

kind involved in the *union of Iceland-Norway with Denmark* (in 1380) under a common crown. On the other hand, the act of union, and more especially the two codes of law (*Járnsíða* and *Jónsbók*) introduced in 1271—73 and 1281 respectively, wrought a fundamental change in the constitution of Iceland: The executive power was vested in the king; the godords were abolished and the godar were replaced by royal officials; Althingi was retained in a changed form, now acting mainly as a judicial tribunal with judges appointed by the king's officials, but continuing to exercise its legislative functions as well, both conjointly with the king and even without his cooperation. This constitution remained unchanged during the next following centuries; and it may, on the whole, be said that the royal authority was not much to the fore in Iceland down to the Reformation (1550); but from that time it greatly increases, and this for several reasons. At the time of the Reformation the king assumed the highest authority in ecclesiastical affairs, as was the rule in other Lutheran countries; he also took possession of the great landed property belonging to the monasteries. After the Reformation the king also began to lay greater stress on getting revenue from Iceland, which led to the establishment of a trade monopoly in 1602 to the great detriment of the Icelandic people. This monopoly lasted till 1787, during which period all trade was either leased to Danish commercial companies or carried on by the kings themselves. After the Reformation, too, the highest officials in the country were for a long time mostly Danes, whereas up to that time they had often been native Icelanders. In 1662 the Icelandic people yielded formal homage to Frederick III as a hereditary and absolute monarch, in the same manner as had already been done in Norway and Denmark. This brought about no change in the status of Iceland in relation to Denmark, but the new régime naturally necessitated modifications in the constitution of the country. About 1700 the legislative power of Althingi had completely disappeared, and its importance gradually dwindled up to the year 1800, when it was finally abolished. Fundamental changes were also made in the administration of the country both in 1683 og 1688. The highest official, the *Stiftsbefalingsmaður* (governor-general), resided in Denmark without ever having to visit Iceland; the management of Icelandic affairs was entrusted to the Danish government departments in Copenhagen; the Danish supreme court became the court of final appeal in Icelandic affairs as well, and even such laws as were intended to have force in Iceland were issued in the Danish language.