Literary History of England

edited by Albert C Baugh

IV

Samuel C Chew
and Richard D Altick

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

A LITERARY HISTORY OF ENGLAND

Second Edition

Edited by Albert C. Baugh

VOLUME

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER (1789-1939)

by

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&

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ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL
LONDON AND HENLEY

Published in Great Britain
by Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd
39 Store Street, London WC1E 7DD and
Broadway House, Newtown Road,
Henley-on-Thames, Oxon. RG9 1EN

Second Edition 1967
Reprinted 1968, 1970 and first published as a paperback 1972
Reprinted 1975, 1977 and 1980

Printed in Great Britain
by Unwin Brothers Limited
The Gresham Press, Old Woking, Surrey
A member of the Staples Printing Group

ISBN 0 7100 6131 5

Preface to the First Edition

The purpose of the work of which the present volume forms a part is to provide a comprehensive history of the literature of England, an account that is at once scholarly and readable, capable of meeting the needs of mature students and of appealing to cultivated readers generally. The extent of English literature is so great that no one can hope to read more than a fraction of it, and the accumulated scholarship—biographical, critical, and historical—by which writers and their works, and the forms and movements and periods of English literature have been interpreted, is so vast that no single scholar can control it. A literary history by one author, a history that is comprehensive and authoritative over the whole field, is next to impossible. Hence, the plan of the present work. A general harmony of treatment among the five contributors, rather than rigid uniformity of method, has seemed desirable, and there is quite properly some difference of emphasis in different sections. It is hoped that the approach to the different periods will seem to be that best suited to the literature concerned. The original plan brought the history to an end with the year 1939 (the outbreak of the Second World War); but delay in publication caused by the war has permitted reference to a few events of a date subsequent to 1939.

Since it is expected that those who read this history or consult it will wish for further acquaintance with the writings and authors discussed, it has been a part of the plan to draw attention, by the generous use of footnotes, to standard editions, to significant biographical and critical works, and to the most important books and articles in which the reader may pursue further the matters that interest him. A few references to very recent publications have been added in proof in an effort to record the present state of scholarly and critical opinion.

As for the present volume, all that is necessary here is to repeat the grateful acknowledgment of indebtedness for helpful suggestions made by Professor Frederick L. Jones, Professor Mary S. Gardiner, and Professor Arthur C. Sprague, and to thank readers who called attention to three or four small errors in the single-volume edition, which have here been corrected.

S. C. C.

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION

The reception of the *Literary History of England* has been so gratifying as to call for a number of successive printings, and these have permitted minor corrections to be made. The present edition has a further aim—to bring the book in line with the most recent scholarship. Small changes have been made in the plates wherever possible, but most of the additions, factual and bibliographical, are recorded in a Supplement. The text, Supplement, and Index are correlated by means of several typographical devices. Explanations of these devices appear on each part-title page as well as at the beginning of the Supplement and the Index.

The editor regrets that the authors of Books II, III, and IV did not live to carry out the revisions of those books, but their places have been ably taken by the scholars whose names appear with theirs in the list of collaborators. It has been the desire of the editor, as well as of those who have joined him, that each of these books should remain essentially as the original author wrote it, and we believe that other scholars would concur. Any new points of view, it is hoped, are adequately represented in the Supplement.

A. C. B.

Contents

I

The Background of Revolution, Repression, and Reform: 1789-1832

The forty-three years from the Fall of the Bastille (1789) to the passage of the first Reform Bill (1832) precisely cover the period in English literary history from the appearance of Blake's *Songs of Innocence* to the death of Sir Walter Scott. Commonly called the Romantic Period, it might be called the pre-Victorian, in a double sense, both chronologically as preceding the Queen's long reign and also because it saw England moving through the ordeal of the Industrial Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars to her period of dominance during the middle decades of the nineteenth century.[1]

I

Agita for Refo

During the seventeen-eighties, under the impulsion of accelerating economic change, the champions of reform became more active. The social conscience found expression in the movement for the abolition of the slave-trade, the revision of the system of poor relief, the religious education of the poor, the mitigation of conditions in prisons and "hulks," the diminution of the national vice of intemperance, the relief of dissenters, and other good causes. But the advocates of the redress of grievances saw that their best strategy was to plead the cause of parliamentary reform—a fairer representation of the people in Parliament. The consensus, however, in the ruling classes was that particular grievances were of no consequence in comparison with the virtue of the English system as a whole. Property interests were fundamental; the people were represented in the spirit of the law even though not in the letter; and—the pragmatic argument—the old system worked.

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Events in France in the summer of 1789 were watched with eager interest by Englishmen and imparted a fresh zeal to the champions of reform. "The London Revolution Society," though founded to celebrate the centenary of political liberty won in 1688, became associated in the popular mind with what was going on across the Channel; and this impression seemed to be confirmed when in November the Society sent a message of congratulation

[1] P. A. Brown, *The French Revolution in English History* (1923); A. F. Freemantle, *England in the Nineteenth Century, 1801-1805* (1929), *1806-1810* (1930); G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England* (1926), Book v, chs. iv-vii, and *English Social History* (1942), chs. xv-xvi; *Social England*, ed. H. D. Traill (1896), v chs. xix-xx; J. M. Thompson, *English Witnesses of the French Revolution* (1938); various chapters in *The Cambridge Modern History*, viii and ix.

to the French National Assembly on the triumph of liberty over arbitrary power. This message roused Edmund Burke to the composition of his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). The anti-revolutionary opinions so widely disseminated in this pamphlet did not go unchallenged.[2] Mary Wollstonecraft [3] (1759-1797) attacked Burke for his reliance upon the past and his contempt of the poor; but though charged with generous feeling her *Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790) was too hastily written and too emotional to be very effective. Nor was the *Vindiciae Gallicae* (1791) of James Mackintosh [4] (1765-1832) widely influential, for it was too refined in its Whig liberalism. But the demagogic style in which Thomas Paine [5] (1737-1809) wrote *The Rights of Man* (1791) made it at once a textbook of popular radicalism. Anyone, even if unable to follow close reasoning, could comprehend his ringing assertions that "man has no property in man" and that "there is a morning of reason rising upon the world." The violence of Paine's attack upon the British monarchy was, however, prejudicial to his own cause, and he harmed it further by the crass anti-Christianity of *The Age of Reason* (1794). In contrast to this fanaticism is the cool argument in *Letters to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke* (1791) by Joseph

[2] With Burke's opponents may be associated Arthur Young (1741-1820), whose defense of the French Revolution was none the less telling for being indirect. He was already an expert observer of agricultural and social conditions and had published three *Tours* (1768-1770) through different parts of England and a *Tour in Ireland* (1780) when in 1787 he made the famous tour of which he gave an account in *Travels in France* (1792); ed. M. Bentham-Edwards (1924). By exposing the rottenness of economic conditions under the *ancien régime* this work demonstrated the inevitability of the Revolution.

[3] After early experience as a teacher (see her *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters,* 1787), Mary Wollstonecraft became literary adviser to Joseph Johnson, a publisher. Her *Original Stories* (1791) were illustrated by Blake; ed. E. V. Lucas (1906). *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) argues for equality of education for both sexes and state control of co-education. In Paris in 1792-1793 she formed an attachment with Gilbert Imlay, her principles forbidding her to marry. Their daughter, Fanny, has a part in Shelley's story. On discovering Imlay's infidelity, Mary attempted to drown herself in the Thames but was rescued. Imlay deserted her and she returned to work in Johnson's shop, where in 1796 she met William Godwin. The union between these two was regularized by marriage in 1797 in order to safeguard the legal rights of a coming child. This was a daughter, Mary, who became Shelley's second wife. At her birth Mrs. Godwin died. — *Posthumous Works,* ed. William Godwin (4v, 1798), of which the *Love Letters to Gilbert Imlay,* ed. Roger Ingpen (1908), were originally part. See William Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1798); ed. W. C. Durant (1927) and J. M. Murry (1930); G. R. S. Taylor, *Mary Wollstonecraft* (1911); H. R. James, *Mary Wollstonecraft* (1932); G. R. Preedy, *This Shining Woman* (1937).

[4] In later years, shocked by the excesses of the revolutionists, Mackintosh came to agree entirely with Burke. But he continued to advocate parliamentary reform. His fragmentary *History of the Revolution in England* (posthumous, 1834) points forward to Macaulay. — R. J. Mackintosh, *The Life of Sir James Mackintosh* (1836).

[5] In early life Paine was an exciseman. A meeting with Benjamin Franklin in London led him to go to America in 1774. In January, 1776 he published *Common Sense,* arguing for the separation of the colonies from Britain and their union in a republic. During the American Revolution he was an energetic pamphleteer. Returning to England, he issued *Prospects on the Rubicon* (1787), pleading for friendship with France. *The Rights of Man* led to his indictment for high treason, but he escaped to France. *The Age of Reason* (1794) mingles lofty morality with rough ridicule. He returned to America in 1802 and died in New York in 1809. — *Writings,* ed. M. D. Conway (4v, 1894-1896); *Representative Selections,* ed. H. H. Clark (1944). See M. D. Conway, *The Life of Thomas Paine* (1892); M. A. Best, *Thomas Paine, Prophet and Martyr of Democracy* (1927); Hesketh Pearson, *Tom Paine, Friend of Mankind* (1937); Frank Smith, *Thomas Paine, Liberator* (1938); W. E. Woodward, *Tom Paine: America's Godfather* (1946).

Priestley [6] (1733-1804). That this first clear enunciation of the doctrine of perfectibility came from a chemist was significant, for the scientific advances of the later eighteenth century stimulated ideas of progress and social evolution. John Thelwall [7] (1764-1834) expounded his social radicalism in a miscellany of prose and verse entitled *The Peripatetic* (1793), but his direct answers to Burke were in speeches delivered in 1795 and in two pamphlets of 1796.

God and Radi

William Godwin [8] (1756-1836) began to write *Political Justice* in 1791, though it was not published till 1793. It is at once a criticism of existing society, a system of social ethics, and a series of prophecies for the future. Godwin shared with other radicals an optimism founded upon their confidence in the power of the human reason. Ignoring the obvious lessons which might have been drawn from the past of the very society that he criticized, he held that truth must prevail because the arguments supporting it are in the nature of the case stronger than those supporting error. Truth needs no sanction but itself. Vice is an error of judgment. Adopting the sensationalistic interpretation of Locke's theory of knowledge, Godwin believed that judgments, falsified by passion and ignorance, could be rectified by education.[9] Though, like the physical world, the mind of man is subject to necessity (the invariable sequence of cause and effect) and though the basic motive of morality is the desire for pleasure and the avoidance of pain, education can make the individual adapt his own interests to the common good. This "enlightened self-interest," which in the moral sphere cor-

[6] The discoverer of oxygen was a voluminous writer on natural science, metaphysics, theology, sociology, and other topics. His idea of perfectibility influenced the Marquis de Condorcet, whose *Esquisse d'un tableau historique du progrès de l'esprit humain* (1794) is one of the documents of revolutionary optimism. Priestley emigrated to America (1794) and settled in Pennsylvania, where he died.

[7] Thelwall's ideas influenced Coleridge and Wordsworth; there are definite parallels between *The Peripatetic* and *The Excursion*. — Charles Cestre, *John Thelwall* (1906).

[8] Godwin began his career as a Calvinist minister but soon adopted the principles of the "Enlightenment." He wrote much, but nothing of importance, before *Political Justice* (1793). This was followed by *Caleb Williams*, on which and on his other novels see below, ch. VIII. After the death of his first wife he married a Mrs. Clairmont, one of whose children by a former marriage was Jane ("Claire") Clairmont. In later life Godwin was in constant pecuniary difficulties, wrote many ephemeral literary and historical works, and carried on a small publishing business. — *Political Justice*, ed. and abridged by R. A. Preston (1906); C. K. Paul, *William Godwin, his Friends and Contemporaries* (2v, 1876); Raymond Gourg, *William Godwin* (Paris, 1908); H. N. Brailsford, *Shelley, Godwin and their Circle* (1913); F. K. Brown, *The Life of William Godwin* (1926); George Woodcock, *William Godwin* (1946); Sir Leslie Stephen, *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (ed. 1902), II. 264-281; Basil Willey, *The Eighteenth Century Background* (1940), pp. 217-239.

[9] The basic document of romantic theories of education is *De l'esprit* (1758) by Claude Adrien Helvétius. The author follows Condillac's interpretation of Locke's epistemology. The mind is at birth a *tabula rasa*; ideas come solely through sensation, the mind adding nothing but merely arranging the data of sense. Hence the supreme importance of an education which will provide the right sensations. The destructive side of Helvétius's thought is his attack upon conservatism and tradition, kings, priests, and hereditary rights. A more superficial book (which had, however, a great influence) is the Baron d'Holbach's *Système de la nature* (1770). Here the mechanistic theory of the universe coupled with the materialistic monism logically deducible from the sensationalistic interpretation of Locke results in absolute atheism. Reason is the only guide. In lieu of threats of supernatural vengeance as a sanction a right education becomes an assurance of morality. See further Daniel Mornet, *French Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, trans. L. M. Levin (1929).

responds to the "will of the majority" in the political, points forward to the Utilitarians; Jeremy Bentham had, indeed, already adumbrated it in his *Fragment on Government* (1776). Only create the right environment for a proper education, Godwin urged, and limitless development in the right direction is possible. In a well ordered society reason, not law, will maintain the social equilibrium. Men will require no political control and government will be reduced to a minimum or will altogether disappear. (It is difficult to distinguish between Godwin's theory of government and pure anarchy.) The institution of private property will not be destroyed, but men will be too reasonable to claim more than their just shares. Marriage, a form of tyranny, will disappear. The penal code and other social conventions will be reformed. This utopian vision is not a "return to nature" in accordance with the usual English interpretation of Rousseau's doctrines,[10] for Godwin advocates not innocent ignorance but virtuous wisdom. When Southey and Coleridge, influenced by *Political Justice,* devised their "pantisocratic" society, they were doubtful of the possibility of reforming their own minds, already warped by wrong education, but planned for the next generation an environment from which opportunities for evil would be shut out and only right sensations impressed upon the mind. These poets and Wordsworth moved away from Godwinian ideas; and Godwin moved away, as it were, from himself. In place of the cool, analytical theory of *Political Justice* his later books substitute a sentimental naturalism.

Though English radicalism was in close touch with Paris, English societies were not planned upon French models. "The Friends of the People" (1791) was moderate in its program of parliamentary reform, though Fox and the New Whigs, who for all their sympathy with France were not "levelers," stood aloof from it. "The London Corresponding Society" (1792), which had branches all over the country, planned to unite the common people for the purpose of making their wishes felt. But by 1792 the increasing violence of the French Revolution strengthened reaction in England. Already in 1791 a "Church and King" mob in Birmingham had burned Priestley's home and laboratory, but this riot had expressed hostility to Dissent rather than to advanced political opinion. Societies appeared dedicated to "the protection of Liberty and Property against republicans and levelers." Men who had formerly sympathized with France began to waver in their optimism. Pamphlets celebrating the blessedness of the English Constitution found ready readers. Loyal addresses flooded the government; newspapers were subsidized; informers wormed their way into radical meetings; and a heresy-hunt began.

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When the reactionary powers of the Continent made their first attack upon France (1792), Pitt had refused to join them; but the French Convention's invitation to a general revolution of all peoples and its indiscriminate defiance of all sovereigns, coupled with the attack upon the Nether-

[10] The English notion of Rousseau's teaching derived primarily from the ideas in his two early *Discours* which were modified and qualified in the writings of his maturity.

lands, brought England into the war early in 1793. Pitt's object was to prevent the annexation of the Low Countries and to meet the cost of hostilities by seizing French colonies in the West Indies. After the expulsion of her army in 1794 England's military rôle on the Continent was almost negligible till the beginning of the Peninsular War in 1808. Her successes in the West Indies were purchased at a high cost in lives and money and contributed little to her ultimate victory. Her practical control of the sea after the Battle of the Nile (1798) was complete after Trafalgar (1805). But meanwhile Napoleon remained invincible on land. The Treaty of Amiens (1802) as much as recognized the oceans as England's sphere, Europe as Napoleon's. But England interpreted the treaty as setting a limit to French conquests, while Napoleon proceeded with his annexations. Consequently Amiens turned out to be but an uneasy truce. Pitt's methods of financing the war by indirect taxation (the income tax was not introduced till 1798) bore heavily upon that part of the population which could least afford to pay, and rising prices and food scarcity increased suffering and discontent. The strange remoteness from the war on the part of many members of the cultivated and wealthy classes was due in part to the fact that they were so little affected by taxation, in part to the fact that the navy was manned by means of the press-gang and there was no call for service in the army save for the short time of threatened invasion in 1805, and in part to the disaffection of the Whigs who, though alienated from France, were half-hearted in support of the war and remained aloof, enjoying a life of wealth and ease.

Anti-Jacobi

The outbreak of war in 1793 led to the so-called "Anti-Jacobin Terror" of 1794. Daniel Isaac Eaton, the publisher of the newspaper *Hog's Wash* (its name an ironical allusion to Burke's scornful phrase, "the swinish multitude"), was tried but acquitted; but in Scotland cruel sentences were imposed upon the victims of the public panic. In the autumn Horne Tooke, John Thelwall, and other radicals were brought to trial for high treason. Their advocate, Thomas Erskine, exposed the falsity of the evidence against them. Several were acquitted and the rest released without trial. Whereupon the volatile populace, which had been strongly anti-Jacobin, celebrated this triumph of freedom of speech and assembly over governmental tyranny. This outcome encouraged the societies, which had been lying low, to become active again for reform. The government countered in 1795 with acts more rigorously defining treason and prohibiting public gatherings without special authorization. To the word *Convention* events in France had attached a sinister meaning; it was feared that assemblies would attempt to overawe or even supersede Parliament. Seething unrest in Ireland, a mutiny in the fleet, and great suffering among the poor were further causes for alarm. The ministry at length suspended habeas corpus. Pitt's motives in putting into force these repressive measures have been much disputed. There seems to be little doubt that he genuinely feared sedition; but he appears to have stimulated panic as a means to rouse the country to support the war.

Freedom of the press, resting upon the Common Law, was never com-

pletely suppressed, though actions for libel and sedition were frequent. The two ablest newspapers, *The Morning Chronicle* and *The Morning Post* (for which Coleridge wrote), were bitter opponents of the ministry. Pitt, on the other hand, had the support of the two cleverest caricaturists of the day, James Gillray and Thomas Rowlandson; and in 1797-1798 George Canning, George Ellis, and J. H. Frere championed the government and defended the system of taxation in their brilliant newspaper, *The Anti-Jacobin*. The chief purpose of their satire was to contrast abstract republican philanthropy with the actual cruelties of the Jacobins. This satire was at once strengthened and lightened with parodies of those English poets who expressed sympathy with radical ideas. The contributors had also an eye for other absurdities of modern thought and fashion.[11]

With the spread of opinion hostile to France the situation eased at the turn of the century, but with the renewal of the war in 1803 fears of subversive activities were again rife. It was in this year that William Blake was brought to trial on the charge of sedition. It was difficult to advance the cause of any reform, no matter how obviously salutary it might be. The argument with which conservatives met the advocates of change was that English society, which had rejected reform, had survived, while French

[11] See *Parodies and Other Burlesque Pieces by George Canning, George Ellis and John Hookham Frere with the whole Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin*, ed. Henry Morley (1890). The most effective part of this weekly paper was the verse. In it appeared *The Needy Knife-Grinder*, by Canning and Frere, a parody on Southey; *The Loves of the Triangles*, a parody of Erasmus Darwin's *Loves of the Plants; The Progress of Man*, a parody of Richard Payne Knight's *Progress of Civil Society*; and similar pieces. Canning was the chief author of *The New Morality* which vigorously satirizes Coleridge, Southey, Paine, Priestley, and other radicals; renders Burke's ideas into verse; and closes with a lofty exhortation to Britain to be true to her noblest traditions. — George Canning (1770-1827), a young protégé of Pitt, became a great statesman. See Dorothy Marshall, *The Rise of George Canning* (1938), pp. 175-188. George Ellis (1753-1815) contributed to the *Probationary Odes for the Laureateship* (1784 and following years; collected, 1791). He is remembered also for his antiquarian studies of which the most distinguished result is his *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances* (1805). John Hookham Frere (1769-1846) pointed the way towards Byron's *Don Juan* (see below, ch. xi) and occupied the leisure of a diplomatic career with his translation of Aristophanes (1839). See Gabrielle Festing, *J. H. Frere and his Friends* (1899); Albert Eichler, *J. H. Frere, sein Leben und seine Werke* (Vienna, 1905). — The editor of *The Anti-Jacobin* was William Gifford (1756-1826). Gifford was schooled in boyhood in hard experience but through the kindness of a philanthropist obtained an Oxford education. His stern nature found congenial stuff in the satires of Juvenal and Persius; and the latter was his model for *The Baviad* (1791) in which with a weight of learning and invective he crushed the poor butterflies who fluttered round Robert Merry, the chief "Della Cruscan" poetaster. The feeble verses of this coterie of sentimentalists had appeared in the *World* newspaper and were gathered into a volume. Gifford followed up his first attack with *The Mæviad* (1795), this time dividing his attention between his former victims and the absurdities of the contemporary stage. The harsh energy and assumption of righteous indignation in these satires are due as much to Gifford's Latin model as to any personal feeling. See J. M. Longaker, *The Della Cruscans and William Gifford* (Philadelphia, 1924). In 1809 Gifford became editor of *The Quarterly Review* where his notices of new literature were often written in the current "slashing" style. He edited Ben Jonson (1816) and John Ford (1827). See R. B. Clark, *William Gifford, Tory Satirist, Critic, and Editor* (1930). — Apart from the *Anti-Jacobin* group was Thomas James Mathias (1754-1835) whose *Pursuits of Literature* appeared in three installments, 1794-1797. In form, dialogues modeled on Pope, these satires derive in thought from Burke. Mathias denounced and ridiculed everything contaminated with revolutionary ideas. He smelt a rat in every corner and many of his corners were small and dark. Most of his victims are forgotten today. See further C. W. Previté-Orton, *Political Satire in English Poetry* (Cambridge, 1910), pp. 154-164; W. J. Courthope, *A History of English Poetry*, VI (1910), ch. VI.

society, which had welcomed it, had collapsed; and that changes were entering wedges proposed by dangerous persons who planned to "go further." The one great accomplishment of these years, the abolition of the slave trade, belongs to the interim of Tory governments when Fox headed the Ministry-of-All-the-Talents. Samuel Romilly [12] carried on his agitation for the reform of the cruel and illogical penal code under a cloud of anti-Jacobin prejudice. Sir Francis Burdett,[13] to whom Shelley dedicated *The Wandering Jew* (1810), was a leader in the attacks upon the government. Among the many victims of the policy of repression were John and Leigh Hunt, who were prosecuted in 1811 for exposing the cruelty of flogging in the army. On the same charge William Cobbett was fined and imprisoned. The trial of Daniel Isaac Eaton in 1812, on the charge of reprinting Paine's *Age of Reason,* was the occasion of Shelley's *Letter to Lord Ellenborough.* The Luddite riots of 1811 led to the Frame-Breaking Bill (1812) which made it a capital offense to destroy manufacturing machinery. Against this bill Byron delivered his maiden speech in the House of Lords. Under its terms various unfortunate victims of technological unemployment were executed in the presence of sullen crowds cowed by the military. The state of the public's nerves is shown by the fact that when in 1812 there was a strike among the Scottish weavers a panic spread over Britain. Scott wrote to Southey: "The country is mined beneath our feet." [14]

II

Reac and Unre

The restrictions upon popular liberty were war measures, but they were not withdrawn after Waterloo and for years the movement for reform was impeded because it was associated with sedition.[15] The retention of office by Tory governments till 1830 was at first due to the prestige of victory, but more largely to the divisions among the Whigs, who by failing to agree among themselves on a plan of parliamentary reform deprived themselves of their one chance of gaining popularity. For the misery and unrest of 1815-1817 several causes are apparent. The growth of population came partly from Irish immigration but chiefly through the decline in the infantile death-rate. Consequent upon this growth was the overcrowding in the new cities of the Midlands with all the horrors of slums and cellar-dwellings. Discharged soldiery swelled the ranks of those thrown out of work by the

[12] *Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly written by Himself* (3v, 1840).

[13] M. W. Patterson, *Sir Francis Burdett and His Times* (2v, 1931).

[14] Sir Walter Scott, *Letters,* ed. Sir H. J. C. Grierson, III. 125.

[15] The classical survey of English society in 1815 is Elie Halévy, *Histoire du peuple anglais au dix-neuvième siècle,* I (3 ed., 1923); Vols. II and III (1923) bring the story down to 1841. See also E. L. Woodward, *The Age of Reform, 1815-1870* (Oxford, 1938); J. H. Clapham, *Economic History of Modern Britain,* I (1930); F. O. Darvall, *Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England* (1934). There is a wealth of illustrations in E. B. Chancellor, *Life in Regency and Early Victorian Times* (1927). Of Rudolph Ackermann's *The Microcosm of London* (3v, 1808-1811) with its color-plates by A. C. Pugin and Thomas Rowlandson there is a reprint (3v, 1904). This is an unrivaled evocation of the outward appearance of Regency London. See also M. J. Quinlan, *Victorian Prelude: a History of English Manners, 1700-1830* (1941).

new machinery. Hand-looms gave place to power-looms slowly—more slowly in the woolen industry than the cotton, but fast enough to cause distress. The decline in trade and fall in prices coincided with the repeal of the income tax with the consequent burden of indirect taxation upon the poor. The fall in the price of corn brought about the enactment of the Corn Laws with their "sliding scale" which afforded protection to the farmers and the landed interests at the expense of the laboring and mercantile classes. In 1816 there was destruction of machinery, agitation among the colliers, and the circulation of petitions to Parliament, and in December a great meeting at Spa Fields, organized by "Orator" Hunt,[16] was accompanied with rioting. The ministers, alarmed, suspended habeas corpus and had an act passed making seditious meetings unlawful. With a temporary revival of trade, panic subsided; but a new depression began in 1819. In August a huge crowd, estimated at 50-60,000, gathered in St. Peter's Field at Manchester to hear an address by Hunt. The crowd was orderly, but the authorities lost their heads, and when soldiers dispersed the gathering, eleven persons were killed and about four hundred wounded. This "Peterloo Massacre," which prompted Shelley to write *The Masque of Anarchy,* roused indignation even in the upper classes. The Six Acts regulating agitation, assembly, and arrest followed. Immediately afterwards came the "Cato Street Conspiracy," so called because in that street were arrested some fanatics who were plotting to blow up the cabinet. The ill repute of the Prince Regent had its share in inflaming popular feeling, as did the indifference and isolation of the Whigs with their leisured, luxurious, cultivated, and often profligate life. When divorce proceedings were brought against Queen Caroline (1820), and when at her husband's coronation (1820) she claimed the right to be crowned, popular opinion rallied round her as a symbolic victim of oppression. In the popular mind Viscount Castlereagh was associated with the policy of repression because he was the leader of the House of Commons. Actually his own interests and great achievements were in the domain of foreign affairs, in bringing back peace to Europe.[17] But his was a Tory mentality and he supported harsh measures. Hence the almost symbolic position that he occupies in the poetry of Byron and Shelley. His suicide in 1822 marked the close of the worst years of reaction.

The fear of the "mob," grounded upon shocked observation of the French Terror, was enhanced by the violence of radical pamphleteering. The most influential of the agitators was William Cobbett [18] (1766-1835), whose early

[16] Henry Hunt (1793-1835) was a disciple of Horne Tooke. In 1810 he was a fellow-prisoner with William Cobbett. In prison, to which he was sentenced after "Peterloo," he wrote his *Memoirs* (1820). He was elected to Parliament in 1830.

[17] C. K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1815-1822* (1934).

[18] After experience as a soldier (1784-1791) and six months in France (1792) Cobbett lived in America (1792-1800), where as "Peter Porcupine" he was a satiric pamphleteer and publisher, intensely pro-British, anti-French, and anti-Republican. He was prosecuted and fined for libel. After his return to England he veered gradually from support of the Tories towards radicalism. His imprisonment for exposing the cruelties of flogging in the army followed in 1809. On his release he became so much involved in debt that in 1817 he fled to the United States. On his return home he stood repeatedly for Parliament, was elected, 1830,

anti-Jacobinism gave way to an ardor for reform after his return from America in 1800. He began publication of *The Political Register* in 1802. In its pages and in other writings vivid observation, loud-voiced denunciation, and conviction-compelling sincerity attracted wide attention. In many journeys through the length and breadth of England, recorded in *Rural Rides* (1830), he made himself the master of the "condition of England question." Though fined and imprisoned, weighed down with debts, and compelled to exile himself for a time in the United States, he lived to become a member of the first reformed Parliament. With him in the history of the struggle for a free press may be associated two publishers. William Hone [19] (1780-1842) was tried in 1817 on the charge of sedition and blasphemy for publishing parodies on the Creed, the Litany, and the Catechism. He was acquitted. But in 1818 Richard Carlile [20] (1790-1843) was fined and imprisoned for reprinting Hone's parodies and Paine's works.

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Meanwhile the tide of reform was slowly coming in. The act of 1819 limiting the hours of child labor in the cotton mills to eleven, pitiable though the concession was, was important in that it recognized the principle of parliamentary interference. Another favorable sign after 1815 was the headway made by the movement for working class education. The "Mechanics' Institutes" and similar organizations were philanthropic responses to the argument that leisure for the poor was a social evil because they had no opportunity for harmless recreation. The experiments which Robert Owen (1771-1858) had been conducting since 1800 at his mills in New Lanark near Glasgow set an example not only in the educational field but in the whole field of social amelioration. Owen's conviction that human character depended upon a right environment was the basis of the principles set forth in his *New View of Society* of which the first part appeared in 1813. His attempts to reconcile the conflict between hand labor and machinery, to organize labor, to manage a business upon a profit-sharing basis, and to establish model communities, with (at a later date) his labor exchange system and socialistic propaganda, were important influences upon the social legislation of the Victorian period and upon the social economics of John Ruskin.

Benth

In the years between Waterloo and the Reform Bill the doctrines which

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re-elected, 1834. — Based on his *Life and Adventures of Peter Porcupine* (1798) and on autobiographical memoranda is *The Progress of a Plough-boy to a Seat in Parliament*, ed. William Reitzel (1933). See also Lewis Melville [pseudonym for L. S. Benjamin], *Life and Letters of William Cobbett* (2v, 1913); *Letters to Edward Thornton*, ed. G. D. H. Cole (1937); G. D. H. Cole, *The Life of William Cobbett* (1924); Marjorie Bowen, *Peter Porcupine, a Study of William Cobbett* (1936); M. C. Clark, *Peter Porcupine in America: the Career of William Cobbett, 1792-1800* (Philadephia, 1939); George Saintsbury, "William Cobbett," *Collected Essays and Papers* (1923), I. 268-301.

[19] F. W. Hackwood, *William Hone, His Life and Times* (1912); Augustus de Morgan, "Hone's Famous Trials," *A Budget of Paradoxes* (Chicago, 1916), I. 180-187; W. H. Wickwar, *The Struggle for the Freedom of the Press, 1819-1832* (1928).

[20] Theophila Carlile Campbell, *The Battle of the Press as told in the Story of the Life of Richard Carlile* (1899).

Jeremy Bentham [21] (1748-1832) had begun to promulgate at a much earlier date began to bear practical fruit. His theory of the pursuit of happiness is open to much question; but at a time when the social conscience was awakening, the doctrine of the "greatest happiness of the greatest number" was a criterion of practical service. It made for reforms in the direction of peace and public order. Bentham's chief concern was not with private morals but with the betterment of society. He was no revolutionary but trusted in parliamentary procedure, advocating governmental supervision but not governmental control. His was a logical rather than a historical method. For the heritage of the past he had an entire contempt unless a reason for survival could be found in a satisfactory answer to his persistent question: "What is its use?" The test of usefulness was of utmost value in the revision and codification of the law. He was especially active in the reform of criminal law; but less directly his doctrines bore upon the problem of a fairer and wider suffrage. Through his disciples, James Mill [22] (1773-1836) and John Stuart Mill [23] (1806-1873), who put much of his memoranda into final shape, he became the father of the Utilitarian school of philosophy.

Against this background of reform the Tories held office during the eighteen-twenties. The death of Castlereagh opened the era of George Canning's dominance (1822-1827). Canning represented a liberal Toryism which was opposed to the high Toryism of Wellington and Eldon. This division and the separation of the Whigs into three groups had the advantage that different sides of public opinion were reflected in Parliament. The prosperity of the early twenties was a support to public order and good feeling. After Canning's death, power came into the hands of the more reactionary Tories; but so great was the pressure of public opinion that they repealed the Test and Corporation Act (1828) and emancipated the Roman Catholics (1829). The pressure for parliamentary reform was led by Francis Place (1771-1854) whose tailor-shop was the rallying-ground of moderate radicalism. Place was active in gathering petitions presented to Parliament by his collaborator, Joseph Hume. The French Revolution of July, 1830 was a further incentive. There was an outbreak of strikes, violent agitation, and arrests. The Whigs' concession to the demand for a more just representation was due to their realization of the strength of popular opinion. There is no need here to repeat the familiar story of the confusion between party lines, the swift

[21] Bentham possessed private means which enabled him to pursue his interests. He studied law but was more concerned with the reform of legal abuses than with establishing a practice. His *Fragment on Government* (1776), published anonymously, was a criticism of the English Constitution and manifested both his indifference to historical considerations and his test of utility. In 1789 appeared his *Principles of Morals and Legislation*. He worked for the abolition of the system of transportation for crime, and the establishment of prisons on lines invented by himself. In 1823 he founded *The Westminster Review* as the organ of philosophic radicalism.

[22] The elder Mill collaborated with Bentham and wrote voluminously on history (*The History of India*, 1818), economics (*Elements of Political Economy*, 1821), psychology (*Analysis of the Human Mind*, 1829), and public affairs. As an economist he was a follower of David Ricardo; as a psychologist he developed associationism. In his political writings he advocated a wide extension of the franchise. He was one of the founders of the University of London (1825).

[23] On the younger Mill see below, ch. xxi.