**Henry VII’s Parliament**

Only King could call Parliament; Henry demonstrated this power early on in his reign. It was called as and when. There were only 7 Parliaments during Henry’s reign. Only 1 was called in the second half of his reign which indicated his increasing security.

Henry used legislation through Parliament to strengthen royal power and emphasise all power derived from the Crown.

In every department of government, Henry simply used the old institutions of council and parliament more efficiently than his Yorkist predecessors. In this sense, he didn’t create a “new system of government”; it was rather the amount of crown wealth he amassed, not its government or institutions, which is the most innovatory aspect of the new Tudor monarchy.

Functions of parliament

* Pass laws
* Grant taxation to the crown.
* Subsidiary concerns of local MPs passed on to the King’s officials.

There were two types of the House of Lords: Lords Spiritual (bishops and abbots of religious houses) and Lords Temporal (nobility). The House of Commons consisted of 2 MPs from each county, 2 MPs from each borough and representatives of 2 universities. The House of Lords was considered more important than the House of Commons.

Early Parliaments: issues of national security and raising revenue.

First two Parliaments passed Acts of Attainder. These acts declared individuals guilty without having to go through a trial. If dead, their land would be forfeit to the crown. They increased royal income.

The first Parliament discussed tonnage and poundage (customs revenues).

Later Parliaments discussed extraordinary revenue (taxation raised by the king to enable him to wage war). The most common form of extraordinary revenue was fifteenths and tenths which were imposed based on the value of the goods of the taxpayer.

The final Parliament limited the demand for extraordinary revenue and the King promised he would not seek more revenue by it.

According to Paul Cavill, Parliament operated effectively: private acts were passed in response to local demands and the King respected decisions made.

In order to maintain order, Henry relied on members of the nobility to exercise power. It was important, however, that they would not gain enough power that they could challenge the King.

Henry did not have the luxury of Edward IV who had divided the country into spheres of influence which were controlled by magnates. In contrast, in Henry’s reign, the number of magnates had decreased after War of the Roses so their lands had fallen under the Crown’s responsibility.

The control of Magnates was confined to the north of England: Henry’s relatives, the Stanley’s, in the northwest.