MAIN IDEA
In contrast to the absolute monarchies of Spain and France, the English monarchy was limited by Parliament; following a civil war, Parliament became even more powerful.

Key Terms and People

Puritans  Protestant religious group that demanded reforms in the Church of England

Charles I  son of James I, became king in 1625

Royalists  supporters of the king during the English Civil War

Oliver Cromwell  commander of Parliament’s army in the Civil War, later Lord Protector

commonwealth  republican government based on the common good of all people

Restoration  the return of the monarchy to England in 1660

Charles II  son of Charles I, became king of Great Britain when monarchy was restored

Glorious Revolution  bloodless transfer of power from James II to William and Mary

William and Mary  James II’s Protestant daughter and son-in-law, who succeeded him

constitutional monarchy  a monarchy limited by law

Taking Notes
As you read the summary, take notes in a graphic organizer like the one below about the decreasing power of the monarchy and increasing power of Parliament.
The Monarchs of Europe

Section 3

Section Summary

THE TUDORS AND PARLIAMENT
To convert England to Protestantism, Henry VIII had teamed up with Parliament. In 1534, the Act of Supremacy named the king the head of England’s official church, the Church of England.

Henry’s daughter Mary briefly returned England to Catholicism. When her sister Elizabeth became queen, Elizabeth had to re-establish the Church of England. She worked well with Parliament, but she strongly believed in her divine right to be queen. In 1601, a noble rebelled against her authority. He was quickly brought to trial, but this showed a growing tendency to question the monarchy.

THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR
In 1603 Elizabeth died, and the Scottish king became James I of England. He believed in the divine right of kings, but he needed money from Parliament, who rarely gave him what he wanted. Religious tensions also troubled him. The Puritans, a group of strict Calvinists, wanted to lessen the power of church officials. James, who depended on the support of the church leadership, refused to pass most Puritan reforms. However, he did authorize an English version of the Bible, known as the King James Bible.

When James died, his son Charles I became king. In 1628, he summoned Parliament to request money. Parliament refused to give it to him until he signed the Petition of Right, which limited the king’s power. Still, conflict continued between king and Parliament. Charles decided not to consult them again.

In 1640, Charles had to ask Parliament for money again. This Parliament declared that the king no longer had the right to dismiss them, and stayed in session for so many years that they became known as the Long Parliament. Charles agreed to Parliament’s demands, but planned to overturn the new rules.

In 1642, Charles interrupted Parliament in session, intending to arrest five members for treason. The men fled, but Charles’s plan to take back power was revealed. Some members of Parliament decided to rise against the king, and the English Civil War began.

Why did the English rulers deal with Parliament even though they believed in the divine right of kings to rule?

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Supporters of the king were called Royalists. Parliament’s army, called Roundheads, consisted of Puritans, merchants, and some gentry. Their leader was Oliver Cromwell, an army general and Puritan member of Parliament. After his army took control of London, he sent troops to dismiss members of Parliament who disagreed with him. The group left behind was called the Rump Parliament. They charged the king with treason and put him on trial. Charles refused to recognize the authority of the court, but he was sentenced to death, and beheaded in 1649.

The House of Commons abolished the House of Lords and the monarchy and England became a commonwealth, a republican government based on the common good of all people. At first, Cromwell ruled England as Lord Protector. Then in 1658 he dismissed Parliament to rule alone. He also affected English social life by closing theaters and other forms of entertainment.

Conditions during the English Civil War inspired philosopher Thomas Hobbes to write Leviathan, in which he described people as naturally selfish and fearful and in need of a powerful leader to rule them.

THE MONARCHY RETURNS
When Cromwell died in 1658, his son took power, but he was not a strong leader. In 1660, Parliament voted to bring back the monarchy. The Restoration brought Charles II, son of Charles I, back from exile. He supported religious toleration, reopened the theaters, and passed the Habeas Corpus Act guaranteeing that those accused of crimes had the right to appear in court. Charles’s brother, a Catholic, became King James II in 1685. However, James was unpopular and in 1689, Parliament asked James’s Protestant daughter and son-in-law to take power. James fled to France. This bloodless transfer of power was known as the Glorious Revolution. Parliament made the couple, William and Mary, agree to a new English Bill of Rights. Among other things, it kept the monarch from overruling Parliament’s laws. England was now a constitutional monarchy, a monarchy limited by law.