriculture, one of Britain's most important industries, supplies arly 60 per cent of the country's food, directly employs over 0,000 people, and uses almost 80 per cent of the land area. owever, its share of the gross domestic product is less than 3 per nt – the lowest figure among the developed capitalism countries. itish agriculture is efficient, for it is based on modern technology d research.

Nearly 80 per cent of the land area is used for agriculture, the rest eing mountain and forest or put to urban and other uses. Although the rea for farming is declining by about 20,000 hectares a year to meet e needs of housing, industry and transport, the land in urban use is ss than a tenth of the agriculturalland. There are 12 million ectares under crops and grass. In hill country, where the area of ultivated land is often small, large areas are used for rough grazing. Soils vary from the poor ones of highland Britain to the rich fertile soils of low-lying areas in the eastern and south-eastern parts of England. The cool temperate climate and the comparatively even distribution of rainfall contribute favourably to the development of agriculture. However, the social structure of British agriculture has a negative effect on its development. Most of the land is owned by big landlords. Farmers rent the land and hire agricultural workers to cultivate it. Part of the land belongs to banks, insurance companies.

There are about 243,500 farming units, of which about a half are able to provide fulltime employment for at least one person and account for over 90 per cent of total output. About 30,000 large farms account for about half of total output. In Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland output from small-scale holding is more significant than in the rest of Britain. In general small farms dominate in the country. This is vividly seen from the following table 2:

Table 2 – Size of Farms
(as a Percentage of Total Number of Farms)

Under 2 Hect.	2-20	20-40	40-120	Over 120 Hect.
15.1	37.3	19.9	17.7	10

However, due to tough competition, the number of small farms under 20 hectares is decreasing.

60 per cent of full-time is devoted mainly to dairying or beef cattle and sheep. This sector of agriculture accounts for three-fourths of agricultural production in value. Sheep and cattle are reared in the hill and moorland areas of Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and northern and south-western England. Beef fattening occurs partly in better grassland areas, as does dairying and partly in yards on arable farms. British livestock breeders have created many of the cattle, sheep and pig breads with world-wide reputations, for example, the large white Yorkshire pig breed. Pig production is carried on most areas but is particularly important in eastern (Yorkshire) and southern England, north-east Scotland and Northern Ireland. In the 1980s there were about 13,5 million head of cattle, about 8 million pigs and 31,4 million head of sheep.

The present pattern of farming in Britain owes a great deal to decisions taken during and after World War II. During the nineteenth century Britain became increasingly dependent upon imported food. The danger of this situation became apparent during the two world wars of the twentieth century when the country was almost starved

o defeat by the German blockade. As a result, it was decided to courage agricultural development to make the country less pendent on imports of food. Subsidies to farmers (especially to the ners of large farms) were introduced. After Britain's entry into the mmon Market in 1973 agriculture was protected by an artificial ce structure and by duties imposed on imported food.

There are three main types of farming: pastoral, arable, mixed. able farming is dominated in the eastern parts of England and otland, whereas in the rest of the country pastoral and mixed rming are prevalent. Besides the three above mentioned types of rming there is another type of farming – crofting – which is still acticed in the remote areas of northern and western Scotland. This ttern of cultivating a small area of land around the farm (the field) and maintaining a much larger area of rough pasture for ock rearing (the outfield) is typical of crofting communities in otland and shows a clear adaptation to a difficult environment. here has been a great decline in crofting and it has virtually sappeared from large areas of the Highlands. This started in the ghteenth century when entire crofting communities were driven t by landowners who wanted to use the land for large scale sheep d cattle rearing. The process resembled the enclosures which took ace earlier in England in the sixteenth century. In recent years this cline has continued on an accelerated scale. The owners of the ofts become ruined because of the low incomes and many of the ofts which remain are run on a part-time basis.

Grass supplies 60 to 80 per cent of feed requirements of cattle nd sheep: its production has been enhanced by the increased use of ertilizers, irrigation, new methods of grazing control etc. Rotational rass covers about 28 per cent of the total cropland. Rough grazings re used for extensively grazed sheep and cattle.

As regards the cereals barley takes the lead. It is cultivated on 33 per cent of the total cropland, amounting to 2,4 million hectares with an average annual yield of 10 million tonnes. The crop is mainly concentrated in the eastern parts of the country. Wheat follows next covering about 17,4 per cent of the total croplands which amounts to 1,4 million hectares with an average annual yield of over 8 million tonnes. About half the wheat crops is normally used for flour milling, the remainder mainly for animal feed. Wheat like barley prevails in the eastern parts of England, especially in East Anglia and in the south-east, as well as in Central Scotland. Cropland used for oats has been reduced to about 2 per cent. The crops is cultivated mainly in the western and northern parts of England.

The potato crop is widespread all throughout the country. Large-scale potato and vegetable production is undertaken in the eastern and south-eastern of England, around the rivers Thames and Humber and in South Lancashire. Early potatoes are an important crop in south-west Wales, Kent and south-west England. High-grade seed potatoes are grown in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Sugar from sugar home-grown sugar beet provides about 47 per cent of requirements, most of the remainder being refined from raw sugar imported from developing countries. Sugar beet covers about 3 per cent of the total cropland.

The land utilised for horticulture is about 290,000 hectares of which vegetables grown in the open, excluding potatoes, cover about 73 per cent, fruit more than 20 per cent, flowers less than 5 per cent and protected crops (those grown under glass or plastic) less than 2 per cent of the land used for horticulture.

The fishing industry. Britain's second major source of food is the surrounding sea. The fishing industry provides about 70 per cent of British fish supplies, and is an important source of employment and income in a number of ports, especially those situated on the North Sea shore. In the 1980s there were about 17,000 fishermen in regular employment. The average annual landings of fish by British ships are about 700,000 tonnes. This marks a massive decline from landings earlier in the century and reflects the crisis which afflicts the industry.

Although fish are widespread in the oceans of the world, it is only in certain limited areas that they occur in sufficient numbers to make large scale fishing an economic proposition. Such areas are called fishing grounds and they are usually found where the waters are shallow with available light and oxygen, where there are large quantities of plankton, which provide food for the fish.

For centuries the British fishing industry depended upon fishing grounds near Britain, particularly those in the North Sea. By the

fteenth century, however, fishermen were already searching for ew distant grounds. By the nineteenth century fishing is distant aters was highly developed and several distinct methods of fishing ad been developed to cope with different kinds of fish with ifferent fishing grounds. Two main types of fish are caught – elagic fish and demersal fish.

Questions

1 What is the structure of the British economy? What is the hare of privatized industries and private enterprise versus public ndustries and enterprise?

2 What are the most important industrial developments in the ast 30 years?

3 List the major manufacturing industries and describe their evelopment.

4 The financial sector: Why is the City so important?

5 Can Britain be described as the world's major trading nation?

6 Name the main types of farming. Describe their role and erritorial specialization.

7 Explain the importance of fishing for Britain.

6 Education in Britain

6.1 School History and the Present School System
6.2 The National Curriculum
6.3 Public Examinations
6.4 Higher and Further Education

6.1 School History and the Present School System

The basic features of the British educational system are the same as they are anywhere else in Europe: full-time education is compulsory up to the middle teenage years; the academic year begins at the end of summer; compulsory education is free of charge, but parents may spend money on educating their children privately if they want to. There are three recognized stages, with children moving from the first stage (primary) to the second stage (secondary) at around the age of eleven or twelve. The third (tertiary) stage is 'further' education at university or college. However, there is quite a lot which distinguishes education in Britain from the way it works in other countries.

6.1.1 Historical Background

The British government attached little importance to education until the end of the nineteenth century. It was one of the last governments in Europe to organize education for everybody. Britain was leading the world in industry and commerce, so, it was felt, education must somehow be taking care of itself. Today, however, education is one of the most frequent subjects for public debate in the country. To understand the background to this debate, a little history is needed.

Schools and other educational institutions (such as universities) existed in Britain long before the government began to take an interest in education. When it finally did, it did not sweep these institutions away, nor did it always take them over. In typically British fashion, it sometimes incorporated them into the system and sometimes left them outside it. Most importantly, the government left alone the small group of schools which had been used in the

ineteenth century (and in some cases before then) to educate the ons of the upper and upper-middle classes. At these 'public' schools. he emphasis was on 'character-building' and the development of eam spirit' rather than on academic achievement.

Stereotypical public schools:

– are for boys only from the age of thirteen onwards, most of vhom attended a private 'prep' (= preparatory) school beforehand;

– take fee-paying pupils (and some scholarship pupils who have von a place in a competitive entrance exam and whose parents do ot pay);

– are boarding schools (the boys live there during term-time);

– are divided into 'houses', each 'house' being looked after by a ousemaster';

– make some of the senior boys 'prefects', which means that they ave authority over the other boys and have their own servants (called 'fags'), who are appointed from amongst the youngest boys;

– place great emphasis on team sports;

– enforce their rules with the use of physical punishment;

– have a reputation for a relatively great amount of homosexual activity;

– are not at all luxurious or comfortable.

However, this traditional image no longer fits the facts. These days, there is not a single public school in the country in which all of the above features apply. There have been a fairly large number of girls 'public schools for the last hundred years, and more recently a few schools have started to admit both boys and girls. Many schools admit day pupils as well as boarders, and some are day-schools only; prefects no longer have so much power or have been abolished altogether; has disappeared; there is less emphasis on team sport and more on academic achievement; life for the pupils is more physically comfortable than it used to be.

Among the most famous public schools are Eton, Harrow, Rugby and Winchester.

This involved the development of distinctive customs and attitudes, the wearing of distinctive clothes and the use of specialized items of vocabulary. They were all 'boarding schools' (that is, the pupils lived in them), so they had a deep and lasting influence on their pupils. Their aim was to prepare young men to take up positions in the higher ranks of the army, in business, the legal profession, the civil service and politics.

When the pupils from these schools finished their education, they formed the ruling elite, retaining the distinctive habits and vocabulary which they had learnt at school. They formed a closed group, to a great extent separate from the rest of society. Entry into this group was difficult for anybody who had a different education. When, in the twentieth century, education and its possibilities for social advancement came within everybody's reach, new schools tended to copy the features of the public schools. (After all, they provided the only model of a successful school that the country had).

Many of the distinctive characteristics of British education outlined below can be ascribed, at least partly, to this historical background. Of more recent relevance is Britain's general loss of confidence in itself. This change of mood has probably had a greater influence on education than on any other aspect of public life. The modern educational system has been through a period of constant change and it is difficult to predict what further changes will occur in the next decade. At the same time, however, there are certain underlying characteristics that seem to remain fixed.

6.1.2 Organization

Despite recent changes, it is a characteristic of the British system that there is comparatively little central control or uniformity. For example, education is manager not by one, but by three, separate government departments: the Department for Education and Employment is responsible for England and Wales alone – Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own departments. In fact, within England and Wales education has traditionally been seen as separate from 'training', and the two areas of responsibility have only recently been combined in a single department.

None of these central authorities exercises much control over the details of what actually happens in the country's educational institutions. All they do is to ensure the availability of education, dictate and implement is overall organization and set overall learning

jectives (which they enforce through a system of inspectors) up to e end of compulsory education.

Central government does not prescribe a detailed programme of arning or determine what books and materials should be used. It ys, in broad terms, what schoolchildren should learn, but it only fers occasional advice about how they should learn it. Nor does it ctate the exact hours of the school day, the exact dates of holidays the exact age at which a child must start in full-time education. It es not manage an institution's finances either, it just decides how uch money to give it. It does not itself set or supervise the marking f the exams which older teenager do. In general, as many details as ossible are left up to the individual institution or the Local ducation Authority (LEA, a branch of local government).

One of the reasons for this level of 'grass-roots' independence is at the system has been influenced by the public-school tradition that school is its own community. Most schools develop, to some degree t lest, a sense of distinctiveness. Many, for example, have their own niforms for pupils. Many, especially those outside the state system, ave associations of former pupils. It is considered desirable (even ecessary) for every school to have its own school hall, big enough to ccommodate every pupil, for daily assemblies and other occasional eremonies. Universities, although financed by the government, have even more autonomy. Each one has complete control over what to teach, ow to teach it, who it accepts as students and how to test these students.

6.1.3 Style

Learning for its own sake, rather than for any particular practical purpose, has traditionally been given a comparatively high value in Britain. In comparison with most other countries, a relatively strong emphasis has been put on the quality of person that education produces (as opposed to the qualities of abilities that it produces). The balance has changed in the last quarter of the twentieth century (for example, there is now a high degree of concern about levels of literacy), but much of the public debate about educational policy still focuses not so much on how to help people develop useful knowledge and skills as on how education might help to bring about a better society – on social justice rather than on efficiency.

This approach has had a far-reaching effect on many aspects of the educational system. First of all, it has influenced the general style of teaching, which has tended to give priority to developing understanding rather than acquiring factual knowledge and learning to apply this knowledge to specific tasks. This is why British young people do not appear to have to work as hard as their counterparts in other European countries. Primary schoolchildren do not normally have formal homework to do and university students have fewer hours of programmed attendance than students on the continent do. (On the other hand, they receive greater personal guidance with their work). A second effect has been an emphasis on academic ability rather than practical ability (despite English anti-intellectualism). This has resulted in high-quality education for the intelligent and academically inclined (at the upper secondary and university levels) with comparatively little attention given to the educational needs of the rest.

The traditional approach, together with the dislike of centralized authority, also helps to explain why the British school system got a national curriculum (a national specification of learning objectives) so much later than other European countries. If your aim is so vague and universal, it is difficult to specify what its elements are. It is for the same reason that British schools and universities have tended to give such a high priority to sport. The idea is that it helps to develop the 'complete' person. The importance of school as a 'community' can increase this emphasis. Sporting success enhances the reputation of an institution. Until the last quarter of the twentieth century, certain sports at some universities (especially Oxford and Cambridge) and medical schools were played to an international standard. People with poor academic records were sometimes accepted as students because of their sporting powers (although, unlike in the USA, this practice was always unofficial).

6.1.4 Recent Developments

Some of the many changes that have taken place in British education in the second half of the twentieth century simply reflect the wider social process of increased egalitarianism. The elitist

stitutions which first set the pattern no longer set the trend, and are emselves less elitist.

In other cases the changes have been the result of government licy. Before 1965 most children in the country had to take an am at about the age of eleven, at the end of their primary hooling. If they passed this exam, they went to a grammar school here they were taught academic subjects to prepare them for iversity, the professions, managerial jobs or other highly-skilled bs; if they failed, they went to a secondary modern school, where e lessons had a more practical and technical bias. Many people gued that it was wrong for a person's future life to be decided at so ung an age. The children who went to 'secondary moderns' tended be seen as 'failures'. Moreover, it was noticed that the children ho passed this exam (known as the 'eleven plus') were almost all om middle-class families. The system seemed to reinforce class istinctions. It was also unfair because the proportion of children ho went to a grammar school varied greatly from area to area (from 5% to 40%). During the 1960s these criticism came to be accepted y a majority of the public. Over the next decade the division into grammar schools and secondary modern schools was changed. These days, most eleven-year-olds all go on to the same local school. These schools are known as comprehensive schools. (The decision to make this change was in the hands of LEAs, so it did not happen at the same time all over the country. In fact, there are still one or two places where the old system is still in force).

However, the comprehensive system has also had its critics. Many people felt that there should be more choice available to parents and disliked the uniformity of education given to teenagers. In addition, there is a widespread feeling that educational standards fell during the 1980s and that the average eleven-year old in Britain is significantly less literate and less numerate than his or her European counterpart.

Starting in the late 1980s, two major changes were introduces by the government. The first of these was the setting up of a national curriculum. For the first time in British education there is now a set of learning objectives for each of compulsory school and all state schools are obliged to work towards these objectives. The other major change is that schools can now decide to 'opt out' of the control of the LEA and put themselves directly under the control of the appropriate government department. These 'grant-maintained' schools get their money directly from central government. This does not mean, however, that there is more central control. Provided they fulfil basic requirements, grant-maintained schools do not have to ask anybody else about how to spend their money.

6.2 The National Curriculum

Pupils aged 5 to 16 in state schools must be taught the National Curriculum, which made up of the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, design and technology; information technology, history, geography, music, art, physical education (PE) and a modern foreign language. The National Curriculum sets out, in broad terms, what schools must teach for each subject.

The National Curriculum is divided into four stages. These are called key stages and depend on pupil's ages. Pupils going into Key Stage 4 before September 1996 do not have to be taught design and technology, information technology and a modern foreign language. Pupils must also study religious education (RE), and secondary schools must provide sex education. The content of these two subjects is decided locally but must remain within the law. The Government also plans to make all secondary schools responsible for providing careers education.

Schools organise their own timetable, and can decide what else to teach their pupils.

6.2.1 How does the National Curriculum Work?

Every school has National Curriculum documents for each subject. These documents describe what teachers must teach at each key stage.

Most National Curriculum subject are divided into different areas of learning. For example, English is divided into three areas: speaking and listening, reading, and writing.

The National Curriculum does not include detailed lesson plans for teachers. Schools and teachers draw up their own lesson plans

based on the National Curriculum. Teachers will plan these lessons, taking account of their pupil's needs. Schools also decide for themselves which text books and other teaching materials to use.

6.2.2 How is Each Pupil's Progress Assessed?

The National Curriculum sets standards of achievement in each subject for pupils aged 5 to 14. For most subjects these standards range from levels 1 to 8. Pupils climb up the levels as they get older and learn more:

– the standards at level 2 should challenge typical 7-year-olds;

– the standards at level 4 should challenge typical 11-year-olds;

– the standards at levels 5 and 6 should challenge typical 14-year-olds.

More able pupils will reach the standards above these levels, and exceptionally able 14-year-olds may reach the standards above level 8.

The National Curriculum for music, art and PE does not use levels 1 to 8. Instead, there is a single description of the standards that most pupils can expect to reach at the end of a key stage for each area of learning.

All teachers check their pupil's progress in each subject as a normal part of their teaching. They must also asses pupil's progress in English, mathematics and science against the National Curriculum standards when pupils reach ages 7, 11 and 14. The teacher decides which level best describes a pupil's performance in each area of learning in the subject. The teacher then uses these to work out an overall level in that subject.

6.3 Public Examinations

There are national tests for 7-, 11- and 14-year-olds in English and mathematics. Pupils aged 11 and 14 are also tested in science. The tests give an independent measure of how pupils and schools are doing compared with the national standards in these subjects.

Most 16-year-old take GCSEs or similar qualifications.

One final point about the persistence of decentralization: there are really three, not one, national curricula. There is one for England and Wales, another for Scotland and another for Northern Ireland. The organization of subjects and the details of the learning objectives vary slightly from to the other. There is even a difference between England and Wales. Only in the latter is the Welsh language part of the curriculum.

The introduction of the national curriculum is also intended to have an influence on the subject-matter of teaching. At the lower primary level, this means a greater emphasis on what are known as 'the three Rs' (Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic). At higher levels, it means a greater emphasis on science and technology. A consequence of the traditional British approach to education had been the habit of giving a relatively large amount of attention to the arts and humanities (which develop the well-rounded human being), and relatively little to science and technology (which develop the ability to do specific jobs). The prevailing belief at the time of writing is that Britain needs more scientists and technicians.

The organization of the exams which schoolchildren take from the age of about fifteen onwards exemplifies both the lack of uniformity in British education and also the traditional 'hands-off' approach of British governments. First, these exams are not set by the government, but rather by independent examining boards. There are several of these. Everywhere except Scotland (which has its own single board), each school or LEA decides which board's exams its pupils take. Some schools even enter their pupils for the exams of more than one board.

Second, the boards publish a separate syllabus for each subject. There is no unified school-leaving exam or school-leaving certificate. Some boards offer a vast range of subjects. In practice, nearly all pupils do exam in English language, maths and a science subject, and most also do an exam in technology and one in a foreign language, usually French. Many students take exams in three or more additional subjects.

Third, the exams have nothing to do with school years as such. They are divorced from the school system. There is nothing to stop a sixty-five year-old doing a few of them for fun. In practice, of course, the vast majority of people who do these exams are school pupils, but formally it is individual people who enter for these exams, not pupils in a particular year of school.

An example of the independence of the examining boards is the decision of one of them (the Northern Examinations Board) in 1992 to include certain popular television programmes on their English literature syllabus. This was against the spirit of the government's education policy at that time. The idea of 100,000 schoolchildren setting down to watch the Australian soap opera *Neighbours* as part of their homework made government ministers very angry, but there was nothing they could do to stop it (table 3).

6.4 Higher and Further Education

At the age of sixteen people are free to leave school if they want to. With Britain's newfound enthusiasm for continuing education (and because the general level of unemployment is now high), far fewer sixteen-year-olds go straight out and look for a job than used to. About a third of them still take this option, however. Most do not find employment immediately and many take part in training schemes which involve on-the-job training combined with part-time college courses.

There has been a great increase in educational opportunities for people at this age or older in the last quarter of the twentieth century. About half of those who stay in full-time education will have to leave their school, either because it does not have a sixth form or because it does not teach the desired subjects, and go to a Sixth-form Collage, or Collage of Further Education.

6.4.1 The Sixth Form

The word 'from' was the usual word to describe a class of pupils in public schools. It was taken over by some state schools. With the introduction of the national curriculum it has become common to refer to 'years'. However, 'from' has been universally retained in the phrase 'sixth form', which refers to those pupils who are studying beyond the age of sixteen.

Table 3

School exams and qualifications	University Degrees
GCSE = General Certificate of Secondary Education. The exams taken by most fifteen-to sixteen-year-olds in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Marks are given for each subjects separately. The syllabuses and methods of examination of the various examining boards differ. However, there is a uniform system of marks, all being graded from A to G. Grades A, B and C are regarded as 'good' grades. **SCE** = Scottish Certificate of Education. The Scottish equivalent of GCSE. These exams are set by the Scottish Examinations Board. Grades are awarded in numbers (I = the best). **A Levels** = Advanced Levels. Higher-level academic exams set by the same examining boards that set GCSE exams. They are taken mostly by people around the age of eighteen who wish to go on to higher education. **SCE 'Highers'** = The Scottish equivalent of A-levels. **GNVQ** = General National Vocational Qualification. Courses and exams in job-related subjects. They are divided into five levels, the lowest level being equivalent to GCSEs/SCEs and the third level to A-levels/'Higher'. Most commonly, GNVQ courses are studied at College of Further Education, but more and more schools are also offering them.	**Degree:** A qualification from a university. (Other qualifications obtained after secondary education are usually called 'certificate' or 'diploma'). Students studying for a first degree are called undergradduates. When they have been awarded a degree, they are known as graduates. Most people get honours degrees, awarded in different classes. These are: Class I (known as 'a first') Class II, I ('a 2, 1' or 'an upper second') Class II, II ('a 2, 2' or 'a lower second') Class III ('a third') A students who is below one of these gets a pass degree (i.e. not an honours degree). **Bachelor's Degree:** The general name for a first degree, most commonly a BA (= Bachelor of Arts) or BSc (= Bachelors of Science). **Master's Degree:** The general name for a second (postgraduate) degree, most commonly an MA or MSc. At Scottish universities, however, there titles are used for first degrees. **Doctorate:** The highest academic qualification. This usually (but not everywhere) carries the title PhD (= Doctor of Philosophy). The time taken to complete a doctorate varies, but it is generally expected to involve three years of more-or-less full-time study.

An increasing number do vocational training courses for particular jobs and careers. Recent governments have been keen to increase the availability of this type of course and its prestige (which used to be comparatively low). In England and Wales, for those who stay in education and study conventional academic subjects, there is more specialization than there is in most other countries. Typically, a pupil spends a whole two years studying just three subjects, usually related ones, in preparation for taking A level exams, though this is something else which might change in the near future.

The independence of Britain's educational institutions is most noticeable in universities. They make their own choice of who to accept on their courses. There is no right of entry to university for anybody. Universities normally select studies on the basis of A-level result and an interview. Those with better exam grades are more likely to be accepted. But in principle there is nothing to stop a university accepting a student who has no A-levels at all and conversely, a student with top grades in several A-levels is not guaranteed a place.

The availability of higher education has increased greatly in the second half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, finding a university place is not easy. Universities only take the better students. Because of this, and also because of the relatively higher degree of personal supervision of students which the low ratio of students to staff allows, nearly all university students complete their studies – and in a very short time too! In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, it is only for modern languages and certain vocational studies that students take more than three years. In Scotland, four years is the norm for most subjects.

Another reason for the low drop-out rate is that 'full-time' really means full-time. Students are not supposed to take a job during term time (normally about thirty to thirty-four weeks of the year). Unless their parents are rich, they receive a state grant of money which is intended to cover most of their living expenses during these times. This includes the cost of accommodation. A large proportion of students live 'on campus', (or, in Oxford and Cambridge, 'in college') or in rooms nearby, which tends to mean that the student is surrounded by a university atmosphere.

However, the expansion of higher education is putting a strain on these characteristics. More students means more expense for the state. The government's response has been to reduce the amount of the student grant and to encourage a system of 'top-up' loans instead. As a result, many more students cannot afford to live away from home. In 1975 it was estimated that 80% of all university students were non-local. This percentage is becoming lower and lower. In addition, a large number of students are being forced to 'moonlight' (that is, secretly do a part-time job). A further result of increased numbers of students without a corresponding increase in budgets is that the student/staff ratio has been getting higher. All of these developments threaten to reduce the traditionally high quality of British university education. They also threaten to reduce its availability to students from low-income families.

6.4.2 Types of University

There are no important official or legal distinctions between the various types of university in the country. But is possible to discern a few broad categories.

Oxbridge

This name denotes the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, both founded in the medieval period. They are federations of semi-independent colleges, each college having its own staff, known as 'Fellows'. Most college have their own dining hall, library and chapel and contain enough accommodation for at least half of their students. The Fellows teach the college students, either one-to-one or in very small groups (known as 'tutorials' in Oxford and 'supervisions' in Cambridge). Oxbridge has the lowest student/staff ratio in Britain. Lectures and laboratory work are organized at university level. As well as the college libraries, there are the two university libraries, both of which are legally entitled to a free copy of every book published in Britain. Before 1970 all Oxbridge colleges were single-sex (mostly for men). Now, the majority admit both sexes.

The old Scottish Universities

By 1600 Scotland boasted four universities. They were Glasgow, Edinburgh. Aberdeen and St. Andrews. The last of these resembles Oxbridge in many ways, while the other three are more like civic universities in that most of the students live at home or find their own rooms in town. At all of them the pattern of study is closer to the continental tradition than to the English one – there is less specialization than at Oxbridge.

The early nineteenth-century English universities

Durham University was founded in 1832. Its collegiate living arrangements are similar to Oxbridge, but academic matters are organized at university level. The University of London started in 1836 with just two colleges. Many more have joined science, scattered widely around the city, so that each collage (most are non-residential) is almost a separate university. The central organization is responsible for little more than exams and the awarding of degrees (table 3).

The older civic ('redbrick') universities

During the nineteenth century various institutes of higher education, usually with a technical bias, sprang up in the new industrial towns and cities such as Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. Their buildings were of local material, often brick, in contrast to the stone of older universities (hence the name, 'redbrick'). They catered only for local people. At first, they prepared students for London University degrees, but later they were given the right to award their own degrees, and so became universities themselves. In the mid twentieth century they started to accept students from all over the country.

The campus universities

These are purpose-built institutions located in the countryside but close to towns. Examples are East Anglia, Lancaster, Sussex and Warwick. They have accommodation for most of their students on site and from their beginning, mostly in the early 1960s, attracted students from all over the country. (Many were known as centres of student protest in the late 1960s and early 1970s). They tend to emphasize relatively 'new' academic disciplines such as social sciences and to make greater use than other universities of teaching in small groups, often known as 'seminars'.

The newer civic universities

These were originally technical colleges set up y local authorities in the first sixty years of this century. Their upgrading to university status took place in two waves. The first wave occurred in the mid 1960s, when ten of them (e.g. Aston in Birmingham, Salford near Manchester and Strathclyde in Glasgow) were promoted in this way. Then, in the early 1970s, another thirty became 'polytechnics', which meant that as well as continuing with their former courses, they were allowed to teach degree courses (the degrees being awarded by a national body). In the early 1990s most of these (and also some other colleges) became universities. Their most notable feature is flexibility with regard to studying arrangements, including 'sandwich' courses (i.e. studies interrupted by periods of time outside education). They are now all financed by central government.

6.4.3 The Open University

This is one development in education in which Britain can to have led the world. It was started in 1969. It allows people who do not have the opportunity to be ordinary 'students' to study for a degree. Its courses are taught through television, radio and specially written coursebooks. Its students work with tutors, to whom they send their written work and with whom they then discuss it, either at meetings or through correspondence. In the summer, they have to attend short residential courses of about a week.

Questions

1 What is the compulsory school age in Britain?

2 The story of British schools: After 1944 almost all children attended one of two kinds of school. What were they called? What was the difference between them? In the 1960s this system was changed. What kind of school was introduced? What effect did the change have?

3 The private sector: Is the public school system socially divisive? Can state education be as good as the private system?

4 Name the two basic public examinations to assess English pupils at the age of sixteen and after another two voluntary years of schooling.

5 Educational reforms in the 1980s: Is the introduction of the National Curriculum likely to have good results?

6 What is the structure of the British Higher education?

7 What in your opinion, are the strengths and weaknesses of Britain's education system compared to Belarus?

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