New York, 1903); A. H. Stephens, *Constitutional View of the War Between the States* (Philadelphia, 1868-1870); and A. L. Lowell, *Governments and Parties in Continental Europe* (Boston, 1896).

**STATES-GENERAL,** the English translation of (1) the *États-Généraux* of France before the Revolution, (2) the *Staten- Generaal* of the Dutch Netherlands. The name in both cases signifies, whatever the ultimate divergence in character of the two bodies, the assembly of the representatives of the various estates of the realm, called together for purposes of legislation or deliberation.

*The French States-General.*—In France the States-General owed their origin to the same causes which produced the Parlia­ment of England, the Cortes of Spain, the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire and the Diets *(Landtage)* of the states of Ger­many, and they resembled these assemblies in their constitution. In these countries the royal or ducal power, when it began to extend its scope, found itself limited by the feudal system and had to turn to the forces of feudalism to obtain from them aid and counsel, *i.e.* pecuniary assistance and moral support. Instead of treating severally with the local representatives of these forces the ruler found it useful and convenient to enter into contact with them as a whole, treating with them through their principal representatives.

In France these conditions led in 1302 to a general assembly consisting of the chief lords, both lay and ecclesiastical, and the representatives of the principal privileged towns, which were like distinct lordships. There had, of course, been certain pre­cedents before 1302 which had, as it were, paved the way for this institution; the representatives of the principal towns had several times been convoked by the king, and under Philip III. there had been assemblies of nobles and ecclesiastics in which the two orders had deliberated separately. It was the dis­pute between Philip IV. the Fair and Boniface VIII. which led to the States-General of 1302; the king of France desired that, in addition to the officers of the Crown, the principal authorities of the country should come and testify solemnly that they were at one with the king in this serious crisis. The letters summoning the assembly of 1302 are published by Μ. Georges Picot in his collection of *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de France.* In 1302 the States-General had been called upon only to give *counsel* to the king; but during the same reign they were several times assembled to give him *aid, i.e.* to grant him subsidies, and in course of time this came to be the most frequent motive of their convocation.

In one sense the composition and powers of the States- General have always been the same. They have always in­cluded representatives of the clergy, nobility and third estate, and they have always been summoned either to grant subsidies or to advise the Crown, to give *aid and counsel.* Their composi­tion, however, as well as their effective powers, have varied greatly at different times.

In their primitive form, *i.e.* in the 14th and the first half of the 15th centuries, the States-General had only a limited elective element. The lay lords who appeared therein were not elected, but directly chosen and summoned by the king, and the same was the case with the prelates, bishops and clergy, who were summoned *quâ* ecclesiastical lords. In the order of the clergy, however, since certain ecclesiastical bodies, *e.g.* abbeys and chapters of cathedrals, were also summoned to the assembly, and as these bodies, being persons in the moral but not in the physical sense, could not appear in person, their representative had to be chosen by the monks of the convent or the canons of the chapter. It was only the representation of the third estate which was furnished by election. Originally, moreover, the latter was not called upon as a whole to seek representation in the estates. It was only the *bonnes villes*, the privileged towns, which were called upon. They were represented by elected *procureurs*, who were frequently the municipal officials of the town, but deputies were often elected for the purpose. The country districts, the *plat pays,* were not represented.

It was during the last thirty years of the 16th century that the States-General became an entirely elective body and really representative of the whole nation as divided into three parts. This was brought about by various causes. On the one hand, the nobles and prelates who were summoned were not always inclined to attend the estates, so had themselves represented by an envoy, a *procureur,* as they had the right to do, and fre­quently the lords or prelates of the same district chose the same *procureur* to represent them. On the other hand, the Crown seems at that time to have felt the need of having the con­sent of representatives really expressing the will and feelings of all the orders, and especially of the third estate as a whole. The letters of summons to the States-General of 1484 invited the ecclesiastics, nobles and third estate in general, to meet at the chief town of their *bailliage* or *sénéchaussée* and elect deputies. An intermediate form had been employed in 1468 when the prelates and lords had still been summoned personally, but the towns had each elected three deputies, an ecclesiastic, a noble and a burgess.

At the estates of 1484 there seems to have been universal and direct suffrage for all the three orders. But the *roturiers* of the country districts could not in practice avail themselves of this power; so the country7 communities and small towns spontaneously elected delegates to represent them at the elec­toral assembly. Thus a system of indirect election arose for the third estate which became confirmed and subsequently con­tinued to be used. To a certain extent there were sometimes more than two degrees in the suffrage; the delegates nominated by the country communities would gather together with the electors chosen by the neighbouring little town, and appoint with them new delegates to represent them at the electoral assembly of the *bailliage.* This ultimately became the system. For the clergy and nobles the suffrage remained direct; but as a rule only such ecclesiastics were admitted to the assembly of the *bailliage* as possessed a benefice, and only such lords as had a fief.

The effective powers of the States-General likewise varied in the course of time. In the 14th century they were actually great. The king could not, in theory, levy general taxation. Even in the provinces attached to the domain of the Crown, he could only levy it where he had retained the *haute justice* over the inhabitants, but not on the subjects of lords having the *haute justice.* The privileged towns had generally the right of taxing themselves. In order to obtain general taxes, the king had to obtain the consent of the lay and ecclesiastical lords and of the towns; this amounted to obtaining the authorization of the States-General, which only granted these subsidies temporarily for a fairly short period. The result was that they were summoned fairly frequently and that their power over the Crown might be considcrable.

But in the second half of the 14th century certain royal taxes levied throughout the whole of the domain of the Crown, tended to become permanent, and independent of the vote of the estates. This sprang from many causes, but from one in particular; the Crown endeavoured by transforming and changing the nature of the "feudal aid" to levy a general tax by right, on its own authority, in such cases as those in which a lord could demand feudal aid from his vassals. For instance, it was in this way that the necessary taxes were raised for twenty years to pay the ransom of King John without a vote of the States- Gcneral, although they met several times during this period. Custom confined this tendency. Thus during the second half of the 15th century the chief taxes, the *taille,* aids and *gabelle* became definitely permanent for the benefit of the Crown, sometimes by the formal consent of the States-General, as in 1437 in the case of the aids. The critical periods of the Hundred Years’ War had been favourable to the States-General, though at the price of great sacrifices. Under the reign of King John they had had for a few years, from 1355 to 1358, not only the voting, but through their commissaries, the administration of and jurisdiction over the taxes. In the first half of the reign of Charles VII. they had been summoned almost every year and had patriotically voted subsidies. And when the struggle was over they renounced, through weariness