

## CHAPTER IX

### PREDOMINANCE OF THE INDIVIDUALIST IDEAL, 1820-1848

**65. National Affairs from 1820 to 1848.** — The period from 1820 to 1848 was free from any serious warfare. The British fleet intervened, it is true, to help Greece obtain her freedom from Turkey in 1827, and on the other hand, to prevent the Pasha of Egypt from becoming independent and seizing Syria and Asia Minor from Turkey in 1841. There was also a small war with China from 1839 to 1841, known as the Opium War, which resulted in England obtaining from China an indemnity and possession of the island of Hong Kong, which she made into a strong fortress and a valuable colony. There were also rather serious disputes with France, Spain, and the United States, but these were settled without war.

If external affairs were comparatively peaceful, the internal affairs of England were exceedingly stormy, and important political changes took place. The English government in the year 1820 might be described as a complete aristocracy. The king had practically no powers apart from his ministers, and they were merely the representatives of the majority in Parliament. Parliament consisted of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The first of these houses was made up for the most part of an hereditary aristocracy. The bishops and newly created peers, the only element which did not come in by inheritance, were appointed by the king and usually from the families of those who already possessed inherited titles. The House of Commons had originally been made up of two members from each county and two from each important town. But the list of represented towns was still practically