force which, even to-day, is not yet extinct. The Provisions of Oxford and Westminster renewed and completed part of the prescriptions of the Great Charter; these dispositions maintaining feudal franchises, and the guarantees against certain administrative abuses and improving procedure were incorporated in a statute which the king granted in 1267, the Statute of Marlborough.

No permanent system had been created, however, to control the monarchy and prevent abuses. Parliament remained little more than the old feudal assembly which the king summoned at will, inviting whomever he pleased. The attempt at an aristocratic council had been a complete failure. The great struggles of the fourteenth century were still to be waged between monarchy and nobility on this ill-chosen battle ground. Above all, the claims of the Holy See which affected the political and moral life of the country so closely had not been broken; religious conflicts were to grow even more bitter until the day when the king himself became Pope in England and thus consolidated his despotism.

1 See my study in DOXXVII, i, 879 ff. Cf. CCCLXXV; DXXXI, 33 ff.; DXXXII, i, 171-2; CCCLXXXI, 120 ff.; DXLV, 122; CDLVII, p. xx.

2 CXXI, i, 19-25; DOXXVII, ii, 115; CCCLXXI, 142-3.
CONCLUSION

The history of the monarchy in France under the first nine Capetians has been presented in this volume on the same scale as the history of the English monarchy. The reader has undoubtedly found a justification for this in the facts recorded. Throughout this period the lives of the two countries were bound up closely together. From the Conquest of 1066 the kings of England were of Norman and Angevin origin, they spoke French and almost all of them passed some part of their reign in France. Henry II and his sons ruled an empire that stretched from Scotland to the Pyrenees. The great problem for the kings of France had been how to resist their advance. Finally, it is easy to see legislative and administrative forms being borrowed from the opposite sides of the Channel. We have, no doubt, thrown a little more light on the history of the two peoples by the order we have adopted.

If we compare the evolution of the two monarchies, the differences strike us. Neither the point of departure nor the ground covered were the same but the atmosphere in which they developed was the same and hence the striking resemblances.

A continual effort of the imagination is necessary to re-create this atmosphere. In the present age the movements of humanity are dominated by the triumph of the scientific spirit, the development of production and demand, the conflict between democracy and capitalism, and the pressure of nationalist ambitions. How is it possible easily to appreciate the extent to which France and England from the tenth to the thirteenth century were completely saturated with the spirit of religion and Feudalism? It was on this moral plane, so different from our own, that the monarchy was reborn, developed, and fought its struggles. It found there both support and opposition. The Church which exalted the Crown sought to make it serve its own ends. The feudal spirit carried within itself the germ of anarchistic violence. The kings,
however, exploited to the full the alliance they had established with the Church and, at the same time, they found it to their advantage to possess, by feudal custom, defined rights, to have loyal followers bound by oath, and they drew advantages of increasing value from their legal position as overlords. The political and administrative Curia, the finances, the army, interference in seigniorial justice and general legislation—these institutions and practices were rooted in the feudal law just as the consecration granted by the Church was the source of the special prestige which the king enjoyed. There was no question, however, of abusing his growing power. Church or nobility would never tolerate a "tyrant". Both considered that the king was bound by contracts—the obligations of the lord to his man and the oath taken at his consecration. The king was the guardian of custom and had to uphold it at least to the extent that it could be modified only after the deliberation of his court. He had to win respect for the divine law and take care of the Church. He had to give true justice. If his obligations as suzerain were not fulfilled, conflict would result.

In fact there had been conflict in England. The participation of the English Church in the struggle against the king had given it a somewhat elevated character, a constitutional character we would say if it was not for fear of creating false ideas. In France the alliance of Crown and Church was not broken. The progress of the royal power had caused violent uprisings but they were incoherent and had no important results.

The stages are worthy of a short review. On the eve of the Norman Conquest, England was only just emerging from its isolation. A Celtic country which had never been thoroughly Romanized, it had received during the intervening centuries Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian contributions which had become engrafted. There were strong local institutions—hundred, wapentake, shire, sheriff—the traces of which exist even to-day and which remained important throughout the Middle Ages. The Anglo-Saxon monarchy, however, had become incapable of defending itself and its fate reminds us of that of the Carolingians. The system of "commendation" had done nothing but ruin its authority. Its weakness, the energy and ability of William the Conqueror, and the
political spirit and bold genius of the Norman people explain the revolution of 1066—one of the most fundamental changes that any country has ever undergone. William based his power on his alliance with the Church and the system of military fiefs and he governed with the help of certain Anglo-Saxon and Norman institutions which he had amalgamated in his strong hand. It had been necessary for him to reward the adventurers who had joined his expedition, to carry through an immense transfer of land, and condemn a section of the native population to a condition of misery. The new nobility built up from his companions was violent and was frequently to show resistance but this was of no importance for he had founded the State. The reign of the brutal William Rufus did not last long enough to endanger his work. In the following century, two great men, Henry Beaufort and Henry II, with the service of a remarkable body of lawyers and financiers completed it. The strongest and wisest government in Europe was founded. It revived Carolingian practices and, at the same time, in the precision of its machinery, and the harshness of its style and manners it reminds us of the Roman or, possibly, even the contemporary state. The Angevin Empire, built up on marriages, in the time of Richard Cœur de Lion threatened even the existence of the Capetian monarchy.

The premature death of Richard and the incipient madness of John Lackland postponed, for more than a century, the threat of an absorption of France by the English monarchy. John was foolish enough to fall out with the Church and the nobility at the same time. He saved his dynasty by becoming reconciled to the Pope.

Innocent III who also “thought in feudal terms” and conceived the political supremacy of Saint Peter’s successor as a suzerainty, made England a fief of the Holy See. This entry of the Papacy was not a happy omen for peace in England. It did not prevent the union of the English church and the nobility against the tyranny nor the active feudal reaction expressed in the Great Charter and its confirmations. During the reign of Henry III, who remained, throughout his life, a devoted son of the Holy See, the exorbitant demands of the Roman Curia were one of the principal causes of the long trouble which ended in civil war and the dictatorship of
Simon de Montfort. In spite of the gravity of this tragic crisis, the English monarchy was still standing at the end of the period we have been studying and the institutions with which it had been endowed by the great kings of the eleventh and twelfth centuries were so stable and so thoroughly based on the old local customs of self government that a very few years were sufficient for Edward I to restore it to full strength.

Serious doubts, however, still survived. The Great Charter was supposed to check the encroachments of the monarchy; its maintenance in full in the form in which it had been confirmed in 1225 was irreconcilable with the policy followed by the king and his officials. On the other hand, the royal finances, the army, decisions for peace or war, even the exercise of justice in important cases were dependent on the co-operation of his loyal subjects: there was no regulation of their participation, however. The word parlement was scarcely born and the institution was still in infancy. We have had to speak of it on very few occasions and then chiefly to warn the reader against anticipating later developments. The barons of Henry III did nothing to organize the representation of the nation. Their object was to establish a governing council to remedy the incapacity of the reigning prince. Finally, even the principle of the succession to the throne was not fixed. The last time it had been discussed, on the death of Richard Cœur de Lion, the English Church had supported the proclamation of the principle of election. The practice of association on the throne which Henry II had tried had proved itself dangerous in practice and it had been abandoned. On John's death, the question of a regency was raised. It had been solved at best by an excellent expedient but no regulation had been made for future application. For all these reasons to which we must add the misfortune of incompetent and disreputable kings, the rapid decline of the English Church in the fourteenth century, and the extreme violence of a passionate nation, we can understand that the rebellions against John Lackland and Henry III did nothing except inaugurate a long era of tragedy for the monarchy.

The history of the royal power in France from 987 to 1270 is less stormy. Its progress began late and in an obscure and hesitating manner. The only time when the pace was at all
forced was during the reigns of Philip Augustus and Louis VIII. From 987, the Capetian dynasty had finally replaced the Carolingians and they retained the throne thanks to the fertility of the queens and the custom of association on the throne which made the principle of election a vain formality; it was a doubtful expedient, however, and Philip Augustus was warned by the revolt of Henry the Younger in England and abolished it. Thus hereditary succession in the direct line on the basis of primogeniture became the established custom. The question of a regency in the case of the minority and absence of the king was settled by the king himself before his death or departure. It might lead to trouble and disturbances but it would not involve revolution. The individuality of the kingdom remained unassailed: thanks to favourable circumstances, even the creation of appanages for the younger princes had no fatal results. In short, the continuity of the royal power and the unity of the monarchy were assured. But if we cease to take this legal viewpoint, we may find the reality very different.

The first Capetians were shadowy figures like the majority of their Robertian ancestors and the Carolingians of the tenth century. Monarchical institutions had given way. There was not, as in England, a local framework of assemblies like the shire and hundred courts which could, one day, provide an able king with the means of action. Everything was in dissolution. The seigniorial regime was the only social bond. France was dismembered and the regional spirit became so strong that it was to survive even the seigniorial regime. For the moment, the monarchy continued to languish with inadequate resources and obsolete pretensions. Without the support of the Church, it seemed as if it might become extinct and scarcely anyone notice it. The Church assigned to Robert the Pious the gift of curing the sick; it preserved memories of the glory of the Carolingians, of a France united under the sceptre of a mighty emperor but, in the period when the Chanson de Roland was written, the monarchy was becoming less and less effective, was shrinking and falling to sleep. The great lords even gave up the habit of coming to the king's Court.

A new era began only with Louis VI. Threatened even within his narrow demesne by bandit nobles, he passed
his time in fighting them. At this period they talk of a
*Rex Francorum* in Gaul. A striking testimony, his vassals
formed up under the banner of St. Denis to stop the
Emperor Henry V on the frontier. After him, the undis-
tinguished Louis VII found no suitable occasion to annex
Aquitaine permanently to the demesne, but once the impetus
was given advance did not completely stop. The Curia began
to organize itself, to judge important cases, and with Suger
that line of great servants of the Capetian monarchy appears
in full view which, with the aid of some of the kings, achieved
all that was done.

Finally, the King of France goes beyond his demesne.
Louis appeared in Languedoc and even went on crusade.
But beside Henry II, who reigned at Rouen, Nantes, Poitiers,
Bordeaux, and Bayonne, or even beside the rich count of
Flanders, Louis VII is yet only an insignificant individual
and the general ordinances which he ventures to publish
remain platonic demonstrations of good will.

Philip Augustus, Louis VIII, Blanche of Castille, and Saint
Louis lifted the monarchy out of this rut. At that period
she had an opportunity, which was not to recur, to be
represented, for almost a century, by kings and a regent
who differed widely in their temperament but were all gifted
and courageous and had devoted their lives to the realization
of dreams of glory or practical godliness. From them really
dates the history of the French monarchy. The historical
importance of a Saint Louis is symbolized in the fertility of
his marriage with Margaret of Provence: all the kings of
France until the nineteenth century were descendants of
his sons.

These four princes found their support in the Church,
in a loyal and well rewarded lesser nobility, and in a bourgeoisie
which, behind the city walls, had organized the only self-
government existing in France. Around the king developed
and worked a whole new class of officials, lay and clerical,
comparable to those who had established the greatness
of the Norman and Angevin monarchy in the twelfth century.
The administrative, financial, and legal advances were made
parallel with the annexations to the demesne; the creation of
bailiffs, the appearance in the heart of the Curia of a Parle-
ment of Paris which very quickly fixed and emphasized
the old traditions and made itself the determined defender of the Crown were events as important as the collapse of the Angevin Empire and the great Albigensian nobility. These great changes were not achieved without shocks. From the coalition of 1214 to the coalition of 1241–2 the monarchy had faced serious threats; as in England, but without the support of the Churchmen and without any other programme than a division of the spoils, the autocracy had tried to make it retreat and had failed. They could produce no sound justification and they had not thought of drawing up a Great Charter. Their rights were not openly violated as in England. To secure themselves financial and military resources as much as to carry through the conquest and seizure of some part of John Lackland’s inheritance or to subject Flanders, Philip Augustus and his successors based their position primarily on feudal custom.

How could the French monarchy, thus limited by respect for custom, continue its advance? The infiltration of Roman Law, which was already being taught at the University of Paris, was to change the conservative spirit of the Curia. Already, however, before the invasion of the southern lawyers, Saint Louis without any political design and in complete innocence of heart had provided the monarchy with a source of strength which neither his predecessors nor the powerful kings of England had been able to tap. By the interpretation he had given to his royal mission, for which he had won acceptance, he had opened, to his dynasty, an indefinite career. No reign was more decisive than this. The principle that the king is in direct communication with God, can dispense with council when he feels himself inspired, can make “provisions for the common good”, and must be obeyed as a mandatory of God, the principle, in a word, of monarchy by divine right, was clearly enunciated in France by Saint Louis who secured its acceptance by his scruples and virtues. His dynasty was to apply it and abuse it in application. He used it, himself, in an attempt to establish order and justice on earth and to lead his subjects towards heaven. He had been brought up by priests and a very pious mother and his morals were those of a Christian not those of a statesman which Philip Augustus and his successors had practised. His godliness, his pity for Christian sufferings, his righteousness,
and his readiness to rectify wrongs gave the Capetian monarchy within France and beyond a prestige which it never lost. When he died on African soil, he was praised throughout Christendom. A service for Saint Louis composed in the fourteenth century summarizes all that the Church, which had already canonized him, said of him and of what he had done for the Church and for France:—

Happy the realm whose king is farsighted, peaceful, pious, and modest and fearless in misfortune. Such was Saint Louis. . . . King, you have made France live in peace and you have based your throne on justice. . . . By this king the Church had been exalted and France is now honoured.¹

It is natural that the clergy should have spread the fame of this saint who was the perfect fruit of ecclesiastical education. Here is evidence from a source other than the Church and of greater importance in the historian's eyes: from the north of the kingdom to the south, at the news of his death, the bards and the troubadours expressed a sorrow which was the feeling of the lay populace, even national in extent, overriding the bounds of the loyalty of vassals, for Louis was not mourned merely by his men whose loyal lord he had been but by every Frenchman even the most humble. The author of the Regrès du roy Loeys ² writes "The good King Loeys! You have held the land—to the profit of barons and lesser men alike . . . To whom can poor folk appeal in future—when the good king is dead, who can love them as well?" The hope of finding a protector in the king was not, however, to perish. The people became patient as though they were awaiting the reincarnation of Saint Louis.

The religion of the monarchy was created. To make it omnipotent was the task of the king's people, lawyers, financiers, bailiffs, and office holders great and small alike.

¹ The complete text should be read; it has been published by L. Delisle: Les heures de Blanche de France, Duchesse de Orléans, in B.E.C., 1905, p. 480 ff.