

'Parliament in a national crisis'

History of Parliament Trust Annual Lecture 2020

19 November 2020

On the face of it, parliament has soldiered on magnificently this year. And in the usual effortlessly self-congratulatory British way, we have patted ourselves on the back for the fact that the Commons has not missed a sitting day during the pandemic. Well done, us.

It was the same after the Second World War. Parliament had soldiered on, despite being bombed repeatedly and the Commons being forced to sit in the Lords, in St Stephen's Hall and in Church House. We were so proud of ourselves that Winston Churchill pronounced at the despatch box that 'we have the strongest Parliament in the world'.ⁱ

But is this self-congratulation justified? Is our Parliament robust? Does it weather storms well? Has it enabled good government in a crisis – or has it just succumbed to the crisis and let the government get on with it? And are there any lessons we might learn from history?

So first of all, my whistle-stop tour of how historic crises have affected parliament – with an emphasis on pandemics.

Petitions, the redress of grievances and statute law

Let's start with the one positive effect that historic national crises had on the development of representative parliament in the Middle Ages.

Monarchs were accustomed from ancient times to governing by royal ordinance. This was true even after the Simon de Montfort parliament of 1265 and the Model Parliament of 1295, which established the political expectation that parliaments including representatives of the shires and the boroughs be summoned. But national crises increasingly led to petitions from boroughs, counties and individuals, which were presented in parliament, seeking intervention by the king's ministers. And these in turn led to the development of statute law.

Nothing prompted such petitions more keenly than a national or local emergency.

In the spring of 1346, for instance, there was great concern about people 'smitten with the blemish of leprosy' dwelling among the other citizens and sound persons, communicating with them, 'as well in public places as in private' and endeavouring 'to contaminate others with that abominable blemish, (that so, to their own wretched solace, they may have the more fellows in suffering,) as well ... by the contagion of their polluted breath, as by carnal intercourse with women in stews and other secret places'.ⁱⁱ Edward III was absorbed with the war with France and did not summon parliament until his humiliating victory at Crécy that August so on this occasion he acted unilaterally and issued an ordinance requiring lepers to leave London within a fortnight and outlawing the harbouring of lepers.

Five years later, though, when parliament met after a lengthy plague-enforced absence on 9 February 1351 its members' major concern was the much-diminished rural workforce and spiralling labour costs – so Edward and his parliament promptly and famously put into the Statute of Labourers the provisions of the royal ordinance of the previous year with a national schedule of wages.

Following a major tornado on the evening of Saturday 16 January 1362 parliament begged the king 'to consider the divers mischiefs that have come to his commons by divers pestilences of wind and water, and mortality of men and beasts'. Henry IV's first parliament likewise petitioned 'that the king would graciously consider the great pestilence which is in the northern parts'. There's a similar petition in 1421.

There were at least a dozen outbreaks of the plague in the 15th century ⁱⁱⁱ but that of 1438-9 was particularly severe. Henry VI had only just come of age, though, he was short of cash and the situation in France was again worrying, so a parliament was nonetheless summoned to Westminster. The Commons petitioned the king that since the 'pestilence is a most infective infirmity, and the presence of those so infected should be greatly avoided',^{iv} they should be allowed to omit kissing the king when paying homage.

These petitions were increasingly combined into Statutes, thereby undergirding parliamentary with statute law. Hence Richard II's Sanitary Act of 1388, the appointment of 'searchers' in 1543 to affix the sign of the cross to affected houses, and the licencing of people who sold cloth, silk and garments and apparel in 1581.

It was, incidentally, the same in Scotland's Three Estates. National measures were taken in Scotland in 1452 when an Act of Parliament permitted the burning of any house affected by plague. Quarantine regulations followed in 1456, restricting the movement of people and goods and in future years these were strictly enforced by parliament, the privy council and the burghs. Penalties for concealment of the plague were harsh.

The nineteenth century has similar instances. The cholera outbreaks of 1831-2, 1848-9, 1853-4 and 1858 also played a role in developing national policy responses and legislation. It started with a keelman called William Sproat who lived near the quayside in Sunderland and died on 23 October 1831. He was the first of 215 in the city and between December 1831 and the following March some 511 people died of cholera in Newcastle and Gateshead (where 50 died on Boxing Day alone). Estimates of the total number of deaths across Britain vary. In one analysis the number was 20,753 but others reckoned it was more like 32,000. In 1848-9 it was even higher at somewhere between 44,362 and 62,000. ^v

One instance will suffice to give the impression of how things felt – with some chilling echoes of recent events. Bilston in Staffordshire – population 15,000 – saw 742 people die in seven weeks in the summer of 1832. The vicar of Bilston, the Revd William Leigh, wrote: 'The pestilence was literally sweeping everything before it, neither age, nor sex, nor station escaping.... To describe the consternation of the people is impossible. Manufactories and workshops were closed; business completely at a stand; women seen in a state of distraction running in all directions for medical help for their dying husbands, husbands for their wives, and children for their parents; the hearse conveying the dead to the grave, without intermission either by night or day; those inhabitants who possessed the means quitting their homes, and flying for safety to some purer atmosphere; those who remained, seeing nothing before them but disease and death.'^{vi}

Many political commentators' grasp on the science of cholera was very limited. They saw the poor suffering more than anyone else and leaped to judgement. They argued that it was their drinking or laziness that had brought this divine visitation from a vengeful God on them. They chose to ignore the overcrowding, the open sewers that still ran through most slum areas and the lack of clean drinking water (which made beer safer than water). But others

were wiser – and there were constant questions in the House of Commons on the subject. As early as October 1831, very shortly after the first UK case was recorded, Sir Richard Vyvyan Bart., the scientifically minded MP for Okehampton, called for strong measures to tackle the outbreak, demanding that all vessels from the city of Hamburg, where several cases had been recorded, should be properly quarantined.^{vii} The government tried to pacify him, but as the number of cases grew, he returned to the subject in December, as the government's quarantine seemed to be inadequate. 'It had been shown', he argued, 'by the instance of the palace near St. Petersburg being surrounded by a cordon, and in which there were between 6,000 and 7,000 individuals, that the disease might be kept out; and Ministers were bound, in the first instance, to endeavour to stop the progress of the disease by precautionary measures, and by strictly enforcing the quarantine laws.' The firebrand MP for Preston, Henry Hunt, followed up with a request that the Government take the issue far more seriously, as it would soon be on their own doorsteps. 'It might not be palatable to hon. Members to hear what he was about to say', he started, 'but of this he was fully assured, that should the cholera make its appearance in the metropolis, it would certainly visit St. Stephen's [i.e. the Commons], for the air which they breathed was unwholesome, and there was a great want of ventilation in the House.'^{viii}

Henry Warburton, the radical MP for Bridport, who was also an amateur scientist, was even more critical of the Government, claiming that if it acted 'with Turkish resignation as to the disease, it would spread all over the county. He had done his duty in calling the attention of Ministers to the subject, and he could not compel them to act if they were not inclined. He had, before the cholera broke out at Sunderland, complained of the laxity in the observance of the quarantine laws. He would not detain the House longer, but he would call upon Ministers to act, and if they did not, in his opinion they would be responsible for the consequences.'^{ix}

The disease continued to ravage several towns. Newcastle had its first case on 7 December and by the summer it had seen 801 deaths. The town of Tranent – with a tiny population of 1,631 had 204 cases and 64 deaths.

Henry Hunt tackled the government again on the matter in March 1832, claiming that 'many cases of Cholera were never reported at all'.^x And on the back of a single case in Grosvenor Square – rather close to many Honourable Members' homes – George Dawson, the Member for Harwich, demanded the interference of the Government, for, unless strong measures were adopted to enforce the law, the extent to which the disease might prevail could not be foretold.'^{xi}

As in previous generations MPs' concerns about a pandemic led to important legislation. It came rather later in the day, but the Cholera Morbus Prevention Act came into force in February 1832 and gave local bodies a few additional powers. Once the epidemic had subsided, though, the issue was forgotten and the underlying problems lay unaddressed. It was not until an outbreak of typhus in 1838 and further concerns about cholera that a Royal Commission on the Health of Towns was set up and the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act 1846 followed by the Public Health Act 1848 pioneered by the social reformer Edwin Chadwick created a General Board of Health and gave local boards responsibility for the supply of clean water, sewerage, drainage and environmental health (albeit without a requirement to do anything or a budget with which to do it). Finally, a British government took (a degree of) responsibility for the health of its citizens.

To sit or not to sit

The main effect of national crises up to the seventeenth century, though, was that they stopped parliament from sitting.

So, for instance, the Black Death arrived in such force in 1348 that bodies were buried five-deep in Spittle Croft and one anonymous person carved the following words in the stonework at St Mary's Ashwell, 'Wretched, terrible, destructive year, the remnants of the people alone remain.' With three Archbishops of Canterbury, the Abbot of Westminster and his own daughter Joan dead, Edward III decided to prorogue parliament on 1 January 1349 on the grounds that: 'the plague and deadly pestilence had suddenly broken out in the said place and the neighbourhood, and daily increased in severity so that grave fears were entertained for the safety of those coming here at the time.' Another prorogation followed on 10 March on the basis that 'the pestilence was continuing at Westminster, in the city of London, and in other places, more severely than before'.^{xiii}

Likewise a hundred years later, Parliament adjourned to Winchester in May 1449 to avoid 'the corrupt and infected airs' of Westminster and that November it moved to Ludgate, the following March it moved to Leicester and in November 1452 it went to Reading, as it did in 1466 and again in 1467 when several MPs died of the plague before parliament was prorogued and everyone sent home.

The Tudors similarly had to move parliament out of Westminster or prorogue it, most notably on 26 April 1530 when parliament was prorogued to 22 June, and then to 1 October. The same happened in 1535, and the following year the mitred abbot of York self-isolated, asking permission not to attend parliament because the plague had 'visited' his house near St Paul's and he didn't want to infect anyone. I don't know whether he was allowed to participate remotely by signet.

The Stuarts faced similar outbreaks. James VI of Scotland became James I of England in March 1603 and aimed to summon parliament that autumn, but had to delay until the following March, thereby postponing the traditional grants of taxation to the new monarch and forcing the king to issue proclamations rather than introduce legislation to prohibit all fairs that year within fifty miles of London. When parliament did eventually meet it introduced the first Act for 'the charitable relief of persons infected with the plague'.^{xiii} I'm not sure whether this amounted to a furlough scheme.

James's son suffered the same fate, as Charles I's first parliament met from June to August 1625 but was forced to decamp to Oxford when the bubonic plague started to ravage London. This failed to provide the crown with the usual tonnage and poundage duties for the monarch's life and merely offered him it for a year plus £140,000 for the war with Spain. Parliament was desperately trying to curb the royal favourite, the duke of Buckingham, at the time but failed as the king simply decided to collect the duties without parliamentary approval. If the plague had not intervened, perhaps a deal might have been struck between Parliament and the Crown that would have prevented the Civil Wars.

(Incidentally, when Jacob Rees-Mogg regularly referred to the last Parliament as the 'Useless Parliament' I worried about his semi-regal pretensions, as he was clearly referring to this Parliament of 1625 which Charles I called 'useless' because it refused to do his bidding.)

The plague continued to ravage Stuart parliaments, as noted by the diarist and MP Sir Simond D'Ewes who noted the weekly statistics in his Latin diary in 1644 and 1645. Interestingly he sent his wife and family away when he thought it necessary, but never seems to have left London or avoided the Commons for fear of contagion.

The worst outbreak since 1348 then came in 1665, killing nearly a quarter of the population of London and forcing Charles II to delay the sitting of the Cavalier Parliament and then move it to Oxford. Again the Crown took emergency measures – closing the border with Scotland and banning all trade in and out of London.

The necessity of holding parliaments

Did it matter that parliament was adjourned or prorogued?

Strictly speaking there was no statute during this period governing when, how often, how long or indeed whether parliament need sit. All of these matters were at the discretion of the monarch. But there were reasons the monarch might want parliament to sit, not least so as to levy taxes and duties to pay royal household expenses and fund war, or as in Henry's VIII's case to enact the monarch's will in legislation dissolving the monasteries.

But there was no requirement that Parliament must sit.

This was of course a major source of dispute in the Stuart era. Hence Parliament's insistence after Charles I's period of personal rule from 1628 to 1640 on the Triennial or Dissolution Act of 1641 which stipulated that Parliament must meet for at least a fifty-day session once every three years. His son Charles II's repeal of this in the Triennial 1664 watered down the requirement of a new parliament every three years by omitting any means of enforcing it, which allowed Charles II to retain the Cavalier Parliament for nearly eighteen years and to rule again without Parliament through from its one-week sitting in Oxford in 1681 until his death in 1685 – and this in turn led after the Glorious Revolution to a more effective successor statute, the Meeting of Parliament Act 1694, which stated simply that 'a Parliament shall bee holden once in Three years att the least'^{xiv} and that no Parliament could last more than three years. This last provision was amended by the very short Septennial Act 1716 to allow parliament to last seven years. This was shortened to five years by the Parliament Act 1911, but as with all seemingly impregnable constitutional-sounding statutes, this too was amended four times in the First World War, and five times in the Second World War so as to extend the life of the parliament to eight and ten years.

The Fixed Term Parliament Act repealed all of this and it alone now provides that a Parliament shall last five years unless there is an early election. Since any government by virtue of its majority still has the ability to amend or repeal even this seemingly fixed element of our constitution, it is difficult not to agree with the American Founding Father James Madison, who drew a distinction between 'a Constitution established by the people and unalterable by the government, and a law established by the government and alterable by the government.'^{xv}

We know the maximum term limit of a parliament, but as the Supreme Court battle over the unlawful prorogation of Parliament proved last year, there still remains in UK law only the vaguest of provisions about how continuously or continually Parliament need sit, as prorogation remains a royal prerogative, and recess dates and the hours of sitting can only be tabled or amended by a minister of the Crown. I note that we still have no idea when this

parliamentary session will end and that the Government is about to publish a Bill aimed at amending or repealing the Fixed term Parliaments Act.

(On a minor note, I would point out that repeal alone doesn't work. It would mean that a Parliament could last indefinitely and this is not a consummation devoutly to be wished by anyone.)

The political sidelines

Perhaps the most significant aspect of any national crisis, though, is that it strengthens the belief that good government requires that the Crown, or in modern parlance ministers be free to act swiftly and decisively without interference. Parliament – and parliamentary debate – is seen as a bit of a luxury.

This is most clearly seen from the experience of the two world wars when, notwithstanding Churchill's patriotic encomium on parliament, it was weak and almost entirely irrelevant.

Thus, in the First World War, the Crown suspended ministerial by-elections which had been held including during times of war ever since 1707 because they were inconvenient. It incorporated the whole of the Opposition into the Government ranks and doubled the number of government ministers, thereby neutralising virtually all dissent by vastly increasing the payroll. When Asquith brought the Conservatives into government the whole reconstruction of the government – and the demise of Liberalism – was conducted without any reference to either house of parliament. And when Lloyd George replaced Asquith as prime minister in a second palace coup, he managed to avoid addressing the Commons for seventy-nine days. And nobody objected. Strong government trumped parliamentary accountability in a crisis.

The same happened in the 1939-45 war. True, parliamentary manoeuvres on the government benches managed to slash a majority of 225 to 81 and thereby effectively despatched Neville Chamberlain as Prime Minister in May 1940. But again, with the Lords unvisited and virtually moribund, Churchill neutralised all Opposition in the Commons. He incorporated all the main parties on the government benches, he doubled the number of ministers on the payroll again, he increased the number of PPSs, and he suspended the other provisions of the Succession to the Crown Act 1707, which excluded from the Commons anyone who accepted an 'office of profit under the Crown' so that he could reward parliamentary loyalty with posts as well-paid commissioners, ambassadors and local administrators. Yet again Parliament was almost entirely irrelevant and on the sidelines.

This should have been shocking. From the Middle Ages, monarchs had needed parliament to provide the financial resources to build ships, pay an army, buy munitions and wage war. The Crown could levy feudal aids, tallage and scutage by dint of vassal tradition, but poll taxes, duties, tonnage and poundage and ship money all came under the undoubted purview of the burgesses and knights of the shire in the Commons (albeit with the tacit approval of the Lords until 1399). When parliament did not want the king to go to war it simply refused to grant him money – or to use the language of parliament it declined 'to vote him supply'. This meant parliament was central to the execution of war, the resourcing of the armed forces and the declaration of war aims. Hence, most notably, the fall of the Government of Lord North in 1782 when Henry Seymour Conway's motion to end 'the further prosecution of offensive warfare in America' was carried by 234 votes to 215. By contrast, all financial measures and emergency legislation were passed in the two world wars without a whisper of dissent.

This was also true of the Influenza Pandemic in 1918-19. Many thousands of Britons died, yet influenza was little reported in the press due to wartime reporting restrictions, there was a general election on 14 December, the new Parliament did not sit until 4 February and the word influenza was only mentioned 118 times in parliament, including 42 written answers to questions. There was a single question about mortality figures on 28 October 1918, a couple of days later Joseph King asked about an outbreak in Belfast Prison, and the following day there were questions about closing down public meetings and schools. There were more questions in November about separate incidents in a hospital and a cadet depot, Viscount Woolmer asked about the significant numbers of soldiers who had died of influenza, and after the election 20 February 1919 Captain Ramsden asked whether the minister was ‘in possession of information based on experience in other countries showing any efficacious means of dealing with the persistence of influenza: and whether any definite statement can be made as to the value of inoculation?’ the newly elected 49 year old Neville Chamberlain followed up with a suggestion about bringing nurses back from France and a week later Major Sir Henry Norman asked ‘what steps are being taken, both in research and in practical measures, to arrest the present epidemic of influenzal pneumonia’^{xvi}, but the three successive Presidents of the Local Government Board, William Hayes Fisher, Auckland Geddes and Christopher Addison were barely troubled on the issue in parliament, which basically let the government get on with it under semi-wartime regulations.

As ever, some members’ grasp of the science wasn’t perfect. Sir Percy Harris opined ‘that the result of closing schools is that children run about the streets to play, and are more liable to contract the disease than if they are in warm buildings’. And Colonel Claude Lowther declared that it was a fact ‘that a sure preventative against influenza is cocoa taken three times a day?’^{xvii} The wartime hero Percy Dean was so blasé that he even seconded the loyal address on 11 February 1919 in uniform as a Lieutenant-Commander ‘only just immediately out of bed after a severe attack of influenza.’^{xviii} This was eighty years before a vaccine. He should definitely have been self-isolating.

My argument is that as in so many other aspects of our national life, that traumatic experience of world war has permanently framed our constitution by instilling in us a belief that good government requires that the Crown, the executive, the government, be strong and unfettered, in full charge of expenditure, sitting dates and the legislative timetable. Hence, we pride ourselves more on managing to sit at all than on scrutiny of the business and the executive’s use or abuse of power. Hence too the fact that when David Cameron lost a motion on whether to join US military action in Syria on 30 August 2013 by 285 to 272 neither he, the foreign secretary nor the chief whip resigned – and nobody seemed surprised.

And this year has shown quite how weak parliament has become.

The Crown – the Government – has never needed to pause when considering what financial packages to put in place to support companies or individuals. They have simply spent the money and informed parliament. Neither House has any means of varying, altering or cancelling that package. This is quite different from most other democracies. Witness the budget decisions in the US – or in your local council.

Nor has the government had to worry much about parliament when taking Emergency Powers under existing legislation. The Coronavirus Act was the most significant power-grab in our history. It granted Government ministers very substantial powers, which they can – for the first time ever – switch on and off at will. The Act was pushed through in very short order – and gave itself a two-year span, with a mere 90-minute debate on a non-amendable renewal motion every six months. The vast majority of measures have been taken through under secondary legislation – again non-amendable, on the take it or leave it principle. So we have the preposterous situation where hundreds of MPs seek to speak in a debate on a second lockdown and barely a handful can be called.

Then there is the problem of the secondary legislation. As of 30 December there have been 329 coronavirus statutory instruments – representing 33% of all SIs during this period – using powers in 109 Acts of Parliament including the Saint Helena Act 1833, the British Settlements Act 1887 and the Colonial Probates Act 1892. 226 SIs were under the ‘made negative’ procedure – in other words, they become law unless a motion or ‘prayer’ against them is carried (which requires the Government to grant time for such a prayer to be debated). Just 85 required approval by the Commons. 145 of the SIs have breached the 21-day rule and come into force less than 21 days after they are laid. 42 have even come into force before they were laid and have therefore had to be notified to the Speakers of both Houses under the Statutory Instruments Act 1946.

Lots of these have been laid so fast that they have had to be corrected within days. The Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982 were amended twice within four days. On 2-3 September, the ‘protected area’ covered by the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Blackburn with Darwen and Bradford) Regulations 2020 was amended twice in 12 hours. The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of Face Coverings in a Relevant Place) (England) Regulations 2020 were amended by three different SIs made in two days on 22-23 September.

Of course, many of these are important, useful measures. But just for instance, The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2020, which were laid on 3 November and came into force on 5 November, run to 26 clauses plus a schedule and included dramatic curtailing of personal liberties with rules on bingo halls, massage parlours, skating rinks, model villages and aquaria. As the explanatory memorandum puts it ‘These Regulations impose restrictions on the occasions on which a person can leave or be outside of the place where they are living and on gatherings.’ Yet the measure was un-amendable and was granted just 90 minutes debate.

Moreover, ministers have had their lives made far simpler by the way business is now transacted. The call lists mean they know the name of every single MP who will ask them a question. They can be prepared. Questions are longer, ministers can waffle in reply and there is very little spontaneity. With just 50 MPs allowed in the chamber, there is little sense of the House coming to a shared view, so the government prevails. The Government Chief whip has done such a good job of harvesting that he now holds more than 246 proxy votes – far outstripping the duke of Buckingham in 1628. The result is ministers need never turn up to vote. Because only the government can table amendments to standing orders and guarantee time for them to be debated, significant numbers of MPs have been excluded from participation in debates. Most contributions from backbenchers are limited to three minutes.

Even private members bills have been consigned to another day. And there is apparently no longer any concept of ‘House business’ being exempt from the whip.

Most egregiously of all, when the Government recalled Parliament for 30 December, ostensibly only to agree the EU Future Relationship Bill as emergency legislation required before the end of the EU Transition period the following day, the Government published the 80-page Bill barely fifteen hours before it was to start being considered. All stages of the Bill were completed in less than five hours, which meant that there was in effect no committee or report stage or third reading debate. The order paper for that day, which included five significant public health statutory instruments that had only been published the day before, was still not available at 10 pm the night before. And, as if to underline the Government’s desire to avoid scrutiny (and its ability to do so) the Government tabled the traditional motion necessary after a recall, to reinstate the recess, but changed the date so as to keep the Commons (but not the Lords) in recess for an additional week. Under Standing Orders no amendment to this motion was possible, which meant that if the motion were to be negatived, the House would sit the following day. Yet again the Standing Orders uphold the iron-grip sovereignty of the Government.

All of which leads me to two conclusions.

Firstly, parliament needs to rediscover its backbone. We have surrendered the historic freedoms of the peoples of the United Kingdom to an over-mighty executive for too long. This crisis must teach us to take back those powers.

Secondly, we need a new legislative settlement on Parliamentary freedom which stands through the vicissitudes of a national crisis when tradition, conventions and historic ‘gentlemen’s agreements’ are placed under unusual stress.

It should specify that:

1. Whatever the circumstances, all proceedings in Parliament must enable all Members of Parliament to participate fully and equally.
2. Parliament shall not be prorogued or dissolved without the express approval of the House of Commons by an enhanced majority.
3. Nor shall the House of Commons be adjourned for a period without the express approval of the House of Commons – the motion shall be subject to amendment by Members other than ministers and if the House is recalled from a recess, the existing recess date shall stand.
4. No Member of Parliament shall hold more than two proxy votes at any one time.
5. Notwithstanding a recess motion, the Speaker shall be enabled to recall the House of Commons if 200 MPs including members of both Government and Opposition benches request it to debate matters akin the Standing Order 24.
6. A full review of the Commons Standing Orders should be conducted and any changes should require a two thirds or similarly enhanced majority.

Our greatest danger is that we confuse the political authority of the government of the day with the political authority of the people who elected it. Ministers need defending from themselves and governments need protecting from the temptations inherent in their own majority. This year’s travails have proved that we need to buttress our freedoms – especially our historic parliamentary liberty – with robust defences. For an elected tyranny is not a

proper democracy – and it rarely leads to good government. A free Parliament requires that its Members be free to speak without fear or favour and to be in charge of their own destiny.

Chris Bryant MP

Rhondda, 30 December 2020

ⁱ HC, 15 May 1945, vol. 410, col. 2307.

ⁱⁱ 'Memorials: 1346', in *Memorials of London and London Life in the 13th, 14th and 15th Centuries*, ed. H T Riley (London, 1868), pp. 230-234. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/memorials-london-life/pp230-234> [accessed 23 November 2020].

ⁱⁱⁱ 1400, 1405, 1413, 1420, 1427, 1433, 1438, 1457, 1463, 1467, 1471 and 1479

^{iv} Charles Creighton, *A History of Epidemics in England*, CUP, 1891, p. 225.

^v E. Ashworth Underwood, 'The History of Cholera in Great Britain', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, vol. XLI (165), 1947.

^{vi} The Revd. William Leigh, *An Authentic Narrative of the Melancholy Occurrences at Bilston ... during the . . . cholera in 1832*, Wolverhampton, 1833.

^{vii} HC, 18 October 1831, vol. 8, cols 898-901.

^{viii} HC, 15 December 1831, vol. 9, cols. 308-16.

^{ix} HC, 15 December 1831, vol. 9, cols. 308-16.

^x HC, 5 March 1832, vol. 10, cols. 1115-7.

^{xi} HC, 28 March 1832, vol. 11, cols. 1017-8.

^{xii} Charles Creighton, *A History of Epidemics in England*, CUP, 1891, p. 117.

^{xiii} 1st James I. (1603-4), cap. 31.

^{xiv} John Raithby, ed., *Statutes of the Realm*, 1819, vol. 6, p. 510.

^{xv} *The Federalist Papers* (n 8), no. 53, p. 328.

^{xvi} HC, 20 February 1919, vol. 112, col. 1192; and 27 February 1919, vol. 112, col. 1997.

^{xvii} HC, 30 October 1918, vol. 110, col. 1462.

^{xviii} HC, 11 February 1919, vol. 112, col. 55.