THE LITERARY REACTIONS TO
UTILITARIANISM
UP TO 1860

With special reference to the
novels of
DISRAELI, PEACOCK and KINGSLEY

Thesis submitted for the
Degree of Ph.D. (University
of New Zealand)

by

R.A. COPLAND 1960
Every Society, every Polity, has a spiritual principle; is the embodiment, tentative and more or less complete, of an Idea: all its tendencies of endeavour, specialities of custom, its laws, politics and whole procedure . . . are prescribed by an Idea, and flow naturally from it, as movements from the living source of motion.

Carlyle: "Characteristics"
CONTENTS

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION ..... 1

Chapter II

THE FORCES OF REACTION

1 Utilitarianism and the Nonconformist Sects ..... 45
2 Newman and the Oxford Movement ..... 92
3 Carlyle ..... 140

Chapter III

DISRAELI ..... 185

Chapter IV

PEACOCK ..... 282

Chapter V

KINGSLEY ..... 345

Chapter VI

CONCLUSION ..... 425

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 433
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do.

Jeremy Bentham
Introduction.

There is no period in which English literature has been more intimately involved with affairs of the times than in the period between 1830 and 1860. It is not merely that the writers "reflect" the age in which they write. They present it; in fact in a quite unexampled way they produce it. It is a time of immense turbulence when the concept of progress has captured and overwhelmed the earlier concept of perfectibility. Again and again the railway is used as the symbol for the spirit of the age, and no fitter symbol could have been chosen. The railway, with its terminals and departure points in the expanding cities, its undeviating course across field and common and past the shrinking villages, its speed and noise and revolving iron wheels and its disregard of parochial frontiers, was at once the most spectacular product of the industrial revolution and the most obvious negation of the picturesque and the past.

The literature of the times was involved with the times not merely by its deliberate social intention, but also through the active participation of the authors in affairs of moment. Where the authors of the period existed by their writing alone, that writing tended to be of a didactic character; and even the entertainer was
commonly the prophet as well. But many of the most influential authors wrote merely "on the side", otherwise being deeply involved in affairs of state or church or education, so that these affairs intruded upon the literature to an unprecedented degree.

For these reasons a study of the literature is not merely illuminated by a knowledge of the times: the one is inseparable from the other. Moreover change and development were so rapid and the scope of them so wide that it becomes almost impossible to treat say the literature of politics without considering the literature of religion, of philosophy, of science and of manners. In short if one is not to stray by paths of association from author to author and topic to topic over the entire social and literary field some limitation of one's enquiry must be made at the start.

A most valuable type of simplification is that made by F.R. Leavis 1 who selects J.S. Mill's essays on Bentham and on Coleridge, as the starting point for a study of the period which (from a central line of division) could grow outwards as far as one chose to allow it. Mill was aware that the turbulence of his age was produced by the opposition of two forces. On the one side was the party of progress, the radicals and reformers in politics, the

1 In Mill on Bentham and Coleridge. Details of editions referred to are supplied in the bibliography.
enquirers and free-thinkers in religion (as well as the
great body of the non-conformist sects), the industrial
magnates, the populace of the great cities new and old, the
rationalist philosophers, the scientists, the merchants, and
from time to time the agricultural labourers. On the other
side was the conservative group, the Tories (and often the
disenchanted Whigs), the churchmen, the landed aristocracy
and gentlemen farmers, the bourgeois or petty tradesman class,
the transcendental philosophers, the artists, the poets and
from time to time the agricultural labourers.

This classification is of course too sweeping. The
issue was always complicated. There were many individual
exceptions and there were many shifts in allegiance during the
period. But so far as such a social division was a real one,
and so far as there was a passion in the espousal of party
peculiar to the times, Bentham's may most suitably stand as
the type of intelligence which represented the one side, and
Coleridge's as that which best represented the other. The
choice of these two has more significance than that they
represent the opposing forces. As has already been said,
the writers of the time go far towards producing them. Mill
calls them "seminal" minds.

Bentham's writings, and those of his close associates,
especially his interpreter Dumont and his disciple James Mill,
were a sort of permanent depot of rationalism to which
radicals and reformers of every sort continually returned.
Bentham's system was rigid at the centre with its irreducible
criterion of pain and pleasure and yet it spread like a
web of incredibly minute detail over a vast area of social
concerns. His formula for democratic government, for
example, did not stop short of the shape and size of the
ballot box itself. Benthamism began with individual
motivation, the springs of action within the man and ended
with a prescription for the wellbeing of mankind. The
philosophy was prosaic and materialistic but it was solid
and unequivocal. Moreover it represented the concentration
into formulae of the speculations of the age before it. It
selected whatever it wanted of eighteenth century philosophy,
psychology and economics and enlisted all in the name of
rationalism, so that as the multitude caught up with the
teachings of the sages they found those teachings stripped
down and put to work on affairs of the world and the moment.
Bentham had brought eighteenth century philosophy into a form
suited to England and the industrial revolution.

The unique force of his teaching lay in the fact
that, apart from bringing the same solvent analysis to bear
upon every institution he examined, he had wholly detached
one aspect of eighteenth century thought from other
characteristic modes of thinking in that century. Locke
was certainly his mentor in the rationalistic habit, but
Locke's position as regards English institutions was
traditional, and society and social forms were to be regarded
as conventions settled upon in the course of human experience.
Thus there are links from Locke to Burke and even to Blackstone.
To take a couple of examples: (a) In his first tract on Trade and Finance, 1691, Locke argued that the rate of interest on money cannot in practice be regulated by law. This argument was carried to its conclusion by Bentham in his *Defence of Usury*, 1787. The end effect of this publication was the Act of 1854, repealing the laws of usury. This example perfectly represents the process of development from 17th and 18th century speculation, through Utilitarian formulation to 19th century application.

(b) On the other hand, Locke, in the second of his *Treatises on Government*, seems to accept the theory of an "Original Contract" between the governed and their appointed governors. In Chapter XIII he speaks of "the first framers of the government" and "the original frame of the government". As will be seen, this theory was accepted by Blackstone and rejected by Bentham at the outset, and as the outset, of his political career. And the idea completely decayed during the 19th century. When therefore in his first publication Bentham assailed Blackstone he was turning one side of eighteenth century thought against the other. He may be said to have brought eighteenth century philosophy into collision with eighteenth century history. The same "stasis" which allowed the historians to look back and synthesize the events of the past allowed the philosophers to look within the conditions of the present. The emotional tone attaching to

---

the histories was commonly one of serenity, acceptance, and as far as the English Constitution was concerned, approval. But the tone of the philosophy was one of dissatisfaction and disapproval. (These conflicting emotions are observable in the great novels of the period, commonly called "histories", in which there is the peculiar fusion of good humour with horror.)

Blackstone was among the historians, and in contemplating the Laws of England his admiration sprang both from the sense that the laws were "reasonable" and "natural" and from the cognate sense that they were just and complete. As much as against the false assumptions and faulty reasoning in Blackstone, Bentham was expostulating against his "equal peremptoriness and complacency, that every thing, yes, 'every thing is as it should be'." He resents the appeals to "sense or probity" - he is in fact consciously disturbing the peace of the Augustans, and inevitably he does so in a prose stripped of the eighteenth century graces, a "utilitarian" prose making with ungainly thrusts straight for the point, but allowing itself plenty of scorn.

In lashing the age, he chooses to deride the sort of prose ("this kind of rhetorical lumber") which was its supreme achievement - "a scrutinizing judgment, perhaps, would not be

1 Bentham, A Fragment on Government. This essay is the source of any quotations in this chapter which are not given a reference number.
altogether satisfied with it; but the ear is soothed by it, and the heart is warmed." However dissatisfied or even disgusted with the age writers like Bolingbroke, Johnson, Fielding or Smollett may have been, they saw themselves as part of it and expressed their views in its terms. Bentham's boast is that he is not part of it. Speaking of his earlier "raw but well-intentioned mind" he tells how as the son of a well-to-do Tory family, educated at Westminster and Oxford he had had his infant affections lifted on the side of despotism. The Genius of the place I dwelt in, the authority of the state, the voice of the Church in her solemn offices; all these taught me to call Charles a martyr, and his opponents rebels. I saw strong countenance lent in the sacred writings to monarchical government: and none to any other. I saw passive obedience deep stamped with the seal of the Christian virtues of humility and self-denial... till I learnt to see that utility was the test and measure of all virtue; of loyalty as much as any; and that the obligation to minister to general happiness was an obligation paramount to and inclusive of every other.

Again, he writes:

Of all men, surely none so fit [to be made a dupe] as that sort of man who is ever on his knees before the footstool of Authority, and who when those above him or before him, have pronounced, thinks it a crime to have an opinion of his own.

Yet if Bentham was conscious of adopting the role of rebel he did not imagine that society would blame him for it. Rather, society should be grateful. He regarded himself as

---

1 Note: R.H. Murray speaks of Bentham's "tribute" as a "scholar" to Blackstone's English. But the admiration is at best reluctant - "correct, elegant...ornamental" - and the tone is prevailingly ironical. [See R.H. Murray, Studies in the English Social and Political Thinkers of the Nineteenth Century, 48.]
a humanitarian reformer, certainly not as an enemy of society. In an age much given to the expression of a refined sympathy he "never suspected that the people in power were against reform"; he "supposed they only wanted to know what was good in order to embrace it." In this he reflects the spirit of the age in being serenely certain that human affairs needed only the scientific application of reason in order to yield up final solutions -

The age we live in is a busy age; in which knowledge is rapidly advancing towards perfection ... Correspondent to discovery and improvement in the natural world, is reformation in the moral.

But his point of departure from the age was his unwillingness to identify the laws and principles arrived at by reason with "natural" laws.

In particular he rejected the notion of "original contract"

a recipe of sovereign efficacy for reconciling the accidental necessity of resistance with the general duty of submission... I bid them [the lawyers] open to me that page of history in which the solemnization of this important contract was recorded. They shrunk from the challenge...[confessing] the whole to be a fiction.

In the period between 1830 and 1860 almost all the attitudes of Blackstone which Bentham was concerned to attack were to be re-adopted.

Charles was to be called a martyr again, "and his opponents rebels". A "natural" order of society was to be revered, a society falling with antique harmony into a Constitution comprising first "the executive power of the
laws lodged in a single person", the sovereign "having all the advantages of strength and dispatch"; "secondly, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, which is an aristocratical assembly of persons selected for their piety, their birth, their wisdom, their valour, or their property; and thirdly, the House of Commons, freely chosen by the people from among themselves," the whole edifice thus combining the three separate virtues of strength (the Sovereign), wisdom (the Lords) and goodness (the Commons). As for "passive obedience" being "deep stamped with the seal of the Christian virtues of humility and self-denial", that note sounds half in piety, half in panic throughout the period. Indeed it may be said more generally that that whole aspect of romanticism (deriving also from the eighteenth century) by which the past came to be revered, and the monuments of the past to be cherished, the historical habit of mind in effect, was, during the period under study, in steady opposition to the Benthamite influence.

Yet as far as literature was concerned the heyday of romanticism was over and most of the great romantic writers were dead. In the beginning romanticism had largely represented the literary, imaginative expression of eighteenth century philosophy which is to say that Bentham's teachings were in the beginning no more alien to the romantic spirit than say those of Rousseau. Shelley's poetry for example is most notably in tune with Utilitarianism in many places. In the notes to Queen Mab, section V, stanza 11, he writes:
But if happiness be the object of morality... if the worthiness of every action is to be estimated by the quantity of pleasurable sensation it is calculated to produce, [etc., etc.,]

these clauses being not a condition supposed but a premiss not needing to be established. The word "quantity" has unmistakably the Utilitarian manner of assessing pleasure arithmetically. Further on, in a note to Section VI, stanza 10, Shelley writes:

But utility is morality; that which is incapable of producing happiness is useless... The great romantic writers of the early period were warm with the vision of a perfect state and insatiable of projects of reform. All his life Bentham had the hope that his favourite ideas of improvement might be executed on a great scale. While Wordsworth was in France the early works of Bentham were being interpreted to Frenchmen by Dumont, and upon Bentham himself the honour of French citizenship was bestowed. But like Wordsworth's, Bentham's hopes of a glorious and reasonable reformation of government in France were "dashed by a reign of violence peculiarly abhorrent to his gentle disposition." 1

Romanticism, in which the cult of the antique had always been a potent element, retired more and more to an imaginative reconstruction of the past; but Bentham's confidence in the present and the future was never dimmed despite his sixty years of struggle against the foes of better government.

In another important way the earlier forms of romanticism had affinities with Benthamism which were later obscured. It was with man in society that both were concerned. The nature of that society in the case of romanticism changed from the existing national patterns with their ever-increasing urban aggregates to some reduced social unit wherein the relation of man to man and the dependence of each upon the other might more readily be observed. At the same time this new small social model would be free of the cumbersome and ill-fitting institutions, political, legal and religious, which it seemed could not be thrown off from the nation-state without violent measures whose end could not be calculated. Thus the romantic inclination to found ideal colonies was of a piece with the tendency to admire small if primitive societies wherever they existed (or were even supposed to exist). This was an evasion of the world as it was seen to be, a compromise between out-and-out individualism and the fading vision of a perfectible nation-state (or even the brotherhood of man). So Bentham, too, in his later years became a partner in Robert Owen's establishment at New Lanark; but this was certainly out of confidence in his prescriptions (which would prove as valid in a tight little English community of one thousand as in the distant and troubled realms of Mahemet Ali) rather than out of a belief in the peculiar virtue of the little state.

Love of the people had become distaste for the masses
and even fear of the mob. Thus romanticism began to develop more intensively another feature which had always been inherent in it; that of the exaltation of the individual.

An interesting example of the change in character of romanticism is the attitude to Napoleon who began as the supreme type of tyrant, the enemy to every humane aspiration, and was by 1830 already taking on the lineaments of the hero and the appeal of a master spirit. The strangest inconsistency is to be found in Byron. In the handful of poems on the subject of Napoleon there are lines as diverse in sentiment as:

Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.
Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bow'd so low the knee?

and

Must thou go, my glorious Chief
Sever'd from thy faithful few?
All I ask is to divide
Every peril he must brave
Sharing by the hero's side
His fall, his exile and his grave.

The poems which express Byron's sympathy for the fallen hero he has felt excused for taking "from the French". But even in his own "Ode to Napoleon" the ambiguity of attitude is found.

All Evil Spirit as thou art
It is enough to grieve the heart
To see thine own unstrung.

The year after Waterloo, Byron was making his way towards the fatal field in a travelling carriage which he had commissioned to be "copied from the celebrated one of Napoleon".  

1 P. Quennell, Byron in Italy, 16.
"He had been 'damned sorry' when he had heard the news of Napoleon's fall.\(^1\) Within a month his republican sympathies were being roused in Switzerland, "the home of freedom". The difficulty of reconciling such sentiments, both essential in romanticism, was perhaps insuperable and accounts for the inappropriate ending to "Ode to Napoleon" - the strange and ineffectual effort to find in George Washington the best of both worlds! One may recall too the ambiguous reflections on Napoleon's career in Childe Harold, Canto III.

Yet for Bentham, Napoleon or any other individual must count merely as another head, one capacity for pleasure or pain among the millions. Bentham's "hedonic calculus" or arithmetical calculation of pleasures and pains was purely quantitative. To achieve the greatest \textit{sum} of happiness was the sole aim and motive of man and ought therefore to be the criterion of institutions. Thus for Bentham the sovereign rule of one man would always remain a tyranny, and the man himself a tyrant.

In these ways Benthamism while continuing steadily to attract to itself ardent spirits of the rationalistic type at the same time steadily lost the sympathy of imaginative and still more of metaphysical minds. Bentham was at all times impatient of imagination in the sense in which the romantic

\(^1\) P. Quennell, \textit{Byron in Italy}, 17.
writers used it: that power which "constitutes the poet", the power

which enables us, by a voluntary effort, to conceive the absent as if it were present, the imaginary as if it were real, and to clothe it in the feeling which, if it were real indeed, it would bring along with it. 

It was the separation of the rationalistic, forward-looking, empirical philosophy of the times from the passionate, backward-looking and intuitive philosophy which threw the period of literature under study into distinction from the one which preceded it. A poem like "Prometheus Unbound" had sufficient in common with say "The Eve of St. Agnes", published the same year, for both to be called romantic; each was marked by a passionate wishfulness, and by a delight melodiously recorded, Shelley's poem being a contemplation of the future, Keats's of the past. But between 1830 and 1860 very few works of literature looked with any rapture to an earthly future. As for the imaginative re-creation of the past, this for the most part had less of gratitude that the past was there to explore than of regret that things could never be the same again. Glamour had passed into nostalgia.

A major paradox in the period of this study will become apparent: though the literature had at no time been more intimately and expressly involved with affairs, at no time had the best of it run so counter to the tide of affairs. The philosophy which stimulated or at least applauded the onward rush of events was outmoded, while the newer

philosophy was retrogressive. The obverse of these
generalisations might be adduced to point the truth of them.
During the period between 1830 and 1860 a great deal was
written to celebrate the march of material improvement, but
little of it is literature and much of it is trash. In
fiction the two chief practitioners of Benthamite tendency
are Bulwer Lytton in Paul Clifford and Harriet Martineau in
her numerous tales and novels, notably Illustrations of
Political Economy. Louis Cazamian, whose work 1 is bound
to be acknowledged in this study, may be called on to
summarize the achievements of the Utilitarian novelists:

The philanthropic tendencies of Utilitarianism ought
to have found in the novel an expression more worthy
of themselves. But in Bulwer, the defects of the man
and of the work, the moral dryness, the artificiality,
make precisely the most complete contrast with the
passionate conviction of Dickens and Kingsley. The
literary mediocrity of Paul Clifford has its origin
in the psychological characteristics of the Utilitarian
temperament such as we find it in the lesser disciples
of the doctrine. 2

And of Harriet Martineau's fictional exercises:

Her reason presents the task as necessary, and her
conscience imposes it upon her. 3. These little novels
do not belong to literature in the narrow sense of the
word; art, if not artifice, is absent from them. 4. To
read one of these stories is to know them all: everywhere
the same artistic deficiency; prosiness in the narrative,
pedantry in the characters, improbability in the events,
absence of life. 5.

1 Louis Cazamian, Le Roman Social en Angleterre.
2 Cazamian, Roman Social, 93. Translated.
3 Cazamian, Roman Social, 97.
4 Cazamian, Roman Social, 99.
5 Cazamian, Roman Social, 102.
At the root of their social zeal, it is not sentiment
moved by human miseries, the obstinate desire for
charity and for justice that we feel; their
inspiration has the coldness and the brightness of a
rational conviction.¹

The real literary monuments to the age of reform deplore the
shape that reform was taking.

What has been said might be repeated and illustrated
in other ways, though the nature of the paradox remains
constant. For example, Romanticism fell on both sides of
the religious question. The detestation of priests and
their obscurantism and of the tyrannous power of the Church,
whether Roman Catholic or Established, was a persistent theme.
Even if this did not imply atheism, still atheism is again a
familiar enough attitude in the Romantic period. Yet on the
other hand the Church, its buildings, its services and its
history, were rich material for the poet and the novelist:
there was in fact a genius of Christianity not unlike the
genius of Nature. And again it was the latter attitude which
persisted in the later literature; which in turn ran counter
to the deepest currents of the period: for the most active
religion was centred not in the apostolic Church nor the
Gothic abbey, but in the chapels of the non-conformist sects.
Utilitarianism was usually able, despite its avowedly secular
character, to attract adherents from the non-conformist sects,
especially the Unitarians. Sir John Bowring, editor of
Bentham’s works, was a Unitarian. This alliance will be
noticed in some detail later, especially in Chapter II.

¹ Cazamian, Roman Social, 110.
The works soon to be examined here are therefore to be regarded as late products of Romanticism. They are aggressive as well as idealistic. They are perhaps less enthusiastic than resentful. They are concerned less to hail the beauty of life than to demand it. The treatment of this literature is preceded by a statement of those tenets of Utilitarianism to which the literature was particularly opposed.

Bentham's writings show originality mainly in the application of derived ideas to particular contexts. But since that application was laboriously minute and since Bentham was always relentless in the fullness of his arguments and morbid in his fear of imprecision the eleven volumes of his work defy the most assiduous student to read them through. From them all however emerges a handful of principles, none of which Bentham claimed as his own but all of which he related to a central proposition. 1

The effect of Bentham's paring down of the findings of more speculative philosophers was to render them rather crude than refined: yet the crudeness was consistently the crudeness of commonsense and as such had a powerful appeal to commonsense minds. Moreover, however unoriginal, debased and inadequate his basic theories may have been, the practical

1 Note: For the genealogy of Bentham's ideas see e.g. Stephen, The English Utilitarians, I 237 ff; and John Plamenatz, The English Utilitarians in which the first half is devoted to Bentham's philosophical lineage. See Bentham's acknowledgment to Hume, in Works I, 268.
value of their application in particular cases was undeniable. Then, as far as the man himself was concerned, tedious and self-approving, solemn from his childhood, serenely confident of the value of his endeavours, happily surrendered to a self-imposed tyranny of labour and regulated exercise, at least and at all times he was independent. His independence of opinion, allowable in a gentleman of the eighteenth century, remained with him into the nineteenth and eventually obliged him to regard himself as a radical, and among the radicals he was to find his friends and disciples.

His teaching, rising firmly from a basis in eighteenth century thought, projected unchanged in character clean through the misgivings and accommodations of the 1790's and the Napoleonic wars, remaining in the 1820's a force of pristine purity. The fact that he began as a Tory and ended as a Radical indicates not that the quality of his own thought had changed, but that the society in which and for which he wrote had changed in its attitude towards him.

Bentham was politically no Radical, but rather Tory-inclined for a great part of his life. It was James Mill who, in the early years of the nineteenth century, made Benthamism a political force and identified Bentham with Philosophic Radicalism. 1

In the beginning he was not transgressing Tory orthodoxy in being a humanitarian reformer; but when this sweet reasonableness persisted from an age of increasing confidence and security into an age rocked by revolutions, political and economic, it took on a savour that many Englishmen found sour.

1 Leavis, Mill on Bentham and Coleridge, 33.
The real extent of Bentham's personal influence on the generation which followed him is hard to assess. Yet the power of Utilitarianism as it will be presently described was undeniably strong. It is perhaps misleading to point to all the measures of reform in one field or another which Bentham proposed in his writings and which were ultimately carried out. The forces which combined to bring about these changes often sprang from motives which Bentham had not looked to or from reasonings arrived at independently of an acquaintance with his works. Yet Bentham's writings were always there, a vast mine of commonsense and practicality made available at a critical time in the edition of Bowring, and to find that there is not "any special significance" in the adoption of his proposals is at least as inconclusive as to find that "Bentham's achievements are well-nigh inestimable. Every department of our public life, our political institutions, every portion of our civil and criminal jurisprudence, every part of our legal procedure have been profoundly affected by his work." Lord Acton speaking of Bentham's intuition of utility as the supreme test of legal validity, declared that "the day on which that gleam lighted up the clear hard mind of Jeremy Bentham is memorable in the political calendar beyond the entire administration of many statesmen." E. Halévy sums up the achievements of Bentham:

2 Coleman Phillipson, Three Criminal Law Reformers, 229.
3 Hammond, The Age of the Chartists, 358.
argument:

At the actual time when these individuals were acting on the public mind and on the institutions of their century, the general causes which had acted on the formation of their thought, continued to act around them on the public mind and on these institutions. Now, except in a conjectural and approximative fashion, can these two influences be distinguished? 1

In any case the spirit of reform was abroad, and Benthamism was no less than the reasoned and systematic advocacy of reform. "The side which Bentham took was the winning side," for "the ordinary morality of the time was Utilitarian in substance". 2 Yet, as soon as the word Utilitarianism is used (to bring into the picture Malthus, Adam Smith, the Mills and Ricardo, the Utilitarian Society and the Westminster Review) the reasons why there might be opposition to Bentham begin to appear. These reasons may now be laid out as main lines in the great argument.

(1) The Utilitarians though they might often propose the desired reform nearly always managed to propose it in the wrong way. For example, consider the affront offered by the central proposition ("It is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong") 3 to an age which was apt to equate

2 Stephen, The English Utilitarians, I, 235. And conversely Mark Pattison explains that in Oxford the Tractarians had "cut us off from the general movement." Memoirs, 238.
"happiness" with damnation, the "greatest number" with revolutionary mobs, and "right and wrong" with every shade of meaning from the Rights of Man to the Will of God.

(2) Then again the troubles in France had reawakened a sense of nationality in England. Reason knows no frontiers and Englishmen of the nineteenth century were to grow more and more suspicious of the international character of Bentham's law-making. (The word "international" is, appropriately, his own neologism.) In these circumstances the reputation built up in France, Russia, Spain and Latin America militated against the acceptance of the prophet at home.

(3) Benthamism represented the logical development of one side of eighteenth century thought, that is, its rationalism; and it was in France that rationalism had flourished. To a considerable degree Bentham was adopting towards the legal institutions of his own country much the attitude that the rationalist Philosophes were adopting towards the whole of the social institutions of France. The Philosophes, or those of them who were to influence Bentham most, were concerned with solvents of custom and tradition in France ... If there is to be discovered in the intricacies of early Victorian literature a single common thread it is the fear of an English revolution on the model of the French. That Benthamism was reformist but quite unrevolutionary in character was a fact that could only be discovered by a reading of the works, and this most of Bentham's enemies were not

1 Wilfrid Harrison, Introduction to A Fragment on Government, xxiii.
2 Harrison, ed. A Fragment on Government, xxii.
prepared to do. Benthamism and Utilitarianism became for many people synonyms for "solvents" (to put it mildly) "of custom and tradition". Thus even though it may be claimed that Utilitarianism continued for half a century after Bentham's death to be "the most potent force in English reform" ¹ few of those who in 1832 were newly enfranchised would have called themselves Benthamites. Even the beneficiaries did not read Bentham and many were numbered among his enemies.

The Reform Act once achieved, the common aim that held together the heterogeneous forces combined to achieve it was gone. ²

George Borrow is typical of his age in his neglecting to read the political philosopher foremost in the esteem of foreigners. In 1837 as a diligent agent of the Bible Society, he met near Cape Finisterre a Spanish official with whom the following exchange occurred:

Alcalde: The grand Baintham. He who has invented laws for all the world. I hope shortly to see them adopted in this unhappy country of ours.

Myself: Oh! You mean Jeremy Bentham? Yes; a very remarkable man in his way.

Alcalde: In his way; in all ways. The most universal genius which the world ever produced...

Myself: I have never read his writings...

Alcalde: How surprising! ... Now, here am I, a simple alcalde of Galicia, yet I possess all the writings of Baintham on that shelf, and I study them day and night. ³

1 Harrison, ed. A Fragment on Government, xli.
2 Leavis, Mill on Bentham and Coleridge, 34.
3 Borrow, The Bible in Spain, Ch xxx.
It has become apparent then that in tracing the reaction against Utilitarianism, it is not only to the letter of Bentham's texts that one must look (and the age is one of continuous, practical, Benthamite reform) but to the "Benthamite" spirit in all its forms, such as it was and such as it was supposed to be. Part of that spirit was its "international" aspect. A man who legislated for Venezuelans and Portuguese was suspect as an Englishman.

(4) If many people (wrongly) suspected Benthamism of having revolutionary ambitions, of being at least un-English in sentiment, more were alarmed at the new tendency towards centralisation of all forms of government. The hated symbol of this policy, suspected (rightly) as being Benthamite in origin, was the new workhouse. Those members and friends of the working classes who had contributed to the struggle for the Reform Bill now found themselves further excluded from privileges captured by a new, rich business class. Just as in the first case it was of no avail to point to Bentham's own words (notably in Anarchical Fallacies and Radicalism Not Dangerous) in order to relieve him of charges of conspiring to overthrow the state, so in the second his Constitutional Code (1830) in no way mitigated the disappointment at Benthamite Reform Bills and the disgust at Benthamite Workhouses. For it could not be denied that if Bentham never positively advocated revolution, his philosophy of utility

1 See Guy Chapman, "The Economic Background" in Batho and Dobree, The Victorians and After, 128ff.
softened the foundations of the social structure especially in the matters of duty and obedience to authority: "Why should men obey?" is the central question he asks in all his disquisitions on government, and the answer repeatedly supplied is: "They will and should obey only so long as the probable mischiefs of obedience are less than the probable mischiefs of resistance." 1 Everywhere he denies the validity of the "social contract", "an ingenious contrivance this enough: but popular passion is not to be fooled, I doubt, so easily." 2 And in the other matter it was hardly a gratification to have the ingenuities of the Panopticon applied to "Houses of Industry". 3

(5) Utilitarianism was based on a psychology taken from Priestley who had in turn been heavily indebted to Hartley. The theory was, briefly, that the individual developed attractions or aversions to objects and processes according as his early acquaintance with them was associated with pleasure or pain. Ideas which were associated by their occurrence together tended to recall one another and, ultimately, the pain or pleasure which was also associated with them. Thus the individual was led to seek those objects and perform those actions which he had found pleasurable, and to avoid those which he had found painful. According to his success or

1 See, e.g. A Fragment on Government, Works I 270.
2 A Fragment on Government, Works I 286.
3 See Works VIII, 359-439.
failure in doing so, he was happy or miserable. Upon these premises a pronouncement might be made (which again was an affront to many writers in the coming times): Man is a pleasure-seeking animal; and since his pleasure depends upon the gratification of himself, he is a self-seeking animal.

For there exists not ever any voluntary action, which is not the result of the operation of some motive or motives: nor any motive, which has not for its accompaniment a corresponding interest, real or imagined. 1

The philosophy is most explicit in the Deontology:

Dream not that men will move their little finger to serve you, unless their advantage in so doing is obvious to them. Men never did so, and never will, while human nature is made of its present materials. 2

(6) Using the same psychological theory of individual behaviour, a theory of social behaviour might be arrived at: Though a man's pleasure came from his own choice of action, his pain might come from another's choice. His assurance of pleasure then depended upon his power to limit another's choice. His assurance of the greatest possible pleasure depended upon his having the greatest possible power over the greatest possible number of his fellows. Thus the supreme despot was supremely happy, and his subjects altogether miserable. Pleasure lay in commanding obedience, pain in obeying.

The grand object of human desire is a command over the wills of other men. 3

1 Works I 212
2 Works II 132
3 James Mill, "On Education" in Essays, 35.
The demand...of power over the acts of other men is really boundless. It is boundless in two ways; boundless in the number of persons to whom...we would extend it, and boundless in its degree over the actions of each.  

On this issue, too, the Utilitarians were to find themselves passionately challenged.

(7) Advancing once more from the base of psychology the Utilitarians arrived at a theory of morals: To thrust one's hand into the flames brought pain and damage; to eat a good meal was pleasant and sustaining. In fact the pain was a signal of the damage, and it therefore became "wrong" to ignore it. In the same way it became "right" to pursue pleasure. These were the only indications of right and wrong which could stand the scrutiny of reason. Reason must also rejoice that the path that a man wanted to take was also the path which he ought to take.

Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do...They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it.  

This moral determinism made possible a ready marriage of convenience with the economic doctrine of laissez-faire. To do what pleased one was to do right.

(8) At this point an assumption may be seen to have entered, which Bentham would have been happy to acknowledge, writing as he so largely did out of the philosophies of the eighteenth century: Man is a creature governed by reason.

1 James Mill, "On Education" in Essays, 35.
It is in fact his reason which enables him to forecast the pain or pleasure which a given action will produce, and hence to decide how he can best please himself. There were to be many writers who believed otherwise.

(9) To continue: Taking all these things into account it now became possible to consider the form that an ideal constitution of the state should take, and within that constitution what legislative and administrative measures should be established. As soon as he began this task Bentham realised that he must re-examine his ideas of pleasure and pain. In an absolute monarchy one man in the state was utterly happy, the rest miserable. That is, the quality of happiness did exist in its purest form in such a state: in the happiness of the despot. But such a state was obviously not to be desired: (reason, presumably, was offended by it, or common-sense condemned it.) Therefore not merely the quality of happiness but the quantity of it was what the philosopher must consider. In fact he must consider both together, since, as with gems, a greater quantity of an inferior quality might still be of less value than a smaller quantity of a finer quality.

So Bentham first laid down the qualitative criteria of pleasure as depending upon such things as the intensity, the duration, the certainty of expectation and the purity (that is "the chance it has of not being followed by sensations of the opposite kind"). Then he was obliged to consider not such an analysis, but a computation of pleasure, for he ran into two

1 Works I 16.
needs for some arithmetical aid to the assessment of happiness. First, since pleasure was not always unmixed with pain it became necessary to be able to add and subtract contributing effects in order to decide whether a given action produced a credit balance of pleasure or a debit balance of pain. Secondly, and here he began firmly to translate his individual psychology into social terms, it was necessary to be able to add up all the individual credit and debit balances so as to arrive at a total for the nation; (and ultimately for the world).

Taking the case of the despot once more he attempted to show that to deprive the despot of say a thousand pleasure units of his vast store was to make but little diminution, whereas to distribute these units among a thousand pleasureless subjects was to enhance their lot immensely. Thus the total happiness was increased. The inference was inescapable: the greatest happiness of the greatest number must lie in the even spread of the units of happiness throughout the community. This "levelling" tendency of the theory was among the most objectionable to many of the early Victorians.

(10) Moreover, when attempting an illustration of this "greatest happiness" principle, Bentham, having in reality no actual unit of pleasure at his disposal, casually took a pound sterling as a comparable sort of thing. In fact, of course, it was the only existing "felicific" unit, and the whole of the "hedonic calculus" was mere humbug unless it was supposed, as it readily was supposed, to be translated into terms of cash. Again there were inferences impossible to miss: Happiness was
to be calculated, if at all, according to the amount of money one possessed. Also, the effects of all intercourse between a man and his fellows might only be summed up in terms of cash. This dehumanising theory of the "cash nexus" was to be yet another point at which writers, notably Carlyle, were to make constant thrusts. In Bentham's writings the inescapable equation between "units of felicity" and units of cash crops up continually. For example, in Leading Principles of the Constitutional Code the casual use of money for illustrative purposes is characteristic: "the smaller the mass a man possesses of the units of felicity...the greater is the loss of felicity produced by the ablation of any given mass of them. By the ablation of fifty pounds, more felicity will be abstracted, [etc.etc.]" ¹

Now the striking thing about all this theorising is that although Benthamism on the one hand approved the even spread of felicific units throughout the community, and on the other seemed to equate those units with monetary ones, this middle-class philosopher baulked abruptly and immovably at the notion of the levelling of property. ² Not enough has been made of this singular flaw in the Benthamite philosophy. That Bentham should have pushed his "greatest happiness" principle to its logical conclusion in political matters, arriving inevitably at the notion of "one man, one vote", and yet have shut his mind to the parallel in

¹ Works II 272.
² See e.g. Appendix to Principles of the Civil Code, Works I 358.
economic matters, is a fact capable of throwing illumination not only on the man himself but on the age which followed him. It explains, among other things, why Benthamism should count among its followers members of the working class as well as of the employing class. This lurking contradiction constantly embarrasses the literary opponents of Utilitarianism who often seem to see their target moving before their eyes. But as far as the age at large was concerned, a doctrine which supported equality of economic and political opportunity along with the inviolable rights of property was exactly calculated to recommend itself to the rising middle classes. It was the strongest plea for a "career open to the talents".

(11) Having determined the nature of the greatest good, Bentham now went on to propose the means of attaining it. All men sought their own happiness. Happiness lay in command, unhappiness in obedience. Therefore all men must share equally the command, or the government: that is, there must be universal manhood suffrage. And, since all must obey, the extent of government must be reduced to a minimum, for any government whatever was, by definition, only a lesser evil than anarchy. This is Bentham's constant position. For example, "The proposition, although almost self-evident, that every law is contrary to liberty, is not generally recognised."

And Stephen quotes Bentham, "All Government is in itself one vast evil." 2 A unit of power was thus supplied by the right to vote, and the vote became a second potential unit of

1 Principles of the Civil Code, Works I 301.
pleasure.

(12) Since all men always sought only their own pleasure, and pleasure lay in power, even the elected representatives would seek to entrench themselves in power. Therefore Parliament must be elected anew each year. The House of Lords must go, and the monarchy with it, since the fund of power lying with them would depreciate the felicific currency. Bentham's constitutional prescriptions are contained in the two major works, Plan of Parliamentary Reform and Constitutional Code.

In a pure monarchy, the positive end of constitutional law is the greatest happiness of a single individual; in a constitutional monarchy it pursues a more complex end, the greatest happiness of the monarch, limited by the greatest happiness of the ruling aristocracy; it is only in a pure representative democracy that the positive end of constitutional law is the greatest happiness of the greatest number. ¹

The Utilitarians were to be engaged all along the line on such issues.

(13) Economically, the Utilitarians were caught between two articles of their own creed. Every man sought his own happiness, that is, his own prosperity, and this was good. If in doing so he diminished unduly the happiness of his fellows that was bad. Yet governmental or legal inhibition was also bad. In deciding upon which side they ought to come down on the Utilitarians accepted the doctrine of Adam Smith that a man who increased his own prosperity inevitably increased that of the community as a whole.² "Bentham is content to take for

² See Wealth of Nations, I Bk iv Ch 2 453-456.
granted as an ultimate fact that the self-interest principle in the long run coincides with the greatest happiness principle, and leaves the problem to his successors." 1 Such a view was welcome enough since the original impulse behind Utilitarianism had been to disencumber the community of old restrictive laws. The Utilitarians thus aligned themselves with the forces of "progress" and industrial expansion, lending, along with Adam Smith, their blessing to laissez-faire and the exertions of the self-making man.

(14) In their urgency to clean away all that muddied the waters of reasonableness and clogged the machinery of progress the Utilitarians naturally turned their eyes from the monarchy and the aristocracy to the Established Church. While the majority of Englishmen were happy enough in the compromise by which the Church and the State existed side by side, each acknowledging the authority within its own sphere of the other, yet the Utilitarians remained incensed at the involvement between them which still existed, in matters both of money and of power. The State and the Church are two bodies having an interest incurably at variance with that of the community, and all sinister interests have a natural tendency to combine together and to co-operate...But between the particular interest of a governing aristocracy and a sacerdotal class, there seems a very peculiar affinity and coincidence - each wielding the precise engine which the other wants. The aristocracy, for instance, possess the disposal of a mass of physical force sufficient to crush any partial resistance...To make this sure, they are obliged to maintain a strong purchase upon the public mind...For this purpose the sacerdotal class is most precisely and most happily cut out...The duty of mankind towards the earthly government becomes thus the same as duty to god - that is, an

1 Stephen, The English Utilitarians, I 314.
Since the abolition of the House of Lords itself would deprive the bishops of much of their political sway there seemed no good reason why the process should not be carried further.

Bentham had always been a free-thinker, but, as in the case of his radicalism in secular affairs, his allegiances were changed with the changing times. In the critical years before 1830 it was not with an "enlightened" eighteenth century aristocracy that he shared his views, but with the party of popular reform. His staunchest disciple, James Mill, "had by his own studies and reflections been early led to reject not only the belief in Revelation, but the foundations of what is commonly called Natural Religion." Others of Bentham's associates, like William Hone (with whom Bentham produced the "Reformer's Register") and Richard Carlile, advancing irreligious notions on their own account, drew the Benthamites further towards outright atheism. The seven years' imprisonment of Carlile not only served to transform his own deism into atheism, but made an irresistible call upon his friends to commit themselves to his cause, thereby

1 Bentham [writing as "Philip Beauchamp", 1822], Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion on the Temporal Happiness of Mankind. This work was compiled by George Grote from Bentham's MSS. Mrs. Grote, in 1875, gave the MSS. to the British Museum. A new edition was printed as a pamphlet by Edward Truelove, London, 1875. The passage quoted is on page 120 of that edition. For full references to this work see Halevy, The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism, 292 ff; and Stephen, The English Utilitarians, I 219 and 315 ff.
2 J.S. Mill, Autobiography, 32.
3 See Mill, Autobiography, 74.
going far to identify Utilitarianism in the public mind with a fierce anti-clericalism: "To be merely supposed to sympathize with him [Carlile] is tantamount to an admission of impiety." 1 Bentham's own publications on religious subjects seem to reflect this pressure of events upon a mind leaning anyway towards complete scepticism. In 1818 his Church of Englandism, and its Catechism examined put forward a sort of radical Christianity: and the same direction of thought was followed, as the title implies, in his Not Paul but Jesus, written about the same time. But by 1822 Bentham had, like James Mill before him, not only rejected the belief in Revelation, but pressed his devastating Utilitarian enquiry to the heart of Natural Religion. The approach in Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion on the Temporal Happiness of Mankind is again evident from the title. Some of the chapter headings will also serve to show the manner and direction of his enquiry: "The expectations of posthumous pleasure and pain, which Natural Religion holds out..." "Efficiency of the superhuman inducements to produce temporal evil: Their inefficiency to produce temporal good." "Inflicting unprofitable suffering; Imposing useless privations; Taxing pleasure by the infusion of preliminary scruples and subsequent remorse." "Producing aversion to improvement; Disqualifying the intellectual faculties for purposes useful in this life; Disjoining Belief from Experience."

By his characteristic a priori procedure Bentham begins with a definition of "natural religion" as the belief

1 Mill, Autobiography, 311.
in the existence of an almighty Being, by whom pains and pleasures will be dispensed to mankind, during an infinite and future state of existence. But this idea of an omnipotent and irresponsible governor is at once offensive to the democratic tendency of the age, and hence must presumably always have been intolerable to the human mind. Therefore, declares Bentham, there has always been felt the need for reassurance about the intentions and disposition of this supremely despotic Being: hence the development of revealed religions. Such religions then invest their priesthoods with the sole rights of interpretation so that they assume a moral advantage over their lay fellows: "The result must be, absolute privation of reason, and an entire sacrifice of all sublunary enjoyment." ¹ Thus the State and the Church enjoy between them the two greatest "engines" of felicity - physical force and moral ascendancy: and each is forever jealous of the other's power.

In representing traditional Christianity as the "ne plus ultra of wickedness" and the Christian idea of God as "the most perfect conception of wickedness which the human mind can devise"; ² in declaring that Paul was an impostor and an ambitious man...("The unsatisfableness of Paul's ambition meets the eye at every page: the fertility of his invention is no less conspicuous..."³); in describing the doctrine of

¹ Analysis etc., 49.
³ Bentham [writing as "Gamaliel Smith Esq.", 1823], Not Paul but Jesus, 282. And see the formidable "Paul Disbelieved Table" showing that Paul's inward conversion was never believed in by any of the true apostles he interviewed.
Heaven and Hell as a system of posthumous penalties and rewards, of pains and pleasures in which the elements of Duration and Intensity have been increased to an appalling extent because there is nothing known of their Certainty or Propinquity; in blasphemously parodying the litany, the Athanasian creed and the Anglican catechism; and in tirelessly pressing the case for a new type of education: "The end of Education is to render the individual, as much as possible, an instrument of happiness...[and NOT] to please the God, or object of worship, and to provide, through his favour, for the happiness of a second, or future life..."; in administering all these shocks to a public which after the Regency was feeling its way forward towards "Victorianism" it was inevitable that the Utilitarians should provoke opposition to themselves from a dozen different directions. Of chief concern to this study were, first, what may be called internal opposition, or that which was brought by the pietistic supporters of reform; and, second, what may be called external opposition, or that which was brought by orthodox and conservative minds. Examples of both types of opposition will later be examined.

1 Bentham's description in Analysis etc, 45-47.
2 See William Hone, The Political Litany, published anonymously by Carlile, 1817. See also The Sinecurist's Creed, by the same publisher, where "Old Bags" is used in place of "God" in the Athanasian Creed. The piece is interesting because of its resemblances to Peacock when attacking Coleridge, Wordsworth and Southey.
3 James Mill, "On Education" in Essays, 3 and 15. Mill here draws a distinction between temperance observed in order to achieve "the greatest possible quantity of happiness" and "the gratuitous renunciation of pleasure" and even "the infliction of voluntary pain" which is part of "theological morality".
It is finally necessary to remember that Utilitarianism along with Bentham's doctrines, and independently of him, had early gathered to itself the principles expounded by Malthus. It was the work of James Mill and Ricardo to merge the Malthusian laws of evolution with Adam Smith's political economy, so that the entire economic doctrine might be unified and systematised: ... Unless men can suppress their natural instinct, the number of consumers tends constantly to increase more rapidly than the quantity of available subsistence. 1

Malthus does not believe that men can, without lapsing into criminal degradation, suppress their natural instinct: "The passion between the sexes is necessary, and will remain nearly in its present state." 2 This proposition found ready adoption by the "business" 3 classes of Victorian England who were able piously to point to the conditional clause ["unless men can suppress their natural instinct"] and so absolve themselves from responsibility for the pauperism which their exertions might otherwise have been supposed to promote. Once more, however, the Malthusian component of Utilitarianism was to become the butt of unremitting attack in the literature between 1830 and 1860, the reason for the rejection usually lying either in a genuine anguish for the plight of the poor, which no mathematical demonstration of its inevitability could assuage, or in a repugnance at the dehumanising tendency of

3 See Mill, Bentham, 73. "A philosophy like Bentham's... can teach the means of organizing and regulating the merely business part of the social arrangements."
the formula itself:
Yes let them diminish the supply [of labourers]: but who are they? [angrily demands Carlyle.] They are twenty-four millions of human individuals...Smart Sally in our alley proves all-too fascinating to brisk Tom in yours: can Tom be called on to make pause, and calculate the demand for labour in the British Empire first?

By the year 1830 Utilitarianism was solidly established in England. It constituted an orthodoxy of radicalism. Its gospels had been written in the eighteenth (and even in the seventeenth ²) century, and its great exponent, Bentham, was able to view with satisfaction the rivalry between his close disciples for the place beside the master and to scatter his writings or his words as carelessly as he chose, knowing that all would be gathered, sorted and presented to the world. He was indefatigably served by translators, editors and amanuenses. By 1830 forty thousand copies of his treatises, translated into French, had been sold for the South American trade alone. His later work was confidently addressed to "all nations and all governments professing liberal opinions" ³ and his offer of service had been to a greater or less extent accepted by Portugal, Spain, Mexico, Venezuela, the United States, Russia, Greece and Tripoli. "The world seemed to be at his feet, anxious to learn from

1 Carlyle, Chartism, Ch X.
2 See Locke, Human Understanding, Bk I Ch iii section 6.
3 Thus was the Constitutional Code addressed.
him the arts of law and government; and he was willing to instruct all comers." ¹

Not only had the Benthamites by 1830 completed in Utilitarianism a solid structure of radical thought, but they had established a new political party which could at last not merely assail the other two entrenched parties, but assail them with such force as to draw their fire in return. Yet the greatest achievements of Utilitarianism were made not by the efforts of a new parliamentary party, but through the concessions and adjustments to policy forced upon the traditional parties by the spread of Utilitarian ideas. For Bentham's was a radicalism of a peculiar type in that its character became more and more bourgeois rather than popular. Thus within the period there arose two great factions whose interests were fundamentally opposed but whose respective debts to Bentham and his associates were almost equally large. These factions moreover were divided not only like Whigs and Tories by distinctions of interest, but also by distinctions of class. In broad terms they may be called the employers and the employed. "One attracts hourly towards it and appropriates all the Positive Electricity of the nation (namely, the Money thereof); the other is equally busy with the Negative (that is to say the Hunger), which is equally potent." ²

¹ W.R. Sorley in Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol xi Ch 3. For other testimonies to Bentham's achievement see Halevy, Philosophic Radicalism, 296 ff; Stephen, English Utilitarians, Vol I Ch 5; Plamenatz, English Utilitarians, 63-64.

² Carlyle, Sartor Resartus, Ch x.
Popular radicalism drew upon Utilitarianism wherever it gave sustenance to the hopes for extended representation, for the softening of the criminal laws, the assurance of justice and the provision of educational opportunities. Thus Chartism found support in Bentham for each of its five points.

On the other hand, the middle classes, however they might wish to modify the constitutional and juridical codes of the Benthamites, were whole-hearted in their acceptance of the economic, religious and educational liberalism which formed so large a part of Utilitarianism. Indeed, the formulae of Adam Smith and Malthus, and the exertions of the liberal educationalists might have been designed in advance to fit their needs. Bentham's own vast sketch of an ideal school system was made "for the use of the middling and higher ranks in life." 1 It is most necessary to keep these divergent influences in mind when considering the reactions to Utilitarianism.

It is also important to keep in mind in the study of the campaign of ideas which was conducted during these thirty years this distinction in the concept of "individualism." Bentham's philosophy is often referred to (by Louis Cazamian, for example) as one of "individualism." Its moral teachings, as has been shown, were based ultimately on individual pain and pleasure. Its constitutional prescriptions sought to stake out the individual's claim to a share of political power. Its legal code sought to make simple justice available to the individual regardless of his station. Above all, its economic

1 Chrestomathia, Works VIII 1.
creed was one of untrammelled individualism, as opposed to what Cazamian calls "Interventionism" - that is, Benthamism was opposed to any socialist idea. Now against this type of "individualism" the opponents of Utilitarianism set another ideal, which may justly be called the Romantic ideal of individualism. The very attempt to distribute political, legal and commercial privileges to every individual seemed to Bentham's opponents to involve a destruction of personal distinction: individualism involved a loss of individuality. Thus there will be found in the writings to be discussed a common ideal of individualism which takes no account of outward, social forms; which discounts and deplores the democratic, ballot-box, laissez-faire sort of individualism; and which exalts the inward forms of individuality. Every man is a potential hero or saint, patriot or martyr. Let him once and for all despise the factitious rewards of worldly advantage and turn his ambitions to self-development and he will begin to enter upon the true "greatest-happiness." All these writers are intensely interested in individual character and in its fulfilment. They have a religious reverence for man's individuality. Most of them are persuaded that personality can largely be explained in terms of blood - a man is the spiritual heir of his physical forebears - though there is always the unique seed of individuality awaiting fruition. Moreover every man is a member of his race and for Disraeli, Carlyle and Kingsley (and to a lesser extent, for Dickens) there exist strong racial characteristics which declare
themselves in even the remotest members of the race. This type of "individualism" counted for nothing in the plans of Bentham for whom "the one" represented a political, legal and economic unit, and "the many" an aggregation of such units wherever they happened to live and whatever they happened to believe.

It is proposed in the pages which follow to examine some of the ways in which English men of letters resisted the implications and the results of Utilitarianism as they have been isolated above; to show how far this resistance was a later manifestation of Romanticism; and in fact to suggest that in so far as elements of Romanticism had been brought within the domain of the Utilitarian philosophy they were lost to literature.

The study of individual writers has been preceded by a consideration of the relationship existing in the period between Utilitarianism and the Nonconformist sects, because, as will be seen, attacks in works of literature upon the latter often spring from disgust with the former, and vice versa. In establishing the involvement between Utilitarianism and Nonconformism the testimony of reputable historians has been largely called on, since these are matters for the social historian rather than the student of literature to pronounce upon. Thus there will be found many references to "secondary sources" in this chapter.

The Oxford Movement gave rise to a literature so
distinctive, and so distinctively anti-Benthamite, that it constituted an obvious subject for a separate section.

Then it was necessary to notice the work of Carlyle because he too set his face so steadfastly against the ethics of Utilitarianism and was personally so influential upon the minds of his generation that he stands with Newman as a focal point of the forces of reaction.

Finally there are separate studies of the works of Disraeli, Peacock and Charles Kingsley. Unlike the writers considered in the previous sections these three have been presented from a viewpoint which comprehends their whole literary output. They have been chosen for special treatment because though each refuses, partially or wholly, to accept the Utilitarian creed, each adopts in its stead a system of beliefs quite distinct from the others. Thus they provide a much more interesting contrast than, say, Newman, Disraeli and Carlyle would have offered. In terms of chronology alone their works make possible a view of the changing nature of the reaction against Utilitarianism. Disraeli's significant writing comes earlier in the period, Kingsley's later, and Peacock's erratic productivity straddles the whole.
Chapter II

THE FORCES OF REACTION

1 Utilitarianism and the Nonconformist Sects
2 Newman and the Oxford Movement
3 Carlyle

Surely there is something unearthly and superhuman in spite of Bentham.

Can the nineteenth century produce no more robust and creative philosophy than this?

J.H. Newman

Bentham's Utility, virtue by Profit-and-Loss; reducing this God's-world to a dead brute Steam-engine, the infinite celestial Soul of a Man to a kind of Hay-balance for weighing hay and thistles on, pleasures and pains on.

Thomas Carlyle
THE FORCES OF REACTION.

The literary reaction against Utilitarianism may be seen to gather into three main forces, each of which will be examined in this chapter.

There is firstly the literary aspersion of religious nonconformity because of its association with laissez-faire economics.

There is secondly the literature of the Oxford Movement, especially that of its master-spirit J.H. Newman.

There is thirdly the single personal force of Thomas Carlyle, without doubt the most stimulating of all. He is the first and the most imperious of the Victorian sages and prophets.

When we turn to the works of Disraeli, Peacock and Kingsley we shall be concerned with the workings of these three forces within them. And in the end we shall observe that each of these writers makes not only an express and passionate rejection of Utilitarian teachings, but also a remarkably similar affirmation of certain values which Bentham had quite disregarded.
(I) UTILITARIANISM AND THE NONCONFORMIST SECTS

One historian after another, seeking to characterise the period between 1830 and 1860 in Britain, finds that it is the weight of nonconformist religious conviction which acted as the governor of all those forces of disintegration, of revolt and of change which in other countries created such drastic upheavals during the nineteenth century. Thus Elie Halevy, in the Prologue to Part III of his first book on English history in the nineteenth century, writes:

We shall witness Methodism bring under its influence, first the Dissenting sects, then the Establishment, finally secular opinion. We shall attempt to find here the key to the problem whose solution has hitherto escaped us; for we shall explain by this movement the extraordinary stability which English Society was destined to enjoy throughout a period of revolutions and crises; what we may truly term the miracle of modern England, anarchist but orderly, practical and businesslike, but religious, and even pietist.

Methodism was of especial significance in the period because of its connexions both with the Established Church and with the dissenting sects; and the history of Methodism during the years here under study is valuable as showing a steady drift towards Benthamite opinions; which is to say that Methodism, recognised by Halevy as providing a key to the understanding of the age, offers a central instance of the spirit of the age. Its numerous and highly influential adherents moved steadily away from "venerable absurdities" and "inequalities which only long usage had made tolerable".

The essentially religious character of English reform is again attested by Humphry House:

What was called Infidelity [in the nineteenth century] took many forms of opposition to practices and dogmas, but it was hardly ever atheism or agnosticism, and rarely abandoned the Christian name. Tom Paine, a convinced deist, had little lasting popular influence; Richard Carlile still less. Even Robert Owen who seemed alike to the orthodox Tory and the evangelical fanatic, not far removed from the Beast of the Revelation, often wrote and spoke as if he were restoring pure Christianity in his 'Religion of Charity unconnected with Faith'.

There is perhaps no need to call in more support for Halevy's claiming the prime importance of Methodism in an understanding of the period, but it may be noticed that G.W. Young in his invaluable summary entitled "Portrait of an Age" begins by asserting that age's strongly religious character:

A young man [born in 1810] looking for some creed by which to steer at such a time might, with the Utilitarians, hold by the laws of political economy and the greatest happiness of the greatest number; he might simply believe in the Whigs, the Middle Classes, and the Reform Bill; or he might, with difficulty, still be a Tory. But atmosphere is more than creed, and, whichever way his temperament led him, he found himself at every turn controlled, and animated, by the imponderable pressure of the Evangelical discipline and the almost universal faith in progress.

Again, G.W. Trevelyan, stressing the importance of the Methodist Revival, points out that "the ultimate consequence was that the Nonconformists rose from about a twentieth of the churchgoers to something near a half." Halevy, in another place, declares that by 1832 the influence of the Methodists had become "predominant in the sects hostile to the Establishment..."

1 House, The Dickens World, 106.
2 Young, Portrait of an Age, 1.
3 Trevelyan, British History in the Nineteenth Century, 25.
and within the Church the influence of Evangelicals was growing stronger every day ... [English Evangelicalism] constituted the essence of Methodist preaching." ¹ Thus, in the matters of their opposition to the Establishment and their demands for reform the Methodists may be taken not only as representatives of dissenting opinion generally, but as leaders of it.

"I know the Dissenters. They carried the Reform Bill; they carried the abolition of slavery; they carried Free Trade; and they'll carry the abolition of Church Rates," said Lord John Russell ² whose testimony must finally suffice to establish the intimate relationship between Nonconformist allegiance and the Reform movement generally.

Now the fact of special interest to this study is that though Dissent in religious matters was almost synonymous with Reform in secular affairs, the literature of the age is all but uniformly opposed to Nonconformity in all its aspects.

The present relevance of considering the literary repugnance at Nonconformity generally and Methodism particularly becomes more apparent when the history of Methodism is compared with that of Utilitarianism. Methodism was originally conservative in its political outlook, and even in the period between 1830 and 1860 the outstanding figure, the "Pope of Methodism", Jabez Bunting, "had a profound distrust of the democratic movement in Church and State, and is even said to have avowed in 1827 that 'Methodism was as much opposed to democracy as it was to sin.'" ³

(It may be as well at this point to indicate the

¹ Halevy, The Triumph of Reform, 162.
³ E.A. Payne, The Free Church Tradition, 95.
relation between Methodism and the Oxford Movement. Because of the allegiance with the Benthamites in the one case and the extreme opposition to them in the other it was natural that Jabez Bunting should declare during a speech at Manchester in 1841: "No person on earth or in heaven - if I may use the language - can reconcile Methodism with High Churchism." ¹

Yet Methodism was a movement which reached down to the new working classes, making religious provision for them in cities like Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and Liverpool which had no bishops and a hopelessly inadequate accommodation in the churches of the Establishment. "In Manchester there was [Church] accommodation for 11,000 of the 79,000 inhabitants." ² This inadequacy was of course steadily aggravated both by the continued growth of the new industrial centres and by the increasing proportion of Nonconformist adherence. These were precisely the classes whose needs had not been met by the Reform Bill and who began to look to the Benthamite prescriptions for the amelioration of their lot. The Methodist laity in the expanding urban centres were "inspired alike by denominational pride and by the utilitarianism of Bentham's searching question, 'What is the use of it?'" ³ especially as it applied to the Establishment whose authority the significant authors of the day were anxious to uphold and even to extend.

¹ See Taylor, Methodism and Politics, 120.
² Halevy, England in 1815, 399. See also A. Wyatt Tilby, Lord John Russell, 97 ff.
³ Taylor, Methodism and Politics, 148.
Thus in the early Victorian period Methodism had largely turned radical, even as Utilitarianism before it had done. Of the six "Tolpuddle Martyrs" five were Methodists. And the role of the Methodists in the eminently Benthamite movement of Chartism was an active one. Many of them, according to the Hammonds, belonged to "Chartist Churches." ¹ William Lovett and Thomas Cooper, two of the Chartist leaders, owed much to Methodism; J.R. Stephens, a strong supporter of Chartism and one who even approved the use of force, was a Methodist minister; and much of the organizing practice of the religious societies was brought into the Chartist movement. These radical Nonconformists often found their secular aspirations condemned by official attitudes within the church and hence "their resentment was turned also against their ministers, whom they regarded as Tory supporters of an oppressive regime." ² In retaliation, "The Wesleyan preachers in the Bath district resolved in 1839 that any Methodist who joined himself to the Chartists should be excluded from their body." ³

It has already been observed that Benthamism made appeals both to the middle and to the lower classes. So it comes about that Chartism, a movement directly traceable to Utilitarian teachings, may in some sense be called anti-Utilitarian since it was largely against the middle class that its forces were directed. ⁴ Thus the Hammonds are led to make

¹ Hammond, The Age of the Chartists, 251.
² Taylor, Methodism and Politics, 142.
³ Hammond, The Age of the Chartists, 247.
⁴ For a full discussion of the complexity of Chartism, see R.L.Hill, Toryism and the People 1832 - 1846.
such paradoxical statements as

All that Bentham had forgotten crowded into the pages of Shelley and Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey, Carlyle and Dickens, Mill and Maurice, Peacock and Disraeli. The ordinary man [among the Chartists] would not have put his case as it was put by Wordsworth, or Maurice, or Carlyle, but the error in the ruling philosophy of the time [Utilitarianism] that provoked those writers was the injustice in life that provoked those rebels.

This would seem to make of Chartism a revolt against Benthamism. Yet if there were any doubt about the origins of Chartism, if the "six points" should be merely coincidentally Benthamite in detail, any history of the movement would settle these doubts at once:

We begin in 1837-38 with a Radical movement in London... a body of labour intellectuals deriving their ideas directly from Owen, Bentham, the Mills, and the other fountain-heads of political doctrine. If one force more than another inspired the Chartist movement, it was that which proceeded from philosophic Radicalism.

Now, just as Utilitarianism was taken up by two classes whose economic and political ideals often clashed, so Nonconformity too had a dual appeal. For, just as Bentham's creed of progress and his particular admiration for the economic doctrine of Free Trade appealed to the new and thriving middle classes, so the ranks of Methodism were swelled by manufacturers, shopkeepers, artisans who were rising in the social scale, and men who, helped by the energy given them by their new religion, had climbed by their own efforts.

... The triumph of Benthamite 'Reason', which swept away the 'Old Tories' at the general election in 1830, gave to England a system of local government which ensured that power should be in the hands of the middle classes. These were the men whose influence in Methodism was becoming ever more important, and their feelings of importance in 'Chapel Affairs' marched pari passu with their new sense of power in local politics.

1 Hammond, The Age of the Chartists, 359.
2 Julius West, A History of the Chartist Movement, 292.
3 Taylor, Methodism and Politics, 144-145.
The Hammonds have pointed out the close parallel which existed between the "struggle of life" within the chapel and the pursuit of Utilitarian, material advantage outside it. "The spirit of the age put its own bias and character on this missionary religion." ¹

In secular affairs the Methodist laity and many of their ministers threw in their lot with that of the general body of Dissent. They were impelled to do so by the pressure from within the Church. "The upper classes, however, remained hostile to Methodism, and the established Church thrust it out to join its potent young force to that of the old Dissenting bodies." ²

It becomes apparent then, that Methodism and Utilitarianism have a similar history in that they rose in the eighteenth century as adjuncts to established traditions, and developed from their Tory origins until the Radical tendencies of both were united in a revolt against orthodoxy in the middle of the nineteenth century. Methodism, like Utilitarianism, sprang into being through the peculiar genius of one man. If they had nothing else in common, both Wesley and Bentham had a Tory, Oxford background; it was the curious history of the early Victorian period that the teachings of the evangelist who had rejected the idea of democracy and those of the democrat who had rejected the idea of religion were followed often by the same men.³

¹ Ham mond, The Age of the Chartists, 249.
² Trevelyan, British History in the Nineteenth Century, 25. For a closer study of these shifting allegiances, see Halevy, The Triumph of Reform, 152-163.
³ For other testimonies to the strong association between Nonconformity and Reform, see House, Dickens, 107; Packe, Life of J.S. Mill, 127.
Among the literary references to this association may be noticed the passage in Chapter 267 of The Bible in Spain where Borrow reports a Spaniard's surprise: "How very singular that the countrymen of the grand Bentham would set any value upon that old monkish book." And in Book I Chapter 7 of The Mill on the Floss George Eliot declares: "Dissent was an inheritance along with a superior pew and a business connection."

Yet, as had been stated, the significant authors of the period unite, if in nothing else, to pour scorn on the Nonconformist sects. "Nonconformists are seldom flattered on the few occasions when they appear in Victorian literature," mildly observes Ernest Payne. 1 "Men of letters disliked the Evangelicals for their narrow Puritanism . . . nevertheless, during the nineteenth century their religion was the moral cement of English society," insists Elie Halevy. 2 The literary opposition to Nonconformity had begun early. One remembers the ridiculous figure cut by Humphry Clinker when the Methodist evangelical fervour was upon him. John Foster's essay first published in 1805 bears the title, "Some of the Causes by which Evangelical Religion has been rendered unacceptable to Persons of cultivated Taste." As persons of cultivated taste, authors between 1830 and 1860 often felt called on to vilify and mock the Nonconformists, not hesitating to go out of their strictly literary way to do so. Because it is difficult and often impossible to distinguish the reasons behind this animadversion, the opposition of writers to Nonconformity is a necessary part

1 Payne, The Free Church Tradition, 102.
2 Halevy, The Triumph of Reform, 163.
of this study. For it is clear that much of the antipathy has
been roused by the very intimate association between Noncon-
formity and Benthamite principles which this chapter has so far
been concerned to establish. Nonconformity was without doubt
a serious "solvent of custom" and J.S. Mill, for example, was
always aware of this. Any approval he gave to the tendency to
break off into Dissent may well be felt, by readers of his
"Liberty", to stem from the notion that this was a first step
in what might become a complete departure from the church. A
second source of the stream of ridicule and invective turned by
authors of the day upon Nonconformity may have been the refusal
by the stricter sects to countenance the reading of fictional
works, "making it a rule, to abstain from fashionable
diversions, from reading plays, romances, or books of humour,
from singing innocent songs, or talking in a merry, gay,
diverting manner." 1 Authors were safe in assuming that they
would give no offence (and indeed that they would even gratify
those who were free to read their work) by a sometimes
gratuitous disparagement of Nonconformity which was not
necessarily inspired by anti-Utilitarian feelings.

In the pages which follow there will be found brief
and separate treatments of the attitudes towards Nonconformity
displayed by some of the greater writers of the period, namely,
Dickens, Kingsley, Charlotte and Emily Bronte, Tennyson, Arnold,
Browning, Thackeray and Mrs Oliphant. To all of them the strong
association between Nonconformity and Utilitarianism must have
been apparent, and, as will be seen, this association is often
explicitly noticed. 2

1 Wesley, Works, Vol. viii. 351.
The attitudes of Dickens towards Utilitarianism and towards Nonconformity are of peculiar relevance to this section of the present study, because an examination of them seems to reveal that while in his mind Dickens tolerated and even approved much of Bentham's teaching, in his heart he detested the association he observed to exist between Utilitarianism and the more evangelical Christian sects. Various studies have been made of the reformist element which invests almost all that Dickens wrote, and his indebtedness to Utilitarian ideas has been variously assessed. T.A. Jackson attempts to prove that while Dickens always violently rejected the bourgeois developments of Utilitarians he made a steady progress from alarm at and distaste for its popular manifestations to a pretty thorough-going approval of them. ¹ According to Jackson, Dickens proceeded along this path of radical theory until ultimately he was upon the threshold of Marxist Communism. Certainly Marx, as Dickens discovered on his trip to Germany in 1846, had acclaimed him, and Engels considered him "one of a great spiritual family united in all lands." ² But the truth seems to be that Dickens's sympathies were so broad and the bulk of his writing so large that while Jackson can make of him a radical, Shaw can make him an early Fabian reformist, Chesterton can present him in his own likeness, and Pickwickians reduce him to a Pickwick. J.S. Mill could take exception to particular passages and deplore Dickens's ridiculing of women's aspirations ³

¹ T.A. Jackson, *Charles Dickens: The Progress of a Radical.*
² Jack Lindsay, *Charles Dickens,* 269.
whereas another reader might well feel that Dickens's whole treatment of women in the novels tended to exalt their claims to more generous consideration. As far as Utilitarianism was concerned, Dickens could conscientiously contribute more than a score of articles to the chief organ of intellectual radicalism, the *Examiner*; he could work first as a Parliamentary reporter on the *Morning Chronicle* under John Black whom J.S. Mill salutes as "a particular friend of my father, imbued with many of his and Bentham's ideas" so that the paper under his editorship "became to a considerable extent a vehicle of the opinions of the Utilitarian Radicals"; 1 Dickens could write for Fonblanque, associated first with the *Morning Chronicle*, later with the *Examiner*; and of course he could form a lifelong friendship with his biographer, John Forster, who succeeded Fonblanque as editor of the *Examiner*. But the reader of the novels is likely to feel that Dickens never really came nearer to the spirit of Bentham than he did to the body. 2 Of Benthamism, as it had issued in the "Manchester School" of economics, and in bourgeois self-satisfaction of every sort, there is no more damning and demaging presentation to be found than that in Dickens's *Hard Times*. Not only, however, is it the Gradgrind philosophy of laissez-faire economics and ethics that is attacked, not only bourgeois Utilitarianism, but also the trade union movement and especially the working-class agitator. It is necessary for T.A. Jackson to explain away this latter assault in order to preserve

2 Dickens regularly dined with Dr. Southwood Smith in the company of Bentham's skeleton. See Una Pope-Hennessy, *Charles Dickens*, 91.
his argument:

[Hard Times] contains the one (almost the only) outstanding instance of faulty observation in all Dickens ... so rarely did Dickens take his view of men and things at second-hand that this instance (in which he seems to have been misled by Thomas Carlyle, to whom the book is dedicated, and through Carlyle by the Tory Press and the Whig politicians) is truly remarkable. 1

Both Humphry House and Edgar Johnson have made the real point:

A very large number of the members in the Reformed House of Commons were influenced directly or indirectly by Bentham's work, and it must have been more in listening to their speeches than in any reading that Dickens was indoctrinated with Benthamism, if at all. 2

[Dickens] refused to substitute abstract theory for the actual welfare of human beings. No doctrinaire utilitarianism could persuade him to offer up living sacrifices on the altar of political economy. 3

Nothing gives a truer picture of Dickens's practical, untiring, tolerant and sometimes wryly amused efforts for reform than the series of letters he addressed to Angela Burdett-Coutts. While this lady provided the cash and the confidence in her agent, Dickens made himself acquainted with the actual cases, with the names and ages and histories of the destitute people they were both concerned to help. This type of "reform" was always personal and took little or no account of social doctrine. ("I found that five and twenty pounds would pay her rent, and enable her to compound for some of her more pressing little debts; but I could not satisfy myself that a smaller sum was likely to be of real service to her. So I gave her £25.") 4

1 Jackson, Charles Dickens, 35.
2 Humphry House, The Dickens World, 37.
3 E. Johnson, Charles Dickens, II 1133.
4 Letters to Angela Burdett - Coutts 1841-1865, ed. Johnson, 211.
Thus it may be said that Dickens was always the most ardent of reformers but that he admired Benthamism only insofar as it too aimed at relief of suffering. He detested some of the tendencies of Utilitarian reform, especially its issue in institutions like the Workhouse and in the Circumlocution Offices of its administration. When however he found the creed of progress married to Nonconformist sanctimoniousness his anger was swift and bitter, and it is this aspect of his writing which needs to be briefly examined here.

Dickens's deep antipathy towards the Nonconformists may be attributed in some measure to his personal history. It was perhaps a revulsion from the deadening atmosphere of his chapel upbringing. In the papers collected in *The Uncommercial Traveller*, Number IX introduces the formidable Boanerges Boiler to hear whom Dickens declares that as a child he was "dragged by the hair of [his] head... to be steamed like a potato in the unventilated breath of the powerful Boanerges Boiler and his congregation," and afterwards to be catechised respecting "his fifthly, his sixthly, and his seventhly!" All this is fairly pure biography and affords a clue to the character of Dickens's revolt, or at least to its vehemence. He adds that he learned to know this Dissenting preacher "all over and all through, while I was very young, and that I left him behind at an early period of life."

There are many such references to the chapel (as well as to the mechanically performed rites of the English Church) scattered through *The Uncommercial Traveller* and all of them
are disparaging. One such reference, which reveals the relish Dickens always felt in the physical discomfiture of nasty people, occurs in the third paper, "Wapping Workhouse" where the Traveller in his appalled wandering through the institution comes upon two "parodies on provincial gentlewomen". One of these old souls is forbidden to attend chapel because she "derived the greatest interest and consolation" from secreting a small stick and causing "some confusion in the responses by suddenly producing it and belabouring the congregation."

Dickens seems to have cultivated an antagonism to Nonconformity because somehow it was "un-English", his notion of what was "English" being vaguely that it was liberal, decorous and undemonstrative (a notion shared by and maybe strengthened by his favourite Smollett). He resented the "method" of Methodism in the same way as he resented the "system" of Benthamism, and with equal strenuousness rejected the narrow authoritarianism of both. The energy of Dickens's assaults on religious systems was the same energy that he brought to bear in denigrating systematic charity. It derived from a nationalist sensitivity, his concepts of what was comely (that is, English) being, if ill-defined, based nevertheless on a reverence for traditional piety and traditional charities of the more spontaneous and personal sort.

There in the past, in the dead years, were the green shoots, the sources of life and renewal. 'Memory', he insisted, 'however sad, is the best and purest link between this world and a better.'

Yet it must not be assumed that Dickens was so enamoured of the

1 Jack Lindsay, Charles Dickens, 41.
past that he would suffer its idealisation to be systematised. He was as opposed to the "systems" based on reverence for the past (whether Catholic, Tractarian or Young-England Tory) as he was to the "systems" being advanced for the future. His attitudes were always complex and ill-organised. Though he did for a time become a Unitarian, and in 1844 wrote the inscription for a presentation to a Unitarian minister (calling Unitarianism "the religion which has sympathy for men of every creed, and ventures to pass judgment on none") he was fundamentally impatient of all theological discussion.

As to the Church, my friend, I am sick of it. The spectacle presented by the indecent squabbles of priests of most denominations, and the exemplary unfairness and rancour with which they conduct their differences, utterly repel me ... How our sublime and so-different Christian religion is to be administered in the future I cannot pretend to say, but that the Church's hand is at its own throat I am fully convinced. Here, more Popery, there, more Methodism — as many forms of consignment to eternal damnation as there are articles ... The church that is to have its part in the coming time must be a more Christian one, one with less arbitrary pretensions and a stronger hold upon the mantle of our Saviour, as He walked and talked upon this earth. 1

This extract, especially the last sentence in it, bears a remarkable resemblance to the attitudes expressed by Browning in a poem to be noticed shortly. It should also be remarked that Dickens's reconciliations of the new scientific discoveries (especially in geology) with Christian revelation 2 are almost identical with those of Charles Kingsley. For it would be wide of the truth to suggest that Dickens had no religion, and it is

1 The Letters of Charles Dickens, II 221. (Oct. 25, 1864).
2 See e.g. Letters, II 200-202.
perfectly in harmony with the literary attitudes of the time that his sympathies, where they veered towards organised religion at all, turned to the Establishment, despite his chapel upbringing. "The Established Church is firmly built into the Dickens landscape... he returns again and again to the scenes and forms and language of the Church." 1

Wherever Dickens's impatience with sectarianism was aggravated by its association with Utilitarian ideals, his treatment of the Nonconformists comes within the scope of this discussion. The notorious central proposition of Benthamism he refers to only once in all the novels, and then facetiously: "I owe it to my fellow creatures that he [Neville] should be, in the words of Bentham, where he is the cause of the greatest danger to the smallest number." 2

As early as 1831, Dickens wrote a poem of political satire called The Devil's Walk, prompted almost certainly by Southey's piece of the same title published the year before. Its significance lies not on its literary value but in the fact that Dickens's devil looks in at the House of Lords and is next found at a chapel meeting. 3 The poem was accompanied in Maria Beadnell's Album by another of Dickens's poems of 1831, The Churchyard. Here again a contrast is drawn between the devotees of money-making and the true Christians. In both these poems the spirit of Mammon which for Dickens had taken, among other disguises, the cloak of Nonconformist piety, is exposed and assailed.

1 House, The Dickens World, 110. And see the whole of Ch. V.
2 Edwin Drood, Ch. XVI.
3 See Lindsay, Charles Dickens, 80.
In 1836, under the name of Timothy Sparks, Dickens wrote a pamphlet entitled **Sunday Under Three Heads**. In this he makes a passing assault (one of the few) upon the Anglicans, but proceeds then to open up with real fury upon the Nonconformists and all the false values they represented for him. The connexion here with Utilitarian teachings is clear, for, as Dickens saw it, the Sunday Observance Bill which prompted the pamphlet was introduced to limit the opportunities of the poor to mingle in enjoyment or travel on their only free day. Thus their more wealthy and hence presumably wiser legislators hoped to make Sunday one more opportunity to enforce upon the poor the sort of prudence that Malthus had so urgently recommended—though as Dickens points out, this is scarcely a serious argument, "it never having been distinctly shown that Sunday is more favourable to the propagation of the human race than any other day in the week." A second intention of the Bill as Dickens saw it was that of compelling the poor to be thrifty, since political economy like charity began at home. Devotion to industrial progress joined hands in this Bill with the asceticism inherent in the revivalist religion and such a Bill was no more than a latter day expression of the bond which had always existed between them. (In December 1764 Wesley had written to the Mayor and Corporation of Bristol protesting against the proposal to build a theatre because a theatre would be "peculiarly hurtful to a trading city, giving a wrong turn to youth especially, gay, trifling and directly opposite to the

1 **Sunday Under Three Heads**, Section iii.
spirit of industry and close application to business." 1)
In the assault upon Nonconformity which Dickens delivered in
this pamphlet it was obviously this union of forces which he
despised. The repressive force continued to be applied by the
employing class, always in the name of morality, until the
populace of the manufacturing cities were driven to spend their
Sundays in drunkenness and brutality. As for the employed
classes, however, their redemption did not lie in the ballot-box.
It is characteristic of Dickens to have as little faith in
Utilitarian political prescriptions as he has love for
Utilitarian economic ones.

As to the suffrage, I have lost hope even in the ballot.
We appear to me to have proved the failure of representative
institutions without an educated and advanced people to
support them...I do reluctantly believe that the English
people are habitually consenting parties to the miserable
imbecility into which we have fallen. 2

In *Sunday Under Three Heads* Dickens is concerned firstly to
attack the narrowmindedness and fanaticism of those who would
keep the Sabbath sacred by driving the population into the
beershops, and secondly to suggest a happier and healthier sort
of Sunday pleasure. Under the third "Head" there is a vehement
denial of the Malthusian theory that an all-wise Providence has
limited the fertility of the soil in order to compel the human
race into continence, industriousness and thrift. This part
of the Malthusian teaching went hand in hand with Bentham's
ideas on the "springs of action": prudence and self-love are
ultimately stronger than passion and benevolence. To Dickens

1 Quoted by Hammond, *The Age of the Chartist*, 257.

this was chilly doctrine and he proceeds to describe an ideal Sunday which is as romantic, antique and rustic as the warmest Young-Englander could wish for. He describes first a country setting with "the whole population of the little hamlet" setting off for church,

stout young labourers in clean round frocks; and buxom girls with healthy laughing faces ... The hedges were green and blooming ... The little church was one of those venerable simple buildings which abound in English counties ... The impressive service of the Church of England was spoken - not merely read - by a grey-headed minister ... At the conclusion of the service the villagers waited in the churchyard, to salute the clergyman as he passed ... that he was fond of his joke I discovered from overhearing him ask a stout, fresh-coloured young fellow, with a very pretty bashful-looking girl on his arm, 'when those banns were to be put up?' - an enquiry which made the young fellow more fresh-coloured, and the girl more bashful, and which, strange to say, caused a great many other girls who were standing round, to colour up also, and look anywhere but in the faces of their male companions.

This passage has been quoted at some length because it is so exactly in the idiom of Disraeli when under the drowsy influence of Young Englandism that it might well have been lifted from his pages. The inevitable roast-beef flavour of the epithets "stout", "clean", "homely", "rustic", "fresh", "sunburnt", pervades the piece. The girls are "buxom", "healthy", "bashful", "bright-eyed"; one is said to "blush" and have "a downcast look of the bright eye". The past is "revered" in the "venerable, simple" church, "half overgrown with moss and ivy"; in the delicate euphemism of the "little plot of ground, which, but for the green mounds with which it was studded, might have passed for a lovely meadow"; in the "old clanking bell"; in the "plain tablet on the opposite wall, which had once recorded names now
indistinguishable”; and in the old man giving advice on cricket to a stalwart “young fellow” who receives it “with an air of profound deference” — for it is hardly necessary to add that the Sunday afternoon is devoted to cricket in the old clergyman’s field.

Another comparison at once presents itself, especially in the remark of the clergyman to the lovers. In *Melincourt*, Chapter xxxv, Peacock’s Reverend Mr. Portpipe emerges from the church and rescues a rustic bride and her groom from the Malthusian jeremiads of Mr. Fax, and the couple go in to their wedding with a blessing and a bank-note from Mr. Forester.

*Sunday Under Three Heads* exposes the more sharply for its brevity the vain wishfulness and the inadequacy of Dickens’s humanism and places him in this respect alongside the more coherent social philosophers who will be looked at later. The pamphlet comes to a close with another admonitory glance at the "sour austerity" of the "professors of religion" who would do more to ensure "respect for that code of morality" if they were to follow the genial example of the cricketing country parson.

A matter of incidental interest in the pamphlet is the mention with approval of the Book of Sports, "for allowing the peasantry of England to divert themselves with certain games in the open air, on Sundays, after evening service, published by Charles the First." Dickens believes that this happy dispensation promoted general well-being; but it was from the beginning an abomination to the Puritans. The commonness with which the rejection of utilitarian ethics was associated with an
approval of pre-Cromwellian times will be noticed later. The Puritan interlude had broken the true English line.

Much less attention can be given to Dickens's later assaults upon Nonconformity as it was associated with Utilitarianism. They occur throughout his work and form perhaps the most consistent thread in his tangled scheme of things. "Necessity and Blessedness" writes Humphry House,

In the linking of those two words is seen the grim alliance between Malthusianism and Nonconformity, against which so much of Dickens's social benevolence was a protest ... Shut the ginshops, prevent travelling on the only day a working-man can travel, make copulation even in marriage seem a sin, and then there might be seen a heaven on earth according to the Rev. T.R. Malthus ... 'Homely virtue and incessant self-discipline' [Harriet Martineau's prescription] was, for the poor, a necessary consequence of natural law, and blessed by a perversion of the Scriptures. 'You shall have the poor always with you': so it was quoted by Mr. Podsnap.

The pious, self-satisfied and prosperous ranters appear in one novel after the other. As early as Pickwick the toping hypocrite Stiggins appears. Along with the other pastors of his flock Stiggins lives fatly on the emotional susceptibilities of womenfolk possessed of some small means, as Mrs. Weller was. Mrs. Weller, complains her husband, has become "Queer, Sammy, queer ... She's been gettin' rayther in the Methodistical order lately, Sammy; and she is uncommon pious, to be sure." (Ch.xxxii). Very early in the piece Mr. Weller translates his disgust into action by giving "the shepherd two or three for himself, and then two or three more to hand over to the man with the red nose [Stiggins]." And presently Stiggins himself is given a more direct token of Weller's distaste (Ch. xxxiii). In the "Charles Dickens Edition" 2 of his works, Dickens felt obliged to explain,

1 House, The Dickens World, 75-76.
2 21 volumes 1867-74.
in a Preface to Pickwick Papers, the difference "between religion and the cant of religion, piety and the pretence of piety", and deplores the "audacious and offensive obtrusion of its [Scripture's] letter and not its spirit in the commonest dissensions and meanest affairs of life."

In The Old Curiosity Shop (Ch. xli) Dickens again presents a Nonconformist ranting minister of the same stamp as Boarnerges Boiler. The description of the Little Bethel exposes once more its deadly dullness and the ruthless egotism of the preacher. Moreover the chapel which might merely have been presented as squalid and its service as excruciatingly tedious, is given a sinister significance in this case by the presence there of Quilp, his hands upon his knees and his eyes fixed upon the ceiling. "I wish Little Bethel was - was farther off," says Kit with feeling, reflecting Dickens's own horror of this kind of "prolonged spiritual nourishment".

Throughout Martin Chuzzlewit Mr. Pecksniff is presented with scarifying mock-reverence as a man of the basest villainy disguising his worldly aims by the most fulsome of pious utterance. His is the perfect combination of Utilitarian ethics with Christian sentiment: "Every man," said Mr. Pecksniff, "has a right, an undoubted right ... to regulate his own proceedings by his own likings and dislikings, supposing they are not immoral and not irreligious ..." "Charity, my dear," said Mr. Pecksniff, "when I take my chamber candle-stick tonight, remind me to be more than usually particular in praying for Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, who has done me an injustice." (Ch. iv). As usual
Dickens dismissed the object of his detestation with physical violence in the end.

With The Chimes appears yet another in his gallery of canting hypocrites, the "disconsolate" Mr. Filer, who very soon after his introduction to the reader begins a dissertation upon the consumption of tripe in the worst tradition of the political economists. The portrait of Filer was provoked by the Westminster Review which according to Dickens had taken exception on grounds of political economy to Scrooge's presentation of the turkey to Bob Cratchit. ¹ In any case Filer is patently intended as a destructive parody of the Utilitarians and is presently mouthing Malthusian catch-words:

"What do you mean!" cried Filer sharply. "Married!"
"Why, yes, we're thinking of it, Master," said Richard. "We're rather in a hurry, you see, in case it should be Put Down first."
"Ah!" cried Filer with a grin. "Put that down, indeed, Alderman, and you'll do something. Married! Married!!

The ignorance of the first principles of political economy on the part of these people; their improvidence; their wickedness; is, by Heavens! enough to - Now look at that couple, will you!"

Well? [comments Dickens] They were worth looking at. And marriage seemed as reasonable and fair a deed as they need have in contemplation. (The Chimes, First Quarter).

Alongside Mr. Filer Dickens has placed two other figures equally detestable: first, Alderman Cute, a Justice of the Peace, with considerable dignity, clean linen, a watch-chain and "an expression of having important and wealthy engagements elsewhere"; and secondly another "full-sized, sleek, well-conditioned gentleman" with a "very red face, as if an undue proportion of the blood in his body were squeezed up into his head; which perhaps accounted for his having also the appearance of being

¹ The charge was apparently unfounded. See House, The Dickens World, 72.
rather cold about the heart." The first is a "practical philosopher" intended to stand for the self-made man now concerned only with Putting things Down. ("All young mothers, of all sorts and kinds, it's my determination to Put Down."

The second was originally intended to stand for the "Young Englanders", and it may be noted here that while both "Young England" and Dickens were in revolt against Utilitarianism, Dickens found surprisingly little in the "Young England" movement to attract him. \(^1\) In 1841 he was anonymously publishing political squibs of a pretty devastating sort, and he does not miss the opportunity to mock the conservative scheme:

```
The good old laws were garnished well with gibbets, whips, and chains,
With fine old English penalties and fine old English pains,
With rebel heads, and seas of blood once hot in rebel veins;
For all these things were requisite to guard the rich old gains
Of the fine old English Tory times;
soon may they come again!  \(^2\)
```

The poem, called "The Fine Old English Gentleman", continues in this bitter and lively way. Young England could not expect to escape the satire of a man with Dickens's family background and personal comic power. Thus, in The Chimes, the birthday celebration of Lady Bowley in the Third Quarter is a bitter burlesque of the Young England movement.

To point the relevance to the present consideration of these three caricatures and of Sir Joseph Bowley who appears later it is necessary to notice the habitual piousness with

\(^1\) See the attack in Bleak House, Ch XII
\(^2\) Poems and Verses of Charles Dickens, 59-63.
which they speak: "... all sick persons and young children
(I hope you know the church-service, but I'm afraid not) I
am determined to Put Down ..."

"But there is One above. We must submit, Mr. Fish.
We must submit ..."
"I am glad this man [the destitute Will Fern] has
entered, "observed Sir Joseph, looking round serenely.
"Don't disturb him. It appears to be Ordained. He
is an example: a living example. I hope and trust,
and confidently expect, that it will not be lost upon
my Friends [his tenants] here."

Two other characters of Nonconformist conviction are
met with in Dombey and Son. Both conform to what by now have
become regular Dickensian types — Captain Cuttle's formidable
landlady Mrs. MacStinger is both fiercely respectable and
rapaciously religious; and her pastor, the Reverend
Melchisedech Howler has more than a nominal resemblance to the
carlier-mentioned Boanerges Boiler. Dickens immediately pins
the label of hypocrisy upon Howler by a reference to his having
been discharged from the West India Docks for secretly drinking
from the barrels he was handling. (Ch. xv) The pair remain
unredeemed throughout the novel and Captain Cuttle is left to
lament the "fatal concentration" with which little Juliana
MacStinger attends to the fulminations of Howler, as she promises
to follow in the footsteps of her predatory mother (Ch. lx).

Though it is clear that the little church from which
Murdstone first walks home with David Copperfield's mother is an
Anglican one, the "gloomy taint that was in the Murdstone blood,
darkened the Murdstone religion, which was austere and wrathful"
(David Copperfield, Ch. iv). Murdstone, and his sister "in a
black velvet gown, that looks as if it had been made out of a
pall," again are the sources of much of the misery which befalls the simple and the honest in this novel. Murdstone perfectly represents the business adventurer "with beautiful black hair and whiskers" who "delivers public addresses sometimes, and it is said ... that the darker tyrant he has lately been, the more ferocious is his doctrine" (Ch lix).

In *Bleak House* Dickens introduces the Rev. Mr. Chadband "attached to no particular denomination" and "endowed with the gift of holding forth for four hours at a stretch." (Ch xix). Like Stiggins, he shows his other main accomplishments to lie in wielding "such weapons of the flesh as a knife and fork, remarkably well." He and his wife, "a stern, severe-looking, silent woman", batten on those with a taste for religion, a taste which seems to have been prevalent among ladies of middling means, such as, in this case, Mrs. Snagsby (who "likes to have her religion rather sharp, you see"). Chadband conforms in every way to the most consistent pattern used by Dickens in his creation of character, and is shown finally at his most odious as a petty blackmailer: "Air we in possession of a sinful secret, and doe we require corn, and wine, and oil - or, what is much the same thing, money - for the keeping thereof? Probably so, my friends." (Ch. liv). Dickens never associated pulpit manner with worldly aim more devastatingly.

But of all the personal guises taken in the Dickens novels by self-seeking parading as piety, by Utilitarian ethics reshaped as Nonconformist rectitude, none is more steadily or convincingly examined than Mrs. Clennam. Here not the general
social injustice but her own direct personal cruelty and malevolence are excused in the mind of Mrs. Clennam by the persuasion that she does and has always done "what it was given to me to do ... I have been an instrument of severity against sin."

_**Little Dorrit** (Bk. II, Ch xxxi)  Her life is devoted to the relentless and devious accumulation of wealth, her lust is for money in itself and for the power which it confers upon her, and her justification to herself and to the world is: "Not for the money's sake ... Not I, a greater than I." (Bk II Ch xxx)

Dickens metes out justice to Mrs. Clennam in a highly symbolic and typically dramatic fashion by having the whole house, in which so many pounds had been counted, so many penalties imposed and so many pieties mouthed, come crashing down in its rottenness. Mrs. Clennam is struck into permanent dumbness and paralysis. Thus the clasp of avarice and sanctimonious cruelty is loosened from the lives of Arthur and Little Dorrit which had been blighted, as, directly or indirectly, all others in the book had been blighted by this "mother, stern of face and unrelenting of heart [who] would sit all day behind a Bible." (Bk I Ch iii)

In Mrs. Clennam Dickens draws to the centre of the novel the particular blend of evil that previously he had left to flourish (and ultimately be brought to rough justice) on the perimeters. He could never accept the ideas of Utilitarianism quite seriously: when, for example, he is writing to Forster about certain contributions he has been making to _The Examiner_, he says:

> By Jove, how Radical I am getting! I wax stronger and stronger in the true principles every day.

1 _Poems and Verses_, 57.
But this flippancy is absent when he is censuring the Nonconformists for taking the radiance out of Christianity and out of life. Thus when he looks upon Nonconformity hand-in-glove with Benthamism his emotional attitude is one of mockery and hatred, a combination which always enabled him to write with his greatest power.

The Nonconformists were often treated by other authors of the time with scarcely more charity than Dickens displayed towards them. The "Poet's Childhood" in Alton Locke (ch 1) was grey enough, but the grim shadow cast upon it by a Dissenting mother ("she used to sit with her Bible on her knee" and "we used to shudder") and the preachers who used to come in to supper did little enough to make it tolerable. "What", demands Kingsley through the mouth of his character, "what was there in the idea of religion which was represented to me at home to captivate me?"

Charlotte Bronte does less than most assailants of Nonconformity in attributing the mortification of childhood and the exacerbation of current social injustices to the reinforcement given by Dissenting religion to Utilitarian economics; but she allows herself to mock the Dissenters from time to time. In the opening chapter of Shirley, for example, the three young Anglican curates are rebuked for their unseemly rowdiness with the words: "Oh! settling the Dissenters — were you? ... making almost as
much noise — you three alone — as Moses Barraclough, the
preaching tailor, and all his hearers, are making in the Methodist
chapel down yonder, where they are in the thick of a revival."
Despite this alluding reference to the Dissenting preacher, the
speaker, Helstone, is obliged to admit that Barraclough "scamp
and hypocrite as he is" nevertheless does manage to "attract all
the weaver-girls in their flowers and ribbons, to witness how
much harder are his knuckles than the wooden brim of his tub ..."
while the curates "often perform the holy service of our church
to bare walls." When Barraclough appears in person (Ch viii)
it is significantly in the role of leader of a band of Luddites
intent on destroying the machinery of Robert Moore's mill.
Though the period is earlier, there is the same association here
as existed later between Dissenters and Chartists. Charlotte
Bronte's portrait of Barraclough is crude enough:

a broadshouldered fellow, distinguished no less by his
demure face and cat-like, trustless eyes, than by a
wooden leg and stout crutch: there was a kind of leer
about his lips, he seemed laughing in his sleeve at some
person or thing, his whole air was anything but that of
a true man...

"Praise God! Bless His Name! I'm a joined Methodist," [he
explains.] "Which in no respect prevents you from being at
the same time a drunkard and a swindler," [retorts Mr. Moore.]
In Chapter ix the chapel itself and the service held within are
dealt with as disparagingly: "Brier-chapel, a large, new, raw,
Wesleyan place of worship" resounds to "shouts, yells,
ejaculations, frantic cries, agonized groans;" but "the roof
of the Chapel did not fly off; which speaks volumes in praise
of its solid slating."
Emily Bronte's Joseph is less well-placed than Barraclough for producing social disruption, but only because Emily's novel has never the conscious social implications of Charlotte's novels. Nevertheless Joseph is a figure of far greater imaginative stature than Moses Barraclough and is capable of being expanded to as broad a social significance as Wuthering Heights itself. His force and influence and meaning are particular and domestic only insofar as the novel itself is so regarded.

Tennyson has a narrative-satiric poem called Sea

Dreams, first printed in 1860. "A city clerk, but gently born and bred" and his wife go on the Sabbath (being "pious variers from the Church") to chapel

Where a heated pulpiteer,
Not preaching simple Christ to simple men,
Announced the coming doom

For sideways up he swung his arms, and shriek'd
'Thus, thus with violence,' even as if he held
The Apocalyptic millstone and himself
Were that great angel ...

The maker of this "wordy storm" is subtly linked in the poem, through the fretful dreams of the clerk and his wife, with the author of their present distress, a man who exhibits once more the familiar combination of worldly ambition and sham piety.

Tennyson attempts a dramatisation of him:

"My dearest friend,
Have faith, have faith! We live by faith," said he;
"And all things work together for the good
Of those" - it makes me sick to quote him -

........................................
Who, never naming God except for gain,
So never took that useful name in vain,
Made Him his cat's paw and the Cross his tool.

And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the rest.
Arising, did his holy oily best,
Dropping the too rough H in Hell and Heaven,
To spread the Word by which himself had thriven.

So an "old satire" is used to hit off the picture of this
hypocrite who has ruined the little family's lives and who like
"our Boarmeges with his threats of doom" haunts their present
dreams.

"Matthew Arnold's pages afford plentiful illustration
of condescending and even contemptuous polemic against English
Nonconformity and Puritanism". 1 Even this is too mild a
statement of Arnold's opposition. It was almost exactly the
association of Nonconformity and Utilitarianism for which he used
the general term "Philistinism" and it is against Philistinism
that he wages ceaseless war.

Dragged with business, your middle class seems to have its
sense blunted for any stimulus besides, except religion;
it has a religion, narrow, unintelligent, repulsive...What
other enjoyments have they? The newspapers, a sort of
eating and drinking which are not to our taste, a
literature of books utterly unreadable by an educated class
anywhere...Well then, we do not at all want to be as your
middle class; we want to learn from it to do business and
to get rich...but we do not, like your middle class, fix our
consumption here: we have a notion of a whole world
besides, not dreamed of in your middle-class's philosophy...
They may be the masters of the modern time with you, but
they are not solving its problem. 2

1 Payne, The Free Church Tradition, 103.
2 In Friendship's Garland, 137-138.
In this essay, My Countrymen, Matthew Arnold mocks the claims, made by men from Manchester and by writers to the Nonconformist, that England is at the peak of her powers even as she is at the peak of her prosperity. He prefers the verdict of foreigners for whom England's greatness lay on the further side of the Reform Bill. In the age of aristocracy, the age of her greatest triumph, Waterloo, England knew how to conduct herself. Her literature too,

reigned in Byron and Scott, voices of the great aristocratical spirit which had just won the victory: Scott expressing its robust, genial conservatism, holding by a thousand roots to the past; Byron its defiant force and indomitable pride. 1

But in dealing with the new age of reason, intelligence and the rising middle-classes, England had failed:

But then came the modern spirit, the modern time; the notion, as we say, of making human life more natural and rational, - or, as your philosophers say, of getting the greatest happiness for the greatest number. Have you succeeded, are you succeeding, in this hour of the many, as your aristocracy succeeded in the hour of the few? 2

Unfortunately for the present discussion, all the highly relevant prose work of Matthew Arnold lies outside the boundaries of the period, even as the above quotations do. It may however be observed that by 1860 the battle for a social development untainted by Utilitarianism had been lost and Matthew Arnold is among the first of the new generation

1 In Friendship's Garland, 137-138.
2 In Friendship's Garland, 128.
who will be fighting against a social establishment which is founded upon and saturated with the Utilitarian ethic held in curious conjunction with "a religion, narrow, unintelligent, repulsive." Yet it is not alone in the later prose that Arnold takes up the cudgels. His earlier verse gives ample notice of the direction he will take as a critic. His upbringing alone does as much. Thomas Arnold, a central and highly influential example of early Victorian liberalism owed more of his opinions to Coleridge and Burke than to any political radical or religious free-thinker. "I think," he said, "with all his faults old Sam [Coleridge] was more of a great man than anyone who has lived within the four seas in my memory." ¹ He detested alike the Utilitarian concept of a purely secular state and the Tractarians' claim to put the church beyond the domain of Government. He also desired to bring back the great body of Dissent into the fold of the Established Church by loosening the Church's dogmas and expanding its sympathies. Thus the prevalent Erastianism by which Christianity was being divided not only from government but within itself, would be halted and citizenship become a brotherhood in faith as well as in rule. This eminently Coleridgean view of Church and State was passed on to the son of Thomas Arnold along with many another attitude which Matthew was to develop according to his own nature.

¹ Quoted by J.D. Jump, Matthew Arnold, 7.
Matthew Arnold's childhood was provided with a country setting for his rambles, his fishing and his boating. His youth brought him to Oxford as a classical scholar and his vacations were spent repeating the pleasures of Wordsworth's youth in the Lake District and in conversation with Wordsworth himself. Then personal sprightliness lured him into the ranks of the Dandiacal Body addicted alike to spectacular waistcoats, flowing tresses and breakfast at noon. Furthermore like many another trousered exquisite he fell under the spell of "that spiritual apparition" J.H. Newman whose influence Thomas Arnold so much abhorred, and formed a fast friendship with Clough of Oriel whose own ideas were to be much more profoundly disturbed by the Oxford Movement. All this could arouse no expectations that Arnold would ever find himself in sympathy with the Benthamites, however liberal his opinions might be; and his is, in fact, a personality and his are opinions much more akin to those of Disraeli than to those of J.S. Mill.

Because even the earliest poems of Arnold come more than mid-way through the period under study there is already a note of resignation rather than of hopeful affirmation to be heard in them. The world that has not listened to Carlyle or to Emerson is a "monstrous, dead, unprofitable world" 1 but at this stage Arnold can still affirm, "Gods are we, bards,

1 "Written in Emerson's Essays", Poetical Works, 3.
saints, heroes, if we will!" The poems which follow begin to be concerned with "Calm", with "Consolation", with "The Second Best" and with "Resignation". Echoes of Coleridge, Newman and Carlyle are constantly heard:

No small profit that man earns . . .
Who each day more surely learns
That an impulse from the distance
Of his deepest, best existence,
To the words, "Hope, Light, Persistence"
Strongly sets and truly burns. 1

As these early poems are read in turn it is possible to discern the steady drift of Arnold's hopes not only away from the relentlessly progressive age in which he was living, but even away from those social creeds which might have been expected to attract him, and which had in fact earlier attracted him. For the same reason as he rejected the Utilitarian-Nonconformist insistence upon purposeful activity for the salvation of the national soul, he rejected the creed of action even as promulgated by the Romantics, by Carlyle and by the Tractarians. "Action is the creed of the commercial and industrial classes and of dissenting religion (Keble recommended 'holy living' as the best cure for Thomas Arnold's theological doubts); it is no less the creed of the advanced intellectuals who see the world as the field upon which they may religiously exercise their souls. Yet not the romantic activists and certainly not the utilitarian activists, but

1 "The Second Best", Poetical Works, 49.
those spirits are happiest who have something of the Poet's 'sad lucidity of soul'" 1 So Lionel Trilling expresses the attitude of Arnold in about 1850.

Browning's background is itself Nonconformist, his devotion to his sternly pious mother is unquestionable, and yet he too has contributed to the heavy attack mounted against Nonconformity in the literature of the period. Indeed Betty Miller would suggest that it was Browning's guilty rejection of his own rationalist promptings that made his religious affirmations so resounding and his occasional sorties against supposed hypocrisy so bitterly vehement. 2 In Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day Browning hits off a spirited and damaging picture of the proceedings at a Nonconformist chapel, "Mount Zion". He is, later in the poem, to present also the "hawk-nosed, high-cheekboned" bespectacled and consumptive German professor of Biblical learning, of the type like David Strauss whose onslaughts upon the letter of religion were shaking the foundations of faith in England no less terribly than the geologists were doing. A third "earthen vessel" is mentioned: The Church of Rome and the Pope who

Turns sick at last of to-day's buffoonery,
Of posturings and petticoatings,
Beside his Bourbon bully's gloatings
In the bloody orgies of drunk poltroonery!

1 Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold, 100.
2 See Betty Miller, Robert Browning, A Portrait
Browning derides and vilifies all three because, himself clinging in a vision to the hem of Christ's Garment, he is led through the three-fold maze of squalid enthusiasm, pedantic insistence, and opulent error, to a perception that all earthen vessels are necessarily flawed but that God has decreed that all will nonetheless carry the water from His fountain-head "as safe as in a golden ewer". The poem is then finally one of acceptance and forgiveness, a grotesquely rhymed expression of religious liberalism. Knowing that his poem is to take this form Browning has allowed himself at the beginning to make lively fun of the chapel-goers and the chapel service; and this section stands apart from the others as being based on first-hand observation and instinctive distaste, whereas the German professor and the Pope are patently the fanciful products of alarm and prejudice. The detail in the "Mount Zion" section is brilliantly observed and the crafty rhymes achieve a devastating satiric effect comparable only with Byron's. For example, he describes a woman sitting near him and smugly receptive of "the preaching-man's immense stupidity":

My old fat woman purred with pleasure,
And thumb round thumb went twirling faster,
While she, to his periods keeping measure,
Maternally devoured the pastor.

This section of the poem gives a glimpse not only of what Browning really felt about the fulminating pastors and their flocks, but also of what he might have achieved in the way of
trenchant satiric verse had his mind been single. In any case the piece more than matches anything that Dickens managed in the same sort.

It may be added at this point that Browning contributed his portion to the recurrent contemporary admiration of Charles I in his "Cavalier Tunes".

Thackeray's background and development are thoroughly typical of the writers of the age - the "Makepeace" is redolent of dauntless family Protestantism dating back to an ancestor-victim of Mary Tudor's persecutions. Enveloped in childhood, like Browning, by a mother's passionate piety he nevertheless managed, unlike Browning, to win clear of her oppressive and melancholy influence and by 1852 he was able to write, "When I was a boy at Larkbeare I thought her an Angel and worshipped her. I see but a woman now, O so tender so loving so cruel." ¹

In Vanity Fair, Chapter XXXIII, the indefatigable Lady Southdown is shown as driving in almost military cavalcade through the countryside launching packets of tracts among the cottagers and demanding their conversion as peremptorily as she insisted upon their taking a powder.

... whatever changes her own-belief might undergo (and it accommodated itself to a prodigious variety of opinion, taken from

all sorts of doctors among the Dissenters), she had not the least scruple in ordering all her tenants and inferiors to follow and believe after her . . . whether she received the Reverend Saunders M'Nitre, the Scotch divine; or the Reverend Luke Waters, the mild Wesleyan; or the Reverend Giles Jowls, the Illuminated Cobbler, who dubbed himself Reverend as Napoleon crowned himself Emperor . . .

Turning to his readers Thackeray exclaims: "O my dear brethren and fellow sojourners in Vanity Fair, which among you does not know and suffer under such benevolent despots?"

Among the tracts collected and distributed by the Southdowns from such sources as the Reverend Bartholomew Irons ("an awakening man"), are the following close parodies of evangelical literary titles: "Crumbs from the Pantry", "The Frying-Pan and the Fire" and "The Livery of Sin" all these being intended of course for the servants' hall. The mockery of Lady Emily is just as ruthless as that of the Countess herself. Lady Emily "had correspondences with clerical gentlemen in most of our East and West India possessions, and was secretly attached to the Reverend Silas Hornblower, who was tattooed in the South Sea Islands."

The association between Nonconformity and mercantile astuteness is displayed extremely in the person of the second Mrs. Newcome, the redoubtable heiress to the Hobson cloth-making and banking business. Thackeray describes the typical working day as being filled during daylight with money-making and during the evening with...
sermons, expoundings, and hymns, with which the
gifted preachers, missionaries, etc., who were
always at the Hermitage, used to wind up the
evening, before supper.

The household ruled over by this "sainted woman" was a
"serious paradise":

As you entered at the gate, gravity fell on you;
and decorum wrapped you in a garment of starch . . .
The rooks in the elms cawed sermons at morning
and evening; the peacocks walked demurely on
the terraces; the guinea-fowls looked more
quaker-like than those savoury birds usually do.

Once again there is a child's spirit being crushed under this
sanctimoniousness, and little Tommy Newcome is

surrounded by stout men in black . . . who
took the little man between their knees, and
questioned him as to his right understanding of
the place whither naughty boys were bound. 1

Thackeray's revulsion from the narrowness and
pretension of those forms of Nonconformity he had met was more
extreme than that of most authors and led him in the early
1830's to the brink of scepticism in company with Fitzgerald.
But the personal misfortunes which awoke in him the need for
divine support tempered this scepticism and his paper "On
Clerical Snobs" (1846) shows him in more tolerant mind towards
religion generally; and it is of interest further to observe
that this paper was prompted by his dislike of Douglas Jerrold,
his fellow-contributor to Punch; so that the paper becomes
at once a rebuff to Jerrold's fierce anti-clericalism and a
rejection of his doctrinaire radicalism. Both in his reluctance

1 The Newcomes, I, Ch. ii, 14-19.
wholly to abandon religious faith and in his impulsive distaste for democracy Thackeray is a characteristic author of the times. His political career marches with his religious career. In the 'thirties he advanced to the edge of radicalism but drew back because of constitutional disinclination. He wrote to his mother in 1836:

"People in their battles about public matters forget the greatest good of all, social-good, I mean fine arts, and civilization, dandyism as you call it; we owe this to the aristocracy and we must keep an aristocracy (pure and modified as you wish) in order to retain it." 1

When the Chartist agitations were at their height, despite the depths to which his personal affairs had sunk, he grew alarmed about the state of the country. His political outlook moved slowly to the right so that he became almost exclusively concerned with the affairs of the middle and upper classes, and his role as he saw it was not to overturn or reshape Victorian society but to raise the standards of behaviour and culture in those for whom he wrote. Thus in his fashion he ranges himself with the Arnolds whose mission was to make cultivated Christian gentlemen out of philistines and snobs.

Finally we should notice three women novelists who were best fitted to introduce the Nonconformist element into their works since all had personal experience in the matter.

And their treatment is generally more charitable, hardly to be classed as disparagement at all. Indeed in *North and South* Mrs. Gaskell may almost be said to have raised the matter of Dissent to be the theme of her novel; it is a plea for understanding and tolerance not only in industrial conflicts but also in religious ones.

George Eliot too relied upon observation rather than prejudice in creating Dinah Morris in *Adam Bede*. Again, the Reverend Rufus Lyon in *Felix Holt* has patently the air of reality about him which is absent from the conventional "heated pulpiteers" of fiction:

To many respectable Church people, old Lyon's little legs and large head seemed to make Dissent additionally preposterous. But he was . . . too absent from the world of small facts and petty impulses in which titterers live.

In *Silas Marner*, George Eliot has shown much understanding of the Lantern Yard community, but little enough sympathy for the bigoted persecution which has banished her hero and warped his spirit. Indeed in this novel she has been more quietly abusive of Nonconformist practices than any of her more strident contemporaries were. For the spiritual redemption of Marner takes place amid the unemphatic piety of Church folk, and the concession by which he allows Eppie to take her ordinary place in an English village church is felt at once by the reader.

1 *Felix Holt*, 53.
to be a warrant against future misery for her and for him.

Similarly in Janet's Reapenance George Eliot distinguishes her hero's dedicated evangelicalism within the Church from the smug pulpitering of Mr Stickney, Dissenting Minister of Salem Chapel, where "more than one pew-holder kept a brass-bound gig". Seeking a ground for complaint against Mr Tryan's self-destroying efforts on behalf of the industrial masses,

Mr. Stickney, of Salem, who considered all voluntary discomfort as a remnant of the legal spirit, pronounced a severe condemnation on this self-neglect, and expressed his fear that Mr. Tryan was still far from having attained true Christian liberty.

Finally, George Eliot may be regarded as having created in Bulstrode the most convincing and defamatory portrait of a Nonconformist in Victorian literature; for she presents the pious capitalist not so much in his appearance to others as in his justification to himself. The craven self-deceptions and the obliquities of his lust for power are examined in a way which seems to explain the strange wedding of piety and expediency which forms the subject of this discussion.

One other novel containing a more sympathetic depreciation of Nonconformists lies just outside the limits

1 Scenes of Clerical Life, 265.
2 Scenes of Clerical Life, 343.
of this study. Mrs Oliphant protested to her publishers that she had never had "the faintest idea of imitating or attempting to rival the author of Adam Bede".\(^1\) Yet her amused and faithful account of a Nonconformist "connexion" in Salem Chapel (1863) hardly suffers by comparison with the similar work of George Eliot. Unfortunately her study of complacent piety and materialism among small-town tradespeople is confined within a melodramatic plot in the Wilkie Collins manner. An aristocratic dastard prowls tigerishly in the shadows of the story, and abduction, seduction, madness and murder play threateningly around the lives of the Nonconformist minister and his fat flock. Arthur Vincent, the hero, has come to Salem Chapel hoping "to resuscitate the shopkeeping Dissenterism of Carlingford into a lofty Nonconformist ideal."\(^2\) The novel explains his failure to do so: his aspiring mind and haughty hopes are repelled by the combination of religious smugness and worldly well-being of his flock.

There emerges then the picture of an age raised, as G.M. Young puts it, "in the dark and narrow framework of Evangelical and economic truth"\(^3\) in which the most sensitive minds made bewildered and energetic attempts to break away from

\(^1\) See Salem Chapel, Introduction, ix.

\(^2\) Salem Chapel, 30.

\(^3\) G.M. Young, Portrait of an Age, 75.
both these "truths", being reluctant however to throw off the faith which those truths managed to express for the age at large - the faith in the existence of God and in His goodness, the faith too in a scheme for creation. But when, like Browning, they "flung out of the little chapel" they were left groping, seeking a shelter for their exposed faith among the Tractarians or the Muscular Christians, or in the contemplative life, or in poetry, or simply in the vague affirmation that God existed though His ways must remain mysterious. The same people while rejecting the formulae of Bentham were unwilling to relinquish their faith in a scheme of creation, and disbelieving in Utilitarian "shop-keeping" Progress, plunged for a role as observer of the slow-weaving pattern of history. Thus Carlyle found the secret of the pattern to lie in a sort of apostolic succession of heroes. Thomas Arnold managed to break through the close circle of present introspection and self-gratulation by an imaginative reconstruction of the past while his son was learning to forgive the present by fitting it into "the murmur of a thousand years / Before him he sees life unroll, / A placid and continuous whole." The Young Englanders attempted to fix their faith on the old rocks of feudalism and country joys. All had abiding or occasional visions of a benevolent aristocracy. None was easy about democracy. Few could bear to

1 Christmas Eve, Section iii.
2 "Resignation", Poetical Works, 57.
be deprived of hereditary belief, or escaped an infection by
the idea of progress; for the times of Butler and of Shaw
had not yet come when agnosticism itself could afford
sufficient shelter and when many men could contemplate without
distraction an amoral and purposeless creation. Darwin and
Strauss were told, "Get thou behind me;" and when Fitzgerald
through Omar Khayyam spoke of a universe which "rolls
impotently on as you and I" he was answered:"A poetry of
indifference towards moral ideas is a poetry of indifference
towards life." 1

The intention of this section has been first to
establish the intimate association between Utilitarianism
(both in those features of it which were taken up by the
middle classes and in those which appealed to the lower classes)
and Nonconformity (again, as it was variously adhered to by
the middle and by the lower classes). Then it has been
intended to suggest that it is this very blend of secular and
religious renegation that characterises the early Victorian
age. Finally, it has been shown that many of the important
writers of the time made assault upon this combination with
greater or less acrimony and persistence. In other words,
Nonconformity, as it was allied with Utilitarianism, became the

1 M. Arnold, Essays in Criticism, 2nd series, "Wordsworth", 144.
butt of many attacks during the period even though it was that combination which continued to achieve reform in a manner ordently hoped for by all - that is, without a revolution. In a period of almost continuous social reform, significant authors fought against the course of it. As Payne concludes: "When every allowance has been made, it is clearly a very distorted picture of the religious and social life of the period which is to be found in its literature." ¹

¹ Payne, The Free Church Tradition, 104.
(II) **Newman and the Oxford Movement**

In this section we are to notice the second of the dominant forces of reaction in the field of literature. Whereas the opposition to Nonconformity, though so general, was erratic and impulsive, the interest in Newman's High Church movement was purposeful and conscious. It is fairly clear that distaste for Nonconformity is but the obverse side of admiration for the Oxford Movement. Indeed we may observe that whereas J.S. Mill sees the contemporary struggle as being waged between the principles of Bentham and the principles of Coleridge, Carlyle (who, Mill acknowledges, "saw many things long before me") sums up the opposing forces not in terms of these personalities but more generally as "Radicalism against Church". In his *Life of John Sterling*, in which this identification is made, Carlyle has chosen a man of central interest to this study; for he presents Sterling as "the man, above many, to recognise worth on both sides" and to be tugged between "the two aberrations" represented by the Benthamites and by Coleridge—and Coleridge's voice nowhere sounded more clearly than in Oriel College. To Carlyle the Oxford Movement was no less an aberration than Utilitarianism. He could see clearly that it was, from its inception and in all its manifestations,

a movement solemnly dedicated to oppose all that Bentham had taught. Opposed as he was himself to that teaching, he nevertheless saw the men of Oriel as being fantastically deluded in their turn:

How are poor mortals whirled hither and thither in the tumultuous chaos of our era; and, under the thick smoke-canopy which has eclipsed all stars, how do they fly now after this poor meteor, now after that? 1

In the tumultuous chaos of the era between 1830 and 1860 no element can be so clearly isolated for examination as the Oxford Movement. Unlike, say, the force of Nationalism or of Puritanism, its exertions were for a time concentrated in one area of the social struggle, and the direction taken by those exertions was always discernible. Moreover the Oxford Movement had its definitions not only in the scope of its endeavours, but also in time. Its beginnings can be traced to a day, even to an hour, and its ending was almost as distinct. Mark Pattison testifies to the abruptness of the change in Oxford after the conversion of Newman: "In 1845 the darkness was dissipated, and the light was let in in an instant." 2 As to the power of the movement at large, its decline was similarly steep at first, and was marked by the passing of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill: as Stockmar put it, "After long centuries the Pope has again caused the fall of an English Premier." 3

1 Carlyle, Life of John Sterling, 88.
2 Mark Pattison, Memoirs, 238.
3 See A. Wyatt Tilby, Lord John Russell, 117.
A main difference between the movement inspired by John Henry Newman and that inspired by John Wesley was that Newman was a man of letters and the Catholic Reaction of the nineteenth century produced a true literature with which the Evangelical Reaction of the previous century had little to compare. This literature arose in the 'thirties and belongs completely to the period of this study, no work being more relevant to it than the *Apologia* which appeared in 1864.

The genius of Newman would undoubtedly have set him apart in any period, but it must be doubted whether any period could have been better calculated to bring out its full force. Newman . . . was made a leader, not by the loss of College preferment, but by the pressure of public events on his Church sentiments. He had reached the moment of stability in his own development exactly at the full swell of the Utilitarian tide, when Parliament had at last broken from the old constitution, when the breach between church and state began to open more widely with the proposed suppression of ancient bishoprics, when toleration and indifference had combined to secure Catholic emancipation and when rationalism had at last come into open hostility with the Establishment. The opposition of Newman to philosophic radicalism, to the "March of Mind" was entire. If Bentham stood for the relentlessness of the mind's enquiry, Newman represented

---

imagination both in its most enveloping strength and in its most delicate sensibility. "Imagination, with Newman, was reason," declares William Barry. 1

Thus if we are to consider the forces which were locked in combat as being represented by Bentham on the one side and Coleridge on the other, it is abundantly clear where Newman stands. In his essay, "Prospects of the Anglican Church" 2 the nature of the contest is recognised as clearly as Mill recognised it, and the same two protagonists are named. Coleridge is warmly referred to as a

very original thinker, who, while he indulged in a liberty of speculation which no Christian can tolerate, and advocated conclusions which were often heathen rather than Christian, yet after all instilled a higher philosophy into enquiring minds, than they had hitherto been accustomed to accept. In this way he made trial of his age, and found it respond to him ... 3

Along with Coleridge in this section of the essay, which is an attempt to assert the "reaction to the true principles of the Church", are also mentioned Scott (who provided "something deeper and more attractive than what had offered itself elsewhere," "stimulating their [his readers'] mental thirst, feeding their hopes, setting before them visions . . . and silently indoctrinating them with nobler ideas"); and Southey and Wordsworth (who "have addressed themselves to the same high principles and feelings and carried forward their readers

1 W. Barry, Newman, 21.
2 First published in the British Critic, April 1839, under the title, "The State of Religious Parties".
in the same direction). Benthamism on the other hand is believed to be "shrivelling up, and a richer and warmer philosophy succeeding." ¹

The teaching of Coleridge was, as has been said, firmly impressed upon the Oxford reforming movement. Mark Pattison's estimate of Coleridge's influence, both upon himself and upon the Oxford of his day may be taken as representative:

Early in 1837 I had fallen under the influence of Coleridge ... I could not have handled the Oriel philosophy paper in a way to meet the views of the examiners, but for this strong infusion of Coleridgean metaphysics ... When Tractarianism had made the clergy aware of their own strength ... vague, indefinite, realistic [i.e. Platonic] views under the influence of Coleridge ... slowly occupied the schools. ²

W.R. Castle, writing in the Sewanee Review asserts even more forcibly the effect of Coleridge as a seminal mind in the evolution of the movement:

By many he is considered the source of the Oxford Movement itself ... That the methods of thought of Coleridge and Newman were so similar is simply a sign that they were both in harmony with the intellectual tendencies of their time, those tendencies being different developments of romantic idealism. ³

Carlyle also notices with sorrow this by-product of Coleridge's thinking and teaching:

From his Cloud-Juno did not he too procreate strange Centaurs, spectral Puseyisms, monstrous, illusory Hybrids, and ecclesiastical Chimeras, — which now roam the earth in a very lamentable manner! ⁴

¹ Essays and Sketches, I, 369.
² Memoirs, 164-166.
⁴ Life of John Sterling, 54.
Had there been no Coleridge, neither had... English Puseyism been.

It was not only the philosophy of Coleridge, but the poetry of the Romantic movement which inspired the Oxford apostles; and an examination of Newman's favourite reading makes clear the strong preferences and distastes (always reflected in his own style) which were characteristic of the Oxford Movement as a whole. Some of these preferences and distastes may be briefly noticed here, the source of the quotations being an article by S.T. Williams in which the conclusions are arrived at from a study of Newman's writings.

Newman found himself attracted by the prose style of Bacon but regarded the man himself as "a heathen and a priest of the hated cult of worldly expediency." Johnson too he reluctantly admired for his classical erudition, while neglecting his significance to the age. He "remained untouched by the poetry of Dryden, Pope and their schools." "The influence of Sir Walter Scott upon him was enormous." "Next to Scott he loved best, in secular literature, Robert Southey... what attracted him was its romantic quality." Thackeray, surprisingly, he admired too, despite his "half-cynical analysis of life" which "filled Newman with amazed pity", but here "romance it is again which wins Newman." "In fact, Newman's instinctive touchstone, in his reading, when it was not

---

1 Carlyle, Life of John Sterling, 92.
righteousness, was romance." Thus George Eliot's realism and agnosticism repelled him doubly, while Byron placed him in an understandable dilemma. Jane Austen made small appeal to him, his objection being explicitly that she lacked "romance". "Every literary preference of Newman's proclaims him, directly or indirectly, a Romantic."

It is perfectly clear that Newman admired in his chosen Romantic writers all those aspects of their work which were opposed to Benthamism, and above all their imaginative reconstruction of the past. Newman is never deterred by the triteness of the phrase "wisdom of our ancestors" which had always so excited the spleen of Bentham. ¹ All his thinking, to which he brought a religious passion, was historical, even if it was true that his actual knowledge of history was shallow. It was inevitable therefore that Newman should find little but intellectual pride in the writers of the eighteenth century upon whose works Bentham took his stand. Scott (like Coleridge) was not without fault:

There are things in the poems and romances ... which must be ever a matter of regret ... but contrasted with the popular writers of the last century, with its novelists, and some of its admired poets, as Pope, [Scott's works] stand almost as oracles of Truth confronting the ministers of error and sin. ²

It is not only the entertainers of the eighteenth century, but the philosophers who had been in error:

¹ See e.g. The Book of Fallacies in Works, II.
² Essays and Sketches, I, 358.
For a century and more past, primitive truth
had either been forgotten, or locked down
upon, and our own engagements to it tacitly
loosened. Indeed, opinions which were
openly acquiesced in by freethinkers, and
noticed with satisfaction by the world's
philosophers and historians, could not but
excite strange impressions in the minds of
true Churchmen. 1

So strenuously did Newman seek for authority where
Bentham had rejoiced in throwing it off that his search led
him behind the bastions of Erastianism which had been erected
in 1688 and into the dominion of Charles I and Laud, to which,
as has been stated he was not the only writer of the time to
turn his eyes. For Puritanism, Methodism and sectarianism
generally, he had little but pity and contempt. Nonconformity
was destined to "melt away like a snowdrift" being but a
hodge-podge of "wilfulnesses and rivalries" having in it
something of Erastianism, and something of Zwinglianism, a
little Judaism, and a little dogmatism, and not a little
secularity, as if by hazard. 2

This secularity of Nonconformity was rightly associated
by Newman with the materialism of the age and he was not blind
to its potency. "It has much power, much money, much
influence." 3 But along with the other writers noticed above,
Newman deplored this worldliness and believed that Nonconformity
hand in glove with what he always called Liberalism 4 (i.e.,
rationalism, tolerance, laissez-faire) constituted the greatest

1 Essays and Sketches, I,
2 Essays and Sketches, I, 361-362.
3 Essays and Sketches, I, 361.
4 In a lengthy Note appended to the Apologia, Newman explained his use of this term. 259 ff.
danger to traditional authority. He was sanguine enough to believe that "Liberalism", like sectarianism, was destined to pass quickly away, as running counter to the true spirit of the age and being besides "too cold a principle to prevail with the multitude."

Whether the English Church can keep a firm hold on Laud's divinity or not, it is very certain that neither Puritanism nor Liberalism has any permanence with her. 1

So strong does Newman believe the secular pull upon "Puritanism" to be that he sees it as merely a temporary compromise with rationalism, that "it does not stand on intrenched ground." Ultimately the nature of the "stern encounter" will be clearer, and "Puritanism" along with "Liberalism" will stand as one of the "two real and living principles, simple, entire and consistent, one in the Church, the other out of it" and these two contending powers will "rush upon each other, contending not for names and words, or half-views, but for elementary notions and distinctive moral characters." 2 More completely than anybody in his time, Newman identified sectarianism as part already of the generally solvent tendency of philosophic radicalism.

The Prospects of the Anglican Church has been chosen as a highly representative essay because as Newman himself later recognised it contained the "last words which [he] ever.

1 Essays and Sketches, I, 360-361.
2 Essays and Sketches, I, 360
spoke as an Anglican to Anglicans." ¹ In it he reviewed the Tractarian movement as far as it had come and, as the title implies, gave much consideration to the future. It is valuable as marking the point at which Newman's own development passed from its close relevance to the times and became more and more an exclusively personal progress. For the purposes of this study it also reinforces the claim that the reaction to Utilitarianism was largely Romantic. There are, apart from the allegiances with Scott, Coleridge, Wordsworth and Southey which Newman expressly claims, any number of other instances to prove that Newman's imagination was romantically fired by the picturesque elements of the Church of antiquity towards which his religious enquiry was leading him. "Newman was an apostle not only of two mighty churches, but also of that mysterious movement of Thought and feeling called Romanticism." ²

He believed that among the strongest appeals which the Church made to men were not only the traditions of Prayer Book Services and Homilies, but also "the touching beauty, loftiness of idea" ³ which will take possession of men's minds and imaginations. Again, "there are interests and motives which make a more pressing appeal on us than the sense of the beautiful. Yet . . . we see no harm in persons obeying the higher perceptions and impulses of their minds

¹ Apologia, 86.
³ Essays and Sketches, I, 337. The quotations which follow without reference numbers are from the same place.
for the time being, whatever they may be, whether of the contemplative, or what is called the romantic ... character."

In fact, people who are attracted to the Church despite its deficiency "in many of those suspicious attractions which other systems hold out to the pride of intellect and originality of mind" are more likely to be sincere and consistent. In Newman's thinking there is always this opposition between imaginative submission to authority, and intellectual reliance upon self. The one is called wisdom and the other pride.

Newman's Romanticism at one point in this essay takes a turn which is not followed up but which would be of interest in any study which traced the growth of the idea that poetry might become a substitute for religion. In a man who so anxiously sought the letter of religion in which to embody the spirit, it is startling to find such statements as these:

Poetry then is our mysticism; and so far as any two characters of mind tend to penetrate below the surface of things, and to draw men from the material to the invisible world, so far they may certainly be said to answer the same end; and that too a religious one.

(Carlyle's remarkably similar expression of the same idea will be found towards the end of the third section of this chapter. And in 1888 Matthew Arnold is still making much of this claim: "The strongest part of our religion today is its unconscious poetry." 1)

It is clear throughout the essay that despite his

1 M. Arnold, Essays in Criticism, II, 2.
frequent expressions of assurance that he has "good hope . . .
that a system will be rising up, superior to the age, yet
harmonizing with and carrying out its higher points", Newman
is constrained to look for comfort to other signs than the
apparent renewal of vigour within the Anglican Church; and
these he invariably finds in the poetry which has been
cultivated and cherished in our later times by
the Cavaliers and Tories in a peculiar way, and
looked coldly on by Puritans and their modern
representatives.

Like all other writers who were opposed to the
direction taken by reform in this reforming age, Newman does
not deny the need for amelioration of hardship and social
injustice. But the system, if it is to be acceptable to the
English nation and hence abiding, must be wholly unlike the
present "epidemic" of "indolence and secularity" with its
"dread of Antiquity." "The mere name of Antiquity seems to
produce a sudden collapse of the intellect in many quarters."
Newman ironically turns "the language of the day" to his own
purposes and asserts that "to march with the age" is in fact
to observe "the plain order of Providence" and adopt "the
primitive system, the rule of Catholic tradition." To seek
pleasure and avoid pain, the Utilitarian ethic, is called the
"hatred of austerity", but again Newman, uncertain of the
attractive power of what he is offering, invokes the gods of
his enemies by assuring his readers that they will have "less
sacrifices to make, less to give up of their natural tastes and wishes" by submission to ancient authority "than they could have anticipated beforehand."

Thus in Prospects of the Anglican Church are to be found pretty well all the elements of the reaction against Utilitarianism which appeared in the years under study. It is the spirit of that same Oxford, to which Bentham had referred with such scorn in his first publication, which is here expressed anew. Against the "enlightenment" of the eighteenth century and against the substitution of individual reason for public tradition, of self-examination and the cult of sensibility for religious meditation, Oxford had in the eighteenth century already called up champions as unlike as Wesley, Butler and Johnson. As early as 1726 Butler had insisted upon the conscience rather than self-love as the final arbiter in the matter of conduct, pronouncing not as to whether it produced pain or pleasure, but as to whether it was right or wrong. In fact, in the first half of the eighteenth century Butler was conducting against the teaching of Hobbes exactly the same sort of crusade as Newman a century later was to conduct against Bentham. In some cases there would be extreme difficulty in attributing statements to one pair of protagonists or to the other:

Every man, for his own part, calleth that which pleaseth him and is delightful to himself good, and that evil which displeaseth him. 1

To these words of Hobbes Butler retorts:

That is not a complete account of man's nature . . . One of those principles of action, conscience or reflection . . . plainly bears upon it marks of authority over all the rest . . . to allow or forbid their gratification. 1

The most remarkable resemblance between Butler and Newman lies paradoxically in the contemporary character of what they had to say. Thus in an age of "enlightenment" Butler the conservative was more enlightened than Hobbes whose defiant philosophy provoked Butler to write. So, too, in a "liberal" age, Newman was less bigoted than Bentham: and the type of human "reason" which Newman exalts in the discourses On the Scope and Nature of University Education (1852) was more contemporary than the Benthamite "reason" he was assailing in the earlier works which are here being considered. (See especially Liberal Knowledge its own End)

Thus in Newman and his associates of the Oxford Movement there arose the traditional resistance to a philosophy having a Whig pedigree dating back to 1688 with Locke and Hume among its progenitors. The school of "Noetics" against which the Oxford Movement reacted would as Barry explains have banished mysteries from the Christian creed, explained ideas by mechanical association, and established society on a balance of interests . . . for it reduced first principles to a shorthand summing up of experience, and thus ended in utilitarian reforms. 2

1 Butler, Fifteen Sermons, 14.
Mark Pattison has just the same thing to say:

[The Noetics were] distinctly the product of the French Revolution. They called everything in question, they appealed to first principles, and disallowed authority as a judge in intellectual matters. 1

Barry goes on to say that Oxford, which had been in its day Laudian and Jacobite, which was medieval yet, in the spirit of its institutions no less than in the style of its architecture, might well have been expected to struggle against a philosophy it had always detested. Oxford, the "queen of romance" carries with it, more than Cambridge, "the feeling of a great past" and is "haunted by the ghost of the Middle Ages." 2

Therefore for Newman the well-being of England lay in a due acknowledgement of her debt to the past. The Via Media between the false (because foreign) roads of "democratism" in France, "popery" in Italy, and "pantheism" in Germany, the middle way, "the true and intelligible mean between extremes", that is to say the right English way at this time of trouble was the way marked out by "our divines of the seventeenth century." 3 They were fortunate in occupying a middle ground (in time) between "Romanism" and "popular Protestantism", of both of which "extremes" the evils were sufficiently evident. Therefore, Newman's argument runs, we should do well to stand upon their ground and so occupy as it were a middle position

1 Mark Pattison, Memoirs, 79.
2 W. Barry, Newman, 5.
3 Essays and Sketches, 1, 371.
in doctrine. He decks out his case with the typical Romantic imagery, borrowing again it will be observed certain badges of the enemy calculated to admit his argument the more readily: "Is there not something natural and reasonable" in this turning back to the seventeenth century by "writers of the day"?

They betake themselves to the old works, long neglected; they determine to put them in position again. There is much to be mended; some additions necessary; some portions superseded by changes in the art of war. Culverins and demi-sakers are gone out of fashion. They may not, perhaps, draw their lines or make their trenches in the same direction to an inch... yet on the whole, they are taking up a position on the old sconce, and are repairing the works.

"Repair" rather than "abolish" or "reform" is the cry of anti-Utilitarian writers. In all that Newman wrote there is the same search for continuity, for the true growth of institutions rather than the alien manufacture of them. History, not science, is the true teacher; but even history as an instrument of wisdom turns in the hand of a man who has not first learned that what has happened is only an adumbration of what was meant, meant that is by God. Faith in the authority of revelation must precede reasoning and it is only by such authority that any interpretation of the past can claim validity. Still more, the right shaping of the future depends upon the exercise of the reason as an instrument of faith, not as the shaping principle itself. This relation between faith and reason is a constant theme in the sermons
and discourses, as the titles occasionally indicate: "The Usurpations of Reason" (1831), "Contest between Faith and Sight" (1832), "Faith without Sight" (1834), "Faith and the World" (1838), "Faith and Reason, Contrasted as Habits of Mind" (1839), "The Nature of Faith in Relation to Reason" (1839).  

In these works Newman maintains a steady assault on the errors of rationalism, the glorification of science and the tendency to regard the marvels of nature as the readiest and most certain evidence of God's existence. This study is not concerned with Newman's persuasive and impassioned insistence on the need for faith and the essential "mystery" even of revealed truth; but his opposition to the "march of mind" which is the negative side of the same philosophy is wholly relevant.

A mere handful of extracts from these discourses must serve to show how unremitting is Newman's attack upon the Utilitarian ethic. In considering the reasons why religion is regarded as a "weariness" he acknowledges the attractive power of "the transactions of worldly business, speculations in trade, ambitious hopes, the pursuit of knowledge". This devotion to economic and social progress is still more strikingly shown by men who

have viewed society with somewhat of a philosophical spirit ... They say, "It is

---

1 All included in *Sermons and Discourses* (1825–1839).
natural for men to love the world for its own
sake; to be engrossed in its pursuits, and to
set their hearts on the rewards of industry,
on the comforts, luxuries, and pleasures of
this life." 1

Again, in The World our Enemy, the "world" is defined
as this "system" which "holds out prizes to merit and exertion.
Men rise above their fellows; they gain fame and honours,
wealth and power, which we therefore call worldly goods." 2
Such a system is no doubt inevitable, but these worldly
pursuits are "to be engaged in with caution", being but short-
lived.

The sciences, for instance, of good government,
of acquiring wealth, of preventing and relieving
want, and the like, are for this reason
especially dangerous.

The only "sciences" of this character were Utilitarian; but
it is to be suspected that, especially in the earlier dis-
courses, Newman has his eyes upon the Whigs, the traditional
enemy, rather than upon the philosophic radicals with whose
preposterous notions of reform the Whigs were at the time
seriously flirting. Certainly the "weariness" caused by
religion was felt by the Whigs with the Establishment rather
than by the Radicals who were wont to have either a vital
religion or none. A. W. Wyatt Tilby, interpreting the Whigs'
attitude towards religion says that they

were conformists rather than ardent believers ... but all creeds were much the same so long as
they were not enforced, and most doctrines
inoffensive so long as they were optional. 2

1 "Religion a Weariness to the Natural Man".
Whiggish expediency was always as detestable to Newman as Radical reason. After 1832, however, in matters concerning the Establishment, he had less cause for complaint about the Whigs who were as alarmed as he when the question of tithes and the surplus revenues of the Church came up, though doubtless for less admirable reasons: this was after all not a question of principle but of property.

The great Whig houses trembled a little, as if a bleak north-easter had struck them . . . there were younger sons and even bishoprics to be thought of . . .

After 1832 the unnatural alliance between the Whigs' complacent dilatoriness and the Utilitarians' disaffected energy came gradually to an end, except insofar as the Whigs temporized with reluctant concessions to reform. But even to let things alone was to allow the tide of Benthamism to come steadily in, with reforms of the Poor Law, the commuting of tithes, the removal of the disabilities of Nonconformists, the firm establishment of London University, the modification of the harsher penal laws and the foundation of popular education, all this having somehow taken place in the ten years after 1832. Even the Tories, attempting to square up to the known Whig foe, found themselves tugged by the tide, to the appalled gaze of Newman.

In 1841, Sir Robert Peel, at the opening of the Tamworth Reading Room, the latest monument to the march of

1 A.W. Tilby, Lord John Russell, 43.
mind, delivered an address so polluted with the spirit and even the jargon of the Utilitarians that Newman recoiled in disgust, registering his protest in a series of letters to The Times afterwards collected under the title The Tamworth Reading Room. He goes at once to the root of the matter, claiming that Sir Robert's speech is indistinguishable in manner and content from "a production of the years 1827 and 1828,—the scene Gower Street, the speaker Mr. Brougham or Dr. Lushington and the occasion, the laying the first stone, or the inauguration, of the then-called London University." He does Sir Robert the courtesy of believing that he only "assumed the philosophy" for the occasion—"for I think too well of him to believe it genuine."

Newman sums up the content of Peel's address with a formidable irony: "Useful Knowledge is the great instrument of education . . . It is the parent of virtue—it exalts man to his highest perfection . . . Physical and moral science rouses, transports, exalts, enlarges, tranquillizes, and satisfies the mind . . . This, it is almost needless to say, is the very theory . . . on which Mr. Brougham once expatiated in the Glasgow and London Universities." Newman had long identified London University, in association with the Radical organ the Westminster Review, as the most alarming manifestation of "latitudinarianism, indifferentism, and schism." In a

1 Nasavy and Sketches, II, 173-214. The quotations from these letters are easy to find and have not been given reference numbers.
letter to his mother dated March 13, 1829, he lists the
enemies of religious truth, attributing to them the general
character of "an advance towards universal education".
First on his list is the aggregation of the "uneducated or
partially educated mass in towns, whose organs are Woller's,
Carlisle's [sic] publications, etc." In the list the second
"enemies" are

The Utilitarians, political economists, useful
knowledge people - their organs the 'Westminster
Review', the 'London University' etc.

In The Tamworth Reading Room he goes on to demonstrate
the affinities of argument, enthusiasm and assumptions between
Peel's address and the sort of apotheosis of science that
Brougham ("the versatile ex-Chancellor") and the rationalists
generally were in the habit of making. All this is in the
easy, brisk style that Newman commonly achieves when he leans
back from his Tractarian posture of precision and close
argument and rests upon his basic beliefs. He proceeds to
demonstrate that there is no logical foundation for the
Utilitarians' believing without a shadow of misgiving that
"in becoming wiser a man will become better". It may here
be noticed that Newman's form of late Romanticism is making
a significant departure from the early, and especially the
Rousseauist, form, in which to grow in useful knowledge was
the same as to grow in virtue. Sandford and Merton is of course

1 See e.g. "The Rationalistic and the Catholic Tempers
Contrasted" (1835), for a similar subject and style.
the classic English instance. In the Victorian period all
thinkers had come to acknowledge the prime place of education
in any scheme of regeneration, and hence there were no subjects
more hotly disputed than what constituted the substance of an
ideal education and what were the ideal means of disseminating
it. It was the Benthamites who developed the "Sandford and
Merton" theorem. For example, Bentham declares:

To prefer the study of these [dead] languages
to the study of those useful truths which the
more mature industry of the moderns has placed
in their stead, is to make a dwelling-place of
a scaffolding . . . 1

The later Romantics tended on the other hand to follow
Coleridge in pleading the defence of the humanities against
the encroachments of "useful" knowledge. Newman's own
handling of this theme is best displayed in his The Idea of a
University, especially in Discourse VII of that work. Here
he traces the contemporary "low Utilitarianism" in education
back to Locke, whose words he allows to stand for the case
as it is still being presented by nineteenth century educationists
of the Utilitarian sort:

'Can there be anything more ridiculous' he [Locke]
asks, 'than that a father should waste his own
money, and his son's time, in setting him to
learn the Roman language, when at the same time
he designs him for a trade.' 2

When the Utilitarians speak of wisdom and knowledge they mean
Useful Knowledge. One of the major themes in The Idea of a
University is this distinction between Liberal Education and Useful Knowledge. The Utilitarians, if they have their way, will distract and enfeeble the mind in the same degree as they encumber the memory with facts mechanically fed into it. "This, forsooth, is the wonder of the age."

What the steam engine does with matter, the printing press is to do with mind; it is to act mechanically, and the population is to be passively, almost unconsciously enlightened.

The fundamental distinction between Liberal Education and Useful Knowledge is that the former is a process by which the initial impulse to Christian virtue is given play among the sciences and arts, while the latter is confidently expected itself to lead to virtue. The Utilitarian philosophy did not originally make such claims, and Newman insists that there is no ground for making them now. The first "Prophet" of Utility, Bacon, was not bound by his philosophy to be true to his friend or faithful in his trust:

Moral virtue was not the line in which he undertook to instruct men ... His mission was the increase of physical enjoyment and social comfort; and most wonderfully, most awfully has he fulfilled his conception and his design ... His is simply a Method whereby bodily discomforts and temporal wants are to be most effectually removed from the greatest number. 2

Newman refuses to accept that Useful Knowledge can ever achieve more than physical comfort. Virtue is a concept having a wider reference than mere social and personal contentment.

1 The Idea of a University, 126.
2 The Idea of a University, 104-106.
It implies absolute values and supernatural authority:

Knowledge is one thing, virtue is another; good sense is not conscience, refinement is not humility, nor is largeness and justness of view faith. 1

Thus too in The Tamworth Reading Room, Newman emphatically demands how it can be so confidently maintained that mere learning will produce virtue.

Mr. Bentham would answer, that the knowledge which carries virtue along with it is the knowledge how to take care of number one 2 - a clear appreciation of what is pleasurable, what painful . . .

Characteristically then, Newman finds the fatal flaw, both in this concept and in the habit of "Benthamizing" generally, to lie in the fact that "Bentham had not a spark of poetry in him".

Here Mr. Bentham, did it fall to him to offer a criticism, doubtless would take leave to inquire whether such language was anything better than a fine set of words 'signifying nothing'.

Here Newman takes issue against one of the notorious aspects of Utilitarianism - its complete lack of response to, and even detestation of, poetry. To Bentham is sometimes attributed the definition that "Poetry is where the lines do not attain the edge of the page." In his Essay on Language 3

1 The Idea of a University, 106.
2 Compare, for its devastating reduction of a Benthamite maxim, Carlyle's: By the never so cunning mechanising of Self-interests, given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their united action. ["Characteristics", Miscellaneous Essays, II, 225.]
3 Bentham, Works, VIII.
he had observed

In poetry... to produce and keep up in the mind, confusion, so it be but accompanied with pleasure, is an object not of aversion, but of endeavour and study.

More than once he had claimed that poetry, being a mere mental diversion, could perfectly well be compared to a game of push-pin. In one place he explains

Between poetry and truth there is a natural opposition: false morals, fictitious nature... If poetry and music deserve to be preferred before a game of push-pin... [etc. etc.]

An even more fascinating glimpse of Bentham's supremely prosaic mind is found in the Essay on Language, where he lists the "external instruments of improvement for augmentation of the usefulness of the several desirable properties of language."² It should however be remembered that J.S. Mill protests that it is merely "part of the popular notion of Benthamites that they are enemies of poetry".³ But even Mill allows that Bentham despised thought that was not painstakingly logical, and the younger generation of intellectual radicals who followed him were proudly impatient of sentiment and fine words:

We retorted by the word 'sentimentality', which along with 'declamation' and 'vague generalities' served us as common terms of opprobrium.⁴

Newman therefore finds that the Utilitarians' faith

1 Bentham, Works, II, 253.
2 See Especially, Works, VIII, 313.
3 J.S. Mill, Autobiography, 94.
4 J.S. Mill, Autobiography, 93.
in their educational programme rests upon the very shaky foundation of poetic insensibility. For, according to Newman it is the falsest of the Benthamite precepts that Useful Knowledge "tends to make us more useful to ourselves", and that to pursue pleasant diversion through discovering the truths of science is incidentally but inevitably to pursue virtue. These precepts are avowed in defiance of facts; and the poet, who represents the human mind as "at best in a very unformed or disordered state" with "passions and conscience, likings and reason, conflicting - might rising against right, with the prospect of things getting worse", is likely to be in the right of it after all.

Newman speaks of scientific pursuits as an evasion of man's first duty, that of "subduing the giant nature, in which we were born" to which the subduing of external nature is but a secondary labour, even as the "glories" revealed by the telescope are no more concerned with Religion than a watch or a steam-carriage. "Wonder is not religion, or we should be worshipping our railroads . . . This god of theirs is not the Living and the True, unless the spring is the god of a watch, or steam the creator of the engine."

In a passage reminiscent of Carlyle ¹ Newman speaks of the Utility of Knowledge as "a philosophy of expedients":

---

[Lord Brougham] shows us how to live by medicine. Digestive pills half an hour before dinner, and a posset at bedtime at the best; and at the worst, dram-drinking and opium, — the very remedy against broken hearts, or remorse of conscience, which is in request among the many, in gin-palaces not intellectual.

The essay proceeds to grow warmer and more rhetorical, revealing for once the passion rather than the persuasion of Newman's revolt against the Utilitarian ethic. Always he insists that the reader consider human life as it is and has been, not as it theoretically might be.

Who was ever made more humble or more benevolent by being told, as the same practical moralist words it, 'to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity'?

He speaks of self-denial as a virtue without feeling the need to defend it as such. He recalls the need which occurs constantly in the actual affairs of men to "steel" themselves "against pain or peril", contingencies which no felicific calculus can be seriously expected to evade. Turning the tables on his opponents, the hard-headed and practical philosophers, he makes the hard-headed suggestion that their philosophy, "this new art of living", be considered for its efficacy if "offered to the labouring classes, — we will say, for instance, in a severe winter, snow on the ground, glass falling, bread rising, coal at 20d. the cwt., and no work."

Again he turns upon Bentham directly, at times deriding, at times pleading against, this "stern realist" who nevertheless limits his realism to "things which he can see,
he does not acknowledge the existence of anything which he cannot ascertain for himself. Exist it may, nevertheless, but till it makes itself felt, to him it exists not; till it comes down right before him, and he is very short-sighted, it is not recognised by him as having a co-existence with himself.

Newman constantly relies here on no more than a passionate appeal against this "iron thinker" for whom to speak truth is to be ready with a definition. "Surely," cries Newman, "there is something unearthly and super-human in spite of Bentham." And again, "Can the nineteenth century produce no more robust and creative philosophy than this?"

The remainder of this powerfully sustained attack upon Utilitarianism is largely concerned with establishing the right relationship between science and faith. The soul cannot be "amused into immortality" and "human nature as it actually exists" with its "grief, anger, cowardice, self-conceit, pride or passion" cannot be subdued by "an examination of shells or grasses, or inhaling of gases, or chipping of rocks." (Newman already recognises the devastating effects which the science of geology will have if studied as an end in itself, or relied upon as a primary revelation of truth.) The only safety for mankind lies in the due placing of reason in the hands of faith. Science provides not a basis but only material for religious sentiment.

The conclusion, more and more powerfully expressed
(the irony having been shed) is the exact reverse of Bentham's.

Apprehension of the unseen is the only known principle capable of subduing moral evil, educating the multitude, and organising society.

Let Bentham reign, if men have no aspirations; but do not tell them to be romantic, and then solace them with glory.

("Glory" is used mockingly in this essay and elsewhere to stand for the exaggerated delights alleged to lurk in "the absorbing passion of knowledge".) And as the for "Springs of Action" these lie not in self-seeking or in the calculation of probable pleasure as Bentham would have it; but "action flows not from inferences, but from impressions, - not from reasonings, but from Faith."

The Tamworth Reading Room is certainly the most explicit and concentrated attack on the Utilitarian values, though Newman's opposition is everywhere implicit, breaking to the surface occasionally, as for instance in the essay on Athenian Schools:

Conscience is pronounced superannuated and retires on a pension, whenever a people is so far advanced in illumination as to perceive that right and wrong can to a certain extent be measured and determined by the useful on the one hand, and by the hurtful on the other.

Here the tone is not intended to be too ironical, though irony still lurks in a word like "illumination". For here, as in most other places, Newman is concerned to appear cool,

1 "Rise and Progress of Universities", in Essays and Sketches. II, 317-318.
and gently dismisses the case for utility after giving instances when it would provide no real substitute for a moral standard: "It is not very safe or logical" to say that Utility is a guarantee for Virtue.

Such examples could be multiplied endlessly. The truth is, Newman’s whole personal and literary career represents an unwavering opposition to "Liberalism". It was in that opposition that his literary career had its beginning.

In the *Apologia* he explains

> It was the success of the Liberal cause which fretted me inwardly. I became fierce against its instruments and its manifestations.  

It was the Liberal success which drew him homewards in 1833, and indeed, as he claims, which kept him alive through the fever he contracted in Sicily. "We have a work to do in England." "I shall not die, I shall not die . . ." "I have a work to do in England."  

If there be any doubt as to how far Utilitarianism represented for him the arch-enemy, Liberalism, in its most fiendish guise, his own list of the "instruments and manifestations" of Liberalism may be studied. Among its propositions he includes:

> Utility and expediency are the measure of political duty. The people are the legitimate source of power - Therefore, e.g. Universal Suffrage is among the natural rights of man. Virtue is the child of

1 *Apologia*, 30.
2 *Apologia*, 31.
knowledge, and vice of ignorance. Therefore, e.g., education, periodical literature, railroad travelling, drainage, and the arts of life, when fully carried out, serve to make a population moral and happy. 1

G.W. Young draws attention to the accuracy with which Newman in such passages represented the point of view of his opponents the philosophic radicals, who would have been ready, Young asserts, to sign such articles of faith exactly as Newman set them down. 2

Even such a work as The Arians of the Fourth Century which is entirely of a theological and historical character, and as such has no direct relevance to this study, nevertheless sprang from the same impulses to stem the tide of Liberalism and to look to Antiquity for guidance in the nineteenth century.

In proportion as I moved out of the shadow of that Liberalism which had hung over my course, my early devotion towards the Fathers returned. 3

Pretty well every page of Newman's contains such a sentence which can be the starting point of an enquiry into his beliefs, an enquiry which soon uncovers a tenet diametrically opposed to Liberalism.

The "shadow" he refers to was cast by the hereditary Calvinism in which he was brought up, and insofar as his development was a flight from the family background of Calvinism and the London banking house, it finds a place in

1 Apologia, Note A, 263.
2 See G.W. Young, "Sophist and Swashbuckler", in Daylight and Champaign.
3 Apologia, 23.
the story told in the preceding section of this chapter.

How squarely Bentham and Newman shape up to each other may be seen by juxtaposing some of their sentences. Thus:

I learned to see that Utility was the test and measure of all virtue. 1

I do not know when I first learned to consider that Antiquity was the true exponent of the doctrines of Christianity. 2

Again, in the next pair, the contrast lies in the fact that Bentham speaks in a tone of bitter scorn, Newman with sincerity:

I saw passive obedience deep stamped with the seal of the Christian virtues of humility and self-denial. 3

Our only safety lies in obedience; our only comfort in keeping it in view. 4

The opposition is complete, how complete may be seen in a sentence like the following:

Conscience is an authority; such is the Church; such is Antiquity; such are the words of the wise; such are hereditary lessons; such are ethical truths; such are historical memories; such are legal saws and state maxims; such are proverbs; such are sentiments, presages, and prepossessions. 5

The works of Newman are built upon a reverence for each of these ideas; the works of Bentham are built upon a rejection of every one of them.

1 Bentham, Works, I, 269. 4 Newman, Essays Critical and Historical, II, 343.
Just as Newman relied rather upon the gathered stock of wisdom in human affairs than upon the ideas of any gifted individual, just as he in other words relied upon tradition and upon the institutions which embodied it, so he naturally tended to emphasise national differences. For clearly, just as each nation had its individual history, so each nation had its separate body of tradition developed and preserved in its institutions of Church and State. That is, the nature of wisdom itself varied from nation to nation, and national characters were distinct largely because of the divergent traditions which went to form them, and which in their turn they helped to perpetuate. So the works of Newman constantly provide expressions of this important concept, a concept which lies at the opposite pole from Bentham's confidence in universal social prescriptions. Newman had learned to revere the British Constitution as described by Blackstone and reviled by Bentham, but he would not have dreamed of imposing it upon any other nation. Only tradition, growing within obvious geographical boundaries of a people, could provide the institutions which that people needed and to which they would naturally give allegiance. 

It need hardly be added that Newman regarded Bentham’s constitutional prescriptions as being founded upon "radically unsound principles." Indeed he was inclined to regard these works

---

1 See Terence Kenny, The Political Thought of J.H. Newman, 58.
2 The Idea of a University, 351.
not as being mere aberrances but as having a deliberately sinister and disguised intention. Bentham is not just wrong; he makes "A covert attack" ¹; he is "simply a disgrace" to truth ²; he actually "aims at directly false conclusions." ³

The prose works of Newman have a place in English literature because of the passion and sincerity which inform them, and because he was always as conscious of his role as literary artist as he was of his role as pleader and prophet. He had deliberately cultivated his prose from an early age, studying and imitating Addison and Johnson; at seventeen "his ears rang with the cadence of [Gibbon's] sentences, and he dreamed of it for a night or two." ⁴ Yet apart from a passage here and there of Newman's in the Tracts there is little that would preserve the literary reputation of the Oxford Tractarians. The publications, especially the published sermons, connected with the movement are immense in number, and range in subject from ecclesiastical history and disputations on points of doctrine, to biographies by and of the men involved. But apart from Newman's sermons, discourses, and essays, and the copious autobiographical material, some of which has already been discussed, the literature (in the narrow sense) of the movement lies outside the polemics of it,

¹ The Idea of a University, 84.
² The Idea of a University, 276.
³ The Idea of a University
⁴ W. Barry, Newman, 15.
and may now be briefly considered for its contribution to this study.

In 1848 Newman anonymously produced a novel called *Loss and Gain* which was set in Oxford at the time of Newman's own agitated passage from Protestantism into the Church of Rome. The hero, Charles Reding, is flung at the age of twenty into the whirlpool of religious faction and doctrinal doubts which Newman had been through. This so-called novel traces, by means of almost unrelieved disputation among the characters, the anguished religious pilgrimage of this young man. The progress is distractedly but steadily towards Rome. Most of the issues are theological and as such do not concern this study, but occasionally the discussions glance aside at the nature of secular institutions and the relationship between Church and State. It is interesting in this connexion to notice the parallel between Newman's idea of a nation's constitution and his description of personal development. Just as Bentham's constitutional thinking was based upon and matched with his theories of individual motivation, both of them representing an effort to achieve desires by calculated action, so Newman's idea of a constitution as something native and spontaneous, the undesigned product of a people's needs and nature, has its perfect counterpart in the development of an individual. Charles Reding exposes himself with rational deliberation to influences and ideas of every
sort. He grapples with them on the plane of reason, but ultimately it is his nature, not his intellect which decides his acceptances and rejections. Stumbling by hazard on an argument of Jeremy Bentham's "Reading was surprised and shocked." ¹ This young man demands dogma. His nature cries out for unequivocal statement based upon reason. Yet the most unequivocal and rational of philosophers appals him. This is because his impulsive reactions and his ultimate decisions are produced not on the level of the reason but by the deeper working of his individual nature:

A new idea was not lost upon him, but it did not distress him, if it was obscure, or conflicted with his habitual view of things. He let it work its way and find its place, and shape itself within him, by the slow spontaneous action of the mind. ²

"I can't bring out what I mean and feel; and when I attempt to do so, my statements and arguments seem absurd to myself." ³

This is the presentation of human behaviour adopted by the writers who reject the Utilitarian psychology. It will be observed most especially in Disraeli; and in fact this insistence on and this esteem for unconscious, spontaneous motivation are basic to Romantic literature. The reader of Disraeli's novels will also be amused to notice the strong infusion of his manner in this novel of Newman's. This is especially the case in the satirical and faintly jocular passages which are sparsely strewn through this earnest work;

¹ Loss and Gain, 128.
² Loss and Gain, 148.
³ Loss and Gain, 256.
and an extract of this sort will serve a double purpose if it concerns the handling of Nonconformity; for it was quite to be expected that Newman's hero in his pilgrim's progress would encounter the giants of many dissenting sects and that Newman would be capable of treating them not only with scorn but with derision:

"There is Mr. Gabb: he is a Boanerges, a perfect Niagara, for his torrent of words . . . He can speak seven hours running without fatigue . . . At Berwick, his last exhibition, the effect was perfectly tremendous; a friend of mine heard it; he assures me, incredible as it may appear, that it shattered some glass in a neighbouring house . . . "

Newman's customary method of refutation was to represent his opponent's case with deadly accuracy. Only in the case of the Nonconformists is this method abandoned in Loss and Gain for what must be regarded as mocking exaggeration. His Dr. Kitchens, like all the sectarian ministers one is apt to meet in the novels of the period, is a man "sleek and plump, who seemed to be in good circumstances, and to have profited by them." He is represented as peddling a Spiritual Elixir whose operation is mild and pleasurable and whose effects upon the tormented soul are prodigious.

Loss and Gain may be looked on as a fictional forerunner to the Apologia, tracing a young man's conversion almost hour by hour, word by word and pang by pang. It is at once a compelling and a forbidding work, compelling by the force of its spiritual anguish and forbidding by its characters' exclusive preoccupation

1 Loss and Gain, 340.
2 Loss and Gain, 338.
with their souls' condition.

**Callista** is also a novel of spiritual pilgrimage. Set as it is in the third century and tracing the conversion to Christianity and the martyrdom of a beautiful Greek girl it is a triumph of historical reconstruction animated not merely by the vividness of the author's pictorial imagination and narrative energy, but also by his deep reverence for the subject of his story. It was clearly the personal need to render this act of devotion to an early saint which moved Newman to write, but in presenting his novel to the world he also meant his readers to discern present parallels and meanings in this story of the Catholic church assailed and brought low by the spirit of imperialism, by the growth and flourishing of innumerable religious cults and by the vacillations even of its adherents, yet returning steadily to power because of the unflinching witness to truth borne by the young martyr. Occasionally these glances at the contemporary scene light upon the matters we are here concerned with, as when the pagan Juba expostulates to his Christian brother:

"You don't take just views of human nature," answered Juba with a self-satisfied air. "Our first duty is to seek our own happiness ..."

"Happiness!" cried Agellius, "where have you been picking up all this stuff?"

---

1 **Callista**, Ch. iv, 33.
But on the whole the work is too faithful to the period of its study and to the first intention of its writing to be subjected to any profitable scrutiny from the present point of view.

Just as in his Assize Sermon of 1833 Keble had launched the Oxford Movement, so in his poems he had early struck the literary note which was to characterize it. Not only did *The Christian Year* constitute a poetical precedent for the men who later became caught up in the movement, but it did much in the early days to commend both men and movement to the orthodox churchman. "Much certainly came of *The Christian Year*: it was the most soothing, tranquillizing, subduing work of the day." 1 It survived in favour long after the movement itself had been re-absorbed into the developing pattern of the Establishment. In the 1860's the hero of *Salem Chapel* finds a whole table of the local bookshop filled with "the much-multiplied volume" in a host of sizes and bindings. 2

Yet even before Keble's poems appeared in 1827 Newman had published poetry which while it cannot be associated with the movement is of interest if only because the "group" character of the later verse production is already adumbrated in the joint publication (in 1821) of *St. Bartholomew's Eve* by Newman and J.W. Bowden, later a Tractarian and contributor to *Lyra Apostolica*.

1 *Essays Critical and Historical*, II, 441.
2 *Mrs. Oliphant, Salem Chapel*, Ch. VI, 55.
Newman’s verse before his trip abroad in December 1832 was expectedly pious, but if there is a persistent theme beneath the piety it is a conventional romanticism. One might be led to predict from these poems a poetic career like Browning’s or Tennyson’s, the youthful piety being suitably accommodated in professional maturity; for there are glimpses not only of the required cult of poetic themes (e.g. beauty and nature) but of a technical dexterity and even of a Browningesque bravado, seen for example in his "Opusculum". But the fact is, Newman’s religious bent was too strong to allow him ever to find in nature a consolation or a final meaning. The excitation of religious devotion into romantic poetry never really occurs in Newman, and the reason is likely to be found in the social, political and ecclesiastical developments which began to possess his mind and start his fears from 1830 onwards.

The great Reform Agitation was going on around me as I wrote. The Whigs had come into power; Lord Grey had told the Bishops to set their house in order, and some of the Prelates had been insulted and threatened in the streets of London. 1 I thought that if Liberalism once got a footing within [my own Church], it was sure of the victory in the event. 2

Thus the poems written after 1832 are either filled with a militant zeal or with an appeal to the Almighty for strength and faith to sustain the embattled champions of truth. Newman turns his eyes from the physical world of art and nature and contemplates the moral world. He no longer appeals that

1 Apologia, 27.
2 Apologia, 28.
"great Nature in my sight Unroll her gorgeous plan" - the world becomes the "World" of the sermons, and the appeal is now for light "amid the encircling gloom". The close relationship between the poems after 1832 and the sermons may be seen in the subjects of each - "England", "Private Judgment", "The Patient Church", "Christmas without Christ", "Our Future", "Heathenism", "The Age to Come", "Progress of Unbelief", "Faith against Sight", "Liberalism" - all these are names given to the poems and they are testimony to the prophetic and apocalyptic character of Newman's verse in the years following the Reform Bill. Again and again lines and stanzas in these poems identify, define or denounce the arch-foil, Liberalism, with its associated reliance upon individual judgment, its self-seeking materialism, its optimism and its confident prescriptions for the well-being of the race,

Wielding Trade's master-keys, at thy proud will
To lock or loose its waters;
To this treacherous doctrine, this "crafty fort", Newman pleads,
"England! trust not still" ¹ He exhorts men to submit to the
"royal Truth",

Fearing the board of wealthy pride,
Or heretic, self-trusting guide. ²

The reliance upon reason is deprecated ³ and the principles of competitive trade are branded as the Religion of Cain. ⁴

In "The Elements" ⁵ the insufficiency of Science to explain or

discover all is again insisted upon: for "God has will'd/
That man, when fully skill'd, / Still gropes in twilight dim."
These poems refract the alarm of their author into a prognostica-
tion of doom for the new "haughty Babel" of the industrial
revolution and the march of secularism. ¹ The poems have
taken on a raw topicality for which Liberalism and the rush of
current events must be held responsible. Only here and there a
stanzas or a poem of more personal content rises not from this
agitated partisanship but from more tranquil springs of faith and
acceptance, and these lines are often of a high lyric order.

These poems, which were all written, as Newman explains,
during the interval between his spells of duty at Oxford, were a
significant part of the "larger course of action" which he entered
upon when Liberalism began its series of successes in church and
state. "My battle was with Liberalism." ² In them all is a
real sense of the great odds against which he was contending.
How great were the odds and how hopeless the strife can only now
be recognised.

By 1834 Newman's verse has withdrawn from the front
lines of the contest, and is now engaged in behalf of his priestly
office, that of cleansing the "victim-flock" and washing "bemired
souls of their defilement". ³ He writes hymns and religious
interpretations of various sorts in which the devotion is deep
and undisturbed. Newman the poet retires within his own

¹ See e.g. "Reverses"
² Apologia, 44.
³ "The Priestly Office", 1834.
perplexities and pieties along with Newman the theologian. When "The Dream of Gerontius" appears in 1865 there is no trace of the early militancy. The demons, "low-born clods" themselves, have had their transgressions named as stemming from "the mind bold and independent . . . and yet on earth they have repute for wondrous power and skill". This is as close as the poem comes to the old themes, and for the rest the tone moves between the serene and the exalted.

It is unnecessary to examine in turn the works of the other poets connected with the Oxford Movement. Such a study would be rewarding only if it set out to discern the individual and personal qualities of men like R.H. Froude, Isaac Williams, J.W. Bowden, R.I. Wilberforce and the others associated with Keble and Newman in the *Lyra Apostolica* and in their separately published poems. Yet the concern here must be not with their individuality but with the opinions and intentions they held in common. In fact, the poets themselves did not originally intend that their individualities should scatter the interest of *Lyra Apostolica*; and they have explained in a prefatory advertisement that only the death of one of the contributors modified this wish. It has been judged fitting to record what belonged to him, and so there are Greek letters appended to all the poems. The poets have issued these pieces "in the humble hope that they may be instrumental in recalling or recommending to the
reader important Christian truths which are at this day in a way to be forgotten." However, compared with the influential public character of the Oxford Movement, the verses in Lyra Apostolica are for the greater part intensely personal. In most cases it is the private, not the national guilt and unworthiness that are lamented. The poems are full of self-abasement and the sense of the private soul's affliction. However remarkably Newman and his associates in the 'thirties resisted this temptation, Kingsley for one was offended by a certain exclusiveness among the High Church party and above all by this incapacitating sense of personal guilt which they seemed eager to indulge. However, there are many places in Lyra Apostolica where the note of Oxford's regenerating zeal bursts out. A notable example is in the section entitled Lighting of Lamps which is wholly contributed by Keble. Here the images are dominated by the concept of a military camp, "Jesus' camp," in which in ancient times the steadfast soldiers "watched and fasted, wept and pray'd." But today they feast and slumber on, caring little what inroads the foe may make. The same image is more pertinently used in another poem (lxxv) to describe the new spirit about to awaken in Oxford. This idea of the church militant is pervasive. The poets see themselves as "firm and few", members of isolated "faithful bands" moving against the might of a deluded foe. Here again one may taste the exclusiveness which the party
claimed for their message. It is this rigid and undeviating conviction that makes possible a separate study of the movement as a reaction against Utilitarianism. It also accounts for the vehemence with which the democratic principle was opposed. Under the heading The Age, J.W. Bowden contributes four poems condemning the present rulers of the land for permitting "the majority" to choose their own gods, and for bowing to those gods themselves. Again, the same spirit drives the Oxford poets to condemn all "new forms of Schism which changing times supply" (poem xcvi), and there is a section given to an attack upon Dissent. Here once again the association between Non-conformity and "Mammon" is alleged:

A creed for every clime and age
By Mammon's touch new moulded
O'er and o'er (poem xcvi)

In another poem the Angel of the Church is represented as denying that those "who flock to Freedom's shrine", whether freedom be a political or religious notion, can ever bow in meekness to the Church once having lifted "the Heav'n-defying brow" elsewhere. The "abomination" of liberalism stands

In semblance fair,
And saint-like air,
The Antichrist of heathen liberty! (poem cxii)

This whole collection of poems, where it speaks not with a private but a public voice, is a plea, passionate and sometimes despairing, against the march of Erastianism and the spirit
of Utilitarianism. It is uncompromising against the demolition of traditional forms by the probing of the rationalists:

The fire of Heaven breaks forth
When haughty Reason pries too near,
Weighing the eternal mandate's worth
In philosophic scales of earth. (poem c1)

These men see themselves as divinely called upon to denounce the champions of liberalism. Their mission, their view of their own role, and their lively sense of impending judgment are best displayed in the group called Jeremiah, a series of five poems by Keble. Because these poems are not widely known, the present discussion of Lyra Apostolica may fittingly be ended with the following sonnet (poem cxxiii) on the text: "This man is worthy to die: for he hath prophesied against this city." It is certainly among the finest achievements of the Oxford poets.

No joy of mine to invite the thunder down,
No pride, th'uprising whirlwind to survey,
Now gradual from the north, with hideous frown
It veers in silence round th'horizon grey
And one by one sweeps the bright isles away,
Where fondly gazed the men of worldly peace,
Dreaming fair weather would outlast their day.
Now the big storm-drops fall - their dream must cease -

They know it well and fain their ire would wreak
On the dread Arm that wields the bolt; but He
Is out of reach; therefore on me they turn,
On me that am but voice, fading and weak,
A withered leaf inscribed with heaven's decree,
And blown where haply some in fear may learn.

When Newman was preaching the gospel of righteousness
through ritual, and salvation through submission to old authority, the age at large, the multitude of Englishmen equipped with middle-class minds, began by being surprised at him, grew distrustful, then impatient, and ended by pitying him or forgetting him.

"The England which the Tractarians came to startle was solidly and actively Protestant"¹ and the religious centre was moving to the left, towards the old established sects, the movement being strengthened by the pull upon the Church exerted both by the Evangelicals within, and by the Wesleyans as yet hardly without the pale of the Establishment. Striking out towards the right Newman and his friends sought to draw the multitude after them, a hopeless quest for every reason, political, religious and above all temperamental. The Victorians disliked and feared Popery; and "they disliked ritual as much as they disliked the sight of Gold Stick walking backwards before the Queen, and for very nearly the same reason. There was no historic or aesthetic fibre in their composition to respond."²

Yet in the history of the age Newman is one among the first of that band of men who fought, all through the years of industrialism triumphant, to secure some place for art and beauty in a grey world. He was with Coleridge, and there were many to follow. Newman's band of young University men,

¹ G.M. Young, Daylight and Champaign, 105.
² G.M. Young, Daylight and Champaign, 105.
whether they went over to Rome, or burned with new zeal within the Church, or wandered in perplexity or doubt, all nevertheless retained a warm conviction of the need for beauty in the life of man. In the end it was perhaps this conviction which sprang most vitally out of the Oxford Movement and which struck most deeply upon the imagination of the age and of the writers that followed Newman. The hero of *Gryll Grange*, as we shall see, came strongly under the spell of this attraction, though the Oxford Movement touched him lightly enough otherwise. Kingsley is obliged painfully to separate the aesthetic from the other elements of the movement, and his fictitious characters are often found embroiled in the same struggle. And in *Sybil*, when Dandy Mick is being initiated into the mysteries of the Trades Union, the working men are chanting Gerald Massey's "Hymn of Labour":

```
Our bliss shall richly overbrim like
sunset in the west,
And we shall dream immortal dreams,
and banquet with the Blest:
Then let us worship Beauty with the knightly
faith of old,
O Chivalry of Labour toiling for the Age
of Gold! 1
```

Thus we may link for a moment the names of Peacock, Kingsley and Disraeli and with the "Chivalry of Labour" we pass now to Carlyle.
(III) Carlyle

In considering the third main force of reaction against Utilitarianism we are concerned not with a general sentiment (as in the distaste for Nonconformity) but with the power of a unique personality. Carlyle is the true sage. He is inspired and alone. His influence on the literature of the Victorian period is incalculable. "Fly Carlylesse as you would the devil" was a vain admonition and almost every writer of the age is tempted at times to adopt if not Carlyle's verbal manner then at least his invective tone and his authoritative posture.

Lending the full force of his disgruntled eloquence to the assault upon Utilitarianism Carlyle refused nevertheless to recognise Newman as an ally. Certainly the conclusions to which Newman's intellect led him were not likely to recommend themselves to his fierce contemporary who, too, had outgrown a hereditary Calvinism but who was constitutionally disinclined to replace it by another creed no less exclusive. The two men were as unlike in their conclusions as in the use of language by which each sought to bring his readers to those conclusions. The superficial differences between the two men were as great in their literary manner as in their physical appearance; and Carlyle lives on the page as he does in the mind's eye, the hairy dyspeptic son of a Scots farmer,
while Newman remains as Arnold saw him, that "spiritual apparition . . . gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St. Mary's." 1

Yet if one considers Carlyle's attitude to each of the representative geniuses whose minds Mill found "seminal", it becomes apparent that in some fashion Carlyle has ranged himself alongside Newman.

Bentham's Utility, virtue by Profit-and-Loss; reducing this God's-world to a dead brute Steam-engine, the infinite celestial Soul of Man to a kind of Hay-balance for weighing hay and thistles on, pleasures and pains on. 2

It is little wonder that Newman, admiring the sentiment and the vehemence was lured at times into attempting the style.

On the other hand:

Coleridge sat on the brow of Highgate Hill, in those years, looking down on London and its smoke-tumult, like a sage escaped from the inanity of Life's battle . . . a sublime man; who, alone in those dark days, had saved his crown of spiritual manhood. 3

(This does not represent Carlyle's final estimate of Coleridge, who in spite of his "pious, ever-labouring, subtle mind" had fallen into a "fatal delusion" and lost sight of the "precious truth." 4)

However widely divergent the conclusions of Newman and Carlyle may have been it is obvious that somewhere their premises overlapped. Indeed, in the matter of attitude towards Coleridge and Bentham their opinions were almost

1 M. Arnold, Discourses in America, 139.
2 Heroes and Hero-Worship, 62.
3 Life of Sterling, 44-51.
4 Life of Sterling, 44.
identical. That they had roots in some common ground is
easier to discern than it is to say what that ground was.
Both believed in God; but then, about the nature of God and
about His means of revealing Himself and His purposes they
could hardly have been at greater variance. It is possible to
read Sartor Resartus and learn that a deep sense of religion
was, for Carlyle, compatible with an entire absence of
theology; but for Newman any sense of religion was wholly
co-extensive with the theology in which it was embodied and
which justified it.

Both believed that salvation lay in the recognition
of authority and in glad resignation to that authority; but
again, about what constituted authority and the means by which
it might be recognised they were irreconcilably at odds.
Both believed that the "democratic" tendency of the age
was to be lamented, that logic and calculation when applied
to human affairs were misleading and even calamitous; but
the reasons each gave for believing so were not identical.

The common ground upon which they stood can only,
in spite of apparently gross differences, be called personal.
They were temperamentally alike. Above all they were both
Romantics. To put it in its broadest terms they believed in
the superiority of the imagination to the reason. They
believed in the supreme importance of the individual, in the
value of his inner promptings and in the vital significance
of intuition as opposed to ratiocination.

As far as the individual was concerned his well-being lay, according to the belief of both men, not in the pursuit of pleasure but in the cultivation of his own divinely implanted nature. As far as society was concerned, again both men believed that its well-being lay in its yielding itself to the authority which intuitively it would recognise to be right. For both men authority was again a matter of personal endowment; it belonged to men endowed with spiritual insight. Authority had little to do with reason; it had everything to do with faith—faith by authority in itself, as well as faith by the people in that authority. Both men found "perfectibility" to lie not in the satisfaction of physical desires or in material prosperity but in the full growth of individuality. "Progress" in the Benthamite way was nothing but the record of man's failure to catch happiness for the very reason that he pursued it:

Truly, [says Carlyle,] I think the man who goes about pothering and uproaring for his "happiness"—pothering, and were it ballot-boxing, poem-making, or in what way soever fussing and exerting himself, he is not the man that will help us . . . [He] belongs not to the old heroic times, but to these dastard new times . . . It is, after all, the one unhappiness of a man, that he cannot work; that he cannot get his destiny as a man fulfilled.

1 Past and Present, 131.
There is a phenomenon which one might call Paralytic Radicalism, in these days; which gauges with Statistic measuring-reed, sounds with Philosophic Poltico-Economic plummet the deep dark sea of troubles. 1

The insistence on right growth and full growth as opposed to the mechanical operation of a logical system is by now the traditional conservative line of opposition which began in the century with Burke and so far makes way through men like Carlyle and Newman that by 1861 a Utilitarian, writing on Utilitarianism, himself admits the impossibility of being happy by means of a system. Only by "fulfilling his destiny", that is, striving to erect the system can an "intelligent" and "generous" man "draw a noble enjoyment from the contest itself, which he would not for any bribe in the form of selfish indulgence consent to be without." 2 In other words, Mill comes round to insisting like Carlyle before him that "happiness, unhappiness: all that was but the wages that thou hadst." 3 Indeed, the life and works of Mill constitute a running record of the headway made by such men as are being dealt with in this study. In the Liberty Mill at last reaches the point where the need for the individual to "grow" in his right and proper (in the French sense) way becomes an alarmingly realised one. As for Newman, he who had made the point so early was still making it much later than Mill:

1 Chartism, 317.
2 Mill, Utilitarianism, 14.
3 Past and Present, 132.
[Man's] "progress" is a living growth not a mechanism; and its instruments are mental acts, not the formulas and contrivances of language. 1

In considering Carlyle's role in the reaction against Utilitarianism it is proposed to deal with his general attitudes rather than to attempt to assemble all the direct attacks which he made upon Benthamism. For the attitudes, irreconcilable as they may at times seem to be, are expressed all through the work, and often enough Utilitarianism is the butt of attack even when it is not named. For example the generalisation which follows is clear enough in its particular reference:

Does not the whole wretchedness, the whole
Atheism as I call it, of man's ways, in these
generations, shadow itself for us in that
unspeakable Life-philosophy of his: The
pretension to be what he calls "happy"?

Presently the particular issue comes even nearer the surface:

We construct our theory of Human Duties, not on
any Greatest-Nobleness Principle, never so
mistaken; no, but on a Greatest-Happiness
Principle. 2

The remainder of this section will therefore be given
to noticing those ideas of Carlyle which refute the articles
of Benthamism set out in Chapter I, whether or not Bentham
is named as the begetter of them. And among the tenets of
Carlyle's creed which were in violent antagonism to Utili-
tarianism there may be examined at once his belief in the

1 Newman, Grammar of Assent, 266.
2 Past and Present, 129-130.
uniqueness of personality. For him the chief affront offered
by the Utilitarian system was first its tabulation of human
motives (with its implication that all motivation might be
placed somewhere in the tables) and secondly, arising from
this theory of personal demands, the conclusion that only the
ballot-box could supply the information on man’s needs in a
community. Thus the precious “Soul” of every man became
lost in the concept of a sort of universal “Stomach”, to use
Carlyle’s terms.

Coleridge had proceeded from the first fact of
selfhood in order ultimately to find all self in God.
Newman too, as we have seen, was attempting to make of life
an intercourse and a harmony between the two supreme facts,
of the existence of self and the existence of God. Like
Coleridge he had begun with the fact of his own uniqueness:

I am what I am or I am nothing. 1

Carlyle also began with the two same facts, of God and of
his own distinct existence:

My soul, breathed into me by God, my Me
and what capability is there . . . I will
keep that and do what work I can with it. 2

Carlyle’s acceptance of the “fact” of God will be noticed
shortly. Here our concern is that he re-affirmed the
sanctity of and the potency of the individual spirit. His
belief in the supreme value of the inspiration and endeavour

1 Newman, Grammar of Ascent, 264.
2 Chartism, 293.
of the individual finds its completest expression in his concept of the hero, and its most controversial form in the concept of the military or conquering hero. The power of the hero derives from the development of his true self. Napoleon, for example, remained a hero while ever he remained true to himself. He fell from power when he fell from grace, yielding to "untruth of heart." And ironically, though Coleridge had himself maintained that individual truth led naturally to individual power, Carlyle discovers the fatal flaw in Coleridge's own personality to lie in disobedience to the behests of his "heavenly inspiration":

His life, with such ray of the empyrean in it, was great and terrible to him; and he had not valiantly grappled with it, he had fled from it.  

"Heroism", then, was never limited by Carlyle to military heroism, and it is to be remembered that Abbot Samson and Shakespeare were, too, heroes. According to Carlyle's idea of it the word "heroic" might justly be applied to any human activity, however humble and even without influence, which nevertheless represented an unflattering attempt to obey an inner voice, and to allow to expand in its fulness the bloom of a personality which lay like a seed in the bodily soil. Thus for example Dante was as great a hero as Mahomet, for though within a hundred years Mahomet had scattered his

1  Heroes, 197.
2  Life of Sterling, 50.
Arabians from Granada to Delhi while "Dante's Italians seem to be yet very much where they were," nevertheless Dante had succeeded in a way that "utilities will not succeed well in calculating!" ¹ For Dante's power had lain in the pure use of his "pictorial gift":

It comes like all else from the essential faculty of him; it is physiognomical of the whole man. ²

We shall notice presently how this idea of self-fidelity, of artistic "permission" to the "essence", is carried on by the authors to be specially studied; in passing we may notice Matthew Arnold's essay on "Literature and Science" in which he handles the same theme of conflict between the "essence" and the "world":

Man's happiness [he declares] consists in his being able to preserve his own essence. ³

So, too, Carlyle laments the impediments laid by the "world" upon the true expression and expansion of individual power:

Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand. They have lost faith in individual endeavour, and in natural force, of any kind. Not for internal perfection, but for external combinations and arrangements, for institutions, constitutions. ⁴

The arch-enemy of individualism, and of those who would attempt to realise "a natural condensation, spontaneous to the man", is what Carlyle embraces by the general term "Mechanism" - the limiting and controlling of impulses and

¹ Heroes, 82-83. ² Heroes, 77. ³ M. Arnold, Discourses in America, 121. ⁴ "Signs of the Times", 476.
energies by the machinery of state or of religion, "a sort of logic-mills to grind out the true causes and effects of all that is done and created". In the realm of political, juridical and economic activity the "machinery" anathemised by Carlyle is almost always Utilitarian.

For the wise men who now appear as Political Philosophers deal exclusively with the Mechanical province; and occupying themselves in counting-up and estimating men's motives, strive by curious checking and balancing, and other adjustments of Profit and Loss, to guide them to their true advantage: while, unfortunately, those same "motives" are so innumerable, and so variable in every individual, that no really useful conclusion can ever be drawn from their enumeration.

Such a mechanical system might be justified if in compensation for putting out the pure flames of individuality it irradiated a warm glow of happiness over the nation as a whole. This however no "external" and imposed contrivance of laws and logic can ever do, for the chief source of man's worth and happiness lies not in Mechanism of any kind but in the "instinctive, unbounded force, which Nature herself lent him, and still continues to him." Thus the enlightened lovers of their kind, the wise men of former times, concerned themselves with the "Dynamics" rather than the "Mechanics" of a society, and applied themselves "chiefly to regulate, increase and purify the inward, primary powers of man."

These things rose up, as it were, by spontaneous growth, in the free soil and sunshine of Nature.

1 "Signs of the Times", 486. 4 "Signs of the Times", 481.
2 "Signs of the Times", 481. 5 "Signs of the Times", 482.
3 "Signs of the Times", 482.
Again and again Carlyle returns to the Romantic apotheosis of the grown in contrast to the made. The tree and the machine are the recurrent symbols:

"Tree" and "Machine": contrast these two things. I, for my part, declare the world to be no machine! 1

Throughout this early essay the signs of the times are seen to point towards the spread of new "-isms", "Mechanisms" generally, and Utilitarianism particularly. Carlyle harks back always to the individuals and to the proper nouns - Socrates, Plato, Hooker, Taylor, John Knox, Newton - insisting always that only individual insight and individual genius can ever make any real achievement. It has always been to the individual seeker that Nature has yielded her secrets; the modern "Scientific Institution" on the other hand "imperatively 'interrogates Nature' - who, however, shows no haste to answer." 2

Of course it occurs to Carlyle on at least one occasion that Utilitarianism itself is in great part the work of an individual, who had moreover devoutly given himself to that work, taking whatever happiness might be paid him as mere wages for, not the aim of, the work. "Swift, out with it; let us see they work!" commands Carlyle, and there Jeremy Bentham presents him with the formidable edifice of Utilitarianism, solid and entire, faithfully fashioned down to

---

1 Heroes, 141.
2 "Signs of the Times", 475.
the last detail. Carlyle is driven to admit that Bentham has apparently fulfilled the requirements of the hero.

Benthamism has something complete, manful, in such fearless committal of itself to what it finds true...

And again: "Of Bentham I meant to say no harm." 2

Carlyle, however, cannot possibly admit Utilitarianism as a genuine Heroism and the reason for his utter rejection of it may be found in the second of his basic tenets.

Intellect, reason, logic—these can only open the way to a "Half-Truth". However sincerely a man may believe in and live by those things he can at best be but a "Half-Hero". For reason, left to work by itself, produces scepticism, not intellectual only, but moral also: "a chronic atrophy and disease of the whole soul". 3 The intellectual and moral scepticism of the age which produced Bentham had led on to the present age of mechanisms:

That Eighteenth Century and its ways... this and the like of this, which we now call Scepticism, is precisely the black malady and life-foe, against which all teaching and discoursing since man's life began has directed itself. 4

It had been an age of "simulacra and universal decadence" and even a great man living in it was liable to become but "half-

---

1 Heroes, 142.  
2 Heroes, 142.  
3 Heroes, 143.  
4 Heroes, 141.
hero, half-quack... An insincere world; a godless untruth of a world!" It is out of this, as he considers, that "the whole tribe of social pestilences, French Revolutions, Chartisma, and what not, have derived their being." The only hope is that the eighteenth century and its works, "the Unbelieving Century, with its unblest products" will pass away; the only consolation is in the signs that it is already passing.

Yes, hollow Formalism, gross Benthamism, and other unheroic, atheistic Insincerity is visibly and even rapidly declining.

Throughout this part of the lectures on Heroes Carlyle, then, belabours the rationalists less for what they believed than for what they did not believe. Not because the eighteenth century believed in the intellect but because it believed only in the intellect it made of "this godlike Universe a dead mechanical steam-engine, all working by motives, checks, balances, and I know not what." Thus Carlyle is moved to define now what he would consider the place of intellect in the man and in the nation: it is but one part of what he calls "Nobleness". The word "noble" for Carlyle seems to have connotations strongly derived from the Romantic concept of the "noble savage". Certainly there is something either primitive or pristine about it. It implies not only a fidelity to one's nature, but a closeness to Nature:

1 Heroes, 145.
Rousseau, Johnson and Burns were heroes because they were "Sons of Nature once more in an age of artifice; once more, Original Men." That they were men of intellect is not to be challenged, but their intellects were only a contribution to their nobleness. They were great only in so far as they brought their conscious thinking into submission to their inward nature and the nature of the universe. Even in the case of "poor Mahomet"

I think it had been better for him not to be so conscious... Whatever is truly great in him springs up from the inarticulate deeps.

For the man of true intellect... is the noblehearted man withal, the true, just, humane and valiant man.

Carlyle's confidence in the virtues of the subconscious mind will be noticed later on. For the processes of detached cerebration he had almost no respect. The qualities to which he constantly returns, after deploring the drift towards "Formalism" and "Spiritual Paralysis", are "Wonder, Greatness, Godhood". Finally the whole opposition between what is and what ought to be is summed in the terms, Scepticism or Unbelief on the one hand, and Faith on the other. To pursue the path of argument and conscious discourse is for man to pass in turn the milestones of mental doubt, moral doubt, plausibility, spiritual paralysis and atheism until the end is met of "miserably dying... in the detestable belly of some

1 Heroes, 146.
2 Heroes, 93.
3 Heroes, 139.
Phalaris'—Bull of his own contriving". The alternative is to "Believe"—then

the world will once more become sincere;
a believing world; with many Heroes in it,
a heroic world! It will then be a victorious
world; never till then. 1

The issue is put plainly then: "The battle of Belief
against Unbelief is the never-ending battle:" 2 Exactly the
same statement had appeared five or six years earlier: "The
special, sole, and deepest theme of the World's and Man's
History," says the Thinker of our time, "where to all other themes
are subordinated, remains the Conflict of Unbelief and Belief.
All epochs in which belief prevails, under what form it may,
are splendid, heart-elevating, fruitful for contemporaries
and posterity." "Here on Earth we are as Soldiers, fighting
in a foreign land; that understand not the plan of campaign,
and have no need to understand it." 3

It is already clear that for Carlyle the verb "to
believe" has some mystical value and is hence commonly used
intransitively. For the most part the rhetoric and the
energy of expression are assumed to be sufficient guarantee
both that Carlyle has available an "object" for the verb, and
that the reader will know what it is. In the same fashion
are the words Faith, Loyalty, Worship and Religion used.
"This and the other earnest man has not been wanting, who

1 Heroes, 145.
2 Heroes, 141.
3 "Characteristics", 227.
could audibly whisper to himself: 'Go to, I will make a religion.' . . . It is not by Mechanism, but by Religion; not by Self-Interest, but by Loyalty, that men are governed or governable." 1 For Carlyle evidently any religion is better than no religion, any object of loyalty better than none. But any institution of religion (e.g. "religions" used as a plural) and any creed, at once becomes suspect, another of the "isms"; and the Oxford Movement is merely another aberration from the path of truth, straying to one side as far as Utilitarianism has done to the other. The only true religious "ism" is such as Abbot Samson's "which he merely ate at stated intervals and lived and did his work upon" for "his religion, his worship, was like his daily bread to him."

"This is Abbot Samson's Catholicism of the Twelfth Century" but "O Heavens, what shall we say of Puseyism in comparison?" 2

If, however, one looks often in vain for the object of worship, loyalty and faith, nevertheless there are exalted passages enough where what Bentham would call a "vague generality" indeed, is named or apostrophised: "Do we not already know that the name of the Infinite is Good, is God?" 3 The existence of God, for Carlyle, is not the first article of faith; it is the first fact. Therefore faith attaches not to His existence, but to His goodness. This is "natural supernaturalism". "The eternal fact begins again to be recognized . . . that God not only made us and beholds us,

1 "Characteristics", 226.
2 Past and Present, 98-99. 3 "Characteristics, 227."
but is in us and around us." ¹ If one begins with this "fact", the whole edifice of Carlyle's philosophy itself becomes as "logical" as Bentham's, who started with the "fact" that man sought his own pleasure. But of every tenet that Bentham held, Carlyle must hold the opposite - physical desire in the one system was replaced by physical denial in the other, reason was replaced by faith, ease by toil, the acquisition of authority by submission to it, science by devotion, rights by duties, research by wonder, prose by poetry, calculation by inspiration, and the perfect system by the perfect man. Bentham begins with the universal "fact" of human desire and builds outwards, ending with a perfect social system. Beyond that nothing can be known and nothing is therefore worth consideration. Carlyle begins with the "eternal fact" of God's existence (more than which nothing can be known) and ends with the individual soul which is likewise a mystery, but likewise a fact. The relation of the last to the first is one of acknowledgement (which is "natural") and of obedience (which is "right"):

Observe with joy, so cunningly has Nature ordered it, that whatsoever man ought to obey, he cannot but obey. Before no faintest revelation of the Godlike did he ever stand irreverent. ²

"Society" will arrange itself spontaneously as another "mystery" only when individuals themselves do what is natural and right. "Reform, like Charity, O Bobus, must begin at home.³

¹ "Characteristics", 226. See Basil Willey, "Carlyle's Religion", in Nineteenth Century Studies, 105-125.
² Sartor Resartus, 170.
³ Past and Present, 29.
"Thou and I, my friend, can in the most flunky world, make, each of us, one non-flunky, one hero, if we like." 1

Considered well, Society is the standing wonder of our existence; a true region of the Supernatural... that mystic union. [Society is that] wherein whatever of Infinitude was in us bodies itself forth. 2

Society then, grows out of the individuals who compose it. A perfect society will grow up out of individuals each of whom has sought to make himself so. And since the perfection of both the individuals and the society which they compose is achieved by a reverent submission to the will of God it follows that any separation of "functions" into Church and State is artificial and meaningless. A perfect society is a religious society.

Not only is the antithesis to the Benthamite programme implicit in all this; it constantly becomes explicit. Religion has degenerated into "religions" and so become pre-occupied with mechanisms - "Rituals, Liturgies, Creeds, Hierarchies: all this is not religion." 3 And so, in practise forms of observance "whereby some smaller quantum of earthly enjoyment may be exchanged for a far larger quantum of celestial enjoyment", religion too has become "a wise prudential feeling grounded on mere calculation; a matter, as all other are now, of Expediency and Utility." 4 It is the "Doctrine of Motives" which leads to atheism, teaching a

1 Past and Present, 30. 2 "Characteristics", 202. 3 Past and Present, 192. 4 "Signs of the Times", 40.
man "nothing but a wretched love of Pleasure, fear of Pain,"
and implying that "Hunger, of applause, of cash, of whatsoever
victual it may be, is the ultimate fact of man's life." ¹ Thus
does Carlyle set up Faith as the saving habit of mind which
will rescue England from the sink of materialism in which she
welters. Moreover he conceives true faith as a unifying
principle conferring a sense of national identity and national
destiny upon the people. The proliferation of sects therefore
is regarded as but another symptom of uncertainty and selfish-
ness. His voice is added to the literary chorus condemning
"respectablest" Methodism:

Methodism with its eye forever turned on its
own navel; asking itself with torturing
anxiety of Hope and Fear, "... Shall I be
saved? Shall I not be damned?" What is this,
at bottom, but a new phasis of egoism.²

He regards the adherents of such "religions" as being no less
preoccupied with their own future happiness than the Utili-
tarians are with their own present happiness. Yet, to
Carlyle, happiness or unhappiness are only casual attendant
circumstances hardly to be controlled, certainly not to be
aimed at. In fact, unhappiness is part of the privilege of
being human.

Man's Unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his
Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite
in him, which with all his cunning he cannot
quite bury under the Finite. ³

¹ Heroes, 143.
² Past and Present, 98.
³ Sartor Resartus, 129.
Faith then, not reason, will lead to contentment. Happiness is out of the question, since it is not happiness but "Blessedness" that man is really seeking. So Carlyle leads up to the supreme affirmation of faith, by which the various Benthamite degrees of unhappiness become so many "merciful Afflictions." Finally, at the highest point of Carlyle's philosophical structure, the Utilitarian ethic is the named adversary: "Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA."  

Before going on to consider the other tenets of Carlyle's belief, it may be worthwhile to notice that the creeds of both Bentham and Carlyle are optimistic and deterministic. We have seen in Chapter I how Utilitarianism propounded not only what was right, and what was best, but what was inevitable. The argument runs: though this has never been, this could well be; and this should be; and this will be. On the other hand Carlyle's message is: Since God exists, and since man's whole nature impels him to obey God, then these things will come about as they have ever done in the past: indeed they must. It is on such grounds that Emerson, contradicting the pronouncement of Arnold that Carlyle was a "pessimist", placed him among the idealistic optimists.

History for Bentham was the record of man's folly.

1 Sartor Resartus, 131.
Reason demanded that the book be shut again after each day's entry. But as Carlyle saw it

we inherit not Life only, but all the garniture and form of Life; and work, and speak, and even think and feel, as our Fathers, and primeval grandfathers, from the beginning, have given it us... There is a living, literal Communion of Saints, wide as the world itself, and as the History of the world.  

The Present is the living sum-total of the whole Past.

Exactly as the obedience to the inner impulses, the proper ripening of each individual soul, would spontaneously produce a harmonious society in any place or at any time, so from generation to generation the same expansion towards self-fulfilment, aspiring always towards the Infinite, produced a social harmony, a growth, and in a sense not apprehended by Bentham, a progress. "What the Father has made, the Son can make and enjoy; but has also work of his own appointed him. Thus all things wax and roll onwards." And Carlyle appends the customary admonition: "Let the friends of social order, in such a disastrous period, lay this to heart, and derive from it any little comfort they can." "The wisdom of our elders" was for Bentham a fossilized fallacy which he examined and destroyed with a convincing enough if rather facile piece of logic. For Carlyle this same "fallacy" was a precious truth. As in the case of "Nobleness", the word "Tradition" had for him an almost mystical value: "Hast thou

1 Sartor Resartus, 167.
2 "Characteristics", 223.
ever meditated upon that word, Tradition . . ." 1

Bentham, turning his back squarely on the past, locked (with unshakable confidence in the application of common-sense) to what might be made of the future. But in Carlyle's view the future would not be made at all; or in any case it would not be man's intelligence that would shape it. The future lay already "on the loom; and silently, mysterious shuttles were putting in the woof." 2 "The general issue will, as it has always done, rest well with a Higher Intelligence than ours." 3

Thus it is none of man's concern to prophesy or attempt to shape what is to come. Such attempts are doubly futile; first, because the future will not be made, but will grow, branching and flowering according to patterns inherent in the germ of creation - ("the boundless Future does lie there, predestined, nay already extant though unseen") 4

Only he who understands what has been, can know what should be and will be; 5 second, because even "the supremest intelligence of man cannot prefigure much of it." 6 Thus the wise man, as always, concerns himself with the "duty that lies next at hand." That is to say, he attempts to discern (by studying what is there to be known, in the past) what the developing

1 Sartor Resartus, 167. 2 Sartor Resartus, 12. 3 Past and Present, 211. 4 Past and Present, 209. 5 Miscellanies, Vol.VI, 406. 6 Past and Present, 209.
pattern is, what actions and fidelities in the past have contributed to the growth of the pattern and may therefore be assumed to continue its evolution. He will be able to trace one or two "grand outlines", and hence "to ascertain clearly what he, for his own part ought to do."

To shape the whole Future is not our problem; but only to shape faithfully a small part of it, according to rules already known. 1

This last sentence contains the whole of Carlyle's belief about the past, the present and the future. It is the past which reveals the "elements" of human life, running from the very roots of it . . . up to this present hour of it in our own hearts.

(again the image of the tree) and "we conclude that such will have to continue." 2 It is in the present that our "duty" lies; it is now that our work must be done, before "the night cometh, wherein no man can work." 3 Moreover, in looking at the past, we must do so "with due earnestness and what we find there we must now "with true heart, do and continue doing." In both the sentences inset above there is found the insistent, supreme injunction "to thine own self be true", lying in the words "faithfully" and "in our own hearts". As for the future, that "is not our problem"—a man cannot penetrate by the eye of reason "its dark enormous depths." Yet because he has a soul, and in that

1 Past and Present, 209.
3 Past and Present, 209.
soul "an Eternal", "he already knows what will continue."
The future is for faith, then, and the dutiful man is assured
that no rational, deliberate, contrivance of forms can alter
it; he knows "what cannot, by any means or appliance what-
soever, be made to continue." 1 For this reason Carlyle
is able to remind his readers of the disastrous effects of
revolution. In France, the casting off of traditional
institutions, especially the purge of the priesthood, had
resulted in a gap, a fracture in the line of national growth.
In France

the New, whatever it may be, cannot now grow
out of the Old, but is severed asunder from
the Old - how much lies wasted in that gap! 2

Such radical alterations to or the complete dissolution of
traditional forms as the Utilitarians proposed would similarly
produce a gap, would indeed ringbark the living tree and
impede its future growth.

Therefore Carlyle's whole concern is with Past and
Present. Therefore, "Two men I honour, and no third." 3
The first man he honours is "the toil-worn Craftman."
"Toil on, toil on: thou art in thy duty, be out of it who
may." The labourer's duty lies in the present, next at
hand - the winning of daily bread. The second man, who is
also "in his duty" is he who toils for the spiritually
indispensable, "not daily bread, but the bread of Life."

1  Past and Present, 210.
2  Chartism, 291.
3  Sartor Resartus, 154-155.
He is the Artist, whose endeavours are first, as might be expected, "towards inward Harmony"; second, towards "revealing this, by act or by word" so that he actively promotes the growth of social harmony by contributing to it the result of his own "inward endeavour"; third, towards discerning the will of God and hence "conquering Heaven for us!" For this second man is "the inspired Thinker," and it is the Thinker, as has been said, whose concern with the conflict of Unbelief and Belief is "the special, sole and deepest theme of the World's and Man's History."

In Carlyle's own case, then, he saw his duty to lie first in the full expression and development of his own personality - and that personality had been uniquely developed, if the style is indeed the man; second, in the revelation of that individuality and that effort after harmony so that society might in turn be influenced - and Carlyle's was the most potent personal influence in the period:

In and from 1840 his name was running like wildfire through the British Islands and through English-speaking America; there was the utmost avidity for his books . . . especially among the young men; phrases from them were in all young men's mouths and were affecting the public speech; 1

third, in the study of the past in order to discover the will of God - and Carlyle ransacked history from Woden to Wellington solely in that intention. 2

1 Kathleen Tillotson, Novels of the 1840's, 150.
2 See "On History Again", in Miscellaneous Essays, Vol.VI, 405. The essay is a mock discourse to the "Society for the Diffusion of Common Honesty".
A fourth basic tenet of Carlyle's, which was in direct opposition to the Benthamite propositions, was his attitude towards authority. For Bentham, to have power was to have pleasure; to be the subject of power was to be the subject of pain. Obedience, then, in so far as it was necessary to social harmony, was for Bentham a necessary source of individual pain. But to Carlyle obedience was at once a privilege and a pleasure—a pleasure, since the impulse to obey was part of every man's true self, inborn, natural and salutary, a divine gift which like all such gifts brought pleasure through its being exercised.

Thus Carlyle brought to established authority a strong sense of reverence wholly foreign to Bentham.

No man is justified in resisting by word or deed the Authority he lives under, for a light cause, be such Authority what it may... Rebel without due and most due cause, is the ugliest of words; the first rebel was Satan. 1

In his unique way Carlyle turned with something strangely like approval to the Stuart concept of kingship, since for him too "kings were by God appointed."

It was well said there lay in the acknowledged Strongest a divine right. 2

Well... was it written by theologians: a King rules by divine right. He carries in him an authority from God. 3

But his first requirement of a king, that he must be successful through his strength, relieved him of the need to regard

1 Chartism, 315.
2 French Revolution, 10.
3 Sartor Resartus, 168.
Charles as a martyr and his beloved Cromwell as a usurper, as Oxford taught its sons to believe.

Throughout his writing Carlyle insists on man's need to obey. In thrusting aside with scorn the idea of "the rights of man" he nevertheless returns to the claim that men have always this one inalienable right — the right to be obedient, the right to have someone in authority. Only by asserting this right and exercising it can men hope to be free in any practicable scheme of things.

Neither except in such Obedience to the Heaven-chosen is Freedom so much as conceivable. 1

The "soul-confusing labyrinths of speculative Radicalism" would attempt to achieve freedom by "manufacturing" it, as all other things are manufactured in this mechanical age.

Unfortunately for the schemes of the modern social philosophers, whatever they may think to "make" of man, the "nature of man is not to be denied; and the nature of man is to obey. "So cunningly has Nature ordered it, that whatsoever man ought to obey, he cannot but obey." Man has not lost, and cannot lose, "his faculty of Reverence." For this reason his freedom lies only in obedience, and "only in reverently bowing down before the Higher does he feel himself exalted."

This is the paradox of man's nature that Utilitarianism has neglected in the "feats of manufacture" it would attempt.

1 Sartor Resartus, 168.
Thus "FREEDOM", like happiness, is not brought to light in
that same Ballot-box of yours" or in any other "devisable
Box, Edifice, or Steam-Mechanism." 1

Carlyle's prescription, no "Morrison's Pill", is,
as always, to "know thyself": only by considering what he is
and has been can man know what he might be.  As Carlyle sees
it, man is given naturally to hero-worship. But along the
route which led to the identification of right with might
this study is not concerned to pursue him. It is plain that
whatever he did believe, Carlyle did not believe that men's
attitudes towards authority were such as Bentham had repre-
"sented them to be. In this matter the optimism of Carlyle
is again apparent: men will obey because they must obey.
Moreover the concept that "rights" and "duties" are in oppo-
tion is angrily brushed aside: a man's right to serve, is also
his "primal duty". To have no "Higher" whom one can obey is
to fall into perplexity and decadence; to neglect to serve
the "Higher" is to become the dupe of charlatans and sceptics.
In thus identifying rights with duties Carlyle makes a break
with earlier forms of radicalism and enunciates a prime
d doctrine of Young England.

Before considering two last lines of Carlyle's thought
which fell directly athwart the Utilitarian creed something
must be said of the dilemmas into which his beliefs sometimes

1 Sartor Resartus, 170.
led him. It has already been noticed that his belief in the
divine right of kings and his reverence for seated authority
threatened to come into collision with his belief in sheer
native power — notable in the case of Charles and Cromwell
and again in the case of Napoleon. The reader is often
unsatisfied that these issues have been really resolved,
feeling perhaps that in the rush of the rhetoric both he and
Carlyle have been carried away. In the same way the attitude
towards and even the definition of, democracy seem to be
obscured. Nothing is clearer than that Carlyle despised the
Reform Bill and all efforts by all men to achieve one "twenty-
thousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver." He
distrusted too "five-point Chartism" because of its shabby
relations, "Household Suffrage, Ballot-Question" and the rest
of the "shadows of things; Benthamic formulas; barren as
the east-wind!" 1 Yet with what a triumph of admonishment
does he announce the rise of Democracy in "The French Revolu-
tion":

Borne over the Atlantic, to the closing ear
of Louis, King by the Grace of God, what sounds
are these; muffled, ominous, new in our
centuries? ... On Bunker Hill, DEMOCRACY
announcing, in rifle-volleys death-winged, under
her Star Banner, to the tune of Yankee-doodle-
doo, that she is born, and, whirlwind-like, will
envelope the whole world! 2

Again, in "The Hero as King", the same enthusiasm for

1 Chartism, 314.
2 French Revolution, 9.
Democracy is felt in the writing:

That this new enormous Democracy asserting itself here in the French Revolution is an insuppressible Fact, which the whole world, with its old forces and institutions, cannot put down; this was a true insight of [Napoleon's], and took his conscience and enthusiasm along with it, — a faith.

Finally, as has already been shown, even towards Bentham himself, Carlyle's attitude could not be simple; how was he to reconcile the sense of Bentham's devoted service, the undeniable quantity of the work done, with the sense of its mischievousness?

For every such case there is accommodation made in Carlyle's creed. Thus a king (like Charles I, or Louis XVI) is in fact no king if he has not "ability". The concept of kingship, then, is modified to mean the inborn faculty of ruling. It is this which is divinely bestowed, and thus to Cromwell belongs the divine right of kings: "Divine right, take it on the grand scale, is found to mean divine might withal!" 2

The escape from the dilemma in the case of Democracy and Utilitarianism (and the offspring of it, Chartism) is more toilsome. Undeniably, in Carlyle's language, much has been got done. But this "doing" process was not to be regarded as continuous. The democratic revolutions in America and France were not manifestations of power like that

1 Heroes, 196.
2 Heroes, 167.
of the locomotive steam-engine which might be counted on to progress towards a distant and ideal future: their power was, rather, explosive, to overthrow the hollow ruins of old institutions before building could begin again on the known patterns. They were destructive upheavals, and their destruction it was which constituted "an insuppressible Fact". They were necessary catastrophes of growth, though not growth itself. Thus Napoleon, before he fell into "charlatanism", saw that his work was to "bridle-in that great-devouring, self-devouring French Revolution; to tame it... that it may become organic, and be able to live among other organisms and formed things, not as a wasting destruction alone." ¹

In the same way, Utilitarianism was seen to provide not an exodus towards a promised land, but a deliverance from the philistinism of the eighteenth century:

I call this gross, steam-engine Utilitarianism an approach towards new Faith... Benthamism is an eyeless Heroi... ²

Bentham was, then, no Moses, but a "blinded Samson" bringing "huge ruin down, but ultimately deliverance withal." So, too, Chartism, "with its 'five points', borne aloft on pikeheads and torchlight meetings," ³ is an insuppressible fact, and has grown as inevitably out of Benthamism as Benthamism out of the eighteenth century. Chartism, then, has come by

¹ Heroes, 197.
² Heroes, 142. See also Sartor Resartus, 159: "[Utilitarianism] is admirably calculated for destroying, only not for rebuilding!"
³ Chartism, 315.
"necessity" and there is nothing in the fact to be deplored. What is deplorable is to regard Chartism as a constructive, progressive principle, instead of as the destructive force of the "great dumb, deep-buried class" which in its distress "has to produce earthquakes." 1

"Nevertheless," cries Teufelsdröckh, "who can hinder it; who is there that can clutch into the wheelspokes of Destiny, and say to the Spirit of Time: Turn back, I command thee? Wiser were it that we yielded to the Inevitable and Inexorable, and accounted even this the best." 2

To sum up, it may be said that Carlyle did manage, in the manner shown, to reconcile his enthusiasm for the revolutionary energy (an enthusiasm which breaks out constantly in The French Revolution) with his disgust for and alarm at this "sort of Dog-madness"; and to concede the thoroughness and effectiveness of the Benthamite philosophy while still reviling its adherents as "Utilitarians, Radicals, refractory Potwalloppers, and so forth." 3

Bulking large among the speculative material which the Utilitarians had borrowed from eighteenth century theory and were devotedly putting into nineteenth century practice were the economic doctrines of Adam Smith and the formidable population theorem of Thomas Malthus. To Carlyle the

1 Chartism, 312.
2 Sartor Resartus, 160.
3 Sartor Resartus, 193.
principles of both men were abhorrent, again for reasons less cogent than temperamental.

It might be supposed that the doctrine of *laissez-faire*, based upon the recognition of every man’s right to work out his own economic destiny would have recommended itself to Carlyle who by instinct distrusted systems and mechanical impositions of all sorts and who on the other hand was convinced that the only salvation for any man was to labour diligently at the work which lay next at hand. Indeed the philosophic dilemma here is more acute than in any instance already noted, and the reader is unable to trace any logical route however devious along which Carlyle goes very far towards reconciling his attitudes. Always as his disquisitions bring him to the crux Carlyle makes only resounding appeals to his reader’s sympathy and the crisis is rushed by with a flurry of rhetoric and compound, abusive nouns.

Innumerable things our Upper Classes and Lawgivers might "do"; but the preliminary of all things, we must repeat, is to know that a thing must *needs* be done . . . that self-cancelling Donothingism and Laissez-faire should have got so ingrained into our Practice, is the source of all these miseries . . . Parliament will absolutely, with whatever effort, have to lift itself out of those deep ruts of doing nothing routine; and learn to say, on all sides, something more edifying than *laissez-faire*. 1

So the reader's expectations are raised towards some, however broad, indication of what Parliament might do which would not

1 *Chartism*, 295-596.
be likely to call upon itself the same objurgations as the Reform Bill had done. But it is at this point that the evasion is made under barrage of admonitory tropes and tricks of oratory:

The toiling millions of England ask of their English Parliament foremost of all, Canst thou govern us or not? . . . If Parliament cannot do this thing, Parliament we prophesy will do some other thing and things, which, in the strangest and not the happiest way, will forward its being done, - not much to the advantage of Parliament probably!

Nothing could be more unsatisfactory, and it is Carlyle himself, with his petty pumping at the words "Parliament" and "thing" and his exclamation marks, who recalls to us the title of his own villain, Sir Jabesh Windbag.

Toiling Classes of mankind declare, in their confused most emphatic way, to the Untoiling, that they will be governed; that they must, under penalty of Chartism, Thuggeries, Rick-burnings, and even blacker things than those.

So this chapter from Chartism explodes in a medley of random names ('patient docile Johnsons", "half mad inflammable Rousseaus", "Philippe d'Orleans, not yet Egalité", "Sergeant Taifourd" . . . ) and ends with the pregnant-seeming but quite barren: "Alas, in regard to so very many things, Laissez-faire ought partly to endeavour to cease!"

Wherever the doctrine of laissez-faire is mentioned by Carlyle the same impatience is displayed, and naturally enough the doctrine is always linked by him with the general ethic of Utilitarianism. He detests these things even for having
their origins in the eighteenth century:

True, this was the practice of the whole Eighteenth Century; and struggles still to prolong itself into the Nineteenth — which however is no longer the time for it! 1

Especially, however, laissez-faire runs counter to his basic belief about social organisation, which is that men have a right not to be left alone. "Guide me, govern me! I am mad and miserable, and cannot guide myself!" These are the "bellowings, inarticulate cries as of a dumb creature in rage and pain" 2 which Carlyle believes the working classes to be making. As for the middle classes, laissez-faire is for them too,

at the best, as we say, a somewhat despicable, unvenerable thing, this same "Laissez-faire"; and now, at the worst, fast growing an altogether detestable one! 3

For it leads directly to the "Mammon-Gospel", to the "ravenous greed of money, of pleasure, of applause: - it is the Gospel of Despair!" Thus, by reading in their contexts Carlyle's diatribes against laissez-faire, one comes to the conclusion that his objections may vary according to the class with which he is dealing: the aristocracy are reduced by it to "Mayfair Clothes-Horses" and neglect to govern; the middle classes are lured to perdition by it and neglect their immortal souls; and the working classes are betrayed by it into starvation and slavery while being deprived of their "sacred right" to be

1 Chartism, 296.
2 Chartism, 288.
3 Past and Present, 155.
Carlyle is once again, however, bound to admit that laissez-faire is here, and fiercely operating. How is this "fact" to be accounted for and embraced in the general optimism of his creed? "Fact, in the meanwhile, takes his lucifer-box, sets fire to wheat-stacks;" etc., etc. ¹ The explanation lies once again in his conviction that this state of affairs is transient, but necessary, a moment of upheaval before a "precious and thrice-precious space of years" ensues, "wherein to struggle as for life in reforming our foul ways." ² The Calvinist peeps out in all he utters.

The name of Adam Smith has only to occur to Carlyle for the name of Malthus to come also into his mind:

Laissez-faire and Malthus, Malthus and Laissez-faire: ought not these two at length to part company? Might we not hope that both of them had as good as delivered their message now, and were about to go their ways? ³

In reply to the forlorn prognostications of Malthus Carlyle at least has an answer pat; and the solution he offers, that of emigration, is wonderfully able to touch off the romantic, poetic fire in him; for the glamour of "boundless Plains and Prairies unbroken with the plough; on the west

¹ Chartism, 287.
² Past and Present, 157.
³ Chartism, 326.
and on the east green desert spaces never yet made white with corn" is as inflaming to Carlyle\'s imagination as it was to the earliest Romantics\'.

Meanwhile, what portion of this inconsiderable terraqueous Globe have ye actually tilled and delved, till it will grow no more? How thick stands your Population in the Pampas and Savannas of America; round ancient Carthage, and in the interior of Africa; on both slopes of the Altaic chain, in the central Platform of Asia; in Spain, Greece, Turkey, Crim Tartary, the Curragh of Kildare?  

Must the indomitable millions, full of old Saxon energy and fire, lie cooped-up in this Western Nook, choking one another . . . ?  

Malthus is despised however not so much because his \"fixed idea\" is "undoubtedly akin to the more diluted forms of madness" 3 but because his vision of the human scene is too grotesquely offensive to Carlyle. In Sartor Resartus it occasions one of the most grisly of Carlyle\'s jests when he recommends a new field sport of pauper-hunting, an annual three-day shoot in which all the accumulated surplus of able-bodied men shall be slain, salted and barrelled as provender for Army and Navy and for the remaining, infirm paupers. And in similar vein he recommends in Chartism the appointment of a "Parish Exterminator" and a reservoir of arsenic kept up at the public expense and free to all poor parishioners. 4

More soberly, he protests that he "has his own notions about human dignity." The great new working populations are to
retain their human dignity by composing in Carlyle's emotionally-charged phrase "The New Chivalry of Labour", a phrase which, like so many of his coinings, soars at once from the actual into the ideal and leaves the reader in want of the links of possibility which might join the two.

The poet in Carlyle is an epic poet and it is precisely the contemplation of the toiling millions and of the astonishing amount of work they get done which moves him most profoundly:

Manchester, with its cotton-fuz, its smoke and dust, its tumult and contentious squalor, is hideous to thee? Think not so: a precious substance, beautiful as magic dreams and yet no dream but a reality, lies hidden in that noisome wrappage. ¹

There follows one of his excited descriptions of the new industrial cities. Goethe, "our World-Poet", knew well what he was saying when he found such a scene of all things he had seen in this world the most poetical. In the new industrial era and in its aggregated millions of workers (or would-be workers), there is a new heroism (or potential heroism), and in the vast opportunities for toil there are as glorious opportunities for godliness - "All true work is sacred." ²

Thus it is that Carlyle is temperamentally opposed to Malthus, because for Carlyle men and women constitute nothing so abstract as "Population", but are so many living, God-fashioned miracles,

¹ Chartism, 308.
² Past and Present, 170.
each with his soul to save by

sweat of the brow; and up from that to sweat
of the brain, sweat of the heart; which
includes all Kepler calculations, all acted
Heroisms, Martyrdoms, — up to that "Agony of
bloody sweat," which all men have called
divine! 1

To Carlyle the growing multitude of Englishmen is seen as a
great new birth, and indeed all Europe is parturient with this
new breed of men, "travails that she may be a mother, and say,
Behold, there is a new Man born!" 2 It is the "frightfullest
madness of our mad epoch" that distresses should arise or
threaten to arise because of this most blessed increase,

a real increase: increase of Men; of human
Force; properly in such a Planet as ours, the
most precious of all increases. 3

Already in the passages quoted above there has been
breaking through, Carlyle's heavy racial prejudice in favour
of the Saxon peoples. The Teutonic twist of his mind and
imagination, his preoccupation with German subjects and style,
and his general conviction that England was great and had a
great destiny mainly because of her Saxon breeding, these facts
are so implicit in his work and so familiar that they need no
more illustration here than has already been given. It is

1 Past and Present, 170.
2 Chartism, 327.
3 "Characteristics", 224.
only necessary to add that Carlyle regarded the "Saxon British" as divinely appointed masters of lesser breeds of men. Such a concept is violently at variance with the Benthamite view of mankind, and Carlyle recognises that this is so. The whole of "The Nigger Question" is provocatively addressed to the UNIVERSAL ABOLITION-OF-PAIN ASSOCIATION, and venomously attacks the Utilitarians from first to last. According to the "benevolent twaddle" and "rosepink sentimentalism" of the Dismal Science, the vote of a Black Quashee, sitting up to his ears in Pumpkins is "equal and no more to that of a Chancellor Bacon". The idea of democracy is frightful enough to Carlyle:

the enlightened public one huge Gaërenee- swinery, tall cocked, snout in air, with joyful animating short squeak [rushing] to the bottomless cloacas of nature.

But the idea of equality between "heroic white men, worthy to be called old Saxons" and a "poor blockhead" of a Nigger - this is an idea which drives him to distraction when it does not make him laugh.

Finally, some attention must be given to that habit of Carlyle's which distinguishes his teaching from Bentham's at the

1 See "The Nigger Question", 484. 3 "The Nigger Question", 474.
very root - that is his faith in the "rightness" of the sub-conscious mind and its promptings, as distinct from the rigid reliance on conscious cerebration. It is this faith which he shares with Newman, and the essay by Jefferson B. Fletcher already cited, 1 is mainly concerned with tracing the affinities of the two men through their almost identical reliance upon the "unconscious" mind as their true and immediate guide. It is hardly necessary to add that it is this reliance which brings both men directly into the main stream of Romanticism, for if one were obliged to define a single element in Romanticism which clearly marked its departure from Classicism and which has characterised Romantic writing right up to the present day, then one must do so in terms of the value placed upon the subliminal activities of the mind.

It is not proposed here to make at any length the same observations as are most luminously made in J.B. Fletcher's essay but a handful of extracts from Carlyle's essay, "Characteristics", will show how clearly he himself expounded his basic theorem which Newman also put forward, notably in his Oxford Sermon on "Explicit and Implicit Reason".

Unconsciousness [says Carlyle] is the sign of creation; Consciousness, at best, that of manufacture.

In Life . . . the roots and inward circulations which stretch down fearfully to the regions of Death and Night, shall not hint of their existence, and only the fair stem with its leaves and flowers, shone on by the fair sun, shall disclose itself, and joyfully grow.

1 In The Atlantic Monthly, Vol.95, 675 ff.
These curious relations of the Voluntary and Unconscious, and the small proportion which, in all departments of our life, the former bears to the latter, - might lead us into deep questions of Psychology and Physiology.

(It is his awareness of how small a part the voluntary and conscious plays in determining human motivation and human conduct that gives Carlyle the conviction to assail the Utilitarian system of "Universal suffrage, Cottage-and-Cow systems, Repression of Population, Vote by Ballot," as trivial and mechanical.)

Manufacture is intelligible but trivial; Creation is great, and cannot be understood.

The healthy Understanding, we should say, is not the Logical, argumentative, but the Intuitive.

(Thus it comes about that all "mere Speculation", "all System-makers and builders of logical card-castles", must end where they began.)

The state of Society in our days is, of all possible states, the least an unconscious one: this is specially the Era when all manner of Inquiries into what was once the unfelt, involuntary sphere of man's existence, find their place . . . Improvement of the Age, the Spirit of the Age, Destruction of Prejudice, Progress of the Species, and the March of Intellect.

Once again, this deplorable present dependence of the age upon the "Conscious or Mechanical" is believed to be but a passing phase, and the principle of life will soon again withdraw
into its inner sanctuaries, its abysses of mystery and miracle; withdraw deeper than ever into that domain of the Unconscious, by nature infinite and inexhaustible; and creatively work there.

Such is Carlyle's psychological creed, and illustrative examples of his faith in it might be endlessly multiplied. Two interesting by-products of it, however, are all that need now be given:

Literature is but a branch of Religion, and always participates in its character: however, in our time, it is the only branch that still shows any greenness; and, as some think, must one day become the main stem.

This observation arises out of Carlyle's belief that since both religion and literature are spontaneous, the natural expression of unexamined but deeply planted impulses, then each is related to the other. This belief and the belief in the necessary transience of what is mechanical and the necessary permanence of what is dynamic, are beliefs shared by Newman though they do not come into the scope of Fletcher's consideration. Both are mysteries and as such are offensive to Utilitarianism. For, to Carlyle, all creativeness is "mysterious" and all that can be known about it is that it will be forever breaking out "winged as the thunderbolt is". Thus, because the motives of every individual human action are buried in mystery beyond sounding, the shape that any society takes will remain mysterious, inaccessible to the most confident and persistent prober. This is the complete, Romantic, antithesis
of Bentham's view of the ideal society as a reasonable union, man's highest work with man.

The second by-product, again of some literary interest, is that Carlyle's belief in the "Unconscious" as the source of poetic power is so reminiscent of Wordsworth's belief in the "Imagination", that it is inevitable that one compare the two men in other ways. Reading the central chapters of Sartor Resartus ("The Everlasting No", "Centre of Indifference", "The Everlasting Yea") is, when allowance has been made for differences in time and in manner of writing, quite remarkably like reading "The Prelude". This is not the place to develop the comparison, but it may be here observed, first, that once again it was the mind of Coleridge which made of Wordsworth a "renovated spirit"; second, that Wordsworth's own "everlasting yea" was the re-affirmation of faith in the imagination and the rejection of rationalism and "self-applauding intellect"; and third, that it was the eighteenth century's tendency "to anatomise the frame of social life", "more and more / Misguided and misleading", which brought Wordsworth to his own "everlasting no" when he had "lost / All feeling of conviction". By the time that Carlyle was called upon to make the same denial, "the most important transaction in my Life", what of the eighteenth century's philosophy still had vitality had been gathered together in England as Utilitarianism and his "everlasting no" was made "in contradiction to much Profit-and-Loss Philosophy,
speculative and practical, that Soul is not synonymous with Stomach".

Only this I know, if what thou namest Happiness be our true aim, then are we all astray. 1

The main forces of the literary reaction against Utilitarianism have been displayed. In the chapters which follow there will be examined the play of these forces within the works of three novelists who in many ways have almost as strong an individual character in their works as they had in their personalities and careers. Indeed one of their attractions as writers in the period is, as we shall see, their expressed disagreement with each other and in some cases with Coleridge, Newman and Carlyle. It is only their common rejection of the Utilitarian view of God, man and society which reveals their kinship.

1  Sartor Resartus, 112.
Chapter III

DISRAELI

The Constitution of England is a profounder piece of human wit than the Brutilitarian philosophers imagine when they recommend to us their new lamps with such pert conceit, and so much complacent ignorance.
In order to read Disraeli's novels with any security of pleasure it is necessary to recognise that the predominant element in his composition was a marked resilience, what his enemies would call the "bounce", of a "damned Jew-boy". This resilience was compounded of courage and humour. It was the courage which impelled him to return to the attack regardless of the humiliations which the world heaped upon him; it was the humour which enabled him to laugh both at the world and at himself and so preserved him from a disastrous solemnity. He was an actor, or as some would have it, a mountebank. He calculated his effects, he studied postures, he set up his models, choosing only those which satisfied his ideals, and then he proceeded to imitate them. He was at all times completely conscious not only of himself but also of the effects he was producing. There is always therefore a doubleness of dealing in Disraeli; or, if that expression has a sinister sound, there is always a complexity of attitude. He aims at the effect, not always because he is emotionally constrained to take aim but often because the effect itself appeals to his artistic sense. On such occasions (and they may make up a whole book) Disraeli's satisfaction begins and ends with the exercise itself.

Alongside Carlyle and Newman Disraeli is apt to appear a trifler. There could hardly be three men whose
personalities as they are revealed in their writings were more widely different. Each has a prose style which reflects the man, and each style is unique to the point of being recognisable in almost any single paragraph. Carlyle's style reflects his intelligence — a tenacious, irritable, simple, dogmatic and forthright intelligence, massively un-self-critical and effective through its terrible energy. Newman's style is decorous, mild and firm, reflecting an intelligence always self-examining if not to any extent self-critical, a mind of considerable complacency and sensitivity, serious and imaginative to the point of being superstitious. Disraeli's style is always self-conscious, and his mind is adventurous, generalising "European" as he called it, and at the same time immensely self-critical. No subjects were richer soil for Disraeli's satire than his own imaginings and ambitions. The Byronic pose never failed both to impress and to amuse him. He was a dandy's dandy, the caricature and the cartoonist at once. Satire is the very element, not a mere aspect, of his intelligence and only by discerning this can the reader reconcile himself to the contradictions and the inequalities he must meet with.

An egotism of the most fruitful sort informs the work of these three writers; and it is their egotism which is affronted by the levelling tendency of Utilitarianism. In Carlyle the heightened sense of the self and its value may be traceable to Calvinistic sources, and this may be true of
Newman as well. Certainly for Newman there was a moment in his adolescence when he underwent a spiritual crisis which, as he himself declares, left him forever with the "thought of two and two only supreme and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator."  

Vivian Grey, the first of the many fictional disguises of Disraeli, also declares:

"I recognise, you know full well, no intermediate essence between my own good soul and that ineffable and omnipotent spirit in whose existence philosophers and priests alike agree."  

In Disraeli what remains consistent (and, to many people, consistently detestable) is his egotism. It was of such a highly developed order that, just as Newman must prostrate himself, but only before the supreme Authority, so Disraeli must impose himself and nothing short of the whole nation would suffice for his dominion. So it comes about that all Disraeli's novels have personal bearings; they are all, at bottom, upon the same subject, namely Disraeli himself. Nobody was less suited to a democratical climate, less willing to be counted as a head, or less likely to be satisfied with an equal share of felicific units.

In the present examination of Disraeli's works it will be shown how, in his passionate and derisive rejection of Utilitarianism, he has been indebted to both Newman and Carlyle and how he has gone beyond them as a constructive

political thinker, displaying a vision more comprehensive than
Newman's and a fervour more practically positive than Carlyle's.
It was Disraeli's redeeming virtues of self-criticism and of
adaptability to changing circumstances that made him a force
to be reckoned with. His impact on English affairs was in
the end more effective than that of Carlyle and more widely
enduring than that of Newman; and indeed when results are
examined it would seem that in the reaction against Utilitarian-
ism Disraeli's is the figure that overtops all others.

His career as a political thinker was one of change
and development and as these things find reflection in his
fictional works it is necessary to divide his literary output
into two parts for present purposes of treatment. In the
publications before Coningsby he will seem to vacillate rather
irresponsibly in his attitudes. In Coningsby and in the
works which follow it he is seriously committed to an anti-
Utilitarian view of Englishmen as individuals and of the
British Constitution as a political system. Less detailed
attention can therefore be granted here to the earlier
productions, our chief concern in them at present being
limited to those places where the reaction against Utilitarian-
ism is already setting in.

Certain lines of development are to be followed in
this study of Disraeli's works, and these may now be briefly
laid down. It will be shown for example that from first to
last he exalts the individual. His novels of high life, like the whole "silver fork school" of fiction, represented for the author and provided for the reader an escape from the encroaching drabness of industrial England. The Hammonds' characterisation of the period as "The Bleak Age" has been frequently challenged insofar as it suggests that the working classes were more brutally pauperised in the age than at other times; but it is conceded that whether or not the age was extraordinarily impoverished, or pious, or complacent, or unstable, or bewildered, (and all these generalisations have been made), it was a "bleak" age in the sense that beauty was forever being sacrificed to efficiency, and that the very notion of the possible comeliness of social life was going under to the notion of the possible reduction of life to a practical set of economic rules.

Above this darkling plain there feebly shone still the possibility of individual achievement and distinction and it was to this star that Disraeli dashingly hitched his wagon.

To Bentham individuality in men or in nations was a matter of no concern. His system was built upon the assumption that all that men had at the beginning of life they had in common - a desire to pursue pleasure and avoid pain. Pleasure was measurable in cash terms or in terms of political power. Disraeli, like Newman and Carlyle, was
convinced of the value of the individual spirit. His name for the unique set of possibilities, prejudices and predilections that each man possessed was "organisation". The word crops up constantly in his novels, and its strictly interior, personal connotation is significantly at variance with the Benthamite use of the word.

"A man can only be content . . . when his career is in harmony with his organisation," declares a character in Walstein, a dishevelled little scrap of a novel which runs, or is extended, to three chapters and ends with a careless wave of the hand. It contains much more in the same vein:

When a man has a peculiar structure, when he is born with a predisposition, or is, in vulgar language, a man of genius, his content entirely depends upon the predisposition being developed and indulged.

It was the "organisation" of Vivian Grey and the passion of his approach to life that carried him through the pathless wilderness of German forests, English country houses, London seasons, of real-life personages, of caricatures and philosophisings and the endless conversations. Vivian Grey was a new type of picaresque hero astray in a world of conversations and high life romance, and as such he was fitted with a new type of personality which so pleased the taste of the age that he began his journeying anew and having come to rest at

1 Popenilla, 356. Popenilla as used to refer to the volume in the Bradenham edition containing this and other stories.
2 Popenilla, 356.
the end of four books was tempted to trudge and plunge on for another four.

Complementary to this insistence upon and exaltation of individual distinction is a second of Disraeli’s major themes. This is the reliance upon predisposition, upon impulse and upon passion, rather than upon reason as a guide to right and profitable behaviour:

The greater my experience, the more I have become convinced that man is not a rational animal. He is only truly good or great when he acts from passion. 1

Springing in turn from this conviction about action and the springs of action is the equally anti-Benthamite view of the nature of happiness and the means of achieving it. Far from being identified with the possession of power and the possession of wealth (both implying some command over others) happiness is seen by Disraeli to lie in the clear discovery of and complete fulfilment of one’s inner, essential self. This idea is contained in the extracts from Walstein already quoted.

Again, what may be termed social well-being is intimately associated (as in Bentham’s view) with personal happiness. But whereas Bentham would arrive at an ideal social organisation by working outwards from personal demands, Disraeli acknowledges and reveres the existing fact of social

1 Pomanilla, 349.
organisation and would have personal happiness to depend upon a like acknowledgement and reverence. In other words, part of the process of finding what one is consists of finding one's place in an existing social order.

This in turn leads Disraeli to place great value upon the past as having slowly produced the existent social order and a great contribution, comparable to Newman's enquiry into the past of the Establishment, is made in the course of these novels by the characters' and the author's habitual dissertations upon the historical context in which all present life is conducted.

Among the conditions of the past which Disraeli looked back to with regret was the religious uniformity of pre-Reformation times, a condition of spiritual harmony which he believed to be a necessary concomitant of temporal happiness. As an extension of this sense he therefore sympathised with the High Church party as representing the true line of descent of the Reformed English Church. His reverence for Charles I was founded upon many beliefs, not the least of them being that king's staunchly conservative religious adherence and his glad toleration of Roman Catholicism in his realm. Thus Disraeli too responded to the aims and practices of the High Church party in his own day. As for Roman Catholicism, the power of its appeal to Disraeli is so obvious and so obviously
great that one is obliged to conclude that he held aloof from the Roman Church only because politically it was expedient to do so. (John Oliver Hobbes, the witty and sagacious alter ego of Pearl Craigie, has brilliantly explored this in Robert Orange.) When Catholic Emancipation had yet to become a fact and was still a ferment in the nation Disraeli was already fixed in his sympathy for Catholic disabilities, finding no doubt the plight of the inhibited minority close to his own. His personal dilemma lay in the fact that only by a late shedding of the Jewish religion was the possibility of a political and social career opened up for him; and yet it was only by a full acknowledgement of his alien extraction that he could lay claim to the priceless heritage of "blood" that he so devoutly desired. In his novels, then, the Catholics are represented as inhabiting a religious enclave within which their pride and their history have kept them uncontaminated by the last century-and-a-half, and within which their brilliant powers have been preserved from dissipation. The Roman Catholics form as it were a sort of ideal English Jewry.

The Utilitarians, however they might have sympathised with the Catholics as being politically or socially underprivileged, had a deep detestation of their religion.

In all countries where they could get the civil power to side with them... they have succeeded in their nefarious purpose, and mankind are still grovelling at their feet... Under Charles I it [the Church] found the civil
power ready to renew the alliance [and] it recommenced its war against the progress of the human mind, and nearly succeeded in throwing us back to the condition of France and Spain.

The figure of Charles I was presently to flit through the pages of Disraeli's novels as the esteemed ghost of a martyred king.

Also among the conditions of the past which Disraeli admired were the feudal arrangement of classes; the balance of duties and rights, all of them clearly understood; the spontaneous application of relief to the needy by the hand of a sympathetic guardian whether temporal or spiritual; and the localisation of government, the administrative identity of parish and county.

All these beliefs may be seen to run counter to the current of the Utilitarian doctrines and they run more and more strongly through the writings of Disraeli from first to last. There are in addition a few convictions which are peculiarly his own and which are more implicitly than explicitly antipathetic to Utilitarian ideas. We may notice first his animated belief in the power of youth. Youth and aristocratic blood together combine by some marvellous chemistry in his imagination to make the ideal man. Disraeli's personal career is marked by a pathetic and even ludicrous desire to stay young. At sixty-four, the gouty Prime Minister is still, too, the mummified dandy. Vivian Grey's great attraction for his

---

author lies less in his dash, his romantic dark humours, his lofty insouciance and his physical daring than in the fact that all these constitute the treasure of youth. Disraeli reflects in The Young Duke

To those who ... find that youth melting away which they believe can alone achieve anything, I think a birthday is about the most gloomy four-and-twenty hours that ever flapped their damp dull wings over melancholy man." 1

Even Byron loses his appeal when he loses his youth, and a report of his physical decay is sad hearing to Vivian Grey. 2

It is always to "action", the physical and mental elasticity of youth, that Disraeli looks to ameliorate the present, renovate the old and lead in the new. (His favourite classical name is Alcibiades, standing as the type of brilliant original youth, a name which appears probably in every novel he wrote.) Once more, then, it is personal, impulsive, and passionate response to the promptings of individual "organisation" upon which Disraeli builds his social hopes.

Another theme which persists and is peculiar to Disraeli's presentation of life is the role played by women. The attitude towards women, private or proclaimed, of the Utilitarians, forms in itself a subject for study; but from Bentham the bachelor testily refusing to meet Madame de Staël, and James Mill who "had begotten more children than he could

1 The Young Duke, 267.
2 Vivian Grey, 150.
afford on a female whom he despised". 1 to the much scrutinized marriage of minds between J.S. Mill and Harriet Taylor, the Utilitarians had been, to say the least, uncertain of the place that women might play in the coming golden age. But there is no uncertainty in Disraeli, and the chivalric ardour of his treatment of women is as much part of his imaginative retreat to an earlier age as part of his insistence on the supremely civilising value of passion and poetry. In other Victorian novelists like Dickens and Kingsley women exert a civilising power by their purity and tenderness. But Disraeli's women are possessed of a much more positive, humane and spiritual intelligence; they are often in fact the embodiment of just that spontaneous and instinctive wisdom which Disraeli sought to oppose to the mere logicality of Utilitarianism. They are witty, proud, astute and practical. They are responsive to art and natural beauty and poetry, and yet they may be found guiding their menfolk through both personal bewilderments and political mazes with a sometimes repellent adroitness.

These heroines and these heroes of Disraeli almost always share the delight of their creator in poetry, and this constitutes one of the personal, indirect challenges to the Utilitarian philosophy, whose total insensibility to poetic utterance has been observed in the first chapter.

1 G.J. Young, Portrait of an Age, 9.
Unhappily Disraeli's delight in the ornamental quality of language is not always disciplined by that criticism he usually directs upon his own ideas and creations, and much of his work is ruined by a quite extravagant use of poetic devices. He appears almost as insensitively addicted to poetry as the Utilitarians were insensitively averse to it.

Next it is to be observed that Disraeli is deeply devoted to a belief in racial distinctions. We have noticed how Carlyle seized roughly on a conviction of Saxon superiority. But Disraeli's habit is to refine racial distinctions to a most delicate degree, accounting for tiny no less than large facets of character in terms of breeding, and carrying his interpretations to an almost clinical, chemical niceness. This habit is extended beyond individuals to whole nations, and he is therefore more than ever insistent upon the need for distinct national patterns, his historical, evolutionary view of social constitutions coming in support of these views on blood and race. Such concepts were in total reaction against the "international" scope of Utilitarian prescriptions.

Finally it must be noticed that the world of Disraeli's novels is aglow with light. It sparkles with gems, with health, with youth, with wit, with water and sunlight and starlight. It is a world in which the women walk with an "elastic" step and the men ride robustly on Arab steeds superlatively mettled. 1 It is a world created in

1 See J. Holloway, The Victorian Sage,
defiance of the encroaching bleakness.

Such are the main themes of Disraeli with which we shall be concerned here. Some brief attention will be given to the development of these themes in the fiction written before 1844 and in some of the more important prose publications. A fuller examination of the novels after 1844 will, like the treatment of the earlier works, be always concerned to show how from time to time these themes, which are themselves implicit derogations of Utilitarianism, are brought into explicit collision with that philosophy.

In July 1820 Leigh Hunt published in the *Indicator* a short tale by a boy of fifteen whose identity was not revealed. The reader of Disraeli’s novels will have no difficulty in recognising even in this early effusion the characteristic languor and lushness of the romantic fancy that clings to and all too often cloys the work of the maturer author. And yet it is only this fatal tendency to inflated language, those conventional sentimentalities and this precarious high-seriousness of the tale that preserve today an interest in them. They are the earliest symptoms of that poetic exostutation against drabness which lay beneath the whole of Disraeli’s dissatisfaction with the spirit of his age.
Six years later Vivian Grey appeared. Here in their first freshness appear those features which were so largely to characterise the later novels. The delight of the author and his hero are seen at once to lie in the vivid personal distinctions made possible by distinctions of class. Vivian Grey is lavishly accorded what his creator desperately longs for — superlatively aristocratic "blood". The hero and the young dandies he consorts with have as their literary and personal hero, Lord Byron. Byron's appeal lies firstly in his aristocratic extraction, secondly in his brilliant personal gifts, and thirdly in his insolent disregard of middle-class values and expectations. The Byronic figure attracts Disraeli powerfully because it represents the most flagrant scorn for the levelling tendency of the times; thus not only does he cultivate in himself the poses of a Byron, but there is a strong tincture of Byron in every one of his heroes.

In this first novel we meet also the detestable Political Economist, Liberal Snake, "lecturing to a knot of alarmed country gentlemen" who are "wringing under the tortures" of "that lecturing knave [who] never knows when to stop, and [who] is actually insulting men before whom, after all, he ought not to dare to open his lips." The abhorrence

1 Vivian Grey, 150-151.
2 Vivian Grey, 73-78.
of political economists at this stage may be regarded as temperamental and irresponsible. Liberal Snake is made hardly more ludicrous than Sir Christopher Mowbray the Corn Law Tory, an unclaimed ancestor of the splendid landed gentlemen who are later to figure in the novels. Yet even at this stage Disraeli treats Mowbray as impotent rather than disgusting, and his heart is after all in the right place—he maintains an implacable detestation of political economists whom he styles "French Smugglers", he demands "French wines, Bible societies and Mr. Huskisson", and keeps himself resolutely ignorant of London University which he can only conclude is a hoax.

Vivian Grey's attitude towards the poor is the traditional concern of a responsible landlord, and as such strikes at once a more mellow and responsive chord in the heart of his readers than the systematic dispensing of relief that began to mark the age. Vivian's way is to pass the reins of his horse to a snivelling country urchin, to enter the cottage of "honest John" and his "good dame" which he had once known as "the very model of the abode of an English husbandman," and to bring reassurance into the stricken lives.

"Here, you curly-headed rascal, scamper down to the village immediately, and bring up a basket of something to eat; and tell Morgan Price that Mr. Grey says he is to send up a couple of beds, and some chairs here immediately, and some plates and dishes, and everything else, and don't forget some ale"; so saying, Vivian flung the urchin a sovereign. 1
This robust and spontaneous acceptance of responsibility, which in Vivian Grey is no more perhaps than a rosy romantic picture daubed for its picturesque appeal into the body of a novel, was later to become a far more seriously presented affair.

A couple of other themes which are idly started in Vivian Grey and which are later to make up an element of deep concern in Disraeli's novels are the Roman Catholic question and the theme of youth's potential leadership.

The year after the appearance of Vivian Grey Disraeli produced an exercise in a more purely satirical vein called Popanilla. Leaving the drawing-rooms and the German castles he turned his attention to the English scene at large. His hero is a coral-island Gulliver of the dandy sort: "No one was a better judge of wine, no one had a better taste for fruit, no one danced with more elegant vivacity, and no one whispered compliments in a more meaning tone." 1 Popanilla, in the midst of an idyllic ignorance upon his island stumbles upon a crate of books, issued by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and washed up on the shore of his paradise. Having steeped himself in the contents he proceeds to harangue, to alarm and to bore the natives.

Popanilla, therefore, spoke of man in a savage state, the origin of society, and the elements of the social compact, in sentences which would not

1 Popanilla, 8.
subjects, decreed to act

use of smelling powder? the king, accompanied by the court

use of dairying? what is the use of drinking water? what is the

reason? In every part of the latter demand "what is the

gather school about him and "the voices of the young boys

system was perfectly correct. At length, as Popanilla

drove presence, in the midst of his protestations, the taste Popanilla out of the

teach at him then a person. contestable, the taste Popanilla out of the
teach to us only a other magnetize and he had no more right to

Tyrwhit, and in disgust at a man who would maintain that the

teleologically and in disgust at a man who would maintain that the

The last words, surnouns to preserve their unentitled

beautify those they are useless.

the author proves that mountains can be neither sublime nor

In a footnote

more natural productions than a mountain." In a footnote

principle) to prove men a magnetism, and a steam-engine

university of which we had no objection to be appointed

the concept of progress, to suggest the building of a new

In this manner Popanilla goes on at length to exact

the cause of our existence.

our bodies, end the ex-statement of this great end

development of utitutita is therefore the effect of

be miserable, dependent and in deep... The

happy, ex-statement power and ex-statement

important, and that a nation might be ex-statement

puts for society; that the interests of the body

he also showed that man was not born for himself.

have discredited the metropolitan pen of Bentham.
"As the axiom of your school seems to be that everything can be made perfect at once, without time, without experience, without practice, and without preparation, I have no doubt, with the aid of a treatise or two, you will make a consummate naval commander, although you have never been at sea in the whole course of your life. Farewell, Captain Popanilla!"

He is put into a provisioned canoe and pushed out to sea, offering desperately to recant. "But his former companions did not exactly detect the utility of his return." 1

Popanilla is washed ashore in Vraibleusia and Disraeli's satire upon the Englishman and his ways is thus made possible. England is looked at through the eyes of this noble savage. The greater part of the satire is directed at the Utilitarians. It has soon been proved to Popanilla that no such thing as experience existed; that as the world was now to be regulated on quite different principles from those by which it had hitherto been conducted, similar events to those which had occurred could never again take place; and therefore it was absolutely useless to know anything about the past . . .

"You are of opinion, then," exclaimed the delighted Popanilla, "that nothing is good which is not useful?"

"Is it possible that an individual exists in this world who doubts this great first principle?" 2

Of considerable interest in the works written before 1832 is the liberal colouring that many of Disraeli's reflections display. This has already been apparent in

1 Popanilla, 24. The preceding unnumbered quotations occur between 15 and 24.
2 Popanilla, 46.
Vivian Grey, and even in Popanilla which attempts a far steadier attack upon the Benthamites, there are issues on which Disraeli has as yet taken no firm stand. The mockery of the Corn Laws and the constitution is an instance; there is also the flippant discourse upon religion which makes up chapter XIV.

No doubt the whole intention of this facetious chapter was to ridicule the pretensions of every religion to be exclusively illumined with the true light; but the impression it leaves is not so much of a plea for tolerance as of an irresponsible and general scepticism. Disraeli’s response to religion was as complex as all his responses and has inevitably its tang of irony. His vivid oriental imagination was fired by the forms of religious observance and his romantic view of the world demanded a supernatural explanation of the phenomenon of man; his political astuteness perceived that exclusiveness or extremism did not make for advancement either in personal or national affairs. Speaking years later of Newman and the Oxford movement he reflects: "The secession of Dr. Newman dealt a blow to the Church of England under which it still reels ... It was a mistake and a misfortune. The tradition of the Church of England was powerful." In Popanilla Disraeli is still uncommitted to the views on the relation of church to state which he is later to develop; and for this reason Cromwell figures no less prominently in his

1 General Preface to the collected (Hughenden) edition of the novels, 1870. In Vivian Grey volume of Bradenham edition, xv.
"history" than Charles I.

Collected in the Bradenham Edition with Popanilla are various other early pieces, for the most part mere tales or unfinished longer works. *Ixion in Heaven* (1828) and *The Infernal Marriage* are gay satires of high life in Olympian settings. In both there are figures cast in the Byronic mould, and both are protestations that "ever and anon from out the clouds a star breaks forth, and glitters, and that star is Poetry". The *Rise of Iskander* (1833) is another extravagantly coloured portrait of Disraeli's man of passion, strength and poetry. The exotic settings in Greece and Albania, and the clash of Christian and Turk, while they exhibit the author's preoccupation with racial distinctions have disastrously lured him into those licences of expression which always menace his writing. He himself called his mind "European", but "Oriental" might have been a truer description of an imagination which in its flight from dry-as-dust prosings was the prey of romantic phantasms in a hundred grotesque shapes. He was a victim of his deepest conviction, that great prose and great poetry were the result of afflatus:

> If I possess the organisation of a poet, no one can prevent me from exercising my faculty, any more than he can rob the courser of his fleetness, or the nightingale of her song.  

The other pieces in the *Popanilla* volume, namely

1 *Popanilla*, 120.
2 *Contarini Fleming*, 252.
The Carrier Pigeon, The Consul's Daughter and Walstein are commonplace and gaudy and offer nothing new to this study. Among the conversations of which Walstein is built up many of the prescriptions for happiness might seem to bear upon the present subject, dealing as they do with the need to develop personal predispositions. But there is a complete lack of consequence in the story and it is, like The Infernal Marriage, not so much concluded as abandoned.

When The Young Duke appeared in 1831 (it was begun in 1829) Disraeli may have seemed at first to have made no advance from his position when writing Vivian Gray. Here was another onset of high-life delirium, recorded in slightly hectic colours by a young man who, as his father wryly observed, knew nothing of dukes. But just as the gentlemanly pretensions of Vivian Grey have here been raised to their loftiest form (the young duke being superlatively well-born and wealthy), so the other issues which were rather idly fingered in the earlier book are now considered with an unwonted gravity.

The young duke himself is treated with a veneration amounting to awe for his long lineage and the ancient splendour he represents: " - a young Duke, the most noble animal in
existence."  

"Oh! to be a Duke, and to be young — it is too much — "  

As a young English aristocrat, Disraeli's Duke of St. James is intended to represent the finest flowering of the human species. His personal power is an endowment from the past, his air of authority sitting naturally upon him and commanding willing respect from the orders below him. His youth confers upon him his resilience and capacity for action in the present. And his education, especially at the hands of his elders and equals in station, assures his sense of responsibility for the future.

Of all the novels which precede Coningsby none has, beneath the extravagance and flippancy, a stronger sense of social responsibility or a firmer rooting in the English soil than The Young Duke. The excursions abroad to the countries of fictional romance, to medieval Germany or the gorgeous east, are absent from this book. If there are abundant indications that Disraeli grew tired of the writing, there are also indications that it was the gay trivialities that wearied him; and the writing, like the character of the hero, tends always to grow more sober as the book proceeds to its close.

A feature of this novel is its consistent seriousness in handling the Roman Catholic question. The first of Disraeli's Roman Catholic heroines appears in the person of

---

1 The Young Duke, 206.
2 The Young Duke, 248.
May Dacre who represents the author's highest ideal of English womanhood. The marriage between the Duke and May Dacre which brings the book to its happy ending has also provided a valuable tension from first to last, since it is always apparent to the reader that the wedding of the Duke's brilliant but erratic genius to the tranquil and traditional piety of May Dacre would produce a combination of surpassing fitness. The heroine's father is presented with the greatest esteem, and for once, without a trace of the author's irony. Mr. Dacre is in fact offered as a representative of the great and ancient Catholic families of England whose struggle to have their talents and their responsibilities recognised forms a sort of secondary theme in the novel. As for the fear that to give power to the Catholics was to give power to the Pope, Disraeli in another place, after introducing two "great proprietors, and Catholics, and Baronets" remarks: "It was not easy to see two men less calculated to be the slaves of a foreign and despotic power, which we all know Catholics are . . ." 1 In this novel he insists upon the steadfastness in faith of the Catholic families and so begins the sound the note that the reactionaries against Bentham were constantly sounding, namely that many a true English line had been unjustly served in the 17th century and was less favoured now than it would have been if accommoda-
dations had been basely made then. So, when the young Duke as

1 The Young Duke, 94.
a member of "a brilliant coterie", takes part in some amateur theatricals it is natural that they should present "in costume the Court of Charles I" 1 even as the later heroine, Henrietta Temple, is discovered in her ancestral halls "copying a miniature of Charles the First." 2

Just as the Roman Catholic theme is treated in The Young Duke with more consistent attention, so the more direct assaults upon the Utilitarians are made with a greater steadiness of purpose. On one occasion the young Duke, travelling incognito in the Edinburgh and York Mail Coach is thrown into company with "a hard-featured, grey-headed gentleman, with a somewhat supercilious look and a mingled air of acuteness and conceit." 3 This person soon announces his affiliations by observing, as they pass the Duke's own private park,

"What the use of parks is, I can't say . . . Don't talk to me of beauty; a mere word. What is the use of all this? Men begin to ask themselves what the use of an aristocracy is. That is the test, sir."

"I think it not very difficult to demonstrate the use of an aristocracy," mildly observed the Duke.

"Pooh! nonsense, sir! I know what you are going to say; but we have got beyond all that. Have you read this, sir? This article on the aristocracy in 'The Screw and Lever Review':"

"I have not, sir."

"Then I advise you to make yourself master of it, and you will talk no more of the aristocracy . . . Look at the men who write 'The Screw and Lever';

1 The Young Duke, 34.
2 Henrietta Temple, 110.
3 The Young Duke, 312.
the first men in the country . . . Look at the man who wrote this article on the aristocracy: young Duncan Macmorrogh . . . There is young First Principles . . . He is a clerk in the India House . . . This article on a new Code . . . shows as plain as light, that by sticking close to first principles, the laws of the country might be carried in every man's waistcoat pocket."

The "acute utilitarian" has much more to say in the same vein, though the Duke hardly deigns to argue with him. As a fitting appendage to this lengthy scene Disraeli allows the Duke an opportunity of bestowing charity upon another fellow-traveller, a needy widow, in a manner at once spontaneous and self-effacing. The utilitarian is finally given the unkindest cut when he is later seen toadying to a nobleman in the passages of the House of Lords.

More suggestive of an increasing firmness of opinions than such a frontal assault are the great many reflective comments which are scattered throughout The Young Duke. More and more Disraeli is becoming committed to the view that "the greatest happiness" can never be used as a collective notion, but only as having individual application. Like Newman he is becoming convinced that felicity is not a matter of self-gratification but of self-development. The swift and brilliant career of the young Duke in the novel may in a real sense be regarded as his education to this view of happiness:

"I may never know what happiness is," thought his Grace, as he leaned back in his whirling britzaka,

1 The Young Duke, 312-316.
"but I think I know what happiness is not. It is not the career which I have hitherto pursued . . . Woe to the wretch who trusts to his pampered senses for felicity! Woe to the wretch who flies from the bright goddess Sympathy, to sacrifice before the dark idol Self-love!" 1

So the young Duke reflects in the midst of his delusive search for self-satisfaction. The word "Sympathy" is used to mean something like "harmony with one's best impulses", which in typical Disraelian fashion may also imply submission to the influence of an ideal woman. Earlier, Disraeli has observed:

The great majority of human beings in a country like England glide through existence in perfect ignorance of their natures, so complicated and so controlling is the machinery of our social life! Few can break the bonds that tie them down, and struggle for self-knowledge; fewer, when the talisman is gained, can direct their illuminated energies to the purposes with which they sympathise . . . 2

Presently the young Duke himself takes up the theme:

"Ay! there it is, I feel it now. Too well I feel that happiness must spring from purer fountains than self-love . . . Why should I live? For virtue, and for duty." 3

The theme of duty, as against rights, begins also to be developed, and the definition of duty again makes perfect harmony with Newman's. It is essentially a Romantic doctrine. The young Duke, having passed his crisis grows each day more convinced of the falseness of his past existence, and of the possibility of

1 The Young Duke, 268.
2 The Young Duke, 241 (Italics supplied)
3 The Young Duke, 245.
happiness to a well-regulated mind; each day more conscious that duty is nothing more than self-knowledge, and the performance of it consequently the development of feelings which are the only true source of self-gratification ...

Knowledge must be gained by ourselves. Mankind may supply us with facts; but the results, even if they agree with previous ones, must be the work of our own mind. To make others feel, we must feel ourselves; and to feel ourselves we must be natural. This we can never be, when we are vomiting forth the dogmas of the schools. Knowledge is not a mere collection of words ... Self-knowledge is the property of that man whose passions have their play, but who ponders over their results.

The prescription is the exact reverse of Bentham's. The Utilitarian pursuit of happiness ran thus: Decide what you want; calculate in advance by the use of reason that means of getting it which will produce less pain than pleasure in the final result. Disraeli advises: Decide what you are; discover by giving play to the passions whether the results of action do or do not harmonise with your "organisation", that is, your essential self-hood. Not self-seeking, but self-knowledge is the road to happiness.

Since Disraeli's hero is invariably a man of power (through his command of money) the ideas of duty, beginning with the duty of self-knowledge, inevitably widen to include the duty towards those whose lives the hero is in a position to influence. While the Duke is groping towards a satisfying

1 The Young Duke, 302.
philosophy

sometimes he had resolved to remain in England and devote himself to his tenantry; but passion blinded him, and he felt that he had erred too far ever to regain the right road. 1

This theme of the duty which accompanies position is to develop into the leading political tenet in the later novels, and even in this earlier work it begins to recur. There is a disparaging mockery of the sporting nobility with their disregard of duties, notably in the scene at Cleve Park before the race meeting at Newmarket. 2 The young Duke's search for happiness must carry him far from these "congenial spirits" to his right position as benevolent steward of his own hereditary property where "his life is passed in the agreeable discharge of all the important duties of his exalted station, and," adds Disraeli with a Parthian shaft for the Utilitarians, "his present career is by far a better answer to the lucubrations of young Duncan Macmorrogh than all the abstract arguments that ever yet were offered in favour of the existence of an Aristocracy." 3

In 1832 appeared the second of the novels of self-portraiture, Contarini Fleming. As Disraeli explains,

1 The Young Duke, 302.
2 The Young Duke, 133.
3 The Young Duke, 350.
Poetry is the safety valve of my passions, but I wish to act what I write. My works are the embodiment of my feelings. In Vivian Grey I have portrayed my active and real ambition: in Alroy my ideal ambition: The Psychological Romance [Contarini Fleming] is a development of my poetic character.1

Once again his prime concern is with personality, and with the self-knowledge which is the basis of all true happiness.

When I search into my own breast, and trace the development of my own intellect, and the formation of my own character, all is light and order ... 2

A theme which is essential to this novel and which Disraeli will later develop with an almost mystical intensity is the slippery doctrine of racial superiority. It has already been observed that a conviction of innate racial distinctions cuts straight across the tendency of Bentham's total disregard both of racial history and of racial characteristics. Disraeli's new hero may be regarded as the spiritual heir of two conflicting racial endowments - his father is Baron Fleming "a Saxon nobleman of ancient family" and his mother "a daughter of the noble [Venetian] house of Contarini": and he is "christened with the name of her illustrious race." 3 It soon becomes apparent that all the personal difficulties of the boy's adjustment to "the rigid climate whither [he] had been brought to live" are caused by

1 Mutilated Diary, Sept. 1st., in Life, Moneypenny and Buckle, I, 181 and 236.
2 Contarini Fleming, 3.
3 Contarini Fleming, 4.
his predominantly Venetian inheritance. "Wherever I moved
I looked around me, and beheld a race different from myself." 1

Thus Contarini, like the young Duke, has to make a
voyage of discovery towards his true place and function. This
time however the spiritual haven is the recognition not of
ancestral duties but of the ancestral home - Venice. The
value of the book as a biographical document is quite large,
but its value to present considerations is limited. There
is no occasion for voicing directly Disraeli's opposition to
the English Utilitarians but the book is filled with the
characteristic reflections which, given another setting, would
have made for a more particular attack.

At a critical point in the hero's development, his
father, whose aim it is to make him "a practical man" and to
"preserve him from the tyranny of impetuous passions" 2
recommends the reading of Voltaire. The effect is for a time
overwhelming:

I returned to the university. I rallied round me
my old companions ... we entirely disembarrassed
ourselves of prejudice; we tried everything by the
test of first principles, and finally we resolved
ourselves into a secret union for the amelioration
of society. 3

This stage of Contarini's career ends in a drunken
and deplorable lapse into organised outlawry from which the
hero is fortunate to escape without dire consequences.

1 Contarini Fleming, 5.
2 Contarini Fleming, 358.
3 Contarini Fleming, 122.
Still under the worldly guidance of his father, Contarini persists in the effort to govern his life according to maxim rather than according to his nature:

I modelled my character on that of my father... I recognised self-interest as the spring of all action. 1

I was profoundly ignorant of all that is true and excellent. An unnatural system, like some grand violence of nature, had transformed the teeming and beneficent ocean of my mind into a sandy and arid desert... Blessed by nature with a heart that is the very shrine of sensibility, my infamous education had succeeded in rendering me the most selfish of my species... 2

The conflict between the hero's southern and northern bloods becomes associated in this way with the conflict between "the latent poetry of [his] being" 3 and the utilitarian education which is imposed upon him. It is "the deep and agonising struggle of his genius and his fate." 4 But nature, reflects Disraeli, is stronger than education, and in a vision the hero's "prophetic mind burst[s] through all the thousand fetters that had been forged so cunningly to bind it in its cell, the inspiration of [his] nature, that beneficent demon who will not desert those who struggle to be wise and good..." 5

Thus the conviction steadily grows that "the law that regulates man must be founded on a knowledge of his nature" 6 and this applies in individual as well as in

1 Contarini Fleming, 154-155.
2 Contarini Fleming, 162.
3 Contarini Fleming, 163.
4 Contarini Fleming, 163.
5 Contarini Fleming, 163.
6 Contarini Fleming, 331.
national cases.

All is an affair of organisation . . . Among all men there are some points of similarity and sympathy. There are few alike; there are some totally unlike the mass . . . Until we know more of ourselves, of what use are our systems? . . . What we want is to discover the character of a man at his birth, and found his education upon his nature. The whole system of moral philosophy is a delusion, fit only for the play of sophists in an age of physiological ignorance. 1

By gathering together such scattered reflections in Contarini Fleming the most coherent statement of Disraeli’s views on the strained relation between individual endowment and a standard education may be obtained. The young hero at school finds that his instructors consider their pupils as machines.

They attempted not to discover, or to develop, or to form character. Predisposition was to them a dark oracle; organisation a mystery in which they were not initiated. The human mind was with them always the same soil, and one to which they brought the same tillage. 2

This steady insistence on individuality takes account of national groupings as well, and it is affirmed that just as the educationist should work upon personal predispositions, so should the legislator build upon national characteristics:

What is the nature of man? In every clime and in every creed we shall find a new definition . . . The most successful legislators are those who have consulted the genius of the people . . . One thing is quite certain, that the system we

1 Contarini Fleming, 243.
2 Contarini Fleming, 42.
have pursued to attain a knowledge of man has entirely failed ... The almighty Creator has breathed his spirit into us; and we testify our gratitude for this choice soon by never deigning to consider what may be the nature of our intelligence. 1

Thus, of the various beliefs that make up Disraeli's attitude to the affairs of his day, the one which Contarini Fleming chiefly presents is his concept of individuality. But it is noteworthy that once again the matchless heroine is a Catholic; and just as the "prose" of the hero's inheritance is associated with his Saxon blood and the "poetry" with his Venetian blood, so as "a Lutheran in a Lutheran country" he is depressed and miserable, and his southern blood insists that "a creed is imagination." 2 One day by chance the adolescent boy finds himself at a village on the skirts of which is "A small Gothic building, beautiful and ancient." He enters and discovers he is in a Catholic church. There follows a rich and romantic description of the service and of a "magical picture" of a Magdalen kneeling and weeping in a garden.

I gazed upon this pictured form with a strange fascination. I came forward, and placed myself near the altar. At that moment the organ burst forth as if heaven were opening; clouds of incense rose and wreathed around the rich and vaulted roof; the priest advanced, and revealed a God, which I fell down and worshipped. From that moment I became a Catholic.

The pages which follow describe the stage of passionate religious devotion through which the hero now passes

1 Contarini Fleming, 331-332.
2 Contarini Fleming, 46. The unnumbered references which follow are all to pages 46-57.
and the association of the "coldness" of Northern Protestant
religion with the unhappiness of the youth is firmly
established. He is allured by the "beautiful mysteries" and
the "sumptuous" quality of Catholicism. This "picturesque"
aspect of the Roman faith and the enthusiasm of imaginative
young people in recognising it have already been noticed as
significant in the appeal made by the Catholic church to the
young adherents of the Oxford Movement. Disraeli's young hero
in this novel manages to express these things in a manner at
once convincing and appropriate to the character he is attempting
to reveal. His haunting of the ruins of a Gothic abbey and
his meeting there a mysterious stranger are the purest
romanticism. This meeting anticipates the very similar
encounter in Sybil when the deeper significance of the scene
will be more fully explored. The abbey will be seen there, not
merely as the perfection of the picturesque but as the shattered
memorial to an age when the nation lived as a "community"
instead of as an "aggregation". Since the dissolution of the
monasteries England has never lost the character of a ravaged
land. The stranger bitterly reflects:

"I don't know whether the union workhouses will
remove it. They are building something for the
people at last. After an experiment of three
centuries, your gaols being full, and your tread-
mills losing something of their virtue, you have
given us a substitute for the monasteries . . . "

1 Sybil, 74.
In Contarini Fleming Disraeli has not expanded his reverence for the monastic rule beyond its possibilities for atmosphere and for the illumination of his hero's temperament. But in both scenes the stranger is a person of the profoundest wisdom who is greatly to influence the hero's whole way of life. It is the mysterious stranger in Sybil who lays before Egremont's startled mind the concept of two nations, The Rich and The Poor, which is at the centre of the book and which provides its subtitle. So in Contarini Fleming the stranger is the ubiquitous Peter Winter whose gnomic wisdom puts the erring Contarini upon the right road again and again. The symbolism by which the "mouldering cloisters" are made the repository of rare secrets and visionary truths is indicative of Disraeli's magical and mystical view of human affairs.

When Disraeli returned from his Eastern travels he brought with him not only Contarini Fleming but the second volume in his autobiographical trilogy, Alroy. Even as the geographical setting of this work is still more remote from his homeland, so its concerns too are less than ever with matters of England and the day than those of Contarini Fleming. Alroy has brought out all the worst in Disraeli. His tenacious belief that to write well was to write fine
never unsettled his judgment so disastrously as in this oriental tale with its highly aromatic, swirling prose. It is only indirectly in the fevered and wishful dwelling upon individuality, race, religion, and the dazzling personal career that Alroy may be regarded as a reaction against Utilitarianism; but that it was so is suggested by the association of jottings for September 1st, 1833 in Disraeli's 'Mutilated Diary':

This trilogy [Vivian Grey, Contarini Fleming and Alroy] is the secret history of my feelings. I shall write no more about myself.

The Utilitarians in politics are like the Unitarians in religion; both omit imagination in their systems, and imagination governs mankind. 1

The purely political element of Disraeli's maturing thought having found extensive expression in the Vindication of the English Constitution and in the Letters of Ranymede (which will be considered separately), his next novel, which appeared four years after Alroy, in 1837, manages to steer a fairly straight course of fictional narrative. "Henrietta Temple and Venetia . . . are not political works," the author avows in the General Preface to the Novels, 1870. 2 Yet the values which were providing the basis for Disraeli's political

1 Life, Moneypenny and Buckle, I, 236-237.
utterance are more firmly than ever knit into the texture of his imaginative writing.

The hero of Henrietta Temple is again awarded the highest distinctions which the author's convictions are able to offer him. His ancestry is of course illustrious, for "the family of Armine entered England with William the Norman". 1

The history of this blue blood is traced through its splendid courses until

in the reign of the unhappy Charles, the Armine family became distinguished Cavaliers . . . . Roman Catholics, however, the Armines always remained, and this circumstance accounts for this once-distinguished family no longer figuring in the history of their country. 2

Once again the hero's education comes short of distinguishing his "accidental" from his "essential" qualities for "the parent and the tutor are rarely skilful in discovering the character of their child or charge." 3

The conduct of men depends upon their temperament, not upon a bunch of misty maxims . . . .

[Ferdinand] was lively and impetuous, with a fiery imagination, violent passions, and a daring soul. 4

Ferdinand is in fact a wholly romantic character, who "loved to be alone . . . . and roam in solitude amid the wild and desolate pleasure-grounds, or wander for hours in the halls and galleries of the castle, gazing upon the pictures of his

1 Henrietta Temple, 1.  3 Henrietta Temple, 23.  2 Henrietta Temple, 2-3.  4 Henrietta Temple, 61.
ancestors." 1

As for Henrietta herself, she is no less of a paragon than Ferdinand, well-born, beautiful, with "that rare and extraordinary combination of intellectual strength and physical softness which marks out the woman capable of exercising an irresistible influence over mankind." 2

The love-affair of this superlative pair has settings of an appropriate romantic splendour and the novel is in fact perhaps the supreme example of "Silver Fork" fiction, unfaltering in its high flight from the mundane and the systematic. It has been well-chosen to stand with G.H. Lawrence's Guy Livingstone and Ouida's Moths in Anthony Powell's Novels of High Society from the Victorian Age. [London, Pilot Press, 1947.]

Almost all the characteristic motifs of Disraeli's other novels reappear in this one. The aristocracy are presented in the most flattering light and there is over the whole book the sense that finds expression in the mouth of one of its most cherished characters: "Nor indeed can I believe that Providence will ever desert a great and pious line." 3

The theme of duties matching privilege is constantly sounded, and it is among the chief advantages of Ferdinand's upbringing that his early years are passed in a family circle where duties of every kind are duly recognised. Indeed Disraeli has

1 Henrietta Temple, 23.
2 Henrietta Temple, 93.
3 Henrietta Temple, 27.
consciously built up a glowing picture of a society based on traditional allegiances and deriving from them time-honoured joys. The coach dashes

over the rich plains of our merry midland; a quick and dazzling vision of gold corn-fields and lawny pasture land; farm houses embowered in orchards and hamlets shaded by the straggling members of some vast and ancient forest . . . The guard sounds his triumphant bugle . . . and mine host of the Red Lion, or the White Hart, followed by all his waiters, advances from his portal with a smile to receive the "gentlemen passengers" . . . And what a dinner! What mighty and iris-tinted rounds of beef! What vast and marble-veined ribs! What gelatious veal pies! What colossal hams! Those are evidently prize cheeses!

Once again the heroine steps out upon her characteristic errands, with Ferdinand at her side ("I used ever to be my mother's companion on such occasions"). As she passes from cottage to cottage,

the children smiled at her approach; their mothers rose and courtesied with affectionate respect. The aged were solaced by her visit; the sick forgot their pains . . . her tender enquiries and sanguine hopes, brought even more comfort than her plenteous promises of succour from the Bower, in the shape of arrowroot and gruel, port wine and flannel petticoats . . .

This scene of sweet simplicity brought back old days and old places to the memory of Ferdinand Armine . . .  

A bountiful and beautiful countryside adorned rather than despoiled by the works of man; country maidens with downcast eyes and ruddy, simple swains; traditional pieties

1 Henrietta Temple, 35.  
2 Henrietta Temple, 113.
and the willing acknowledgement of class; the strong sense of a social pattern built up of rights and duties at every level; this vision is at once the legacy of romanticism and the base of Disraeli's political programme. It implies a rejection at every point of Bentham's social scheme.

_Henrietta Temple_, despite its avowed concern only with a love affair, represents one of the most coherent affirmations of Disraeli's creed during the 'thirties. It represents, too, his hopes for the future. At the end of the book the great Catholic families, thanks to "the passing of the memorable Act of 1828" are entering once more upon their duties in the House, where though they adhere to the Whig politics of their families, they also

in the most marked manner, abstained from voting on the appropriation clause; and there is little doubt that they will ultimately support that British and national administration which Providence has doubtless in store for these outraged and distracted realms. ¹

Thus, in the novel, Disraeli reveals the hopes that were currently inspiring his political exertions for the re-establishment of the Tory party. But the novel is free of those inconsistencies which expediency introduced into his political writings of this time, in which James II is still sometimes "the Popish tyrant" and the Revolution of 1688 is regarded as salutary and inevitable. In other words the novel comes closer than the pamphlets to Disraeli's later

¹ _Henrietta Temple_, 452.
position as it is expounded in *Sybil*.

By the time *Venetia* appeared, in 1837, (hard upon the heels of *Henrietta Temple* since the bailiffs were hard upon his own), Disraeli was firmly attached to the Conservative party, and committed to their policy. As the allegiance to Peel implied too an allegiance to the tainted "Tamworth" manifesto Disraeli may be regarded as once again having found that self-expression in the novel which was denied him in more strictly political contexts.

His new (and tragic) love story has brought to the centre of the stage the figure of Byron who had always lurked in the wings of the author's imagination and influenced his real no less than his literary poses. In *Venetia* there is also made one of the pious endeavours to reclaim the brilliant but errant Shelley, who, as Marmion Herbert in the novel, turns up in Italy after languishing in disgrace for many years. His Roman Catholic wife and daughter come upon him in a monastery where he is leading the contemplative life. Such is the transformation in the character of Herbert that his wife has strong hopes he will presently come fully into the grace of God and the church of her fathers. Thus both Disraeli and Browning 1 attempt to bring Shelley into the Victorian fold,

---

being reluctant to lose to the devil so much intellectual fire and poetic distinction.

Venetia ends, as must be expected, with the new Lord Cadarcis and his peerless bride Venetia entering upon a new world of hopes, he taking up his duties in the House of Lords, and she bringing to the newly-won Catholic opportunities a vast windfall wealth with which to renovate the fortunes of both families. Thus Disraeli reaffirms the conclusion implicit in Vivian Grey, The Young Duke and Henrietta Temple, that future happiness depends upon the recognition of its duties by an hereditary aristocracy which adheres to the older forms of faith.

In the years between the publication of Venetia and the great trilogy of the 'forties, Disraeli was mainly occupied in politics. The break which occurs in the continuity of his novel-writing provides a natural place at which to consider briefly those political writings of his which have a claim upon the attention because of their literary excellence.

A "volume of by-products of Disraeli's pen" in the period between 1833 and 1853 has been edited by William Hutcheon under the general title Whigs and Whiggism [John Murray, London, 1913]. In these prose works Disraeli develops with stricter cogency the themes which are acted out and talked
out in the novels.

In the pamphlet *What is He?* which was scattered abroad in 1833 there is a strong flavour of the sort of radicalism which has been noted in the earlier fiction such as *Popanilla*. Disraeli in this pamphlet declares that "We must either revert to the aristocratic principle, or we must advance to the democratic." The surprising thing is that on this occasion he professes himself convinced that it is "utterly impossible to revert to the aristocratic principle", and that it is therefore "the duty of every person of property, talents, and education . . . to use his utmost exertions to advance the democratic principle." He reads European history of the last three centuries as a steady transition from feudal to federal principles of government, and the revolution in England under Charles I is seen as no more than a stage in this evolution. Like other historical philosophers of the time he is greatly alarmed that a similar revolutionary movement might again occur, and the pamphlet seems to be written either in the fear of, or to create the fear of a national calamity.

At present Property is only threatened; in a few months it will be a question as to the preservation of Order; another year, and we must struggle for Civilisation.

The only sentences in the pamphlet which remind us that the author is the future leader of Young England occur at the very end. Having reasserted that the times are dangerous and that "the sagacious Statesman must view the
present portents with anxiety, if not with terror", Disraeli
the uneasy champion of democracy, adjures his readers not to
forget "an influence too much underrated in this age of
bustling mediocrity - the influence of individual character.
Great spirits may yet arise to guide the groaning helm through
the world of troubled waters ..."; of which hope Isaac
D'Israeli shrewdly enquired, "Who will be the proud spirit?"

In 1834, in his address to the electors of High
Wycombe which was published under the title *The Crisis Examined*,
Disraeli firmly places himself on the Conservative side. He
passes in quick review the present difficulties of the agri-
cultural interest ("I am always an advocate, in spite of
political economists, for the abolition of direct taxes");
the question of Church Reform ("the Church is [the people's]
patrimony, their only hereditary property; it is their portal
to power, their avenue to learning, to distinction, and to
honour"); the "delicate subject of the claims of the
Dissenters"; and the question of Corporate reform:

The Whig system of centralisation [is] fatal to
rural prosperity and provincial independence -
one of those Gallic imitations of which they are
so fond, but which I hope, the sense and spirit
and love of freedom of Englishmen will always
resist.

1 See footnote in *Whigs and Whigism*, 22.
The address is naturally full of topicalities, but Disraeli's opinions upon policies and personalities have become coherent and have settled into an enlightened rather than bigoted opposition to "democratical principles".

I will allow for the spirit of the age; I will allow for the march of intellect; but I cannot force from my mind the conviction that a House of Commons, concentrating in itself the whole power of the State might . . . establish in this country a despotism of the most formidable and dangerous character.

His view of the constitutional upheaval of the seventeenth century now differs sharply from the view noticed above in

What is He?

I cannot shut my eyes to the historical truth. Let us look to the reign of Charles the First . . . We err when we take it for granted that this present age in England is peculiarly distinguished from preceding ones by the general diffusion of public knowledge . . .

He then goes on to show how under Charles there was "a springtime in the intellect of England" in every way comparable to the present march of mind, "there was the same feeling abroad in favour of freedom, and the same enthusiasm for the rights of the subject."¹ And what was the result?

The omnipotent House of Commons, after having pulled down the throne and decapitated the monarch, after having expelled the Bishops from the House of Peers, and then abrogated the peerage, set you [the electorate] at defiance.

By thus ingeniously likening the present times to the times of Charles, Disraeli not only awakes once more the fear of a

¹ This idea lies behind Isaac D'Israeli's history of Charles's reign, which Benjamin helped to edit. See Isaac's Preface.
national cataclysm but begins to regard Charles as a martyr
to the "rapacity" of the democratical spirit. "Looking at
such consequences, I think we may feel that we have some
interest in maintaining the prerogative of the Crown and the
privileges of the Peers."

In August and September 1835 Disraeli contributed to
the Morning Post a series of leading articles in which the
themes started in 'The Crisis Examined' are more closely and
lengthily pursued. His chief concern in the early chapters
is again to draw parallels between the present age and the age
of Charles I; and this theme he is to develop once again in
his Vindication of the English Constitution. With considerable
forensic skill he insists that the "new" is really something
long ago tried and found wanting - ("for Hampden we have Hume,
and Warburton for Pym") - and so pins the label of "Brutil-
tarians" on these modern Pyms and Hampdens for combining
Utilitarian notions with a brutal ignorance that all has been
disastrously argued and acted out before. Once already

we have "relieved" the Bishops from their legis-
lative functions, we have voted the "inutility"
of the House of Lords, we have rooted up the
Throne, and what was the result? The leaders
of the present movement may be too ignorant to
know; but the people of England, the real people
of England have not forgotten.

Having reasserted this historical analogy Disraeli
now goes on in the succeeding articles to elaborate what may 
be called the "constitutional condition of England", an 
undertaking which his temperament, his command of a fluent and 
powerful prose, and his wide and original view of English 
constititutional history enabled him to present with peculiar 
force and persuasion. Through these articles in the Morning 
Post, through the later Letters of Runnymede contributed to 
the Times during the first half of 1836 and above all through 
his magnificent Vindication of the English Constitution, 
Disraeli establishes himself as the foremost exponent of the 
conservative ethic in the period. These writings prove a ready 
handbook of conservative doctrine to be set against the 
Benthamite prescription which was being published at the same 
time. The opposition is always implicit - to Disraeli a 
nation is no abstraction, a "problem" to be solved by the 
application of flawless principles, but a living body containing 
within it the experiences of its past and able to continue in 
health only when it acted in accordance with its own nature. 
Often the opposition is explicit:

The Constitution of England is a profounder piece 
of human wit than the Brutilitarian philosophers 
imagine when they recommend us their new lamps 
with such pert conceit, and so much complacent 
ignorance. 1

Mr. Hume and his Brutilitarians oppose the Peers 
because they exercise an "irresponsible" power . . . 
Let Mr. Hume and his school push on their

1 Peers and People, in Whigs and Whiggism, VI, 68.
principles, and see to what results they tend . . . That they are completely ignorant of the nature of the British Constitution in particular and of the nature of human society in general is quite evident. 1

At present the people of England have a wiser trust in the practical wisdom of Alfred the Great than in the verbose and windy theories of Jeremy Bentham and his Utilitarian disciples . . . We love our Constitution, we honour it, we cherish it, and we understand it. But as for the Utilitarian sophists . . . they are absolutely in the dark respecting the very subject they criticise . . . 2

To attempt to summarise Disraeli's Vindication of the English Constitution would be to suggest that this statement, in thirty-four chapters, has been over-elaborated. Yet this is not the case. The work is the centre-piece of the literature being considered in this study and is characterised both by its masterly ordering of its material and by the economy of its argument. To attempt to quote from its pages in order to show how often it makes direct assault upon the Utilitarians would be to suggest that Disraeli was not wholly concerned with establishing a political, social and moral doctrine consistently opposed to Benthamism. Yet this is not the case either, for it is evident from the beginning that the whole energy of the piece derives from the intention of rebutting the Utilitarian philosophy. Bentham's key maxims are brought one by one into judgment, examined and condemned.

1 Peers and People, in Whigs and Whiggism, 103.
The parallel between the contemporary scene and the times of Charles I is drawn once more; the "truly democratic" system of representation by classes, of the popular monarchy and the Three Estates, of civil and legal equality, is glowingly extolled; and the maxim that "political institutions must be judged by their results" 1 is constantly applied. A couple of sentences from the opening chapters and a sentence from the final chapter may serve to indicate the scope and the direction of Disraeli's dissertation in this work. He begins by naming his adversary:

A political sect has sprung up avowedly adverse to the Estates of the Realm ... The avowed object of this new sect of statesmen is to submit the institutions of the country to the test of UTILITY, and to form a new Constitution on the abstract principles of theoretic science. 2

He sums up his long and powerful vindication:

The constitution of England is founded not only on a profound knowledge of human nature, but of human nature in England. 3

The Letters of Runnymede openly addressed in The Times to various eminent personages, while they are remarkable instances of Disraeli's polished but damaging invective (with rather fewer instances of his power to flatter), are too

1 In Whigs and Whiggism, 199.
2 In Whigs and Whiggism, 113-114.
3 In Whigs and Whiggism, 230.
personal and ephemeral to offer a great deal to the present study. The Spirit of Whiggism, collected with the Letters of Runnymede and published late in 1836 is professedly a briefer and lesser Vindication in which the rhetorical power of the larger work has been lost in a curttness and dryness of style. Yet this very crispness often gives an almost aphoristic quality to the writing which may be more acceptable to some tastes than the more cultivated periods of the Vindication. Certainly in this work Disraeli's beliefs are thrown into striking outline:

The rights and liberties of a nation can only be preserved by institutions. It is not the spread of knowledge or the march of intellect that will be found sufficient sureties for the public welfare in the crisis of a country's freedom. Our interest taints our intelligence, our passions paralyse our reason... Life is short, man is imaginative; our means are limited, our passions high...

The only other piece among these more fugitive publications which requires a glance is a curious collection of brief articles entitled Old England. These were contributed pseudonymously to the Times in January 1838, and are partly in the form of prophetic exhortation and partly in the form of dialogue between such figures as "Young France" and "Old England", "John Bull" and "Crisis", "Jenkins" and "Tomkins".

1 In Whigs and Whiggism, 338.
These latter exchanges may be compared to the sort of dialogue into which Disraeli was always apt to lead his characters in the more static chapters of his novels. Jenkins and Tomkins might easily appear as a couple of political stock-jobbers in any of the novels that were shortly to follow. But more interesting is the prophetic mantle of Carlyle which Disraeli has rather clumsily donned for the passages between these dialogues. Whatever Carlyle may at this stage (and for many years to come) have thought of the aspiring young Jew, it is certain that Disraeli had always a ready ear for the aggressive grandiloquence of the Scot. One extract will suffice to show how far Disraeli is prepared to carry his emulation:

Remember what the great Prussian said, old iron-hearted Frederick . . . You, too, have had your seven years' war, John [Bull] . . . 'Tis seven years and more since old William the Fourth, who also had a lion heart in his way, did not dine in the city; and the great question has not yet been answered, "How is the King's Government to be carried on?" Great question of a great man! True hero-question, prescient, far-seeing, and easily answered by common men . . . Here be Christmas riddles and new year charades, and if we cannot untwist them we must pay forfeit. Reformed Parliament has not answered them; Reform Ministry has not answered them; New Poor Law has not answered them [etc., etc.]

Disraeli's attack in all these works is upon "the spirit of Whiggism", which the Whigs themselves have called "the spirit of the Age"; and this spirit of the age is the Utilitarian spirit. Disraeli may be allowed to proclaim

1 In Whigs and Whiggism, 409.
his own attitude in a Falstaffian outburst which again might have come from Carlyle:

They [the Whigs] govern in "the spirit of the age" forsooth. If so, 'tis a shabby spirit, a very pitiful spirit, indeed; a most lick-spittle, place-loving, self-adoring spirit.

By the time Disraeli began his great political trilogy he was already well embarked upon his career in the House and, having been passed over by Peel when the latter was making up his Ministry after the election of 1841, had begun to gather about him those young, ardent and gilded youths who were to constitute the "Young England" group.

The three novels were written in order to make known the ideals of this group, Coningsby to present the political, Sybil the social, and Tancred the religious point of view.

The most remarkable difference between Coningsby and the novels which precede it is the fact that the philosophical and temperamental attitudes which characterise the earlier works have all now been given a political cast. The tensions are no longer merely personal; every personal relationship is also a political relationship. In other words, Coningsby is a political novel in the real sense that the characters maintain a genuine personal existence in an environment almost purely political. Heretofore the emphasis

1 In Whigs and Whiggism, 64.
has been upon personal maturation while the political element has found expression in occasional passages, either of dialogue or of reflection by a character, or of passing comment by the author, these passages being usually inessential to the novel and at times an intrusion upon it.

Disraeli describes this development explicitly:

"My mind," [said Coningsby] "on these subjects has long been a chaos. I float in a sea of troubles and should long ago have been wrecked had I not been sustained by a profound, however vague, conviction, that there are still great truths, if we could but work them out; that Government, for instance, should be loved and not hated, and that Religion should be a faith and not a form." 1

The novel is the exposition of a political programme which will give substance to these vague convictions. "The ancient feudal feeling . . . is an instrument which, when skilfully wielded, may be productive of vast social benefit." 2

On the positive side Disraeli is convinced like Carlyle and Newman that

man is made to adore and to obey: but if you will not command him, if you give him nothing to worship, he will fashion his own divinities, and find a chieftain in his own passions. 3

In the second half of that statement appears the negative side of Disraeli's belief, which of course was Carlyle's "everlasting nay" as well. The central assertion (which has already been made in Walstein) appears yet once more:

1 Coningsby, 156.
2 Coningsby, 156.
3 Coningsby, 253.
Man is only truly great when he acts from the passions; never irresistible but when he appears to the imagination. Even Mormon counts more votaries than Bentham. 1

Just as Newman and Carlyle brought themselves desperately to be convinced that the principle of Utility had been tried and found wanting and that a more enlightened age was about to be ushered in, so Disraeli, throughout this novel is confident that the Spirit of the Age has completed its worst conquests and that "the eternal principles of human nature" 2 are about to reassert themselves. The omniscient and omnipotent Sidonia, from whose mouth flows much of the wisdom of the book observes:

"In this country . . . since the peace there has been an attempt to advocate a reconstruction of society on a purely rational basis. The principle of Utility has been powerfully developed. . . . There has been an attempt to reconstruct society on a basis of material motives and calculations. It has failed . . . its failure in an ancient and densely-peopled kingdom was inevitable . . . We are not indebted to the Reason of man for any of the great achievements . . . " 3

"The Utilitarian system is dead," said Coningsby. "It has passed through the heaven of philosophy like a hail-storm, cold, noisy, sharp, and peppering, and it has melted away." 4

Disraeli's task in this book is to transmute into fictional form the results of many years of constructive thinking on the great "Condition of England" question. In

1 Coningsby, 253.  
2 Coningsby, 354.  
3 Coningsby, 253.  
4 Coningsby, 379.
real life he was faced with two major difficulties in designing a political career for himself. Firstly he could not close his mind to the fact that the condition of England had undergone and must still undergo vast changes consequent upon the new sources and distribution of wealth. Secondly, his natively conservative and romantic outlook which should have made for an allegiance to the Tory party was nevertheless associated with a strongly independent and self-assertive element which alienated him from that party and disgusted him with its compromising and ineffectual policies. This is the flight from "Tamworth" already referred to, and Disraeli gives a brief chapter [Book II, Chapter V] wholly to a pronouncement upon "Tamworth" and its "infidelities". In real life Disraeli had gone far towards a resolution of this dilemma and in Coningsby he presents the results.

The great manufacturing interest is represented in the person of the elder Millbank and the blind aristocratic prejudice is represented in Lord Monmouth. These two are naturally sworn foes, and it is not merely their apparently conflicting principles which bring them into collision. The dearly-loved fiancée of Millbank had been won from him by a younger son of Monmouth. This marriage had so displeased Monmouth that he began "a system of domestic persecution" under which the son had died, the widow had been left in "desperate necessity" and the child of the union, Coningsby,
separated from her under Monmouth's aloof patronage. The broken-hearted Millbank, though he had himself later married and begotten two children, still bears an implacable hatred towards Monmouth. Thus in fictional terms is the enmity between manufacturer and land-owner represented. Similarly (as in Mrs. Gaskell's North and South) the reconciliation between these two conflicting principles is symbolised not only in the lifelong friendship between Coningsby and Oswald, the younger Millbank, but in the marriage between Coningsby and Edith, the manufacturer's daughter.

To Lord Monmouth Disraeli has given that stubborn devotion to the effete Tory party which he himself would not own: "Peel is the only man suited to the times and all that; at least we must say so, and try to believe so; we can't go back." 1 But Coningsby will have none of this craven partisanship:

To enter the House of Commons a slave and a tool; to move according to instructions, and to labour for the low designs of petty spirits, without even the consolation of being a dupe. What sympathy could there exist between Coningsby and "the great Conservative party," that for ten years in an age of revolution had never promulgated a principle; whose only ... policy seemed to be ... to evince their utter ignorance of Church principles; and who were at this moment ... in open insurrection against the prerogatives of the English Monarchy?

Coningsby strikes out upon a new and independent conservative line and it is his function in the novel to

1 Coningsby, 431.
2 Coningsby, 428.
win over the son of Millbank to an acknowledgement of the beneficent role that traditional loyalties have still to play in English society. Oswald Millbank comes to Eton with all the political prejudices of Manchester "which were of course merely caught up from his father" and there Coningsby, who is "as he supposed, a high Tory", finds during many conversations with his new friend that there is "insensibly provoked in his mind a spirit of enquiry into political questions."  

In this way Disraeli frankly acknowledges the great new feature in the political and economic picture, and presently his hero makes a visit to Manchester as a "representative of the New Generation, fresh from Eton, nursed in prejudices, yet with a mind predisposed to enquiry and prone to meditation."  

In the end it is the elder Millbank who makes possible Coningsby's entry into Parliament and his son who joyously brings the news. They have been finally won over by his "high principles, great talents, and good heart".  

As for Lord Monmouth, sheltering himself to the last from the rough realities of the world, he has died with his glass half-way to his lips. So in the novel Disraeli finds the answer to both his problems - he has rejected the old Tory

1 Coningsby, 111.  
2 Coningsby, 110.  
3 Coningsby, 111.  
4 Coningsby, 60.  
5 Coningsby, 501.
party and brought into his radiant scheme of things the grim fact of Manchester.

It is time, however, to notice the nature of those "high principles" which have mellowed the hearts of the Millbanks. Throughout the novel the searching question is repeatedly put to the Conservative party: What do you propose to conserve? Just as insistently the answer is supplied:

The prerogatives of the Crown, provided they are not exercised; the independence of the House of Lords, provided it is not asserted; the Ecclesiastical estate, provided it is regulated by a commission of laymen. Everything, in short, that is established, as long as it is a phrase and not a fact. 1

The programme of Young England - presented in the animated conversation of the young men, in the dogmatism and erudition of Sidonia, in comment by the author, and more legitimately though less persuasively in actual incident - is to convert the phrase into the fact. The monarch is to become the actual reigning head of the nation and the "democratic" march is to be halted. The centralising tendency of Benthamite administration is to be checked and "a vast pile of municipal and local government" 2 to succeed it. Such a system, with a free monarchy exercising its prerogatives and a representation of popular interests by personal and local means, is declared to be more truly democratic than

1 Coningsby, 104.  
2 Coningsby, 375.
parliamentary representation. Indeed,

parliamentary representation was the happy
device of a ruder age, to which it was admirably
adapted: an age of semi-civilisation, when
there was a leading class in the community;
but it exhibits many symptoms of desuetude. 1

Monarchy is declared to be, not an outmoded form
of government unlimited in its susceptibility to corruption,
but the most mature of political developments:

The tendency of advanced civilisations is in
truth to pure Monarchy. Monarchy is indeed a
government which requires a high degree of
civilisation for its full development. 2

The new conservative policy is made captivating to
young minds by such daring paradoxes as this. "The only power
that has no class sympathy is the Sovereign." 3 "The House
of Commons is the house of a few; the Sovereign is the
sovereign of all. The proper leader of the people is the
individual who sits upon the throne." 4 Moreover, a society
having the monarch at its head and a system of local administra-
tion in which duties, functions and responsibilities are
readily perceptible and open to immediate and informed
discussion has the attractive advantage of existing already in
form. "Now there is a polity adapted to our laws, our
institutions, our feelings, our manners, our traditions . . . " 5

Much of course is made of "our feelings, our manners,
our traditions." For example, in the figure of Eustace Lyle,

1 Coningsby, 374.
2 Coningsby, 319.
3 Coningsby, 373.
4 Coningsby, 374.
5 Coningsby, 375.
Disraeli provides an ideal type of young landed gentleman whom all his tenants adore. He is of a Roman Catholic family, about the oldest we have in the county, and the wealthiest... You see, 'tis an old Cavalier family, and Lyle has all the opinions and feelings of his race. He will not ally himself with anti-monarchists, and democrats, and infidels, and sectarians...

Lyle's persuasions are presented with much reverence and he is presently to be demonstrating the right and traditional method of handling the problems of the poor. "I have revived the monastic customs at St. Genevieve," said the young man, blushing. "There is an almsgiving twice a week," 2 This confession is shyly thrown into a discussion of the New Poor Law during which the younger men have been insisting that "the order of the peasantry was as ancient, legal and recognised an order as the order of the nobility" 3 and refusing to listen to "statistics, dietary tables, Commissioners' rules, Sub-commissioners' reports." 4 The "New Generation" will not condone the abandoning of the traditional term "peasantry" (with all its connotations of rights and loyalties) for the term "labourers". The picture of Lyle's poor peasantry making their way to the great house for the alms which they may justly claim is done in Disraeli's warmest and most romantic colours. Because the scene will later attract Kingsley's attention in Yeast, a glimpse of it

1 Coningsby, 146. 3 Coningsby, 141.
2 Coningsby, 143. 4 Coningsby, 141.
may usefully be given here:

They came along the valley, a procession of Nature . . . The old man, who loved the pilgrimage too much to avail himself of the privilege of a substitute accorded to his grey hairs, came in person with his grandchild and his staff. There also came the widow with her child at her breast, and others clinging to her form . . . many a dame in her red cloak, and many a maiden with her light basket . . . sometimes a stalwart form baffled for a time of the labour which he desired. But not a heart there that did not bless the bell that sounded from the tower of St. Genevieve.

(With this picturesque ceremony may be compared the young Henry Sydney's enquiry as to "why should dancing round a May-pole be more obsolete than holding a Chapter of the Garter?" "The Spirit of the Age is against such things," said Lord Everingham. "And what is the Spirit of the Age?" asked Coningsby. "The Spirit of Utility," said Lord Everingham. 2)

Just as the theme of charity is here considered in the context of a full political programme, so all the other themes which have been emerging in the earlier novels now find their place in the matured social philosophy. The theme of youth with its energies and sympathies and its capacity for self-expression is of course at the heart of the Young England idea. This is a New Generation of ardent young spirits. Among the many dissertations which the enigmatic Sidonia tosses cut to an adoring Coningsby none does more to launch the hero

1 Coningsby, 153-154.
2 Coningsby, 142.
on his career than the first, delivered during a rainstorm at a country inn. It is a dazzling roll-call of the names of the illustrious young. "Genius, when young, is divine," announces Sidonia and proceeds to throw out the names and achievements of divinities ranging from Don John of Austria and Gaston de Foix to Nelson and Clive, from Innocent III to Bolingbroke and Pitt. ¹ At the end of the novel all the young men find themselves elected to Parliament, "the wand was waved, and it seemed that the schoolfellows had had a sudden become elements of power." ²

What will be their fate? . . . Will they remain brave, single and true; . . . sensible of the greatness of their position, recognise the greatness of their duties; denounce to a perplexed and disheartened world the frigid theories of a generalising age that have destroyed the individuality of man, and restore the happiness of their country by believing in their own energies, and daring to be great? ³

Not the least of interests which this novel holds are the constant echoes of Carlyle. One is inevitably reminded of Carlyle's intoxication with the dynamic meaning of Manchester when reading the opening pages of Book IV.

"It is the philosopher alone who can conceive the grandeur of Manchester, and the immensity of its future," confesses Disraeli. The descriptions of the "Lancashire village [which] has expanded into a mighty region of factories and

¹ *Goningsby*, 125-126.
² *Goningsby*, 128.
³ *Goningsby*, 503.
warehouses" are all in the philosopher's rather than the
novelist's vein:

[Coningsby] had passed over the plains where iron
and coal supersede turf and corn, dingy as the
entrance of Hades, and flaming with furnaces; and
now he was among illumined factories, with more
windows than Italian palaces, and smoking chimneys
taller than Egyptian obelisks . . .

Like Carlyle, Coningsby strives for "the comprehension"
of Manchester.

It was to him a new world, pregnant with new ideas,
and suggestive of new trains of thought and feeling . . .
he beheld a great source of the wealth of nations
[which] was rapidly developing classes whose power
was imperfectly recognised in the constitutional
scheme and whose duties in the social system seemed
altogether omitted. 2

In Coningsby Disraeli is still grappling as a
philosopher with the fact of Manchester, and in his conclusions
he comes very close to Carlyle. It is not until he writes
Subil that he really treats the facts of "Manchester" as a
novelist, but when he does so he hardly comes short of Mrs.
Gaskell herself.

Carlyle's idea of the hero also runs through the
book. When Coningsby is feeling that impulse towards
patriotic service which all Disraeli's heroes are apt to feel,
this impulse is described as

that noble ambition . . . It is the heroic
feeling: the feeling that in old days produced
demi-gods; without which no State is safe;
without which political institutions are meat
without salt; the Crown a bauble, the Church an
establishment . . .

1 Coningsby, 162.
2 Coningsby, 165.
3 Coningsby, 274.
Looking upon the walls of his Cambridge college,

"Where is the spirit that raised these walls?"


I cannot believe it. Man that is made in the

image of the Creator, is made for God-like
deeds. Come what come may, I will cling to

the heroic principle. It can alone satisfy

my soul." 1

The disquisitions of Sidonia often read like a

chapter taken from Carlyle, though largely trimmed of

Carlyle's mannerisms. There is a great deal of this sort

of thing:

"I perceive," said Coningsby . . . "that you

have great confidence in the influence of

individual character . . . But it is not the

Spirit of the Age" . . . "The Spirit of the Age

is the very thing that a great man changes . . .

From the throne to the hovel all call for a

guide. You give monarchs constitutions to

teach them sovereignty, and nations Sunday

schools to inspire them with faith."

The Young England idea is itself inspired with

faith, and like young Henry Sydney it is "full of church

architecture, national sports, restoration of the order of

the Peasantry". 3  As has been noticed, in the person of

Erastus Lyle, it is romantically inspired by the Roman Catholic

faith; yet at a more serious level it is upon the Establishment

that it looks as the true representative of national

belief. "It is by the Church . . . alone that I see any

chance of regenerating the national character." 4  But the

tendency towards Erastianism must cease and the Church must be

1 Coningsby, 281.  3 Coningsby, 272.
2 Coningsby, 124.  4 Coningsby, 378.
free to exercise its authority within its legitimate domains. Its bishops must no longer be obliged to the State for their appointments.

The priests of God are the tribunes of the people. O ignorant! that with such a mission they should ever have cringed in the antechambers of ministers, or bowed before parliamentary committees!

An identification of Whig and Radical interests with the non-conformist sects is constantly made and the latitudinarian drift of the times is deplored. When Tadpole, the opportunist Tory, is desperately courting political favour in every likely quarter he is found "coquetting with a manufacturing town and a large constituency, where he was to succeed by the aid of the Wesleyans, of which pious body he had suddenly become a fervent admirer." For the Wesleyans are suddenly seen as being capable of not "unreasonable" conduct, and are indeed "really a respectable body" too long confounded "with the mass of Dissenters". It is perhaps the greatest single weakness in Disraeli's fervently hopeful programme that the Millbank family are so staunch in their allegiance to the Establishment. When the younger Millbank and Coningsby argue themselves into unanimity over the Condition of England question in Book VII Chapter 2, it is all too plain that their common devotion to the Church of England is the real basis of their agreement. The most ambitious intention of Coningsby is to absorb the new

1 Coningsby, 379.
2 Coningsby, 89.
facts of industrial development into the old idea of a nation. In the novel this is achieved only by blinking one of the most obstructive details. Mrs. Gaskell does not seek to reconcile North and South by any such facile expedient.

Yet if as argument Coningsby remains open to endless expostulation, as the cogent expression of an ideal it is a masterpiece of organisation. It is filled with glowing pictures of an orderly society in which traditional allegiances and pieties still survive. The public coach with its foaming and curvetting horses and the triumphant bugle of the guard; the comely serving-maid at the country inn who spreads the "dapper" cloth and uncovers the hissing bacon and eggs, "a national dish"; the steeple-chase in which gentlemen riders compete for their own delight as well as for that of "squire and farmer; with no lack of their wives and daughters; many a hind in his smock-frock, and many an 'operative' from the neighbouring factories . . . There was scarcely a domestic in the Castle who was not there . . .";¹ the merry Christmas at St. Genevieve with the Lord of Misrule, the Numerus, the Hobby-horse, the Boar's head, the distributing of rosemary and the procession round the hall; all these are the various symbols of Disraeli's conviction that "a mere mechanical mitigation of the material necessities" is no complete answer to the Condition of England question. It is insisted that the amelioration of the lot of the "humbler classes"

¹ Coningsby, 256.
is not merely a "knife and fork question", to use the coarse and shallow phrase of the Utilitarian school; that a simple satisfaction of the grosser necessities of our nature will not make a happy people. 1

Disraeli had originally intended to treat in Coningsby not only "the derivation and character of political parties" but also "the condition of the people which had been the consequence of them" and "the duties of the church as a main remedial agency in our present state." 2 Though all these subjects were "launched" in Coningsby it was in Sybil that he turned his attention almost wholly to the second subject. The novel is partly a report on the social condition of England and partly a promise of new and better times impending.

To a student of the novels the most impressive difference in Sybil from the preceding works is the greatly increased reality of the writing. Hitherto every fictional offering of Disraeli's has been suffused and highly flavoured by the personality of the writer and has owed its vitality to the fevers of his imagination and of his need, psychological and financial, to get something written. His rejection of Utilitarianism has been mainly temperamental and testy, and his positive recommendations have been provocative and wishful.

1 Coningsby, 464.
He has translated his personal ambition to move among the aristocracy into a fantastic idealisation of the well-born, and "knowing nothing of Dukes" has nevertheless led a succession of fine-fattled English thoroughbreds around his romantic ring. In the same fashion he has constantly introduced the "lower orders" at the best as robustly resourceful, at the worst as picturesquely poor. His basic belief in the value of individuality and the need for the self-expression of genius has been given scope for demonstration in the unlimited means and freedom of his heroes. His admiration for the Roman Catholic families and their faith has also been romantically and superficially expressed and he has shown little awareness of the meaning of religious belief, the demands of its dogmas and the contest between God and the world fought out in anguish within the personality as Newman had experienced it. Disraeli has instinctively plunged for the values and the forms which Bentham detested and has set about to display and defend them from the confines of his own "organisation" and of his writing-room in a country mansion.

But in *Sybil*, forced on to the field of actuality by his career and by the real young aristocrats who were his admirers and who looked to him to provide a manifesto against the Utilitarian spirit of the age, Disraeli is resolved to wed fiction to fact. As it happened he was peculiarly endowed with the ironic detachment necessary to turn the tables on
himself and the result is at once his most mature, his most controlled and his most satisfying novel. In it he constantly calls upon his wit rather than his rhetoric and on his observation rather than his fancy. He demonstrates the injuries wrought by the Utilitarian spirit not merely upon his own sensibilities but upon the English people. The novel therefore ranks with Dickens's novels as an indictment of the civilisation which the industrial revolution has produced, and Disraeli might be admonishing his earlier self when he writes:

In a spreading dale, contiguous to the margin of a clear and lively stream, surrounded by meadows and gardens, and backed by lofty hills, undulating and richly wooded, the traveller on the opposite heights of the dale would often stop to admire the merry prospect that recalled to him the traditional epithet of his country.

Beautiful illusion! For behind that laughing landscape, penury and disease fed upon the vitals of a miserable populace. 1 [Italics supplied]

Disraeli has not abandoned his belief that the democratic aspirations of the age must come to nothing if not to disaster. He still believes that England's hope lies in the leadership of her young aristocrats. He still sees the institution of the monarchy as the sole remaining ground where a divided and distracted populace can perceive their interests to meet. He still reveres and laments the lost monastic order which had imposed a sense of responsibility and fellowship upon all members of the nation along with its common creed. The

1 Sybil, 60.
"glorious revolution" of 1688 is still called "the Dutch invasion" ¹ which ushered into England "a spirit of rapacious covetousness, desecrating all the humanities of life." ² The Reform Act is seen, not as the portal to a new age, but as the culmination of all the iniquities and false philosophies which preceded it: "Has it elevated the tone of the public mind? Has it cultured the popular sensibilities to noble and ennobling ends?" ³ demands Disraeli in an unabashed stream of "vague generalities". He asserts that

since the passing of the Reform Act the altar of Mammon has blazed with triple worship. To acquire, to accumulate, to plunder each other by virtue of philosophic phrases, to propose a Utopia to consist only of WEALTH and TOIL, this has been the breathless business of enfranchised England . . . ⁴

In all these ways Disraeli is consistent in maintaining his earlier attitudes and he still displays that independence in his reading of English history which marked the prose works already noticed:

All the great events [in the history of England] have been distorted, most of the important causes concealed, some of the principal characters never appear, and all who figure are so misunderstood and misrepresented, that the result is a complete mystification. ⁵

As usual, Disraeli's appeal in this novel is based upon a reference to history, which in its turn implies a scornful rejection of the prescriptions of those "whose assiduity in

1 Sybil, 23.  
2 Sybil, 36.  
3 Sybil, 35.  
4 Sybil, 36.  
5 Sybil, 17.
affairs had convinced their unprivileged fellow-subjects that
government was a science, and administration was an art." 1
Against this view he sets once more the dictum that "it is the
past alone that can explain the present." 2 He introduces
his hero, Egremont, by a recapitulation of his ancestry, a
process which enables Disraeli to hammer home to his readers the
ancestry of all-too-many of their currently exalted families.
It is in this matter that he departs startlingly and at once
from his earlier practice of deriving his aristocratic heroes
from the Normans:

Egremont was the younger brother of an English
earl, whose nobility, being of nearly three
centuries' date, ranked him among our high and
ancient peers, although its origin was more
memorable than illustrious. The founder of the
family had been a confidential domestic of one
of the favourites of Henry the Eighth, and had
contrived to be appointed one of the commissioners
for "visiting and taking the surrenders of divers
religious houses." 3

The contrivances and prudences of these upstart
earls are pursued up to the present day by which time it is
firmly established that they are "pricked by their Norman
blood" to aspire to their "due quota of Garters and governments
and bishoprics; admirals without fleets, and generals who
fought only in America." 4 This shameful line has finally
issued in the present Lord Marney with his chilly maxims:
"Everything in this world is calculation . . . If you go on

1 Sybil, 15.
2 Sybil, 151.
3 Sybil, 10.
4 Sybil, 12-13.
calculating with equal exactness, you must succeed in life." ¹

Lord Marney has been presented with crushing contempt but entire credibility as an example of the arrogance and blindness to responsibility which the nature of the age was capable of producing. He is only one of the jumped-up aristocrats whose claims to privilege are not matched by a corresponding and traditional acknowledgement of duties towards their inferiors; but as Marney is drawn in the likeness of a thorough-going Utilitarian he is treated with the greatest scorn: "He had formed his mind by Helvetius, whose system he deemed irrefutable, and in whom alone he had faith ... cynical, devoid of sentiment, arrogant, literal, hard ... he had no imagination," ² and "armed with the principles of his great master" he moves through the novel in blind indifference to the great new and restive forces at work around him, and is brought to an inglorious death at the hands of an outraged populace. His rank and his neglected duties descend to the young hero, Egremont, who is thus called upon to demonstrate the more positive side of Disraeli's creed that it is upon young noblemen of lofty imagination and native sympathy that England must call if she is to find national welfare. For "it is youth that alone can mould the remedial future." ³ The vision is romantic and is romantically embodied in the restitution to Sybil of her aristocratic

1 Sybil, 78.
2 Sybil, 50.
3 Sybil, 491.
birthright. Disraeli himself might be speaking when one of his characters reflects: 'To build up a great Catholic house again; of the old blood, and the old names, and the old faith—by holy Mary, it is a glorious vision!'\(^1\)

Egremont is once more the typical Disraelian hero, making a journey of self-discovery through the novel, freeing himself from prejudice and misunderstanding and working steadily towards a full comprehension of the responsibility that his rank carries with it. The impulse in him towards right action is, as always, to be found not in any Benthamite table of the springs of action, but in his "organisation". Like the earlier Disraelian heroes (and indeed like the conventional hero of epic) his youth has been insuspicious, "a younger son with extravagant tastes and expensive habits"\(^2\) but his nature asserts itself and indeed, despite his "quite puerile" performances at school, his subsequent career may be guessed at from his countenance:

An air of refinement distinguished his well-moulded brow: his mouth breathed sympathy, and his rich brown eye gleamed with tenderness. The sweetness of his voice in speaking was in harmony with this organization.\(^2\)

Two other male characters are presented with equal sympathy. The first, and the more expected, is "an humble vicar in the shape of Aubrey St. Lys, who came among a hundred thousand heathen to preach 'the Unknown God'"\(^3\) As "a younger

---

1 Sybil, 296.
2 Sybil, 37-38
3 Sybil, 125.
son of the most ancient Norman family in England" Mr. St. Lys is "distinguished by that beauty of the noble English blood, of which in these days few types remain." Like Eustace Lyle in Coningsby (in character no less than name) Aubrey St. Lys has been inspired to re-awaken in the hearts and lives of his parishioners a sense of their community, both within and without the Church. His parish of Nowbray is meant to represent the swollen populations of industrial cities who were not only without Parliamentary representation, but without a creed:

The parish church for a long time remained the only one at Nowbray when the population of the town exceeded that of some European capitals. And even in the parish church the frigid spell of Erastian self-complacency fatally prevailed.  

In accordance with Disraeli's greater general concern with the actualities of the English social scene, St. Lys is a member of the Church of England. Yet his sympathies with Rome are warm, and frequently warmly expressed:

The Church of Rome is to be respected as the only Hebraeo-Christian Church extant; all other Churches established by the Hebrew apostles have disappeared, but Rome remains... The Church of Rome is sustained by apostolical succession... To men not less favoured than the apostles, the revelation of the priestly character was made, and those forms and ceremonies ordained, which the Church of Rome has never relinquished...

Under St. Lys's eloquent and convinced guidance, not only Egremont but a great multitude of the erstwhile "heathens" of Nowbray are brought to a reverence of "forms and ceremonies"

1 Sybil, 123-124.
2 Sybil, 125.
3 Sybil, 129-130.
and to a profound respect for St. Lyns himself. He is made very often to voice Disraeli’s own romantic response to High Church ritual and to the various arts associated with religion. Indeed all the leading sympathetic characters in the novel are shown at one time or another as being transported by a contemplation of the beauty of the church. Yet the neglected "Multitudes" live either like the denizens of Wodgate (an industrial inferno, its name derived from Woden) as heathens, or at best as members of the Dissenting Sects:

The eyes of this unhappy race might have been raised to the solitary spire that sprung up in the midst of them, the bearer of present consolation, the harbinger of future equality; but Holy Church at Marney had forgotten her sacred mission. The people of Marney took refuge in conventicles, which abounded; little plain buildings of pale brick with the names painted on them, of Sion, Bethel, Bethesda... breathing consolation in the nineteenth century to the harassed forms and the harrowed souls of a Saxon peasantry. 1

Disraeli rightly associated the, to him, misguided aspirations of the Chartists with an allegiance to the chapel. One of the leading Chartist conspirators is "Wilkins, a Baptist teacher." 2 On the release from arrest of the Chartist leader, Gerard, his followers organise a grand reception for him which begins in the dissenting chapels where thanksgivings are publicly offered. Themselves recognising the antipathy to Chartist ideals represented by the Establishment, the agitators crowd in demonstration into the parish church, where, however,

1 Sybil, 63.
2 Sybil, 376.
the resourceful and eloquent St. Lys treats them to an ex temp orary discourse on the text, "Fear God and honour the King".  

It may be added that when the deluded mob are on the point of committing their gravest excess the voice of St. Lys prevails upon the more reasonable of them to desist.  

Also at hand to quell the insurrection is Egremont, and thus the Oxford Movement and Young England each produce a champion of privilege and the established order to stand shoulder to shoulder against the destructive force of Chartism.  

The other male character in whom Disraeli is sympathetically interest is Walter Gerard, whose "fathers fought at Azincourt", who is the rightful heir of the great and ancient estate of Mowbray but who has been treacherously dispossessed by the present Lord de Mowbray.  Gerard, though ignorant of having been denied his birthright, is fully alive not only to the ancient and honourable blood that flows in his veins, but also to the plight of the dispossessed "peasantry" of which he is at once the symbol and the natural leader.  Disraeli, attempting to characterise in Gerard the deprivation of rights among the lower orders, shows him caught up in the national movement towards a juster scheme of things.  Gerard is carried, despite his nobler nature, into intrigues and the approbation of violence by the baffled passions of his associates.  In a significant interview between Gerard and Lord Valentine,  

1 See Sybil, 394.  
2 See Sybil, 477.  
3 Sybil, 97.  
4 Sybil, 261-266.
another representative of the younger and more enlightened aristocracy, the interests of the nobility and of the people are shown to have been served in common in the great achievements of the past. But now "the relations of the working classes of England to its privileged orders are relations of enmity, and therefore of peril." 1 Ger"ard's career as a popular leader is shown as being misguided and even degrading as he is led further into the agitation for the Benthamite "five points". But his good sense, his natural uprightness of character and especially his reverence for the traditional English society eventually redeem his errors of judgment. Disraeli himself does not hesitate to interpret this message to his readers, and allows "the impartial pen that traces these memoirs of our times" 2 to deplore the gulf which has opened up between the interests of governors and governed and which has led to the present fallacious belief in democracy as a remedy.

Before summing up Disraeli's social philosophy as it is presented in Sybil it is of interest to notice one or two secondary themes which he carries on from the earlier novels. Once again Charles I figures as "a virtuous and able monarch martyred":

Rightly was King Charles surnamed the Martyr . . .

Never yet did man lay down his heroic life for so great a cause: the cause of the Church and the cause of the Poor. 3

1 Sybil, 264.
2 Sybil, 316.
3 Sybil, 268.
Once again the ideal form of aid to the poor is that of personal and direct charity. Sybil herself this time is the "angel from heaven" who visits the old, the sick and the poor, carrying with her a basket of provisions from the convent and bringing the light of her sympathy into the darkness of poverty and despair. Then the theme of responsibility, of the duties which attend the function of employer, is raised again and again. To offset the prevailing horror and squalor of his scenes of industry Disraeli introduces Mr. Trafford's factory set by a "sparkling river" and against a "sylvan background" with "the spire of the Gothic church" rising behind. Trafford is a Roman Catholic, the younger son of a family "that had for centuries been planted in the land":

With gentle blood in his veins, and old English feelings, he imbibed, at an early period of his career, a correct conception of the relations which should subsist between the employer and the employed. He felt that between them there should be other ties than the payment and the receipt of wages.

In the course of the novel the bonds which unite Trafford and his labourers in a sense of common purpose are tested and found to be proof against the "democratical" tempests of the times. The relation of interdependence between employer and employed is not only sympathetically acknowledged by Trafford: he gives this acknowledgment physical form by making his own home the centre of the village, reviving

1 See Sybil, 139-144.
"the baronial principle" instead of withdrawing himself "with vulgar exclusiveness from his real dependants". Disraeli has also deliberately filled the streets of this ideal village with beautiful children. "The race too tender for labour seemed to spring out of every cottage." The multitude of children, in defiance of Malthus, crowd upon the scene with joy and health and the promise of fruitful labour in the future.

The message in Sybil is that "the people are not strong; the people can never be strong. Their attempts at self-vindication will end only in their suffering and confusion." This assertion is proved by tracing the course of the Chartist movement and presenting in fictional guise not only some of its leaders but also the personalities and practices of Trade Unionism. The real strength of the people lies in a renewal of the parochial pattern in which human values and the common needs, rights and duties of all classes may be readily discerned. But it is precisely the tendency of competitive industry and laissez-faire economics to destroy this pattern, and the destruction is further aggravated by the Benthamite principle of centralisation, and the proliferation of "the pigeon-holes of a Whig bureau." The people of England are now finding, with "a general wail of frenzied alarm"

the parochial constitution of the country sacrificed without a struggle, and a rude assault

1 Sybil, 32.
2 Sybil, 318.
made on all local influences in order to establish a severely organized centralisation, [and that] a blow was given to the influence of the priest and of the gentleman, the ancient champions of the people ... 1 Englishmen want none of [this] joint-stock felicity; they want rights — rights consistent with the rights of other classes ... 2

"The people must have leaders," states Lord Valentine, speaking for Young England, and "when it comes to a push they will follow their nobility." 3 But unhappily for the people and for England, the nobility are all too often acting-out a mere "splendid mimicry of Norman rule" 4 capable of being wiped out by a single act of violence like that which razed the castle of Mowbray. Yet if Lord de Mowbray is a usurper and deserving of his fate, so no less are the self-styled leaders of the mob, who bring down upon themselves a similar "pitiless fate" through acting "with analogous pretension." 5

It is not through "the grand mystification of high nobility" 6 and still less through the people's ignorant endeavours after representation that "merry England" is to be restored. "[The] Charter is a coarse specific for our social evils. The spirit that would cure our ills must be of a deeper and finer mood." 7 The nation has already begun to suspect that

the oracles that have so long deluded them are not the true ones ... That we may live to see England once more possess a free Monarchy, and a privileged and prosperous People, is my prayer;

1 Sybil, 319. 2 Sybil, 346. 3 Sybil, 264. 4 Sybil, 486. 5 Sybil, 486. 6 Sybil, 309. 7 Sybil, 290.
that these great consequences can only be brought about by the energy and devotion of our youth is my persuasion. 1

From the literary point of view, Sybil must be regarded as being among the finest novels of the period. The skilful alternation of chapters brilliantly illustrates the general theme of a nation divided against itself as the scene abruptly shifts from barbarity, squalor and ignorance in the one "nation" to indolence, political intrigue and petty concerns in the other. (See for example the shift in Book V between chapters 6 and 7.) The bridge between the nations is managed almost purely in terms of character; Egremont, the high-born hero making his way into the unknown lower world under the name of Mr. Franklin; and Sybil, the heroine born among the people and raised in the convent, learning to take her place among the aristocracy. Into the Disraelian early world of splendour and extravagance there has burst a startling, grotesque, humorous and slangy mob of the underprivileged. "Suddenly the tramp and hum of a multitude broke upon the sunshiny silence." 2 Disraeli has forced himself to look more closely at the condition of England, and the result is a critical modification of his earlier views with no loss however of his conviction that

there is a dayspring in the history of this nation, which those only who are on the mountain-tops can as yet recognize. You deem you are in

1 Sybil, 432.
2 Sybil, 459.
darkness, and I see a dawn. The new generation of the aristocracy of England are not tyrants, not oppressors... They are the natural leaders of the people...; believe me they are the only ones.

The present state of political parties, the present state of English society, and the present state of religion are the three themes which Disraeli sets out to explore in his trilogy. He is even more concerned with the future state of all three, and the novels present by means of character and action their author's hopes for England's future. In Coningsby and Sybil there is so great an achievement of actuality in picturing the present that the hopes for the future seem convincing in their turn. A reader who tried to anticipate the content of Tancred from the contents of the earlier two novels might well expect to find a sort of Disraelian Loss and Gain in which Disraeli re-asserted the claims of the Establishment and tended ever towards Rome in his interpretation of ancient authority and national history. It is therefore a considerable disappointment to find in Tancred not a continuation of the English themes but a departure once more to Eastern ones. The pleading to a nation has become incongruously the plea for a race. The English are, as it were, asked to become Jews.

1 Sybil, 322.
It is most unfortunate for the symmetry of his design that the very qualities which distinguish Disraeli as an English sage in Coningsby and Sybil betray him in Tancred. The historical sense which might have reached back to Augustine and advanced with him upon English soil has retreated instead to Moses and is lost in Jerusalem, Canobia and Damascus. The young aristocrats, full of a sense of a mission, have become translated into emirs and sheikhs, and Young England is all but forgotten in favour of "the most remarkable institution which occurred about this time (1844) . . . that of 'YOUNG SYRIA'!"¹

The romantic imagination capable of being fired by the recollection of an olden merry England and by the present English countryside falls, as in some of the earlier work, once more under the spell of the East. Even the brilliant evocation of faction, of intrigue and coterie, of informed indolence and cunning wealth, in which Disraeli is unrivalled as a novelist, has suffered through want of its most valuable sources in contemporary England. And the heroine, instead of being a paragon of English beauty and virtue, wears an amber vest and Mamlouk trousers. Thus, this novel which might have been so valuable in its own time and in ours, as part of a unique political manifesto, has been made the vehicle for a rather absurd dissertation on the supremacy of racial purity over the mediocrity of mixed bloods. The doctrine is as

¹ Tancred, 359.
dangerous as it is alien to Disraeli's scheme. The novel lays bare the sensitivity of its author to his own foreignness. Bitterness, not buoyant optimism, is the prevailing element. 1 His new hero is never brought to grapple with the religious problem as it exists in England.

When however it has been said that Tancred fails to achieve in the realm of religion what the other two books achieved in their respective realms, it must be granted that the philosophic mood which prompted it has remained the same. England is seen as being in great peril. Despite her material prosperity she is in danger of collapsing through lack of faith. Again and again the note is sounded: the age is progressing, but progressing to what? It is an age of railroads, but the rails do not lead to any place where faith can find its home. The English who once had sent forth their peers and their common people to rescue Jerusalem from the infidel are now bewildered amid "the wreck of creeds, the crash of empires, French revolutions, English reforms, Catholicism in agony, and Protestantism in convulsions." 2

Instead of the third crusade, they expend their superfluous energies in the construction of railroads. 3

The opposition between religious aspiration and the belief in progress which is symbolised by the railroad is at one point perfectly expressed:

1 Tancred, see e.g. 198 and 402.
2 Tancred, 267.
3 Tancred, 176.
"A railroad!" exclaimed Tancred, with a look of horror. "A railroad to Jerusalem!"

Tancred sees his country as being caught up in "an age of movement, but of confused ideas: a country of progress" in which nobody now thinks about heaven. They never dream of angels. All their existence is concentrated in steamboats and railways.

For want of a vital, unifying faith "the people of this country have ceased to be a nation." So Tancred sets off to the Holy Land to wait upon a latter-day revelation, a direct communication from God which will disclose His present purpose towards man. That purpose as it is announced to Tancred in a vision, is to reverse the disastrous trend which began with the turn of the century. The people have wrongly attributed their unhappiness to the very principles which guaranteed their felicity. In hankering after equality and fraternity they have achieved only desolation.

The equality of man can only be accomplished by the sovereignty of God. The longing for fraternity can never be satisfied but under the sway of a common father.

Under this divine inspiration Tancred wishes to conquer the world with angels at our head, in order that we may establish the happiness of man by a divine dominion, and, crushing the political atheism that is now desolating existence, utterly extinguish the grovelling tyranny of self-government.

1 Tancred, 167.
2 Tancred, 75.
3 Tancred, 135.
4 Tancred, 52.
5 Tancred, 300.
6 Tancred, 434.
But Tancred never returns to England with this splendid message, and Englishmen are apparently left to pursue happiness still by seeking the "grovelling tyranny of self-government". The reader must share the feelings of Eva when she speaks at the last:

"I have a vague impression," said Eva sorrowfully, "that there have been heroic aspirations wasted, and noble energies thrown away . . . "

In the preface to *Lothair* which serves also as a general preface to the 1870 edition of his works Disraeli is able to describe with his customary genius for generalisation the philosophic tendency of his earlier works and of his political career:

To change back the oligarchy into a generous aristocracy round a real throne; to infuse life and vigour into the Church, as the trainer of the nation . . . ; to establish a commercial code on the principles successfully negotiated by Lord Bolingbroke . . . ; to govern Ireland according to the policy of Charles I and not of Oliver Cromwell; to emancipate the political constituency of 1832 from its sectarian bondage and contracted sympathies . . . all this rather by the use of ancient forms and the restoration of the past than by political revolutions founded on abstract ideas . . . It will be seen that the general spirit of these productions [*Coningsby*, *Sybil*, *Tancred*] ran counter to the views which had long been prevalent in England, and which may be popularly, though not altogether accurately, described as Utilitarian. 2

1 *Tancred*, 499.
2 General preface, Bradenham edition, I, xii.
But if Disraeli was clear, forceful and eloquent in expounding the intentions of these earlier works he is by no means so lucid when he speaks of Lothair itself. "A distinguished individual" has begged for Disraeli's own views of the "purport" of Lothair, but the author in this preface declines to give them. "Their purport to the writer seems clear enough," he says, and claims that the large sales of the book are a testimony to the general understanding of that purport. Yet Lothair, for all the scope it gives Disraeli to play in his natural element of intrigue and faction, remains a slightly disappointing work for those who hope to find in it the earlier convictions full-grown. In Lothair the purely political and social themes have been almost abandoned and it is, as it were, the politics of religion which preoccupy the writer. Such a development is thoroughly to be expected after the lapse of twenty-five years. The change in Disraeli's subject-matter is a reflection of the changes in the greater world about him. The geological and evolutionary theories; the rationalistic investigations of the scriptures; the expanding ambitions and the triumphs of Roman Catholicism in England with the formidable roll of its converts; the continuing strife among the dissenting sects each with its exclusive claims to enlightenment; all these issues had risen, during a period of comparative economic stability, to a position where they dominated the world of ideas in which Disraeli and other thinkers were living.
Even the revolutionary or republican aspirations of the time were associated less with a movement towards social equality than with a movement away from religious enthrallment. At least so Disraeli has represented them in this novel. The issue is between belief and atheism, between orderly Christendom and disintegration into Communism. "If the Church were to be destroyed, Europe would be divided between the Atheist and the Communist," warns Lothair's guardian, the Cardinal. 1 Disraeli has become less concerned with the economic and social life of England than with the spiritual crisis of Europe, and there is an international significance in the novel which is far more rightly included than in earlier works where only the peregrinations of the hero necessitated the changes of scene. In Lothair the central characters themselves are English, Scottish, American, French, Italian and Jewish because the action in which they are all involved has all Europe as its field. Disraeli is unable to find his footing in the surge of opposing modern forces. He is convinced of "the divine right of government" 2; but he is equally convinced of "the Divine government of this world". 3 He has a passion for political "freedom", but the word "liberty" cannot be substituted because it suggests "liberalism", and it was "under the plea of liberalism [that] all the institutions which were the bulwarks of the multitude had been sapped and weakened." 4

1 Lothair, 251. 3 General preface, I, xvi.
2 General preface, I, xi. 4 General preface, I, xi.
It is this basic uncertainty of the author which weakens the novel as a statement. It produces a most uncharacteristic shadowiness about Lothair himself. The hero gropes his way among the leaders of opposing powers but has no power himself. The Cardinal, representing the towering hopes of Catholicism as well as its subtle methods; Theodora Campian, the figurehead of republicanism and the goddess of the secret societies; Phoebus, the spokesman for aestheticism and the retreat to a primitive and lovely animism; the ducal family at Brenham representing English orthodoxy in its finest flower; Lord Culloden, the fiery and austere votary of the Free Kirk; all these figures and the forces they symbolise rise around the hero and dwarf him. He scurries from the circle of one influence into the circle of another, perplexed, irresolute and unhappy. His attachment to each of the conflicting causes in turn is fictionally represented by an amatory attachment in each camp; yet he is denied the dash of a Lothario and is made almost a craven, obsessed at twenty-one with matrimonial longings but afraid of becoming a matrimonial sacrifice. His ineffectual role in the midst of people who are rigidly committed is made more apparent by his being given no exact rank or titles.

In departing from his customary practice of extracting his hero with every detail of brilliant and remotest conjunction, in leaving him all but nameless in
a world of the most precious and precise pedigree, Disraeli
seems to give a hint at his intention in this novel. Lothair
is less a fictional personality than a social symbol. He
is the well-meaning, intelligent, but perplexed youth of
the day. His only convictions are that life is not a
mechanical affair, that the Creation was divinely achieved
for a divine purpose and that man is a religious being.
These convictions lead him always to reject the utilitarian
ethics, the utilitarian explanations of human motives and
the utilitarian description of human happiness. Lothair
is always secure in what he must reject. In knowing what
to accept among all the formulae he is offered he is
without assurance.

Disraeli leads him finally into a fairly desultory
union with his first love, the emblem of English orthodoxy,
Lady Corisande. It is a skilfully and sincerely presented
dénouement. Lothair's heart has been more tumultuously
stirred both by the vivid and vital Theodora, the spirit
of liberty, and by the mysterious and faintly menacing
Clare Arundel, representing the allurement of Roman
Catholicism. It has been necessary for Lothair to be ex-
posed to both these seductions before he can be allowed to
drift thankfully back to the calm and guileless love of
Corisande.

The "purpose" which was clear enough to Disraeli
must be that in the present crisis of warring powers, with
violent and free-thinking liberalism on the one side and the
scheming equivocations of Catholicism on the other, with
gaunt and gawky nonconformity (the giant daughters of
Culloden) sternly guarding the spirit of youth from the
wiles of the devil, and with the march of science threatening
to deprive man altogether of his spiritual inheritance, the
sensible man will seek refuge in the arms of the Established
Church of England.

Like the Disraelian heroes before him, Lothair has
made his pilgrimage of self-discovery, but unlike them he
remains a man more acted-upon than acting. In vain has
Disraeli heaped upon him the wealth, position, youth and
health which he grants to all his heroes—Lothair has no
"organisation". He is the creature of circumstances. One
must conclude that Disraeli himself feels baffled by the
relentless growth of liberalism. What once looked like a
defiance of it, namely the espousal of the Roman Catholic
faith, now looks like an evasion of it; and to fall into
Papacy is to become a pawn in the hands of a power no less
bigoted and blind than utilitarianism itself. There remains
only the traditional English faith. "Let us rest here for a
while," said Lothair, "under the shade of this oak"; and
Lady Corisande reclined against its mighty trunk and Lothair
threw himself at her feet. ¹

¹ Lothair, 466.
All things seem to have combined to make Disraeli's last novel, *Endymion*, a literary tombstone. The staggering success of *Lothair* appeared to give the author licence to let his pen run endlessly on for the gratification of an avid multitude. The vivid years before and after the first Reform Bill lay glowing in the old man's memory and lured him into an unwonted retrospection. But all the sparkle and the daring, the provocation and the paradoxes of the younger man fighting for great ends against great odds have gone. Disraeli's life and his works alike were given direction and brilliant force by his driving ambition to become Prime Minister of England. *Endymion* has all the confident tedium of the adventurer's tale after he has long reached home with his gold.

The single feature of the novel which must be blamed for its failure is the character of the hero. *Endymion* is already an old man in the nursery. We learn that he is handsome and looks healthy; but before the novel is ended and before the hero has reached his prime there are hints that even his health is poor. So he brings nothing to the enlivenment of the piece. Indeed he lacks every virtue of the Disraelian hero. His name appears on almost every page but he can hardly be said to have an existence in the novel at all. He is floated gently up from obscurity to eminence by the good offices and shrewd political conjectures of the
bevy of ladies who surround him. He himself seems incapable either of possessing or of uttering a principle or an idea, and even the marriage which crowns his career has to be proposed by the lady herself. Indeed Disraeli himself astonishingly explains that his hero is "without any alarming originality, or too positive convictions". 1

On the other hand the novel does manage to convey, chiefly through an abundance of secondary characters, a fairly strong sense of the period between 1830 and 1850. Whigs and Tories both old style and new are represented. The noise of Chartism is heard afar off. The Oxford Movement stirs the imaginations of many people and carries some over to Rome. The career of Newman is emulated by Nigel Penruddock even as the careers of other eminent Victorians are shadowed out under fictional names. The Roman Catholic hierarchy is re-established in England, Irish potatoes fail, the Duke and Sir Robert Peel form and dissolve governments, and above all the railways are advancing and branching all over the country. Yet it is all an affair of petticoats, and women are guiding the destiny of England even as they do that of Endymion himself. Disraeli takes no stand in the novel and nothing can confidently be quoted as an opinion of the author. An enervating tolerance of all opinions pervades the whole book and the earlier novelist is only very

1 Endymion, 181.
Occasionally before us:

King James the Second was the true founder and hero of the British navy. He was the worthy son of his admirable father, that blessed martyr, the restorer at least, if not the inventor, of ship money; the most patriotic and popular tax that ever was devised by man. The Nonconformists thought themselves so wise in resisting it, and they have got the naval estimates instead.¹

Yet the character, Waldershare, who voices such opinions as these is treated with scarcely more sympathy by Disraeli than another, Bertie Tremaine, whose library was well stored with political history and political science. ² Bentham was the philosopher then affected by young gentlemen of ambition, and who wished to have credit for profundity and hard heads . . . by the assertion of abstract principles . . . which it was now beginning to be the fashion to call Liberalism . . . Mr. Bertie Tremaine, who piqued himself on recognising the spirit of the age, adopted Liberal principles with that youthful fervour which is sometimes called enthusiasm . . . subsequently discovered to be inconsistent with the experience of actual life. ²

"The experience of actual life" has incapacitated Disraeli for giving his readers a personal record of the years he has chosen to deal with. To the extent that he has himself withdrawn from his pages the reader is constrained to follow his example.

The novels and the prose works of Disraeli present

¹ Endymion, 424.
² Endymion, 155.
a massive statement of the conservative ideal. While they consistently reflect the intelligence and beliefs of their author they are also notable for the manner in which that statement is adjusted to the changing nature and demands of the times. Disraeli was concerned always to oppose the Utilitarian teaching but at the same time he was careful to steer his own teaching close enough to the felt winds of reaction to ensure that his ideas would make some headway. He succeeded always in holding before the eyes of a public heavily assailed by Utilitarianism an alternative vision of the future in which human relationships were based upon allegiance to class, in which political powers were class powers, in which privilege was balanced by responsibility, and in which loyalty constituted claim. Moreover, he asserted constantly that human happiness was not an affair of political and material self-satisfaction but a process of spiritual and temperamental self-discovery. He felt and argued for the need of an ecclesiastical structure existing beside but independent of the structure of the state; and the role of the church was firstly to embody the religious impulses of the people, secondly to foster the sense of spiritual brotherhood, and thirdly to enhance the hierarchical character of the nation by acknowledging a supernatural authority which was impartial and universal. Similarly he would revive the failing authority of the monarch. In other
words his social schemes were reactionary to the point of being feudal. The same may be said of his views on individual development. Against the educational ideal of providing useful information for the multitude he advanced the ideal of self-fulfilment. Against acquisitiveness he set expression. Against the right of the many to have he set the duty of the few to give. Behind everything he proposed was a protest against uniformity, calculation and drabness. His works are an exuberant denial that all men are equal.
Chapter IV

PEACOCK

Chorus of Scotch Economists

Come, sing as we’ve said it – Oho! Oho!
Sing 'Free Trade and credit' – Oho! Oho!
Sing 'Scotch Education',
And 'O'er-population',
And 'Wealth of the Nation' – Oho! Oho!
Peacock.

In about 1826 Peacock wrote a tale called The Lord of the Hills in which a veteran military officer tells of three critical moments in his life. On the first occasion he was crossing the mountains between Silesia and Bohemia on the way to France. The time was that of the Revolution and he was journeying "to be a witness of the regeneration of man." As he rested in "a rhapsody of anticipation of the progress of light and liberty, and the downfall of tyranny and superstition" he was startled to hear a great mocking laugh burst around the hills. His fond hopes having been shattered in the events which followed, he was passing the same place a second time. By now "the dreams of liberty [had] passed away" in favour of an "Augustan age, universal peace under an enlightened head, and the diffusion of science, which would prepare mankind for universal liberty." Once again the unearthly shout of mockery rang around him. The soldier proceeds with his tale:

Once more I sate on the same stone, and rhapsodised on the march of mind and the final triumph of reason, and once more the same loud laugh of derision . . . marred my meditations . . . Tomorrow I shall pass the mountains perhaps for the last time . . . I shall furnish no food for [mockery], for all my illusions are over. 1

This tale has a great symbolic value in the appreciation of Peacock's writings. The laughter of Peacock is the wry laughter of disillusionment alternating with the more boisterous laughter of mockery or the bitter laughter of envy. In the last of his novels the thundering laughter of Jupiter bursts yet again over the heads of the loud pretenders to enlightenment.

It is a mistake to believe that Peacock sat above the battle of his time, recording in amused aloofness the blows received and struck by the protagonists. Nobody was more seriously engaged than he. The contest of forces which is being examined in the present study was forever in agitation within himself. His works therefore provide a unique opportunity for examining the play of those forces; for Peacock, like J.S. Mill, had identified the leaders of the conflicting philosophies. The two most potent influences upon him after Shelley's death were the influences of Bentham and Coleridge. The opposing creeds they represented were Utilitarianism and mature Romanticism. In Shelley he had seemed to find an anachronistic blend of radicalism and Romanticism which attracted him irresistibly; though whether the promise of such a resolution of conflict accounts for the friendship, or whether the friendship itself stimulated the conflict, must remain a matter of controversy. An opinion which is susceptible of strong proof is that Peacock's scholarly training promoted a
willingness to indulge in rationalistic discussion, while his conservative nature fled always from the results. In other words the dilemma which beset him was that of finding his natural predilections always at war with the propositions which his intellect laid down. He could talk endlessly with the Utilitarians but he could never live according to the outcome of his talk with this "disquisitional set of young men". The story related of Peacock and James Mill when they were dining at a country inn exactly expresses Peacock's position. After Mill had given precise reasons why the beefsteak should be tender, Peacock replied, "Yes, but, as usual, all the reason is on your side, and all the proof on mine." ¹

The easiest and most common approach to a reconciliation of all the contradictions which Peacock's writings present is the biographical approach. This is tacitly to attribute to the passage of time, both as it produced development in the man and as it brought changes to English society, the disparities of sentiment to be found in Peacock's works. Thus it is possible to speak of his early, or poetic period; the period of Shelleyan influence and the first novels; the rationalist period of

¹ Carl van Doren, The Life of Thomas Love Peacock, 183. (Hereafter referred to as Life)
his association with Bentham and the Mills; and the long, almost silent, period of his gradual acceptance of the world's incorrigible follies and its fascinations.

But though such an approach may be satisfactory enough in describing a sort of typical Romantic's Progress it can hardly be sufficient psychologically for the proper study of one man. For it is obvious that the author of *Palmyra*, published in 1806, is none other than the undeveloped author of *Gryll Grange* in 1860. Moreover, to divide his work into periods is to suggest that within any period he himself was not divided in his views or in his statement of them; and this is not the case. The contradictions are within the man and not between periods of his growth or of the century in which he lived. For example, the *Essay on Fashionable Literature* must have been written almost at the same time as *The Four Ages of Poetry*, and the opinions put forward in the one are, in the treatment of Coleridge at least, an outright denial of the opinions put forward in the other. There are passages in *The Misfortunes of Elphin* which, read separately, express views progressive to the point of being revolutionary; but they are contained within a work which as a whole is a mockery of progress and an idealisation of the past.

Carl van Doren, although his work on Peacock is largely biographical, has nevertheless recognised the need to bring together the conflicting expressions of Peacock's
personality and attempts to do so by saying:

Nothing gives so good an idea of Peacock's actual position as to call him the Court Jester of Utilitarianism. ¹

This is in many ways an admirable appellation, suggesting as it does both Peacock's involvement with and his detachment from the ethics of Bentham, with the added hint that his detachment customarily took a comic turn. Yet it carries too the suggestion that though Peacock may have been the Court Jester, he was nevertheless of the Court; a Utilitarian in fact. But earlier, van Doren has spoken of Peacock's "constitutional toryism and intellectual independence" ² and insisted that

in no case did Peacock form a close friendship with a member of the [Utilitarian] group. One searches in vain for any considerable mention of him in the published memoirs or letters of the Utilitarians. ³

It must seem strange that Peacock formed no close friendship with the Benthamites when he is known to have dined regularly once a week alone with Bentham himself for many years. But van Doren is surely just in this insistence as well as in ignoring Leigh Hunt's attempt to enrol Peacock among the Utilitarians in the preface to his Poetical Works in 1832. "Peacock was far enough from being the

1 Life, 196.
2 Life, 191.
3 Life, 183.
singer of utility," asserts van Doren. Yet he was professionally associated with the Mills, was anxious not to displease them, withholding publication of Paper Money Lyrics until after the elder Mill's death, and was a contributor to The Westminster Review.

In the pages which follow there will be offered an account of the psychological puzzle which Peacock presents, an account which will place him not among the Utilitarians as a jester, but among those constitutionally opposed to Utilitarianism. And if a formula is required, to match the one quoted above, it will be rather that "Peacock is the Court Jester of Romanticism."

But such a tag as the last would not bring into consideration the strong affinities of Peacock with the late eighteenth century. One cannot read him without reflecting that had the gods to whom he appealed on his death-bed been kinder to him Peacock would have grown old with Gibbon instead of with Macaulay. The late eighteenth century itself did not produce many men who reflected it at so many points. Peacock revered alike Voltaire and Rousseau; he responded to Ossian as warmly as to Bentham; he shared the sense of "arrival" which had stimulated the historians to examine the way by which they had come, but he shared too the sense of "arriving" which had opened up for

1 Life, 184
the philosophers the prospect of human perfectibility; he
had a classicist's respect for correctness which led much
of his criticism to the point of pedantry, yet he was not
merely a condoner but a champion of innovation in both
poetry and music, with an ear readily responsive to new
measures and a sensibility eager to discern spontaneity and
originality wherever they appeared. In one place he is
dissecting Thomas Moore's prose with the most finical of
scholarly fingers and attributing Moore's faults to his
popularity; and in another he is defending Bellini's music
against "systematical doctors" and declaring that

the feelings of the ordinary unsophisticated and
unprejudiced hearer are always in advance of
their rules; and that which has, in despite of
them, been once stamped with popular favour,
becomes a standard to the same class of critics
in the next generation. 1

In several other places the preferences of the multitude are
called the imbecilities of the rabble.

All the puzzling contradictions of Peacock become
comprehensible if he is pictured as living, with an emanci-
pated intelligence and an unbruised sensibility, in the
period immediately before the French Revolution. He has a
genuine and deep vein of melancholy, customarily expressed
in the elegiac contemplation of the transience of man and
his works; but cheerfulness keeps breaking out, and even

1 Bellini, Works IX 335.
becomes irresponsibility. The shadows of Gray and Johnson flit through his poetry, but Monk Lewis and Ossian, Sterne and the Burns of Tam O'Shanter are also glimpsed in their turn. A bluff patriotism makes comic or detestable figures out of Frenchmen, Scotchmen, the Irish or the Jews; and on the other hand an enlightened intelligence and a catholic taste can relish foreign literature whether its subjects be philosophical, lyrical, dramatic or comic. An American may be a barbarous slave-driver, a hero of liberty, a paper-money mountebank or a noble savage. A powerful respect for erudition leads to the citing of the ancients as final authorities on matters as widely apart as the character of Greek music and baldness among women; and yet an awakening romanticism attempts to match the classical mythologies with those of the Norse and the Celts. King Arthur and Merlin inhabit an island in the company of Bacchus and Pan.¹ Such complexities of belief, thought and feeling might be almost indefinitely exhibited from Peacock's works and might be shown to extend to every matter with which a cultivated man is concerned, whether of religion or art, politics or manners, science or philosophy. Yet these complexities would not only be comprehensible, they might be expected in a man of Peacock's powers placed in the England of the late eighteenth century.

¹ See Calidore, Works VIII.
Thus, if a concise appellation is required to characterise the patchwork of paradoxes which seems to constitute Peacock's personal belief, it is helpful to realise that only after the Revolution and the rise of imperial France does an attempt seem necessary to resolve those paradoxes. For we look, in the century which followed, for definite philosophic positions. Peacock himself was fierce against others' shifts in allegiance, recognising the age's demand that men should become committed one way or another now that the swords had been out and might at any moment be out again. Yet his very fierceness against political paltering in others is a mark of his distress at having to commit himself. "It does not comport with the steam-engine speed of our march of mind to look at more than one side of a question," he complains. He may indeed be seen as sharing the experience of one of his characters:

Every one was the organ of some division or subdivision of a faction; and had entrenched himself in a narrow circle, within the pale of which all was honour, consistency, integrity, generosity, and justice; while all without it was villany, hypocrisy, selfishness, corruption, and lies. Not being inclined to entrench myself in any one of these magical rings ... 

His works are the works of a man upon whom the

1 The Misfortunes of Elphin, Works IV 59.
2 Melincourt, Works II 137.
times and his own conscience made more demands than he would choose to be subjected to. Had he lived before the 1790's the world would have been his own. Between his birth and his manhood came what he called "that scarecrow of well-meaning simplicity, the French Reign of Terror". He may therefore be labelled a pre-Romantic living on the wrong side of the French Revolution.

One other modification of the common view of Peacock needs to be suggested. He was early named "the laughing philosopher" and it is customary to see him as boisterously drowning his doubts in red wine and stopping argument with a song. No view could be more superficial. Though he was no toper himself his literary indulgence in liquor as a solvent of contending ideas is symptomatic of his own uneasiness. Almost every chapter in Gryll Grange is headed with a classical admonishment to drink and forget. To have been thrust into an age of bitter, necessary faction and to have been deprived of the dream of human perfectibility brought Peacock to a condition of deep melancholy and regret. His more sober publications reveal a man of earnest mind, grievously disappointed. In, for example, his essay called The Enicier written for The London Review of January 1836 there may be found a poignant account of the defeat of the revolutionary spirit by the stolid self-interest of the

1 Jefferson's Memoirs, Works IX 186.
epicier or petty bourgeois class. An age not committed to narrow political and social doctrines will nourish, he declares, an Epicurus or a Hobbes, in the wholesome air of free speculation. But now only a Dugald Stewart or a Mackintosh is produced. The "days of the Rights of Man, Political Justice, and Moral and Intellectual Perfectibility" have passed and men live "in the days of the march of mechanics, in the days of political economy, in the days of prices—current and percentages..." ¹ Peacock's spiritual fate, like that of the earliest Romantics, is the actual fate of Benjamin Constant as Peacock describes it:

He had dreamed of popular power—great, majestic, beneficent: he had seen it little, abject, ridiculous, selfish. The reality stared him in the face: he closed his eyes and died. He who has lost his last illusion, who has used up his ideality, has nothing to do but die. ²

The essay concludes in the bitterest despair of its ever being possible to "evolve the new form which society should wear" or to "invest it with features of moral and intellectual beauty."

Peacock was a serious man, unsociable, testy, kindly and for the greater part, unhappy. Even the ebullient Disraeli was melancholy in his presence. His personality was ill-at-ease in nineteenth-century England, and his years were, so to speak, passed in exile.

For the present purpose it becomes necessary not

1 The Epicier, Works IX 255-256.
2 The Epicier, Works IX 306.
merely to examine the ways in which Peacock behaved in this predicament, but to show that, caught up in a world in which Utilitarianism reigned, he joined forces, as a sort of "underground" agent, with the movement of resistance against Utilitarianism.

It has already been claimed in Chapter I that, in the beginning Utilitarianism and Romanticism had common roots and that they grew into opposition under the pressure of political and social events. In the case of Peacock this growth, with all its adaptations and its pangs, may be witnessed in its effects upon a single person. At one moment he is moved to renounce his Romantic affinities and boldly, if disappointedly, to espouse the cause of rationalism, liberalism and scientific progress. At the next moment he is seduced by a line of verse, or the vision of an olden and golden era, to mock the march of mind, to revile the achievements of science, and to protest that

\[
\text{every day before our eyes} \\
\text{New forms of mountebankery rise,} \\
\text{And as one folly flies or dies} \\
\text{Another fills the void.} \]

Yet this oscillation is by no means regular, and it is evident when the whole work of Peacock is observed that the set of his mind and feeling is strongly to the side of the reaction against Utilitarianism; that he is in fact constitutionally a Tory.

1 From an undated poem, Works VII 288.
An obvious test is the attitude towards religion, for it has been clear in the case of the other opponents of Utilitarianism that they bring more or less directly against the nonconformist or non-existent belief of their enemies, a staunch adherence to the older establishments whether of England or of Rome. The earliest of Peacock's verses show a tendency to piety much stronger than the undemonstrative Christian faith of his beloved mother might have been expected to produce in him. There are pieces probably written in 1801 whose titles From the Revelations and Paraphrase from the Seventeenth Chapter of Isaiah suggest their tone and content.

Even in the lines addressed To Mrs. Sewell the religious note is becomingly sounded. The last lines of Palmyra, published in 1805, provide a firm, if commonplace, contrast to the elegiac strain which precedes them:

Bow then to Him, for He is Good,
And loves the works his hands have made. 1

Again, when inviting his reader to "weep with Ossian o'er a tale of woe", there is the same assurance that

the heav'nly hope shall rise,
To meet in higher bliss, in better skies,
In those bright mansions of the just above,
Where all is Rapture, Innocence, and Love. 2

1 Works VI 22.
2 Works VI 40.
A further handful of examples from this volume of 1805 will serve to show the consistency with which Peacock at that time sounded the note of Christian piety:

But after death
Shall Virtue live, and live to die no more. 1

Religion pours
Hope's fairy-colours on the virtuous mind. 2

Far from the haunts of Folly, Vice, and Man,
To hold sublime communion with . . . God! 3

There is also a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer.

If these expressions of religious faith are unremarkable in any other way, they at least suggest that at the age of twenty Peacock had made no progress towards the atheism he was later to come upon in Shelley, the Mills, and Bentham. Even seven years later, he is writing, in The Philosophy of Melancholy:

For heaven is wronged, when virtue feels despair . . .
No more with earth-directed eyes complain:
But bow to him whose mercy sends thee pain . . .
He rules and circumscribes this mundane ball, 4
Combines, dissolves, restores, arranges, all.

Now The Philosophy of Melancholy is a considerable work, the fruit of much study, reflection and careful composition. There can be no doubt that it represents too a real, if unconvincing, attempt on Peacock's part to reconcile his mind to the disappointments of the world. In 1812, then, the delicate but vital distinction between despair and acceptance lay for Peacock in the recognition "that the existence of a

1 Works VI 67.
2 Works VI 68.
3 Works VI 13.
4 Works VI 223.
certain portion of evil is indispensable to the general system of nature," 1 (a markedly anti-Benthamite sentiment), and in "the knowledge of that all-perfect wisdom, which arranges the whole in harmony". 2 Even pain is regarded not as the Utilitarians regarded it, but as one manifestation of God's mercy.

In the same year Peacock met Shelley, and with rare exceptions, he was unable subsequently to maintain, or at least to express, his religious beliefs so simply. Yet either in boisterous mirth or in witty comment his attention returns again and again to the religious life; his works are filled with fleshy parsons and gluttonous friars and it seems he can never have enough of his fling at their expense. Yet it is apparent too that among the clergy of the older faiths he finds a large measure of the good life. This reluctant admiration is never shown towards the nonconformist sects, the members of which all resemble the missionary castaway of Satyrane who, hearing "the unholy sounds of music and merriment"

felt strengthened in the conviction of his call to shew these deluded reprobates the saving grace and virtue of long faces and dismal sounds, and after another application to his bottle [of rum] he concealed it in a copious pocket, from which he extracted a bible. 3

Indeed, by means of Timothy Touchandgo's letter to his daughter, Peacock associates the sectarian spirit with that of commercial rapacity. Touchandgo has flitted to America,

1 Works VI 186.
2 Works VI 186
3 Works VIII 298
the land in which all men flourish; but there are
three classes of men who flourish especially, -
Methodist preachers, slave-drivers, and paper-
money manufacturers. 1

On another occasion, speaking of the traditional song-making
of the Welsh peasantry, Peacock observes that this happy
practice

may still be heard among them on the few occasions
on which rack-renting, tax-collecting, common-
enclosing, methodist-preaching, and similar
developments of the light of the age, have left
them either the means or inclination of making
merry. 2

It is in the novels written after he had met Shelley
and before the nation was divided over the Catholic Emancipa-
tion issue that pretty well all Peacock's slighting references
to the Established and Roman Churches are made. They all
take the same forms, either of a thrust at the fat living in
the old monasteries or at the church's sorry history of
oppression. The attacks are remarkable in every case for
slyness and wit rather than for the warmth of genuine conviction.
A few examples of each will show these characteristics.

In Maid Marian, the abbey of Rubygill is described
as standing

in a picturesque valley . . . in a spot which
seemed adapted by nature to be the retreat of
monastic mortification, being on the banks of a
fine trout stream, and in the midst of woodland
coverts, abounding with excellent game . . . 3

1 Chrobot Castle, Works IV 134.
2 The Misfortunes of Elphin, Works IV 145.
3 Maid Marian, Works III 1.
Again, in the same novel:

The friar now conducted them to his peaceful cell, where he spread his frugal board with fish, venison, wild-fowl, fruit, and canary.

In *The Misfortunes of Elphin*:

*Avalon* was the oldest monastic establishment in Britain; and consequently, as of reason, the most plump, succulent, and rosy.

There are a great many other such hits at the gluttony, venality, and even lechery of the monastic orders. There may lurk a genuine disparagement beneath this badinage, but in other ways Peacock deals most genially with men like Friar Tuck and the monks of St. Mark's and of Boozabout Abbey. There seems a sharper edge to the attacks upon the church's militarism, and it may well be that Peacock never wholly forgave Christianity for bringing what he confessed to be the undeniable truth to shatter the lovely illusions of his beloved Pagans. Thus on occasion, in the period between 1812 and 1829, emboldened by his intercourse with atheists, he assails Christianity itself:

To the age of brass in the ancient world succeeded the dark ages, in which the light of the gospel began to spread over Europe, and in which by a mysterious and inscrutable dispensation, the darkness thickened with the progress of the light.

In *Caligore*, all the gods and goddesses, genii and nymphs who once reigned in Olympus have fled from mankind in disgusted retreat before the dismal onset of Christianity.

---

3. In e.g. *Moore's Epicuroan*, Works IX passim.
If in these instances the attack seems only naughty, the same

can hardly be said for such attacks as these:

The newly-converted Saxons set upon the monastery
of Bangor Iscoed, and put its twelve hundred monks
to the sword. This was the first overt act in
which the Saxons set forth their new sense of a
religion of peace . . . 1

... the Reformation, which demonstrated by the
holy text of pike and gun . . . 2

the good old times were always on his lips;
meaning the days when polemic theology was in
its prime, and rival prelates beat the drum.
ecclesiastic with Herculean vigour, till the
one wound up his series of syllogisms with the
very orthodox conclusion of roasting the other. 3

In *Said Marian*, Peacock coins the ingenious and grisly word
"philotheoparoptesism: Roasting by a slow fire for the love
of God." 4 Yet the sharpness even in these examples seems
always one of bafflement rather than of anger. The quality
of the writing needs only to be tested alongside certain more
serious reflections which will be supplied shortly in order to
see that Peacock was being partly provocative, and partly
dutiful to his acquired sentiments. That he is writing under
the influence of rationalist associations is suggested by the
reference to Bentham's prison design in the following example:

Describing yet another "succulent" abbey he says:

A curious series of fish-ponds, connected by sluices,
was fed from a contiguous stream with a perpetual
circulation of fresh water, - a sort of piscatorial
panopticon, where all approved varieties of fresh-
water fish had been . . . kept in good order,

1 The Misfortunes of Elphin, Works IV 54.
2 A Story of a Mansion among the Chiltern Hills, Works VIII 391.
3 Nightmare Abbey, Works III 11.
4 Said Marian, Works III 45 (note).
clean and fat, for the mortification of the flesh of the monastic brotherhood on fast-days. 1

If these extracts, in all of which the jest comes pat, are compared with those which follow, a new and superior quality of thought will be discovered in the latter.

Ultimately the real and permanent disposition of Peacock's mind depends for its discovery upon textural comparisons of this sort as will presently be shown in greater detail. In Crotchet Castle Mr. Chainmail says to the Utilitarian, Mr. Macquedy:

It is a question worth asking, Mr. Macquedy, whether the religious spirit which raised these edifices [the old churches], and connected with them everywhere an asylum for misfortune and a provision for poverty, was not better than the commercial spirit, which has turned all the business of modern life into schemes of profit... I do not see, in all your boasted improvements, any compensation for that kindly feeling which, within their own little communities, bound the several classes of society together, while full scope was left for the development of natural character... Now... we have no bond of union, but pecuniary interest... everything about us is as artificial and as complicated as our steam-machinery. 2

It is not necessary to labour the similarities of sentiment and expression here with those of Newman, Disraeli and Carlyle. This short passage contains matter which these other writers expounded at vast length. At the moment it is necessary only to suggest that when allowance is made for Mr. Chainmail's having to speak in character, there remain a force, a sincerity, and a sobriety of expression which are distinctly

1 Recollections of Childhood, works, VIII, 29.
2 Crotchet Castle, works, IV, 123.
lacking from the passages which precede it. There are many places where Peacock, speaking with his own voice, echoes both the tone and sentiments here expressed and some of these will be noticed later. If there is any doubt that Peacock, himself the frequenter of abbeys, is to be heard in this speech of Mr. Chainmail's, it should be observed that the character makes use of the author's particular *hate noire* for comparison - Peacock's personal detestation of steam-machinery is, as Dr. Opium always puts it, "as notorious as the sun at noon."

It can confidently be asserted that Peacock, throughout his life, felt the need for and respected the place of religion in every society. Only the nonconformist religiosity which he connected with money-making and long faces really offended him. His real hunger was for the religion of the ancients; but since he had been born in the Christian era his sympathy went out to the earlier churches, especially the church of Rome; for in addition to its calm certainty of faith and its acknowledgement of the needs of the flesh, it offered a romantic and picturesque appeal in its ruins, its sacraments and its images. Between about 1830 and 1860 Peacock responded to these appeals in various ways.

In 1829 when the Duke of Newcastle made an abortive attempt to speak against the Catholic Emancipation Bill, Peacock wrote a satirical poem called *A Speech in Embryo* which mocked the would-be orator's attempts to retain Catholic disabilities. A similar attack was then made by Peacock upon
Lord Winchelsea who also opposed the bill. At this stage it was orthodox liberal behaviour to support the Catholics in their struggle and Peacock was not in the same danger of offending his Utilitarian friends as he was with his *Paper Money Lyrics*. But that his sympathies may well already have been lurking with the Catholics' faith as well as with their political aspirations is suggested by his poem of c. 1851. *A Goodbye Ballade of Little John* is palpably an attack on Lord John Russell made after he had introduced a Bill for Resisting the Aggression of the Pope. Little John is represented in the ballad as having called in the devil to put an end to his fearful visions as he "sat in a lordly hall / 'Mid spoils of the Church of old." For Little John seemed to see a day advancing when the monastic orders would resume their rights over such ancient halls, with "the poor, at the Abbey door / Receiving their daily bread." Worse, the three dread sisters, Faith, Hope, and Charity were abroad in the land once more. Having summoned the "murky fiend"

"Now take thee a torch in thy red right hand,"
Little John to the fiend he saith:
"And let it serve as a signal brand,
To raise the rabble, throughout the land,
Against the Catholic Faith."

Already, with the populace branded as rabble and Peacock's satire proceeding with the vigour of one of his drinking songs, the poem has become startlingly reactionary.

1 *A Speech in Embryo* and *When John of Ziaca went to Kingdom Come*, Works VII 244 and 245.  
2 Works VII 254 ff.
But to go on: the devil at once goes to work and is joined in his campaign by "dawn Scots Presbyters." In fact the "Protestant Hydra's every head / Sent forth a yell of zeal,"

And pell-mell went all forms of dissent,
Each beating its scriptural drum;
Wesleyans and Whitfieldites followed as friends,
And whatever in 'onian and 'arian ends,
Et omne quod exit in hum.

And in bonfires burned ten thousand Guys
With caricatures of the pious and wise,
Mid shouts of goblin glee . . .

The rabble once started, however, cannot be stopped and Little John is face with a sorcerer's apprentice's problem of reining in the forces of dissolution he has set bolting. With the awful spectre of the devil towering menacingly astride the shrines of Durham and Oxford and York the poem ends. It is linked with another poem which Peacock later used in a modified form in Gryll Grange as Dr. Olimian's reflections on the new orders of chivalry. ¹ Both poems survive in manuscript in the same unknown hand. Of chief interest in the present context is a stanza omitted from The New Order of Chivalry as it finally appeared in Gryll Grange. In this stanza, the strange new members of the Christian institution of knighthood (two Jews and a "Paynim") are further challenged on their hostility to the Roman Catholic faith:

Should Satan lack funds, Heaven's prince to dethrone,
These are just the three worthies to lend him a loan.

The cancellation of these lines and the withholding from

¹ See Gryll Grange, Works V 181. The earlier version appears in Works VII 256.
publication of the other poem are typical of Peacock's reticences, other examples of which will be observed in due course.

There are many other defences of the Roman Catholic faith in Peacock's work. In fact it may be said that while he presents his Church of England parsons with great cordiality, his approval of them is only implied and carries with it the reservation of banter; but when his defence of a church is explicit it is nearly always the Roman Catholic church he is defending:

... one of those rich old abbeys, whose demesnes the pure devotion of Henry the Eighth transferred from their former occupants (who foolishly imagined they had a right to them ... )

In the Catholic days of England, three sisters, named Katharine, Martha, and Anne, built three chapels to their name-sake Saints ... They were reverenced as memorials of piety and sisterly affection till the days of the Reformation, which demonstrated by the holy text of pike and gun that both the pieties and the affection were Pagan and idolatrous.

How far Peacock himself came under the influence of the Oxford Movement it is impossible to know; but in Gryll Grange there is a more delicate male character study than any other in his works. Beside the figure of Mr. Falconer such an earlier personage as Mr. Sylvan Forester seems stuffy and absurd.

If then there is external evidence to support the view that Mr. Forester was a spokesman for certain of Peacock's own

1 Recollections of Childhood, Works VIII 29.
2 A Story of a Mansion among the Chiltern Hills, Works VIII 391.
predilections, it seems safe to assume that the tastes of Mr. Falconer, so winningly presented, must have been shared or at least considered by Peacock with much delectation. Here again the tone or the texture of the expression of the views is the surest indication of their importance in the medley of opinion:

The Rev. Dr. Opimian: At present, your faith is simply poetical. But take care, my young friend, that you do not finish by becoming the dupe of your own mystification.

Mr. Falconer: I have no fear of that. I think I can clearly distinguish devotion to ideal beauty from superstitious belief. I feel the necessity of some such devotion, to fill up the void which the world, as it is, leaves in my mind... Everything is too deeply tinged with sordid vulgarity... [there can be] no Naiad in a stream that turns a cotton-mill; no Oread in a mountain dell, where a railway train deposits a cargo of Vandals... But the intercession of saints still forms a link between the visible and invisible. 1

Dr. Anodyne: I do not wonder that the forms of the old Catholic worship are received with increasing favour. There is a sort of adhesion to the old religion, which results less from faith than from a certain feeling of poetry; it finds its disciples; but it is of modern growth... 2

It is in the instances where Peacock carefully represents, not loudly overstates, an opinion that he is felt to be himself involved. Mr. Falconer, walking with quiet delight along the brink of hagiolatry, and with all his other romantic and chivalrous eccentricities is ripe for the satiric plucking; but Peacock never makes him a buffoon. He even so far identifies his hero with himself as to give him the lines

1 Gryll Grange, Works V 73-79.
2 Gryll Grange, Works V 93-94.
Peacock had himself already written about the chapels built by the three pious sisters, Katharine, Martha and Anne:

Mr. Falconer: The sisters thought the chapels would long remain memorials of Catholic piety and sisterly love. The Reformation laid them in ruins...

In the matter of religion Peacock may be said to have followed the advice of Thomas Jefferson of whom he always spoke in terms of the warmest admiration. In the essay on Moore's Epicurean Peacock agrees with Jefferson on the moral necessity

to fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of a God; because if there be one, he must more approve the homage of reason than of blindfold fear.

Like Jefferson, Peacock's reason finally demanded a supernatural explanation of being. His own constitutional bent chose the older establishment to embody and to formulate his religious needs. Not only the acknowledgment of God's existence, which is implicit in his work from first to last, but the latter-day sympathy with the Roman Catholic church and response to the romantic appeal of its services, these characteristics made it impossible for Peacock ever to enter the Utilitarian camp. He was incapable of agreeing with Mr. Fax that "feelings and poetical images are equally out of place in a calm philosophical view of human society," for Mr. Fax is described by Peacock himself as "the indefatigable explorer of the cold clear

1 *Gryll Grange*, Works V 76.
3 *Melincourt*, Works II 76.
springs of knowledge... He looks on the human world... as a mathematician looks on his diagrams, or a mechanist on his wheels and pulleys...” ¹

A second test of Peacock's real position which at once suggests itself is his attitude towards Coleridge. He had early identified Coleridge as a reactionary against the philosophic radicalism of his, Peacock's, friends; and nobody assailed Coleridge with more malice and mockery than Peacock. Alongside this enemy of enlightenment and liberty Peacock ranged as other liberal renegades, Southey, Wordsworth, Scott and even Byron. It is a fairly obvious diagnosis of the cause of Peacock's spleen to say that it developed largely through chagrin; that he himself had tried and failed to rival these men as a creative writer in the Romantic mode; that when he was favoured with Shelley's friendship and had recognised in Shelley's poetic genius a quite different expression of Romanticism, he was lured to the espousal of ideas with which he could never really live in harmony; and that the unhappiness of this misalliance produced an extravagant public display of distaste for Coleridge and the others.

Such a view is supported when a careful study is

¹ Melincourt, Works II 73
made of the place and the nature of Peacock's attacks on these men. Of the various guises in which Coleridge appears in the novels the figure of Mr. Mystic in Melincourt may be used for discussion because in him the caricature is most grotesque. The root of almost all Peacock's published ridicule of Coleridge is his incomprehensibility. Mr. Mystic inhabits Cimmerian Lodge. He is so enveloped in metaphysical fogs and miasmas that the eye of common sense cannot discern him. Moreover his chief pride lies in this obscurity. In another incarnation, as Mr. Flosky, Coleridge is represented as being deliberately obscure because his reputation lay in his never having blundered into perspicuity. For "mystery was his mental element." This constant thrusting at one place is to be compared with the repetitive jibes at the gluttony of friars. If however one turns from the novels to a work which Peacock refrained from publishing, but which was written about the same time as Nightmare Abbey, one finds Peacock vehemently denouncing those critics who pretended to find Coleridge obscure. He even goes so far as to expose the methods of the Edinburgh Review in its attempts to ridicule aspiring authors like Coleridge and shows that certain devices are used repetitively. An example is the pretence that the author is unintelligible. The whole of this very able defence of Coleridge was kept from the press, one can only conclude, because Peacock could hardly expose himself to the charge of such gross inconsistency.

1 *Nightmare Abbey*, Works III 78-79.
3 See *An Essay on Fashionable Literature*, Works VIII, 276 ff.
Instead, Peacock published *The Four Ages of Poetry* in which not only Coleridge, but Wordsworth, Southey, Byron and Scott are wildly ridiculed.

In the course of this last essay Peacock speaks of Coleridge's poetic technique as "a tissue of verse constructed on what Mr. Coleridge calls a new principle (that is, no principle at all)". ¹ But in the *Essay on Fashionable Literature* of slightly earlier date he chastises the *Edinburgh Review* with deliberate or obtuse failure to recognise the subtleties of Coleridge's verse-making and quotes in order to demolish it the Review's statement that Coleridge "makes his metre 'on a new principle!' but we utterly deny the truth of the assertion, and defy him to show us any principle upon which his lines can be conceived to tally." ² Peacock goes on in the *Essay on Fashionable Literature* to support Byron's description of *Christabel* as a "wild and singularly original and beautiful poem," which estimate the Review had ponderously dismissed. The defence of *Christabel* which follows displays a sensitive and total appreciation of the poem, and the detail is painstaking (and apologetic) only because of Peacock's sincere desire to explain the poem to the "idiot" who could not or would not understand it.

In the same essay there is a panegyric upon Scott

---

Peacock is quoting from the *Edinburgh Review* of September 1816.
as a writer who communicates great and valuable information. He is a painter of manners . . . He offers material to the philosopher in depicting, with the truth of life, the features of human nature in a peculiar state of society, before comparatively little known. 1

This matter of presenting in literature "the truth of life" is very important to Peacock as a touchstone in all his serious criticism. It is Moore's flagrant "untruths" which chiefly disgust Peacock. On the other hand Shakespeare is always satisfying because he is always true to life and true to nature. It was, among other things, because the Utilitarian creed was false to nature that Peacock could not believe in it (as will be presently shown); and on the other hand it was this quality of truth which compelled Peacock's admiration for the "Cumberland poets". In Gryll Grange Miss Ilex, a "calmly-judging person" 2 asserts that

Shakespeare never makes a flower blossom out of season. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey are true to nature, in this and in all other respects: even in their wildest imaginings. 3

In the same novel the brutally belaboured Southey of the earlier works is constantly quoted in admiration. 4 It is of even greater interest to observe that a couple of years later in a footnote to The Last Day of Windsor Forest Peacock, quoting yet again from Southey, wrote

It is one of the best of his minor poems, and would alone suffice to show that he had "looked on nature with a poet's eye." 5

1 An Essay on Fashionable Literature, Works VIII 275.
2 Gryll Grange, Works V 269.
3 Gryll Grange, Works V 239.
4 See e.g. Gryll Grange, Works V 154 235 348.
5 The Last Day of Windsor Forest, Works VIII 148
But the note has been struck through in the later of two manuscripts in Peacock's hand.

Peacock's works are studded with quotations and with chapter headings drawn from the poets he pretended to despise. He tells in his memoirs of Shelley that "we were walking together on the banks of the Surrey Canal, and discoursing of Wordsworth, and quoting from his verses"; \(^1\) and he goes on to defend their sailing of paper boats by saying that at least such diversions are not mixed with any "sorrow of the meanest thing that feels". This habit of quoting and adapting the lines of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey is persistent with him and makes clear that the language of these poets had become, to an unusual degree, part of the fabric of his thinking. A couple of other examples drawn from the many will help to show this characteristic: In a letter to E.T. Hookham, describing the way in which his moods fluctuated from joy to depression he makes use of the words, "as high as we have mounted in our delight, in our dejection do we sink as low". \(^2\) The same quotation is made use of again in Maid Marian, the words being juggled to fit a new context. \(^3\) In Nightmare Abbey he writes: "but, one morning, like Sir Leoline in Christabel, 'he woke and found his lady dead,' and remained a very console widower . . . " \(^4\) Still more curious than this absorption of lines of verse into his own thought and

---

2 Letters, Works VIII 183. Quoted from Wordsworth's Resolution and Independence.  
3 See Maid Marian, Works III 46.  
4 Nightmare Abbey, Works III 3.
expression is an instance in Gryll Grange where the action of the story itself is influenced by a line from Wordsworth. ¹

It becomes clear from a reading of the works as a whole that it is only when Peacock turns his attention deliberately upon the greater romantic poets, especially Coleridge and Wordsworth, that he mocks and vilifies them. When his eye is upon a different subject, especially one which is itself exciting his resentment, he is apt to let slip what, from the obliqueness of their introduction, may well be regarded as his true sentiments. In the latter cases the contradiction of what was said in the former may sometimes, as for example in the case of Coleridge's obscurity already cited, be quite flagrant. But when he is assailing an object of his real detestation such as the Edinburgh Review, his assumed dislikes are shed. When he is attacking Moore, his true opinion of Byron may be glimpsed. ² In the same place, his anger having been doubly stimulated first by Moore and then by the Review, he lets fall the following comments upon Coleridge and upon Christabel:

This most beautiful little poem was . . . consigned to the hands of that one of Mr. Jeffrey's coadjutors, who combined the most profound ignorance and the grossest obtuseness of intellect, with the most rancorous malignity . . . The Review has not destroyed Mr. Coleridge's poetical fame: that was, and is, beyond its reach: but it destroyed his chance of popularity . . . at a time . . . when to have assisted him to that share of public attention which he has always merited as a poet, would, though nothing more than an act of justice, have had the effect of an act of generosity.

¹ See Gryll Grange, Works V 316-317, The Twelfth Night Ball.
² See Review of Moore's Letters and Journals of Lord Byron; (in Westminster Review, April 1830), Works IX 98ff.
³ Moore's Byron, works IX 135
All of this might well have been written by, say, Wordsworth in anger against Peacock. The "at a time" he speaks of is the time at which his own outrageous characterisations, both fictional and critical, of Coleridge were beginning to appear. In justice to Peacock's integrity it has to be pointed out that his lampooning of Coleridge was always directed rather at the metaphysical philosopher than at the poet; and the same may be said of his diatribes against Wordsworth and Southey, in which their political activities rather than their verses are mainly castigated. Still, to observe this is not altogether to avoid the difficulty: it was a poem of Southey's which provoked the devastating Sir Proteus in 1814, a satirical ballad which rains down blows upon the whole "Cumberland school of poetry" and names the members of that school "the tuneful slaves of kings."  

The poetry and the politics are not easily to be disengaged. In the dedication even Byron is dragged into the range of Peacock's fire, though his offences are all literary, and he too is ironically commended according to the formula which Peacock exposes as being adopted by the Edinburgh Review, namely

for narrative enveloped in all the Cimmerian sublimity of the impenetrable obscure.  

The conclusion is inescapable that Peacock was a devoted, if in some ways frustrated, disciple of Romanticism and was emotionally involved in all the oppositions which such

---

1 Italics supplied in poetry and tuneful.
2 Sir Proteus: A Satirical Ballad. Works VI 279.
an adherence demanded. Independently and at an early age he
discovered the consolations and healing powers of nature. He
always finely distinguished between the cult of the picturesque
and the genuine delight in the romance of solitude and the
grander aspects of nature. Like Coleridge and Wordsworth he
knew what he meant when he used the word "sublime". Moreover
he was naturally responsive to the various literary expressions
of Romanticism as may be discovered from his favourite reading:

I shall begin to gratify my romantic appetite
with Lewis's Romantic Tales,

he writes to Hookham in 1808 1 and proceeds to quote a dozen
lines from Scott. Again he appeals to the same correspondent:

Have the goodness to send me the fourth volume of
Lewis's Romantic Tales, the Romance of the Forest,
the Ring and the Well, Adelworm the Outlaw, and
something very elegantly romantic in the
poetical department. 2

It is to Hookham that he writes the ecstatic description of
the "sublime" scenery approaching and upon Cadair Idris 3
which finds parallels in some of the novels. To his diary
he confesses

Could not read or write for scheming my romance.
Rivers castles forests abbies monks maids kings
and banditti dancing before me like a masked ball. 4

There is no evidence that he was ever so excited by rational-
istic ideas. The passing conviction, produced partly by his
own insufficiencies and partly through association with the

1  Letter to E.T. Hookham, Nov. 28 1808, Works VIII 161
2  Letters, Feb. 10 1809, Works, VIII 163.
3  Letters, Apr. 9 1811, Works VIII 191
4  Diary, July 7 - Aug. 26 1818, Works, VIII 440.
shelley circle, that "to a rational ambition poetical reputation is not only not to be desired, but most earnestly to be deprecated" 1 did not in any real way affect the deeper and stronger currents of his ideas. The great poets of Romanticism he recognised and valued. On a final analysis the only expression of distaste which seems to ring true is his observation that he could never bear to read Keats's Hyperion. 2 His calmer and more mature assessment of Wordsworth gives the measure not only of his true appreciation but of his critical acuity:

Wordsworth's . . . genius is in no respect Bacchic: it is neither epic, nor dramatic, nor dithyrambic. He has deep thought and deep feeling, graceful imaginings, great pathos, and little passion. Withal, his Muse is as Decorous as Pamela, much of a Vestal, and nothing of a Bacchant. 3

Such an assessment throws up in all their triviality and mischievousness the portraits of Mr. Paperstump and Mr. Wilful Montreux.

What has been said might be urged at greater length and with more illustration, but it seems needless to insist further that Peacock would agree with Mr. Fax, that "the world of reality is not the world of romance" 4 — but that unlike Mr. Fax he would choose the world of romance in preference to the world of Mr. Fax, that "most determined votary of moral and political arithmetic." 5 While his character is

1 Letter to P.B. Shelley, Dec. 4 1820, Works VIII 215.
3 Horse Dramatics; (in Fraser's Magazine, March and April 1852), Works X 76.
4 Melbourne, Works II 123.
5 Melbourne, Works II 77.
asseverating that "the cause of all the evils of human society is single, obvious, reducible to the most mathematical calculation," 1 Peacock himself reflects in a later preface to the novel that "the progress of intellect, with all deference to those who believe in it, is not quite so obvious as the progress of mechanics." 2 In the interminable controversy of the age, conducted between Mr. Macquedy, a Benthamite, and Mr. Skionar, a Coleridgean, Peacock's final judgment rests with that of his romantic hero Captain Fitzchrome:

Clarinda: [Mr. Macquedy] lays down the law about every thing and therefore may be taken to understand every thing . . . He is the spirit of the Frozen Ocean to every thing like romance and sentiment . . . Mr. Skionar [is] a sort of poetical philosopher, a curious compound of the intense and the mystical. He abominates all the ideas of Mr. Macquedy and settles every thing by sentiment and intuition.

Captain Fitzchrome: Then, I say, he is the wiser man . . . Any philosophy, for heaven's sake, but the pound-shilling-and-pence philosophy of Mr. Macquedy. 3

Of much more profound concern in Peacock's writings than his attitudes towards religion and towards the Romantics is the concern which lies at the back of almost everything he thought and wrote: The uncertainty as to whether "progress", as his age used and believed in that concept, was or was not a

1 Melincourt, Works II 76.
2 Melincourt, (preface to 1856 edition), Works II 2.
3 Grotchet Castle, Works IV 58.
reality. Even the compromise by which "perfectibility" had been modified to "progress" between the first and third decade of the century could not command his acceptance. All the argument "about it and about" which makes up the staple of his novels tends ultimately to be the same argument which began in *Headlong Hall* between the perfectibilian, Mr. Foster, and the deteriorationist, Mr. Escot. The collision is between an opinion that the best has been and an opinion that the best is yet to be. In terms of the present study it is a collision between those who rejected Benthamism and those who accepted it. Spokesmen for both parties appear in all the novels - even if the time-setting requires the spokesman to be Peacock himself. Thus even *Maid Marian* is made the vehicle for a similar discussion.

If in his endless pleading of both causes Peacock had kept his own convictions out of court, he could not have been chosen to represent one aspect of the reaction against Utilitarianism; because merely to display examples of his anti-Benthamite utterance would be to neglect an equally extensive display of opposed sentiments. But, in fact, from his earliest to his latest publications Peacock reveals one way or another a constant preference for the past, matched by a steadily increasing distaste for the present and its promises for the future. As was claimed earlier, temperamentally he lived on the wrong side of the French Revolution; and indeed with a few exceptions, any era previous to his own was deemed
a better than his own. This sense of displacement found one of its more preposterous expressions in his long poem Ahrimanes. In that work, by a sort of mystical Spenglerianism, he asserts that the world is in a phase where the "evil principle" reigns. That he took the weird mythology of Ahrimanies pretty seriously is suggested by such a passing reference to the system as is found in his Lines to a Favourite Laurel:

'tis something yet,
Even in this world where Ahrimanies reigns
To think that thou, my favourite, hast been left
Unharmed amid the inclemency of time ...

The same deeply-felt conviction that the times were inclement to his real nature led him to make a version of a chorus from Euripides, with its concluding lines,

The thirst of truth and wisdom dies;
And love and beauty bow the knee
To gold's supreme divinity.

By 1836 the melancholy has become a bitter acceptance of "gold's supreme divinity":

desist from evil lamentations and fruitless struggles; move not weapons that will recoil upon yourselves. For the present acknowledge yourselves conquered... bend in homage to your king.

It may be as well to examine at once those passages where Peacock's belief in progress seems sure.

In The Four Ages of Poetry the reader who has not already

1 Works VII 231
2 Works VII 214
3 Works IX 308.
been astonished by the whole intention of the essay must surely be struck with the utter incongruity, from Peacock, of this sort of statement, the opening words of which are a faithful echo of Bentham's own:

While the historian and the philosopher are advancing in, and accelerating, the progress of knowledge, the poet is wallowing in the rubbish of departed ignorance ... He lives in the days that are past. His ideas, thoughts, feelings, associations, are all with barbarous manners, obsolete customs, and exploded superstitions. The march of his intellect is like that of a crab, backward ... [The modern poetic inspiration] cannot claim the slightest share in any of the comforts and utilities of life of which we have witnessed so many and so rapid advances. 1

As if it were not surprising enough to find Peacock speaking seriously of "the march of intellect" he goes on to extol the mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, moralists, metaphysicians, historians, politicians, and political economists, who have built into the upper air of intelligence a pyramid 2.

When one sees the political economists placed, as it were, on the pinnacle of the pyramid, one is tempted to declare at once that the whole essay is a hoax; and considering the circumstances of its writing this may still be the true explanation of this extraordinary exercise in self-misrepresentation. But more likely it is a desperate attempt to hold an uncongenial opinion by decisively and publicly adopting it. It is as

1 The Four Ages of Poetry, Works VIII 19.
though Peacock felt the need for the shelter of an affirmation, from the uncertainties in which he was living. He must have envied Shelley his assurance, and it is to Shelley that he primarily addresses the essay, and a letter in support of it which contains the following:

The truth, I am convinced, is, that there is no longer a poetical audience among the higher class of minds; that moral, political, and physical science have entirely withdrawn from poetry the attention of all whose attention is worth having.

Now, in fairness to Peacock, it must be said that he was, and knew he was, coming near a truth which the passage of time has tended to confirm. It is about his own share in this resignation from poetry that he is misleading himself. Especially does he fail to represent his true opinion of "the rubbish of departed ignorance" and "exploded superstition".

Just as his admiration for Shelley may be partly responsible for the freaks of self-representation in The Four Ages of Poetry, so his admiration for Thomas Jefferson may have led him into certain statements later on which are hardly to be reconciled with the general tenor of his feelings. In the latter case, too, he was no doubt conscious of the requirements of his publishers, The Westminster Review. He approvingly quotes Jefferson on

WISDOM OF ANCESTRY. - "Laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the

human mind ... institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilised society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors ... 1

This is pure Benthamism, and although the words are not Peacock's, he quotes them after having earlier declared that

the opinion of Jefferson on all the most important questions in morals, politics, and religion ... present such a body of good sense ... of kindly feeling, of enlarged philanthropy, of spotless integrity [etc., etc.] as will not easily find a parallel. 2

There is no hoax here. One is obliged to take account of an element in Peacock's composition of genuine radicalism, or at least of a genuine desire for the amelioration of certain social anomalies, absurdities and injustices. In this he may be compared with Disraeli, Newman and Carlyle. His deeper affections were with the past, and he had a stubborn scepticism concerning the advantages of intellectually-directed and wholesale change. Yet he seemed to believe in, and certainly to hope for, a slow advance towards greater rationality in the social system. He may well be regarded as sharing Dr. Opimian's view of "legislative wisdom", that it was

an incoherent and undigested mass of law, shot down, as from a rubbish-cart on the heads of the people 3

an opinion which he quotes direct from Bentham himself. Yet through his learned doctor, Peacock goes on to create an Aristophanic Comedy in which

3 *Gryll Grange*, works, V 59.
Reformers, scientific, moral, educational, political, passed in succession, each answering a question of Gryllus. Gryllus observed that so far from everything being better than it had been, it seemed that everything was wrong, and wanted mending.

Presumably the mending involved a return to older and more "barbarous" ways since the dramatic climax to the Comedy occurs when Richard Coeur-de-Lion flourishes his battle-axe over certain representatives of the march of mind, who scatter in great confusion. Later there is heard the thundering laugh of Jupiter bursting half in anger, half in contempt upon the "modern Athenians" who have claimed that

We are the wisest race the earth has known,
The most advanced in all the arts of life,
In science and in morals.

As was noticed earlier, this burst of unearthly laughter is strongly reminiscent of that heard in The Lord of the Hills.

Gryll Grange, as the last of Peacock's novels, may be compared with the last of his own years - both are filled with a placid acceptance of the world's follies and a scholarly delight in the works of the past. Even the Utilitarian, Mr. MacBorrowdale, "a gentleman who comprised in himself all that Scotland had ever been supposed to possess of mental, moral, and political philosophy," confesses, "I have talked a great deal of nonsense," in the years gone by. Like Peacock, Dr. Opimian is drawn more and more strongly by the charm of

1 Gryll Grange, Works V 283.
2 Gryll Grange, Works V 290.
3 Gryll Grange, Works V 113.
4 Gryll Grange, Works V 228.
the past, especially the past of England. Both character and
author revive or retain old customs in a manner reminiscent
of Young England:

I like the idea of the Yule log . . . I like the
feastons of holly on the walls and windows; the
dance under the mistletoe; the gigantic sausage;
the baron of beef . . . the life and joy of the
old hall, when the Squire and his household and
his neighbourhood were as one.¹

Under the spell of such antique charms Lord Curryfin, who has
been a young enthusiast of the march of mind, confesses that
his pursuits have been misguided:

I assure you, Mr. MacBorrowdale, all this seems
as ridiculous now to me as it does to you,²

and in his turn the one-time advocate of Utilitarian reform,
who has abandoned arguing in favour of drinking, reflects:

The main business of my life has been among
the driest matters of fact. ³

By the end of his life Peacock was content to leave
unsettled the argument as to whether the world was making
"progress". Not the mind of man, but the passage of time was
to be looked to for amelioration:

For petty, as for great oppressions, there is
a day of retribution growing out of themselves. ⁴
It is often long in coming . . . But it comes.

In the meantime, live in hope; but live on
beef and ale.⁵

The Romantic dilemma which beset all thinkers of
his generation troubled Peacock no less profoundly than any

¹ Gryll Grange, Works V 228. ⁴ Gryll Grange, Works V 195.
³ Gryll Grange, Works V 362.
other man. As one reads the works of "the laughing philosopher" from first to last one is impressed with the pangs of uncertainty from which he suffered, and the grief of loss which he knew whenever he drove himself to take a decisive stand. As Romanticism drew apart from reforming ardour Peacock experienced the same distresses as Wordsworth or Coleridge. Yet there was little doubt as to which side of the widening gulf he must place himself upon. From the beginning the strongest element in his poetic composition had been the pleasantly melancholic contemplation of the past. His first large poem, Palmyra, has as its central motif the idea that

\[
\text{Truths more sublime than bard or sage can teach,} \\
\text{This pomp of ruin presses on the heart...} \\
\text{In reverential thought I trace} \\
\text{The mansions of your sacred dust.}
\]

The Philosophy of Melancholy represents a brave attempt to explain and justify the mood of sadness into which the assurance that "perfectibility" is a delusion has plunged the poet. Consolation lies in a due acknowledgement of life's uncertainties; it has a source too in the contemplation of "the ruined magnificence of former times... in the retrospective attachment, which dwells on the scenes of our childhood, and on the memory of departed friends." 2

By means of the friendship with Shelley there was awakened the possibility of re-uniting poetry and radicalism, and it was during this arduous and desperate period that most

1 Palmyra, Works VI 8.
2 The Philosophy of Melancholy, Works VI 186.
of Peacock's savage attacks were made upon the poets who had apparently relapsed into the comfort of reaction. But even when Peacock is most strident in his radicalism the true inclination of his nature makes itself evident. He writes Headlong Hall, Malincourt and Nightmare Abbey, and in every one betrays by the quality of his writing and the choice of incident and setting a truly Romantic persuasion, and indeed a Romantic genius never so well employed in his more direct attempts in that mode. Mr. Foster and Mr. Escot seem at first to represent with equal force the opposing notions of perfectibility and deterioration, as though Peacock were himself above the battle. But it is only necessary to compare the quality of their utterances to discover where Peacock's heart lies. From Chapter VII come these two characteristic passages. The first with its pompous jargon is the mere orthodoxy of philosophical radicalism:

Mr. Foster: The progress of philosophical investigation, and the rapidly increasing accuracy of human knowledge, approximate by degrees the diversities of opinion; so that, in process of time, moral science will be susceptible of mathematical demonstration; and, clear and indisputable principles being universally recognised, the coincidences of deduction will necessarily follow. 1

The second presents the fully-persuaded, backward looking Romantic ideal that was to persist to the end of the period under study:

1 Headlong Hall. Works, I. The three passages quoted occur between pp. 77-81.
Mr. Escot: Twenty years ago, at the door of every cottage sate the good woman with her spinning-wheel: the children, if not more profitably employed than in gathering heath and sticks, at least laid in a stock of health and strength to sustain the labours of maturer years. Where is the spinning-wheel now, and every simple and insulated occupation of the industrious cottager? . . . Look for one moment at midnight into a cotton-mill, amidst the smell of oil, the smoke of lamps, the rattling of wheels, the dizzy and complicated motions of diabolical mechanism; contemplate the little human machines that keep play with the revolutions of the iron work, robbed at that hour of their natural rest, as of air and exercise by day: observe their pale and ghastly features, more ghastly in that baleful and malignant light. . . .

If there remained, despite the difference in tone of the two men's speeches, any doubt as to whether Peacock's favourite were Mr. Foster or Mr. Escot many things would dispel it. There is a reliable indication in the fact that it is Mr. Escot who is the romantic hero and who wins "the beautiful Cephalis." There is the altogether more agreeable personality of Mr. Escot. Above all there are the independent observations of Peacock himself. Immediately after Mr. Escot's terrible picture given above of the machine-enslaved children, a child favoured by the fortune of living in primitive rusticity is brought upon the scene:

As Mr. Escot said this, a little rosy-cheeked girl, with a basket of heath on her head, came tripping down the side of one of the rocks on the left. The force of contrast struck even on the phlegmatic spirit of Mr. Jenkinson . . .

Peacock's relish for the past mars his bravest intentions to be impartial or to be the zealot of reform. He tells Shelley
in a letter that he is

writing a comic Romance of the Twelfth Century,
which I shall make the vehicle of much oblique
satire on all the oppressions that are done
under the sun. 1

But it is all too apparent that in Maid Marian it is the
charm of Merry England that stimulates him to write at all.
The satire is almost all in the form of monk-baiting noticed
earlier, but the novel as a whole is full of merriment and
of such scenes as this:

A number of young men and women advanced, some
drawing, and others dancing round, a floral car;
and having placed a crown of flowers on Matilda's
head, they saluted her Queen of the May, and
drew her to the place appointed for the rural
sports.
A hogshead of ale was abroach under an oak, and
a fire was blazing in an open space before the
trees to roast the fat deer which the foresters
brought . . . 2

In the same way The Misfortunes of Elphin, despite its clever
bursts of satire is from the beginning undertaken in an effort
to recapture a Romantic past, and as the story progresses any
satiric intention is almost lost sight of. The novel contains
certain passages of serious descriptive writing, very rarely
to be discovered in Peacock's published work, which give a
measure of his frustrated talent in this direction; but more
important to the present purpose is the fact that wherever the
satire does break through it tends to attack not the barbarous
past and not always the obsolete institutions of the present,
but the pretensions of the present to be progressive:

1 Letters, Works VIII 209.
2 Maid Marian, Works III, 56.
The science of political economy was sleeping in the womb of time . . . They had no steam-engines, with fires as eternal as those of the nether world, wherein the squalid many, from infancy to age, might be turned into component portions of machinery for the benefit of the purple-faced few. They could neither poison the air with gas, nor the waters with its dregs; in short they made their money of metal, and breathed pure air, and drank pure water, like unscientific barbarians . . .

1 The Misfortunes of Elphin, Works IV 50-51.

The mention of money made from metal is a characteristic thrust. No theme occurs with more consistency in Peacock's work than the inferiority of paper-money to gold. This deep-rooted prejudice represents more than an economic opinion which he recognized as being unshared by the Benthamites. It takes on the value of a symbol for the general deterioration of the times, and for this reason the theme is treated with greater pertinacity and heat than it would seem to warrant. The golden sovereign is for Peacock a token of a golden past and has for him the emotive connotations he finds also in words like "oak", and "ale", and "abbey".

Even during the time that Peacock was writing for the Westminster Review his attachment to the past and his deep conviction that the present age was one of retrogression are apparent in his articles. This is especially so in his essay on London Bridge which appeared in the same number as his review of Jefferson's Memoirs and which is as contradictory.
to that review in sentiment as it could well be.

Having approved Jefferson's disparagement of the "wisdom of ancestors" he proceeds to make out a stout defence of that wisdom in the second article. Once again the cause of this contradiction is not far to seek. Peacock has been required to challenge the need for a new bridge on economic grounds.

With his eye on this object and his doubts lulled by the consciousness that he is writing for a radical paper he lets his real sympathies appear:

The old London Bridge was begun in 1176, and finished in 1209. It was built on such unscientific principles, that it ought to have been carried away before it was finished... but partly by the awkward contrivances of barbarous men, partly by its own obstinacy, it has stood six centuries and a quarter... 1

This spirited and informed defence of the old bridge concludes on a note of sentiment:

we do not like these sweeping changes, which give to the metropolis the appearance of a thing of yesterday, and obliterate every visible sign that connects the present generation with the ages that are gone. 2

The love of the past, particularly the English past, pervades the whole work of Peacock. It may be seen in his songs, in his autobiographical notes, in his reviews and in his essays. It breaks out in unexpected places, as for example in his review of Lord Mount Edgcumbe's Musical Reminiscences where he suddenly reflects, "Our Old English

2 London Bridge, Works IX 219.
songs were models of simplicity, but our modern songs are almost all false sentiment [etc.]" 1 It is strongly and touchingly expressed in one of the last pieces he ever wrote, *The Last Day of Windsor Forest*, in which he ruefully discusses the "general utility of enclosures" and how the sentimental attachments of time and place are of no account in ledger balances, which profess to demonstrate that . . . the aggregate gain is the gain of the community; and that all matters of taste or feeling are fitly represented by a cypher. So be it. 2

In his old age Peacock was resigned to the "utility" of innovations, though in his private life he attempted to revive, not abandon, certain old English customs which were as useless as they were picturesque. It seems to have cost him less pain to submit in later life to the slow conquest of Utilitarian reforms than it had cost him earlier to abandon hope of them. During the 1820's he was yielding reluctantly to his "constitutional toryism", and the loss of the ideals which Shelley had inspired was grievous. Writing after the death of Shelley he says:

> He was advancing, I think, to the attainment of . . . reality. The more clear development of what men were would have lowered his estimate of what they might be, and dimmed his enthusiastic prospect of the future destiny of the world . . . and perhaps [he would have desired] that nothing should be inscribed on his tomb, but his name, the dates of his birth and death, and the single word, "DESIILLUSIONED." 3

---

2 *The Last Day of Windsor Forest*, Works VIII 149.
Peacock shared this disillusionment. The jovial interplay of opinions in his novels represents a serious inability to accept the cleavage between them. Yet to have yielded to the circumstances of the times and his own nature, as Wordsworth did, would perhaps have brought him comparable consolation and comparable achievement. The reluctance of his yielding produces instead this sort of "bad

Wordsworth's pathos:

My thoughts at night are often filled
With visions false as fair:
For in the past alone I build
My castles in the air.

I dwell not now on what may be:
Night shadows o'er the scene:
But still my fancy wanders free
Through that which might have been.
Greece and Rome brought him ultimately to the decision that the world was in its age of gold during the Later Greek republic and the earlier empire of Rome.

Wonderful days in the world’s history were those of republican Greece, where all that was lofty, heroic, beautiful and good, met in one place and at one time, to be a pattern and a glory for ever. 1

The philosophy which most strongly appealed to his common sense and his love of living was that of Epicurus. The names of Atticus, Lucretius, Seneca, Virgil, Horace and Lucian he reverences as disciples of Epicurus. These are the "illustrious" 2 names of antiquity. "The very names we have mentioned, are among the brightest ornaments of the human race." 3

The similarity between the doctrines of Epicurus and those of Bentham was inescapable to Peacock. As he himself expounds the Epicurean philosophy the words seem to be referring to Bentham:

Epicurus taught that happiness is the end of life: that there is no happiness without pleasure: that all pleasure is itself good, and that all pain is itself evil: but that present pleasure is to be avoided in the prospect of future pain, and that present pain is to be endured for the sake of future pleasure . . . 4

It is inevitable that Peacock should presently make use of the Benthamite phraseology more explicitly:

1 Gastronomy and Civilisation, Works X 351.
2 See Review of Müller’s History of Greek Literature; (in Fraser’s Magazine, March 1859), Works X 165.
3 Moore’s Epicurean, Works IX 50.
4 Moore’s Epicurean, Works IX 46.
Epicurus says: "Natural justice is the symbol of utility ... That which is just, or that which is most useful in the general society of men, is the same to all ..."
Thus Epicurus first taught, that general utility, or as Bentham expresses it, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," is the legitimate end of philosophy.

In Peacock's case the Utilitarian philosophy had thus an artificial or superficial appeal which its practitioners and its methods hardly merited. To separate the aesthetic and scholarly attractions of the ancients from the nineteenth century applications of their philosophy was an exercise hardly to be expected of a young man urgently in need of a present philosophy himself. Only time and experience could reveal to Peacock his innate distaste for the mechanical, practical prescriptions into which the general theory of Utilitarianism was broken down. In the meantime he wished to approve the enveloping theory while he allowed himself to reject the practical derivations one by one.

The whole Malthusian element of Utilitarianism was an offence to Peacock. It is not necessary to point out more than one or two occasions on which he gives vent to his feelings upon Malthus's population principles. The genial Mr. Hippy in Kelincourt has responded as a human being to the pleasure of playing with a child. In his ears are dimming the doleful prosings of Mr. Faw, the Utilitarian:

1 Moore's Epicurean, Works IX 48-49. For Bentham's own recognition of the Epicurean origins of Utility, see Bentham, Works I 5.
In spite of all the eloquence of the anti-populationist, the image of the beautiful child which he had danced on his knee, continued to haunt his imagination. 1

As the passage has been referred to in an earlier chapter it may be as well to mention again the scene outside the village church where Mr. Fax comes upon the rustic couple about to go into their wedding. The Malthusian appeals in the name of "general reason" against such a disastrous procedure; but Mr. Forester, the Romantic hero, gives the bridegroom some money and his blessing, upon which the swain replies:

"Od rabbit me! . . . I don't know who thee beast, but thee bee'n't General Reason, that's vor zartin." 2

General reason never really imposed upon Peacock if it came into conflict with the spontaneity of human sympathy. It was therefore impossible for him ever to approve the institutionalized and regulated exercise of charity. In this matter his position is exactly alongside the other writers who have been considered in this study. In almost every novel we are given an instance of the truly charitable act, and the proper way of aiding the poor often forms the substance of his characters' discussion. Like Disraeli he found the old monastic issue of alma both humane and comely. Otherwise charity should be personal, direct, and sympathetic. The visit of the three Charity Commissioners

1 Melincourt, Works II 279.
2 Melincourt, Works II 323.
in Crotchet Castle is the most obvious example of Peacock's disrelish for systematic charity. Like so many of the abominations of the age the arrival of "a chaise and four, to make a fuss about a pound per annum" is the work of the "learned friend". Dr. Folliott voices Peacock's view when he exclaims:

Oh, the learned friend! the learned friend! He is the evil genius of everything that falls in his way."

Calculated marriage and calculated charity offended Peacock's sense of what was best in human nature, no less than it did Dickens's. Peacock could never tolerate the "unnatural" degree to which Utilitarians pushed abstract reason and their estimates of the useful. For example he recoiled from the sort of scientific inquiry that they conducted upon Bentham's skull. He failed to share their excitement in discovering in the cranium of their late master an anti-freeze oil which might prove useful for lubricating chronometers at high altitudes. This disgust at practices and theories which he felt to be unnatural finds its expression from time to time in the novels. When Captain Fitzchrome is believed dead, "Mr. MacQuedy said it was no such great matter to ascertain the precise mode in which the surplus population was diminished by one." 2 Dr. Folliott lives in fear of having his person fall into the hands of

1 Crotchet Castle, Works IV 106-111.
2 Crotchet Castle, Works IV 132.
scientifically-inclined assassins.

Besides detesting the Malthusian element and the institutionalising element in Benthamism, Peacock maintained an unremitting assault by satire and ironic comment upon the whole edifice of political economy inherited from Adam Smith, both in its theoretical forms as represented by men like Mr. Macquedy and in its practical forms as represented by men like Mr. Crotchet; of whom and his laissez-faire economics the sharp Clarinda observes:

Nothing would induce him to give sixpence to the poor, because he holds that all misfortune is from imprudence, that none but the rich ought to marry, and that all ought to thrive by honest industry as he did. 1

In Melincourt Mr. Forester puts his opposition more plainly:

To assert that the unfortunate must necessarily have been imprudent, is to furnish an excuse to the cold-hearted and illiberal selfishness of a state of society, which needs no motive super-added to his own miserable narrow-mindedness, to produce the almost total extinction of benevolence and sympathy. 2

Peacock is rarely as forthright as his characters and his perpetual warfare against political economy is waged by a series of unexpected thrusts and cuts throughout his writing. The reason that political economy and economists should be so relentlessly assailed is probably that here was the meeting-point of an exceptional number of Peacock's prejudices.

When science, paper money, the new programmes of education,

1 Crotchet Castile, Works IV 56.
2 Melincourt, Works II 125.
the universities, Scotland, scepticism and solemnity all came together in the production of a political economist Peacock recognised the arch-foe unequivocally. Nothing offers stronger testimony against Peacock's sincerity in the Four Ages of Poetry than his giving pride of place there to the political economist.

The universities have been mentioned. Peacock, as a scholar largely self-instructed, conducts throughout his works a petty feud against the older seats of learning. This prejudice might in another man have predisposed him to welcome the establishment of London University, set up as it was on professed emancipation from the hypocrisies, the lethargy and the exclusiveness of the older universities. Peacock's reaction to the setting-up of London University thus provides a critical clue to his real opinions. Will he, one might ask before actually discovering his attitude, come down on the side of the Utilitarian friends with whom at the time he was most closely associated: will he approve the setting-up of this obelisk to liberty and learning, throwing in with the cause of the Utilitarians his personal and expressed distaste for Oxford and Cambridge? Or will he expand that distaste to include the new institution as well? The answer lies in his mocking translation of the Latin inscription placed under the first stone of the new building. The very foundation of the new home of learning rests it seems upon a grammatical flaw which Peacock is delighted to expose. He also finds a source
of wicked satisfaction in the conventional piety of the
inscription, which opens with a reference to the favour of God,
"the great builder of earth." Knowing the Utilitarians'
true feelings on the subject, Peacock imitates them thus:

By the favor of God, the great builder of earth,
(Which favor we hope may be found of some worth). 1

The attack upon London University is continued in the poem
called Oh Nose of Wax in which one may discover that here
all things combine to aggravate Peacock's disgust. Not
merely his scholarship but his patriotism too is offended by
the prospect of Professorial Scotch Economists twitching
Britain by the nose.

All the arch-quacks of the day and all their
political and social nostrums are jumbled together in the
Chorus of Scotch Economists. They triumphantly chant to the
air of "The Campbells are coming":

Come, sing as we've said it - Oho! Oho!
Sing "Free trade and credit" - Oho! Oho!
Sing "Scotch Education,"
And "O'er-population,"
And "Wealth of the nation" - Oho! Oho! 2

Very little remains unmolested of Utilitarianism
when it is remembered that Peacock was also appalled by the
notion of democracy. Whatever he may have thought of the
populace-at-large in his earlier days, and however many times
he stabs at Burke for speaking of "the swinish multitude",
by the 1830's he has nothing but misgiving about the rising

1 Works VII 240.
2 Works VII 236.
tide of democracy. That image of course lurks always behind
his description, in *The Misfortunes of Elphin*, of the inrush
of the sea across the decaying embankments, built by "venerable
antiquity." Like Teithrin, Peacock was saying in 1829,

I think of the decay I have seen, and I fear
the voice I have heard.

A couple of years later the Reverend Dr. Folliott finds his
vicarage imperilled by the march of democracy, moving with
the march of mind and guided by the Steam Intellect Society.
His ricks have been set alight on thoroughly scientific
principles. At Chainmail Hall, in the midst of the merry
English Yuletide festivities, the populace is at the very
door. Even Mr. MacQuady is forced to perceive that "when
the rabble is up, it is very undiscriminating":

Mr. Chainmail: The way to keep the people down
is kind and liberal usage.

Mr. MacQuady: That is very well... in the
way of prevention; but in the way of cure, the
operation must be more drastic. (Taking down
a battle-axe.) I would fain have a good
blunderbuss charged with slugs.

As for Dr. Folliott, he cries, "Let us see what the
church militant, in the armour of the twelfth century, will
do against the march of mind."

From this time the populace, when democracy is the
topic, becomes for Peacock "the rabble". In one place he
speaks in his own person of "the prurient appetite of the

1 *The Misfortunes of Elphin*, Works IV 25.
2 *Crotchet Castle*, Works IV 201.
3 *Crotchet Castle*, Works IV 200.
reading rabble." ¹ In **Gryll Grange** even the Utilitarian, Mr. MacBorrowdale believes that a further extension of the franchise would only serve to annihilate the franchise of the educated classes, "for it would not be worth their while to cross the road to exercise it against the rabble preponderance which would then have been created." ²

There is always the danger of attributing to the author the sentiments of his characters, and Peacock may not have agreed thoroughly with Mr. MacBorrowdale. It is only just to his dramatic and artistic intention to discover that in this sketch of a Utilitarian making astounding retractions from the doctrines of his father, Peacock was caricaturing the development of Utilitarianism generally and of the younger Mill in particular. Yet even if Mr. MacBorrowdale, improbably quaffing his wine through the novel, speaks for J.S. Mill rather than for Peacock it is apparent that there is little disagreement between them on the good sense of such recantation. For **Gryll Grange** is notable for the fact that on political matters the characters have come into closer agreement than ever before, and the arguments are thus almost oppressively limited to academic subjects. The dry-as-dust Utilitarian of the earlier works has been soaked in Madeira and declines to be drawn on the subjects that were once his whole concern. Contradictions have been dissolved in port

----

¹ Works IX 76.
and canary, and Mr. MacBorrowdale is often found to be in
agreement with the Reverend Dr. Opimian. They agree, to
take a notable example, in discrediting the theories of the
geologists. 1 Thus is reflected the slow cessation of
inward conflict in the author. Peacock might well be
speaking of his own early hopes when he writes "My father
was a stanch reformer:" and goes on to relate that after
the mob had broken his windows he was cured of the passion
for reform:

During the rest of his life he never talked
as he had used to do, of "the people:" he
always said "the rabble" . . . If, which does
not seem likely, another reform lunacy should
arise in my time, I shall take care to close
my shutters . . . 2

There are other less obvious matters upon which
Peacock diverges from the Utilitarian line rather than
directly opposing it. There are in Melincourt 3 and in
Crotchet Castle 4 warmly argued cases made out for egal-
tarianism in wealth no less than in franchise. There are
many challenges thrown down to the notion that, as Mr.
Forester phrases it, "the hope of personal advantage, and
the dread of personal punishment" are the only springs of
human action. 5 Peacock, like Dickens, throws in his
contribution to the protest against the Sunday Observances
Bill. 6 He speaks of long-faced seventeenth century

1 See Gryll Grange, Works V 221-222.
2 Gryll Grange, Works V 180.
3 See e.g. Melincourt, Works II 265-269.
4 See e.g. Crotchet Castle, Works IV 73 and 127.
5 See Melincourt, Works II 236.
6 Works, VII 236.
Englishmen, psalm-singing and "seeking the Lord" and in the meantime cutting off the king's head, and then of their later importing a Grave Dutchman, to whom and his lawful heirs they had made over themselves and all their posterity for ever, this achievement being called by them a "glorious revolution". 1 There are even certain curious musings on the theme that might is right on more than one occasion. 2 And, if Carlyle has been brought to mind by the last item, Newman may be remembered (in his refutation of the claims of astronomy to awaken reverence by the study of the heavens) in the similar mockery that Peacock often makes of just that claim of

our more correct and profound astronomy . . . that of elevating the mind, as the eidouramia, lecturers have it, to sublime contemplations. 3

Then there are points of contact all over the writings of Peacock with those of Disraeli. A quite remarkable resemblance exists between their two satirical fragments, Calidore (with its alternative beginning in Satyrage) and Popanilla. Often the ironic manner of the one man is indistinguishable from that of the other. Both have a vein of radicalism running through their toryism. Both love to present examples of rustic simplicity and health; of action contradicting theory; of picturesque places and romantic meetings; and of the solid English household

1 Works, VIII 330.
2 See e.g. Maid Marian, Works III 103 ff. and The Misfortunes of Elphin, Works IV 124-133.
3 The Misfortunes of Elphin, Works IV 53.
Hobhouse records in his diary that when the two men met, Disraeli called Peacock his "master". ।

This study of Peacock's works has been made in the constant awareness that their literary preservation has depended upon qualities hardly noticed here. It is the vivacity of his mind rather than the nature of his opinions that has always drawn readers to Peacock. In fact it is his apparent refusal to take the affairs of his times seriously that makes his novels a holiday in the calendar of nineteenth century literature. Yet it has seemed rewarding, by establishing his affinities with more solemn thinkers, to conclude that his works offer the boisterousness of inconsequentiality rather than the sport of inconsistency. It is not that he has no opinions, but that he has no great opinion of them.

When those opinions are summarized it is seen how strikingly they match with Newman's and Carlyle's, Disraeli's and Kingsley's, and how they nearly all belittle or reject the tendencies of Utilitarianism. A quiet strain of religious belief informs his life and writings and leads to

an expressed affection for the more orthodox ceremonies and symbols. This is balanced by an antipathy towards the newer and more clamorous religious sects. He is deeply (and sometimes secretly) responsive to Romantic literature and especially to the work of Coleridge. He is forever scornful of the modern notion of progress and abominates all its manifestations. He expresses an abiding sense of disillusionment which had set in with the collapse of republican hopes in France and expanded into a sober pessimism about the condition of man in this world. This left no likelihood that he would again grow confident of social reform; and of all reforming manners the deliberative, systematic manner of the Utilitarians was least capable of appealing to a nature which was testy, satirical and impulsive. His impulsiveness breaks out into detestation of shadows and shame — economic theories and paper money in place of the golden sovereign, population theories in place of children, Poor Laws in place of charity, Useful Knowledge in place of books, autoptical enquiries in place of burial, political ciphers in place of Englishmen. His sense of nationality is strong, and while he is delighted by the quirkish backwardness of the Welsh he is contemptuous of the stringent progressiveness of the Scots. His sympathies lie with Charles not with Cromwell, with modern poetry not with modern philosophy, with rural experience not with urban experimentation. It is from these bases of prejudice and sentiment that he delivers his satire upon Utilitarianism.
Chapter V

KINGSLEY

Would to heaven that wholesome feudal feeling were more common everywhere.
In dealing with a past age we constantly need a central man to refer to, and naturally he will not be one of its greatest men in the eyes of later generations. Kingsley is very nearly the central man of that period of swift change which sets in soon after 1845 and was consummated about twenty years later.

G.W. Young. 1

In the eyes of later generations, Kingsley certainly appears a slighter figure than Carlyle, Disraeli, Newman or Mill. He was a poet rather than a thinker, a scientist rather than a novelist. It may be said with justice that he found out nothing for himself. His greatness for his times and his fascination for ours lie not in what he discovered, but in the extraordinary degree to which he was discovered. He may be seen as living retired in a country rectory into which he was pursued by the ideas of Newman and Carlyle, Bentham and Coleridge, Maurice and Ludlow.

Pray for me; I could lie down and cry at times. A poor fool of a fellow, and yet feeling thrust upon all sorts of great and unspeakable paths, instead of being left in peace to classify butterflies and catch trout. 2

1 Daylight and Champagne, 107.
2 Charles Kingsley: His letters and memories of his life, [Hereafter G.K. Letters etc.]: I, 242.
In a prefatory memoir attached to Alton Locke in the edition of 1876, Thomas Hughes, who, better perhaps than any other man, knew the subject of his memoir, has written:

One was reminded of the old Jewish prophets, such as Amos: the herdsman of Tekoa — "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel."

Kingsley becomes indeed a "central man" of the latter half of this period. He may be regarded as a personal symbol of English social history between 1845 and 1860. Nobody provides a more satisfactory study in the development of the struggle against Utilitarianism in the latter part of this period. In the uneasy, baffled, tentative friendship between Kingsley and Mill lies the record of the philosophical combat waged between 1830 and 1860, and its results.

"There are few men," writes J.S. Mill in August 1859, "between whom and myself any nearer approximation in opinion could be more agreeable to me." 1 The life of Mill and the life of Kingsley provides a study in the convergence of the philosophies of Bentham and Coleridge, each being modified under the impact of the other.

Had Kingsley been inaccessible to the ideas and events going on about him he might well have succumbed to his own "tastes and thoughts":

1 C.K. Letters etc., II, 88.
Lights and censers - the whole machinery almost of St. Barnabas and Mr. Bennet. It has been the temptation which I have had most to fight against. . . . All things are lawful for me - crucifixes, images, processions, chantings, incense, flowers, festivals, fasts - but all things are not expedient. . . .

He saw very clearly that despite its striking success among a certain group in the nation, the extremist reaction of the Oxford Movement could have no hold upon the minds of Englishmen generally. In any case it soon becomes obvious to his modern readers no less than it became to himself that such inclinations as he has described above (and in one or two other places in his letters) were deeply offensive to his true nature. The reasons for his aversion from the Oxford Movement will be considered later. The above extract is supplied merely to indicate the furthest point from which Kingsley had to begin his journey of compromise. For it is, in the end, not a rejection of Benthamism but a compromise with it which the age as well as its "central man" agreed to make. This compromise required an acknowledgment of the claims of science along with the claims of religion, of political economy along with trade unionism, of democracy along with the monarchy and the House of Lords. Again and again Kingsley expresses his desire to be "all things to all men", although it is this very policy of universal appeasement which he seems to despise in his character Conrad in

1 Letter to Derwent Coleridge, Feb. 12, 1851. See Margaret Farrand Thorp. Charles Kingsley, 32.
The Saint's Tragedy. In 1842 he writes:

I am trying to become (harmoniously and consistently) all things to all men, and I thank God for the versatile mind He has given me.

What it is most important to perceive, both about Kingsley's thinking and about the character of the period between 1845 and 1860, is that this tremendous and anxious struggle to absorb all forces, all facts and all opinions into a harmonious and consistent philosophy, was something quite different from an energetic dilettantism or an undirected eclecticism.

Both these latter tendencies were of course prominent enough in the time. But as far as Kingsley was concerned he had nothing but impatience and disgust for both dilettantism and eclecticism. The first he abhorred as effeminate, the second he deplored as faithless. It is a common ground of modern distaste for this period that in attempting to reconcile all oppositions it lapsed into hypocrisy and a vulgar medley of bric-a-brac, actual no less than metaphorical:

pampas grass and peacock's feathers, spill vases and antimacassars, highland cowscapes on the wall . . . stodgy upholstery, travel souvenirs, cooking smells, books with clasps . . . The hallmark of the Victorian age seems to me a guilty eclecticism; the age of industrial progress was also a breeder of escapism, of feverish revivals of Gothic, Assyrian, Pisan, Florentine, or troubadour styles, of buhl as well as papier mache . . .

In the case of Kingsley, who represents the truth rather than the trappings of his age, there is a far more

1 See The Saint's Tragedy, Act III, Sc. 3, 89.
2 C.K. Letters etc., I, 80.
3 Cyril Connolly, "Trying to like Victoriana" in Sunday Times, August 31, 1958, 7.
valiant and desperate effort to cope with its complexities than may be despised as a mere "guilty eclecticism". For something like fifteen years he struggled to achieve a system of life and thought which would be neither "escapism" into all the paraphernalia of feverish revivals nor surrender to the rushing tide of materialism. At the one extreme was the creed of what he called the "Tractators", at the other the creed of the "Mammonites". To Kingsley an acceptance of either was a form of moral cowardice, a capitulation of the will. He will not be enrolled among

that numerous youth, who, now that the tractarians are tired of playing at popery are keeping dilettantism's altar alight by playing at tractarianism — the shadow of a ghost — the sham of a sham. Our intellects are getting beyond milk and water; they are becoming mere gas and bottled moonshine. 1

Nor on the other hand will he be persuaded that it is any more hard-headed to throw in his lot with the Benthamites. To fly from Puseyism is a movement for him of impulsive horror. But to keep aloof from philosophical radicalism, from utilitarian ethics and the economics of laissez-faire is a constant effort of the will:

I am swimming against a mighty stream, and I feel every moment I must drop my arms, and float in apathy over the hurrying cataract, which I see and hear but have not the spirit to avoid. Man does want something more than his reason! 2

This was written in 1840, and in the same letter he

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 111.
2 C.K. Letters etc., I, 49.
goes on to assert that he sees "no middle course" between out-and-out rationalism on the one hand and "the highest and most monarchical system of Catholicism" on the other. He confesses that he is wavering between them, and his preference, if any, seems to be towards becoming an "Oxford Tractist", a decision which he believes must involve also his becoming "necessarily a steady and conscientious Tory - they are inseparably connected." But in fact he struggled on towards a middle position which would exclude both extremes and yet at the same time be consistent. His efforts were guided by his reading of Coleridge and Maurice. Above all other influences the works of Carlyle took effect upon his thinking. He constantly addresses Maurice as his "master", but it is Carlyle in whose opinions, manner and very words the novels of Kingsley are saturated. Kingsley's whole attitude to his reading public is almost identical with that of Carlyle: prophetic, admonitory, arch, provocative, occasionally patronising and always suggestive of insights whose real meaning is withheld from the vulgar view. Kingsley is the more versatile stylist, but Carlyle is the more forthright pulpitser and the more confident philosopher. Whenever Kingsley is forthright he is likely to be found regretting his imprudence soon afterwards. He reminds us from time to time that the thoughts and sayings of his characters when they have become rather outrageous, do not necessarily represent
his own opinions. He is anxious to please all, to offend none; eager to retract and to apologise; ready to modify or to erase anything to which exception has been taken. In the course of the forays he chose to make against political economy he naturally provoked opposition among its professors; yet Hughes records that he was full of "special reverence" for political economists and "desired eagerly to stand well with them." And it was "a most bitter trial to him" to find he had enemies in that camp. On the opposite flank he ran foul of Newman, again though a piece of ill-considered forthrightness, and his first efforts at reconciliation where they are not merely blundering are almost obsequious. Goaded at length into public controversy, his part in the celebrated encounter makes sorry reading. He was obliged to retreat to a continental obscurity and thereafter into a baffled and dignified silence. Justifying himself with low murmurs of "Jesuit subtlety" he nevertheless may be found towards the end of his career making public overtures towards the stern cardinal, "that great genius, John Henry Newman." Even in his private correspondence at a later date he speaks of "the late great Oxford Movement" and declares

However utterly I may differ from the Entourage in which Dr. Newman's present creed surrounds the central idea, I must feel that that central

1 See prefatory memoir to Alton Locke ed. 1876.
2 Preface to 4th ed. of Yeast, 1859. In the first of his letters to the Guardian, the organ of the High Church party, "Mr. Kingsley expressed his hearty desire to co-operate with the members of the High Church school [and] his conviction that he . . . had a common object with them." F.D. Maurice in Christian Socialist, I, no. 33, 257.
idea is as true as it is noble . . . I am thankful to any man, who under any parabolic or even questionably true forms, will teach that to a generation which is losing more and more the sense of reverence. 1

It is apparent that after the publication of Alton Locke Kingsley became more and more reluctant to thrust himself or to be thrust into the arena of social conflict. But it was during the 'forties, when he was making for himself a standing ground between the opposing parties that the works of chief concern to this study were written. It is time to consider in greater detail how far Kingsley's creed was a reaction against Utilitarianism. (The reaction against the Oxford Movement and the violent distaste for Roman Catholicism are the other half of the story and will require less notice here.) The marked change in his attitudes after the publication of Alton Locke makes it convenient to treat the earlier works separately. In both periods his opinions were anti-Benthamite but the points at which he tilted were different in the early and in the later works.

The feature which distinguishes Kingsley's philosophy from those of Newman and Disraeli is the separation he makes between the Benthamite political programme and the Benthamite economic programme. The great flaw in the

1 C.K. Letters etc., II, 221 and 270.
Utilitarian system was remarked in the opening chapter of this work. The rationalism which argued that every man would always seek his own pleasure had produced the conclusion that the greatest happiness of the greatest number could be ensured politically only by universal suffrage. On the other hand, the distribution of the other type of felicific units, namely money, was to be equitably arranged not by an even spread of wealth, but by equality of the opportunity to make wealth. Thus, as has been earlier shown, Benthamism found its most ardent followers in two distinct camps — in the unenfranchised and impoverished working class, and in the unenfranchised and economically impeded middle class of industrial employers. In 1832 their cause seemed to be the same cause and the working classes threw in their weight with the middle classes in order to force the constitution into a shape nearer to the Benthamite ideals. As Kingsley puts it:

> They were told to support the Reform Bill, not only on account of its intrinsic righteousness . . . but because it was the first of a glorious line of steps towards their enfranchisement; and now the very men who told them this, talked peremptorily of "finality", showed themselves the most dogged and careless of conservatives, and pooh-poohed away every attempt at further enlargement of the suffrage. 1

Once this cleavage of interests opened up between the labouring and the employing classes each class struck out in its own way for Benthamite principles which had come into

1 Alton Locke, Ch. XXXII, 235.
collision. The labouring class, according to Kingsley's view of it, determined to take a leaf out of the book of their betters and to ameliorate their own lot by a further extension of the franchise. Their collective will was expressed in Chartism. In the opposite camp the great labour kings and the small shopkeepers, armed with their new weapon of an ever-increasing parliamentary majority devoted their efforts to an unfettered application of the economic laws which Adam Smith, Malthus and Ricardo had laid down. Kingsley opposed both parties. The vehemence and relentlessness of his attacks upon the economics of laissez-faire may be exhibited from the earliest of his published works.

The Saint's Tragedy is a work in which all Kingsley's prejudices and anxieties are given play in a most revealing fashion. In writing it he was primarily concerned with working out the problem of chastity and its connexion with piety. There will have to be a return to this matter presently. At the moment some secondary matters in the play are our concern. The heroine, Elizabeth, daughter of the king of Hungary in the thirteenth century, oppressed with the spectacle of pauperism and riches existing side by side, exerts herself to remedy matters. It is immediately apparent that the play is meant to bear upon conditions in nineteenth century England. Elizabeth cries:
We sit in a cloud, and sing, like pictured angels,
And say, the world runs smooth - while right below
Walters the black fermenting heap of life
On which our state is built.  

Like Dickens, Kingsley was to make it his mission to introduce the well-to-do to the scenes of squalor and horror in which the masses lived. The following passage is an ingenious transposition of such scenes as he was later to describe in Alton Locke into the far-off world of his play:

where my own bower looks down
Upon that unknown sea of wavy roofs,
I turned into an alley 'neath the wall -
And stepped from earth to hell. - The light of heaven,
The common air, was narrow, gross, and dun;
The tiles did drop from the eaves; the unhinged doors
Tottered o'er inky pools, where reeked and curdled
The offal of a life . . .
Shrill mothers cursed; wan children wailed; sharp coughs
Rang through the crazy chambers; hungry eyes
Glared dumb reproach . . .
O'er still and woeless looms
The listless craftsmen through their elf-locks scowled;
These were my people! all I had, I gave.  

Despite all Elizabeth can do, however, the plight of the poor degenerates to the point of famine. At this point a merchant is introduced who has plenty of corn but, working on the economic principle of buying where the goods are cheapest and selling where they are dearest, he demands a cruel price for his grain, uttering the maxim, "You must pay according to your need." Elizabeth entreats him to dare once to be great:

See how that boiling sea of human heads
Waits open-mouthed to bless thee.  

1 The Saint's Tragedy, Act II, Sc. 4 in Poems, 44.
2 The Saint's Tragedy, Act II, Sc. 4, 45.
3 The Saint's Tragedy, Act II, Sc. 7, 55.
The merchant refuses to yield, but his grain is devoured nonetheless by the starving mob. Kingsley constantly warns his readers that riot and revolution will be the only end to unrestrained "Mammonism".

In the next scene Kingsley brings upon the stage a group of lordly and pious rogues including two counts and an abbot who are all dyed-in-the-wool Utilitarians. Their complaint is that Elizabeth's foolish intervention has upset the balance of supply and demand: the grain which, if it had found uninterrupted passage, would now be in the form of ale to be drunk by themselves, has in the event been made into cakes for the poor.

Abbot: The parent of seraphic ale degraded into plebeian dough. Indeed, Sir, we have no right to lessen wantonly the amount of human enjoyment!

The abbot is reasoned with by Count Walter, who represents, Kingsley explains, "the 'healthy animalism' of the Teutonic mind, with its mixture of deep earnestness and hearty merriment." How can Elizabeth be blamed for her action when the people had been eating grass?

Count Hugo: Nobody asked them to eat it; nobody asked them to be there to eat it; if they will breed like rabbits, let them feed like rabbits, say I . . .

Abbot: Ah, Count Walter! How sad to see a man of your sense so led away by his feelings! . . . Had but the stern benevolence of providence remained undisturbed by her ladyship's carnal

1 See Introduction to The Saint's Tragedy.
tenderness — what a boon had this famine been! ... How many a poor soul would be lying ... in Abraham's bosom, who must now toil on still in this vale of tears? The self-interest of each it is which produces in the aggregate the happy equilibrium of all.

Count Walter: Well — the world is right well made, that's certain ... But look you, Sirs, private selfishness may be public weal, and yet private selfishness be just as surely damned, for all that ... 1

There is a good deal more of this argument strangely thrust into the body of a play which hardly has place for it. The scene ends as might be expected with a dark hint by Count Walter that if the nation's wealth becomes too grossly misapportioned, the whole system may be violently up-ended, like an hour glass, so that the sands may run effectively once more: "and the Lord have mercy upon us!" Significantly, the author of this swift retribution will be God himself, using the mob as his agents. Here is a first glimpse of Kingsley's slowly but steadily acquired conviction that "the world is God's world, not the devil's", a conviction which, as will be seen, provides the justification for his apparent loose eclecticim, as it does for that of the age at large.

The Saint's Tragedy, especially in the scenes just noticed, gives a first expression not only of Kingsley's horror at the unbridled "Hammonism" of competitive commerce, but also of his distaste for the pedantic system-monger,

1 The Saint's Tragedy, Act II, Sc. 8, 57.
whether religious or social. In Act II, scene 8, the bluff, courageous and humane Count Walter soliloquises in this manner:

Of all cruelties, save me from your small pedant — your closet philosopher, who has just courage enough to bestride his theory, without wit to see whither it will carry him . . . instead of God's grace, a few schoolboy saws about benevolence, and industry, and independence — there is his metal . . . A doctrine is these men's God — touch but that shrine, and lo! your simpering Philanthropist becomes as ruthless as a Dominican. ¹

These subjects, broached timidly (and irrelevantly) enough in the play are soon to be treated with considerable passion and pleading in Yeast and Alton Locke. The war against laissez-faire is continued in these novels; but in addition there is a second front opened up against the political doctrines of Bentham which were providing the rallying cry of the Chartist movement. That is, having entered the no-man's-land between the working and the employing classes, Kingsley conducts a campaign against each. But whereas his anger and disgust are almost unqualified in his dealings with the disciples of "Mammon", his reproaches of the advocates of democracy are tempered with the deepest sympathy and understanding. Before going on to examine these works, however, some account must be taken of Kingsley's contributions to the periodical literature of the Christian Socialist movement in which he began now to be caught up. And it may be pointed out at once that both the ideas implicit in Christian Socialism

¹ The Saint's Tragedy, Act II, Sc. 8, 64.
are antagonistic to Utilitarianism. In attempting a marriage between "the latest born of the forces now at work in modern society" (i.e. co-operation) and "the eldest born of those forces" \(^1\) (i.e. Christianity) the group with which Kingsley was now associated were bringing together two ideas which struck right across the current of Utilitarianism - for Christianity the Benthamites had agreed to reject; and co-operation they had hardly considered, so patent and inevitable had the economics of individualism appeared to be.

**Politics for the People**, a periodical venture in which Kingsley was involved between May and July, 1848, gives powerful support to the claim that his was a receptive rather than an original mind. This series of pamphlets, running to seventeen numbers in all, is firmly impressed with the personality and ideas of John Ludlow, who contributes under the name of John Townsend. Yet though Kingsley's contributions are on independent subjects (and usually, it must be acknowledged, of a more stifling piety), the attitudes taken up there as editorial policy are indistinguishable from those adopted by Kingsley in his novels of this period; he is presently to follow Ludlow in the crusade for Christian Socialism; and he is to end by cultivating all the latent

---

\(^1\) See the "New Idea" contributed by "John Townsend" (i.e. John Ludlow) to the first number of the Christian Socialist, 1, no.1, 1.
conservatism in Politics for the People but relinquishing its passion for reform.

The prevailing tone of these pamphlets is appeasement; and that is the prevailing tone throughout Kingsley's career. He is at once the most swashbuckling and the most apologetic of the Victorian sages. There are practically no groups or parties of which he will not claim himself a disciple — with the reservation that he cannot contribute to their principles. If he is rebuking the Chartists he calls himself a Chartist before doing so. If he is appalled by the doings of radical reformers he declares at the outset: I am a radical reformer. Though he professes himself offended by the activities of the High Church party, he will, if it seems to heighten his effect sign himself: Yours faithfully, A High Church Parson.

He confesses:

I would rejoice with the rejoicing reformers . . .
I would weep with the weeping conservatives,
the ecclesiologists, and the Young Englanders.

He is liberal in his hopes for the emancipation of women and can wax as warm on this theme as Mill — but he detests women who wish to be emancipated. Such "Hatchgoose Pythonesses did not wish to be women, but very bad imitations of men." His advice to them is finally:

By quiet, modest, silent, private influence,
we [!] shall win. "Neither strive nor cry,
nor let your voice be heard in the streets,"
was good advice of old, and is still.

1 Politics for the People "Letters to Chartists" No.1, 28. 4 See C.K, Letters etc., II, 327-320
2 See C.K, Letters etc., I, 353. 5 Two Years Abs., Ch. XI, 218.
3 C.K, Letters etc., I, 142. 6 C.K, Letters etc., II, 326.
Now this practice of combining a radiant espousal of a party with a pious deprecation of its principles is exactly what Politics for the People exemplifies. As this periodical either represented or formed Kingsley's views on public affairs it is important to notice the general tendency of its message. The opening essay of the first number, addressed to the Chartists, informs them that they must abandon Chartism as an exclusive platform – for the Whigs, the Conservatives and the Radicals, all alike, have good men and good principles among them. The first firm statement of the paper produces at once the idea that personal, moral reform must precede any effort for, or indeed any deserving of, political reform:

So long as men are not capable of self-government, so long are they worthy of sharing in the government of others.

Illustrating this theme by reference to foreign examples "John Townsend" in another place declares:

It is not a change of rulers and institutions that France needs, but a thorough moral regeneration.

It would be going too far to suggest that the contributors to Politics for the People are not interested in politics. But their political position, ill-defined as it is, will soon appear to be reactionary rather than radical – and in any case they are staunchly opposed to the Benthamite principle of one man – one vote. Their cry, like Disraeli's, is:

1 Politics for the People, 10.
2 Politics for the People, 15.
Universal Suffrage is not Universal Representation. 1

And if the periodical gradually discloses a greater concern among its contributors for moral regeneration, the cult of the beautiful, and a decent compliance with things as they promise to be; that is, if Politics for the People shows itself not particularly concerned with "politics", it declares itself not to be concerned with the "people":

We mean but one thing by the word People - the English nation. Not this class, nor that class . . . but all. 2

In the course of its seventeen numbers the paper attempts four political "portraits", all of them from the hand of "John Townsend" and all of them exactly in the vein that Kingsley made his own. The first of these portraits is of "The Tory" and the following brief extracts will serve without comment to indicate the lineaments of this national figure:

... a hearty love to things as they are . . .
... a genial nature, which sees the past in the best light, and sets the present in the best . . .

The real old Tory is among the best friends of the poor, for he is a true Christian . . . The finest sight in the neighbourhood of the old Tory are his tenants. Such substantial cottages - such oak and walnut-tree tables and chests [etc., etc.] . . . [He] loves a roomful of flaxen-pilled children . . . At bottom, the old Tory rather likes a good Radical or Chartist, so long as they do not become seditious . . . The genuine old Tory is really one of the essential elements in the English nation . . .

1 Politics for the People, 13.
2 Politics For the People, 17.
3 Politics for the People, 56-58.
As if this stout old gentleman were not sufficient in himself to represent the political principle of conservatism, there is displayed next a portrait of "The Conservative" who is done in colours hardly less glowing. Apart from the fact that the description runs more to abstraction than that in "The Tory" there is little distinction between them. An effort is made however to provide, in anticipation, a contrast with the Whig and Radical who are to appear next. The Conservative is

not a dry, cold, unimpassioned ... unrestrained logician, who spins constitutions as a spider spins webs, out of his own self, and will sacrifice everything to a system; but a man who starts ... with a bias of affection for things that are ... When "The Whig" appears the strain of keeping an enlightened impartiality begins to show even more than it has already done. There is some lukewarm and qualified praise of the Whig, chiefly for his resemblance to the Tory. But the opposition to the Utilitarian element soon appears:

Whig feelings rest not upon facts as they are ... but upon certain real or imaginary political principles ...

... the Scotch school of philosophy [produces] that strong tendency of the Whig mind to logical accuracy, to the working out of politics into an absolute science ... Hence ... the conservative is the better man of business ...

... the historical character of their party prevents them generally from fraternizing with the great bulk of the people ...

... [they] can, from henceforth, produce no more great men ...

1 Politics for the People, 115-117.
2 Politics for the People, 199-200.
In the last of the portraits, "The Radical"\(^1\), the author is unable any longer to keep up the descriptive method he began with. There is no attempt at a portrait at all, but a dissertation on the now familiar lines that "no man can be a true Radical who is not a Christian." "The beam in our own eye is the first thing to be cast out."

The whole tenor of these papers, then, is conservative; but like Kingsley's own, it is a conservatism filled with a recognition that things are not yet perfect. Two things, among the many dialogues which the papers indulge in, emerge as confident assertions. First, that the Bible and the Church of England services offer the underprivileged a surer guarantee of well-being than any man-made system can offer. This is Kingsley's ever-repeated contribution to the papers, especially in his "Letters to Chartists."

My friends, I have to tell you that in the Bible you will find what you long for, promised more fairly than any man in these days promised it you.

\[\text{[The Bible] gives a ray of hope . . . such as no universal suffrage, free trade, communism, organisation of labour, or any other Morrison's-pill-measure can give.}\]

The second assertion is that England as she is, is good and great. Only let the "juices sweet of charity" flow again and the old English oak will flourish; and rich and poor alike will find shelter beneath the ample boughs "of the old

\[\text{1 Politics for the People, 221.}\]
\[\text{2 Politics for the People, 136.}\]
\[\text{3 Politics for the People, 58.}\]
and famous tree" as they did of yore. 1

The final paper issued in this series sums up the philosophy of its editors:

Let us all try to love the society in which we live, and we shall soon make it easy for us to live in. Let us learn to look not for difference, but for agreement, seeking to reconcile divisions and not to make them, and we shall at last understand and feel what a blessing it is to be members of the Great English Partnership. 2

The periodical enjoyed, like Kingsley himself, a contemporary notoriety for radicalism something short of incendiary!

In his Message of the Church to Labouring Men 3 Kingsley preaches once again this strange doctrine of a revolutionary status quo. This time he associates himself and God with no less than the portentous watchword of the French Revolution:

The business for which God sends a Christian priest in a Christian nation, is to preach and practise, liberty equality and brotherhood.

But it presently appears that just as there are two sorts of Chartist, so there are two sorts of liberty: the one, liberty to do what we like, the other to do what we ought. And before he can distinguish between these two, a man's heart"must be free from all degrading passions". So too,

1 See Politics for the People, "The Saving of the Oak", 141.
2 Politics for the People, 274.
3 Published by John W. Parker, London, 1851.
there are two kinds of equality: the false, which "gives the same power to the bad as to the good"; and the true, which is the equality of opportunity to use the gifts God has given us. And there are two kinds of brotherhood: the false, by which a man claims his own class and friends as brothers; the true, by which he claims all classes and his enemies too as his brothers. So it is that Kingsley's religious warmth has only to touch a radical idea to turn it into vapour.

Yet in this sermon, which produced a minor ecclesiastical earthquake, it is true that Kingsley preaches unequivocally the Mosaic social doctrine of "the acceptable year of the Lord." By this law all debts were periodically to be cancelled, and, more startlingly, all property was from time to time to return to its original owner. That the idea was quite impracticable in 19th century England is beside the point. Kingsley was quoting scripture to telling effect when he cried

Woe unto you that are full, for ye have received your consolation already. Woe unto you that add house to house and field to field, that you may stand alone in the land.

He claims on behalf of the poor

A share and a stake, for them and their children after them, in the soil, the wealth, the civilization and the government of this English land.

Here, as in Alton Locke, are found the compassion and the
vehemence of denunciation which chiefly established Kingsley's reputation in his early writing career and which almost alone preserve it today. The sermon develops into a brilliantly organized and authoritative invective against laissez-faire and that vile neglect which allows tens of thousands in our great cities to grow up hogs in body, soul and spirit.

The two themes upon which Kingsley works in his two earliest novels are fused here: to the lower-class democrats he preaches self-reform and a patience sustained by faith; to the middle-class industrialists he preaches, "woe unto you that make merchandize out of the needs of your brethren."

It is a pity to be told by Maurice in a prefatory note to the published sermon that, had he realised the uproar it would cause, Kingsley would willingly have withdrawn or altered any passage that offended.

Kingsley's contributions to Ludlow's next journalistic ventures, The Journal of Association and The Christian Socialist, were written over the name of "Parson Lot" and appeared fairly regularly during the lifetime of the periodicals. There is not a great deal of Kingsley's work in The Journal of Association, but once again the explicit intention of the paper as set out by "John Townsend" is of
importance in establishing the nature of Kingsley's reaction against Utilitarianism:

We have to build up a New Political Economy, grounded upon fellowship instead of self-interest; in harmony with the nature of man, as a creature made in the image of God . . .

The fault of the old political economy ... [is] that it is a closet system which would fain square men and facts to its fancied laws . . . it [is] the duty of the new political economy to let fellowship grow up, when its ground has once been shown, before defining its laws; to follow nature, instead of dictating to her. 1

For The Christian Socialist Kingsley wrote two series of articles, one called "Thoughts on the Frimley Murder" and the other called "Bible Politics". And for No. 7 of the first volume he wrote out "My Political Creed". It is so forthright, so confused, and so representative of his belief and his manner that it may be quoted at some length as an indication of his general contribution to The Christian Socialist.

Having been accused of "Revolutionary principles", etc., etc., I beg leave to state I am a monarchist; and that so strong a one, that I am inclined to prefer, for an old country at least, a despotism to a republic; a rule which is above all classes and interests . . . 2

To write for a socialist organ that "I am a monarchist" is exactly what the reader of Kingsley has by now expected him to do. Invariably he assumes the reputation of the radical before proceeding to his wholly reactionary sentiments. It

1 The Journal of Association, 14;6.
is not to be wondered at that he drew fire from both sides; from the conservatives who noticed only the company he kept and the air he assumed and believed he was preaching Jacobinism and Jacquerie; and from the radicals who warned workmen against this pious campaign which watered down the socialist nostrum.
The political creed of Kingsley is hardly more than a précis of Disraeli:

I believe that the Crown has now too little, and not too much power . . .
I believe that the modern French dogma, that the will of the People is the source of power, is atheistic in theory, and impossible in practice . . .
I believe that there is no authority but of God, and that the authorities which exist are ordained by God . . . and that their very possession of authority is a proof that they were intended to hold that authority, as long as they govern, not merely according to the people's fancy, but according to the laws and institutions of this realm . . .

And now Kingsley begins to stumble upon the greatest single obstacle in the argument of all these reactionary reformers. Carlyle, Disraeli, Newman and Kingsley (to name only those with whom we are immediately concerned) put forward an idea which may here be expressed in its crudest terms: "Whatever is, is wrong. Whatever was, was right." The crux however is that in a hundred years' time the present, too, will be past. The "is" of 1830-1860 will be the "was" of 1930-1960, and will presumably be "right." (In passing it may be reflected that this realisation explained the frequent optimism of the period. The age might be in travail but
its pangs would be justified in history.) Thus Kingsley has the consoling sensation of the age's not so much making for the future, as getting itself into the past, when its horrors and uncertainties will be explained by the outcome. Each of the reactionary Victorian sages came to terms with this crux in his own way. To Carlyle there appeared a crucial difference between how the past had felt its way into shape and how the present was thinking its way into shape—the crucial difference between faith, intuition, duty, on the one hand and reason, calculation, selfishness on the other. To Newman and Disraeli there appeared a point where the right road had been forsaken. The point of wrong turning was differently placed by each of them, but they would both put the beginning of the "wrong present" further back than Carlyle would do. Kingsley is flustered by the crux and writes as follows:

I consider [the laws and constitution of this realm] as the sum total of the political truth which God has been revealing to the nation of England for fifteen hundred years . . . Therefore my political creed, while it justifies the civil wars of 1641 and the glorious revolution of 1688, abhors any physical force attempt of any party or class against the rest.

Kingsley is clearly less consistent than his master, for Carlyle at least went on to acknowledge the value of physical force in shaping the present, having like Kingsley "justified" its application in the past. In another, later, number of the same periodical Kingsley again struggles in the webs of
this problem:

It was the will of God that the tyrannous and
iniquitous "Ancien Régime" should be put down in
France in 1793... Such men as Robespierre really
did, to a certain extent, obey a divine impulse, a
heaven-born sense of justice, in putting it down... it was by the command of God; by an awful impulse,
which those possessed by it could not explain, but
only obey... Yet the men who were the actors in
it were not righteous... Thus a righteous work
was done by unrighteous men; and their work
succeeded, and remains to this day; they them-
selves, as we well know, were punished for their
own wickedness. 1

The tortuosity of all this, and its prim conclusion, can only
be matched in the period with the geological freaks of the
elder Gosse. These are the painfully amusing antics of a
mind working across the grain of temperament. Kingsley must
now hurry on to the business of merely getting the present
into the past:

And if, as at present, any large class remains
unenfranchised, I believe such a state will be
ultimately found to have been for their good,
a wholesome, necessary, and divinely appointed
preparation for enfranchisement, and that He who
bestows all real and righteous power, will raise
them to their proper share in the Commonwealth,
as soon as they have made themselves and proved
themselves fit for that share, and not till then. 2

So the reactionary prescription comes back once more (as
always in Dickens as well as in Carlyle and Newman), to indi-
vidual inward improvement. The message varies only slightly
from oracle to oracle: If England is to be a better nation,
then individual Englishmen must become more heroic, or more

1 "Bible Politics" No. 6, in The Christian Socialist, I, no.2,15;
2 "My Political Creed" in The Christian Socialist, I, no.7, 50
saintly, or more kindly, or more gentlemanly or, in brief, more English.

In his other contributions to *The Christian Socialist*, Kingsley sometimes comes nearer the socialist ideals of the organisation of labour. That is to say he swerves into direct opposition to "the great God laissez-faire, and the [economic] laws of the universe!"¹ Then he adroitly points out that "the formulae inductively discovered by such men as Bentham, Ricardo, Mill and Chalmers" are not prescriptive but descriptive laws. They have made available to us certain economic facts. It is England's business now not to submit to these laws but to make use of them. He declares that laissez-faire is a principle quite indefensibly derived from these laws. It may be likened to a resignation to disease after having discovered the principle of infection:

I see no use in discovering these laws unless it be to use them . . . and the man who tells us that we ought to investigate nature, simply to sit still patiently under her, and let her freeze, and ruin, and starve, and stink us to death, is a goose, whether he call himself a chemist or a political economist.

Kingsley has here at last grasped and expressed the direly needed rider to the Benthamite theorem of economics. The century which has passed since he wrote these words has been busy in endless attempts to apply them. Unfortunately he himself could apparently see no further than the general

¹ *The Christian Socialist*, I, no. 1, 3.
principle. He had no mind, or patience, or, one suspects, nerve for breaking the principle down to practical economic method.

Among the numerous topics upon which Kingsley challenges Benthamite doctrine we may notice the Panopticon idea and the Malthusian principles. In the fourth of the articles entitled "Thoughts on the Frimley Murder" there is offered a heavily sarcastic and bitter burlesque upon the workhouse and prison systems of remedying social evils. Here is an explicit guying of the Panopticon idea, Kingsley's model reformatory being called the "South National Auto-Palingenesium":

The interior should be fitted up with about five thousand retreats . . . each neatly furnished, and supplied with the newest and most scientific appliances in ventilation, sewage, hot-water pipes, and gutta-percha call-tubes . . . The comforts of such an abode would, by their perfect novelty, excite in the inmates an enlightened sympathy with the wonders of science . . . The supply of religious teaching will, of course . . . depend solely on the demand, and be created thereby. Supply and demand will manage everything else in the world, and why not religion too? . . . 1

So it goes on at great length. It cannot be claimed that Kingsley's satiric manner is as sly and diverting as, say, Peacock's or even Disraeli's. But here his true feelings do come in aid of his ideas and he has no difficulty in being consistent. The same observation applies to his handling of Malthusian ideas. In his article entitled "The Church versus

1 "Thoughts on the Frimley Murder" No. 4 in The Christian Socialist, I, no. 9,
Malthus" he writes

The present Politico-Economical school complain that the Christian clergy generally favour the increase of population... We cannot deny the allegation, nor do we wish to do so: on the contrary, we rather glory in our shame... We put, and will continue, with God's help, to put into the hands of every Englishman the book which proclaims... "There shall be neither male nor female barren among you, nor among your cattle." 1

Kingsley's other articles in *The Christian Socialist* are concerned, as befitted his cloth, more with the Christian than the Socialist side of the programme; and it must be observed that often his notions of Christian duty imply an acceptance of things as they are which must enervate his pleading for socialist intervention. It is interesting to compare his *Sermons on National Subjects*, published in 1852, with his *Sermons for the Times*, published in 1855. The best way to show the swift relapse from the passing mood of demanding socialist intervention to the more characteristic mood of Christian acceptance is to put alongside each other extracts from the writings of each period:

1852: What ever nation He may let become great by covetousness, and selfish competing and struggling of man against man, He will not let England grow great by it... 2

1855: True freedom can only live with true loyalty and obedience, such as our Prayer-book, our Catechism, our Church of England preaches to us... it is a Church meant also for loyal men, who look on the law as the ordinance of God, and on their rulers as the ministers of God. 3

2 "National Rewards and Punishments" in *Sermons on National Subjects*, 245.
3 "England's Strength" in *Sermons for the Times*, 226.
1852: This new idol of selfish competition which men worship now-a-days, and fancy that it is the secret cause of all plenty, and cheapness, and civilisation, has no place in the Church of Jesus Christ.

1855: We should be thankful this day that we are Englishmen. The only country in Europe which is not now perplexed with fear of change, going about our business in peace and safety in a land in which we and our forefathers have found, now for many a year, that just laws make a quiet and prosperous people.

1852: I expect nothing from a public press, which panders to popular Mammonism, by scraps of politico-economic cant, and justifies the ignorant miser to himself by retailing to him Benthamite phrases. I expect nothing from the advocates of Laissez-faire; the pedants whose glory is in the shame of society; who arrogantly talk of political economy as of a science so completely perfected, so universal and all-important, that common humanity and morality, reason and religion, must be pooh-poohed down, if they seem to interfere with its infallible conclusions.

1855: Not to ourselves do we owe our blessings. We owe it to our wise Constitution, to our wise Church.

Turn with disgust from platform squabbles and newspaper controversies, to do the duty which lies nearest you. Be Christian Englishmen. Growing up healthy under that solemn sense of national duty which is the only safeguard of national freedom.

The strength of Kingsley's conservatism has very soon pulled him from the arduous compromise with Benthamism which Socialism demanded, into a thorough-going acceptance of things as they are. The final words of this socialist phase are "be thankful.

1 Sermons on National Subjects, 345.
2 Sermons for the Times, 229.
4 Sermons for the Times, 230.
5 Sermons for the Times, 340-341.
and be patient". And this attitude is best expressed in "Parson Lot's Last Words":

The spectacle of silent working faith is one at once so rare and so noble, that it tells more, even on opponents, than ten thousand platform pyrotechnics. In the meantime it will be no bad thing for us, if we are beaten sometimes . . .

"The proper impulse has been given, Wait a little longer." 1

In the last chapter of Yeast Kingsley's "inexplicable sage", Barnakill, attempts to inspire the hero with a true awareness of the present condition of England:

See, I say, what a chaos of noble materials is here, - all confused, it is true, - polarised, jarring and chaotic . . . but only waiting for the one inspiring Spirit to organise, and unite, and consecrate this chaos into the noblest polity the world ever saw realised! 2

It is just such a chaos that Kingsley himself has succeeded in organising in this novel. The careful reader of his letters and his published works will begin to see the nature of Kingsley's personal struggle and the nature of its success. Throughout the writings there are scattered dark hints (left in the letters despite the over-delicate editing of his wife) of a highly developed sexuality in him, especially in the days before his marriage when there seemed no honourable means

1 The Journal of Association, 212.
2 Yeast, Ch.XVII, 249.
of expressing it. There are backward glances of shame and disgust at the period when the demands of sex seemed both imperative and unanswerable. Kingsley's sexuality seemed to him at that stage only to be attributable to the working of Satan within him. He seemed faced with the dilemma, either of indulging it and thus cutting himself off from all that was godly, or of utterly denying it by imposing a pious asceticism upon himself. When he met the woman who was to be his wife he discovered to his growing delight not only that sexual passion could be acceptable to a pious woman, but that whatever reticences the middle classes might primly cultivate, a woman of the aristocracy was prepared to talk about these things. A new energy was imparted to his living and his thinking. In order to qualify for marriage he was able, with a brain not remarkably academic, to drive his way through to the highest university distinction. At the same time he began to react most violently against every argument in favour of celibacy.

Man is a sexual being, with the power of multiplying his race, of bringing into the kingdom of God new spirits, new hands, new heads, new servants and brothers in the great family ... and on the intention implied in that power he has now acted undoubtingly ever since the creation ... confessing, by his instinctive wish to connect it with a religion, his belief that it was in some way a symbol of eternal and celestial ideas.

But Newman's hero in Loss and Gain is instinctively

1 The Christian Socialist, I, no.16, 121.
averse to such ideas. He recoils from the very notion of marriage. Kingsley was unable to see how fully the Oxford Movement represented his own inclinations because of his excited distaste for its effeminacy. His attack upon Roman Catholicism and upon the High Church movement is reducible almost entirely to a revulsion at their lack of manliness. He has a horror of sexual substitutions — mariolatry appals him because the concept of a virgin mother is intolerable; he despises the relationship between a male confessor and a female penitent; the Catholic concept of a guardian angel is to him "a woman unsexed"; he is repelled by the notion of Christ as the "bridegroom of each individual soul" (which is a "Romish" notion held by people who have "forgotten what a bridegroom means") regardless of "the sex of its possessor," for there is involved a hint of homosexuality for which he dares not find words; 1 the concept of saintliness as understood by Catholics is detestable to him:

If by holiness you mean "sainthood", I quite agree that Rome is the place to get that, and a poor pitiful thing it is when it is got — not God's ideal of a man, but an effeminate shaveling's ideal. Look at St. Francis de Sales, or St. Vincent de Paul's face, and then say, does not your English spirit loathe to see that? 2

A full and independent study of Kingsley's writing might well make his aggressive sexuality the central theme. Here it can

1 See C.K. Letters etc., I, 259.
2 C.K. Letters etc., I, 204.
be noticed only insofar as it contributes to his distaste for Utilitarianism. It must suffice to observe that there is a sexual source to be discovered in almost all his attitudes—his ideas about race, about politics, about business, about science, about family affairs and about the role of women in the world are all coloured only to a less extent than his ideas about God, by the happy solution he fell upon when he discovered Fanny Grenfell. "How often has he said to me," writes William Harrison, his curate, "that whatever he had done or achieved was due to the love that had come to him at a great crisis." 1 His passion for his wife never grew less, he could never bear to be separated from her ("I have just let [my wife] go to Devonshire without me . . . and I feel like a cat without its skin" 2) and spilt quantities of ink persuading himself and others that there must indeed, regardless of Scripture, be marriages in heaven. If there is something in the following lines which threatens to remind one of Tristram Shandy's father they do underline the report of William Harrison just referred to:

For woman is warm though man be cold,
And the night will hallow the day;
Till the heart which at even was weary and old
Can rise in the morning gay,
Sweet wife,
To its work in the morning gay. 3

1 In C.K. Letters etc., II, 288.
2 C.K. Letters etc., II, 106.
3 The Journal of Association, 15. The poem appears as "Dolcino to Margaret" in Poems, 164.
The fascinating study of Kingsley's sexuality, how it breaks through in his images (trains for example are "demon bridegrooms" which "rush roaring over [the lines] on the path which none but they must go"¹) and moulds his ideas (the Anglo-Saxons were "a female race" who "required impregnation by the great male race, — the Norse"²), shows that the conflict he had to pass through was not the conflict common to his age, that between the claims of belief and reason. Kingsley's crisis lay in the struggle between piety and sex. Once he had won through to a reconciliation of them, all other reconciliations were possible:

I have been through that terrible question of "Celibacy versus Marriage" once already in my life . . . It is the cardinal point. If you leave that fortress untaken, your other batteries are wasted. It is to religion what the Malthusian doctrine is to political economy . . .³

One by one the other "fortresses" were brought under the dominion of a now triumphant Protestant belief. Protestantism as it was represented by the Church of England was deemed broad, strong and liberal enough to contain all the forces which needed to be organised and united in order for them to work together and produce that "noblest polity the world ever saw realised." As Barnakill defines it, the true idea of Protestantism is

The universal symbolism and dignity of matter, whether in man or nature. ⁴

¹ C.K. Letters etc., I, 181. ³ C.K. Letters etc., I, 255.
² C.K. Letters etc., I, 201. ⁴ Yeast, Ch.XV, 225.
Kingsley's argument begins where Lancelot Smith's begins as he makes his way towards this all-embracing formula:

I find within myself certain appetites; and I suppose that the God whom you say made me, made those appetites as a part of me. Why are they to be crushed any more than any other part of me? I am the whole of what I find in myself. 1

This is part of Lancelot's rough rejoinder to his cousin Luke, the Tractarian curate, and it represents Kingsley's own early rebuttal of the High Church movement. It was Protestantism's "true idea" to come to terms with matter; or, rather, to accept the existence of physical fact as indicating the divine intention:

If He who made me intended me to think of spirit first, He would have let me see it first. But as He has given me material senses, and put me in a material world, I take it as a fair hint that I am meant to use those senses first, whatever may come after. 2

Thus for Kingsley's hero, every slightest fact about a bone or a weed is of importance to him. So it became with Kingsley. He was able to enter upon the domain of hard fact and of scientific investigation with a religious enthusiasm; this at the very time too when greater religious thinkers and greater scientists were perplexed or at best grimly resigned as a crevasse seemed to be opening between them. To the end of his life Kingsley clung fervently to this reverence for facts as the handwriting of God, and he wished to "die with

1 Yeast, Ch.II, 26.
2 Yeast, Ch.X, 126.
my mind full of God's facts, instead of men's lies."

Two things are to be observed at this point. First, this resolute acceptance of and reverence for facts is of a totally different kind from the Utilitarian insistence upon facts. To the Utilitarians it was the unequivocal testimony of fact and law which invalidated a theory of revelation, still more of intervention. Kingsley reverses this position: It is God's method of revealing himself and his intention towards man, to put physical fact and physical law within the scope of man's understanding. Darwin's theory provides a perfect touchstone in this matter. Disraeli, we have seen, could not include the theory of evolution in his view of man. But Kingsley declares:

My friend, God's orthodoxy is truth: if Darwin speaks the truth, he is orthodox. 2

The greatest single problem for Kingsley to deal with now was to make this philosophy (which amounted to hardly more than deism) compatible with Christian revelation, and especially with miracle. His passionate arguments form important features of Yeast and Alton Locke, and appear in the letters too. But their content begins to fall outside the scope of the present study. They may be summed up briefly in his own words:

[Miracles are] the highest development of that will of God whose lowest manifestations we call the Laws of Nature, though really they are no Laws of Nature, but merely customs of God, which

1 C.K. Letters etc., II, 246.
He can alter as and when He will. It may be added that this fundamental and all-embracing principle of Kingsley's belief was found by him in his master, Carlyle. He acknowledges this through the mouth of the heroine of Alton Locke, whose dark asides in the early part of the book prepare the reader for the commanding position she is to assume at the end:

"Mr. Carlyle," said Miss Staunton in her abrupt way, "can see that the God of Nature is the God of man . . . Mr. Carlyle is no Deist . . . and I am sure, that unless the truths of Christianity contrive soon to get themselves justified by the laws of science, the higher orders will believe in them as little as . . . the working classes do." 2

The second thing to be observed about this creed of Kingsley's is its strong tendency to promote acceptance of the status quo. The world is God's world, facts are God's facts, and God is all-wise, all-just, and all-merciful. Now as the Utilitarians had long been agreed, such a creed must cut the ground from under any rationalist structure of reform.

As a would-be reformer Kingsley was first a Christian. In the excitement, compassion and alarm which prevailed in him when he began his reforming mission during the events of 1848, he had failed to estimate the difficulties he was running into. "I am a Church of England parson - and a Chartist," served very well to seize the attention of a Chartist meeting. But as the alarm and the excitement died down Kingsley began to

1 C.K. Letters etc., II, 67.
2 Alton Locke, CH. XVI, 133.
feel the real difficulties of reconciling these roles. As
the years passed the conviction, which he clung to at times
with desperation, that "God's Spirit is actively abroad in
the world... that, in spite of all appearances, the world
was going right, and would go right somehow," this conviction
led to a general reluctance to be precipitate or to attempt to
intervene, or in short to be active for reform at all. As
he grew older he relapsed into what one must feel was at all
times his natural pose — that of an English gentleman convinced
that God was in his heaven and all right with the world. On
his death bed he constantly murmured

It is all right, all as it should be... It is all right. All under rule. 2

But this steady relapse into conservatism is a feature of the
later works and must be noticed more fully at a later point.
Here it is only intended to point out that the seeds of this
conservative development were present in the nature of the
very principle which released Kingsley's reforming zeal. If
God revealed Himself through "facts", then "things as they
are" would soon seem to acquire a special sanctity.

Having arrived at the inspiring conviction that
God encompassed all things, Kingsley set out in Yeast to
examine the present condition of England in order both to
understand and if possible to lead his readers to understand

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 160.
what God might mean now, and in the future. He hardly undertakes to deliver a message in this novel. He attempts to display all the forces for good and for evil which he believes are of most significance. To do so, he chooses two men, one of the leisured middle class, Lancelot Smith, and the other of the working class, the Cornishman Tregarva. In conducting his work of social examination through men of these two classes he shows at once where he detects the vigour and promise of his age to lie. Between them they encounter and make known all the elements of the "yeast" which is obscurely but potently working in England. Among those elements are Young Englandism, the Oxford Movement, Chartism, the individualism of laissez-faire, the aesthetic renaissance, and above all the strangely blended expectancy and sense of prodigy which Carlyle had aroused in the nation. By virtue of his embracing creed Kingsley is able to represent all these elements as contributing to a wholesome ferment in the land, a widespread and (since it is God's ferment) assuredly beneficent dissatisfaction. Thus it is Kingsley's achievement to perceive that the teaching of Carlyle, of Newman and of Disraeli is obscurely but certainly all of a piece. Like Newman's, his reform is to spread abroad from its centre in the church. Like Disraeli's, it is to be based on a recognition of class distinctions together with a recognition of duties. Like both these other men his appeal is to the idealistic and ardent youth of England.
Again, it is the nonconformist intelligence and outlook which constitutes a menace to national harmony and an obstacle to national development. Like Carlyle's, Kingsley's conception of history is that a divine intention is being steadily worked out, using impulsive genius as its constructive, and impulsive anger as its destructive, agency. Yet, in this animated effort after a synthesis of forces, Kingsley is obliged to take issue with each of them in turn. Each is found to err, to be guilty mainly of seeking to impose some pattern upon English society to which its real nature will not conform. The faults of each, as Kingsley saw them, may be briefly looked at in turn.

The Oxford Movement is dealt with far more impatiently at this stage than it is when Kingsley comes to write *Two Years Ago*. It has already been stated that Kingsley's repugnance was aroused by its effeminacy, a characteristic which was expressed not only in the type of men it often attracted but in its feeble submission to a fine-drawn sophistry. The movement is represented in the novel by Lancelot's cousin Luke who remains off-stage and is heard of through letters full of a devious argument which the robust and masculine mind of Lancelot will not succumb to:

1 The taint of homosexuality seems, justly or unjustly, to have been suspected by Kingsley. This matter is dispassionately and convincingly examined by Geoffrey Faber in *Oxford Apostles*. 
I can't answer his [the Pope's] arguments, you see, or yours either; I am an Englishman, and not a controversialist. The only answer I give is John Bull's old dumb instinctive "Everlasting No!" which he will stand by, if need be, with sharp shot and cold steel. 1

Lancelot's rejection of Tractarianism is meant, obviously, to symbolise England's rejection. It is an instance of God's will being achieved through impulsive anger. Yet Kingsley is bound to acknowledge that the Oxford Movement had arisen largely in protest against a commercial ethic which had threatened to convert the nation into a state of heathen irresponsibility. Newman had offered a more ancient and more humane concept of society, an organisation informed with the spirit of Christian charity and controlled by the divinely accorded authority of the church. Thus the heroine of Yeast is brought under the spell of the High Church movement, not because she is unintelligent, but precisely because she is intelligent and a woman. But this spinsterish intellectualism descends more and more into a contemplative and self-centred asceticism, its repulsion at worldly injustice and the squalor of poverty being expressed in a fastidious retirement from the world. Kingsley shatters this delicate scheme by bringing into Argemone's life the "huge awkward Titan-cub" 2 Lancelot, symbolically astride his giant hunter, "Shiver-the-timbers, who kicked and snorted over the down like one of Mephistopheles"

1 Yeast, Ch.V, 69.
2 Yeast, Ch.I, 9.
Demon-steeds". 1 They fall in love, and in this passionate and wholly natural condition each is able to contribute to the other's healthy development.

It was her love he wanted . . . it was to conquer her and possess her, and inform himself with her image, and her with his own. 2

This violent sexuality liberates Argemone from the wan dreams of private piety. Henceforth the religious impulse in her is properly expressed in action and all her latent generosity and spirituality which had sought fulfilment in a sort of mystic sensuality are now applied (to use a favourite expression of both Kingsley and Carlyle) "to the task which lies next at hand". She dies of a fever contracted in watching at the bedside of a diseased pauper. It is, as it were, the physical fact of Lancelot which enables her to see clearly "the rickety old windmill of sham-Popery" which she has "taken for a real giant." 3 In her turn she has opened Lancelot's eyes to certain religious and social ideas which are to influence his own choice of action. He, like Kingsley himself, discerns the close association between Tractarianism and the Young England idea, though once again we are reminded that Lancelot falls in love "not with Young Englandism, but with Argemone Lavington." 4

Young Englandism is represented in the novel in the person of Lord Vieuxbois, a young nobleman of ancient family

1 Yeast, Ch.I, 13. 2 Yeast, Ch.VI, 87. 3 Yeast, Ch.X, 134. 4 Yeast, Ch.III, 31.
who also comes in for his share of rebuke at Kingsley's hands. His heart, like Argemone's, is in the right place. He has a similar urge to mend himself and the world, and is following out the ideals of Disraeli. But just as Argemone had become entangled in the trappings of her High Church aspirations, so Vieuxbois is losing his way among high art and painted glass, spade-farms, and modern smell-traps, rubricalities and sanitary reforms, and all other inventions, possible and impossible, for "stretching the old formula to meet the new fact." 1

But Lancelot insists that "you must not laugh at all this."

Young England or Peelite, this is all right and noble ... I have been for years laughing at Young England, and yet its little finger is thicker than my whole body, for it is trying to do something. 2

The only faults which Kingsley has to find with Young England are first that, being attracted towards Tractarianism, it tends to forget the need for a present and vital religion, remembering only the past and picturesque dignities of the church. Secondly, in rightly acknowledging the differences of class, it seeks to impose a wrong relationship between the classes. These two faults may be discussed separately.

Kingsley's faith carried inevitably the concept not merely of a creating God, but of an intervening God. For Disraeli, the political philosopher, the Church had a place in the pattern of power, privilege and duties which he built up.

1 Yeast, Ch.VI, 75.
2 Yeast, Ch.VI, 75-76.
Just so, there was a place for religious belief in the ideal individual "organisation". But this is clearly not sufficient for Kingsley, the religious philosopher, for whom all things were part of a divine idea. Thus he concludes that Vieuxbois is the nearest to an ideal landlord that England is likely to see for some time; but there is a great deal that he has yet to learn. "He has to learn that God is a living God now, as well as in the middle ages." 1 He has to develop the sense of an immanent and active deity whose concern with the world is eternal, of the present and the future no less than of the past. It is Vieuxbois' task to acquire a faith expressed in a modern, changing church to replace his reverence for antique precedents.

Secondly, with regard to the classes below him: Vieuxbois has already recognised his duties towards them. Let him go on to understand the true nature of their modern aspirations. They are no longer to be treated as dependent children. Tregarva, the spokesman for the restive lower orders declares that although Vieuxbois is "as sweet a gentleman as God ever made," nevertheless

"as sure as you live he's making his people slaves and humbugs. He doesn't see, sir, that they want to be raised bodily out of this miserable hand-to-mouth state, to be brought nearer up to him." 2

Lancelot recalls with a smile "that amusingly inconsistent,

1 Yeast, Epilogue, 268.
2 Yeast, Ch.XIII, 171.
however well-meant scene in Coningsby" in which Mr. Lyle calls in the peasantry to receive alms at his gate "as if they had been middle-age serfs or vagabonds, and not citizens of modern England." Tregarva explains that it is neither alms nor protection that the working classes want, but an opportunity to improve their own lot by their own efforts. In case this should suggest an even wider application of the economics of individualism, Kingsley makes Tregarva explain in another place that he and his fellows want to rise, certainly, but it is not money nor the opportunity to make it that they are after. Still less do they want to pull the gentry down to their own level.

Let the rich be as rich as they will. - I, and those like me, covet not money, but manners. Why should not the workman be a gentleman, and a workman still? Why are they to be shut out from all that is beautiful, and delicate, and winning, and stately? 3

It may be observed at once that Kingsley has here strayed into realms of wishfulness no less "amusingly inconsistent, however well-meant" than Disraeli before him. Kingsley was so convinced of the poor man's eagerness for the beautiful and the stately that the idea began to paralyse his social thinking. At about this time the well-intentioned Parson Lot was addressing his essays on the National Gallery and the British Museum to the metropolitan poor:

There, in the space of a single room, the townsman may take his country walk . . . and his

1 Yeast, Ch.XIII, 171.
2 Yeast, Ch.XIII, 171.
3 Yeast, Ch.XV, 213.
hard-worn heart wanders out free, beyond the
grim city-world of stone and iron, smoky
chimneys, and roaring wheels, into the world
of beautiful things—the world which shall be
hereafter—a world which shall be.

When it is understood that the world "hereafter" which is
promised with such vehemence is the spiritual, not the physical
"hereafter" it becomes clear why Holyoake, editor of the
Reasoner, should warn workmen against "the insidious campaign
initiated by the clergy to nobbble and emasculate pure
socialism." 2 Indeed, those who despise the eminent
Victorians on the grounds of hypocrisy could hardly come upon
a more horrible glimpse of it than in these words of Kingsley
which his wife admiringly republishes:

Believe it, toil-worn worker, in spite of thy
foul alley, thy crowded lodging, thy grimed
clothing, thy ill-fed children, thy thin, pale
wife—believe it: thou too, and thine, will
some day have your share of beauty. God made
you love beautiful things only because He
intends hereafter to give you your fill of them
... on the resurrection morn! ... I say,
pictures raise blessed thoughts in me—why
not in you, my brothers? 3

The only thought which might check a rough reply to this last
question is the thought that Kingsley was being consistent to
the best of his ability. He began with the conviction that
"every yearning proves the existence of an object meant to
satisfy it." 4 If he was unable to promise beauty in this
world to those who longed for it he was obliged to believe it
would be forthcoming in the next world. Thus his creed leads

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 169. The original is in Politics for
the People, 5.
2 See Una Pope-Hennessy, Canon Charles Kingsley, 118.
3 C.K. Letters etc., I, 169. 4 Yeast, Ch.II, 20.
him to join hands with the aesthetic revival and to link the 
idea of socialism with the idea of art for the masses; and 
so to place himself in a sufficiently illustrious line.

In these ways Kingsley associates Tractarianism with 
Young England, and Young England with the aesthetic revival. 
They all represent an attempt to break away from domination 
by the Utilitarian ethic. They are signs of a burgeoning 
idealism which Kingsley is certain will presently break into 
flower:

In the nineteenth century . . . men are telling 
us that the poetic and enthusiastic have become 
impossible, and that the only possible state of 
the world henceforward will be a universal 
good-humoured hive, of the Franklin-Benthamite 
religion . . . and all the while, in spite of 
all Manchester schools, and high and dry ortho-
dox schools, here are the strangest phantasms, 
new and old, sane and insane, starting up sudden-
ly into live practical power, to give their 
prosaic theories the life. 1

These forces will produce a new era for humanity, and "the 
Stock Exchange, and railway staggering . . . and the frantic 
Mammon-hunting which has been for the last fifty years the 
peculiar pursuit of the majority of Quakers, Dissenters, and 
Religious Churchmen" 2 will all be swept away in a cataclysm, 
a prodigy and a mystery.

The Benthamites will receive this announcement, 
if it ever meets their eyes, with shouts of 
laughter. Be it so - nous verrons. 3

The Benthamites have been treated with remarkable tolerance

1 Yeast, CH.XV, 221. 
2 Yeast, CH.II, 27. 
3 Yeast, Epilogue, 262.
The representative of economic individualism is Lord Minchampstead whose essential masculinity and sheer physical power, the attributes of a hero, go far towards redeeming his faults. Kingsley regards him, for better or for worse, as the coming man; his rude strength seems to warrant a basic honesty and kindness. The situation is seen by Kingsley exactly as E.M. Forster saw it many years later in *Howard's End*: it is the regenerating potency of the industrial giant which will, by marriage with the fading culture of the age before, retain as much as it renews. So, in the Epilogue, there is a marriage arranged between a Vieuxbois and a Minchampstead:

That should be a noble mixture; there should be stalwart offspring, spiritual as well as physical, born of that intermarriage of the old and the new. 1

Lord Minchampstead is placed in the novel to exemplify the potential re-inforcement which the new industrial princes might make to the existing but decadent rural administration. His achievements may be summed up in his own words:

The stern political economist proclaimed at his own table that "he had bought Minchampstead for merely commercial purposes, as a profitable investment of capital, and he would see that, whatever else it did, it should pay." 2

Kingsley declares that Minchampstead is infinitely superior to the ignorant, extravagant and idle squires whose estates are all around him. "He had formed his narrow theory of the

1 *Yeats*, Epilogue, 269.
2 *Yeats*, Ch.VI, 79.
universe, and he was methodically and conscientiously carrying it out." Kingsley believes that Minchampstead's great error is to be taken in by the Malthusian theorem. The political economist believes that where, as in England, there is no uncultivated land on to which surplus labour can be turned, then little can be done to alleviate the condition of the working classes. Competition alone can decide who shall eat. But Kingsley, like all the men who have been met with in this study, is repelled by such a notion. In order to justify his rejection of it he insists that both the land and the labour which might fructify it are being blindly wasted. He will not heed "the over-population cry":

Everywhere waste. Waste of manure, waste of land, waste of muscle, waste of brain, waste of population — and we call ourselves the workshop of the world!

At this stage, then, he looks to the undeveloped riches of England to raise the condition of the poor. He has not yet considered seriously the other answer to Malthus, which lies in emigration and imperialism. He is conscious in any case of an impulsive distaste for the idea of limiting population. Like Carlyle, he believes the wealth of the nation to lie in its people. In The Saint's Tragedy he had written:

Our wisdom and our swords may fill our coffers, But will they breed us men, my Lords, or mothers?

1 Yeast, Ch.VI, 80.
2 Yeast, Ch.XIII, 187.
3 The Saint's Tragedy, Act II, Sc.8, 74.
This delight in the richness of numbers is associated ultimately with Kingsley's reaction against celibacy. He believes in God as Him

who said to Adam and Eve, "Increase and multiply and replenish the earth;" as the tutelary God of the patriarchs, with their rich animal life; as the Lord of the marrying, farming, fighting Jews . . .

We may contrast with this the expression of Newman's hero, Charles Reding, in Loss and Gain:

Surely the idea of an Apostle, unmarried, pure, in fast and nakedness, and at length a martyr, is a higher idea than that of one of the old Israelites, sitting under his vine and fig-tree, full of temporal goods, and surrounded by sons and grandsons.

This is anathema to Kingsley. His impatience with Newman and with Malthus is to be traced to the same source, that of his own dominant virility. Thus in Yeast he confesses through his hero that, according to economic theory the Malthusian edict looked well enough — on paper. No doubt it is inexcusable to destroy the balance established by economic law (as Elizabeth had done in The Saint's Tragedy) by giving alms to a man in need.

"But—but—but," thought Lancelot, "in practice one can't help feeling a little of that un-economic feeling called pity. No doubt the fellow has committed an unpardonable sin in daring to come into the world when there was no call for him . . .

No doubt, too, the fellow might have got work if he had chosen — in Kamchatka or the Cannibal Islands; for the political economists have proved, beyond a doubt, that there is work somewhere or other for every one who chooses to work."

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 258.
2 Newman, Loss and Gain, 221.
3 Yeast, Ch.VIII, 106.
Among the greatest dilemmas which Kingsley's creed (that God worked and revealed his intentions through natural laws) was to lead him into, was this matter of political economy. Again and again he expresses the conviction that, like all other natural laws, the laws of political economy must be divine laws. Yet he is forever appalled by the apparent operation of these laws. He is obliged therefore to conclude that the political economists have not as yet discovered the true laws, and this is the position he maintains not only in *Yeast* but for the remainder of his life. Kingsley deliberately gives his readers to understand that his feelings are close to those of Lancelot when he writes:

> Give me the political economist, the sanitary reformer, the engineer; and take your saints and virgins, relics and miracles.

Yet it is the search, not the findings, of the contemporary political economist which he approves. If there results from the application of the laws a cruel oppression of the multitude, then the laws must be falsely or incompletely comprehended. Lord Minchampstead's is therefore called a "narrow theory of the universe", the inference being, at this stage, that Kingsley believes there are factors left out of account. He has not yet been introduced to the idea of association among working men, which is to form much of the economic doctrine found in *Alton Locke*. This is a step in the direction not of revising the laws of political economy

1 *Yeast*, Ch.V, 70.
by extending their scope but of consciously counteracting them. In *Yeast* Kingsley has nothing to offer but two "vague generalities". The first, which he derives directly from Carlyle, is that

"The beginning and the end of what is the matter with us in these days is — that we have forgotten God."

Forgotten God? That was at least a defect of which the blue books had taken no note. 1

This was a defect which he never ceased to find in the political economists. Years later he wrote of J.S. Mill:

> When I look at his cold, clear-cut face . . . I think there is a whole hell beneath him, of which he knows nothing, and so there may be a whole heaven above him. 2

And Tregarva, the studious gamekeeper, reflects that Harriet Martineau's books are "grand to set one a-thinking; but she don't seem to see the Lord in all things." 3

The second generality is even more vague — to: the point of being mere exasperation. As Lancelot wanders about seeing the horrors of existence among country labourers he is forced to acquiesce in Sam Weller's memorable dictum:

> "Who it is I can’t say; but all I can say is that somebody ought to be wopped for this!" 4

Kingsley's deep reluctance to do any "wopping" or to encourage physical resistance of any kind made the idea of association especially attractive to him. When this idea was joined to that of Christian brotherhood the combination was irresistible. Between the writing of *Yeast* and the writing of *Alton Locke*

---

1. *Yeast*, Ch.VIII, 98.
3. *Yeast*, Ch.IV, 59.
4. *Yeast*, Ch.VIII, 98.
he was caught up in Christian Socialism, a movement which has attracted a thorough examination in its own right. Kingsley's literary contribution to it has already been noticed.

In *Alton Locke* the assault upon Utilitarianism is continued, not as in *Yeast* in vague protest against the harsh working of political economy, but as a much more forthright rebuke of *laissez-faire* on the one hand and of Chartism on the other.

*Alton Locke* gains so much from being written in the first person that it is tempting to attribute its greater immediacy and power to this device. More likely it is the fact that Kingsley has been more drastically exposed to the horrors of London's slums than any other writer in the period. Disraeli's brief acquaintance with industrial squalor, dutifully undergone, produced at once a stronger realisation of the human situation to which his theories applied. Dickens and Mrs. Gaskell too have a real experience of their human materials. But it is Kingsley's achievement to bring a reforming ardour stronger than any of these others' into combination with an experience of his subject that was long and intimate. By circumstance as much an outsider as Disraeli, he made himself as much an insider as Dickens. The result in *Alton Locke* is a degree of passion and compassion unexampled in the social novel of the times. Not only the misery, starvation and
slavery of which he is the eloquent witness, but the (to him) misguided aspirations of the Chartists are attributable almost solely to the operation of *laissez-faire*, that "great spirit of the nineteenth century", that

system or barbaric absence of all system, which involves starvation, nakedness, prostitution, and long imprisonment in dungeons worse than the cells of the Inquisition. 1

The workmen whose tragic tale he tells have attempted other ways to ameliorate their lot before they turned Chartists. They have appealed in vain to their employers. They have sent a deputation to their member of parliament, "one that was reputed a philosopher, and a political economist," who replied in character

that it was no business of government, or any one else, to interfere . . . that those things regulated themselves by the laws of political economy, which it was madness and suicide to oppose. He may have been a wise man. I only know that he was a rich one. 2

As the fateful Tenth of April draws nearer the workers grow frantic with what has now been impressed upon them as a "horrible certainty": that

there was no remedy, no salvation for us in man, that political economists had declared such to be the law and constitution of society. 3

So the poor are driven by want and by despair to acts of violence, destruction of life and property, and to a desperate

1 *Alton Locke*, X, 77.
2 *Alton Locke*, X, 80.
3 *Alton Locke*, XX, 153.
faith in their Charter. But Kingsley, if he is fierce against the believers in laissez-faire, is stern against the believers in an extended franchise. In this matter he aligns himself exactly with Carlyle, and introduces the character of Sandy Mackaye to represent Carlyle not only in maxim, but in appearance, character and speech as well. If it is difficult to harmonise all the attitudes of Carlyle, it is still more so in the case of Kingsley whose personality seems more tranquil, reasonable and unprejudiced. The nature of Carlyle's genius is impulsive, pugnacious and prophetic, depending on insight and unashamed of inconsistency. Why should Kingsley oppose the aspirations after democracy as expressed in the Charter? He denies the efficacy or the right of workers' striking, and so it is difficult to see where he bases his fervent hopes for amelioration. His opposition to democracy is unrelenting. Part of the explanation probably lies in the fact that when he wrote Alton Locke the Charter had already miserably failed of its purpose. This failure thus became presumably one of the facts of God, to be accepted. Moreover, as a clergyman, Kingsley developed his social evangel from his religious one; let each man improve himself and all will be improved; let reform, like charity, begin at home within the individual heart. In the end none of the Victorian sages had a great deal more to suggest.

Alton Locke is represented as being written by the hero as he is dying. It is thus written "after the event" of
which it tells by a man who has grown wiser in adversity.

One by one the various systems of reform are gone through and rejected. All, it seems, look upon man and his condition as the products of

the particular outward system, social or political, in which he happens to find himself.

An abominable heresy [which] Benthamites and economists . . . have been preaching for the last twenty years. 1

Kingsley, and his enlightened hero at last, will not accept that any "outward" system can produce an abiding social reform. Alton Locke has been grievously in error when he "bowed down to the idol of political institutions, and pinned [his] hopes of salvation on 'the possession of one ten-thousandth [sic] part of a talker in the national palaver.'" 2

Sandy Mackaye, whose original is heard throughout the book in quotations like the above, scowls and growls at all the Chartists' doings, though the reader, like the hero, is in no little perplexity as to what he really believes or would suggest. He has Bentham's books crucified and hung from his ceiling, and his last message to the men he has worked for and among for "sixty years" is to tell them

that the gude God'll smite 'em down, and bring 'em to nought, and scatter 'em abroad, till they repent, an' get clean hearts and a rich speerit within them. 3

It is curious to observe that not only the public at large, but Kingsley himself regarded Yeast and Alton Locke as Radical

1 Alton Locke, X, 85.
2 Alton Locke, X, 85.
3 Alton Locke, XXXIII, 247.
in tendency. Just as to speak of prostitution was immoral, so to describe the horrors of poverty was revolutionary. To the modern reader Kingsley's efforts to explain the "madness" of the Chartist actions, his anxiety to please all parties, and his prevailing theme of Christian self-reform all appear to be prompted by a cautious, if fervently sympathetic, conservatism. Many years later, when Kingsley was resigned even to the failure of the co-operative movement and had settled into a complacent acceptance of things as they were and himself as their prophet, he was unable to add anything to the view of "outward" Benthamite systems which he had expressed in *Alton Locke*. With the passage from the novel quoted above (p. 85) may be compared this extract from a letter written at the end of 1866:

> Mr. Mill (of whom I speak with real reverence) seems to me to look on man too much as the creature of circumstances. 1

In his insistence that men hold their destinies in their own hands, and that each must begin his own reform by a change of heart, Kingsley ran against three other principles of Utilitarianism. Firstly, he held views comparable to those of the other writers looked at in this work regarding the springs of human action. Secondly, he believed that there were basic

spiritual, moral and intellectual differences so great between man and man that to rate all men as equal, whether politically or in the matter of class, was to work against the grain of reason no less than of justice. Thirdly, this belief led him along paths already entered upon by Carlyle, Disraeli and Peacock towards national and racial distinctions of which the Benthamites (rightly or wrongly) took no account. These three matters may be briefly discussed in turn.

Kingsley shared the view of the other opponents of Utilitarianism that man was a creature of impulse rather than of calculation. He goes even further than some in declaring that the true springs of human action are hidden not only from the philosopher looking on, but from the actor himself. He has in fact a theory of sub-conscious motivation. When Arstemone in Yeast accounts for her behaviour Kingsley remarks:

She was conscious ... of no other reason than that she gave; but consciousness is a dim candle — over a deep mine. 1

In Alton Locke he writes:

The unconscious logic of association is often deeper and truer than any syllogism. 2

His faith in the "truth" of impulsive action is the same as that shared by all the men already studied. It is the response of the whole man, the individual and unique personality, which for him is of supreme value. Impulse becomes for Kingsley

1 Yeast, II, 24.
2 Alton Locke, XXXVIII, 292.
not the antithesis of reason, but the highest and most "holy"
form of it. His description of true reason, as he acknowledges
in the following passage, is perfectly in line with Coleridge's
idea of it. Reason, he declares, is

Holy, one, pure, loving the beautiful (i.e., the
good), benevolent, subtle, searching all things —
spiritual; a pure influence flowing from the
glory of the Almighty; the unspotted mirror of
the power of God and His goodness, in all ages
entering into holy men, saints, heroes and poets
... It is the Divine sanction to the truth of
Coleridge's and Carlyle's and Maurice's philo-
sophy. 1

In another place he declares that when a man acts from impulse
it is because his flesh is at harmony with, and obeys, his
spirit. The contemporary "worldly-wise" philosopher despises
any attempts to crush these impulses

because they are opposed to the cold, selfish
work of the brute intellect — because they make
men self-sacrificing. 2

One such "worldly-wise" philosopher is Malthus, Kingsley goes
on, who despises and distrusts impulse because a defence of
it would become a general sanction to unchecked animal passions.
Kingsley can hardly bear to repeat such "horrid words". The
impulse to which he refers is the impulse of benevolence, the
only true spring of human action. Again and again he denies
the first tenet of the Benthamite philosophy that "self-
interest", the pursuit of personal gratification, is the
original source of all human behaviour, and must therefore

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 107-8.
2 C.K. Letters etc., I, 102-3.
determine the character of all human societies. A few characteristic outbursts against this prime article of the Utilitarian creed will suffice to show Kingsley's opinion:

self-sacrifice, the living for others, is the law of our perfect being, and ... in self-sacrifice alone can we attain to the perfect apprehension of ourselves, our own personality, our own duty, our own bliss. 1

You must leave self - forget self - you must discipline self till she lays [sic] down, and ceases clamouring for a vote in the parliament of men. 2

Talk of mankind being ruled by self-interest. Juggling fiend. It is its own bane. None are so blind to their own interest as the selfish. 3

Not self-interest, but self-sacrifice, is the only law upon which human society can be grounded with any hope of prosperity and permanence. 4

the true springs of all human action are generally those which fools will not see, which wise men will not mention. 5

Turning now to the second of the three anti-Utilitarian beliefs which sprang from Kingsley's trust in self-reform, we may notice how he draws distinctions between individual capacities. It is these deeply-felt distinctions which lie at the bottom of Kingsley's ever-present tendency to conservatism. They account for the acute sense of class which pervades his work. They provide an insuperable check to his sympathy with all democratic aspirations among the lower classes. Thus in the novels, in the periodical writing and in the letters, no matter how deeply his feelings are

2 C.K. Letters etc., I, 132. 5 Two Years Ago, Introductory chapter, 25.
engaged on behalf of the desperate and degraded lower classes, it is in the individual's capacity for self-reform, not in the class's claim for general improvement that he declares the hope of amelioration to lie. In his novels an impassioned plea for intervention lies strangely alongside a pious injunction to the working classes to remain passive. In the letters the second, conservative, element is expressed much more forcibly and impatiently. There is no doubt in the reader's mind where Kingsley's opinions will ultimately reside:

The working man who tries to get on, to desert his class and rise above it, enters into a lie, and leaves God's path for his own - with consequences. 1

So he writes in 1851. In another fifteen years, as will be seen, he is inextricably entrenched in this position. At this earlier stage he believes it necessary only to provide decent human working conditions for the lower classes: given these they will become sensible of "the dignity of work". They will "begin to see their labour as a true calling in God's church." He constantly asserts in the novels, and in his Letters to Chartists, that legislative reform is not the same thing as social reform and that men's hearts will not be changed by Act of Parliament. It is curious to observe that Kingsley's reasoning is always blind in one eye. He argues always that parliamentary representation is a different matter from personal reform: personal reform is a highly desirable and

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 247.
necessary thing: therefore parliamentary representation is undesirable, and indeed the reverse of God's will:

The devil is quite ready to help us to mend the laws and the parliament, earth and heaven, without ever starting such an impertinent and "personal" request, as that a man should mend himself. I

I do not think the cry "get on," to be anything but a devil's cry. 2

Thus, even at his most "radical" period, as he calls it, Kingsley regards as baleful the attempts to "mend the laws and the parliament" which it had been Bentham's lifework to promote.

The third outcome of Kingsley's rigid belief in essential personal differences is the strong vein of racial prejudice which runs through his work. He distinguishes nations and even sections of one nation according to the blood which they possess, and his precision in this matter is, like Disraeli's, hardly short of clinical. His characters behave and think according to the blood which they possess. The doctrine of blood and race embraces not only physical but moral characteristics. The Roman Catholic countries owe their faith not to their history but to their racial insufficiency for anything better. The doctrine, then, introduces not merely distinctions but strong notions of racial superiority and inferiority. It becomes in Kingsley one more expression of Teutonic supremacy. Characteristically there is a sexual

1 "Letters to Chartists" No.1, in C.K. Letters etc., I, 162.
2 C.K. Letters etc., I, 247.
element, if not a sexual basis, in all this. The Teutons are sexually superior. In Hypatia the rough revitalising vigour of the marauding Germans is represented as a male potency which rides down the effeminate resistance of the East. The Eastern character is spoken of as "weak", and hence it degenerates easily into the contemplative rather than the active life. In these conditions a monastic world of "abstinence" begins to flourish, producing, with an enormous decrease in the actual amount of moral evil, an equally great enervation and decrease of the population. ¹

In Hypatia, the need to generalise about the forces involved in this great conflict in Alexandria of the 5th century leads Kingsley further than usual into assertions about racial characteristics. The Jews, for example, are the bearers of the moral sense, as opposed to the intellectual fancy and religious philosophy of the Greeks. The Greek mind tends always to abstractions, symbolisms, affinities and "a brilliant cloud-world." ² The Romans are cynical, ambitious, expediently adoptive, cruel and dissolute. But the Germanic races join to a physical courage and hardihood a capacity to recognise virtue and beauty and a dim but strong apprehension of a spiritual after-life. These ideas of racial distinction colour Kingsley's thinking on most questions. The ideal marriage of the new English aristocracy with the old, which has

¹ See Hypatia, Preface, xiii.
² Hypatia, XXVII, 307-8.
already been mentioned, is bound up with a belief in the superiority of Norse blood flowing more strongly in the northern counties than in the south.

"Oh!" thought Lancelot, "for some sandy Lancashire or Lothian blood, to put new life into the old frozen South Saxon veins! Even a drop of the warm enthusiastic Celtic would be better than none." 1

The crusty old sage, Sandy Mackaye, hearing of the downfall of Louis Philippe, tempers his jubilation with the following reflections on the moral chemistry of blood:

An' yet I'm sair afraid for they puir feckless French. I ha' na faith, ye ken, in the Celtic blude, an' its spirit o' lees. The Saxon spirit o' covetise is a grewsome house-fiend, and sae's our Norse speerit o' shifts an' dodges; but the spirit o' lees is worse. 2

Once more it may be added at this point that this belief in racial distinctions, already cutting across the line of Benthamite teaching, was to grow stronger in Kingsley as the years passed.

Kingsley's attitudes with regard to some of the lesser issues involved in this study need to be noticed. Standing firm in his adherence to the Established Church he regards nonconformity with distrust. Not only is it a wilful departure from God's wishes for the nation as manifested in the evolution of a truly English, truly Protestant church, but its selfish and exclusive creed of salvation offends, ironically his democratic sense. He brings the same objection, strangely

1 Yeast, XIII, 176.
2 Alton Locke, XXXI, 232.
enough, against the High Church movement, which he stigmatises as exclusively aristocratic. He also finds the puritanical blindness to beauty and the arts in conflict not only with his personal responsiveness to them but with his social ideas of a brotherhood in beauty shared. His representations of non-conformists in the novels are perfectly in line with those of other authors of the period who shared his antipathy.

Tregarva in Yeast is philosophically disabled by his hereditary Methodism, reinforced by a conviction of being personally "saved" at a crisis in his life. It is Lancelot's task to broaden and enlighten his outlook and to relieve his native manliness of the aesthetic ineptitude which constricts it.

In terms of these characters Kingsley expresses his hopes for the dissenters generally. In Yeast the deadly intrigues and fanaticism which surround the hero in the opening chapters have already been alluded to in an earlier section of this work.

The same narrow and treacherous background of dissent all but ruins the healthy development of the heroine Grace Harvey in Two Years Ago. The non-conformist preachers who have been "creeping into widows' houses, and making long prayers" 1 at the start of the novel are later actually responsible for deaths in the village because of their terrifying sermons and blasphemous warnings during the cholera epidemic. 2 In Yeast there is clearly declared an involvement between the dissenters

1 Two Years Ago, IV, 105.
2 See Two Years Ago, Ch. XVII
and the "Mammonite" doctrine of laissez-faire. Lancelot explains the association by saying that the dissenting forms of Protestantism have interdicted to their followers all art, all excitement, all amusement—except money-making. "It is their dernier ressort, poor souls!" ¹ And in an early letter Kingsley writes:

Popery and Puritanism seem to be fighting their battle over again in England, on the foul middle ground of Mammonite infidelity. ²

Both in his life and in his writing Kingsley displayed his distaste for the impersonal and organised forms of poor relief. His private charities were so generous and impulsive as to keep him in need of money himself. As in all matters his instincts in this matter often came into conflict with his reasoning; he shares Lancelot's "uneconomic" feeling of pity, as do all his best-loved characters, like Elizabeth in The Saint's Tragedy and Tom Thurnall in Two Years Ago.

In his letters he writes more explicitly:

I have been very sad lately seeing . . . the horrid effects of that new Poor Law. You must be behind the scenes to see the truth, in places which the Malthus's and xxx's know nothing of. ³

In one significant way Kingsley differs from the others in this study; that is, in his attitude towards the past. In this matter he follows neither the Benthamites in disregarding when not despising the past, nor the Tractarians and Young Englanders in seeking to revive it. He accepts what

¹ Yeast, II, 27.
² C.K. Letters etc., I, 138.
³ C.K. Letters etc., I, 121.
has been as right and needful. Thus he will not be found lamenting the death of Charles I as a martyrdom, nor deploring 1688 as a year of inglorious compromise. The Oxford Movement has failed because it was retrogressive:

Christianity is a progressive scheme . . . in Popery and Puseyism we violate utterly the consistency of the scheme by going back . . . 1

Young England has also to learn that Christianity is a progressive scheme:

I would tell them to hail with adoration all new truth, while they cling fiercely, if need be, to all old truth—sure that Christ is the working King of the earth, and that new and old equally proceed from Him. 2

This inclusive, accepting and progressive Christianity is capable of accommodating new situations as well as accounting for old ones, and may therefore be matched exactly in this matter of the past and present with Kingsley's attitude towards the new sciences and the new facts. A perfect example of Kingsley's attitude, which is a modification of those already met with, is his treatment of the railways. These he hails always as symbols of a splendid new energy in the nation. Yet when he has himself to make a journey he confesses:

Three hours on a real coach will be a second childhood in these roaring and rattling railroad days. 3

Again, in Two Years Ago he admiringly describes all the modern developments taking place in a favourite fishing resort,

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 77.
2 C.K. Letters etc., I, 142.
including a railway, a railway station, and a new adjoining hotel

which hopes (but hopes in vain) to outrival the ancient "Angler's Rest" ... the good old inn ... \(^1\)

which he then warmly and fulsomely describes. In this earlier stage of his writing career his work is full of this new and resolute acceptance of past, present and future. Just as he refused to regard science as a menace to Christian orthodoxy, and could write:

Read geology ... and you will rise up awe-struck and cling to God! \(^2\)

so his attitude to past and future may be represented in the following characteristic passage:

My whole heart is set, not on retrogression - not on going back in the least matter to any ideal age or system, but on fairly taking the present as it is ... the new element is democracy in Church and State. Waiving the question of its evil or its good, we cannot stop it. Let us Christianize it instead. \(^3\)

Yet he may be found breaking out with such advice as this:

Look forward to the future with hope. Build castles if you will, but only bright ones and not too many - better to live in the Past. We cannot help thanking God for that! Blessed Past. \(^4\)

The latter half of Kingsley's writing life is characterised by a steady withdrawal from controversial social

\(^1\) Two Years Ago, Introductory Chapter, 23.
\(^2\) C.K. Letters etc., I, 88.
\(^3\) C.K. Letters etc., I, 141
\(^4\) C.K. Letters etc., I, 89.
issues. His basic conviction that God was actively at work in the British nation made more and more for a complacency about the condition of his country. It must be added, too, that this development was attended by a growing self-complacency. There lurks beneath, and often rears above, everything that Kingsley uttered in his later life a most forbidding self-satisfaction. His tone is never more smug than when he is protesting his sense of insufficiency. He relinquishes the role of missionary and reformer for that of oracle and pontiff. The glow of altruism and pity which suffused the earlier novels and redeemed the sermonizing of the pamphlets becomes, except in odd places like The Water Babies, replaced by a cheerful confidence in his own reputation as a man who has been listened to. He disfigures Alton Locke with a couple of later prefaces, one to the Undergraduates of Cambridge, the other to the Working Men of Great Britain. If the first is often oppressive in its apologies, its complacency and its flattery, the second is often offensive in its patronage. While the "young gentlemen" of Cambridge are told that in the last ten years "the attitude of the British upper classes has undergone a noble change", the working men are told that they have done nothing worth doing since the book appeared. Any improvement in their lot has been due either to the economic accidents of supply and demand or to the exertions made by "upright men of the very classes whom demagogues taught you to consider as your enemies." If anyone still maintains that
the upper classes are the oppressors of the lower. "I believe that he is a liar and a child of the devil." Kingsley tells the Undergraduates that "there is no aristocracy in the world, and there never has been one ... which has so honourably repented ... which has so cheerfully asked what its duty was, that it might do it." To the working men he cries:

God grant that the workmen of the South of England may bestir themselves ere it be too late, and discover that the only defence against want is self-restraint; the only defence against slavery, obedience to rule.

Kingsley has reverted in half-a-dozen years to a thorough-going Conservatism. He warns the Cambridge Undergraduates that there will be a continuous pressure from below for greater parliamentary representation. Nothing can stop it. As he confesses to Thomas Cooper:

I am merely stupidly acquiescent. More poor and ignorant voters? Very well - more bribes; more bribers ... I suppose it ought to be so. Something will come of it. I

Since nothing can stem this current of national development, the gentlemen of England must see to it that it is properly directed. At all costs the Throne and the House of Lords must be maintained. Otherwise the end will be not democratic but simply arithmocratic like the American system. This is to remain Kingsley's position to the end of his life. His efforts will be towards keeping alive the sense of responsibility

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 287.
to working men of the aristocracy, and the sense of duty and respect towards the aristocracy of the workers. Even in the two prefaces to Alton Locke while there is a predominant note of congratulation in the address to the "gentlemen" there is a sustained plea to both classes to find the best in each other and to perceive their common interests and traditional allegiances. This effort to foster anew the alliance between the upper and the lower orders is exactly the programme of Young England, and like Disraeli Kingsley is conscious of encouraging the partnership in order to oppose more effectively the power of the middle classes. The bond is to be cemented in a communion of worship in the Established Church, and in a common loyalty to the Monarch. The real battle of the time is

the Church, the gentleman, and the workman, against the shopkeepers and the Manchester School. 1

The workman of course is to understand that an "arithmetic" on the principle of one man, one vote, in an all-powerful House of Commons would simply intensify the difficulties under which he now suffers. Instead of having the support he now enjoys from belonging to a class, each man would be exposed in a universally competitive society like that of America. A true democracy

is impossible without a Church and a Queen, and, as I believe, without a gentry. 2

1 C.K. Letters etc., I, 313.
Kingsley goes on to state that unless the aristocracy, the "gentlemen of ancient family, like your humble servant", can manage to control the shape of the new democracy England will never develop "gradually and harmoniously... on her ancient foundations."

Would to heaven that wholesome feudal feeling were more common everywhere. 1

The attack he began upon laissez-faire in his earliest work is continued throughout his life. By 1863 he is asserting that the so-called "system" of the Manchester School, "which is no system at all", is an insult to all that four-fifths of England holds dear, - the monarchy, the government, the army, the navy, the landlords, the sturdy agricultural peasant... 2

Later still he writes:

I would if I could, restore the feudal system, the highest form of civilisation - in ideal, not in practice, - which Europe has seen yet. I would bind the tenant to the landlord, the landlord to the lord-lieutenant... and him and all to the Crown... In a word, I would make every man, as in the Middle Age, responsible to some superior who represented to him the Crown. 3

Reaction can go no further. If Kingsley had enjoined peaceful co-operation upon the working classes from 1848 to 1850 it was because he had faith in the power of association to help them to their deserts. But when the industrial associations failed he was left with nothing to propose to them. Having

1 C.K. Letters etc., II, 146.  
2 C.K. Letters etc., II, 149.  
3 C.K. Letters etc., II, 357.
rejected the Benthamite programme of legislative reform, and having never approved of the strike weapon he is reduced to a pathetic impotence when appealed to by the workers of Sheffield in their difficulties:

No one, I hope you will believe me, more heartily wishes that such matters . . . could be altered. But . . . I am convinced that they cannot. The thing must be left alone; and the only advice I can give is, emigrate; but never strike . . . all I can recommend is, peace . . . I see little before the English workman but to abide as he is, and endure. 

Thus in his declining years Kingsley abandons hope of success against the fierce competitive commercialism which he had struggled against so long. He succumbs to the inexorable economic law of supply and demand and in this as in almost all other matters, religious as well as scientific, his repeated advice is to accept things as they are. In theory he becomes persuaded of the virtues of a feudal system based upon hereditary obligations. He professes himself convinced that the new industrial aristocracy is sound at heart, and he would therefore admit constant recruiting of the House of Lords from this new and "real" source of leadership. But when it comes to practical advice he can only plead with aspirants of every sort to abide in the place to which God has appointed them and to turn their hands to the duty which lies nearest.

Yet this determination not to intervene either against the status quo or against the forces which were

1 C.K. Letters etc., II, 477.
successfully modifying it was not attended by any but occasional misgiving. Kingsley as a man of his age, grew more and more enthusiastic about the march of mind. He wept with admiration and reverence at the contemplation of the Great Exhibition. He believed that the ancestors of Englishmen who had prayed for a new age of heavenly glory upon earth would have found the signs and tokens of it in the new railways, factories, schools and mechanics' institutes. His character Mark Armsworth in *Two Years Ago*, constantly avers with the author who admired him so much:

> Yes, sir! We're going all right now, in the old country. Only have to steer straight, and not put on too much steam...  

This bluff satisfaction prevails in most of the later writing. Once he had abandoned his mission of stemming the tide of *laissez-faire* economics and democratic agitation at home, Kingsley found it necessary to believe in Britain's imperial destiny. Just as in the letter quoted above he could only advise the dissatisfied workmen of Sheffield to emigrate, so the people in his novels, like the members of his family, began to extend their field of action over the new world. He advises the members of the Ladies' Sanitary Association not to be taken in by the latter-day Malthusians, for four-fifths of the globe is as yet uncultivated and uninhabited. The patriotism which had always been a strong element in him

1 *Two Years Ago*, Introductory Chapter, 19.
now flares into an excited nationalism. Since, he declares,
of all races upon earth now, probably the
English race is the finest, [it becomes] a duty,
one of the noblest of duties, to help the
increase of the English race as much as possible. 1

Westward Ho! draws upon this rapidly-swelling imperial
ambition to give the age a reminder of England's earlier
greatness.

Let us . . . see in these old Elizabethan
gallants our own ancestors, showing forth with
the luxuriant wildness of youth, all the virtues
which still go to the making of a true English-
man. Let us not only see in their commercial
and military daring, in their political astute-
ness [etc., etc.] . . . that beautiful tenderness
and mercy which is now, as it was then, the twin
sister of English valour. 2

All the ideal characteristics of the hero—according-to-
Carlyle are combined in Amyas Leigh, whose virtue is native,
aive and impulsive, who is a physical giant with a child's
simplicity, who prays at his mother's knee before going out to
slice the head off a Frenchman who insults his Queen and to
wring the blood out of wily papists with his bare hands. In
the novel Kingsley reminds readers that the man of commerce
was in these grand old days of confidence and action, often
the same man as the soldier. So too in a sermon he declares

as surely as I believe that there is a God,
so surely I believe that commerce is the
ordinance of God, that the great army of
producers and distributors is God's army. 3

And he goes on to picture the English trader going forth to

1 C.K. Letters etc., II, 81-82.
2 Westward Ho! Ch.VIII, 177.
3 "Sermon on Charity" in C.K. Letters etc., II, 323.
replenish the earth and subdue it, and to ward off poverty and starvation from the teeming millions of mankind. Kingsley grows impatient with the political philosophers who predict that wars will henceforth be unthinkable. He mocks their claims to "know now how to govern the world far too well to need any divine visitations" for as these very claims are made the news arrives that "three great nations were gone forth to tear each other as of yore." 1 The shedding of foreign blood possessed a fearful fascination for Kingsley. He calls in to defend it not only his doctrine of racial differences but also his doctrine that God works through cataclysm by means of human agents in order to work His will.

There is no need to pursue Kingsley further along his road of militant Protestantism, and British commercial imperialism. The strands of his opposition to and his admiration of Utilitarianism as a practical philosophy become so intertwined as to be inextricable. Yet this is the nature, too, of the reaction to Utilitarianism generally in the latter half of the period. It may be broadly stated that Kingsley never abandoned his efforts to contain the acceptable dogmas of Utilitarianism within a flexible and progressive Christian idea. He always despised the Malthusian element in Utilitarianism. To the end he rejected the idea of equality between individuals - a rejection which involved, as has been

1 Two Years Ago, XXIII, 476.
seen, not only a refusal to encourage democratic tendencies, but an insistence on racial distinction. In 1866 he complains that J. S. Mill is too ready to

disparage, if not totally deny, the congenital differences of character in individuals, and still more in races. He has, if I mistake not, openly denounced the doctrine of difference and superiority in race . . .

Of course, if it is assumed that all men are born into the world equal . . . society . . . has no right to punish them by withholding the suffrage . . . This seems to me to be the revolutionary doctrine of 1793-1848, which convulsed Europe; and from its logic and morality there is no escape as long as humans are asserted to be congenitally equal . . . I have some right to speak on this subject, as I held that doctrine myself in past years, and was cured of it, in spite of its seeming justice and charity, by the harsh school of facts. I

The reader has difficulty in discovering evidence that this doctrine was strongly held at any time in Kingsley's career. He has no difficulty, however, in discovering the range of Kingsley's beliefs at the end: of all nations on earth the English nation was the best; of all ages in its history the present was the best; of all classes in England at present the gentry were the best, and a gentleman was slightly better than a gentlewoman; of all gentlemen in England a Church of England gentleman was best; and of all Church of England gentlemen a Church of England parson was best. To complete his paragon, Kingsley would have the Church of England parson married, a smoker, a moderate drinker, a sportsman, a Cambridge

graduate, a countryman and a scientist, with a son building railways in far-off countries. All these beliefs have been expressed separately in his writings. They add up to a portrait of an ideal mid-Victorian. And of course they add up exactly to himself.
Conclusion

The year of Bentham's death brought a signal victory for the cause he had long been promoting; for the Reform Bill was a first step towards general political enfranchisement. The Utilitarians had made headway because their prescriptions were welcomed by both the middle and lower classes whose numbers, whose powers and whose function in the realm had been vastly expanded and altered as the industrial revolution proceeded. Both classes were in common pursuit of parliamentary representation. It had yet to become apparent that political and commercial equality are quite different matters from social and economic equality. It was precisely in the years following the political reform that the worst economic effects began to be felt. Economic individualism, (the idea that each man promoted the general welfare who strove for his own), began now to be seen as the source of all the misery and degradation of the lower classes as well as of the threatened disintegration of the national fabric. It was inevitable that the employing middle classes who had formerly seemed allies of the dispossessed masses now came to be regarded as their enemies. At the same time a somewhat too simple
interpretation was made of the connexion between recent political enfranchisement and present economic distress. From these two reactions there came about, first a rapprochement between the lower classes and the aristocracy, and second a grave distrust of the democratic principle itself. It is these two feelings which chiefly find expression in the literature we have been discussing.

After 1832 the door was opened more widely than ever to individualism in commercial enterprise. At the same time, seeking to facilitate the operation of supply and demand in the labour market, the industrialists were eager to loosen the ties which had formerly bound men to their masters, to mock and destroy any survival of the patriarchal principle, and to substitute central for local administration whether of justice or of charity. The reaction, as it appears in literature, takes the form of reaffirming not only the value of the ancient structure but also the comeliness of it. There is thus revealed what Cazamian has called the "hidden cleavage between Utilitarian England and sentimental England." ¹

It must be remembered that not only Christian Socialism as envisaged by Kingsley but also the feudal order as extolled by Disraeli implied a social reform. Thus there are two types of reforming philosophy developing side by side in the period, both of them informed by a sincere desire to better the human lot. Even the earlier generation of Utilitarians, men like

Bentham, James Mill and Francis Place, had as Mill himself put it, "a passion for the improvement of the condition of mankind."¹ Their works and their lives were austerely dedicated to the reshaping or the destruction of human institutions which they believed were blocking the road to universal happiness. These men were dry, abstract and dogmatic, but they were of most generous intention. In the end one finds that it is the force of their humane sentiments, persisting into the second generation, which slowly recommends their logic to the nation and involves men like Peacock and Kingsley in their ideas.

On the other hand it cannot be doubted that the "reforming" spirit of men like Carlyle, Newman, Disraeli and Kingsley made a distracted populace aware of its past nationhood and kept alive the older notions of loyalty and duty. Thus they reminded the Utilitarians in their turn of English actualities and so obliged them to modify their own theories. Above all, these men brought a totally different concept of individuality before their readers. The economic "individual" of Adam Smith and Ricardo was an economic unit merely, one which required only a void in which to spin about upon its own egotistic and acquisitive impulse. The jostling and collision of these units added up to a national energy. Let each seek his own ends and all would be contented. But the "individual" of the reactionary writers was a human being who, even if the greatest number did find their

¹ James Mill in letter to Place. Graham Wallas, Life of Francis Place, 72.
greatest happiness, would still be capable of feeling individual pain. It was the nature of Utilitarianism generally (as it was the nature of James Mill) to be so preoccupied with the well-being of man as to neglect the nature of men. "He [James Mill] could help the mass," wrote Place, "but he could not help the individual, not even himself, or his own." ¹ The writers whose works have been discussed in these pages looked into the lives of individuals who were perplexed and starved by the operation of Utilitarianism. They revealed men and women whose happiness lay not alone in the prospect of material gain but in the possibility of self-development.

Furthermore the "self" which the reactionary writers were intent on revealing was a much more complex phenomenon than any description given of it by the Utilitarians. Its needs had slowly found expression in the past and so there existed in the present the institutions which had answered those needs: the Church, the Law, the Government, the Constitution, the traditions of literature, art and architecture. All of these institutions the Utilitarians were willing to destroy or neglect. For the Church "represented to the Utilitarian precisely the very worst specimen of the corruptions of the time." ² Government, the legal system and the Constitution were all regarded as antiquated and corrupt, the products of sinister design. The writers who have been studied here all undertook to defend what they regarded

¹ Graham Wallas, Life of Francis Place, 79.  
² Leslie Stephen, The English Utilitarians, II, 60.
as a priceless and irreplaceable inheritance. But whereas the
Philosophic Radicals pressed for measures about whose virtues
they were single-minded, the reactionary writers often failed
to recognise that there were funds of conviction which they
all shared.

Newman was able to give direction to some of the forces
of reaction, but his was hardly a political mind and he had
almost no social philosophy at all. Carlyle however exerted
a wider and more potent influence over the minds of men about
him, filling them if not with any clear social prescription
at least with a fierce indignation against the presumption of
more pragmatical social physicians. He also aroused in his
readers a religious protestation and ideals (however vague) of
social harmony, national distinction, brotherhood in toil and
glad acknowledgement of the disparate native endowment of
individuals. Almost every writer in the period has passed
within the field of Carlyle's personal magnetism. A third
rallying force was the purely impulsive and apparently
independent distaste for Nonconformity, in their recoil from
which many writers found themselves thrown together. Yet in
spite of such unifying principles reaction continued to be
unorganised.

The three men chosen for study here represented
three of the more easily discernible forms of reaction.
What Disraeli, Peacock and Kingsley had in common has been
exhibited. But their differences may justly be taken to
stand for three types of reaction.

Disraeli spoke for the conscious, active and passionate espousal of party. He necessarily shifted his posture so as to keep his opponent always in full face; and at the same time he was aware of and sought to enlist the powers that were gathering elsewhere. He recognised his natural allies. He may be regarded as the public, political reactionary.

Peacock represented the impatient rejection of ideas and practices which offended his sense of what was seemly, natural and proven. Life in England seemed to him to have settled slowly into reasonable contours and he was conscious not only of the pretension but also of the laughable indignity of attempts to reshape them. He stands for men of good sense, men hard to convince. He may be regarded as the private, temperamental reactionary.

Kingsley's was the voice of enlightened men of good will who were ready enough to see wrongs put right, eager to advance with the times and yet immovable in their beliefs about God and the Established Church of England. Kingsley was the product of the opposing forces we have been studying. He had listened to both sides of the story. His best work attempted a resolution of the conflict and his reaction was not direct but oblique. Until he relinquished this effort at compromise and sank into conservative apathy he represented
the orthodox but complaisant reactionary.

Both the radical and the conservative philosophies produced their appropriate literature. It might well have come about that the philanthropic tendencies of Utilitarianism produced novels worthy of the great cause to which its disciples were devoted. But the reforming passion in most of these writers had been conducted off into the pure cold light of conviction, of confidence in their programme so complete that they were hardly able to notice the plight of people, so intent were they on the plans to relieve it. Thus in reading the Utilitarian writings it is not a protesting sympathy for human suffering that we feel, not an obstinate plea for justice and charity, but an obstinate insistence upon prescriptions whose efficacy is in no doubt. On the other hand the reactionary philosophy produced a true literature precisely because it was uncertain, baffled and contradictory; because it was held by men of impulsive imagination and instinctive personal sympathy; and because also in looking to the past it had the literary values of the past around which to shape itself. Indeed it is through these works that the main current of English literature now runs and in them that the Romantic account of life is continued.

These novels, prose works and poetry in which the reforming passion is conducted off into a warmth of protest
may not in some cases have been so eagerly accepted by contemporary middle class and lower class readers as were the works of the Utilitarian writers. But these works of protest had in them the power of literary survival, and so they continued to work upon the national conscience, to nourish sentiment and to claim a place for religion, art and poetry in the developing idea of England.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dates in brackets give year of first publication. Publisher is given only when the work is referred to by page number in the thesis. Date following publisher shows edition used. Place of publication is London unless stated otherwise.

ADAMS Henry
The Education of Henry Adams (1907)

ALDINGTON Richard
"The Lustrous World of Young Disraeli" in Four English Portraits 1801-1851 (1948)

ALLEN J.W.

ARNOLD Matthew
Culture and Anarchy (1869), Discourses in America (1885). Macmillan 1896
Essays in Criticism (1865 & 1888). Macmillan 1915
Friendship's Garland (1871). John Murray 1903
Poetical Works, ed. Tinker and Lowry. O.U.P. 1950

AYDELOTTE W.O.
"The England of Marx and Mill as Reflected in Fiction" in Journal of Economic History, 8, Supplement 1948

BAKER J.E.
The Novel and the Oxford Movement (1932)

BARRY William
Newman. Hodder and Stoughton 1904

BARZUN Jacques
Darwin, Marx, Wagner; Critique of a Heritage. (Boston 1941)

BATHO and DOBREE
The Victorians and After. Cresset Press 1950

BEAUCHAMP Philip [see BENTHAM J.]
BENTHAM Jeremy
pseud. Philip Beauchamp: Church of Englandism and its Catechism Examined (1818)
Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion on the Temporal Happiness of Mankind (1822). Truelove 1875

Works, ed. Sir John Bowring. William Tait, Edinburgh 1843
Vol I Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation
A Table of the Springs of Action
A Fragment on Government
Principles of the Civil Code
II Leading Principles of a Constitutional Code, for Any State
The Book of Fallacies
Anarchical Fallacies
III Defence of Usury
A Manual of Political Economy
Radicalism not Dangerous
IV Panopticon: or, The Inspection-House
Panopticon versus New South Wales
Jeremy Bentham to his Fellow-Citizens of France, on Houses of Peers and Senates
V The Elements of the Art of Packing
VI The Rationale of Evidence
VII The Rationale of Evidence
VIII Chrestomathia
Essay on Language
Tracts on Poor Laws and Pauper Management
Securities against Misrule
IX The Constitutional Code
X Memoirs of Bentham
XI Memoirs of Bentham
Index

Deontology, ed. J Bowring (1834)

BORROW George
The Bible in Spain (1843)
BOUYER Louis
Newman, His Life and Spirituality (1958)

BOWDEN J.W.
St. Bartholomew's Eve (1821) [With J.H. Newman]

BRIGHTON Crane
The Political Ideas of the English Romanticists (1926)

BRONTE Charlotte
Shirley (1849)

BRONTE Emily
Wuthering Heights (1847)

BROWNING E.B.
The Cry of the Children (1843)

BROWNING Robert
Christmas Eve and Easter Day (1850)
"Cavalier Tunes" in Dramatic Lyrics (1842)
ed. Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley (1852) [spurious]

BURY J.B.
The Idea of Progress. Macmillan 1920

BUTLER Joseph
Fifteen Sermons (1726). G. Bell and Sons 1949

BYRON George Gordon
Poems

CARLYLE Thomas
Sartor Resartus (1834)
The French Revolution (1837)
On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History (1841)
Critical and Miscellaneous Essays (1838)
Vol I Signs of the Times (1829)
On History (1830)
II Characteristics (1831)
Corn Law Rhymes (1832)
On History Again (1833)
III Chartism (1840)
The Nigger Question (1849)
Shooting Niagara: and After? (1867)
Past and Present (1843)
Latter Day Pamphlets (1850)
Life of John Sterling (1851)
Correspondence with R.W. Emerson [see EMERSON R.W.]
CASTLE W.R.

CAZAMIAN Louis
Le Roman Social en Angleterre. H. Didier, Paris 1934

CHAPMAN Guy
"The Economic Background" in The Victorians and After,
Batho and Dobree. Cresset Press 1950

CHURCH R.W.
The Oxford Movement (1891)

CLOUGH A.H.
Poems

COLE RIDGE S.T.
The Constitution of the Church and State (1830)

CRUSE Amy
The Englishman and his Books in the Early Nineteenth Century (1930)
The Victorians and their Books (1936)

DALZIEL Margaret
Popular Fiction 100 Years Ago (1957)

DICKENS Charles
Pickwick Papers (1837)
Oliver Twist (1838)
The Old Curiosity Shop (1841)
Martin Chuzzlewit (1844)
The Chimes (1845)
Dombey and Son (1848)
David Copperfield (1850)
Bleak House (1853)
Hard Times (1854)
Little Dorrit (1857)
Great Expectations (1861)
Edwin Drood (1870)

Sunday Under Three Heads (1836)
The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices [with Wilkie Collins] (1857)
The Uncommercial Traveller (1861)
Poems and Verses, ed. P.G. Kitton (1903)
Letters. Chapman and Hall, 3 vols 1880-1882
Letters to Angela Burdett-Coutts, ed. E. Johnson. Jonathan Cape 1953
DIGBY Kenelm

The Broadstone of Honour (or Rules for the Gentlemen of England) (1822)

DISRAELI Benjamin

"Bradenham Edition": The Novels and Tales of Benjamin Disraeli, 12 vols. Peter Davies 1927

Papenilla

A True Story
Ixion in Heaven
The Infernal Marriage
The Rise of Iskander
The Carrier Pigeon
The Consul's Daughter
Walstein
Vivian Grey (1826 and 1827)
The Young Duke (1831)
Contarini Fleming (1832)
The Wondrous Tale of Alroy (1833)
Henrietta Temple (1837)
Venetia (1837)
Coningsby: Or the New Generation (1844)
Sybil: Or, The Two Nations (1845)
Tancred: Or The New Crusade (1847)
Lothair (1870)
Endymion (1880)

The Revolutionary Epick (1834)
The Tragedy of Count Alarco (1839)

Whigs and Whiggism, ed. W. Hutcheon. John Murray 1913

What is He? (1833)
The Crisis Examined (1834)
Articles in "Times" (1837-41)
Articles in "Morning Post" (1835)
Articles in "The Press" (1853)
Articles in "Fraser's Magazine" (1835-6)
Letters of Runnymede (1836)
The Spirit of Whiggism (1836)
Vindication of the English Constitution (1835)

Lord George Bentinck: A Political Biography.
Colburn 1852

Letters 1830-1852, ed. Ralph Disraeli. Murray 1887
D'ISRAELI Isaac
Life and Reign of Charles I, ed. Benjamin Disraeli (1851)

DOREN Carl van
The Life of Thomas Love Peacock. Dent 1911

ELIOT George
"Library Edition" Blackwood 1901
Adam Bede (1859)
The Mill on the Floss (1860)
Scenes of Clerical Life, "Janet's Repentance" (1859)
Silas Marner (1861)
Felix Holt the Radical (1866)
Middlemarch (1871)

ELTON Oliver
Survey of English Literature, 1830-1880 (1920)

ELWIN Malcolm
Savage Landor. Macmillan 1941

EMERSON R.W.
Essays (1841-1870)
Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and R.W. Emerson, 1834-72. Chatto and Windus 1883

FABER Geoffrey
Oxford Apostles (1933)

FLETCHER J.B.

FORSTER E.M.
Howards End (1910)

FOSTER Thomas
Locke. Macmillan 1880

FREEMAN A.M.
Thomas Love Peacock, a Critical Study (1911)

FROUDE J.A.
Lord Beaconsfield (1890)

GASKELL Mrs. E.
Mary Barton (1848)
North and South (1855)

GATES L.E.
Three Studies in Literature (1899)
HALEVY Elie

England in 1815. Benn 1949
The Triumph of Reform. Benn 1949
The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism. Faber 1934

HAMMOND J.L. and B.
The Age of the Chartists. Longmans 1930
The Bleak Age. Penguin 1947

HARRISON Wilfrid E.
Blackwell 1948

HAZLITT William
The Spirit of the Age: or Contemporary Portraits (1825)

HILL R.L.
Toryism and the People, 1832-1846. Constable 1929

HOBSES John Oliver [Pearl Craigie]
The School for Saints (1897)
Robert Orange (1900)

HOLLOWAY John
The Victorian Sage. Macmillan 1953

HONE William
The Political Litany. Richard Carlile 1817
The Sinecurist's Creed. Richard Carlile 1817

HOOD Thomas
The Song of the Shirt (1843)

HORNE R.H.
A New Spirit of the Age (1907)

HOUGHTON Walter E.
The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870 (Yale and Oxford 1957)

HOUSE Humphry
The Dickens World. Oxford Univ. Press 1941

HUGHES Thomas
Tom Brown's Schooldays (1857)
Tom Brown at Oxford (1861)

HUME David
A Treatise of Human Nature (1739-40)
JACKSON T. A.
Charles Dickens: The Progress of a Radical.
Lawrence and Wishart 1937

JAMES D. G.
The Romantic Comedy. Oxford Univ. Press 1948

JOHNSON Edgar
Dickens: his Tragedy and Triumph. Gollancz 1953

JUMP J. D.
Matthew Arnold. Longmans 1955

KEATS John
Poems

KEBLE John
The Christian Year (1827)
[see LYRA APOSTOLICA]

KENDALL Guy
Charles Kingsley and His Ideas (1947)

KENNY Terence
The Political Thought of J. H. Newman. Longmans 1957

KINGSLEY Charles
Everyman 1927

Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet (1850). Macmillan 1889
Yeast, a Problem (1851). Macmillan 1888
Hypatia, or New Foes with an Old Face (1853).
Macmillan 1889
Westward Ho! (1855). Everyman 1906
The Heroes (1856)
Two Years Ago (1857). Macmillan 1889
The Water-Babies (1863)
Hereward the Wake (1866)

[contributor to] Politics for the People. John W. Parker 1848
The Christian Socialist. John Tupling 1851
The Journal of Association. J. J. Bezer 1852

Sermons on National Subjects. John J. Griffin 1852-1854
Sermons for the Times. John W. Parker 1855
KINGSLEY Charles [contd.]
Cheap Clothes are Nasty (1850)
Who are the Friends of Order? (1852)
Phaeton; or, Loose Thoughts for Loose Thinkers (1852)
Mr. Kingsley and Dr. Newman (1864)
What, then, does Dr. Newman mean? (1864)


KIRK Russell A.
The Conservative Mind from Burke to Santayana. H. Regnery, Chicago 1953

LAWRENCE George A.
Guy Livingstone (1857)

LEAVIS F.R.
Mill on Bentham and Coleridge. Chatto and Windus 1950

LINDSAY Jack
Charles Dickens. Andrew Dakers 1950

LIPPMINCOTT B.E.
Victorian Critics of Democracy (1938)

LISTER T.H.
Granby (1826)

LOCKE John
Essay concerning Human Understanding (1690)

LYTTON Bulwer
Pelham (1828)
Paul Clifford (1830)
Eugene Aram (1832)
Godolphin (1833)

LYRA APOSTOLICA (1836)

MacCUHN J.
Six Radical Thinkers (1907)

MALTHUS Thomas R.
First Essay on Population (1798)

MANNERS Lord John
England's Trust and Other Poems (1841)
MARE W. and PERCIVAL A.C.
  Victorian Best-Seller: the World of Charlotte Yonge (1948)

MARTINEAU Harriet
  Illustrations of Political Economy (1832-34)

MASEFIELD Muriel A.
  Peacocks and Primroses: a Survey of Disraeli's Novels (1953)

MAURICE F.D.
  Eustace Conway; or Brother and Sister (1834)

MAUROIS Andre
  Disraeli (1927)

MILL James
  Essays on Government, Education [etc]. Privately printed 1825

MILL John Stuart
  Dissertations and Discussions (1859-1867-1875)
  Utilitarianism (1863). Everyman 1910
  Three Essays on Religion (1874)

MILLER Betty
  Robert Browning, a Portrait. Murray 1952

MODDER E.H.
  "The Alien Patriot in Disraeli's Novels" in London Quarterly Review, Vol CLIX 1934

MOPYPENNY W.P. and BUCKLE G.E.
  The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield. Murray 1910-1920

MONTAGUE F.C.

MORE Paul Elmer
  The Drift of Romanticism (Boston 1913)

MORLEY John
  Studies in Literature. Macmillan 1891
MURRAY R.H.
Studies in the English Social and Political Thinkers of the Nineteenth Century. Heffer 1929

NEFF Emery
Carlyle and Mill (N.Y. 1926)

NEWMAN J.H.
Essays and Sketches
Vol I The Rationalistic and the Catholic Tempers Contrasted (1835)
Prospects of the Anglican Church (1839)
II The Tamworth Reading Room (1841)
Rise and Progress of Universities (1856)

Sermons and Discourses
Vol I (1825-39)
II (1839-57)

Apologia pro Vita Sua (1864)
An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent (1870)
The Idea of a University (1873)
Loss and Gain (1848) in Prose and Poetry of [J.H.N.], ed. G. Tillotson. Reynard Library, Hart-Davis 1957
Callista (1856). P.J. Kennedy, N.Y. [N.D.]
Tract No. 90 (1841), ed. A.W. Evans (1933)
Verses on Various Occasions. Longmans 1903
Letters and Correspondence of [J.H.N.] during his Life in the English Church, ed. Anne Mozley. Longmans 1891
St. Bartholomew's Eve (1821) [with J.W. Bowden]

OLIPHANT Mrs. M.O.W.
Salem Chapel. Everyman 1907

PACKE M.St.J.
Life of John Stuart Mill. Secker and Warburg 1954

PATTISON Mark
Memoirs (1883)

PAYNE E.A.
The Free Church Tradition in the Life of England. S.C.M. Press 1944
PEACOCK T.L.

The Monks of St. Mark (1804)
Palmyra and Other Poems (1806)
The Genius of the Thames (1810)
The Philosophy of Melancholy (1812)
Sir Hornbook: a Grammatico-Allegorical Ballad (1814)
Sir Proteus: a Satirical Ballad (1814)
The Round Table (1817)
Rhododaphne; or, The Thessalian Spell (1818)
Paper Money Lyrics (1837)
A Bill for the Better Promotion of Oppression on the Sabbath Day (privately printed) [N.D.]

Headlong Hall (1816)
Melincourt (1817)
Nightmare Abbey (1818)
Maid Marian (1822)
The Misfortunes of Elphin (1829)
Crotchet Castle (1831)
Gryll Grange (1860)
The Four Ages of Poetry (1820)
Essay on Fashionable Literature (c. 1820)
Memoranda on India, Steam Navigation etc. (1834)
Reviews of Moore, Jefferson etc. (1827-1858)
Gastronomy and Civilisation (1851)
Horae Dramaticae (1852-1857)
Chappelle and Bachaumont (1858)
Memoirs of P.B. Shelley (1858-60-62)
ed. Unpublished Letters of P.B. Shelley (1860)
The Last Day of Windsor Forest (publ. 1887)
Calidore and Miscellanea (publ. 1891)
Ahrimanes (publ. 1909)
Letters to Edward Hookham and Percy Bysshe Shelley;
Boosabowt Abbey, Julia Procula, The Lord of the Hills, Cotswold Chace (publ. 1910)

PEARSON Hesketh
Dizzy (1951)

PHILLIPSON Coleman
Three Criminal Law Reformers (1923)

PLAMENATZ John
The English Utilitarians. Blackwell 1949

POPE-HENNESSY James
Monckton Milnes (1949)
POPE-HENNESSY Una
Charles Dickens. Chatto and Windus 1945
Canon Charles Kingsley. Chatto and Windus 1948

POWELL Anthony
Novels of High Society from the Victorian Age.
Pilot Press 1947

PRIESTLEY J.B.
Thomas Love Peacock (1927)

PRITCHETT V. S.
"Our Only Political Novelist" in New Statesman
and Nation, Aug 18 1945
The Living Novel (1945)

QUEENELL Peter
Byron in Italy. St. James's Library, Collins 1951

RAY Gordon N.
Press 1955

RUSKIN John
Unto this Last (1862)
The Crown of Wild Olives (1866)

RUTHERFORD Mark [William Hale White]
Autobiography (1881)
The Revolution in Tanner's Lane (1887)

SADLEIR M.
Bulwer: a Panorama; Edward and Rosina, 1803–1836
(1931)
Blessington-d'Orsay, a Masquerade (1933)

SHELLEY, P.B.
Poems

SMITH Adam
The Wealth of Nations (1776). Bell 1921

SMITH Gamaliel [see BENTHAM J.]

SMILES Samuel
Self-Help (1859)

STEPHEN Leslie
Hours in a Library (1874–79)
The English Utilitarians. Duckworth 1900
SORLEY W.R.
Chapter III in Cambridge History of English Literature Vol XI (1907-16)

SPEARE M.E.
The Political Novel (1924)

STERLING John
Arthur Coningsby (1833)

STUBBS J.H.
The Darkling Plain (1950)

TAYLOR E.R.
Methodism and Politics 1791-1851. Cambridge Univ. Press 1935

TENNYSON Alfred
Poetical Works

THACKERAY W.M.
Codlingsby (Punch) (1845)
On Clerical Snobs (Punch) (1847)
Vanity Fair (1848)
The Newcomes (1855)

THIRLWALL J.C.
"Cardinal Newman's Literary Preferences" in Modern Language Notes Vol 48 1933

THORP M.F.
Charles Kingsley 1819-1875. Princeton Univ. Press 1957

TILEY A. Wyatt
Lord John Russell. Cassell 1930

TILLOTSON Kathleen
Novels of the 1840's. Oxford Univ. Press 1954

TRAILL H.D.
"The Political Novel" in The New Fiction (1897)

TREVELYAN G.M.
British History in the Nineteenth Century. Longmans 1922

TRILLING Lionel
Matthew Arnold. Columbia Univ. Press, N.Y. 1949
The Liberal Imagination (1950)
WALLAS Graham
   The Life of Francis Place. Longmans 1898

WARD Plumer
   Tremaine, or the Man of Refinement (1825)

WESLEY John
   Works. Wesleyan Conference Office 1872

WEST Julius
   A History of the Chartist Movement. Constable 1920

WHEATLEY Vera
   The Life and Works of Harriet Martineau (1957)

WILLEY Basil
   Nineteenth Century Studies. Chatto and Windus 1949

WILLIAMS S.T.
   "Newman's Literary Preferences" in Sewanee Review
   Vol XXVIII 1920

YOUNG G.M.
   Daylight and Champaign. Cape 1937
   Portrait of an Age. Oxford Univ. Press 1949