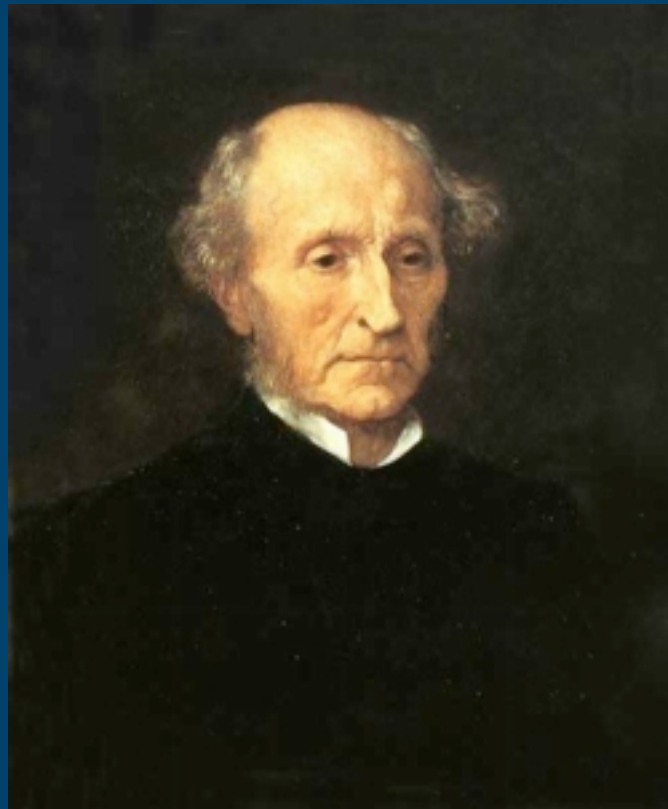


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THE INTRODUCTIONS TO THE ROBSON  
EDITION OF THE COLLECTED WORKS OF  
J.S. MILL (1963-1991)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Introductions to the Robson Edition of the Collected Works of J.S. Mill (1963-1991) .....	4
Volume I - Autobiography and Literary Essays: Introduction by Lord Robbins ..	7
Volume II - The Principles of Political Economy. Introduction by V.W. Bladen.	48
Volume IV - Essays on Economics and Society Part I. Introduction by Lord Robbins.....	84
Volume VI - Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire. Introduction by Joseph Hamburger .....	115
Volume VII - A System of Logic Ratiocinative and Inductive. Introduction by R.F. McRae .....	163
Volume IX - An Examination of William Hamilton's Philosophy. Introduction by Alan Ryan .....	189
Volume X (1) - Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society. Introduction by F.E.L. Priestley.....	242
Volume X (2) - Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society. "Essay on Mill's Utilitarianism" by D.P. Dryer .....	289
Volume XI - Essays on Philosophy and the Classics. Introduction by F.E. Sparshott	333
Volume XII - The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill 1812-1848 Part I. Introduction by F.A. Hayek.....	399
Volume XIV - The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill 1849-1873 Part I. Introduction by Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley .....	408
Volume XVIII - Essays on Politics and Society Part I. Introduction by Alexander Brady.....	435
Volume XX - Essays on French History and Historians. Introduction by John C. Cairns .....	489

Volume XXI - Essays on Equality, Law, and Education. Introduction by Stefan Collini .....	575
Volume XXII - Newspaper Writings December 1822 - July 1831 Part I. Introduction by Ann P. Robson and John M. Robson.....	623
Volume XXVI - Journals and Debating Speeches Part I. Introduction by John M. Robson .....	705
Volume XXVIII - Public and Parliamentary Speeches Part I November 1850 - November 1868. Introduction by Bruce L. Kinzer .....	753
Volume XXX - Writings on India. Introduction by Martin Moir.....	804
Volume XXXI - Miscellaneous Writings. Introduction by John M. Robson ....	851
Volume XXXII - Additional Letters of John Stuart Mill. Introduction by Marion Filipiuk .....	894

**THE INTRODUCTIONS TO THE ROBSON EDITION OF *THE COLLECTED WORKS*  
OF J.S. MILL (1963-1991)**

ABOUT THIS TITLE

The *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* consists of 33 volumes which contain the writings of one of the leading classical liberals of the 19th century. Mill wrote works of political economy, philosophy, history, political theory, and corresponded with many of the leading figures of his day. The collection also includes the speeches he gave as a member of parliament and many volumes of his newspaper articles and letters.

The *Collected Works* was produced by an editorial committee appointed from the Faculty of Arts and Science of the University of Toronto, and from the University of Toronto Press. The primary aim of the edition is to present fully collated texts of those works which exist in a number of versions, both printed and manuscript, and to provide accurate texts of works previously unpublished or which have become relatively inaccessible. An Editorial Committee under the direction of John M. Robson (1927-1995) oversaw the project over a period stretching from 1963 to 1991.

Each volume (or the volume which began a series of related volumes) was preceded by a lengthy introduction written by a leading scholar in the field of Mill studies. We have gathered all 19 of these introductions into one book in order to make this extraordinary scholarly work more easily accessible to the reader. Each introduction reproduced below also contains a link back to the Online Library of Liberty website if the reader wishes to consult the original source as well as the works listed in that volume.

SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. J.M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963-1991), 33 vols. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/165>>.

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## THE INTRODUCTIONS

Nineteen of the 33 volumes in the *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* have extensive Introductions either written by one of the editors or by experts who commissioned to write them, such as F.A. Hayek or Lord Robbins. They can be found online individually as part of each volume. However, we thought there was some use in having them collected in one file so that the reader could explore Mill's thinking in greater depth and convenience. The collection contains the following titles. Those containing Introductions are in bold. When the author of the Introduction is not mentioned specifically by name it is assumed that the editors of the volume wrote the Introduction:

- **Volume I - Autobiography and Literary Essays. Introduction by Lord Robbins**
- **Volume II - The Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy (Books I-II). Introduction by V.W. Bladen**
- Volume III - Principles of Political Economy Part II
- **Volume IV - Essays of Economics and Society Part I. Introduction by Lord Robbins**
- Volume V - Essays on Economics and Society Part II
- **Volume VI - Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire. Introduction by Joseph Hamburger**
- **Volume VII - A System of Logic Ratiocinative and Inductive Part I. Introduction by R.F. McRae**
- Volume VIII - A System of Logic Ratiocinative and Inductive Part II
- **Volume IX - An Examination of William Hamilton's Philosophy. Introduction by Alan Ryan**
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- **Volume XIV - The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill 1849-1873 Part I. Introduction by Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley**
- Volume XV - The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill 1849-1873 Part II
- Volume XVI - The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill 1849-1873 Part III
- Volume XVII - The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill 1849-1873 Part IV
- **Volume XVIII - Essays on Politics and Society Part I. Introduction by Alexander Brady**
- Volume XIX - Essays on Politics and Society Part 2
- **Volume XX - Essays on French History and Historians. Introduction by John C. Cairns**
- **Volume XXI - Essays on Equality, Law, and Education. Introduction by Stefan Collini**
- **Volume XXII - Newspaper Writings December 1822 - July 1831 Part I. Introduction by Ann P. Robson and John M. Robson**
- Volume XXIII - Newspaper Writings August 1831 - October 1834 Part II
- Volume XXIV - Newspaper Writings January 1835 - June 1847 Part III
- Volume XXV - Newspaper Writings December 1847 - July 1873 Part IV
- **Volume XXVI - Journals and Debating Speeches Part I. Introduction by John M. Robson**
- Volume XXVII - Journals and Debating Speeches Part II
- **Volume XXVIII - Public and Parliamentary Speeches Part I November 1850 - November 1868. Introduction by Bruce L. Kinzer**
- Volume XXIX - Public and Parliamentary Speeches Part II July 1869 - March 1873
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- **Volume XXXII - Additional Letters of John Stuart Mill. Introduction by Marion Filipiuk**

# VOLUME I - AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LITERARY ESSAYS: INTRODUCTION BY LORD ROBBINS

## SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume I - Autobiography and Literary Essays*, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger, introduction by Lord Robbins (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/242/7709>>.

## INTRODUCTION

John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography* offers details of his life, a subjective judgment as to its significance, and lengthy expositions of his leading ideas. It is therefore fitting that it should occupy the first place in an edition of his collected works. Indeed Mill himself, thinking of a smaller collection of essays, suggested to his wife that "the Life" should appear "at their head."<sup>1</sup> The *Autobiography*'s comprehensiveness makes the choice of other materials to accompany it less obvious. Those gathered under the rubric of literary essays were decided upon because autobiography is a literary genre, because these essays cast light on some of the personal relations outlined in the memoir, and because they derive from and help us understand a period Mill saw as crucial to his development. Indeed they allow us, as does the *Autobiography*, to see aspects of his character that are obscured in the more magisterial works. In particular, one finds specific evidence of aesthetic enthusiasm and taste, and of friendships and allegiances, that proves him not to have been the chill pedant of caricature.

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Autobiographies are seldom explicit about their purposes, which can be widely diverse. Yet to ignore the author's intentions is to run the risk of confusing, for example, confession with self-celebration, or diary with social anatomy. Mill helps us avoid this danger by presenting, in the first paragraph of his *Autobiography*, a warning that serves as an enticing framework for his overt statement of purpose. He cannot imagine that anything in a life "so uneventful" could be "interesting to the public as a narrative, or as being connected" with himself. But there are, he says, other reasons that justify the publication of the record: first, a description of his "unusual and remarkable" education should be useful in showing how much can effectively be taught to children; second, an account of the successive phases of a mind always eager and open will be "both of interest and of benefit" in "an age of transition in opinions"; and, finally, and to the author most significantly (though, as he does not point out, without direct public utility), an acknowl-

edgment of his intellectual and moral debts is necessary to satisfy his sense of duty. Having thus established the terms of a contract with his potential audience. Mill closes the paragraph with an admonition that probably no one has ever heeded: “The reader whom these things do not interest, has only himself to blame if he reads farther, and I do not desire any other indulgence from him than that of bearing in mind, that for him these pages were not written” (p. 5).<sup>2</sup>

Anyone reading this introduction (and we beg the same indulgence) presumably believes, *malgré* Mill, that his “uneventful” life is interesting, or accepts, with him, the validity of his stated goals. One can proceed, then, to use the opening paragraph as an avenue into comment on the *Autobiography*, confident that one is on the author’s chosen route. To do so is doubly important, for some critics have chosen to treat his evident omissions and underplaying of events and people as evidence of suppressed psychological states or distorting attitudes. And such inferences may be correct: but at least one should give Mill credit, with his quirks and biases, for knowing what he was trying to do.

It is apparent, to begin with, that the narrative balance is affected by his notion of what his readers should properly take an interest in. As so often occurs in personal memoirs, there is a chronological imbalance: the first six chapters (about 70 per cent of the text) cover the period to 1840, when Mill was thirty-six years old, while the seventh and last chapter deals with the next thirty years. The title of that last chapter—“General View of the Remainder of My Life”—suggests summary and diminuendo, whereas the titles of the earlier chapters imply the rich detail that they in fact contain.

Although chronology is (in the main) the structural guide, the pace is irregular: ignoring some adumbration and very slight retrospection, one can say that Chapters i and ii cover roughly the same years (to *aet.* 15) from different points of view, intellectual and moral. Chapter iii, rather surprisingly, covers only about two years (to *aet.* 17). Chapters iv and v together deal with nine years (to 1830, *aet.* 24); they overlap in their accounts of the period from 1826 to 1829 (*aet.* 20 to 23). Chapter vi takes one through the next decade (to 1840, *aet.* 34), and Chapter vii brings the narrative to the point where Mill finally put down his pen, early in 1870 (*aet.* 63). Furthermore, the chapters vary considerably in length, so the average amount of space given per year in each period clarifies the emphasis:

TABLE 1<sup>3</sup>

Chap	i & ii	iii	iv & v	vi	vii
No. of years	15	2	9	10	30
% of total pages	19	8	32	12	30
% of pages per year	1.3	4	3.6	1.2	1

Explanatory light is thrown on the imbalance by Mill’s tripartite division of his life: the first stage being one of education and of propagandism for Philosophic Radicalism; the second stage one of new ideas, assimilation, and reconsideration; and the third stage one of mature and steady

(but not rigid) views, recorded in his major works. This division, seen in conjunction with the three purposes Mill announces, makes it clearer why he structured the *Autobiography* as he did.

The account of his education (first purpose) occupies most of the first three chapters, while the explanation of the “successive phases” of his mind (second purpose) is the main matter of the next three chapters. The division between these phases, however, cannot be distinctly drawn, and the third purpose, acknowledgment of debts, as is to be expected, is served through most of the work. The reason is that education in its widest sense is a continuous process, during which one moves through “phases” and incurs repeated debts. For example, looking at the transition from Chapter iii to Chapter iv, one sees that the former ends with an account of what Mill, in its title, identifies as the “first” stage of his self-education, and the latter, with its mention of the strenuous activities of the fledgling Philosophic Radicals (discussions, debates, studies, editing, essays), obviously is the next phase. But, while the narrative of sectarian activities in Chapter iv provides an excellent foil for the rejection of one-sidedness in Chapter v, it also outlines a continuation of the young Mill’s education. Furthermore, his education of course continued in the exciting phase described in Chapter v, “A Crisis in My Mental History. One Stage Onward.” And in each of these chapters, as in Chapters i and ii, he mentions people who influenced him. The thematic intertwining, with the consequent need to cover crucial periods from different standpoints, explains why the period of greatest overlap, from about 1821 to the early 1830s, gets most attention. A glance at Table 1 above will show that Chapters iii-v occupy about 40 per cent of the whole work, and on an average each year in that period is given more than 3½ times as much space as each year after 1840.

So, if we accept the premises Mill himself advances, the concentration on his education and intellectual development until his mid-thirties is neither surprising nor exceptionable. Indeed, the anomalous element is the final chapter, with its account of his next thirty years, in which there should be little matter relevant to his stated purposes. There is, in fact, some: most obviously, Mill pays important tribute to his wife. Chapter vi, which covers the decade of their first acquaintance, has in its title the strong assertion, “Commencement of the Most Valuable Friendship of My Life,” but the continuation of the account into the final chapter results in almost one-fifth of it being dedicated to her part in his life and work. Indeed, he ties that account directly to his third purpose:

In resuming my pen some years after closing the preceding narrative, I am influenced by a desire not to leave incomplete the record, for the sake of which chiefly this biographical sketch was undertaken, of the obligations I owe to those who have either contributed essentially to my own mental development or had a direct share in my writings and in whatever else of a public nature I have done.<sup>4</sup>

It may be noticed that here he somewhat modifies his initial statement of purpose: rather than referring to aids to his *intellectual and moral* development, he refers to those who contributed to his *mental* development and to those who shared in his writings and public acts. This modification further justifies the final chapter, for in its pages appear substantial accounts of his writings in maturity, in the course of which he mentions other debts.<sup>5</sup> It cannot be denied, however, that af-

ter the last tribute to his wife, the focus does alter: in actual as well as proportional length, Mill gives more space to his parliamentary career (1865-68) than to any other period in his life, even that of his “mental crisis.”<sup>6</sup> The account of that career, the events of which were fresh in his mind only a year after his defeat, is not easily justified on Mill’s stated terms. Indeed, its main interest surely lies outside them, in his own character and fame, which are described if not in a boastful, at least in a self-satisfied way.

Apart from the concluding portion of Chapter vii (which, untypically for Mill, was not rewritten), one can, then, gain considerable insight by accepting his exordium as accurate. In that light, some comment on the way he fulfils his goals is appropriate.

First, the description of his extraordinary education, initially at the hands of his father, but later and indeed for most of the time on his own initiative, is copious and full of interest. The account is also dense, as may be seen by comparing the combined lengths of Appendices B and C below, which attempt to reconstruct his early reading and writing, with their primary source, the early pages of the *Autobiography* (cf. especially pp. 9-25 with App. B, pp. 552-68). The early start (Greek at the age of three) was not then so exceptional as it now would be: to choose relevant comparisons, Bentham (with not much encouragement) was quick off the infant blocks, as (with more encouragement) was Macaulay. Mill was unusual, but he appears unique because he left such a full record. His detailed memory of those early years is surprising; however, he almost certainly had at least one *aide-mémoire*, a copy of the letter he wrote to Sir Samuel Bentham in mid-1819,<sup>7</sup> setting out his educational accomplishments of the preceding six years. That letter confirms and slightly expands the account in the *Autobiography*, and strengthens our appreciation of two aspects of his education—its continued and indeed increasing intensity, and the fact that it was intermingled with daily instruction of his younger siblings, especially of the two closest to him in age, Wilhelmina and Clara. In both these respects he was very unusual, especially when it is remembered that he had no formal education at all, his only teacher, in these early years, being his father, who was in truth using the child as a proving ground for his theories. (This wicked practice, it may be remarked, is found in all enlightened periods.) However, as Mill points out, his was not an education of cram; its great virtue, he believed, was that it enabled and encouraged him to think for himself, not only answering but questioning, not only getting but giving, not only remembering but discovering. This practice remained with him through life, and was connected with yet another distinguishing element: his curiosity and eagerness to learn. In the *Autobiography* this attribute is mentioned, although it surely tells against his assertion that anyone educated as he was could match his record. In the journal he kept while in France, his eagerness stands out as though in boldface, while one can read between the lines the efforts of his hosts, especially Lady Bentham, to prevent his doing lessons all the time.<sup>8</sup>

Probably the most extraordinary aspect of Mill’s precocity was his ability from about twelve to fifteen years of age to comprehend and enunciate abstract ideas in economics, and some parts of philosophy and science. Many gifted children astonish with feats of memory,<sup>9</sup> with ability to learn languages, and, perhaps most obviously, with great mathematical powers; Mill had these talents, but also showed astonishing maturity in his wide-ranging discussions with his father and

others, in his self-directed studies, in his comments on his more formal studies, and in the major surviving piece of contemporary evidence, the “*Traité de logique*” he wrote while in France. And, without extending the case unduly, his editing, before his twentieth year, of Bentham’s *Rationale of Judicial Evidence* (see the understated account on pp. 117-19 below) was a genuinely amazing feat.

In his account, of course, Mill, in keeping with his third purpose, is celebrating not himself, but his father, and, despite the qualifications and explanations,<sup>10</sup> it is a celebration, incorporating at least one memorable aphorism: “A pupil from whom nothing is ever demanded which he cannot do, never does all he can” (p. 35). Moving into the period of self-education, Mill, having learned his pedagogy, broadened his teaching to include others who were caught up in the Radicals’ increasing momentum,<sup>11</sup> and one can be sure that at least the demand side of the aphorism was observed. We cannot now recapture all the detail—let alone the enthusiasm—of the activities he joined in with others, but what is known is remarkable.

The earliest joint venture was probably the “Mutual Improvement Society,” not mentioned in the *Autobiography*, which flowered at least briefly under Jeremy Bentham’s patronage.<sup>12</sup> The date of Mill’s two surviving speeches for that Society, 1823 or 1824,<sup>13</sup> suggests that in fact it may have melded with the “Utilitarian Society” that Mill says he founded in the winter of 1822-23 (p. 81); the latter also met in Bentham’s house, included Bentham’s amanuensis, Richard Doane, and convened once a fortnight to read essays and discuss questions of ethics and politics. This small group, which continued until 1826, included Mill’s most intimate friends, as did its successor, the “Society of Students of Mental Philosophy,” which met for detailed discussion of specific philosophic and economic texts in George Grote’s house from 1825 until early in 1828, and then again in 1829.<sup>14</sup> In the mid-20s, emulating the *philosophes*, Mill kept a journal of his group’s activities, and wrote a few articles for a proposed Philosophical Dictionary to be edited by Charles Austin (see p. 110; the journal and articles seem not to have survived).

Another kind of mutual education, through propagation of the faith, was contemporaneous: public debate. First, in 1825, he and some friends<sup>15</sup> debated against the Owenites of the Cooperative Society; then, from 1826 to 1829, they embarked on a more impressive scheme, the London Debating Society, in which the coming young men opened their minds and talents on major issues of the times.<sup>16</sup> Less important were evening meetings to study elocution, and the formation of a class to learn German on the “Hamiltonian method.”<sup>17</sup>

Of greater significance in a wider sphere was the work done by the young Philosophic Radicals with their elders and mentors on the *Westminster Review*, founded in 1824 (see pp. 93-101), and on the *Parliamentary History and Review* during its brief career from 1826 to 1828 (p. 121), the latter year also seeing the Mills withdraw from the *Westminster Review* stable (p. 135). Throughout this period Mill’s practical education, the value of which he acknowledges on p. 87, was going on in the Examiner’s Office of the East India Company, which he had joined in 1823 on his seventeenth birthday. Finally, though the details are vague, one should not overlook the broad educational benefits of his less formal but undoubtedly strenuous and wide-ranging discussions with his friends on his daily walks between Kensington and the City, and his weekend and holiday excursions.

sions into the countryside. Even without analysis of his writings, one can wholeheartedly support his judgment that from 1822 to 1828 his “own pursuits . . . were never carried on more vigorously” (p. 89).<sup>18</sup>

Here one is moving to the second of Mill’s purposes, his desire to show “the successive phases” of a “mind which was always pressing forward, equally ready to learn and to unlearn either from its own thoughts or from those of others” (p. 5). The least precise of the three goals, it nonetheless gets very careful attention in the next few chapters of the *Autobiography*, those dealing with the period from the time of his mental crisis in 1826-27 until 1840, when the *Logic* was virtually completed. He says that in his account of “these years of transition” he has mentioned only those of his “new impressions” which appeared then and later “to be a kind of turning points, marking a definite progress” in his mode of thought (p. 175). And he goes on to indicate that he was considering much more in those years than the account indicates. The nature and intensity of some of these considerations are to be seen in the literary essays in the present volume.

Many of the changes, these essays also imply, came through personal contact of the kind already suggested, as his circle of acquaintance broadened. The record of “successive phases” of his mind is, therefore, again seen to be intertwined with that of his debts, and so the second and third purposes are served together. Often his desire to acknowledge his intellectual debts is greater than his desire to trace his development, with the result, quite intentional on Mill’s part, that emphasis falls on certain aspects of his development at the expense of others. For example, the brief period of near withdrawal from his customary activities from 1828 to 1830 is left in shade, and little evidence is available elsewhere to fill in the picture. And the years of active political sectarianism in the *London and Westminster Review*, years that have troubled many who otherwise admire Mill (after all, he says he had already forsworn at least overt sectarianism [see pp. 115-17]), are excused by the plea of circumstance, inadequately described. Again—and from the perspective of the editors of this volume, quite regrettably—Mill gives little space to his writings for journals in the 1830s, and much of that concerns his mainly political leaders in the *Examiner*.

As mentioned above, one important change, Mill’s new aesthetic interest, is seen in his literary essays. In particular, they indicate the shift in thought following his distress over the effects of purely analytic methods, and point to the existence of what was not quite a school, or even a coterie, but certainly was a group quick to respond and to interact. The relief Mill found in Wordsworth’s poetry (pp. 149-53), and his related discovery of Shelley (a favourite of Harriet Taylor’s), as well as his love of music (almost unmentioned in the *Autobiography*),<sup>19</sup> and his growing appreciation of drama, painting, and architecture, all had a part in inducing the aesthetic speculations found in these essays. Though they do not amount to an important theory, elements of them are of considerable value, and helped clarify for Mill both the place of emotion in individual lives and in the human sciences, and what he took to be his proper role in the “Art and Science of Life,” as “Scientist” or “Logician,” and not as “Artist” or “Poet.”<sup>20</sup>

Mill was markedly influenced by his new acquaintances, most significantly by W. J. Fox’s circle of Unitarians,<sup>21</sup> including Harriet and John Taylor, by Thomas Carlyle, and by John Sterling,



Through Sterling (and perhaps through Cambridge friends of Charles Austin) Mill became acquainted with other of the Cambridge “Apostles,” and it is of more than passing significance that his reaching out for “radicals” of different kinds brought into the net of the *London and Westminster Review* some of these apparently incompatible, but equally enthusiastic proponents of a new order. When one considers the subjects and provenances of Mill’s articles in the present volume, the network of relations is evident: of those articles published in the 1830s, four of the five that appeared before 1835 were in Fox’s journal, the *Monthly Repository* (which in these years was Mill’s main organ for non-literary essays as well); all those after that date were in the *London and Westminster* under his own editorship. Not all the articles are actually reviews, but of those that are, two deal with William Bridges Adams, a protégé of Fox’s, who married Sarah Flower, the sister of Harriet Taylor’s closest friend (and Fox’s lover), Eliza. Browning also was a member of Fox’s circle, and only accident (see pp. xxxiii-xxxiv) prevented Mill’s review of his *Pauline* from appearing. Tennyson, Helps, Milnes, and Bulwer (see App. F, p. 604) were all Cambridge men, the first three Apostles. This evidence does not justify an accusation of puffery, though the reviews are favourable, but Mill can at least be seen as showing bias in his selection of subjects. And there is other evidence of his raising a wind. Exhalations include his placing, in the *Examiner*, reviews of Eliza Flower’s musical compositions,<sup>22</sup> and complimentary notices of the *Monthly Repository*.<sup>23</sup> In return, the *Repository* blew some kisses, mentioning as a new publication the pamphlet reprint of Mill’s “Corporation and Church Property,” and commenting, “ ‘Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest’ this little pamphlet, which is full of the marrow of a sound philosophy and morality.” In “Characteristics of English Aristocracy,” a review of Bulwer’s *England and the English*, there is praise for the appendices Mill contributed anonymously on Bentham and James Mill that might well normally have gone unnoticed. And there is an unambiguous (to the informed) reference to Mill: “The most accomplished and perfect logician we ever knew, has the best appreciation of the beautiful and the poetical.”<sup>24</sup>

In all ages, and even among the virtuous, *manus manum lavat*, and altruism may be a form of self-help. There were, in that age of excitement, when the old order (again) seemed to be passing away, many opportunities for the daring and enthusiastic young to air and share their views, and as Mill passed through his “successive phases” he joined in or was touched by the Philosophic Radicals of the 1820s, the Romantics, the Saint-Simonians, the Unitarians, the Cambridge Apostles, the new bureaucrats, the Philosophic Radicals of the 1830s; in some cases he was at or near the centre, in others on the periphery—but never was he to be ignored.

A change came, however. The last stage (on his account) was one in which he thought himself rejected by “society,” and in which, in any case, he rejected the society of most others. His relation with Harriet Taylor, a relation which they seem naïvely to have thought neither would nor should cause comment, resulted in their eventual isolation from all but a few, such as the Carlyles (and there was constant and increasing tension even with them). Mill’s account of his movement into maturity of opinion, then, ought to be seen also as a movement away from the influence of groups. He did not, it should be clear, go into intellectual solitude, for quite apart from the constant interchange of views with Harriet Taylor, he read and corresponded widely (for example with Auguste Comte). He was not, however, in an arena where the constant push-and-pull of al-

legiances, opinions, and events could initiate major fluctuations of belief. When, in the mid-1860s after his wife's death and his retirement from the East India Company, the time did come for him to plunge into turbulent political waters, his general attitudes were indeed firm, though his expression of them in particular circumstances led some to believe him fickle. And at that time, as young men gathered round him—Bain, Cairnes, Fawcett, Morley, even Spencer—it was his influence on them that mattered, not theirs on him. And that tale he does not choose to tell.

The tale he does tell, right from the beginning of the *Autobiography*, as we have seen, is that of his third purpose: acknowledgment of his intellectual and moral debts, the importance of which justifies brief analysis. It is hard and indeed unwise to identify separately the elements that make up Mill's accounts of his teachers and friends; there is some mention of their characters, some of their careers, and some of their writings, as well as of their relations with Mill, and all these matters bear on one another. Also, a few people of obvious importance are mentioned almost in passing,<sup>25</sup> one may infer because the exigencies of narrative did not easily permit of a fuller account. As has been argued, the tributes and assessments are entwined with the accounts of his education and the movement of his mind; nonetheless, if we look simply at the main emphasis of passages, almost one-third of the final version is given generally to an account of his debts. (A considerably higher proportion is found in the Early Draft, which includes, *inter alia*, longer passages on Roebuck and Sarah Austin and necessarily excludes the narrative of the final years.) The relative weighting is interesting. Ignoring all those of less than one-half page in length, one finds:

TABLE 2

Tribute to and discussion of	App. no. of pages	of	Tribute to and discussion of	App. no. of pages
James Mill	19½		Charles Austin	1½
Harriet Taylor Mill	14		Carlyle	1½
Roebuck	4 <sup>26</sup>		Sarah Austin	1 <sup>27</sup>
John Austin	3		Sterling	1
Comte	3		Maurice	1
Wordsworth	2½		Helen Taylor	1
Bentham	2		Hare	1
Saint-Simonians	2		Black	⅔
Tocqueville	2		Grote	½

Such computation (which ignores the strength as well as the kind of comment) does rough justice to Mill's account; but he himself is not even-handed. Given other evidence, including Mill's writings, no one is likely to challenge the placing of his father and his wife at the head of the list of those who influenced him. The kind of influence and its effect are perhaps moot, especially in the case of his wife, but one can easily accept his estimate of their weights. Mill says his

conscience spoke to him in his father's voice (p. 613); there can be no doubt that there was a literal transference of this function to Harriet Taylor after James Mill's death in 1836, if not before, and only a little that Helen Taylor played a speaking role after her mother's death in 1858.<sup>28</sup> There is no room here for essays on these extraordinary relations; our comment is only that they were, certainly from a psychological point of view, as important as Mill indicates.

About others, though, some caveats concerning Mill's judgment must be entered. His attitude to his mother has caused speculation: not mentioned in the *Autobiography*, she is given, in isolated comments of a derogatory kind, almost all of which were cancelled, only about one-half page in the Early Draft. When he began that draft, Mill was excessively, indeed petulantly, angry at his family because of what he (and/or Harriet) took to be their slighting response to his marriage; in revision, he at least moved from derogation to silence. It is likely that his mother and his siblings did not "influence" him, using the word as he intends it, but one may well regret the attitude and the omission. At the very least it is odd that a strong feminist, writing under the correcting eye of an equally strong feminist, should have given himself but a single parent in the opening narrative sentence of his autobiography: "I was born in London, on the 20th of May 1806, and was the eldest son of James Mill, the author of *The History of British India*" (p. 5).

Other questions can here only be asked:<sup>29</sup> if John Austin gets (deservedly) three pages, surely Bentham deserves more than two, and George Grote more than one-half—and what of Harriet Grote? Wordsworth merits at least the treatment he receives, but where then is Coleridge? (The answer lies partly, but only partly, in the discussion of the "Coleridgeans," Sterling and Maurice.) Does not Tocqueville, whose influence, curiously enough, is not acknowledged at all in the Early Draft, deserve as much space as Comte (even if we admit that much of the three pages devoted to the latter is given to denial of influence)? Surely Carlyle, whatever Mill's later judgments, had more influence than Roebuck (who was on his own admission a pupil of Mill's)—and, again, where is Jane Carlyle? Could he not have mentioned his colleagues in the East India House, such as Thomas Love Peacock? The questions pile up, and answers implying the deliberate downplaying of friendships, or the desire to avoid comment on those alive to read the account, do not seem adequate. Of greater relevance are Mill's and his wife's attitudes to the people discussed and the exigencies of narrative and of thesis: the case he is making does not require equal or absolute justice, and a story—even one the author claims to be devoid of interesting episode—militates against judgmental balance. One certainly may regret that Mill's denigration of self led him to the purposes he thought proper, and so to exclude much that other autobiographers, many of them of narrower experience and less insight, delight us with. But his judgment should be respected. Although his mind, his life, and his career have an interest beyond the significance he attached to them, in developing his stated purposes Mill faithfully adheres to his contract with the reader for whom "these pages were . . . written."

The *Autobiography* stands alone among Mill's book-length works in the abundance of MS materials that have survived.<sup>30</sup> We have no fewer than three complete MSS—Mill's original draft, a revised MS also in his hand, and a transcript of the whole—as well as a four-page piece of holo-

graph draft independent of the other MSS. The three complete MSS were among the collection of letters and papers owned after Mill's death by Helen Taylor, bequeathed by her to her niece Mary Taylor, and sold at auction in 1922 by the executors of the latter's estate. They are listed together, "a large parcel," as lot 720 (third day) in Sotheby's sale catalogue of 27-29 March, 1922: "Mill (John Stuart) Auto. MS. of his Autobiography upwards of 220 pp. 4to; with an earlier draft of the same in his hand, and a copy, mostly in the hand of Helen Taylor, *with the suppressed passages.*" The lot went for £5 5s. to Maggs Bros., who resold the MSS separately.

*Early Draft.* The "earlier draft" was purchased from Maggs in 1923 by Jacob H. Hollander, Professor of Political Economy at Johns Hopkins University, who kept it until his death in 1940, after which it was stored for nearly two decades in a Baltimore warehouse. In 1958 it was acquired with the rest of Hollander's library by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. More than just "earlier," it is in fact the original draft of the *Autobiography*, consisting of 169 leaves all told—139 leaves constituting the first finished version of the work plus thirty leaves of rejected text retained together at the end of the draft. Written in the late months of 1853 and the early months of 1854 (see below on this and other datings), the MS contains a complete account, as Mill then would have given it, of his life up to his marriage in 1851. The paper is apparently that used in the East India Company office where Mill worked, half-sheets of white laid foolscap measuring *c.* 33.6 × 20.8 cm., with either a Britannia watermark (on about half the leaves, irregularly throughout) or one of three countermarks: "Stacey Wise 1849," "C Ansell 1851," and "C Ansell 1852." Mill wrote in ink, generally on both sides. Before beginning a leaf, he folded it once lengthwise, to divide each page into two long halves *c.* 10.4 cm. wide;<sup>31</sup> he originally composed only in the right-hand half, saving the space at left for his revisions and for corrections, comments, and other markings by his wife.

*Columbia MS.* The second of the complete MSS (to take them in the order in which they were written), the "Auto. MS." of the description in Sotheby's catalogue, was bought from Maggs by Professor John Jacob Coss, acting for members of the Department of Philosophy at Columbia who presented it to the Columbia University Library in April, 1923. This MS consists of 210 leaves (not counting those left blank by Mill or used as wrappers) measuring *c.* 26 × 21.5 cm. The first 162 leaves, medium blue paper sewn in twenty-leaf gatherings marked A through I (with the initial leaf of A and the last seventeen leaves of I left blank) and containing either a fleur-de-lis watermark or the countermark "Weatherley 1856," constitute a revised version of the Early Draft text plus a three-page continuation, the text of 247.35-251.9 below. This part of the MS was written in 1861. The remaining forty-eight leaves, a gathering marked K and made up of twenty-four sheets of darker blue (unwatermarked) paper folded separately and unsewn, represent—except for text taken over from the Yale fragment (see below)—the first and only draft of the rest of the *Autobiography*, written in the winter of 1869-70.

*Rylands transcript.* The third of the MSS sold at Sotheby's, the "copy, mostly in the hand of Helen Taylor, *with the suppressed passages,*" went to an unknown English buyer, and was lost sight of until July, 1959, when it was discovered in the London salerooms of Messrs. Hodgson and acquired by the John Rylands Library, Manchester. Consisting of 282 leaves of various kinds and

sizes of paper, the transcript was made mainly or entirely in the months just after Mill's death by three writers—Helen Taylor, Mill's youngest sister Mary Elizabeth Colman, and an unidentified French copyist. It is from this MS that the first edition of the work (1873) was printed, and the “descent” of the text is thus simple and straightforward: Mill revised, recopied, and continued his original version (Early Draft) in the Columbia MS; Helen Taylor and her helpers copied the Columbia text in the Rylands transcript; and the work was set in type from the Rylands transcript.

*Yale fragment.* In addition to these complete MSS, Mill's first draft of the present 251.18-259.21, the “Note . . . concerning the participation of my wife in my writings” given below beginning on p. 250, is extant at Yale. This is written on the four pages of a folded sheet of bluish-gray wove paper, page size *c.* 25.8 × 20.2 cm. The MS bears the pencil date “[1861]” in the hand of a twentieth-century scholar or archivist, but the basis for this dating is not clear. Mill could have drafted the note any time between the completion of the Early Draft, in 1854, and the writing of the last part of the work in 1869-70. The tenses, the tone, and the mention of *On Liberty* as a “book” (pp. 256-8) strongly suggest that it was composed no earlier than 1859, after his wife's death and the publication of *On Liberty*, and probably after 1861, because it was not included in the continuation of the Early Draft written at that time.

In his surviving letters Mill first mentions the Early Draft on 23 January, 1854, four days after recording in a diary entry his bitterness at having “procrastinated in the sacred duty of fixing in writing, so that it may not die with me, everything that I have in my mind which is capable of assisting the destruction of error and prejudice and the growth of just feelings and true opinions.”<sup>32</sup> Replying to a letter now lost, he writes to his wife:

I too have thought very often lately about the life & am most anxious that we should complete it the soonest possible. What there is of it is in a perfectly publishable state—as far as writing goes it could be printed tomorrow—& it contains a full writing out as far as anything can write out, what you are, as far as I am competent to describe you, & what I owe to you—but, besides that until revised by you it is little better than unwritten, it contains nothing about our private circumstances, further than shewing that there was intimate friendship for many years, & you only can decide what more it is necessary or desirable to say in order to stop the mouths of enemies hereafter. The fact is there is about as much written as I *can* write without your help & we must go through this together & add the rest to it at the very first opportunity—I have not forgotten what she said about bringing it with me to Paris.<sup>33</sup>

He discusses the subject at length again on 10 February:

I . . . have read through all that is written of the Life—I find it wants revision, which I shall give it—but I do not well know what to do with some of the passages which we marked for alteration in the early part of it which we read together. They were mostly passages in which I had written, you thought, too much of the truth or what I believe to be the truth about my own defects. I certainly do not desire to say more about them than integrity requires, but the difficult matter is to decide how

much that is. Of course one does not, in writing a life, either one's own or another's, undertake to tell everything—& it will be right to put something into *this* which shall prevent any one from being able to suppose or to pretend, that we undertake to keep nothing back. Still it va sans dire that it ought to be on the whole a fair representation. Some things appear to me on looking at them now to be said very crudely, which does not surprise me in a first draft, in which the essential was to say everything, somehow, *sauf* to omit or revise afterwards. As to matters of opinion & feeling on general subjects, I find there is a great deal of good matter written down in the Life which we have not written anywhere else, & which will make it as valuable in that respect (apart from its main object) as the best things we have published. But of what particularly concerns *our* life there is nothing yet written, except the descriptions of you, & of your effect on me; which are at all events a permanent memorial of what I know you to be, & (so far as it can be shewn by generalities) of what I owe to you intellectually. That, though it is the smallest part of what you are to me, is the most important to commemorate, as people are comparatively willing to suppose all the rest. But we have to consider, which we can only do together, how much of our story it is advisable to tell, in order to make head against the representations of enemies when we shall not be alive to add anything to it. If it was not to be published for 100 years I should say, tell all, simply & without reserve. As it is there must be care taken not to put arms into the hands of the enemy.<sup>34</sup>

Taken together, the two letters show (1) that an early form of the draft, including at least the first eight leaves of the original Part II,<sup>35</sup> largely unrevised since it was first written but nevertheless “in a perfectly publishable state,” was finished by 23 January, 1854; (2) that Mill and his wife had read an “early part of it” together, marking passages for alteration (those extracted in App. G from R23-5, and possibly Mill's subsequent revisions of them—in R24<sup>2</sup>-25<sup>2</sup> and R19/20, also marked by her—are more or less specifically mentioned in the second letter); but (3) that she had not yet read any portion of the original Part II, in which she and their relationship are described. Up to this point, therefore, there were at least two periods of composition—one in which he wrote the early part that they read and marked together, the other in which he continued writing in her absence.

We have, unfortunately, virtually no biographical documents for the first two years of their marriage, after they had returned from the Continent and settled at Blackheath Park in September, 1851. In August, 1853, Mill took his wife to Sidmouth, Devonshire, returning to London alone on the 23rd—the first time since the marriage that they had been separated. He remained in London through much of September, and then, on the advice of their physicians, accompanied his wife to Nice. When his three-month leave of absence from the India House had expired, he left her at Hyères, on 27 or 28 December, and arrived back in London on 5 January.

It is unlikely that he worked on the draft between 5 and 23 January (the date of the first letter quoted above). On his return he was occupied with official correspondence that had accumulated in his absence, and of his own work he was primarily concerned with the essay on “Nature.” He told his wife on 14 January:

I am working hard at getting up the arrear of India house business & have taken some of it home to work at tomorrow (Sunday). I hardly feel well or vigorous enough to set about any work of our own yet on Sundays & in the evenings—when I do the first thing shall be to finish the rewriting of the paper on Nature, which I began before we left.<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, the tone of his letter of 23 January (“I too have thought very often lately about the life”) does not suggest that he has been writing. What seems most probable, if we assume that he began the draft in London, perhaps even (as he did with other works) during office hours at the India House when correspondence lagged, is that he commenced writing earlier than August, 1853; that he and his wife read and marked the early part (at least the first twenty-five leaves, through the first extract given in App. G) before going to Devonshire in that month; and that he continued writing, through at least the first eight leaves of the original Part II, in the August-September interval of separation, before joining her for their sojourn in France. A large part of the draft, the “publishable” version described in the letter of 23 January, 1854, should therefore be dated earlier than 24 September, 1853, the date on which they left England together.

On 13 February, 1854, still planning to join his wife in Paris, Mill again mentions bringing the draft with him, and adds:

But if we are not to be together this summer it is doubly important to have as much of the life written as can be written before we meet—therefore will you my own love in one of your sweetest letters give me your general notion of what we should say or imply respecting our private concerns. As it is, it shews confidential friendship & strong attachment ending in marriage when you were free & ignores there having ever been any scandalous suspicions about us.<sup>37</sup>

To his earlier letter of the 10th she replied on 14-15 February:

I feel sure dear that the Life is not half written and that half that is written will not do. Should there not be a summary of our relationship from its commencement in 1830—I mean given in a dozen lines. . . . This ought to be done in its genuine truth and simplicity—strong affection, intimacy of friendship, and no impropriety. It seems to me an edifying picture for those poor wretches who cannot conceive friendship but in sex—nor believe that expediency and the consideration for feelings of others can conquer sensuality.<sup>38</sup>

While her letter was en route Mill wrote to her again on the 18th that he was “most anxious at present about the Life, but . . . can do little in the way of addition to it till I hear from her,”<sup>39</sup> and a diary entry of 19 February implies further concern with the life: “Goethe . . . [called] his autobiography, which tells just as much about himself as he liked to be known, ‘*Aus meinem Leben Dichtung und Wahrheit*.’ The *Aus* even without the *Dichtung* saves his veracity.”<sup>40</sup> Finally on the 20th, having received her letter, he was able to report some progress in the work:

As to the Life—which I have been revising & correcting—the greater part, in bulk, of what is written consists of the history of my mind *up to* the time when your influence over it began—and I do not think there can be much objectionable in that part,

even including as it does, sketches of the character of most of the people I was intimate with—if I could be said to be so with any one. I quite agree in the sort of résumé of our relationship which you suggest—but if it is to be only as you say a dozen lines, or even three or four dozen, could you not my own love write it out your darling self & send it in one of your precious letters—It is one of the many things of which the *fond* would be much better laid by you & we can add to it afterwards if we see occasion.<sup>41</sup>

On 5 February Mill had finished rewriting “Nature”; on 5 March, having caught up with India House correspondence, he began writing “Utility of Religion.”<sup>42</sup> Between those dates, and especially around 20 February, when we have seen him “revising & correcting,” he read over and revised the whole of the draft he had written in 1853, and it was probably then also that he finished writing the original Part II. Professor Levi is surely right in suggesting that a passage from Harriet Mill’s letter of 14-15 February (“strong affection, intimacy of friendship . . . an edifying picture for those poor wretches who cannot conceive friendship but in sex—nor believe that expediency and the consideration for feelings of others can conquer sensuality”) is echoed in Mill’s account of their relationship in the twentieth leaf of Part II:

our relation to each other was one of strong affection and confidential intimacy, entirely apart from sensuality. . . . we disdained, as every person not a slave of his animal appetites must do, the abject notion that the strongest and tenderest friendship cannot exist between a man and a woman without a sensual tie; or that sensuality cannot be put aside when regard for the feelings of others, or even when only prudence and personal dignity require it.<sup>43</sup>

She did not otherwise send him the account he requested, for of the numbered series of Mill’s letters to her all but one—a short letter addressed to Marseilles on 13 March—are extant between 20 February and the middle of April, and there are but two subsequent references to the work during the period. On 24 February he writes: “we must do what we can while we are alive—the Life being the first thing—which independent of the personal matters which it will set right when we have made it what we intend, is even now an unreserved proclamation of our opinions on religion, nature, & much else.”<sup>44</sup> The gist of the first part of this statement is repeated in a letter of 20 March: “above all I am anxious about the Life, which must be the first thing we go over when we are together.”<sup>45</sup>

Harriet Mill returned to London in the middle of April, and it must have been either then or shortly afterward—“the Life being the first thing”—that she read and “improved” the remainder of the draft. Though no useful terminal date for Mill’s subsequent corrections can be assigned with certainty, it seems most reasonable to suppose that he revised and rewrote the leaves of Part II before departing for a six-week tour of Brittany in June-July, 1854, and certainly before setting out on his extended tour of France, Italy, and Greece, 8 December, 1854-late June, 1855, during which he was separated from his wife for nearly seven months.

The Early Draft is a heavily worked over MS, with cancellations and interlined revisions on nearly every page, and a great many additional passages written and rewritten at left. Mill foli-



ated the MS in pencil, and most of the leaves show evidence of having been renumbered one or more times as additional leaves were inserted, passages reordered, and revised leaves substituted for earlier ones. The principal additions and rearrangements are reported in notes to the Early Draft text and in headnotes to the extracts given in Appendix G. The most interesting of Mill's large-scale changes has to do with his early intention to divide the work into two parts, the first covering his life before he met Harriet Taylor, and "Part II," beginning with his "first introduction to the lady whose friendship has been the honour and blessing of my existence." Possibly because he wished to bring her in at an earlier point in his account (after his writings of 1832, rather than, as originally, after his writings of 1834 and Molesworth's proposal in that year to establish the *London and Westminster Review*), perhaps also because the two parts were of considerably disproportionate lengths (121 vs. 24 leaves). Mill rearranged several paragraphs, condensed the first eight leaves of Part II to three and a half, and discarded the two-part division altogether (see pp. 616-17 below).

Except possibly for the revised leaves that replaced the rejected leaves of the original Part II and the ending of Part I, Harriet Mill read the entire MS, marking passages with lines, X's, and question marks beside the text, deleting and sometimes rewriting Mill's sentences, here and there commenting in the space at left; and Mill followed many of her suggestions and accepted most of her pencilled alterations by rewriting them in ink. A sizable proportion of her markings are editorial in character, calling attention to wordiness, vagueness, inaccuracy of expression, repetition of word or phrase, and the like "minuter matters of composition" (see p. 255); but she was also the originator of some major changes in the texture and tone of the work. In response to her markings Mill suppressed personal and family details that, had they been retained, would have made the *Autobiography* a warmer, if often more critical document, and she exerted extensive influence on the several versions in which he attempted to describe his practical deficiencies (see pp. 608-11) and on the account he wrote of their relations in the original Part II. While "HTM" appears frequently in the textual apparatus, the notes report only the most significant of her markings and alterations, and do not adequately convey the pervasiveness of her pencil in the MS.<sup>46</sup>

Mill returned to the work sometime in 1861, two or three years after the death of his wife, and on this occasion wrote the first 162 leaves of the Columbia MS, the text from the beginning through the present 251.9.<sup>47</sup> Most of this, of course, was revision rather than initial composition—the "second writing" that Mill refers to in describing the "double redaction" method by which "all my books have been composed" (see pp. 229-31)—but, although the Early Draft on which it was based is itself, in its final stage, a highly finished piece of writing, the new version is substantially different. Between the Early Draft and the corresponding text of the Columbia MS there are some 2,600 substantive differences, large and small (the figure is offered simply as a rough indication of the frequency of revision; the alteration of a single word counts as one substantive change, and the omission or addition of an entire paragraph or more also counts as one). The number and nature of the differences make impracticable the usual method of recording variants in this edition. We have, therefore, chosen to present the Early Draft and the Columbia MS as parallel texts on facing pages, with spacing adjusted to bring corresponding passages, as much as possible, opposite one another. As a result, blank spaces (and even whole blank pages) on

one side or the other immediately call attention to the most extensive of the revisions. Some of the less obvious may be mentioned briefly.

With the distance gained by the passing of seven or more years since his writing of the Early Draft, Mill viewed the events of his life with increased detachment. He could now, for example, add a mitigating comparison to his description of heavy dejection during his mental crisis, by seeing it as like “the state . . . in which converts to Methodism usually are, when smitten by their first ‘conviction of sin,’ ” and go on, less dramatically. “In all probability my case was by no means so peculiar as I fancied it, and I doubt not that many others have passed through a similar state” (pp. 137, 145). This new objectivity dictated a number of changes by which earlier outbursts of egotism, contrasting strikingly with the characteristic self-effacement that marks much of the work, were deflated or restrained. Occasionally, for passages first written specifically about himself, Mill substituted generalization (compare the two versions of the concluding statement about Plato’s influence, pp. 24, 25); and many particulars of biographical detail were omitted in the revised account: his meeting with the Frenchmen Ternaux, Destutt de Tracy, Dunoyer, and others (p. 62), “emulation of a little manuscript essay of Mr. Grote” in attempting his first argumentative composition (p. 72), writing an early essay replying to Paley’s *Natural Theology* (p. 74), keeping a journal “on the model of Grimm’s *Correspondence*” and contributing three or four articles to a projected “Philosophical Dictionary, suggested by Voltaire’s” (p. 110), weekly evening meetings to study elocution (p. 126), his elaborate speech in reply to Thirlwall (p. 128), his enthusiastic admiration in response to Carlyle’s article on Johnson (p. 182), and so on. The revised life is less full, less varied in texture, than that of the Early Draft.

Here and there Mill toned down his recollections of family relationships and especially of his father. Indirect references to his mother, in speaking of his father’s “ill assorted marriage,” “to which he had not, and never could have supposed that he had, the inducements of kindred intellect, tastes, or pursuits” (pp. 52, 6), are charitably omitted. James Mill’s “authority and indignation” is rewritten as “displeasure” (pp. 14, 15); and the fact that he “often mockingly caricatured” his son’s bad reading aloud is discarded (p. 26), along with a number of other sentences and phrases of similar tendency (compare the summary comments on the severity of his upbringing at 52.19-21 and 53.28-9). By changes of this sort, and the addition of several sentences comparing James Mill with Bentham (p. 213), the revised version comes considerably closer than the earlier to being, in the passages describing his father, a eulogy.<sup>48</sup> The same access of charity is evident in recollections of associates outside his family. He cut out the greater part of his “character” of Roebuck (pp. 154-8), softened his critique of Maurice (pp. 160-1), rewrote his account of Sterling (pp. 162, 161), dropped a nasty paragraph on Sarah Austin (p. 186), and resorted to anonymity (“My father and I had hoped that some competent leader might arise; some man of philosophic attainments and popular talents”) in place of several sentences of harsh commentary on George Grote’s lack of courage, energy, and activity (pp. 202, 204-5).

The more formal and generalized character of the later version is continued in the last part that Mill wrote, the forty-eight leaves of the K gathering in the Columbia MS, containing the text of the work from the present 251.10 to the end. This was drafted in the winter of 1869-70.<sup>49</sup> Mill

presumably also gave the earlier part of the MS a final polish at this time (there are in this part a few interlineations and other alterations in darker ink than the rest); there is no evidence of any authoritative changes in the work after this date.<sup>50</sup> At this point other hands take over, and the text deteriorates.

In a codicil to his will dated 14 February, 1872, Mill names Helen Taylor as his literary executor “with full and absolute power and license . . . to edit all or any of my literary works and to publish all or any of my manuscripts as she in her sole discretion may think fit.” He then specifically mentions the *Autobiography*:

And whereas in these days no one is secure against attempts to make money out of his memory by means of pretended biographies I therefore think it necessary to state that I have written a short account of my life which I leave to the absolute charge and controul of my said stepdaughter Miss Helen Taylor to be published or not at her will and discretion and in the event of her death in my lifetime to the charge and controul of William Thomas Thornton [a longtime colleague of Mill’s at the India House] of No. 23 Queens Gardens Hyde Park Square on condition that he publishes the same within two years of my decease.

Mill died at Avignon on 7 May, 1873, and the will was proved in London on 5 September. By the latter date the *Autobiography* was already set in type and about to be printed.

Though Helen Taylor may have begun copying the Columbia MS in France before Mill’s death, the greater part of the Rylands transcript was made afterward, in the summer of 1873, when she was in England “pressing on as quickly as I am able” with the publication of the work, “having come to England for that purpose only.”<sup>51</sup> In the last 236 leaves of the Rylands MS, which constitute about five-sixths of the whole, Helen Taylor and Mary Colman copied discontinuous sections of the Columbia MS simultaneously (the former doing Columbia MS gatherings B, E, G, H, I, and K, the latter doing C, D, and F), and there is further evidence of haste in the great number of errors in these leaves, and in the fact that although Helen Taylor here and there corrected and punctuated Mary Colman’s parts of the transcript, she clearly did not read them over entirely or attempt to prepare them in any thorough way for the press. Mary Colman’s pages of the transcript went to the printer with more than 1,200 variants from Mill’s text unaltered, including some 170 substantive variants—all of them errors, and many quite obvious. Altogether, when we add the considerably longer stretches copied by Helen Taylor and the twenty-three leaves at the beginning in the hand of the unidentified French copyist, the transcript has over 2,650 variants, including more than 450 substantives, from the MS that was its immediate source.

The *Autobiography* was published by Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, “8vo. price 7s. 6d.,” on 17 October, 1873.<sup>52</sup> The most significant of the differences between the first printed text and that of the Columbia MS are (1) the omission of the first paragraph that Mill wrote when he took up the work again in 1869-70 (the present 251.10-17); (2) the rearrangement of the remaining nine paragraphs of transition between the 1861 and 1869-70 parts of the MS (247.35-251.9, 251.18-261.12) into the order 4-5, 1-3, 9, 6-8 (so that 1873 has, in succession, 251.18-257.32, 247.35-251.9, 261.8-12, 257.33-261.7); and (3) the excision of ten mostly short passages (563

words altogether) referring to Helen Taylor.<sup>53</sup> In addition to these, there are some eighty other substantive differences of varying length and importance,<sup>54</sup> and, as one would expect in comparing any MS text with a printed version, hundreds of differences in the accidentals of punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and word-division.

The evidence of rearranged and partly rewritten leaves in the Rylands MS shows that Helen Taylor originally copied all ten of Mill's paragraphs beginning at 247.35 in their original order, and that she dropped 251.10-17 and rearranged the others as a revision in the transcript. The cancellation of the ten passages referring to herself, on the other hand, as the spaced asterisks replacing them in 1873 make clear, was done at proof stage.<sup>55</sup> The rest of the substantive differences between the Columbia MS and the printed text represent errors and alterations originating in the Rylands transcript and then further changes made by the 1873 compositor and/or the proof-correctors. It is remarkable that only sixty of the more than 450 substantive errors in the Rylands transcript got into print. Someone—most likely Helen Taylor, but perhaps also Alexander Bain, who we know had a text of the work in hand in the weeks just before it was published—read proofs fairly carefully against the Columbia MS, and restored Mill's wording in some 390 places. The first printed text could have been much worse.

The 1873 edition (reprinted many times in London and New York) remained the sole source of text until September, 1924, when the Columbia University Press issued *Autobiography of John Stuart Mill Published for the First Time without Alterations or Omissions from the Original Manuscript in the Possession of Columbia University*, with a Preface by John Jacob Coss (and, as the Preface explains, the “editorial work . . . undertaken by Mr. Roger Howson”). Considerably more faithful than the text of 1873, this nevertheless departs from readings of Mill's MS in more than nine hundred particulars, including some seventy errors of wording and paragraphing, many of which originated in the Rylands transcript and 1873, on the latter of which Howson relied too much in his attempts to decipher Mill's hand. It was, however (as it should have been), the standard edition for the next forty-five years, although, until the textual puzzles were untangled in the early 1960s, scholars and critics sometimes used another text also published in 1924, Harold J. Laski's Oxford World's Classics edition, which is an imperfect and unedited reprint of the first edition. The second twentieth-century text based on the Columbia MS is that in the Riverside paperback edited by Jack Stillinger (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969). This improves on the accuracy of the 1924 Columbia edition in the nine hundred particulars just mentioned, and has been the most reliable text for the past decade. The third editing from the Columbia MS is that in the present volume. It corrects “their contraries” to “the contraries” at 53.1 (Mill wrote “their” but then deleted “ir”) and restores “given to the world” to Mill's note at 253n.22 (words deleted by Helen Taylor's pencil in the MS); otherwise it is substantively identical with the text published in 1969. In the present edition the reader can, as mentioned, compare at a glance this text with that of the Early Draft in various stages, aided by the editorial apparatus described later in this introduction.

## LITERARY ESSAYS

This volume includes, in addition to the *Autobiography*, fourteen of Mill's essays and reviews,<sup>56</sup> and nine appendices. Only two of these articles were republished in *Dissertations and Discussions* (1859) in more or less complete form, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties" (the two-part essay in the *Monthly Repository*) and "Writings of Alfred de Vigny" (from the *London and Westminster*), but two more, "Aphorisms: Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd" and "Ware's Letters from Palmyra" (both from the *London and Westminster*), are represented by extracts in *Dissertations and Discussions*. It might be argued that Mill did not, at least in 1859 when *Dissertations and Discussions* first appeared, believe many of these essays to be of major importance, and indeed by any standards some of them are slight; however, a case can be made for each of those he chose to leave buried in periodicals, and *a fortiori* for the importance of his literary essays as a whole.

It would be perverse to argue, on the other hand, that Mill in middle life or later believed his literary articles to have the importance of those on economics, history, and politics (though a great many of the last were not reprinted by Mill); in this connection one should note that the essays in this volume span only the years 1824 to 1844, with all but four appearing in the 1830s, the period when he was most concerned to examine literary works and, as editor of the *London and Westminster*, was able to review them at will. They thus illustrate (without in themselves establishing) Mill's movement from orthodox Philosophic Radicalism through a period of eclectic search to settled maturity.

"Periodical Literature: *Edinburgh Review*" represents the initial period, being in fact his first article in the newly-founded organ of the Philosophic Radicals, and indicating both in manner and content that the designated successor to Bentham and James Mill was coming out in the expected and proper fashion. The assurance, contempt, irony (particularly in the attacks on Brougham's articles—anonymous, of course, but not to the initiate), and characteristic language (e.g., the demand for "securities") all mark the author as a committed sectarian as surely as the argument that the governors must be accountable to the governed, and the insistence that the aristocracy and its organs are motivated by special (and therefore sinister) interests. That Mill later recognized these as signs of narrow sectarianism is indicated by his comment in the *Autobiography*: "The continuation of this article in the second number of the review was written by me under my father's eye, and (except as practice in composition, in which respect it was, to me, more useful than anything else I ever wrote) was of little or no value" (p. 95n; see also p. 96k). It also, of course, was a continuation of his practised diligence (soon to be taxed in his editing of Bentham's *Rationale*), especially when one notes that he had done the extensive research for his father's impressive article as well as for his own. Though there are hints in the article of his individual views, it is not surprising that he chose not to republish it (in fact he republished none of his thirteen articles from the first dynasty of the *Westminster*, all of which have considerable interest and value). Alexander Bain's comment is fair: most of the opinions in the article "were his father *redivivus*; yet, we may see the beginnings of his own independent start, more especially in the opinions with regard to women, and the morality of sex."<sup>57</sup>

The next four essays, "On Genius," "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," and the two reviews of Junius Redivivus, all date from 1832 and 1833. They show Mill in the midst of his pe-

riod of search, examining and enjoying the new perspectives and insights afforded by W. J. Fox and his circle, including Harriet Taylor, and by Thomas Carlyle, who, though certainly not a member of that group, knew them and discussed their ways and works in his extensive correspondence with Mill. The first three of these essays appeared in Fox's *Monthly Repository*, where Harriet Taylor was publishing poetry, and to which William Bridges Adams ("Junius Redivivus") was contributing. Probably in response to a suggestion in conversation, Mill wrote to Fox on 3 April, 1832, to say that he would send along anything of his appropriate to the "design" of the *Monthly Repository*;<sup>58</sup> "On Genius," a response to an article in the *Repository*, was the first to appear, some six months later. Of it, and the three following pieces, Mill might equally well have noted that he was gaining practice in composition, though he had changed his model from James Mill to Carlyle. To the latter he commented on 17 September, 1832:

. . . I have written a rambling kind of article, in which many, I will not say great, but big things are said on a small occasion, namely in the form of strictures on a well-meaning but flimsy article which recently appeared in the *Monthly Repository*. . . . As for this article of mine, those who best know me will see more character in it than in anything I have ever published; other people will never guess it to be mine. *You*, I hope, will find all the three articles *true*, the only praise I covet, & certainly rarer than any other in our times. But in this last you will find many things which I never saw, or never saw clearly till they were shewn to me by you, nor even for some time after.<sup>59</sup>

The italicized words, "*You*" and "*true*," match the article's intensity, which clearly relates to his excitement over Carlyle's rhetoric, as does the expression of emotional response, and also the Delphic evasiveness of such comments as that in the same letter: "You see I adhere to my system, which is to be as particular in the choice of my vehicles, as you are indiscriminate, & I think we are both right." All of this mannerism he later repudiated (and he did not reprint "On Genius"), informing George Henry Lewes (probably late in 1840):

The "Genius" paper is no favorite with me, especially in its boyish stile. It was written in the height of my Carlylism, a vice of style which I have since carefully striven to correct & as I think you should do—there is too much of it in the Shelley. I think Carlyle's costume should be left to Carlyle whom alone it becomes & in whom it would soon become unpleasant if it were made common—& I have seen as you must have done, grievous symptoms of its being taken up by the lowest of the low.<sup>60</sup>

The next item, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," is the republished form of two essays in the *Monthly Repository* (January and October, 1833), which show less hectically the same characteristics. (The version in *Dissertations and Discussions*, it may be interjected, reveals Mill's awareness of the over-enthusiasm in the originals by removing italics in sixty-four places.) The first, "What Is Poetry?" was evidently written without thought of a sequel, in a rather tentative spirit, as befitted a venture into strange new lands. He sought guidance and reassurance from Carlyle on 27 December, 1832, saying he had written an essay for "Fox's January number" that

attempts something much higher, and intrinsically more valuable, than all these writings on politics, but with far less success: it is not nearly so good of its kind, be-

cause I am not so well versed in the subject. It embodies some loose thoughts, which had long been floating in my mind, about Poetry and Art, but the result is not satisfactory to me and will probably be far less so to you—but you will tell me to what extent you think me wrong, or shallow. I wrote the paper from conviction (else it had never been written) but not from that strong conviction which *forces* to write: rather because I wished to write something for Fox, and thought there was a clearer field open for him in that direction than in the political one.<sup>61</sup>

And his doubts continued, as is evident in a letter to Carlyle (11 and 12 Apr., 1833) after the article appeared:

That last [“What Is Poetry?”] you promised me a careful examination and criticism of: I need it much; for I have a growing feeling that I have not got quite into the heart of that mystery, and I want you to shew me how. If you do not teach me you will do what is better, put me in the way of finding out. But I begin to see a not very far distant boundary to all I am qualified to accomplish in *this* particular line of speculation.<sup>62</sup>

During the course of the year, and in large measure because of actual and anticipated responses from Carlyle, Mill pushed his investigations further into the relation between Art and Philosophy (a question that was to resolve itself for him a decade later in Book VI of his *Logic*), into the value of his intellectual inheritance, and into examinations of new poets. The products were, in part, the comments on his father included in Bulwer’s *England and the English* (App. D below), the ill-fated review of Robert Browning’s *Pauline* (the surviving note for which is given in App. E below), and the beginnings of a review of Alfred Tennyson’s poems which resulted in both “The Two Kinds of Poetry” (the second part of “Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties”) and “Tennyson’s Poems.” The remarks on his father, which Mill repudiated as having been “cut and mangled and coxcombified” by Bulwer (see p. 589 below), should be seen in conjunction with the comments on Bentham that he also contributed to *England and the English*.<sup>63</sup> In both he is respectful; the voice, however, is that of a broadening critic, not that of a narrow disciple. The independence is more obvious in the “review” of *Pauline*, which has received much comment from Browning scholars. One need only summarize briefly what is known: *Pauline* was published in March, and Mill, given a copy by W. J. Fox, wrote a review for the *Examiner* before the middle of May. It was judged too long for the *Examiner*, so Mill proposed to revise it for *Tait’s*. His summer months being busy, however, he had not made his revisions by August, when *Tait’s* published a dismissive review of the poem, and Mill withdrew his offer. The only surviving evidence of his views is found in the copy of *Pauline* which he returned to Fox. He, going against Mill’s suggestion, gave it to Browning, whose revisions of the poem reflect in part a reaction to Mill’s marginal comments. The fullest recording of these, with the note printed below as Appendix E, and Browning’s revisions, is in an article by William S. Peterson and Fred L. Standley.<sup>64</sup> Some of the marginalia give evidence of Mill’s subjective reading of this highly subjective poem; for example, against

But then to know nothing—to hope for nothing—

To seize on life's dull joys from a strange fear,  
Lest, losing them, all's lost, and nought remains  
he wrote, "deeply true."

When these other articles of 1833 are read with "The Two Kinds of Poetry," one can see the "weaving anew" process mentioned in the *Autobiography* (p. 163), as Mill intertwines the warp of his learned associationism with the woof of new ideas about the use and value of emotion. The new insight he owed, in this case, to James Martineau's "On the Life, Character, and Works of Dr. Priestley,"<sup>65</sup> as he acknowledges on 26 May, 1835:

The last two pages of the concluding paper made an impression upon me which will never be effaced. In a subsequent paper of my own in the "Repository" headed "The Two Kinds of Poetry" (October, 1833) I attempted to carry out your speculation into some of those ulterior consequences which you had rather indicated than stated.<sup>66</sup>

And he goes on to assert his continued acceptance of at least part of his intellectual inheritance, in a way that was to become increasingly sure as he gained confidence in his new proceedings; he had, he told Carlyle, two articles in the *Monthly Repository* for October, 1833, one on Blakey, and the other

the little paper I told you I was writing in further prosecution of, or rather improvement on, the thoughts I published before on Poetry and Art. You will not find much in the first to please you; perhaps rather more in the second, but I fear you will think both of them too much infected by mechanical theories of the mind: yet you will probably in this as in many other cases be glad to see that out of my mechanical premisses I elicit *dynamical* conclusions. . . .<sup>67</sup>

It is not known what Mill thought of these speculations later—he merely refers to them as "the most considerable" of his contributions to the *Monthly Repository* (p. 205)—but it is unquestionably significant that he included a carefully revised version in *Dissertations and Discussions*, the only such inclusions from his *Repository* articles (apart from a section of his review of Alison's *History*).

Using the latest version from Mill's lifetime as copy-text (the normal practice in this edition), we indicate the variants in earlier versions in footnotes. A study of these shows that the revisions can be seen to fall into four types: (1) alterations in opinion or fact, including major omissions, amplifications, or corrections of information; (2) alterations resulting from the time between writings, including changes in statement of fact consequent upon the passage of time and new publications; (3) alterations which qualify, emphasize, or give technical clarity; and (4) alterations which are purely verbal, or give semantic clarity, or result from shifts in word usage, and alterations in italicization. The changes here reveal several similarities to Mill's practice in other reprinted essays: first, there is a large number, some 209 in all (or 6.5 per page of *Dissertations and Discussions*), as is common in the early essays reprinted by Mill; when less time intervened between the original form and the first revised form in 1859, fewer changes seemed necessary. Second, using the categories just described, one finds the order of frequency to be 4 (128 changes), 3 (58 changes), 1



(20 changes), and 2 (3 changes); by far the largest number (more than half) are of type 4.<sup>68</sup> Third, very few of the changes (16 in all) were made for the 2nd ed. of Vols. I and II of *Dissertations and Discussions* (1867), and of these almost all were relatively trivial (12 involved the removal of italics that had survived the apparently thorough reduction of shrillness in 1859). It should be noted that while what, to modern taste, might seem to be excessive italicization appears in articles by others in the *Monthly Repository*, Mill's usage in these articles went far beyond that journal's norm. Finally, the non-substantive changes, like those in Mill's other writings, generally parallel those of the substantives.<sup>69</sup>

Any selection of significant or even merely interesting variants will reflect subjective judgments, but, especially when seen in conjunction with the *Autobiography* and the other literary essays, it seems likely that most readers would attach importance to the long type 1 variants (p. 353<sub>s-s</sub> and p. 365<sub>a</sub>) that originally closed the separate essays. The former contains a comparison of French and Grecian (Modern and Ancient) artists (capped by a quotation from Carlyle), an account of beauty in painting, illustrated by Claude Lorraine and Salvator Rosa, and a passage on the weakness of modern architecture compared to the Classical and Gothic "tongues" which it "parrots" (here a quotation from Milton is used). The latter (with a quotation from Wordsworth) has a different kind of interest, explaining as it does (if again somewhat mysteriously) Mill's use of the signature "Antiquus," and by inference its successor, the simple "A" that he normally used in the *London and Westminster Review*.

An example of the few and slight type 2 changes may be seen in the deletion of "last summer" from the account of Mme Schröder-Devrient's performance in *Fidelio* at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, in 1832 (p. 351<sub>q</sub>).

Probably the most easily identified characteristic of Mill's revisions is the search for the properly weighted judgment, resulting in the qualifications that we count as type 3 changes. Most common are substitutions of a less extreme modifier: in 1859 "rarely" replaced "never" at p. 344<sub>j-j</sub>, and "commonly" replaced "always" at p. 364<sub>t-t</sub>. (See also the string of changes, pp. 359-60<sub>b-b</sub> to<sub>f</sub>.) A troublesome instance of scholarly obfuscation may be instanced: a description of poetry (in quotation marks) as "man's thoughts tinged by his feelings" is ascribed by Mill to "a writer in *Blackwood's Magazine*"; in 1859 he says, bluntly, "He defines" it as such; but in 1833 he had said, "We forget his exact words, but in substance he defined" (p. 348<sub>i-i</sub>)—he almost certainly refers to John Wilson, who used similar phrases (especially *after* Mill wrote these words), but no such definition has been located by us. Perhaps Mill was simply seeking a more positive persona, as in a similar change where "We believe that whenever" is strengthened to just "Whenever" (p. 362<sub>j-j</sub>). There are also some that remind one of the circumstances relating to the composition: at p. 364<sub>w-w</sub> Mill in 1833 placed the "logician-poet" above the "mere poet"; "logician" was the term he used at the time in contrasting himself with Carlyle the "poet"; in 1859 the higher talent was assigned to the "philosopher-poet"—not, it should be said, with any self-reference.

While the type 4 changes are most trivial as well as most common, they have a cumulative effect (as in the removal of italics already cited, with which may be compared the removal of exclamation marks at, e.g., p. 363<sub>o-o</sub>). Also some have special or typical interest, not infrequently of

a slightly puzzling kind. For instance, at p. 347*b-b*, when Mill, referring to the powers of the imagination, altered “arranged in the colours and seen through the medium” to “seen through the medium and arrayed in the colours,” had his attention been caught by what may well be a printer’s misreading of his hand (“arranged” for “arrayed”) which led him to reconsider the temporal or logical priority of the two clauses?<sup>70</sup>

The final two essays in this group, the parallel reviews in 1833 of *The Producing Man’s Companion* by W. B. Adams, were published in April (*Monthly Repository*) and June (*Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine*)—that is, in the period between the two essays on poetry. The one in *Tait’s*, though it appeared later, was written and submitted before the one in the *Monthly Repository*, being proposed by Mill in a letter to William Tait of 23 January, 1833:

I shall probably send you, in time for your March number, a short review of an excellent book, the *Producing Man’s Companion*, by Junius Redivivus—whom I think the very best popular writer whom the enlightened radicals count in their ranks—though I like his *personal* articles in the *Examiner* less than the many admirable papers he has written in the *True Sun*, *Mechanics Magazine* & various other periodicals.<sup>71</sup>

The article went to Tait on 28 February, with Mill’s comment: “I send you a paper on Junius Redivivus, for your Magazine, in case you think it worthy of insertion.”<sup>72</sup> He also mentioned it to Carlyle in a letter of 3 March, saying that he was forwarding a copy of the book to him.<sup>73</sup> Some implications in the review evidently gave Tait doubts, which Mill attempted to assuage on 30 March:

With respect to the article on Junius Redivivus, I myself have not made up my mind on the question whether the situation of the working classes is on the whole better or worse than it was: I worded the article so as if possible not to commit the Magazine to a decided opinion, but I thought the testimony of a writer who evidently knows much of the working people, an article of evidence very fit to be received, though not sufficient to decide the question. Could not you let the article stand as it is, and express your dissent from the opinion of J. R. in an editorial note? If not, I should like to see the article again before it is printed; not from any fear that you should “spoil” the article, but because when anything is to be left out, a writer almost always thinks it necessary that something else should be put in.

As to the matter of fact in dispute I feel convinced from the great diversity of opinion among equally good observers, & from the result of the enquiries of the Poor Law Commission, that the truth varies very much in different parts of the kingdom & among different classes of workmen.

Are there any other parts of the article which you object to?<sup>74</sup>

Tait’s reservations may have delayed publication, but in any case almost a month earlier, indeed on 1 March, the day after he had sent his review to Tait, Mill said to W. J. Fox: “I *will* write a short paper for the next M.R. on Junius Redivivus.”<sup>75</sup> This he produced with his usual dispatch, commenting to Carlyle in a letter of 11-12 April:

Tait has not yet published that paper on Junius Redivivus, but in the meantime I have written another on the same subject for Fox, (a much better one as I think), which has appeared in the April number, and . . . you shall have it by the first opportunity.<sup>76</sup>

Before the “first opportunity” had arrived, Carlyle had seen a quoted passage that prompted him to think that, just as he had detected a new mystic (that is, a promising disciple) in Mill’s anonymous articles on the Spirit of the Age in the *Examiner*, so here he had found another.<sup>77</sup> Mill, saying on 18 May that he has finally sent a copy, adds: “The passage you saw quoted about Books and Men, was from that; so there is not evidence therein of ‘another mystic’; so much the worse.”<sup>78</sup>

The brief notice of *Views in the Pyrenees*, which is not mentioned by Mill in extant correspondence or in the *Autobiography*, also appeared in 1833 in the *Monthly Repository*. Though slight, it shows his continued enthusiasm for mountain views; one recalls his remark that the powerful effect of Wordsworth on him was in part the result of Wordsworth’s setting much of his poetry in mountains, which, says Mill, “owing to my early Pyrenean excursion, were my ideal of natural beauty” (p. 151). Though we have no evidence to support the assertion, it seems not unlikely that Mill chose to notice the book, rather than having it given to him for review merely by accident.

The next five essays have a common source: all appeared in the journal edited by Mill, the *London Review* (later the *London and Westminster Review*). As might be expected when he was his own editor, they are more assured and independent. This tone is also seen, even when mixed with apology, in Mill’s editorial notes for the review, printed in Appendix F below.<sup>79</sup> These help us see Mill in his editorial role, though it seems that Alexander Bain overstates the case in saying that the review “abounds in editorial *caveats*, attached to the articles: [Mill’s] principle of seeing partial truth on opposite sides was carried out in this form.”<sup>80</sup> There can be no question, however, about their casting more light on his friendships with Sterling and Carlyle, and on his running battle with Abraham Hayward.<sup>81</sup>

Mill’s first major literary essay in his own journal was the review of Tennyson (1835), which has links with the preceding years: as we have already mentioned, “The Two Kinds of Poetry” was first conceived as the prelude to a notice of Tennyson. Had such a notice appeared in 1833, what has been recognized as Mill’s early appreciation of Tennyson’s poems would have been even more remarkable. His view was enthusiastic: in a letter to J. P. Nichol he ranked them as “the best poems . . . which have appeared since the best days of Coleridge.”<sup>82</sup> As is typical of him, impressions were retained: a particular view, he wrote to his wife twenty years later, is “as one fancies the valley in Tennyson’s Oenone, only that there is no forest or turf here”; Francis Mineka notes that Mill had quoted in his review the lines from “Oenone” beginning, “There is a vale in Ida.”<sup>83</sup>

Though Mill chose, regrettably and for unknown reasons, not to include his review of Tennyson in *Dissertations and Discussions*, the next three items from the *London and Westminster* were represented there, though, in one case, only by the opening and, in another, by the closing paragraphs. That is, the “review” parts were deleted, leaving the generalized comments appropriate to an ex-

ordium and a peroration. The subject of the first of these reviews, Arthur Helps's *Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd*, was another book that Mill held in more than a reviewer's regard. According to Alexander Bain,

This [review] was another occasion when [Mill] displayed his passion for discerning and encouraging the first indications of talent and genius. I remember when I first came to London, this was one of the books he lent me; and we agreed that, in point of thinking power, Helps had not fulfilled the promise of that little work.<sup>84</sup>

Mill seems to have pondered the subject for almost a year, for he told Nichol just after the article appeared that it "was all prepared last spring, though I had not put any of it on paper."<sup>85</sup> As usual, when he put pen to paper, the ink flowed easily and quickly: "I have stolen in the last two days, time to begin a little article for the review & a day or two more will finish it."<sup>86</sup> Helps gave Mill one of those fine moments of gratification for reviewers when he let Mill know, over thirty years later, that his had been a word in season. Mill replied:

If, as you intimate, my review of your first publication had any share in procuring for the world the series of works which I & so many others have since read with so much pleasure & instruction; far from regarding this exploit of mine as a sin to be repented of, I should look upon it as a fair set off against a good many sins.<sup>87</sup>

No detailed comment is needed on the revisions Mill made in the reprinted paragraphs, the discussion on pp. xxxv-xxxvi above being intended to cover the general issues and types. It may be noted, however, that there are comparatively few changes, only 12, or 2.4 per page of *Dissertations and Discussions*,<sup>88</sup> all of them type 3 or type 4, and all but 2 made in 1859.

"Ware's Letters from Palmyra" is not mentioned in any of Mill's extant correspondence or in the *Autobiography*. The novel, published in the United States, was probably first brought to his attention by its mention (which he quotes to open his review) in Harriet Martineau's *Society in America*. Here again there are few variants (7, or 2.3 per page of *Dissertations and Discussions*, each made in 1859), all of which are minor.<sup>89</sup>

Mill's review of Alfred de Vigny's *Œuvres*, which appears in *Dissertations and Discussions*, less only the summary and running comment on *Cinq Mars* (p. 474*c*), is his last major attempt, in Bain's words, "to philosophize upon Literature and Poetry."<sup>90</sup> Though we have only two comments on it by Mill, they indicate why he thought it was worth reprinting, and also show how he saw it in relation to his earlier essays. In the Early Draft he remarks that of his literary essays, "the one which contained most thought" was that on Vigny (p. 224). And in a letter of February, 1841, to George Henry Lewes, he says:

You have not however yet convinced me that the line between poetry, & passionate writing of any kind, is best drawn where metre ends & prose begins. The distinction between the artistic expression of feeling for feeling's sake & the artistic expression of feeling for the sake of compassing an end, or as I have phrased it between poetry & eloquence, appears to me to run through all art; & I am averse to saying that nothing is poetry which is not in *words*, as well as to saying that all passionate writing in verse

is poetry. At the same time I allow that there is a natural, not an arbitrary relation between metre & what *I* call poetry. This is one of the truths I had not arrived at when I wrote those papers in the *Repository* but what afterwards occurred to me on the matter I put (in a very condensed form) into the concluding part of an article in the *L. & W.* on Alfred de Vigny. I wish you would look at that same when you have time, (I will shew it to you) & tell me whether what I have said there exhausts the meaning of what you say about the *organic* character of metre, or whether there is still something further which I have to take into my theory.<sup>91</sup>

A glance at the revisions in this article helps establish the generalization offered above, that the later the date of an essay (this appeared in 1838), the less rewriting was needed: here there are 132 substantive changes, or 3.1 per page of *Dissertations and Discussions* (as against 6.5 per page for “Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties” of 1833).<sup>92</sup> Once again no extensive treatment of the variants is called for. As usual, the order of frequency is type 4, type 3, type 1, type 2, with more than half being type 4,<sup>93</sup> and more than a third type 3; and very few changes were made in 1867 (7 of 132).<sup>94</sup>

The last essay in this group from the *London and Westminster* is Mill’s first review (Aug., 1838) of Richard Monckton Milnes. It would appear again that he was searching out good material for the *Review*, for the first issues of Milnes’s two books (later in the year published as Milnes’s *Poems*, Vols. I and II) were rather elusive. In the review, it will be noted, Mill says one of the volumes “was not designed for publication, and the other is not yet published” (p. 505). Editorial consultation led him to write to Leigh Hunt on 11 November, 1838:

Robertson tells me you have a copy of Mr. Milnes’ volume of poems: if you are not needing it for a day or two, would it be too much to beg the favour of a sight of it? Something relating to the next number of the *Review* may depend upon the opinion we form of it—if left at Hooper’s or sent by omnibus or parcel company to the I[ndia] H[ouse] I should receive it.<sup>95</sup>

Despite the cautious tone (“Something . . . may depend”), Mill probably already intended to review the volumes, as the search and the praise in the review suggest prior knowledge.

After giving up the editorship and proprietorship of the *London and Westminster*, Mill wrote only a little for the *Westminster*, as it then once more became. The next two essays in this volume, appreciative notices of Milnes’s *Poetry for the People* and of Macaulay’s *Lays of Ancient Rome*, come from that small group, and it is at least moderately ironical that one of the remnant from the early, ferocious, and anti-poetical days of the *Westminster* should appear in it, almost for the last time, as the author of favourable reviews of poetry by non-Radicals. Nothing, it should be said, is known of the composition of these articles, nor do their texts present any challenges. And the same is true of the final item in the volume, Mill’s letter of January, 1844, in defence of his father, which appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, the journal to which, in 1840, he began to contribute many of his best essays, as James Mill had in the years preceding the founding of the *Westminster*. (Concerning the main issue in this letter, James Mill’s financial obligations to Bentham, one should look at the revision of the Early Draft at p. 56a-a below.) So a cycle, which this volume il-

lustrates, comes to a close: the young sectarian Benthamite, now assured and, with the publication of the *Logic*, widely acclaimed, whose first periodical article was an attack on the *Edinburgh*, has become a contributor to it. The *Autobiography* tells us, of course, that the story does not end here, but the record of Mill's further career as an author must be sought in other volumes of the *Collected Works*.

This is not the appropriate place to enter into detailed exposition of Mill's critical ideas or their relation to his ethical or political thought, and in any case one would be hard pressed to maintain that the essays in this volume—so various in occasion, scope, and seriousness of purpose—represent a coherent body of theory. A few of the pieces are not really “literary” at all (in the stricter sense of treating imaginative literature imaginatively), while others suggest that, as a practical critic, Mill had, by our standards, less than excellent taste. (His lengthy quotations in the two reviews of Milnes amount to a small anthology of the world's worst poetry.) Even so, there are in the essays some statements that have, to modify Keats's phrase, put Mill “among the English critics,” and these deserve to be noticed.

The best known of Mill's critical ideas are contained in “Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties,” and most of them more specifically in the first section (originally published separately as “What Is Poetry?”), where, after setting down the object of poetry (“to act upon the emotions”) and distinguishing between poetry and eloquence (“eloquence is *heard*, poetry is *overheard*”), Mill arrives at this summary definition: “Poetry is feeling, confessing itself to itself in moments of solitude, and embodying itself in symbols, which are the nearest possible representations of the feeling in the exact shape in which it exists in the poet's mind” (p. 348). The three elements of this definition—the strong (almost exclusive) emphasis on feeling, the idea of the poet as self-confessor in solitude, and the description of symbols as vehicles of the poet's emotion—are distinctive, and these are the points that have been of most interest to historians of modern criticism.<sup>96</sup>

Near the beginning of the essay, in a preliminary attempt to pin down exactly where poetry resides, Mill says that “poetry is not in the object itself, nor in the scientific truth itself, but in the state of mind in which the one and the other may be contemplated,” and he then invents an example, often quoted, of object as representation of feeling:

If a poet describes a lion, he does not describe him as a naturalist would, nor even as a traveller would, who was intent upon stating the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He describes him by imagery, that is, by suggesting the most striking likenesses and contrasts which might occur to a mind contemplating the lion, in the state of awe, wonder, or terror, which the spectacle naturally excites, or is, on the occasion, supposed to excite. Now this is describing the lion professedly, but the state of excitement of the spectator really. (P. 347.)

In the later twentieth century, on the hither side of T. S. Eliot's famous definition of “objective correlative”<sup>97</sup> (which is certainly what Mill, in his simpler way, intended the lion to exemplify) and several decades of New Critical elaboration of the concept, we can appreciate Mill's intelligence, even precocity, at this point in the essay. But in the course of developing the notion of self-

confession—“All poetry is of the nature of soliloquy,” “no trace of consciousness that any eyes are upon us must be visible in the work itself,” “Poetry . . . is the natural fruit of solitude and meditation” (p. 349)—he strips poetry of nearly all its traditional elements (story, incident, description, moral truth, above all an audience to interact with), and in place of the poet as, in Wordsworth’s Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (para. 15), “a man speaking to men,” we are presented with the much narrower concept of a man speaking to himself about himself.<sup>98</sup>

Mill was himself soliloquizing, of course, and his essay has the rhetorical character of the greater Romantic lyric, taking shape according to the movement of the speaker’s mind. In the second section (originally published separately as “The Two Kinds of Poetry”), Mill restores some of what he had taken away by defining two categories, the poetry of the “poet by nature” (represented by Shelley) and the “poetry of culture” (Wordsworth—some would today reverse the examples), and then, perhaps upon realizing that he has produced two halves of something rather than two discrete entities, ends up with the ideal union of the two in the concept “philosopher-poet” (p. 364).<sup>99</sup> And this is the position that he *begins* with when he enters into the theoretical section of his review of Tennyson: “There are in the character of every true poet, two elements, for one of which he is indebted to nature, for the other to cultivation” (p. 413).

The Tennyson essay contains an eloquent statement on the relative value of feeling and thought in achieving “the noblest end of poetry”:

Every great poet, every poet who has extensively or permanently influenced mankind, has been a great thinker;—has had a philosophy, though perhaps he did not call it by that name;—has had his mind full of thoughts, derived not merely from passive sensibility, but from trains of reflection, from observation, analysis, and generalization. . . . Where the poetic temperament exists in its greatest degree, while the systematic culture of the intellect has been neglected, we may expect to find, what we do find in the best poems of Shelley—vivid representations of states of passive and dreamy emotion, fitted to give extreme pleasure to persons of similar organization to the poet, but not likely to be sympathized in, because not understood, by any other persons; and scarcely conducing at all to the noblest end of poetry as an intellectual pursuit, that of acting upon the desires and characters of mankind through their emotions, to raise them towards the perfection of their nature. This, like every other adaptation of means to ends, is the work of cultivated reason; and the poet’s success in it will be in proportion to the intrinsic value of his thoughts, and to the command which he has acquired over the materials of his imagination, for placing those thoughts in a strong light before the intellect, and impressing them on the feelings. (Pp. 413-14.)

This is a much more generous and reasonable view of poetry than that of the first section of “Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties,” and it much better represents Mill’s considered ideas on the subject. From the Tennyson essay on, and most prominently in the reviews of Vigny, Milnes, and Macaulay, his emphasis is where readers of the *Autobiography* would expect it to be—on the importance of feeling *and* thought, and on the educational, social, and cultural functions of po-

etry (“to raise [men and women] towards the perfection of their nature”). These later ideas, unlike those of “Thoughts on Poetry,” are not distinctive; they were long in the public domain before Mill arrived. But this is not the first instance in which Mill sacrificed distinctive originality for the sake of more substantial and more comprehensive truth.

There is little evidence that Mill read poetry later in life,<sup>100</sup> and it is probably best, in the overall view, to say that where, before the mental crisis, he had been “theoretically indifferent” to poetry (see p. 115), ever afterward he was theoretically in favour of it—still, however, almost entirely at the level of theory. But though he wrote no more articles or reviews that would qualify for inclusion as “literary essays,” we nevertheless have, from his middle years, the fine paragraphs about discovering Wordsworth and the importance of poetry and “culture of the feelings” in the *Autobiography* (pp. 149-53), and from his last decade the powerful defence of poetry and art at the conclusion of his *Inaugural Address Delivered to the University of St. Andrews* (1867). What is most significant, finally, is not any specific idea about the nature of poetry or the role of the poet, but instead the spectacle of Mill’s “strange confusion . . . endeavouring to unite poetry and philosophy.”<sup>101</sup> This “confusion” and endeavour made him a broader, deeper, and more complex thinker and writer than he had been before, and they continue to make him interesting and valuable. His more orderly predecessors and contemporaries now figure mainly in footnotes; he, on the other hand, as the works collected in these volumes amply testify, remains alive in text and in context.

## Endnotes

[1] *Later Letters [LL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, *Collected Works [CW]*, Vols. XIV-XVII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), Vol. XIV, p. 142 (29 Jan., 1854).

[2] References to material printed in this volume are normally given in the text. The third of these stated purposes, it should be noted, is not present in the corresponding text of the Early Draft.

[3] Percentages are used because the setting of the text in this edition (parallel passages with blank spaces) and the number of footnotes make page counting unreliable. For that reason, in both Table 1 and Table 2 below, the counts are based on Jack Stillinger’s editions of the *Autobiography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969) and *The Early Draft of John Stuart Mill’s “Autobiography”* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961).

[4] P. 251. The composition of the concluding pages of Chap. vii is described on p. xxvii below.

[5] The acknowledgments are not extensive, though Helen Taylor is given a page explicitly (and more implicitly), and Thomas Hare’s writings are also given a page.

[6] If we include the discussion of his writings while he was a member of parliament, the account fills about twenty pages, whereas that of his crisis occupies about eight.



[7] See *Earlier Letters [EL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, *CW*, Vols. XII-XIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), Vol. XII, pp. 6-10.

[8] See Anna J. Mill, ed., *John Mill's Boyhood Visit to France* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), esp. pp. 24, 28, 35, 43, 50.

[9] Given Mill's attitude towards his own life, it is not surprising that the *Autobiography* lacks particularity of detail. But there are some sentences that convey a sense of luminous memory breaking through the calm level. Often these have to do with his father's use of the Socratic method in teaching: "my recollection," he says, "is almost wholly of failures, hardly ever of success" (p. 35). Earlier he had remarked that he "well" remembered "how, and in what particular walk," his father had attempted to get him to understand syllogistic logic (p. 21); here he goes on to mention what was obviously vivid in his mind, forty years after the event, his inability to define "idea," and his father's challenging him for having said that "something was true in theory but required correction in practice" (p. 35). Shortly thereafter he says he remembers "the very place in Hyde Park where, in [his] fourteenth year," his father explained to him how unusual a person his education had made him (p. 37). Perhaps the most surprising passage is that concerning Ford Abbey, where the grounds, Mill (with his wife's help) says, "were riant and secluded, umbrageous, and full of the sound of falling waters" (p. 57). More often the emotion is excluded with the telling detail, and only retracing the process of revision gives an opening: he mentions reading Dugald Stewart on reasoning "a second or third time" (originally he had written—probably correctly—"third or fourth"), but he cancelled "sitting in the garden at Mickleham" (where the Mills had a cottage). The detail is striking for anyone who has handled the bulky folios of Stewart, another matter that Mill omits. (Pp. 188-9.)

[10] Probably the one he intended to tell most against a general application of his father's methods is that on p. 37, where Mill says that much of what was accomplished was incompatible with "any great amount of intercourse with other boys." (It need not be said that this pre-Freudian remark has no special reference to the English public schools.)

[11] See John Arthur Roebuck's account in his *Life and Letters*, ed. R. E. Leader (London: Arnold, 1897), pp. 25-8. See also pp. 306-7, where Leader gives Roebuck's speech at an election meeting in support of Mill's candidacy for Westminster (reported in the *Morning Star*, 7 Apr., 1865, p. 2).

[12] See John M. Robson, "John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, with Some Observations on James Mill," in *Essays in English Literature Presented to A. S. P. Woodhouse*, ed. M. MacLure and F. W. Watt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), p. 254.

[13] One, "On the Utility of Knowledge," was dated 1823 by its editor, H. J. Laski (who had the MS in his possession); see Mill's *Autobiography*, ed. Laski (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), pp. 267-74. The MS of the other, "On Parliamentary Reform," is inscribed by Mill "1823 or 24" (Mill-Taylor Collection, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London School of Economics).

[14] The Utilitarian Society included William Prescott (Grote's banking partner), William Eytton Tooke, William Ellis, George John Graham, and John Arthur Roebuck; the Society of Students of Mental Philosophy (which Harriet Grote called "the Brangles") included all these (though Tooke is not named in known sources) plus, at one time or another, George Grote, Horace Grant, Henry Cole, Edward Lytton Bulwer, "two brothers Whitmore" (probably George and William, who were members of the London Debating Society), and [John?] Wilson. (See Textual Introduction, *A System of Logic, CW*, Vols. VII-VIII [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973], Vol. VII, p. liii, and the sources there cited, and F. E. Sparshott, Introduction, *Essays on Philosophy and the Classics, CW*, Vol. XI [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978], p. viii n.)

[15] He mentions Roebuck, Ellis, and Charles Austin (pp. 127-9).

[16] See pp. 129-33. Roebuck was (for most of the period) Mill's major ally, but many other friends joined in the fray. The Society continued for a few years after Mill (with John Sterling, a new friend made through the Society) withdrew in 1829.

[17] P. 123. Mill's assertion that he "learnt German" at this time, and his later mention of reading "Goethe and other Germans" (adding in an earlier version, "either in the original or in translations," p. 160*b*), merit attention, because the question whether he read the language is often raised, especially in connection with his philosophy. The Hamiltonian method (set out in James Hamilton, *The History, Principles, Practice and Results of the Hamiltonian System* [Manchester, Sowler, 1829]) involved immediate word for word translation by the student, the method originally used, and apparently still approved, by James Mill, who, on 15 Nov., 1825, was one of a group that examined "eight lads" of poor families who had been learning Latin, French, and Italian by this system (*Morning Chronicle*, 16 Nov., 1825).

[18] In the Early Draft the sentence as first written reinforced the point by continuing, "than during the next few years." Harriet Taylor underscored "few" and Mill responded with the question, "meaning of this mark?" Her answer, whatever it was, led to the deletion of the words.

[19] There are references on pp. 21, 147-9. He played the piano (and composed in an amateur way); the piano he used in France still exists, in Fondation Flandreysy-Espérandieu, Palais du Roure, Avignon.

[20] See John M. Robson, "J. S. Mill's Theory of Poetry," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XXIX (July, 1960), 420-37, and, for a more personal application of the theory, Robson, "Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill. Artist and Scientist," *Queen's Quarterly*, LXXIII (Summer, 1966), 167-86.

[21] Mill surely knew of Fox, if he had not actually met him, as early as 1824, for Fox contributed to the first number of the *Westminster* the lead article, which almost certainly is one of the two Mill says he took most to heart (see p. 96 below).

[22] 3 July, 1831, pp. 420-1; 8 Apr., 1832, p. 230, 21 Apr., 1833, p. 245; 20 Apr., 1834, p. 244, and 4 Jan., 1835, p. 4.

[23] 17 Mar., 1833, pp. 164-5; 14 Apr., 1833, pp. 229-30; 16 June, 1833, pp. 372-3; 8 Sept., 1833, p. 567; 15 Dec., 1833, pp. 788-9; 12 Jan., 1834, p. 21.

[24] *Monthly Repository*, n.s. VII (Mar., 1833), 215, and *ibid.* (Sept., 1833), 601, and 593.

[25] As an example (not a complete account), the following persons, all of whom most certainly influenced Mill in some significant way, are, except as noted, given two sentences or less: Ricardo, Joseph Hume, Samuel Bentham and his family (about five sentences), Mill's teachers in France, Say (four sentences), W. E. Tooke, William Ellis, G. J. Graham, Thirlwall (three sentences), Coleridge, Goethe, Fonblanque (three sentences), and Bain.

[26] In the Early Draft; about three pages were removed in the final revision.

[27] In the Early Draft; the passage was removed in the final revision.

[28] Though Helen Taylor had nothing to do with the formation of Mill's central views, she was a major influence on the expression of his ideas and on his actions in the last decade of his life.

[29] One of them seems best relegated to a footnote, important as it is: would it not have been instructive for him to have given more space to the influence on him of the dead (Aristotle, Bacon, Locke, as well as the acknowledged Plato)?

[30] This section on the composition of the work and the transmission and first publication of the text draws (sometimes verbatim) on two previous accounts by Jack Stillinger—"The Text of John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography*," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, XLIII (Sept., 1960), 220-42, and the introduction to *The Early Draft of John Stuart Mill's "Autobiography."* These in turn are indebted to Albert William Levi's pioneer work in "The Writing of Mill's *Autobiography*," *Ethics*, LXI (July, 1951), 284-96.

[31] He used the same method in the extant MSS of "Notes on Some of the More Popular Dialogues of Plato" (see Textual Introduction, *Essays on Philosophy and the Classics*, *CW*, Vol. XI, pp. lxxxi-lxxxii, and illustration facing p. 175) and in the surviving MS page of "The Silk Trade" (see *Essays on Economics and Society*, *CW*, Vol. IV [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967], illustration facing p. 138).

[32] Diary entry for 19 Jan., 1854, in *The Letters of John Stuart Mill*, ed. Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), Vol. II, p. 361.

[33] *LL*, *CW*, Vol. XIV, pp. 137-8 (23 Jan., 1854) (At the end of this passage, as frequently elsewhere in his letters to her, Mill refers to his wife in the third person.)

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 154. Between 23 Jan. and 10 Feb. the "Life" is mentioned briefly in two other letters: "I fancy I see one large or two small posthumous volumes of Essays, with the Life at their head," he writes on 29 Jan. (*ibid.*, p. 142); and on 4 Feb. he promises to "look again through the Life" when he has finished rewriting "Nature" (*ibid.*, p. 149). The "Essays" that he was envisioning in the first of these (29 Jan.) include "Nature," "Utility of Religion," *On Liberty*, and some pieces later incorporated into *Utilitarianism*; presumably they are also the "various Essays, for eventual publication, on some of the fundamental questions of human and social life" that he refers to toward the end of the *Autobiography* (p. 245 below). See Textual Introduction, *Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society*, *CW*, Vol. X (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), pp. cxxii-cxxix.

[35] But apparently not the whole of Part II—or, more specifically, not the text of RII 20 (see the fourth paragraph below, and App. G, pp. 616-17)—since Mill says in both letters that he has written nothing of their “private circumstances.” Two breaks in the composition of the original Part II are evident from changes in pen, the first following the text of the extract given from RII.1-8 (pp. 617-24 below), the second coming after the sentence ending at 222.20 (“ . . . did not know what to say.”)

[36] *LL, CW*, Vol. XIV, p. 131.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 159.

[38] F. A. Hayek, *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), p. 196.

[39] *LL, CW*, Vol. XIV, p. 163.

[40] *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, ed. Elliot, Vol. II, p. 373.

[41] *LL, CW*, Vol. XIV, pp. 165-6.

[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 152, 178.

[43] Levi, “The Writing of Mill’s *Autobiography*,” p. 292. The passage from RII.20 was rewritten as the present 236.15-24. See also the textual notes on pp. 236-7.

[44] *LL, CW*, Vol. XIV, p. 168.

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 190.

[46] Her pencilled markings, alterations, and comments appear in nearly a hundred of the 169 leaves, they are absent most notably in the revised leaves that replaced R119-21, RII.1-8, 20, and 24. Occasional markings and alterations of Mill’s revisions at left—revisions made as a result of her earlier markings (e.g., in the discarded versions given in the long textual note on pp. 64-5)—are evidence that she read at least some of the MS twice.

[47] The dating is based on Helen Taylor’s notes in the 1873 first edition, pp. 240, 251. “Written about 1861” appended to the end of the paragraph at 247.17 in the present volume, and “What precedes was written or revised previous to, or during the year 1861. What follows was written in 1870” appended to the end of the paragraph at 251.9. As is explained below, several paragraphs of Columbia MS text were reordered in the Rylands transcript (and thence in the 1873 edition) in the span where the latter note occurs. But 251.9 is where the text of gathering I of the Columbia MS leaves off, and 251.10 is the beginning of K; it seems virtually certain that the dating in the 1873 note should be applied to (because it originally derived from) this division in the MS. There are a few details in the text before 251.10 that postdate the year 1861—e.g., the references on pp. 79 and 105 to John Romilly as “Lord Romilly” (his title beginning in 1865)—but these are in every instance darker-ink interlineations in the Columbia MS and not part of the original writing.

[48] This is how Mill himself viewed it. In a letter of 26 Nov., 1865, he thanks George Grote for “doing justice to my father” in an article in the *Westminster Review*, and adds. “My own

contribution to his memory is already written in a MS designed for posthumous publication [i.e., the *Autobiography*]. though if I live more than a few years longer, I shall very likely publish it while I am alive” (*LL, CW*, Vol. XVI, p. 1121).

[49] The dating is based on the second of Helen Taylor’s notes quoted in n. 47 just above, Mill’s parenthetical date in the text at 276.17, and the first sentence of Helen Taylor’s continuation given below in App. H (p. 625), all of which refer to 1870 or “the winter of 1869-1870.”

[50] Except possibly in one instance (at 251.42), Mill did not respond to, and may never have seen, the handful of alterations and comments pencilled by Helen Taylor in the Columbia MS. For the record, they are as follows: 47.28-9, deletion of the five-word parenthesis; 55.4, deletion of a redundant “in education” after “dispensed with” (an emendation followed in the present text); 193.27, “Not true” written on the opposite verso and connected specifically to the words “or artistic tastes”: 195.6, “Miss Flower” (with the initials “HT”) also on the opposite verso, identifying the “person of genius”, 251.28-9, alteration of “preceded, all . . . her work” to read “preceded it, all . . . my wife’s work”, 251.42, interlineation of “perhaps” (subsequently cancelled in ink, but not necessarily by Mill) after “except”; 253n.22, deletion of “given to the world”; and 274.10, interlineation of “English” before “electors.” Helen Taylor’s note printed below on p. 282 is written in ink.

[51] From an undated pencil draft written on the back of a note to her from the editor Howard Evans, 30 July, 1873 (Mill-Taylor Collection, British Library of Political and Economic Science). Both the Rylands transcript and the 1873 first edition are minutely described, and the dating discussed, in “The Text of John Stuart Mill’s *Autobiography*” (see n. 30 above). Though it has no independent authority, the transcript is of considerable importance textually. Before its rediscovery in 1959, there existed two separate texts of the full work, in the Columbia MS and the 1873 edition, and scholars had no knowledge of their relative authority (there was always the possibility that Mill himself provided copy, in another MS now lost, for the 1873 printing). The Rylands MS shows indisputably that Mill had no direct hand in the copy-text from which 1873 was printed, and thus establishes the Columbia MS as the single authoritative source for the final version of the work.

[52] *Athenaeum*, 11, 18 Oct., 1873, pp. 451, 508, and *The Times*, 17 Oct., 1873, p. 6. The “second edition” of 1873 is apparently a reissue of sheets of the first impression, with a cancellans title leaf pasted to the stub of the original title and a twelve-page index inserted at the end. A sub-edition was issued in New York, by Henry Holt and Co., from plates of the first London issue, in the first week of Nov., 1873.

[53] 264.30-1 (“Miss Helen Taylor . . . character;”), 264.33-8 (“, and have . . . adequate idea”); 264.39-265.1 (“—another companion . . . quality”); 265.3-4 (“, the least . . . attached to it”), 265.30-1 (“at my daughter’s suggestion”); 265.35-6 (“it was enriched . . . writing. But”); 268.10-13 (“And I shall . . . till our return.”); 285.19-37 (“The time . . . others.”); 286.30-287.4 (“At this time . . . were hers.”); 290.16 (“by my daughter and myself.”)

[54] These are listed in “The Text of John Stuart Mill’s *Autobiography*,” pp. 232-3, 237.

[55] She worried a great deal over these passages. In letters of 6 and 13 Sept., 1873, Alexander Bain had urged her to omit the most extravagant parts of Mill's description of her mother as well as herself: "I greatly doubt the propriety of your printing those sentences where he declares her to be a greater poet than Carlyle . . . and a greater thinker than himself—and again, a greater leader than his father (or at all events an equal)" (pp. 183, 213 in the present volume); "I would recommend to you, under all the circumstances, to decline the compliment, for yourself, of being more original than Mr Mill" (Bain refers specifically to the passage at the top of p. 265). Her eloquent reply of 14 Sept., too long to be included here, should be read in full; see "The Text of John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography*," pp. 234-7. The result was a compromise: retention of the passages about her mother on the grounds that Mill meant what he said, and omission of the references to herself because Mill "agreed . . . that nothing known from private intercourse ought to be published if it gives pain to living persons."

[56] Of the fourteen, eight appeared in the *Westminster Review* (including one in the *London Review* and four in the *London and Westminster Review*), four (one of them originally two separate essays) in the *Monthly Repository*, and one each in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* and the *Edinburgh Review*. It is interesting to note that Mill signed his first three essays in the *Monthly Repository* "Antiquus," explaining, when he last used it, his reason both for adopting and for abandoning it (see p. 365), and saying he would henceforth use "A." And in five of the seven that appeared in the *London and Westminster* he used "A"; however, in the two others—the review of Ware and the first review of Milnes—he signed himself "S," perhaps because he had other reviews in the same issues, and did not want readers to think the *Review's* stable was emptying, and he was being left with a terminal case of Hobson's choice.

For economy, here and in similar contexts where no distinction is needed, "*London and Westminster Review*" should be understood to include the two volumes of the *London Review* that appeared before its merger with the *Westminster*.

[57] Alexander Bain, *John Stuart Mill* (London: Longmans, Green, 1882), p. 33.

[58] *EL, CW*, Vol. XII, pp. 97-8.

[59] *Ibid.*, pp. 117-18. The other two articles referred to are "Corporation and Church Property" and "Austin on Jurisprudence."

[60] *Ibid.*, Vol. XIII, p. 449.

[61] *Ibid.*, Vol. XII, p. 133. Later he would surely have regretted saying he was "not so well versed" in poetry.

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 149.

[63] Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society, *CW*, Vol. X, pp. 3-18, and 499-502.

[64] "The J. S. Mill Marginalia in Robert Browning's *Pauline*: A History and Transcription," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, LXVI (2nd quarter, 1972), 135-70, citing, *inter alia*, *EL, CW*, Vol. XII, pp. 157, 162, 174, 185. Our transcription corrects some errors in theirs. The mar-

ginal note quoted below is on p. 47 of *Pauline: A Fragment of a Confession* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1833).

[65] *Monthly Repository*, n.s. VII (Jan., Feb., Apr., 1833), 19-30, 84-8, 231-41. Mill refers to, and quotes from, the concluding portion in his *Logic* (*CW*, Vol. VII, p. 481, and Vol. VIII, pp. 857-8).

[66] *EL*, *CW*, Vol. XII, p. 247.

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 181. For the article on Blakey, see *Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society*, *CW*, Vol. X, pp. 19-29.

[68] There are proportionally rather fewer type 3 changes here; in other essays there is more commonly only slightly more of type 4 than of type 3. See, e.g., *CW*, Vol. X, p. cxxii, and Vol. XVIII, p. lxxvii. In our calculations we are counting the variant notes, not the individual changes.

[69] That is, more (though not preponderantly) occur here than in later essays, and more (with the same qualification) in 1859 than in 1867. The great majority involve changes in the use of commas, but there are almost as many deletions of a comma or a pair of commas (30 instances) as of additions (27 instances). In general, and remembering that some of these changes probably reflect house style, one may say that there is a lightening of punctuation over time—again a tendency seen in Mill’s other writings.

[70] See also pp. 351*n-n*, 356*b*, 357*t-t*, and 360*k-k*. What is very likely a misreading, one paralleled elsewhere, may be seen in the change to “or” from “and” (habitually written by Mill as a small ampersand resembling both “or” and “a”) at p. 358*w-w*; and cf. below, the change from “where” to “when” (p. 423*j-j*) and from “those” to “these” (p. 467*l-l*), very likely the result of other common problems with Mill’s hand.

[71] *EL*, *CW*, Vol. XII, p. 137.

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

[74] *Ibid.*, p. 148.

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 149.

[77] See Carlyle’s letter to Mill of 1 May, 1833, in *The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle*, ed. Charles Richard Sanders, *et al.* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1970- ), Vol. VI, p. 377. Concerning his comment on Mill’s “The Spirit of the Age,” see p. 181*n* below.

[78] *EL*, *CW*, Vol. XII, p. 155.

[79] Some of the worrisome details of an editor’s life can be seen in Mill’s letters, for example in that of June, 1837, to Robertson (*EL*, *CW*, Vol. XII, pp. 338-9), in which he says, in part, “There is the devil to pay on another score—the *new* printers have begun with page 1 instead of page 285”—as indeed No. 10 and 53 (July, 1837) mistakenly did.

A greater problem—more annoying to modern scholars than it evidently was to Mill—concerns the numbering of the volumes of the review. When in 1836 the *London Review* combined with the *Westminster* as the *London and Westminster*, it was decided to preserve the volume sequence for both periodicals. There had been two volumes of the *London*, and twenty-four of the *Westminster*, so the first amalgamated volume was designated Vol. III and XXV. This double numbering was continued until 1838 (Vol. VII and XXIX). At that time it was decided to do something about the first two volumes of the *London*, which had appeared at the same time as, but quite distinct from, Vols. XXIII and XXIV of the *Westminster*, the decision was to give them the next numbers in the *Westminster* sequence, and so they are identified as both *London Review*, Vols. I and II, and *London and Westminster Review*, Vols. XXX and XXXI. The next volume published after this decision (that for 1838-39) was designated as Vol. XXXII. After one more volume, XXXIII (1839-40), Mill relinquished the review, and it became again (with Vol. XXXIV) the *Westminster*. The sequence of the *Westminster* numbers, then, is maintained at the cost of chronology and logic; between XXIX (1838) and XXXII (1838-39) come XXX (1835) and XXXI (1835-36).

All this is quite bad enough, but the confusion is confounded for those who notice the note on the verso of the title page of the bound version of Vol. XXXIII (1839-40), printed on pp. 606-7 below. There it is said, with an apology for the lateness of the announcement and with some peculiar arithmetic, that “to avoid the double numbering” of the volumes, “the numbers of each Review were added together, whereby Vol. VII and XXIX became Vol. XXXI of the united series.” And indeed on the title page of that volume as bound, and in its index, as well as in the footlines, it is identified as Vol. XXXI. However, as indicated on the spines of sets, for the reasons given above, it is properly referred to as Vol. VII and XXIX.

[80] Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, p. 57. The quotation from Locke that appears on the title pages of the review seems to indicate Mill’s determination that the periodical reflect his own search for truth rather than an assured dogmatism: “Those who have not thoroughly examined to the bottom all their own tenets, must confess they are unfit to prescribe to others; and are unreasonable in imposing that as truth on other men’s belief which they themselves have not searched into, nor weighed the arguments of probability on which they should receive or reject it.” (*Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, in *Works*, New ed., 10 vols. (London: Tegg, *et al.*, 1823), Vol. III. p. 104 [Bk IV, Chap xvi. §4]. In Locke the sentence begins, “At least those, who . . . .”)

The accompanying motto may equally well point to the influence over the fledgling review exerted by James Mill (see p. 208 below): “Legitimae inquisitionis vera norma est, ut nihil veniat in practicam, cujus non fit etiam doctrina aliqua et theoria.” (Francis Bacon, *De augmentis scientiarum*, in *Works*, ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, and Douglas Denon Heath, 14 vols. [London: Longman, *et al.*, 1857-74], Vol. I, p. 772.) The English version (*ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 59) of this passage (we have italicized the words omitted from the Latin version in the quotation) reads: “Again, it tends to the perfection of learning, because it is the perfect law of the inquiry of truth, ‘that nothing be in the globe of matter which has not its parallel in the globe of crystal or the understanding,’ that is, that there be nothing in practice, whereof there is no theory or doctrine.”



[81] Concerning Hayward and Mill, see Francis E. Mineka, “John Stuart Mill and Neo-Malthusianism, 1873,” *Mill News Letter*, VIII (Fall, 1972), 3-10. Also, Hayward’s translation of *Faust* was attacked by J. H. Garnier in the *London and Westminster*, III and XXV (Apr., 1836), 366-90.

[82] *EL, CW*, Vol. XII, p. 245.

[83] *LL, CW*, Vol. XIV, p. 382.

[84] Bain, John Stuart Mill, p. 49.

[85] *EL, CW*, Vol. XII, p. 322.

[86] *LL, CW*, Vol. XVII, p. 1969.

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 1709.

[88] Oddly enough, there are comparatively more (22 in total, all but 2 in 1859) changes in accidentals, which do not here, or in the next review (where there are only 5), appear in their final form because the copy-text for each is the earlier version.

[89] All are of type 3 or type 4, except that at p. 460*g-g*, which ranks as a type 1: Mill deleted in 1859 the passage here italicized: “greatly is any book to be valued, which in this age, and in a form suited to it, *and not only unexceptionable but fitted to be most acceptable to the religious leader*, does its part towards keeping alive the chivalrous spirit.”

[90] Bain, John Stuart Mill, p. 52.

[91] *EL, CW*, Vol. XIII, pp. 463-4.

[92] There are also relatively fewer non-substantive changes, only a handful of which were made in 1867 (including the addition of accents on four foreign words or names).

[93] In contrast to the revised essay of 1833, this one shows far less need for the removal of italics; there are only 8 instances (1 dating from 1867), and in one place (p. 484*t-t*) the word “salon” (probably judged still to be foreign) was italicized in 1859.

[94] Mill’s translations of Vigny demonstrate an extraordinary command of French. In those excerpts from *Cinq-Mars* chosen to illustrate Vigny’s ability to convey the character of an age, Mill successfully translates the flavour by employing structures and vocabulary, often cognates, for their archaic or poetic suggestiveness, occasionally leaving French words that contribute to atmosphere or mystery. In the excerpts that illustrate Vigny’s depiction of character and emotions, Mill, in his seemingly effortless way, renders faithfully ideas and nuances of feeling, but he also demonstrates, through the occasional omission and rearrangement of detail, that he has a good eye, and ear, for the dramatic. The most interesting omission and reordering of elements occurs in the translation of Stello’s *credo* concerning his poetic gift (p. 497), where Mill suppresses in each sentence the introductory main clause expressing belief in the self, and moves his affirmation of the poet’s visionary power from first to third place, after his response to Nature and his sympathy with mankind.

[95] *EL, CW*, Vol. XIII, p. 384.

[96] See in particular Alba H. Warren, Jr., *English Poetic Theory, 1825-1865* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), pp. 66-78, M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 23-5; René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism: 1750-1950*, Vol. III (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), pp. 132-6.

[97] In "Hamlet and His Problems" (1919), reprinted in *Selected Essays, 1917-1932* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1932), pp. 124-5. Eliot later echoes Mill in *The Three Voices of Poetry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1954), where the first voice is "the poet talking to himself—or to nobody," and Eliot suggests that "part of our enjoyment of great poetry is the enjoyment of *over-hearing* words which are not addressed to us" (pp. 6, 33). As Mill progresses to a less extreme position, with the emphasis on both thought and feeling that begins with the Tennyson essay, he joins the many anticipators of Eliot's "unified sensibility" (see Eliot's "The Metaphysical Poets," in *Selected Essays*, pp. 245-8).

[98] Though there were other, more immediate stimuluses (Carlyle and James Martineau have been mentioned earlier, and Harriet Taylor is certain to have played a part), the most fundamental and pervasive influence on this essay, as on the literary essays more generally (especially "On Genius" and the reviews of Tennyson and Vigny), is Wordsworth, to whom Mill is indebted not just for quotations and the specific ideas that we have identified in reference notes, but for much of the vocabulary as well (e.g., "representation of feeling," "state of excitement," "feeling pouring itself out," "emotion spontaneously embod[y]ing itself," "overflowing of . . . feelings," "vivid sensations") and even such rhetorical strategies as the affirmative antithesis so characteristic of Wordsworth when he wants to proceed in spite of the logical weakness of his position: "If the above be, as we believe, the true theory . . . or even though it be not so, yet . . ." (p. 350). (The paragraph of advice to readers beginning at the middle of p. 403 suggests that Mill read the 1798 Advertisement to *Lyrical Ballads* as well as the later prefaces.) But Wordsworth in his theory is constantly in touch with his audience, and the narrowness of Mill's position in other respects is similarly unWordsworthian. Possibly we have here a prime case of Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence." The most curious aspect of the relation is Mill's use of the most typically Wordsworthian descriptions of the poet to apply not to Wordsworth but, as it turns out, to Shelley! (See especially the paragraph beginning at the bottom of p. 357.)

[99] This strategy Mill employs elsewhere, most notably in his discussions of Bentham and Coleridge; he found the notion of "halfness" in Carlyle, but the putting together of "halfmen" was probably based on his own self-examination.

[100] The following, however, from Lady Amberley's journal, 28 Sept., 1870, is often quoted. "After dinner Mr. Mill read us Shelley's Ode to Liberty & he got quite excited & moved over it rocking backwards & forwards & nearly choking with emotion; he said himself: 'it is almost too much for one.' Miss Taylor read the Hymn to Intellectual Beauty but in rather a theatrical voice not as pleasant as Mill's, he also some of his favourite bits of Wordsworth whh he admires very much." (*The Amberley Papers*, ed. Bertrand and Patricia Russell [London: Hogarth Press, 1937], Vol. II, p. 375.)

[101] John Bowring's phrase, reported by Caroline Fox, *Memories of Old Friends*, ed. Horace N. Pym (London: Smith, Elder, 1882), p. 113 (journal entry for 7 Aug., 1840).

# VOLUME II - THE PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY. INTRODUCTION BY V.W. BLADEN

## SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume II - The Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy (Books I-II)*, ed. John M. Robson, introduction by V.W. Bladen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/102/9651>>.

## INTRODUCTION

### I. THE APPROACH

The textual precision and inclusiveness of this edition of the *Principles of Political Economy* are due entirely to the intelligence and industry of the textual editor, Professor Robson, and it is only proper that he has written the second introduction, which is concerned with the successive changes in thought and exposition recorded in this edition, and which lays down the principles of textual criticism and procedure followed in preparing the text. It is my privilege to contribute an economist's introduction to the *Principles* as a single complete work, rather than to deal with variations of text. I fully recognize the importance of the work of the textual editor and the value of this edition, but I must explain how different is my own approach. I welcomed an edition which would make the *Principles* in its final form readily available and easy to read because I believe that it is a living book which has present value and significance. The members of the editorial committee have emphasized always the importance of providing easy reading of the main text of the *Works* for those who want to ignore changes over successive editions, and I was glad to have this 7th edition of the *Principles* in such a form. I have always set a high value on the Ashley edition, and was anxious that its virtues should be retained in this edition. Ashley's was not a fully collated edition: it did not meet the needs of the scholar trying to reconstruct the successive editions after 1848; but as a working edition for the modern economist it was superb. It indicated nearly all the textual changes of importance to the modern economist. I am proud that it was the work of the first professor of economics in this University and it is with some sentiment of filial piety that I, one of his successors in the Department of Political Economy, write this introduction.

I have said that this book has present value and significance, and this I must defend. I know that in many universities economists are trained without reading any economics written before World War I. I know that in most universities the history of economic thought, if included in the curriculum, is, nevertheless, considered of no real importance, though possibly of some antiquarian interest. Even where the classical literature is seriously studied the attitude is often that stated

by Professor Frank Knight in his brilliant article on the “Ricardian Theory of Production and Distribution”:<sup>1</sup> he there said that our “primary interest in the ‘ancients’ in such a field as economics is to learn from their mistakes,” and the primary theme of his article was “the contrast between the ‘classical’ system and ‘correct’ views.” By contrast, I am not interested in examining the inadequacies of the “founders” but rather in discovering what we can still learn from them. From my own experience, and from observation of the development of my students, I would argue that the study of the classical economists, and in particular of Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill, is important in the development of the modern economist, in the development of insight if not in the development of analytical skill.

The advance of our science has not been even on all fronts: while we now answer with greater precision and certainty some of the questions the classical economists asked, there are many other questions that we have ceased to ask because we have seen no better way of answering and have been dissatisfied with the apparent lack of a sound basis for the answers given. Some of these questions are, I suggest, as important as, or more important than, the ones we now answer. One of the values of the classical literature is to remind us to ask these questions and to seek anew ways of answering them. The student of this book will not improve his technical analytical skill, but he may come to recognize more fully how much more he needs than technical equipment. There is, as Professor Redfield reminded us, an element of art in science.<sup>2</sup> Alfred Marshall had this in mind when he said: “The economist needs the three great intellectual faculties, perception, imagination and reason: and most of all he needs imagination.”<sup>3</sup> More recently, Professor Boulding has said: “Insight (judgment) and logic (mathematics) are strictly complementary goods.”<sup>4</sup> We know a good deal about training in the techniques of science, we know incredibly little about the development of imagination or judgment. Indeed I am sometimes worried lest we kill off imagination in the process of such training. I cannot prove that a study of the great classics will develop those scarce qualities of imagination and judgment; but I assert that it will develop those qualities in some of us.

This is a lonely position, and I therefore take great comfort in the support of the late Professor Schumpeter and of Lord Robbins. Said Schumpeter in his *History of Economic Analysis*:<sup>5</sup>

Teachers or students who attempt to act upon the theory that the most recent treatise is all they need will soon discover that they are making things unnecessarily difficult for themselves. . . . Any treatise that attempts to render “the present state of science” really renders methods, problems, and results that are historically conditioned and are meaningful only with reference to the historical background from which they spring. . . . The state of any science at any given time implies its past history and cannot be satisfactorily conveyed without making this implicit history explicit.

And Schumpeter went on to a further justification of the study of the classical literature with which I am particularly sympathetic. “Our minds,” he said, “are apt to derive new inspiration from the study of the history of science. Some do so more than others, but there are probably few that do not derive from it any benefit at all. A man’s mind must be indeed sluggish if, standing back from the work of his time and beholding the wide mountain ranges of past thought, he

does not experience a widening of his own horizon.” Lord Robbins, in his *Theory of Economic Policy*,<sup>6</sup> gives similar support: “I suspect,” he there said, “that damage has been done, not merely to historical and speculative culture, but also to our practical insight, by this indifference to our intellectual past—this provincialism in time—which has been so characteristic of our particular branch of social studies.” Lord Robbins went on to a further comment of great importance: “It is no exaggeration to say that it is impossible to understand the evolution and meaning of Western liberal civilization without some understanding of Classical Political Economy.” The contribution of the classical political economists to this cultural heritage may well have been as important as their contribution to the development of the science of economics. Modern economists have some responsibility for conserving and interpreting this part of our cultural and intellectual heritage.

I have said that there is an element of “art” in the science of economics; I need hardly add that economic policy making is an “art”. It involves much more than prescribing on the basis of scientific analysis a particular action with a view to achieving a stated end. In this it is like medicine: in both political economy and medicine when practitioners diagnose and prescribe, judgment is involved. There must be a readiness to act in spite of incomplete knowledge which makes the result of the action uncertain. For economists the problem is frequently complicated by the desire of the public to promote two, or more, ends without recognition of their conflict; to make such conflict clear so that the public may be faced with the necessity of choice is an important function of the economist. But perhaps a more important function of the political economist is to make explicit the implicit but unrecognized values of the community of which he is a member; values which he is likely to share. This function John Stuart Mill performed more fully than most: study of his work may lead more of us to recognize the values implicit in our policy statements, and to attempt to develop similar recognition on the part of the public. Political Economy in the classical tradition comprehended more than economic analysis; some of its inadequacies in analysis may be forgiven when we consider the total contribution it made.

Some of its supposed inadequacies I shall later argue are the product of misinterpretation of the literature, the inadequacy being in the modern reader rather than in the classical writer. Most frequently the source of misinterpretation lies in the failure to identify the question which the writer was trying to answer. Too often we assume that the ancients asked the same questions that we ask; their answers seem stupid in relation to our questions, but may be very intelligent in relation to those they asked. This habit of ours is sometimes a barrier to understanding in current discussion between modern economists; it is a formidable one in understanding the classics. The habit of mind developed in the sympathetic study of the classics may well contribute to more effective communication between modern economists.

It is over fifty years since W. J. Ashley wrote his introduction to his edition of the *Principles*,<sup>7</sup> but what he said of it then is not inappropriate at this later date:

. . . Mill’s *Principles* will long continue to be read and will deserve to be read. It represents an interesting phase in the intellectual history of the nineteenth century. But its merit is more than historical. It is still one of the most stimulating books that can

be put into the hands of students, if they are cautioned at the outset against regarding it as necessarily final in all its parts. On some topics there is still, in my opinion, nothing better in the English language; on others Mill's treatment is still the best point of departure for further enquiry. Whatever its faults, few or many, it is a great treatise, conceived and executed on a lofty plane, and breathing a noble spirit. Mill—especially when we penetrate beneath the magisterial flow of his final text, as we are now enabled to do by the record in this edition of his varying moods—is a very human personality. The reader of to-day is not likely to come to him in too receptive a spirit; and for a long time there will be much that even those who most differ from him will still be able to learn from his pages.

## II. METHOD: SCIENCE AND VALUES

Though Mill had been raised in the Ricardian tradition, the *Principles* is in the tradition of Adam Smith (and Malthus) rather than of Ricardo. Its title suggests this: *Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy*. His Preface to the 1st edition elaborates the point made in the title. Of Adam Smith's work Mill says:

The most characteristic quality . . . is that it invariably associates the principles with their applications. This of itself implies a much wider range of ideas and of topics, than are included in Political Economy, considered as a branch of abstract speculation. For practical purposes, Political Economy is inseparably intertwined with many other branches of social philosophy. Except on matters of mere detail, there are perhaps no practical questions, even among those which approach nearest to the character of purely economical questions, which admit of being decided on economical premises alone. And it is because Adam Smith never loses sight of this truth; because, in his applications of Political Economy, he perpetually appeals to other and often far larger considerations than pure Political Economy affords—that he gives that well-grounded feeling of command over the principles of the subject for purposes of practice. . . . (I.xci.19—xcii.3.)<sup>8</sup>

But Mill felt that advances in “Political Economy, properly so called,” and in “the philosophy of society” had rendered the *Wealth of Nations* “in many parts obsolete” (I.xcii. 11-3). So he decided to attempt to “combine his practical mode of treating his subject with the increased knowledge since acquired of its theory” and to “exhibit the economical phenomena of society in the relation in which they stand to the best social ideas of the present time” (I.xcii.17-20). But while he wanted to make his treatise “more than a mere exposition of the abstract doctrines of Political Economy” he intended that “such an exposition should be found in it” (I.xcii. 28-30). The *Principles* is, then, the product of a Ricardian economist who was also, in the judgment of F. Y. Edgeworth,<sup>9</sup> “pre-eminent in general philosophy,” in which respect he, and he alone, was “comparable to Adam Smith.”

A full understanding of Mill's view of the scope and method of Political Economy involves some semantic difficulty. The term "political economy" as distinguished from "economics" has come to refer to a study of the functioning of the economy in which historical, political, sociological, customary, and non-logical aspects are treated, and in which "values" are examined and policies are discussed not only with reference to the probability of the expected results being achieved, but with reference to the acceptability of the results in the light of values of the individual political economist or of the society of which he is a member. Since most policies have indirect as well as direct effects, it is the business of the political economist to determine as carefully and as fully as he can these indirect effects. The problem of values then becomes not simply that of the choice of the end directly sought, but of the net advantage of achieving the chosen direct end plus the advantages and minus the disadvantages of the indirect results of pursuing the given policy. A simple prescription of policy is only possible when there is certainty as to its direct and indirect effects, and when there is no doubt, or disagreement, as to the net advantages, that is, when there is complete agreement as to the "values" involved. The art of political economy requires, along with the best scientific estimate of probable effects of action (or inaction), a readiness to act (or to recommend action) even though the results are uncertain, and even though the results, if achieved, will not be universally recognized as good. How far the political economist should be honest in indicating the degree of probability of the result, and in identifying the value system which leads him to consider the net advantages of the policy to be positive (and greater than the net advantages of alternative policies which might have been adopted) may be disputed. My own use of the word "honest" indicates my bias. The science of political economy is related to the art of government in much the same way that the science of medicine is related to the art of medicine: there is the same necessity to decide what to do (if anything) in spite of the uncertainty as to the effect of that action (or of inaction): in relation to the art of medicine, the choice of values might seem to be absent, since health is an agreed end, but of course the conflict of values must still enter in since "health" is not simple and indivisible. Even Bentham's formula, "minimize pain," may prove an inadequate guide.

Now what has all this to do with John Stuart Mill? Political Economy meant to him something different from the modern conception, and the difference is not just a matter of words. Political Economy he seems to have used as the name for what we would now call Economic Theory; prescription of policy required, in his view, a consideration of many factors excluded from the abstract analysis of political economy, the effects of which factors could not be as adequately determined as could those of the factors which formed the basis of the analytic part of the study; but if the knowledge and understanding of the economy and of the society were adequate, then Mill would, I think, claim that a "scientific" decision on policy was possible. The problem of values and the conflict of values as something beyond science does not seem to have arisen. I have sometimes argued that the absence of the discussion of values in the classical literature of political economy is explicable in terms of the common acceptance of an implicit scheme of values which, being taken for granted, did not need to be made explicit. But this is hard to maintain in the face of the vigorous criticism in Mill's *Principles* of many of the "bourgeois" ideals, some examples of which will be noted later in this introduction.



I must try to justify these general remarks by some specific examination of Mill's writings, and this takes me back to his early essay on method. In his essay "On the Definition of Political Economy; and on the Method of Investigation Proper to It,"<sup>10</sup> Mill restricted the term "political economy" to the narrow sphere that we would now call "economic theory." He ruled out not only the "art" but even much of the science on which the art must depend:

What is now commonly understood by the term "Political Economy" is not the science of speculative politics, but a branch of that science. It does not treat of the whole of man's nature as modified by the social state, nor of the whole conduct of man in society. It is concerned with him solely as a being who desires to possess wealth, and who is capable of judging of the comparative efficacy of means for obtaining that end. It predicts only such of the phenomena of the social state as take place in consequence of the pursuit of wealth. It makes entire abstraction of every other human passion or motive; except those which may be regarded as *perpetually antagonizing principles to the desire of wealth, namely, aversion to labour, and desire of the present enjoyment of costly indulgences*. . . . [The actions it studies], though many of them are really the result of a plurality of motives, are considered by Political Economy as flowing solely from the desire of wealth. The science then proceeds to investigate the laws which govern these several operations, under the supposition that man is a being who is determined, by the necessity of his nature, to prefer a greater portion of wealth to a smaller in all cases, without any other exception *than that constituted by the two counter-motives already specified*. Not that any political economist was ever so absurd as to suppose that mankind are really thus constituted, but because this is the mode in which science must necessarily proceed. . . . With respect to those parts of human conduct of which wealth is not even the principal object, to these Political Economy does not pretend that its conclusions are applicable. But there are also certain departments of human affairs, in which the acquisition of wealth is the main and acknowledged end. It is only of these that Political Economy takes notice. . . . [It treats] the main and acknowledged end as if it were the sole end. . . . The political economist inquires, what are the actions which would be produced by this desire, if . . . it were unimpeded by any other. In this way a nearer approximation is obtained than would otherwise be practicable. . . . This approximation is then to be corrected by making proper allowance for the effects of any impulses of a different description. . . .

Given this definition of the nature of the science as "abstract," the "method of investigation proper to it" is obviously *a priori*. "It reasons, and, as we contend, must necessarily reason, from assumptions, not from facts. . . . Geometry presupposes an arbitrary definition of a line. . . . Just in the same manner does Political Economy presuppose an arbitrary definition of a man, as a being who invariably does that by which he may obtain the greatest amount of necessaries, conveniences, and luxuries, with the smallest quantity of labour and physical self-denial with which they can be obtained in the existing state of knowledge." Mill regretted that this "definition of man is not formally prefixed to any work on Political Economy," for if it were, "it would be less in danger of being forgotten." He warned the economist to be "on his guard not to ascribe to con-

clusions which are grounded upon an hypothesis a different kind of certainty from that which really belongs to them. They would be true without qualification, only in a case which is purely imaginary.”<sup>11</sup>

All of this is very sound comment on the character and limitation of what we would now call “pure theory,” what Mill refers to in the preface to the *Principles* as “pure political economy.” But Mill asserted that the *a priori* method was not only a legitimate method but was the only legitimate method for the study of economics and social phenomena:<sup>12</sup> “it is vain,” he said, “to hope that truth can be arrived at, either in Political Economy or in any other department of the social science, while we look at the facts in the concrete, clothed in all the complexity with which nature has surrounded them, and endeavour to elicit a general law by a process of induction. . . .”<sup>13</sup> Yet he urged the political economist to study the facts. “Although . . . a philosopher be convinced that no general truths can be attained in the affairs of nations by the *à posteriori* road, it does not the less behove [*sic*] him . . . to sift and scrutinize the details of every specific experiment. Without this, he may be an excellent professor of abstract science,” but “he must rest contented to take no share in practical politics; to have no opinion, or to hold it with extreme modesty, on the applications which should be made of his doctrines to existing circumstances.”<sup>14</sup>

Before writing the *Principles*, Mill wrote his *Logic*; he again discussed the problem of method, but this time he was concerned with the social sciences in general rather than with political economy in particular. The approach remained substantially the same: “The conclusions of theory cannot be trusted, unless confirmed by observation; nor those of observation, unless they can be affiliated to theory. . . .”<sup>15</sup> This indicates some further recognition of the value of “observation,” due probably to the influence of Comte. It was, however, for “ethology” and particularly for the “general science of society” that the “inverse deductive or historical method”<sup>16</sup> was suggested. This general science of society was concerned with the laws of the development of social institutions. This, he saw, required historical study, not only for verification, but for suggestion of hypotheses:

while it is an imperative rule never to introduce any generalization from history into the social science unless sufficient grounds can be pointed out for it in human nature, I do think any one will contend that it would have been possible, setting out from the principles of human nature and from the general circumstances of the position of our species, to determine *à priori* the order in which human development must take place, and to predict, consequently, the general facts of history. . . .<sup>17</sup>

But for political economy the method remained deductive, “reasoning from . . . one law of human nature, and from the principal outward circumstances (whether universal or confined to particular states of society).”<sup>18</sup>

One should not take too seriously what people say about method; what they do is often very different. In the *Principles* Mill decided to follow the example of Adam Smith in associating “the principles with their applications” (I.xci.22). This, he recognized, “implies a much wider range of ideas and of topics, than are included in Political Economy, considered as a branch of abstract speculation,” for there are, perhaps, no practical questions “which admit of being decided on

economical premises alone” (I.xci.23-9). That Mill was wise in choosing to go beyond the bounds of the abstract science can scarcely be doubted. He should, perhaps, have been readier to distinguish those propositions which were precise but limited in application by the nature of the assumptions from which they were deduced, from those propositions which were less precise but were relevant to the real society, not the unreal model. He should also have been more confident, and more venturesome, in his study of the actual. He recognized that in society “custom” was a determinant of income distribution along with “competition.” But he had not yet perceived the possibility of the “scientific” study of custom: “only through the principle of competition,” he said, “has political economy any pretension to the character of a science” (I.239.13-4). Recognition of the modifying influence of custom was essential: “To escape error, we ought, in applying the conclusions of political economy to the actual affairs of life, to consider not only what will happen supposing the maximum of competition, but how far the result will be affected if competition falls short of the maximum” (I.244.22-6). But he gave no estimate of how far short of the maximum competition did fall and no estimate of how much the result was affected. Nor did he see that pure political economy might be able to deal with problems of monopoly and of limited competition. But he did anticipate the results of such modern theory when he argued with reference to retail trade that “when competition does exist, it often, instead of lowering prices, merely divides the gains of the high price among a greater number of dealers” (I.243.7-9).

Curiously enough Mill said little about another source of divergence between “the laws of the science and the facts of life” arising from the unreality of the concept of the economic man. Professor Edgeworth questioned, in his article in Palgrave’s *Dictionary of Political Economy*, whether Mill could consistently retain his view of the deductive character of the science as he began to “doubt the universality of the principle of self-interest.” This doubt was reflected in the chapter on communism, where Mill said: “Mankind are capable of a far greater amount of public spirit than the present age is accustomed to suppose possible” (I.205.16-8). But his eulogy of peasant proprietorship, and for that matter of co-operative factories, was based on the expectation of increased productivity from more direct pecuniary incentive to produce, as it would become the interest of the workers “to do the utmost, instead of the least possible, in exchange for their remuneration” (II.792.4-5). The principle of self-interest might not be universal, but it was recognized to be very powerful. Like Alfred Marshall, Mill seems to have been ready to take advantage of the strongest rather than the highest motives in order to get things done.

In spite of the insistence on the *a priori* character of the science of economics, the complementary insistence on observation of concrete facts opened the way to a more general attack on problems of society through historical and statistical studies; and indeed Mill did not restrict himself to explanations that could be derived *a priori*. Though he was not prepared to consider his broader inquiries as “scientific,” he appears to have been quite confident in the reliability of his explanations, predictions, and judgments in the broader field. What I find missing is a recognition of the dependence of many of his prescriptions on the choice of ends. There is, in the last pages of the *Logic*, a brief discussion of the “Logic of Practice or Art; including Morality and Policy.” He here stated very properly: “A scientific observer or reasoner, merely as such, is not an adviser for practice. His part is only to show that certain consequences follow from certain causes, and

that to obtain certain ends, certain means are the most effectual. Whether the ends themselves are such as ought to be pursued . . . it is no part of his business as a cultivator of science to decide, and science alone will never qualify him for the decision.”<sup>19</sup> If we combine this statement on teleology with his statements on the nature of the science one might suppose that Mill would specify the end before prescribing policy. Much of the best writing in the *Principles* is relevant to the choice of ends, yet there appears to be no recognition of the dependence of his policy prescriptions on the choice of ends. Curiously enough this failure to discuss the choice of ends is explained by the definition of the “science,” and some of the inadequacy of the “abstract science” for purposes of explanation and prediction is related to the neglect of the problems of the choice of ends by the people who are being studied. I propose to elaborate this proposition because I believe it to have contemporary significance.

The definition of “political economy” quoted above specified the end: “the pursuit of wealth.” But two “perpetually antagonizing principles . . . namely aversion to labour and desire of the present enjoyment of costly indulgences” were noted. Here we have a problem of competing ends: more wealth or more leisure, more wealth or more current income. Some passages in the *Principles* are relevant. “In England, it is not the desire of wealth that needs to be taught, but the use of wealth, and appreciation of the objects of desire which wealth cannot purchase. . . . Every real improvement in the character of the English, whether it consist in giving them higher aspirations, or only a juster estimate of the value of their present objects of desire, must necessarily moderate the ardour of their devotion to the pursuit of wealth” (I.105.4-10). The first two editions had put this even more strongly, referring to “the all engrossing torment of their industrialism.” “The desirable medium,” he went on to argue, “is one which mankind have not often known how to hit: when they labour, to do it with all their might, and especially with all their mind; but to devote to labour, for mere pecuniary gain, fewer hours in the day, fewer days in the year, and fewer years of life” (I.105.14—106.3). This is good preaching of values; and is highly relevant to the “art” of political economy, but it also illustrates the need to determine what values are held in order to predict, that is, for the purpose of the science. To treat the problem as one of defining the supply function of labour does not change it from a problem of values.

What Mill thought of as the purely scientific part of economics had only predictive value as long as the specified end was in fact the choice of the people studied. If the chosen end is other than that specified not only is the prescription necessarily different, but this other end enters into the making of the prediction as to the effect of proposed action on which the prescription is based. This relation between the science and the art can be illustrated by a homely example: John Doe is in Toronto one morning and wants to be in Montreal by evening. He has chosen his end; knowledge of the timetables for air and railway travel, of the state of the weather and of the roads, enables him to select the means of getting to Montreal: such knowledge constitutes his science. But suppose the problem really to be that of the scientist in predicting where John Doe (or a thousand like him) will be on a particular night. Knowledge of the timetables (the science relevant to the simpler question) is not enough: the scientist must know what end John Doe has chosen, to stay in Toronto, to go to Montreal, or to go to Windsor.

Consider next the other “antagonizing” principle, “desire of the present enjoyment of costly indulgences.” My first comment is that this involves confusion between “wealth” and “income.” Surely the motive assumed for the abstract science is not the maximum accumulation of wealth with consumption limited to “productive consumption,” so that even the few luxuries of the poor come under scrutiny as doubtfully proper. “. . . [C]onsumption even of productive labourers is not all of it productive consumption. . . . What they consume in keeping up or improving their health, strength, and capacities of work, or in rearing other productive labourers to succeed them, is productive consumption. But consumption on pleasures or luxuries, whether by the idle or by the industrious . . . must be reckoned unproductive: with a reservation perhaps of a certain quantum of enjoyment which may be classed among necessaries, since anything short of it would not be consistent with the greatest efficiency of labour” (I.52.24-33). If consumption were assumed to be so limited the abstract science would be easier, but Mill does not pretend that it either is, or ought to be, so limited. “It would be a great error to regret the large proportion of the annual produce, which in an opulent country goes to supply unproductive consumption. It would be to lament that the community has so much to spare from its necessities, for its pleasures and for all higher uses. This portion of the produce is the fund from which all the wants of the community, other than that of mere living, are provided for. . . . That so great a surplus should be available for such purposes . . . can only be a subject of congratulation” (I.54.29-30).

What then of the antagonizing principle? Mill the preacher is offended by the “costly indulgences”: what is to be regretted is not the size of the surplus available for unproductive consumption but the “prodigious inequality with which this surplus is distributed, the little worth of the objects to which the greater part of it is devoted, and the large share which falls to the lot of persons who render no equivalent service in return” (I.54.32-5). For the abstract science the problem is to establish a supply function for savings which emerges from these values, the choices, of the people. For the art a conflict of ends has emerged: is the wealth pursued worth pursuing, would it be worth pursuing if that wealth were more equally divided? Mill returns to this theme in the chapter on the “Stationary State”:

those who do not accept the present very early stage of human improvement as its ultimate type, may be excused for being comparatively indifferent to the kind of economical progress which excites the congratulations of ordinary politicians; the mere increase of production and accumulation. . . . I know not why it should be a matter of congratulation that persons who are already richer than any one needs to be, should have doubled their means of consuming things which give little or no pleasure except as representative of wealth. . . . It is only in the backward countries of the world that increased production is still an important object. . . . (II.754.29—755.13.) (This J. K. Galbraith has elaborated in his *The Affluent Society*.<sup>20</sup>)

The unkind reference to the Americans in the 1st edition was a dramatic condemnation of the motive “assumed” for the science and of the Malthusian sin of the people. “They have the six points of Chartism, and they have no poverty: and all that these advantages do for them is that the life of the whole of one sex is devoted to dollar-hunting, and of the other to breeding dollar-hunters” (II.754a-a). This is preaching, but success in preaching a different set of values would

change the data of the science. The scientific study of the values of the community is, therefore, I reiterate, a major part of political economy in the wide sense as distinct from political economy conceived as an abstract science; assessment of values is relevant to the determination of means, as well as to the choice of ends. The choice of means requires prediction of the effect of any proposed action (prediction that requires a knowledge of the values held by the community); the choice of ends requires an assessment of cost (what is foregone) of any proposed action. Knowledge of values is required for the science; skill in the science is required for realization of the values.

A very important element remains to be noticed: the means may become partially ends in themselves. Of modern writers, Professor Frank Knight has dealt most effectively with this problem:

When we consider that productive activity takes up the larger part of the waking lives of the great mass of mankind, it is surely not to be assumed without investigation or inquiry that production is a means only, a necessary evil, a sacrifice made for the sake of some good entirely outside the production process. We are impelled to look for ends in the economic process itself, other than the mere consumption of the produce, and to give thoughtful consideration to the possibilities of participation in economic activity as a sphere of self expression and creative achievement.<sup>21</sup> . . . Economists and publicists are coming to realize how largely the efficiency of business and industry is the result of this appeal to intrinsic interest in action; how feeble, in spite of the old economics, is the motivation of mere appetite or cupidity; and how much the driving power of our economic life depends on making and keeping the game interesting. A rapidly growing literature on “incentive” is a witness to this awakening.<sup>22</sup>

That Mill was not unaware of this interplay of means and ends is shown in the chapter on the “Stationary State” where he argues that increased production is a matter of minor importance because it means consuming more things that give little or no pleasure, but also argues: “That the energies of mankind should be kept in employment by the struggle for riches, as they were formerly by the struggle of war, until the better minds succeed in educating the others into better things, is undoubtedly more desirable than that they should rust and stagnate” (II.754.24-7).

Some of the elements of this problem have been exposed (or possibly hidden) in modern discussion of the “net advantages” of particular occupations; but here it is only differential advantages of particular occupations that are considered, not the net advantages of the process of production as a whole. In the calculation of these “net advantages” one needs to consider what the process of production to satisfy the wants of the people does to the character of the people. The means most effective in the supply of their existing wants may mould people into more or less desirable patterns. To Ruskin it appeared that there was a premium on the less desirable characteristics, for success in the business world seemed to depend on these. “In a community regulated by the law of demand and supply but protected from open violence,” Ruskin said, “the persons

who become rich are, generally speaking, industrious, resolute, proud, covetous, prompt, methodical, sensible, unimaginative, insensitive and ignorant. The persons who remain poor are the entirely foolish, the entirely wise, the idle, the reckless, the humble, the thoughtful, the dull, the imaginative, the sensitive, the well-informed, the improvident, the irregularly and impulsively wicked, the clumsy knave, the open thief, the entirely merciful, just, and godly person.”<sup>23</sup> One may not accept this condemnation, but one must recognize that the effect of the process on the people is relevant to the choice of the kind of process.

Mill’s discussion of communism raises another aspect of this when he asks whether communism or competitive capitalism is “consistent with the greatest amount of human liberty and spontaneity” (I.208.34-5). The fluctuation in his assessment of the desirability of communism involves conflict of ends and uncertainty as to the efficacy of means. “After the means of subsistence are assured,” he said, “the next in strength of the personal wants of human beings is liberty . . .” (I.208.35-7). But the schemes which he discussed seemed to involve renouncing “liberty for the sake of equality” (I.209.3-4); and there was reason to fear that equality might weaken the motivation for production. He recognized that the “restraints of Communism would be freedom in comparison with the present condition of the majority of the human race” (I.209.14-5) and he urged his readers to “compare Communism at its best, with the régime of individual property, not as it is but as it might be made” (I.207.23-5). It was not enough for communism to promise “greater personal and mental freedom than is now enjoyed by those who have not enough of either to deserve the name” (I.209.24-6); nor was it acceptable to denounce the restriction on freedom under socialism while accepting the restrictions on freedom of the existing society. “The generality of labourers . . .,” said Mill, “have as little choice of occupation or freedom of locomotion, are practically as dependent on fixed rules and on the will of others, as they could be on any system short of actual slavery . . .” (I.209.15-9). With this should be read those splendid pages at the beginning of his chapter on the “Probable Futurity of the Labouring Classes” (IV.vii), where he discussed “the two conflicting theories respecting the social position desirable for manual labourers,” the “theory of dependence and protection,” and the “theory of self dependence.” Liberty implies independence. There were those who were arguing for a paternal relationship between the rich and the poor, “affectionate tutelage on the one side, respectful and grateful deference on the other” (II.759.25-6) (“spaniel-like servility” was the phrase William Thomas Thornton used). To them Mill pointed out that “All privileged and powerful classes, as such, have used their power in the interest of their own selfishness, and have indulged their self-importance in despising, and not in lovingly caring for, those who were, in their estimation, degraded, by being under the necessity of working for their benefit” (II.760.8-12). He made it clear that even if the “superior classes could be sufficiently improved to govern in the tutelary manner supposed, the inferior classes would be too much improved to be so governed” (II.760.17-9). “Of the working men, at least in the more advanced countries of Europe, it may be pronounced certain, that the patriarchal or paternal system of government is one to which they will not again be subject” (II.761.28—762.2).

Liberty, spontaneity, equality, productivity, all must be considered and to them we now add the preservation of natural beauty. His plea in the chapter on the “Stationary State” is still wor-

thy of consideration: “solitude in the presence of natural beauty and grandeur, is the cradle of thoughts and aspirations which are not only good for the individual, but which society could ill do without” (II.756.11-4). There is little satisfaction in contemplating a world “with nothing left to the spontaneous activity of nature; . . . [with] every flowery waste or natural pasture ploughed up, all quadrupeds or birds which are not domesticated for man’s use exterminated as his rivals for food . . . , and scarcely a place left where a wild shrub or flower could grow without being eradicated as a weed in the name of improved agriculture” (II.756.15-21). He feared that the earth might lose that “great portion of its pleasantness which it owes to things that the unlimited increase of wealth and population would extirpate from it” (II.756.22-4). This became the theme of George Gissing’s novel *Demos*.<sup>24</sup> At the opening of the novel, Stanbury Hill, “remote but two hours’ walk from a region blasted with mine and factory and furnace, shelters with its western slope a fair green valley, a land of meadows and orchard, untouched by poisonous breath.”<sup>25</sup> In Chapter vii, John Eldon looks out on a different scene: “building of various kinds was in progress in the heart of the vale; a great massive chimney was rising to completion, and about it stood a number of sheds. Beyond was to be seen the commencement of a street of small houses, promising infinite ugliness in a little space . . . in truth, the benighted valley was waking up and donning the true nineteenth-century livery.”<sup>26</sup> But a turn of fortune puts Eldon back in the position of owner and all is changed. “It is springtime, and the valley of Wanley is bursting into green and flowery life, peacefully glad as if the foot of *Demos* had never come that way. Incredible that the fumes of furnaces ever desecrated that fleece-sown sky of tenderest blue, that hammers clanged and engines roared where now the thrush utters his song so joyously. Hubert Eldon has been as good as his word. In all the valley no trace is left of what was called New Wanley.”<sup>27</sup> Whether we consider this a case of competing ends, wealth or beauty, or whether we consider beauty part of the wealth which is to be maximized, the problems raised are still relevant. Professor Joseph Spengler has, for instance, turned to this theme in his address as President of the Population Association of America, “The Aesthetics of Population.”<sup>28</sup> “Every year 1.1 million acres reportedly are taken permanently out of crop use by urban and suburban development, together with the expansion of industry, airports, military establishments, and new highways; and another 700,000 acres are lost annually through soil erosion, tree planting, water-logging, salt deposits, and other contamination.”<sup>29</sup> There is a “continuing replacement of Arcadian beauty by cardominated, billboarded, neon-signed shabbiness.”<sup>30</sup> Or again: “these uses chew up and uglify the countryside.”<sup>31</sup> All of which is not to say that all beauty must be preserved at any cost: but that growth in the gross national product is not the sole object of the community without reference to the consequent destruction of natural beauty.

### III. THE PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

While Mill the preacher might doubt the importance of increasing production except in “the backward countries,” Mill the political economist was more realistic and put the problem of production, the causes of productivity and of increasing productivity, at the forefront of his study. Perhaps this was related to his expectation of continued population increase: increasing accumu-



lation and increasing productivity would be necessary even if no further improvement in standards of living were desired; and whatever improvement in the condition of the poor might be achieved by redistribution with a stationary population, the existing standard could not be maintained with increasing population without such increase in productivity. The preacher was contemplating the Stationary State, the political economist was concerned with the practical problems of contemporary society. Increase in the productivity of labour, and accumulation of capital were recognized as urgent necessities. They remain urgently necessary, and modern economists in developing countries, backward or advanced, particularly in countries where population is once again increasing rapidly, do well to reconsider Mill's treatment if only to stimulate them to develop a modern theory of production.

## INVESTMENT IN HUMAN BEINGS

One important element in Mill's treatment is his emphasis on investment in human beings. After a century of neglect this has come to the fore as a result of the immense investment in education required in backward and advanced countries alike. In discussing "Labour as an Agent of Production" (I, ii) he devotes one section (§7) to "labour of which the subject is human beings" (I.40.35). Much of this labour is "incurred from other motives than to obtain such ultimate return, and, for most purposes of political economy, need not be taken into account as expenses of production" (I.41.6-8). But "technical or industrial education" is generally "undergone for the sake of the greater or more valuable produce thereby attained" and should therefore be treated as "part of what the produce costs to society" (I.41.8-19). Similarly "the labour employed in keeping up productive powers; in preventing them from being destroyed or weakened by accident or disease," though not generally employed by the individual patients from "economical motives," must be considered "as part of the advance by which society effects its productive operations" (I.41.19-37). There follows a section on the labour of the inventor and the savant. Again there is the difference between the individual and the social aspect: "these material fruits, though the result, are seldom the direct purpose of the pursuits of savants . . . . But when (as in political economy one should always be prepared to do) we shift our point of view, and consider not individual acts, and the motives by which they are determined, but national and universal results, intellectual speculation must be looked upon as a most influential part of the productive labour of society . . ." (I.43.4-16).

Mill recurs to this theme in the chapter on "Unproductive Labour" (I, iii) where he discusses "utilities fixed and embodied in human beings." He would have preferred, he says, to "regard all labour as productive which is employed in creating permanent utilities, whether embodied in human beings, or in any other animate or inanimate objects" (I.48.21-3). But he accepted the usage which limited the term to labour which produces "utilities embodied in material objects" (I.49.23). He then broke through this limitation to include as productive, "labour expended in the acquisition of manufacturing skill . . . not in virtue of the skill itself, but of the manufactured products created by the skill" (I.49.28-30). The emphasis is on the "investment" aspect of some

part of education: if the labour of the teacher is classed as “unproductive” this is not “derogatory,” but in classing it as “productive” its contribution to increasing future productivity is established. That part of education expense is essentially part of the “accumulation” which is so urgently required. Finally one notes the chapter on the degrees of productiveness (I, vii). “Successful production . . . depends more on the qualities of the human agents, than on the circumstances in which they work . . .” (I.103.13-5). So he discussed as the second of the causes of superior productiveness “the greater energy of labour” (I.103.27). Here the preacher comes back into the picture (the sermon varying somewhat between the editions but remaining essentially the same). In the first edition the essential problem is stated: “An Englishman, of almost every class, is the most efficient of all labourers, because, to use a common phrase, his heart is in his work. But it is surely quite possible to put heart into his work without being incapable of putting it into anything else” (I.105*r-r*). Mill had, and continued to have, no doubt about the cause of the high productivity: he had serious doubts as to the ultimate “welfare” of people who were productive of material objects but incapable of enjoying them. But if he would “moderate the ardour of their devotion to the pursuit of wealth” (I.105.10), he would hope not to diminish “the strenuous and businesslike application to the matter in hand, which is found in the best English workmen” (I.105.11-3).

The third element determining the productiveness of labour is “the skill and knowledge therein existing” (I.106.6). The effects of increased knowledge in increasing wealth “have become familiar. . . . A thing not yet so well understood and recognised, is the economical value of the general diffusion of intelligence among the people” (I.107.25-8). The scarcity of “persons fitted to direct and superintend any industrial enterprise” (I.107.28-9) is only one aspect of the problem: another is the “connexion between mental cultivation and moral trustworthiness” (I.108.35). Mr. Escher of Zurich is quoted at some length: “The better educated workmen . . . are distinguished by superior moral habits . . . they are entirely sober; they are discreet in their enjoyments . . .; they have a taste for much better society, which they approach respectfully . . .; they cultivate music; they read; they enjoy the pleasures of scenery . . .; they are . . . honest and trustworthy” (I.108.36—109.9). Of the uneducated English Mr. Escher says they are “the most skilful,” but the most “debauched . . . and least respectable and trustworthy”: if treated with “urbanity and friendly feeling” they become “unmanageable and useless.” Mill comments, “As soon as any idea of equality enters the mind of an uneducated English working man, his head is turned by it. When he ceases to be servile, he becomes insolent” (I.109.11-28). Again we are going beyond the theory of productivity: for that theory it is important to recognize with Mill that the “moral qualities of the labourers are fully as important to the efficiency and worth of their labour, as the intellectual” (I.109.29-30). But the plea for moral improvement is not primarily a plea for improving productivity: the whole character of society and the future condition of man is involved. We shall return to the issue when commenting on Mills’ chapters on communism and on the probable futurity of the working class. Appropriately, in view of the emphasis on education and the development of knowledge in the beginning of the book, Mill devotes a section of his final chapter on the limits of the province of government to a plea for provision for scientific research and for the maintenance of a “learned class.” “The cultivation of speculative knowledge, though one of the most useful of all employments, is a service rendered to a community collectively, not indi-

vidually, and one consequently for which it is, *primâ facie*, reasonable that the community collectively should pay . . .” (II.968.34-7).

## THE THEORY OF FULL DEVELOPMENT

In the neo-classical economics the theory of production was essentially a theory of allocation of resources, of the “right” proportions of factors in the production of the “right” things (“right” interpreted with reference to least cost and conformity to demand). In the Keynesian economics the concern was with full employment of resources. In the classical economics, as in the new economics of growth and development, the full employment and proper allocation of given resources took second place to a concern for the development of new resources. This is perhaps clearer in Adam Smith than in Mill, but I believe that the continued use of the distinction between productive and unproductive labour indicates a continued concern for the liquidation of the primitive sector of the economy in which menial servants were maintained in idleness on a more or less feudal basis, and for the development of “industry,” the advanced sector of the economy in which workers, well equipped, well managed, well disciplined, would probably be employed at wages considerably higher than those prevailing in the primitive sector. I cannot here examine in detail this interpretation of the concept of productive labour and the related theory of development,<sup>32</sup> but I propose to quote from Adam Smith and from Malthus to give the necessary background. “We are more industrious than our forefathers,” said Adam Smith, “because in the present times the funds destined for the maintenance of industry are much greater in proportion to those which are likely to be employed in the maintenance of idleness than they were two or three centuries ago.”<sup>33</sup> And Malthus: “Three or four hundred years ago, there was undoubtedly much less labour in England in proportion to the population, than at present; but there was much more dependence; and we probably should not now enjoy our present degree of civil liberty, if the poor, by the introduction of manufactures, had not been enabled to give something in exchange for the provisions of the great Lords, instead of being dependent upon their bounty.”<sup>34</sup> The idle, be it noted, were not unemployed; the problem was to absorb them into “industry” where they would be more productive.

Much of the difficulty of interpreting, or accepting, the propositions about capital in Mill may be reduced if it is recognized that these chapters are concerned with “development.” As Professor Myint put it in his *Theories of Economic Welfare* we should not read “our latter-day pre-occupation with the ‘allocative’ problem into the classics through the distorting spectacles provided by the General Equilibrium economists of the Marginal Utility School. It is time we learned to cure ourselves of this theoretical anthropomorphism and to approach the classical economists in the context of their own intellectual climate.”<sup>35</sup> In this context the chapters in Mill on capital must be read, not as discussion of the economies of roundabout production, nor even of the employment problems rising from an imbalance of saving and investment, but as discussion of the development of “industry” at the expense of the pre-industrial, quasi-feudal, sector of the economy, with the recruiting of the idle-employed into the ranks of the industrious, with the

employment in productive labour of those “whom we shall suppose to have been previously, like the Irish peasantry, only half employed and half fed” (I.56.36-7).

While continuing the theme of development as being a process of expanding the number of productive labourers, Mill added a discussion of the distinction between productive and unproductive consumption. What productive labourers “consume in keeping up or improving their health, strength, and capacities of work, or in rearing other productive labourers to succeed them, is productive consumption. But consumption on pleasures or luxuries, whether by the idle or by the industrious, since production is neither its object nor is in any way advanced by it, must be reckoned unproductive: with a reservation perhaps of a certain quantum of enjoyment which may be classed among necessities, since anything short of it would not be consistent with the greatest efficiency of labour” (I.52.26-33). From this discussion of unproductive consumption there develops the proposition that there is a more important distinction than that between productive and unproductive labour; “namely, between labour for the supply of productive, and for the supply of unproductive, consumption” (I.53.27-8). If the former were suspended, “the country at the end of the twelvemonth would have been entirely impoverished” (I.54.20-1); if the latter were suspended, “the sources of production would be unimpaired” (I.54.15-6). Mill went on to say that it would be a great error to regret the “large proportion of the annual produce, which in an opulent country goes to supply unproductive consumption” (I.54.22-4). It is rather a matter for congratulation. It is surprising that he does not here press home the point that this fund for unproductive consumption is the basis for that process of accumulation which provides for a spiral of economic development. He underestimated the effect on human productivity of better living and he underestimated the magnitude of the necessary increase in fixed capital. He was right in directing attention to the increase in that “labour which tends to the permanent enrichment of society.” He was right in directing attention to the “fund from which all the wants of the community, other than that of mere living, are provided for” (I.54.26-7); he was right to continue Ricardo’s concern for “net produce,” and to parallel Marx’s concern for surplus value; he was right because he was concerned with growth. Thrift is important, and a study of its causes is important: but we must not forget “that to increase capital there is another way besides consuming less, namely, to produce more” (I.70.15-6). . . . “[W]hatever increases the productive power of labour, creates an additional fund to make savings from, and enables capital to be enlarged not only without additional privation, but concurrently with an increase of personal consumption” (I.70.3-6). In these circumstances “abstinence” is a rather odd description of the basis for capital accumulation.

In this context of “development” the difficulties of interpretation of the chapters on capital, even of the fourth proposition, disappear. Capital must be interpreted as “real capital,” wage goods, materials and instruments to supply “productive labour” with the “pre-requisites of production.” “. . . [I]ndustry is limited by capital” (I.63.9): for there cannot be more persons employed in productive labour than can be supplied with wage goods, materials and instruments. Capital “is the result of saving” (I.68.27-8); for there can be no increase in capital if the “net produce” of productive labour is dissipated in unproductive consumption. Clearly more capital requires either less wage goods used to support unproductive labour and transferred to the use of

productive labour, or less production of luxury goods permitting the production of more wage goods, material, and instruments. And since the “industrious” are likely to enjoy more wage goods than the “idle” some reduction in the purchase of luxury goods needs to go along with the reduction in the number of servants. Capital “although saved . . . is nevertheless consumed” (I.70.18-9): the food that the servants would have eaten the industrious eat, the food and materials produced in place of the plate and silks are eaten and worked up by the industrious. “Demand for commodities is not demand for labour” (I.78.26) is the fourth proposition and it has produced an extraordinary variety of comment, most of which, including my own comment in a “Centenary Estimate,”<sup>36</sup> is misguided because of the failure to recognize the dynamic context. To Cairnes this proposition was simply “a different mode of stating the third fundamental theorem.” In his very interesting and valuable “Notes on the Principles of Political Economy” (see Appendix H below) Cairnes presented an alternative formulation: “In short to establish the doctrine that ‘demand for commodities is not demand for labour’—i.e. does not benefit the labouring classes—all that is needed is the two assumptions 1. that he who profits by (i.e. enjoys) wealth is he who consumes it, and 2. that productive labourers consume saved wealth, while wealth unproductively spent is consumed wholly by the unproductive consumers.”<sup>37</sup> Cairnes then illustrated his argument by a *reductio ad absurdum*, “if it be equally for the benefit of the poorer classes whether I consume my wealth unproductively or set aside a portion in the form of wages or alms for their direct consumption, then on what ground can the policy be justified of taking my money from me to support paupers.” That Cairnes understood Mill’s intention is indicated by the adaptation of this passage from Cairnes in the 6th edition of the *Principles* (I.84.10-4). There remains the proposition in Chapter vi, “that all increase of fixed capital, when taking place at the expense of circulating, must be, at least temporarily, prejudicial to the interests of the labourers” (I.93.40-94.2). From this proposition he argues, first, that “All attempts to make out that the labouring classes as a collective body *cannot* suffer temporarily by the introduction of machinery, or by the sinking of capital in permanent improvements, are . . . necessarily fallacious” (I.96.22-5). He then argues that “as things are actually transacted” improvements are not “often, if ever, injurious, even temporarily, to the labouring classes in the aggregate” (I.97.8-9). This is because improvements are “seldom or never made by withdrawing circulating capital from actual production, but are made by the employment of the annual increase” (I.97.12-4). The ultimate benefit is not in doubt but “this does not discharge governments from the obligation of alleviating, and if possible preventing, the evils of which this source of ultimate benefit is or may be productive to an existing generation” (I.99.2-4). To return to the proposition: is not Mill’s problem that of many modern nations, how to increase fixed capital faster than voluntary savings permit: the modern solution is often by planned reduction in consumption or by inflation-induced reduction of consumption. There remains the old-fashioned solution, to save more: but the “extreme incapacity of the people for personal enjoyment, which is a characteristic of countries over which puritanism has passed” (I.171.27-9) can no longer be relied on, and “the silly desire for the appearance of a large expenditure” still “has the force of a passion” (I.171.33-4).

## POPULATION AND PRODUCTIVITY

The problems of population crop up throughout the *Principles*. The study of production becomes a study of the race between production and population. In the chapter on the “Law of the Increase of Labour” (I, x), it is held that “It is a very low estimate of the capacity of increase, if we only assume, that in a good sanitary condition of the people, each generation may be double the number of the generation which preceded it” (I.155.11-3). That population does not increase at that pace is not “through a providential adaptation of the fecundity of the human species to the exigencies of society” (I.155.20-1) but through “prudent or conscientious self-restraint” (I.157.35-6). An “acceleration of the rate [of population increase] very speedily follows any diminution of the motives to restraint” (I.159.7-8). Thus the problem is posed: “Unless, either by their general improvement in intellectual and moral culture, or at least by raising their habitual standard of comfortable living, they can be taught to make a better use of favourable circumstances, nothing permanent can be done for them; the most promising schemes end only in having a more numerous, but not a happier people” (I.159.14-8). The problem is here posed as an individual one; in Chapter xiii it is posed as a social one. “The return to labour has probably increased as fast as the population; and would have outstripped it, if that very augmentation of return had not called forth an additional portion of the inherent power of multiplication in the human species. . . . [N]othing could have prevented a general deterioration in the condition of the human race, were it not that population has in fact been restrained. Had it been restrained still more, and the same improvements taken place, there would have been a larger dividend. . . . The new ground wrung from nature by the improvements would not have been all used up in the support of mere numbers.” (I.189.36—190.17.)

In Book II there is further discussion of the prospects for prudence. In his discussion of communism (Chapter i) he appears less afraid of the population effect than was Malthus: there would be provided “motives to restraint.” “. . . Communism is precisely the state of things in which opinion might be expected to declare itself with greatest intensity against this kind of selfish intemperance. . . . [O]pinion could not fail to reprobate, and if reprobation did not suffice, to repress by penalties of some description, this or any other culpable self-indulgence at the expense of the community” (I.206.9-19). This sounds more like Orwell’s bad dream of 1984 than the sentiments of the author of the essay *On Liberty*!

He recurs to the problem in his three chapters on wages (II, xi, xii, and xiii). Again the “motives for restraint” are the primary concern: “No remedies for low wages have the smallest chance of being efficacious, which do not operate on and through the minds and habits of the people” (I.366.6-7). Education might help. “If the opinion were once generally established among the labouring class that their welfare required a due regulation of the numbers of families, the respectable and well-conducted of the body would conform to the prescription . . .” (I.372.16-8). But a more important influence would follow the admission of women “to the same rights of citizenship with men” (I.372.28—373.1). In commenting on “hard-hearted Malthusianism” he said: “as if it were not a thousand times more hard-hearted to tell human beings that they may, than that they may not, call into existence swarms of creatures who are sure to be miserable . . . and forget-

ting that the conduct, which it is reckoned so cruel to disapprove, is a degrading slavery to a brute instinct in one of the persons concerned, and . . . in the other, helpless submission to a revolting abuse of power” (I.352.6-12). And later: “It is seldom by the choice of the wife that families are too numerous; on her devolves (along with all the physical suffering and at least a full share of the privations) the whole of the intolerable domestic drudgery resulting from the excess. . . . Among the barbarisms which law and morals have not yet ceased to sanction, the most disgusting surely is, that any human being should be permitted to consider himself as having a *right* to the person of another” (I.372.6-15). To education and a change in the status of women must be added, Mill argued, a dramatic improvement in the condition of the poor. The minor improvement resulting from the repeal of the Corn Laws he did not consider important. “Things which only affect them a very little, make no permanent impression upon their habits and requirements, and they soon slide back into their former state. To produce permanent advantage, the temporary cause operating upon them must be sufficient to make a great change in their condition. . . . Of cases in point, the most remarkable is France after the Revolution” (I.342.21-32). He recurs to this point in Chapter xiii. “For the purpose therefore of altering the habits of the labouring people, there is need of a twofold action, directed simultaneously upon their intelligence and their poverty. An effective national education of the children of the labouring class, is the first thing needful: and, coincidentally with this, a system of measures which shall (as the Revolution did in France) extinguish extreme poverty for one whole generation” (I.374.34-9). “Unless comfort can be made as habitual to a whole generation as indigence is now, nothing is accomplished; and feeble half-measures do but fritter away resources . . .” (I.378.11-4). All of this is highly relevant to the problem of the modern world; I propose to underline only one point. With reference to the poorer countries with high fertility one may well ask whether external aid, like poor relief in nineteenth-century England, may simply postpone the necessary adjustment in the birth rate, may be “frittered away,” mere numbers rather than happiness resulting. One may also wonder whether Mill had the answer for his day and for ours. He saw that relief (or aid) must be on a massive scale to permit the dawn of hope. If this is correct, as I believe it to be, we should concentrate our “aid” on a few countries, and those countries must be chosen as most nearly ready for massive improvement. This “hard-hearted Malthusianism” would be hard to practise. The choice of those to be aided would be heart-breaking; and there is the danger that those not chosen will in exasperation and frustration do injury to themselves and us.<sup>38</sup>

## PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

In the “Preliminary Remarks,” Mill distinguished the laws of production from those of distribution. The “manner in which wealth is distributed in any given society, depends on the statutes or usages therein obtaining” (I.21.17-8). So, at the beginning of Book II, he says: “The laws and conditions of the production of wealth partake of the character of physical truths. . . . It is not so with the Distribution of Wealth. That is a matter of human institution solely” (I.199.4-29). In fact Mill has much to say about the effect on productivity of “human institutions” as I propose to demonstrate. The really important distinction that he made was between the inevitability of the

consequences which flow from any *given* circumstances and the freedom to modify the circumstances. Thus in the “Preliminary Remarks” he says: “though governments or nations have the power of deciding what institutions shall exist, they cannot arbitrarily determine how those institutions shall work” (I.21.18-20). And in Book II: “We have here to consider, not the causes, but the consequences, of the rules according to which wealth may be distributed. Those, at least, are as little arbitrary, and have as much the character of physical laws, as the laws of production. Human beings can control their own acts, but not the consequences of their acts either to themselves or to others” (I.200.20-5). One of these “consequences” is reflected in productivity. It is of great importance to recognize the effect of “institutions” on productivity, and in particular to recognize the effect on productivity of institutions devised with a view to improving the distribution of wealth. The smaller the amount to be divided the more seriously must the effect of redistribution on the size of the dividend be examined. The problem becomes one of identifying “useful injustices” (as Sir Dennis Robertson has called them).<sup>39</sup>

In the chapter on the “Degrees of Productiveness” the importance of “Security” is emphasized. “This consists of protection *by* the government, and protection *against* the government” (I.112.4-5), and much of it seems to be “the effect of manners and opinion rather than of law” (I.114.11-2). The key sentence is this: “the efficiency of industry may be expected to be great, in proportion as the fruits of industry are insured to the person exerting it” (I.114.33-5). This is a recurrent theme. In Chapter ix, when discussing the conduct of large scale enterprise by joint stock, he states two qualifications of the manager: “fidelity and zeal.” The former he thinks it is easy to secure, the latter very difficult. The “directing mind should be incessantly occupied with the subject; should be continually laying schemes by which greater profit may be obtained. . . . This intensity of interest . . . it is seldom to be expected that any one should feel, who is conducting a business as the hired servant and for the profit of another. There are experiments in human affairs which are conclusive on the point. Look at the whole class of rulers, and ministers of state” (I.137.39—138.5). Again, in Chapter xii, the doctrine is applied to agriculture: “Improvements in government, and almost every kind of moral and social advancement, operate in the same manner. Suppose a country in the condition of France before the Revolution: taxation imposed . . . on such a principle as to be an actual penalty on production. . . . Was not the hurricane which swept away this system of things, even if we look no further than to its effect in augmenting the productiveness of labour, equivalent to many industrial inventions?” (I.183.6-14). From taxation we turn to tenure to note the effect in Ireland “of a bad system of tenancy, in rendering agricultural labour slack and ineffective. No improvements operate more directly upon the productiveness of labour, than those in the tenure of farms, and in the laws relating to landed property” (I.183.24-7). So, in Book I, on “Production,” discussion of the expediency of social institutions crept in, and in Book II, on “Distribution,” the problems of justice did not crowd out the problems of expediency through effects on production.

The chapter on “Property” (II, i) underwent very great changes. In the preface to the 2nd edition, Mill says that the objections stated in the 1st edition to “the specific schemes propounded by some Socialists, have been erroneously understood as a general condemnation of all that is commonly included under that name” (I.xcii.35-7). To meet the objection he enlarged the chapter. In



the 3rd edition he rewrote it. “The only objection to which any great importance will be found to be attached in the present edition, is the unprepared state of mankind in general, and of the labouring classes in particular; their extreme unfitness at present for any order of things, which would make any considerable demand on either their intellect or their virtue” (I.xciii.12-6). These changes, and his later posthumous *Chapters on Socialism*, provide scope for long debates about how socialistic Mill was at various points in his career. What is really valuable is not his changing answers, but his continuing questions. The criteria for judging society as it existed, and society as it might be, emerge from the questions. One of the criteria is the degree of motivation to work:

The objection ordinarily made to a system of community of property and equal distribution of the produce, that each person would be incessantly occupied in evading his fair share of the work, points, undoubtedly, to a real difficulty. But those who urge this objection, forget to how great an extent the same difficulty exists under the system on which nine-tenths of the business of society is now conducted. . . . From the Irish reaper or hodman to the chief justice or the minister of state, nearly all the work of society is remunerated by day wages or fixed salaries. A factory operative has less personal interest in his work than a member of a Communist association. . . . Mankind are capable of a far greater amount of public spirit than the present age is accustomed to suppose possible. . . . To what extent, therefore, the energy of labour would be diminished by Communism, or whether in the long run it would be diminished at all, must be considered . . . an undecided question. (I.203.37—205.40.)

This is a more favourable judgment than that in the 1st edition, and is seemingly inconsistent with the general attitude of the *Principles* on motivation and incentive. The explanation of the change and the “inconsistency” lies in the addition of “two conditions . . . without which neither Communism nor any other laws or institutions could make the condition of the mass of mankind other than degraded and miserable. One of these conditions is universal education; the other, a due limitation of the numbers of the community” (I.208.21-5). He may dream of a utopia where pecuniary incentives are unnecessary; but he has a very realistic recognition of the importance of pecuniary incentives for some time to come: “we may, without attempting to limit the ultimate capabilities of human nature, affirm, that the political economist, for a considerable time to come, will be chiefly concerned with the conditions of existence and progress belonging to a society founded on private property and individual competition” (I.214.5-9).

If productivity is assured under “Communism” there remains the question of “human liberty and spontaneity.” Of liberty as an end in itself I have said something earlier. One sentence has peculiar relevance to the modern world: “No society in which eccentricity is a matter of reproach, can be in a wholesome state” (I.209.33-4). But here the concern is with productivity and I would argue that the atmosphere of liberty and spontaneity is especially conducive to productivity. Indeed I think Mill would so argue, and in support of this view I would cite his attitude to competition as developed in the chapter on the “Probable Futurity of the Labouring Classes” (IV, vii) in a section, be it noted, that was added in the 3rd edition. “To be protected against competition is to be protected in idleness, in mental dulness . . .” (II.795.37-8). Competition, innovation, enterprise, are the fruits of liberty, the complement of spontaneity. Mill’s dissent from the social-

ists' declamation against competition comes at the end of his discussion of co-operative societies: communism was a matter of the distant future, co-operatives promised improvement in the immediate future. The co-operative movement promised, not only a new dignity to labour and "the healing of the standing feud between capital and labour" (II.792.7-8), but a great increase in the "productiveness of labour." This increase would result from the "vast stimulus given to productive energies, by placing the labourers, as a mass, in a relation to their work which would make it their principle and their interest—at present it is neither—to do the utmost, instead of the least possible, in exchange for their remuneration" (II.792.1-5). Yet Mill believed that it would be desirable, "for a considerable length of time," that individual capitalists should "coexist" with co-operative societies. "A private capitalist, exempt from the control of a body, if he is a person of capacity, is considerably more likely than almost any association to run judicious risks, and originate costly improvements" (II.793.3-5).

Along with his admiration for the co-operative association in industry, Mill had a curiously individualistic attitude to the organization of agriculture. His chapters on "Peasant Proprietors," "Metayers," and "Cottiers" all reflect his idealization of the small agriculturists of Wordsworth's Lakes (I.253n). The theme is essentially motivation to hard work: "The magic of *property* turns sand to gold. . . . Give a man the secure possession of a bleak rock, and he will turn it into a garden. . . ." (I.274.19-30.) But it is not just a matter of increased exertion: peasant proprietorship stimulates "mental activity" and is "propitious to the moral virtues of prudence, temperance, and self-control. Day-labourers . . . are usually improvident. . . . [P]easant proprietors . . . are oftener accused of penuriousness than of prodigality" (I.281.28—282.8). Mill indeed recognized the dangers of *morcellement* and the advantages of *grande culture*, but he concluded that compared with the English system of cultivation by hired labour peasant proprietorship was "eminently beneficial" and he did not feel "on the present occasion called upon to compare it with the joint ownership of the land by associations of labourers" (I.296.2-4).

Mill proceeded to examine two other systems of tenure: metayers and cottiers. He contrasts the happy stage of Lombardy and its metayers with the miserable condition of the Irish cottiers. "Under a metayer system there is an established mode in which the owner of land is sure of participating in the increased produce drawn from it" (I.316.5-7). Of the cottier he says: "If the landlord at any time exerted his full legal rights, the cottier would not be able even to live. If by extra exertion he doubled the produce of his bit of land, or if he prudently abstained from producing mouths to eat it up, his only gain would be to have more left to pay to his landlord . . . if he is lazy or intemperate, it is at his landlord's expense" (I.318.30—319.3). Mill watched closely the revolution in Ireland, and Cairnes (as is clear from Appendix H) kept him posted. Repeal of the Corn Laws "would of itself have sufficed to bring about this revolution in tenure" (I.333.2-3), but it was "immensely facilitated and made more rapid by the vast emigration, as well as by that greatest boon ever conferred on Ireland by any Government, the Encumbered Estates Act" (I.332.6-9). The change, however, was toward the English system of capitalist farming; "The truly insular ignorance of her public men respecting a form of agricultural economy which predominates in nearly every other civilized country" made it doubtful whether action would be taken to promote peasant proprietorship; "Yet there are germs of a tendency . . ." (I.334.7-10).

## EXCHANGE

“Happily,” said Mill, “there is nothing in the laws of value which remains for the present or any future writer to clear up; the theory of the subject is complete.” This was injudicious. Professor Schumpeter, commenting on the state of the economic science just before World War I in his Preface to Dr. Zeuthen’s *Problems of Monopoly*,<sup>40</sup> gave one reason for thinking it injudicious:

There was a belief that the great work had been done—a belief very similar to that expressed by Mill in that famous passage. . . . In a sense, this attitude was both right and fruitful. Great work had undoubtedly been done, and it was certainly necessary to bend to the task of defending, expounding and applying it. Yet there was some danger of petrification ahead, and the almost immediate rise of anti-theoretic schools of thought . . . is the proof that Theory was about to pay the penalty for that air of finality which was beginning to get on the nerves of the rising generation in very much the same way as it did in the case of Mill.

It appeared injudicious, too, in the light of the new theory of the “neoclassics” which soon emerged as victor (albeit a relatively considerate and co-operative victor) in the “war of the methods.” Because there has been some misunderstanding as to the nature of the advance made from Mill to Jevons, and consequently some misunderstanding of Mill, I propose to state very briefly what I consider to have been the real improvements.

The new analysis of marginal utility seems to me to be the least important element: the solution of the paradox of water and diamonds was academically interesting but little was added, if anything, to the understanding of the role of demand in the process of exchange. The essential notion of elasticity of demand, present in Adam Smith, was clarified in Mill and only waited to be christened by Marshall. The notion of “consumers’ sovereignty,” again without the name, was basic to the economics of Mill, as of Adam Smith: and it might well be argued that this general notion of appropriate economic organization makes more sense than the precision of the demonstrations of the conditions for maximizing utility, having in mind the fact that the utility for any individual is unmeasurable and that interpersonal comparisons are strictly impossible. Edgeworth’s verdict on Mill’s performance, in his article in Palgrave’s *Dictionary of Political Economy*, is just: “The general theory of demand and supply seems to be stated by Mill as clearly as is possible without the aid of mathematical apparatus.”<sup>41</sup> If utility analysis added little to the general theory of demand, the utility theorists did make very important advances. Perhaps the most important advances lay in the clear recognition of the simultaneous pricing of goods and factors of production, and of the generality of the notion of “variable proportions” leading to elucidation of the role of substitution. Closely related was the development of the concept of “alternative opportunity” as the basis of cost. Much of the confusion of the classics in dealing with capital appears to me to have been compounded by the capital theory of Jevons and Bohm Bawerk, but the way out was demonstrated by Walras when he treated the pricing of the services of people and of durable goods as essentially the same and went on to discuss the pricing of the durable

goods as the sources of those services. Perhaps equally important with these specific advances lay the advance towards more precision in the specification of models with the promise of more rigorous theory and with the clearer obligation to recognize the difficulty of using such theory in understanding the real economic process, in diagnosing its ills and in prescribing remedies.

When the pricing of the factors of production is seen as part of a whole process of equilibrium, the organization of Mill's *Principles* appears very odd. Distribution is the subject of Book II; pricing is left to Book III. It is true that he says that he has not "escaped the necessity of anticipating some small portion of the theory of Value, especially as to the value of labour and of land" (II.455.12-3), but, at the end of Book III, the chapter on "Distribution as Affected by Exchange" is devoted to the thesis that distribution is not affected by exchange. "Wages depend on the ratio between population and capital; and would do so if all the capital in the world were the property of one association, or if the capitalists among whom it is shared maintained each an establishment for the production of every article consumed in the community, exchange of commodities having no existence" (II.695.26—696.2). Similarly, rent: "Exchange, and money, therefore, make no difference in the law of rent" (II.698.9-10). And profits: "Wages and Rent being thus regulated by the same principles when paid in money, as they would be if apportioned in kind, it follows that Profits are so likewise. For the surplus, after replacing wages and paying rent, constitutes Profits" (II.698.18-21). The verdict of Alfred Marshall is found in his Appendix J:

By putting his main theory of wages before his account of supply and demand, he cut himself off from the chance of treating that theory in a satisfactory way. . . . The fact is that the theories of Distribution and Exchange are so intimately connected as to be little more than two sides of the same problem. . . . If Mill had recognized this great truth he would not have been drawn on to appear to substitute, as he did in his second Book, the statement of the problem of wages for its solution: but he would have combined the description and analysis in his second Book, with the short but profound study of the causes that govern the distribution of the national dividend, given in his fourth Book.<sup>42</sup>

Noting Marshall's assessment of the profundity of Book IV, perhaps one should remember the limitation, as well as the value, of the new pricing theory: Mill ignored the importance of the pricing process in the theory of distribution but his successors were too readily content with a static solution. Mill may have been unsatisfactory in his explanation of why factor prices were what they were, but he had brilliant insights into the probable trend of change. And his successors were too ready to accept a theory of the pricing of factors as a theory (not just a part of a theory) of distribution ignoring the really exciting problems of why particular people had particular factors for sale at these prices.

To the thesis that distribution is not affected by exchange is added the further thesis that the process of exchange is unaffected by money:

There cannot, in short, be intrinsically a more insignificant thing, in the economy of society, than money; except in the character of a contrivance for sparing time and labour. It is a machine for doing quickly and commodiously, what would be done,

though less quickly and commodiously, without it: and like many other kinds of machinery, it only exerts a distinct and independent influence of its own when it gets out of order.

The introduction of money does not interfere with the operation of any of the Laws of Value laid down in the preceding chapters. (II.506.32-40.)

What follows is a sequence of chapters on money, monetary theory, and monetary policy, which indicate that he knew that the “machinery” very easily got out of order, so that money was in fact far from “insignificant.” I do not propose to examine these chapters in detail but I assert that they wear well. They need to be read, however, with patience; an initial dogmatic statement is later qualified. His assertion of the “quantity theory,” for instance, is followed by qualifications which “under a complex system of credit like that existing in England, render the proposition an extremely incorrect expression of the fact” (II.516.32-4). Professor Schumpeter has said of these chapters that “they contain some of Mill’s best work. [They display] indeed some contradictions, hesitations, and unassimilated compromises . . . but even these were not unmixed evils since they brought out, in strange contrast to Mill’s own belief in the finality of his teaching, the unfinished state of the analysis of that time, and thus indicated lines for further research to follow.”<sup>43</sup> Of the chapters on international trade the judgment is more universally favourable, the development of the relationship between reciprocal demand and the commodity terms of trade being considered by Professor Viner to constitute “his chief claim to originality in the field of economics.”<sup>44</sup> This favourable judgment is related to his performance in the static sphere; it is only in recent years that the dynamic aspect of his trade theory has been revived. When Mill denounced the fallacy of Adam Smith’s “vent for surplus” approach to the benefit of foreign trade, “that it afforded an outlet for the surplus produce of a country” (II.592.12-3), he turned his back on the development aspects of the problem of unproductive labour, and argued on the level of the static theorists. The new concern for the economics of growth has brought new appreciation of the Adam Smith approach. Professor Allyn Young<sup>45</sup> and J. H. Williams<sup>46</sup> were among the first in this generation to recognize the value of that part of international trade theory that had been considered “crude” and fallacious by the orthodox. Professor Myint<sup>47</sup> has shown that “in general, the ‘vent-for-surplus’ theory produces a more effective approach than the comparative costs theory to the international trade of the underdeveloped countries.” He recognized that this theory “does not provide an exact fit to all the particular patterns of development,” but that it is more relevant than a theory which “assumes that the resources of a country are given and fully employed before it enters into international trade.” Professor Myint was concerned with the relatively backward countries: but no countries are “fully developed” and in all it is necessary to consider more than effective allocation of given resources, in all there are some unused productive capacities, some additional resources to develop. We should pay attention therefore to what Mill has to say about the “indirect effects” of international trade “which must be counted as benefits of a high order” (II.593.24-5). One of these indirect effects is “the tendency of every extension of the market to improve the processes of production” (II.593.25-6); another is that the opening of a new market “sometimes works a sort of industrial revolution in a country whose resources were previously undeveloped for want of energy and ambition in the people” (II.593.39—594.2).

## OF THE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT

The “agenda” of government change with changes in the nature of the economy, with changes in the character (particularly the honesty and efficiency) of the government. We do not look at the English prescription for 1848 as likely to be satisfactory for the England of 1965, nor do we look for one prescription appropriate for all countries in 1965. But examination of Mill’s writing on the “influence of government,” on the “economical effects” of the manner in which governments carry on their “necessary” functions and on the proper extension of their optional functions, is not just a matter for the economic historian. As in other parts of the inquiry, questions are raised that still demand answers, and insight may be stimulated to the point where answers relevant to our time may be found. But the answers depend on much more than “economical” effects; liberty and democracy are at issue:

impatient reformers, thinking it easier and shorter to get possession of the government than of the intellects and dispositions of the public, are under a constant temptation to stretch the province of government. . . [and] many rash proposals are made by sincere lovers of improvement, for attempting, by compulsory regulation, the attainment of objects which can only be effectually or only usefully compassed by opinion and discussion . . . . (II.799.11-20.)

The itch to interfere, to impose one’s will on others, might seem to need restraining, but Mill had no narrow concept of the function of government: “the admitted functions of government embrace a much wider field than can easily be included within the ring-fence of any restrictive definition, and . . . it is hardly possible to find any ground of justification common to them all, except the comprehensive one of general expediency; nor to limit the interference of government by any universal rule, save the simple and vague one, that it should never be admitted but when the case of expediency is strong” (II.803.42—804.6).

In Book I Mill had emphasized the economic importance of security of person and property, and in Book II he had argued that the rights of property were not absolute. He returns to these matters in Book V. “Insecurity of person and property . . . means, not only that labour and frugality are not the road to acquisition, but that violence is” (II.880.11-7). But there is also the very suggestive qualification: “a certain degree of insecurity, in some combinations of circumstances, has good as well as bad effects, by making energy and practical ability the conditions of safety. Insecurity paralyzes, only when it is such in nature and in degree, that no energy of which mankind in general are capable, affords any tolerable means of self-protection.” (II.881.19-24.) After some discussion of the imperfection of the laws of property, he reverts to the problem of inheritance which he had discussed in Book II. He argues that “no one person should be permitted to acquire, by inheritance, more than the amount of a moderate independence” (II.887.19-21). In Book II he had noted, with scorn, the view that “the best thing which can be done for objects of affection is to heap on them to satiety those intrinsically worthless things on which large fortunes are mostly expended” (I.225.22-4). If restriction of the right to inherit could be made effectual,

“wealth which could no longer be employed in over-enriching a few, would either be devoted to objects of public usefulness, or if bestowed on individuals, would be distributed among a larger number” (I.226.4-6). He noted with great approval the endowment of charitable foundations in the United States “where the ideas and practice in the matter of inheritance seem to be unusually rational and beneficial” (I.226.18-9), and he comments that to make similar bequests in England would be to run “the risk of being declared insane by a jury after . . . death, or at the least, of having the property wasted in a Chancery suit to set aside the will” (I.226.n18-21).

The “optional” functions of government are treated in two chapters: one deals with those “grounded on erroneous theories” (V, x), the other discusses in general the “grounds and limits of the laissez-faire or non-interference principle” (V, xi). In the former I would note his discussion of Protectionism, “the most notable” of the false theories. But the “infant industry” plea is recognized:

The superiority of one country over another in a branch of production, often arises only from having begun it sooner. There may be no inherent advantage on one part, or disadvantage on the other, but only a present superiority of acquired skill and experience. A country which has this skill and experience yet to acquire, may in other respects be better adapted to the production than those which were earlier in the field: and besides, it is a just remark of Mr. Rae, that nothing has a greater tendency to promote improvements in any branch of production, than its trial under a new set of conditions. But it cannot be expected that individuals should, at their own risk, or rather to their certain loss, introduce a new manufacture, and bear the burthen of carrying it on until the producers have been educated up to the level of those with whom the processes are traditional. (II.918.33—919.5.)

But if infants are to be protected, they must grow up to compete freely with the world. I would also note his treatment of the Combination Laws. Mill recognized “a limited power of obtaining, by combination, an increase of general wages at the expense of profits” (II.930.2-3). But he argued that the “limits of this power are narrow” (II.930.3-4). He denounced those “aristocratic” unions which were “hedging themselves in against competition, and protecting their own wages by shutting out others from access to their employment” (II.931.27-8). He insisted that it is “an indispensable condition of tolerating combinations, that they should be voluntary” (II.933.16-7). He considered mischievous the opposition to piece work and the insistence on equal pay for all workers of a given grade: mischievous because “they place the energetic and the idle, the skilful and the incompetent, on a level” (II.934.4-5). But he argued the right to free association: “though combinations to keep up wages are seldom effectual . . . the right of making the attempt is one which cannot be refused to any portion of the working population without great injustice, or without the probability of fatally misleading them respecting the circumstances which determine their condition. So long as combinations to raise wages were prohibited by law, the law appeared to the operatives to be the real cause of the low wages. . . .” (II.931.37—932.7.) What Mill did not perceive was the change in the status of the worker which strong unions might achieve: conditions of employment other than wages became a matter of contract, and the development of a “grievance procedure” gave protection against management, especially against

the petty tyranny of the lower levels. Perception of this change would have led to a very different chapter on the “Probable Futurity of the Working Class” from that actually written.

The limits of the province of government are discussed in the last chapter of the book. First there is the plea for “privacy”: “there is a part of the life of every person who has come to years of discretion, within which the individuality of that person ought to reign uncontrolled. . . . [T]here is, or ought to be, some space in human existence thus entrenched around, and sacred from authoritative intrusion. . . .” (II.938.4-8.) The second “general objection” is that every increase of the functions “devolving on the government is an increase of its power, both in the form of authority, and still more, in the indirect form of influence” (II.939.14-6). The danger of such power, no less in a democracy than in any other form of government, makes it necessary to develop “powerful defences, in order to maintain that originality of mind and individuality of character, which are the only source of any real progress” (II.940.3-5). A third “general objection” lies in the danger of overloading: “Every additional function undertaken by the government, is a fresh occupation imposed upon a body already overcharged with duties” (II.940.17-9). The final objection is that which Alfred Marshall later stressed in relation to “small business”: “The business of life is an essential part of the practical education of a people . . .” (II.943.1-2). Finally Mill proceeded to discuss some cases of appropriate interference. Public provision of elementary education is defended, but a monopoly of that provision is denounced: “A government which can mould the opinions and sentiments of the people from their youth upwards, can do with them whatever it pleases” (II.950.19-21). Support of research I have already noted as one of his important items of government policy:

The fellowships of the Universities are an institution excellently adapted for such a purpose; but are hardly ever applied to it, being bestowed, at the best, as a reward for past proficiency, in committing to memory what has been done by others, and not as the salary of future labours in the advancement of knowledge. . . . The most effectual plan . . . seems to be that of conferring Professorships, with duties of instruction attached to them. The occupation of teaching a branch of knowledge, at least in its higher departments, is a help rather than an impediment to the systematic cultivation of the subject itself. The duties of a professorship almost always leave much time for original researches; and the greatest advances which have been made in the various sciences, both moral and physical, have originated with those who were public teachers of them. . . . (II.969.17-31.)

A generous statement this from a servant of the East India Company who was developing further the economics of the stockbroker Ricardo—but Adam Smith and T. R. Malthus were professors.

#### IV. THE PRINCIPLES AND THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I have written about the *Principles* as an individual book with little reference to the context of the whole thought of Mill or of the thought of the mid-nineteenth century. To have done other-



wise would have involved embarking on a book, not an introductory essay. But reference must be made to Mill's own account of the context in his *Autobiography*.<sup>48</sup> The beginning of his study of economics at the age of thirteen was strictly Ricardian:

Though Ricardo's great work was already in print, no didactic treatise embodying its doctrines, in a manner fit for learners, had yet appeared. My father, therefore, commenced instructing me in the science by a sort of lectures, which he delivered to me in our walks. He expounded each day a portion of the subject, and I gave him next day a written account of it, which he made me rewrite over and over again until it was clear, precise, and tolerably complete. In this manner I went through the whole extent of the science; and the written outline of it which resulted from my daily *compte rendu*, served him afterwards as notes from which to write his Elements of Political Economy. After this I read Ricardo, giving an account daily of what I read, and discussing, in the best manner I could, the collateral points which offered themselves in our progress.

On Money, as the most intricate part of the subject, he made me read in the same manner Ricardo's admirable pamphlets, written during what was called the Bullion controversy; to these succeeded Adam Smith; and in this reading it was one of my father's main objects to make me apply to Smith's more superficial view of political economy, the superior lights of Ricardo, and detect what was fallacious in Smith's arguments, or erroneous in any of his conclusions.<sup>49</sup>

Two years later he went over the same ground again:

my father was just finishing for the press his "Elements of Political Economy," and he made me perform an exercise on the manuscript, which Mr. Bentham practised on all of his writings, making what he called, "marginal contents"; a short abstract of every paragraph, to enable the writer more easily to judge of, and improve, the order of the ideas, and the general character of the exposition.<sup>50</sup>

Four years later he reviewed the same material in company with a group of young men who met in Mr. Grote's house in Threadneedle Street:

Our first subject was Political Economy. We chose some systematic treatise as our text-book; my father's "Elements" being our first choice. One of us read aloud a chapter, or some smaller portion of the book. The discussion was then opened, and any one who had an objection, or other remark to make, made it. Our rule was to discuss thoroughly every point raised, whether great or small, prolonging the discussion until all who took part were satisfied with the conclusion they had individually arrived at; and to follow up every topic of collateral speculation which the chapter or the conversation suggested, never leaving it until we had untied every knot which we found. We repeatedly kept up the discussion of some one point for several weeks, thinking intently on it during the intervals of our meetings, and contriving solutions of the new difficulties which had risen up in the last morning's discussion. When we had finished in this way my father's Elements, we went in the same manner through

Ricardo's *Principles of Political Economy*, and Bailey's *Dissertation on Value*. These close and vigorous discussions were not only improving in a high degree to those who took part in them, but brought out new views of some topics of abstract Political Economy. The theory of International Values which I afterwards published, emanated from these conversations, as did also the modified form of Ricardo's theory of Profits, laid down in my *Essay on Profits and Interest*.<sup>51</sup>

The account in the *Autobiography* of the impact on the Ricardian, Benthamite Mill, of Coleridge, Maurice, Sterling, St. Simon, and Comte, of Carlyle, and finally of Harriet Taylor, cannot here be quoted, but if not familiar should be read by every reader of the *Principles*. Here I confine myself to the direct references to the *Principles*. The point of view is evident in his explanation of the change of his views from the days of his "extreme Benthamism" to the time when he wrote this treatise:

In those days I had seen little further than the old school of political economists into the possibilities of fundamental improvement in social arrangements. Private property, as now understood, and inheritance, appeared to me, as to them, the *dernier mot* of legislation: and I looked no further than to mitigating the inequalities consequent on these institutions, by getting rid of primogeniture and entails. The notion that it was possible to go further than this in removing the injustice—for injustice it is, whether admitting of a complete remedy or not—involved in the fact that some are born to riches and the vast majority to poverty, I then reckoned chimerical, and only hoped that by universal education, leading to voluntary restraint on population, the portion of the poor might be made more tolerable. In short, I was a democrat, but not the least of a Socialist. We were now much less democrats than I had been, because so long as education continues to be so wretchedly imperfect, we dreaded the ignorance and especially the selfishness and brutality of the mass: but our ideal of ultimate improvement went far beyond Democracy, and would class us decidedly under the general designation of Socialists. While we repudiated with the greatest energy that tyranny of society over the individual which most Socialistic systems are supposed to involve, we yet looked forward to a time when society will no longer be divided into the idle and the industrious; when the rule that they who do not work shall not eat, will be applied not to paupers only, but impartially to all; when the division of the produce of labour, instead of depending, as in so great a degree it now does, on the accident of birth, will be made by concert on an acknowledged principle of justice; and when it will no longer either be, or be thought to be, impossible for human beings to exert themselves strenuously in procuring benefits which are not to be exclusively their own, but to be shared with the society they belong to. The social problem of the future we considered to be, how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action, with a common ownership in the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labour.<sup>52</sup>

He then described the production of the book:

In the “Principles of Political Economy,” these opinions were promulgated, less clearly and fully in the first edition, rather more so in the second, and quite unequivocally in the third. The difference arose partly from the change of times, the first edition having been written and sent to press before the French Revolution of 1848, after which the public mind became more open to the reception of novelties in opinion, and doctrines appeared moderate which would have been thought very startling a short time before. In the first edition the difficulties of Socialism were stated so strongly, that the tone was on the whole that of opposition to it. In the year or two which followed, much time was given to the study of the best Socialistic writers on the Continent, and to meditation and discussion on the whole range of topics involved in the controversy: and the result was that most of what had been written on the subject in the first edition was cancelled, and replaced by arguments and reflections which represent a more advanced opinion.

The Political Economy was far more rapidly executed than the Logic, or indeed than anything of importance which I had previously written. It was commenced in the autumn of 1845, and was ready for the press before the end of 1847.<sup>53</sup>

Finally, there is Mill’s generous, perhaps over-generous, account of the part played by Harriet Taylor:

The first of my books in which her share was conspicuous was the “Principles of Political Economy.” The “System of Logic” owed little to her except in the minuter matters of composition, in which respect my writings, both great and small, have largely benefited by her accurate and clear-sighted criticism. The chapter of the Political Economy which has had a greater influence on opinion than all the rest, that on “the Probable Future of the Labouring Classes,” is entirely due to her: in the first draft of the book, that chapter did not exist. She pointed out the need of such a chapter, and the extreme imperfection of the book without it: she was the cause of my writing it; and the more general part of the chapter, the statement and discussion of the two opposite theories respecting the proper condition of the labouring classes, was wholly an exposition of her thoughts, often in words taken from her own lips. The purely scientific part of the Political Economy I did not learn from her; but it was chiefly her influence that gave to the book that general tone by which it is distinguished from all previous expositions of Political Economy that had any pretension to being scientific, and which has made it so useful in conciliating minds which those previous expositions had repelled. This tone consisted chiefly in making the proper distinction between the laws of the Production of Wealth, which are real laws of nature, dependent on the properties of objects, and the modes of its Distribution, which, subject to certain conditions, depend on human will. The common run of political economists confuse these together, under the designation of economic laws, which they deem incapable of being defeated or modified by human effort; ascribing the same necessity to things dependent on the unchangeable conditions of our earthly existence, and to those which, being but the necessary consequences of par-

ticular social arrangements, are merely co-extensive with these: given certain institutions and customs, wages, profits, and rent will be determined by certain causes; but this class of political economists drop the indispensable presupposition, and argue that these causes must, by an inherent necessity, against which no human means can avail, determine the shares which fall, in the division of the produce, to labourers, capitalists, and landlords. The “Principles of Political Economy” yielded to none of its predecessors in aiming at the scientific appreciation of the action of these causes, under the conditions which they presuppose; but it set the example of not treating those conditions as final. The economic generalization which depend, not on necessities of nature but on those combined with the existing arrangements of society, it deals with only as provisional, and as liable to be much altered by the progress of social improvement.<sup>54</sup>

I conclude with a quotation from Professor Harold Laski’s introduction to the World’s Classics edition of the *Autobiography*:

The modern economist may use a technique more refined than that of Mill; he rarely conveys the same sense of generous insight into his material. The modern logician has an apparatus incomparably more delicate and subtle; but those very qualities make his work less accessible, and therefore, less educative than Mill’s. The tradition is different because he wrote; and that, after all, is the final answer to critical analysis.<sup>55</sup>

In this judgment I concur.

## Endnotes

[1] Frank Knight, “The Ricardian Theory of Production and Distribution,” *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, I (1935), 3.

[2] R. Redfield, “The Art of Social Science,” *American Journal of Sociology*, LIV (1948), 181-90.

[3] Alfred Marshall, *Principles of Economics*, Variorum Edition, ed. C. W. Guillebaud (London, 1961), 43.

[4] K. E. Boulding, “Samuelson’s *Foundations of Economic Analysis*: The Role of Mathematics in Economics,” *Journal of Political Economy*, LVI (1948), 190.

[5] J. A. Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis* (New York, 1954), 4-5.

[6] Lord Robbins, *Theory of Economic Policy* (London, 1952), 1 and 4.

[7] John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, ed. W. J. Ashley (London, 1909), xxiv.

[8] Page references to the present edition are given in parentheses in the text.

[9] F. Y. Edgeworth, “John Stuart Mill,” *Dictionary of Political Economy*, ed. R. H. I. Palgrave (London, 1910), II, 763.

[10] J. S. Mill, “On the Definition of Political Economy; and on the Method of Investigation Proper to It,” Essay V in *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy* (London, 1844). Reprinted as number 7 in the *Series of Scarce Works on Political Economy*, by the London School of Economics and Political Science (London, 1948), 137-40. My italics.

[11] Mill, “On the Definition of Political Economy,” 144-5.

[12] *Ibid.*, 146.

[13] *Ibid.*, 148-9.

[14] *Ibid.*, 155.

[15] J. S. Mill, *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive*, 8th ed. (London, 1872), II, 463.

[16] *Ibid.*, II, 508ff.

[17] *Ibid.*, II, 513.

[18] *Ibid.*, II, 495.

[19] *A System of Logic*, II, 553-4.

[20] J. K. Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston, 1958).

[21] F. H. Knight, *The Ethics of Competition* (London, 1935), 59.

[22] *Ibid.*, 60-1.

[23] Quoted in *ibid.*, 66.

[24] Published 1886. Quotations are from the edition in the Wayfarers Library (London, n.d.).

[25] *Ibid.*, 1.

[26] *Ibid.*, 62.

[27] *Ibid.*, 428.

[28] Joseph Spengler, “The Aesthetics of Population,” *Population Bulletin*, XIII (1957), 61-75.

[29] *Ibid.*, 70.

[30] *Ibid.*, 71.

[31] *Ibid.*, 72.

[32] See my two articles, “Adam Smith on Productive and Unproductive Labour: A Theory of Full Development,” *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XXVI (1960), 625-30; and “L’industrie de l’automobile canadienne et son intégration dans l’économie mondiale,” *Cahiers de l’Institut de Science Economique Appliquée*, H.S., CXXVIII (1962), 121-35.

- [33] Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, ed. Cannan (London, 1904), I, 318.
- [34] Thomas Malthus, *First Essay on Population* (London, 1798). Reprinted for the Royal Economic Society (London, 1926), 293.
- [35] F. Myint, *Theories of Economic Welfare* (London, 1948), 13.
- [36] V. W. Bladen, “John Stuart Mill’s *Principles*: A Centenary Estimate,” *American Economic Review*, XXXIX.2 (1949), 1-12. See also the article on this “proposition” by H. G. Johnson, “Demand for Commodities is *Not* Demand for Labour,” *Economic Journal*, LIX (1949), 531-6.
- [37] See Appendix H, II.1043.4-9.
- [38] See my Preface to *Canadian Population and Northern Colonization*, ed. V. W. Bladen. Royal Society of Canada, “*Studia Varia*” series, no. 7 (Toronto, 1962).
- [39] Sir D. H. Robertson, *Utility and All That* (London, 1952), 63. “Surely one of the economist’s most obvious duties is to attempt to disentangle *useful injustices* from useless or harmless ones. . . . If, in the face of his findings, the Sovereign People then deliberately decides that Justice is at all costs to be preferred to Welfare, or even that Soaking the Rich is at all costs to be preferred to both—well, that is that.”
- [40] J. A. Schumpeter, Preface to F. Zeuthen, *Problems of Monopoly* (London, 1930), vii-viii.
- [41] Edgeworth, *Dictionary*, 760.
- [42] Marshall, *Principles*, Appendix J.
- [43] Schumpeter, *History*, 689.
- [44] J. Viner, *Studies in the Theory of International Trade* (New York, 1957), 535.
- [45] A. A. Young, “Increasing Returns and Economic Progress,” *Economic Journal*, XXXVIII (1928), 527-42.
- [46] J. H. Williams, “The Theory of International Trade Reconsidered,” *Economic Journal*, XXXIX (1929), 195-209.
- [47] H. Myint, “The ‘Classical Theory’ of International Trade and the Underdeveloped Countries,” *Economic Journal*, LXVIII (1958), 317-37.
- [48] Page references are to the Columbia edition (New York, 1924). Along with this part of the Introduction should be read Appendix G, in which some letters relating to the writing of the *Principles* are collected.
- [49] Autobiography, 19-20.
- [50] *Ibid.*, 44.
- [51] *Ibid.*, 84.
- [52] *Ibid.*, 161-2.
- [53] Autobiography, 164.

[54] *Ibid.*, 173-5.

[55] *Autobiography*, ed. Laski (London, 1924), xix and xx.

**VOLUME IV - ESSAYS ON ECONOMICS AND SOCIETY PART I. INTRODUCTION**  
**BY LORD ROBBINS**

SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume IV - Essays on Economics and Society Part I*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by Lord Robbins (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/244/16621>>.

INTRODUCTION

I. NATURE OF THE COLLECTION

The papers collected in this volume have a twofold value. They provide important insights into the evolution of the views of their author on economic and social problems; and, since they come from one of the world's outstanding economists and social philosophers, they still possess great intrinsic interest. John Stuart Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* is one of the great synthetic works of classical economics; anything which throws light on its propositions and their development is therefore of considerable historical importance. The views of the author of *On Liberty* on any aspect of social and economic policy have still great significance at this stage of human history.

For good scholarly reasons the papers here reproduced are printed in chronological order. For purposes of discussion, however, they are better classified according to subject matter. From this point of view, they may be considered under six main headings: General Economic Theory (other than money and banking); Money and Banking; Public Finance; Labour; Property and Its Social Control; and Socialism. It is under these headings and in this order that they will be discussed in this Introduction.

II. GENERAL ECONOMIC THEORY

JUVENILIA

The papers relating to non-monetary general economic theory begin with a set of three which may be regarded as exposition on the part of the youthful John Stuart of an outlook which he inherited from his father and Ricardo. Their chief value consists in their revelation of the position from which he set out. The review of McCulloch's *Discourse on the Rise, Progress, Peculiar Ob-*



*jects and Importance of Political Economy* (reprinted in an Appendix because it was jointly composed with William Ellis) is pure propaganda for the School; it is fairly clear that the eulogy of McCulloch would not have been written later on.<sup>1</sup> The paper on “The Nature, Origin, and Progress of Rent,” a straightforward exposition of Ricardian theory, was written as an appendix to McCulloch’s edition of Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* and well explains the Ricardian critique of Adam Smith’s views on rent. But the most notable thing about the reprint is the footnote on page 178 where Professor Robson reproduces a marginal note from Mill’s copy, now at Somerville College, in which he shows dissatisfaction with the dogmatic insistence on the doctrine that rent does not enter into cost of production, thus foreshadowing possibly the concessions in this respect appearing in the *Principles*.<sup>2</sup>

The article from the *Westminster Review*, “The Quarterly Review on Political Economy,” which is the earliest of the three, is also the most extensive. It is an episode in the war between the two Reviews. The article which it attacks—a review of McCulloch’s *Discourse*—was actually written by Malthus. But Mill’s review, which was obviously written with this knowledge, pretends that the article in the *Quarterly Review* was written with a view to making Malthus look ridiculous. As a piece of debating, it is excellent rough stuff. As usual, outside his writings on population, Malthus had put his points so poorly that it was not difficult to make logical mincemeat of them; and this the youthful reviewer does with great relish. The article contains no indication that he was yet aware of the vulnerable point in crude assertions of his father’s and Say’s arguments about the impossibility of general gluts. And to those who have read the thorough trouncing from Torrens, evoked by an earlier effort to sustain his father’s preposterous view that differences in the period of investment might all be reduced to labour;<sup>3</sup> the attempt to minimize the differences between this view and Ricardo’s must have interest as almost the one instance in the whole corpus of his writings where Mill was not entirely ingenuous. For any who are interested in the finer shades of the disputes between Malthus and the Ricardians, this article is required reading. For the rest, it is chiefly notable as an exceptionally clear exposition of what the Ricardian theory of value really asserted.

## PAPERS ON GENERAL THEORY WRITTEN BEFORE 1848

Next comes a central group of essays and reviews in which Mill is to be seen working out his own views on general theory in forms later to appear in the *Principles*. Of these, the five included in the separate volume entitled *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy* are by far the most important. Their actual publication did not take place until 1844 and seems to have been stimulated by a desire to set before the world a more systematic and temperate exposition of the rôle of demand in international trade theory than was being expounded with great debating brilliance, but considerable over-emphasis, by Torrens in the famous, or notorious, *Budget* letters. But they were written in 1829 and 1830 and therefore come first in chronological order as they do in the order of intellectual importance.

The first of the series is the most famous. The background is fairly well known. The theory of comparative cost, invented by Torrens and Ricardo and expounded by Mill's father, had indicated the nature of the advantages of territorial division of labour and the limiting cost ratios (in a two-commodity model) between which exchanges advantageous to both parties could take place. But it did not decide at what rate these exchanges would actually take place and therefore the way in which the gains of trade would be divided. Indeed, in the first edition of James Mill's *Elements* the exposition actually involved a double counting of the gain, only corrected in the third edition after representations by his son and his son's friend, George Graham. It was doubtless in the course of attempts to fill this gap that there took place those conversations which, as Mill relates in his *Autobiography*,<sup>4</sup> eventually resulted in the writing of the essay, "Of the Laws of Interchange Between Nations; and the Distribution of the Gains of Commerce among the Countries of the Commercial World."

This essay is surely one of the most powerful contributions ever made to the evolution of economic analysis. The idea of demand as a function of price was not, of course, entirely new: it is easy to find perceptions of this relationship in earlier literature. But this was the first case in which it was systematically set forth and made the analytical basis of important propositions. Moreover, there is involved in this essay the first systematic presentation of the classical theory of international trade in all its main implications. Ricardo, with the theory of comparative costs and the theory of the distribution of the precious metals, had provided two of the most basic ingredients. But until the demand element was explicitly introduced, the theory was necessarily incomplete. In this essay Mill not only meets this need, in models involving both barter and money, but he also provides a systematic working out of the corollaries as regards tariffs and the terms of trade, the export of machinery, the problem of two countries competing in a third, and the payment of international tribute. Not all the solutions are comprehensive. But for the first time the general outline of a comprehensive analysis is set forth; and, although there was some elaboration in the *Principles*, we have the authority of Edgeworth for the view that not all this was an improvement.<sup>5</sup>

The second essay, "Of the Influence of Consumption on Production," is scarcely less remarkable. Classical teaching on this subject had hitherto been represented by Adam Smith's proposition that "What is annually saved is as regularly consumed as what is annually spent, and nearly in the same time, too,"<sup>6</sup> or by the even more doctrinaire Law of Markets, as it was thought to be propounded by J. B. Say and certainly was by Mill's father, which flatly asserted the identity of aggregate supply and aggregate demand and flatly denied the possibility of general overproduction—a principle which, as we shall see later, Mill himself, as a young man, was not unwilling to adduce in a dispute about war expenditure.<sup>7</sup> Mill's essay begins with an assertion of the broad principle that "What a country wants to make it richer, is never consumption, but production" (I.263). But in searching for "scattered particles of important truth" amid "the ruins of exploded error" he is led to reformulations which in fact amount both to a refutation of Say's Law as usually applied to a money economy, and to a view of the operations of the speculative motive which affords what is in effect a theory of the trade cycle. "In order to render the argument for the impossibility of an excess of all commodities applicable to the case in which a circulating

medium is employed, money must itself be considered as a commodity. It must, undoubtedly, be admitted that there cannot be an excess of all other commodities, and an excess of money at the same time.” He continues: “But those who have . . . affirmed that there was an excess of all commodities, never pretended that money was one of these commodities; they held that there was not an excess, but a deficiency of the circulating medium.” What this amounted to was “that persons in general, at that particular time, from a general expectation of being called upon to meet sudden demands, liked better to possess money than any other commodity. Money, consequently, was in request, and all other commodities were in comparative disrepute. . . . But the result is, that all commodities fall in price, or become unsaleable. When this happens to one single commodity, there is said to be a superabundance of that commodity; and if that be a proper expression, there would seem to be in the nature of the case no particular impropriety in saying that there is a superabundance of all or most commodities, when all or most of them are in this same predicament.” (I.277.) For some reason or other this remarkable reconstruction of the classical position has seldom received explicit recognition. It can be detected between the lines in the treatment of speculation in the *Principles*, but it is nowhere so overtly developed; and from that day to this, the neat side-tracking of the crudities of Say’s Law has passed very little noticed. Yet, as Messrs. Baumol and Becker remark, in their excellent résumé of the historical treatment of the issues, “In reading it one is led to wonder why so much of the subsequent literature (this paper included) had to be written at all.”<sup>8</sup>

The remaining three essays in this collection are not of the same path-breaking importance, but they have considerable interest nevertheless. The third essay, “On the Words Productive and Unproductive,” is devoted to making clear that the use of these words, in the sense in which they had been employed by the English classical economists—as distinct from the Physiocrats—was to indicate the difference between the production of capital in some form or other, and pure services leaving directly or indirectly no lasting sources of enjoyment behind. Attention to such elucidations should have saved many purely semantic polemics in the literature of the hundred years after they appeared.

The fourth essay, “On Profits and Interest,” consists first of a clarification and amendment of the Ricardian proposition that profits depend upon wages, and then a discussion of the relation between profits and interest, and the influences on the determination of the latter independent of the influence of the former. This part is conspicuous for a very clear exposition of the process of “forced accumulation,” as Mill calls it, through inflationary movements of cash or credit—an exposition which is explicitly stated to be no palliation of the iniquity of the process. “Though A might have spent his property unproductively, B ought not to be permitted to rob him of it because B will expend it on productive labour.” (I.307.)

The subject matter of the last essay in this series is sufficiently indicated by its title, “On the Definition of Political Economy; and on the Method of Investigation Proper to It.” A scrutiny of earlier definitions and successive refinements of tentatives of his own eventually leads Mill to the conclusion that political economy is best defined as “The science which traces the laws of such of the phenomena of society as arise from the combined operations of mankind for the production

of wealth in so far as those phenomena are not modified by the pursuit of any other object” (I.323); and what he calls the *a priori* method of reasoning from general assumptions is declared to be the only legitimate method of reaching general conclusions, although these conclusions need continually to be tested by reference to specific experience. These conceptions have sometimes been thought to have been discarded in the writing of the *Principles*. But it is doubtful if this is so. The essay makes it abundantly plain that, for purposes of practical recommendations, the use of the abstract propositions of the science as its author conceived it needed to be supplemented by other knowledge. In the world of reality there are many disturbing circumstances which do not fall within the province of political economy, “and here the mere political economist, he who has studied no science but Political Economy, if he attempt to apply his science to practice, will fail” (I.331). The scope of the *Principles* was intended to cover not only theory but also applications, as is evident even in its full title, *The Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy*, and it is difficult to believe that Mill would have admitted any incompatibility between this objective and his earlier discussion of scope and method. This is not the only time in the history of economic thought that attempts to clarify logical distinctions have been mistaken for prohibitions of catholicity of interest.

There are two other papers, published before the writing of the *Principles*, which are concerned with questions of general theory.

The first is a review of the concluding number of Harriet Martineau’s *Illustrations of Political Economy*, that entitled *The Moral of Many Fables*. Mill did not always speak kindly of this lady—he once referred to her as “a mere tyro”<sup>9</sup>—but here, while making plain its limited pretensions, he treats her little book with a measure of respect. But he brings against it the reproach which by that time (1834) he had begun to feel against the political economy he had inherited from his father and his father’s circle, namely that it took the existing institutional framework as a permanent feature of the human situation. “Thus, for instance, English political economists presuppose, in every one of their speculations, that the produce of industry is shared among three classes, altogether distinct from one another. . . . They revolve in their eternal circle of landlords, capitalists, and labourers, until they seem to think of the distinction of society into those three classes, as if it were one of God’s ordinances, not man’s, and as little under human control as the division of day and night.” (I.225-7.) It is easy to see in these strictures the beginnings of the distinction that plays such a predominant rôle in the *Principles* between the laws of production which were immutable and the laws of distribution which were contingent on human institutions.

The second paper is a review of De Quincey’s *Logic of Political Economy*. This was written very shortly before the commencement of the *Principles* and it can well be believed that, in the writing thereof, some of the stimulus of De Quincey’s lively exposition was still present in his mind. De Quincey’s politics were antipathetic to Mill, who candidly avows that he found it difficult “to reconcile this wretched party invective with the respect we sincerely wish to feel” (I.404). But he takes De Quincey’s discussions of the theory of value very seriously and reproduces at length the charming parable of alternative sales of a musical box in London and on a boat on Lake Superior with which De Quincey attempts to illustrate the respective influence of difficulty of attain-

ment and usefulness.<sup>10</sup> The paper is also noteworthy for a repudiation of the view, expressed by De Quincey and wrongly attributed by many (including no less an authority than Schumpeter) to Ricardo, that supply and demand are irrelevant to the determination of value.

## PAPERS ON GENERAL THEORY WRITTEN AFTER 1848

Mill published very little on general economic theory once the *Principles* had appeared; his interest thereafter was focused upon more detailed applications. There are two papers appearing in this period which might legitimately be brought under this heading, the review of Newman's *Lectures on Political Economy* of 1851 and the review of Thornton's *On Labour and its Claims* of 1869. Each of these, however, has its centre of gravity in another universe of discourse. The review of Thornton will accordingly be dealt with below under the heading of Labour, and that of Newman under Socialism.

## III. MONEY AND BANKING

Mill's papers relating to money and banking fall into two clearly marked groups. There is a group dealing with the controversies and events of the twenties and early thirties—the left-overs, so to speak, of the great bullionist debate; and there is a group, dealing with banking policy and the conduct of the Bank of England, which is part of the controversy concerning the expediency and results of the Bank Act of 1844. As we shall see, there is some evidence of continuity of thought between the two groups. But there is sufficient difference in content to make it useful to deal with them separately.

## PAPERS OF THE TWENTIES AND EARLY THIRTIES

The first paper of the earlier group is a review of the pamphlet, *Observations on the Effects Produced by the Expenditure of Government during the Restriction of Cash Payments*, by William Blake. At the height of the bullion controversy Blake had published a short treatise in which the main principles of bullionist orthodoxy were forcibly expressed,<sup>11</sup> but he had changed his mind, and in the pamphlet under review had urged that the rise of prices during the war and the subsequent fall were all attributable to the increase and diminution of government expenditure. This pamphlet had been the subject of critical comment by Ricardo shortly before his death<sup>12</sup> and had been the subject of an exchange of views between the author and McCulloch.<sup>13</sup> It was only to be expected that it should be singled out for critical examination in the *Westminster Review*, which in this connection, through its association with James Mill and his circle, stood for the unqualified classical position; and it was in character with this position that the task should have been assigned to John Mill.<sup>14</sup>

It is a crude article imbued with the youthful combativeness and occasional arrogance which we have already noticed in the review of Malthus of about the same period. It begins with a denial of general distress after the war—"We neither saw nor heard it, except in the cant of the agriculturists" (I.3)—and relies on Tooke's attempts<sup>15</sup> to exhibit the Blakean thesis as wholly mistaken. "No general reasoning could have added to the conviction which everyone must feel, who has perused Mr. Tooke's detail of facts, that Mr. Blake's theory is totally erroneous." (I.21.) The attitude is not sympathetic to this modern reader. Historical scholarship, at the present day, would probably hold that Blake had overstated his case. Moreover, at times his arguments are muddled and do not carry conviction. But to contend that there was nothing in the view that the great variations in government expenditure played some part in the inflationary and deflationary movements of prices is implausible to the modern outlook; and it must be admitted that there is something slightly repellent about the confidence with which the youthful reviewer asserts this point of view.

Moreover, Mill's own view at this stage cannot be regarded as free from error. He regards it as a fallacy to suppose that "expenditure, as contradistinguished from saving, can by any possibility constitute an additional source of demand"; and he similarly denounces the conception that "capital which being borrowed by government becomes a source of demand in its hands, would not have been equally a source of demand in the hands of those from whom it is taken" (I.13), neither of which views can in fact be taken to be inevitably fallacious. We have seen already that, in the essay "On the Influence of Consumption on Production," Mill was to break the impasse created by the proposition that all that is saved is consumed and in about the same time. It is clear that at the time of this early review he was still in the bondage of this kind of thinking. As a critique of Blake's general position his paper is radically inferior to the section devoted to that subject in Matthias Attwood's *Letter to Lord Archibald Hamilton*.<sup>16</sup>

The same spirit of somewhat combative dogmatism inspires the paper, written in 1833, entitled "The Currency Juggle." This is a violent polemic directed chiefly against the position of Thomas Attwood who, in a recent debate with Cobbett, had advocated currency depreciation as a means for lightening the burden of debt and increasing the volume of employment. It is clear from the opening paragraphs of the paper that the object in writing it was to disassociate the radical movement from this propaganda, which it was felt was likely to bring the cause of reform into discredit; and, given the facts that the restoration of a metallic standard had taken place more than twelve years before and that the country was tired of controversy about the currency, it is not difficult to understand this motive. It is not difficult, moreover, to understand the view that Cobbett's desire for an overt scaling down of debt, although in Mill's view a mistaken position, should have been regarded as morally superior to a proposal to bring about the same thing by measures which were likely to rob all existing holders of money, whether or not they were creditors, of some of the value of their holding. What, however, is more difficult to understand is the tone of the argument and the apparent unwillingness to admit any force or quality in the position of the writers attacked. After all, from the point of view of modern analysis, during the period before the restoration of the metallic standard when the economy was being crippled by deflation, the position of the Attwoods seems considerably more defensible than that of the con-

temporary classical orthodoxy; and although by 1833 the economic situation had changed and the balance of argument was then probably against unorthodox changes, it is difficult to regard all their arguments as being as contemptible as they are made to appear in Mill's attack. At first sight there is lacking the fairness, the willingness to do justice to opposing points of view, characteristic of Mill in his prime. But in fact, where any question of inconvertible paper was concerned, this attitude persisted till the end, as is shown not only by *obiter dicta* in the *Principles*, but also by the preservation of this particular effusion in *Dissertations and Discussions*. Apparently the traumatic experience of inconvertible paper during the Restriction period had left such a deep imprint on the members of the classical school that one and all seem to have been incapable of calm argument rather than of denunciation in this connection—which was a pity, for it left a gap in the literature not well filled even at the present day.

The last paper in this group is the article on “Paper Currency and Commercial Distress” from the *Parliamentary Review* for the session of 1826. This paper, although somewhat prolix and rambling in form, is probably the most significant of the three, both as regards positive content and as an indication of the lines on which Mill's future thought was to evolve.

The positive value of the paper consists in its explanation of the course of a speculative boom and its eventual collapse. The vivid account of the origin of such movements in anticipation of shortages of supply, their extension so that the “speculative purchases produce the very effect, in anticipation of which they were made” (I.75), the repercussions of this state of affairs on manufacture, the arrival of increased supplies, and the unloading of swollen stocks—all this is without parallel in the earlier literature; and it is possible to read into it some anticipation of the essay “On the Influence of Consumption on Production” with its masterly invocation of fluctuations in willingness to hold money rather than commodities. Certainly it contains the germs of much of the content of the chapter (III, xii) on the “Influence of Credit on Prices” in the *Principles*.

At the same time, in its criticisms of the government's decision to prohibit the issue of pound notes and the arguments by which that decision was supported, there are to be discovered, at times in a somewhat extreme form, anticipations of Mill's subsequent position in the controversy between the so-called Banking and Currency Schools. Thus, for instance, he maintains that until paper money has entirely displaced metal there can be no talk of excess. “So long as there remains a sovereign in the country, there has been no over-issue.” (I.83.) To the suggestion that such displacement takes time and that, in the interval, the total circulation may legitimately be described as excessive, he replies by a virtual denial of the existence of any appreciable lags. And he goes on to argue that if there were no paper circulation capable of depreciation in speculative periods, the same effect would be produced by the multiplication of other forms of credit. “It appears, that in periods of speculation, the addition to the circulating medium and the depreciation of its value, are no greater with a local bank paper than without it.” (I.96.) Finally he denies that the movement of interest rates had been in the least influenced by the increased issue of notes.

Certainly the main positions of the Banking School are all here in embryo. But this brings us to the papers bearing directly on the controversy concerned.

## THE CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES OF THE BANK ACT OF 1844 AND ITS OPERATION IN PRACTICE

This controversy related specifically to the principles appropriate to the regulation of a convertible paper currency. Both the schools of thought involved repudiated any connection with propaganda for inconvertible paper and insisted on the need for convertibility. But, given this degree of common ground, they differed root and branch concerning the need for regulation beyond this requirement. The Currency School, led by Overstone, Norman, and Torrens, argued that regulations were necessary in order that the movements of a mixed circulation might be similar to those which would take place if the currency were wholly metallic: to this end they proposed what was embodied in the famous Bank Act of 1844, a separation of the function of issue from the function of banking in the organisation of the Bank of England, and a rule which brought it about that, beyond a fixed fiduciary issue of an amount smaller than the minimum needs of trade, each note outstanding should be covered by an equivalent gold reserve. The Banking School argued that no such regulation was necessary and further that the separation of the departments imposed undesirable limitations on the proper discharge of the functions of the central bank.

Beyond these practical issues there lay deeper divisions of view regarding the working of the monetary mechanism and the objectives of monetary policy.<sup>17</sup>

Thus the Banking School regarded the size of the note issue as completely passive to the movement of prices. It did not determine prices; it was determined by them. They contended that it was impossible for bankers to bring about an increased circulation of notes: any attempt to do so was believed to be frustrated by the celebrated principle of reflux. They regarded bank credit as having exactly the same status as convertible notes, not only in relation to prices and incomes but also as part of the total system of circulating media. Their remedy for any menace to the convertibility of the note issue was to increase the central banking reserve. And they argued against the alleged desirability of a system which brought it about that the active circulation was influenced, as the plans of the Currency School held that it should be, by the state of the balance of payments.

Against this, their opponents planted themselves firmly on the norms indicated by the Ricardian theory of the distribution of the precious metals. They urged that the movements of a mixed circulation should be similar to those which would take place were it wholly metallic. They ridiculed the idea that prices were indifferent to the volume of convertible paper. They maintained that the banks could vary the circulation of notes by variations in the terms of lending and contended that, unless the reflux of notes was instantaneous, the fact of a time lag necessarily involved the possibility of temporarily increased issues. They argued that the possibility of variations in the note issue, other than those similar to what would take place if the currency was purely metallic, increased the possibility of adverse variations in bank credit. And they held that the use of a reserve to insulate the circulation from fluctuations which otherwise would be caused by variations in the state of the balance of payments were likely to delay readjustment and in-



crease the danger to convertibility of a prolonged external drain. They denied the accusation that they regarded absolute increases in the note circulation as necessarily the initiating cause of fluctuations in prices and the external balance, contending that the focus of their precautions was on the prevention of *relative* over-issue—a state of affairs as likely to result from changes originating on the side of goods as from those on the side of money.

As happens so often, the verdict of time on this controversy has not been unequivocally in favour of one side or the other. It is clear that the Currency School erred gravely in regarding control of the note issue as a sufficient control of the volume of credit: there are indications that Torrens at least was beginning to see this by the end of his career.<sup>18</sup> The Banking School had more sense of contemporary reality in this respect. It is also clear that, having regard to the possibility of sudden movements on capital account, there was much weight in their plea for a larger reserve. But on matters of deeper analysis, in my judgment, the balance of merit is reversed. The Banking School were wrong about the passivity of issue and the significance of reflux; and they preached a perilous doctrine in urging that the internal circulation should be insulated from changes in the external position. And although it is easy to pick holes in the rigid prescriptions of the Currency School, focused on the current account and relying too heavily on control of the note issue, it is arguable that their assumption of a connection between the internal and external position, only to be violated at peril of continuing disequilibrium, is one which still has relevance to the problems of the present age.

In this dispute, Mill's general position was that of the Banking School. His connections with Tooke inclined him to a similar mode of approach; and although, as can be seen in "The Currency Question," he was not unaware of the vulnerability of some of Tooke's formulations vis-à-vis Torrens' expert guerilla warfare, he tended to accept the broad implications of his general position. The chapter in the *Principles*, "Of the Regulation of a Convertible Paper Currency" (III, xxiv) makes some concession to the Currency School in regard to the possibility of increasing note issues in times of buoyant speculation and therefore, in regard to the effectiveness of the Act of 1844, in arresting speculative extensions of credit. But in the main it is the pure milk of the Banking School. Thus, apart from the exception just noted, it minimizes throughout the importance of the note issue and its relation to the creation of credit in general. It endorses Fullerton's conception of the central rôle of "hoards" in the settlement of disparities of international indebtedness. And it disputes the desirability of arrangements which seek to make the general movements of the circulation vis-à-vis the outside world approximate to what would be the case were it entirely metallic. It was not by accident that it was singled out for a paragraph by paragraph critical examination in Torrens' major polemic.<sup>19</sup>

The three papers here reprinted afford useful insights into the evolution and consolidation of this attitude. The first, entitled "The Currency Question," which appeared in the *Westminster Review* when the controversy relating to Peel's proposals for the renewal of the Bank Charter was at its height, is in effect a defence of Tooke against Torrens. The pamphlet, *An Enquiry into the Currency Principle*, by the respected author of the *History of Prices*, which was a frontal attack on the whole intellectual basis of these proposals, had elicited a reply from Torrens, *An Enquiry into the*

*Practical Working of the Proposed Arrangements for the Renewal of the Charter of the Bank of England*, and Mill's article was an attempt to defend Tooke's position from what was certainly a highly ingenious and resourceful attack. The main purport of the argument is to demonstrate that "it seems not easy to understand how an increased creation of the written evidences of credit called bank notes, can, of itself, create an additional demand or occasion a rise of price. . . . What does the person do who issues them, but take so much from the third element of purchasing power, namely credit, and add it to the first element, money in hand—making no addition whatever to the total amount?" (I.354.) It protests that the separation of the departments will increase rather than diminish the violence of commercial fluctuations and reaches the conclusion that "the proposed changes in the mode of regulating the currency will be attended with none of the advantages predicted; that, so far as intended to guard against the danger of over-issue, they are precautions against a chimerical evil; that the real evil of commercial vicissitudes, of 'cycles of excitement and depression,' is not touched by them, nor by any regulations which can be adopted for bank notes or other mere instruments of credit; and that in what Mr. Tooke justly calls (next to solvency and convertibility) 'the main difference between one banking system and another,' namely, 'the greater or less liability to abrupt changes in the rate of interest and in the state of commercial credit,' the present arrangements, under the condition of a larger bank reserve, have a decided advantage over the new system" (I.361).

The two remaining papers, "The Bank Acts" (evidence before the Select Committee on the Bank Acts of 1857) and "Currency and Banking" (replies to the questions of the French *Enquête sur les principes et les faits généraux qui régissent la circulation monétaire et fiduciaire*) come from a date when the Peel Act had been some time in operation; and they exhibit the views and arguments characteristic of the chapter in the *Principles* which had remained and continued to remain substantially unaltered.

"The Bank Acts," which is much the longer and more important of the two, involves much repetition, as might be expected when the witness was cross-examined in turn by different members of the committee. But certain positions stand out. Mill is against the separation of the departments because he thinks it inhibits the flexibility of credit policy. He admits the usefulness of the Act in imposing a curb on the expansion of credit at times of speculative excitement. But he urges that in every other respect it is destabilizing. The right way to safeguard convertibility, he urges, is not the separation of the departments but, as Tooke had urged, the keeping of a larger reserve. As for the claim that the movements of a mixed system should conform to the movements which would take place if the currency were wholly metallic, he repudiates it: "no currency can be good of which the permanent average value does not conform to the permanent average value of a metallic currency; but I do not admit the inference that in order to enable it to do this, its fluctuations in value must conform to the fluctuations in the value of a metallic currency; because it appears to me, that fluctuations in value are liable to occur from anything that affects credit; and I think that a metallic currency is liable to more severe revulsions of credit, than a mixed currency, such as ours was before the Act of 1844; and therefore, that a paper currency of the permanent value of a metallic currency, and convertible, but without any other restriction, is liable to less fluctuation than we now have under the Act of 1844" (II.544). And, de-

veloping this point, he argues that the advantage of the absence of restriction is that the Bank “will not be obliged to contract credit in cases in which there had been no previous undue expansion of it” (II.544).<sup>20</sup>

The replies to the questions of the Enquête add very little to all this. They are, however, notable for a particularly forceful statement of the case where, an external drain having been caused by excessive speculation, the authorities of the central bank are under an obligation to contract their issues to prevent a cumulative breakdown. “L’écoulement ainsi produit n’a pas de limite naturelle, et n’a aucune raison de s’arrêter avant la cessation des causes qui l’ont amené. Il ne cesse et ne peut cesser que lorsque les hauts prix qui lui ont donné lieu ont pris fin par un mouvement de baisse, c’est-à-dire lorsque la spéculation a cédé à une réaction. En ce cas, l’écoulement du numéraire est le remède naturel et indispensable de la maladie, et parvinton à le retarder, on ne réussirait qu’à prolonger le mal et à aggraver la crise finale. Si, en ce cas, la Banque s’abstenait d’agir pour défendre son encaisse, si elle continuait d’escompter aussi largement qu’auparavant, en laissant s’écouler sa réserve métallique, les spéculateurs, trouvant à emprunter au cours ordinaire, ne seraient pas réduits à vendre: ils pourraient prolonger pendant quelque temps encore leur lutte contre les lois naturelles; les prix surhaussés ne baisseraient pas, et partant l’écoulement suivrait son cours jusqu’à ce que la réserve même la mieux fournie y eût passé tout entière. A l’approche de cette catastrophe, la Banque, pour ne pas faire faillite, serait dans la nécessité de produire d’un seul coup la réaction qu’elle aurait dû préparer graduellement. Une diminution des escomptes et une élévation du taux de l’intérêt, qui eussent suffi pour arrêter la spéculation dans les commencements de la sortie des métaux précieux, ne suffiraient plus: il faudrait une action non-seulement plus brusque, mais plus excessive et plus violente. De là, écoulement général du crédit, la panique et la peine, qui est loin de frapper seulement les spéculateurs dont l’imprudence a amené le mal.” (II.604.)

All of which would have delighted the hearts of Colonel Torrens and the others of his persuasion. But they would have added that there were other cases when to allow an external drain to continue without affecting the internal circulation might lead to equivalent dangers. And if we have regard to the possibility of adverse turns in the terms of trade and to the Ricardian Theory of the distribution of the precious metals, it is not at all certain that they would not have been right.

#### IV. PUBLIC FINANCE

The papers on public finance in this collection fall into two entirely distinct groups: a group written in the twenties attacking various aspects of the protective duties of the day, and a group chiefly consisting of evidence on income and property taxation tendered to government committees in the years after the publication of the *Principles*.

#### PROTECTIVE DUTIES

The two principal papers in the first group are both concerned with the Corn Laws and may be regarded as a repository of the classical doctrine on these duties. The first, taking for granted the interest of the community as a whole in cheap imports, makes great use of standard Ricardian analysis to isolate the interests of the landlords in this respect from those of all other classes. It might be thought that protection to agriculture benefited the farmers. But, in so far as the farmer is a capitalist, in the long run he suffers with the rest, other than the landlords: a high price of corn means higher wages to cover the higher costs of subsistence, and this in turn leads to a lower rate of profit. Moreover, a lower rate of profit, it is noted, means a lower rate of accumulation; and “it is on the accumulation of capital that the advancement of the national wealth is *wholly* dependant” (I.50; italics added). It is therefore only the landlords who gain from this kind of protection, and the high rents they receive are not merely a transfer from other classes. In order that they may receive this kind of benefit, the community has to suffer the losses due to using resources to produce high-cost corn rather than importing it from lower-cost areas abroad. It would clearly be better to impose direct taxes to provide the subsidy to the landlords.

The second paper, written three years later apropos of the New Corn Law with its sliding scales, continues the attack. The first article had elaborated the proposition that the existing duties aggravated price fluctuations. This one argues that the sliding scales which were intended to deal with this evil will not do so, and that “the benefit intended to be conferred upon our own consumers by the gradually decreasing scale of duties from 12*s.* downwards, will be reaped principally, if not wholly, by foreigners” (I.146). It goes on to develop a frontal attack on the whole position that there is something especially sacrosanct about agriculture. “Before we offer up our substance to an allegorical idol, let us hear what title it has to our worship. What is this ‘agriculture,’ of which you speak? When you say that no country was ever prosperous without agriculture, do you mean, that no country was ever prosperous without procuring food? If this be all, the truth of the proposition is not very likely to be disputed. But if you mean that no country was ever prosperous unless it procured food by digging and ploughing, instead of procuring it by spinning and weaving, your assertion is altogether destitute of truth: since the Dutch republic, which procured the greater part of its food without digging or ploughing was one of the most prosperous communities which the world ever saw.” (I.149-50.)

He then asks: “when you speak of the necessity of protecting agriculture, do you mean the necessity of protecting the mere turning up of the ground? or the necessity of protecting the procuring of food for the people? If you mean the first, show us, if you can, any reason for desiring to procure food by turning up the ground, when we can procure more with the same quantity of labour in any other way. But if, by protection to agriculture, you mean protection to procuring food, there is no dispute about that. We are as desirous as you are, to afford protection to the procuring of food; provided always, that the procuring of food needs protection. But what is this contrivance of yours for protecting it? Simply this: to force the people to obtain ten bushels of corn by turning up the ground, when with the same degree of labour they might obtain twelve by growing it in their looms and in their cotton mills. If this be *protection* (which it is not, but *privilege*)

it is protection only to the owners of the ground. A prohibition of gas-lights might be called, without any great impropriety, protection to the oil-companies; but would the oil-companies be permitted to term it protection for lighting? Yes; if lighting be protected by being rendered more expensive and more difficult. No, if this be, as it evidently is, the very reverse of protection. If agriculture means only turning up the ground, it deserves no protection. Turning up the ground is not a *bonum per se*. If it means procuring food, it is protected by excluding cheap corn, precisely in the same manner as the lighting of the streets of London would be protected by imposing a heavy duty upon gas.” (I.150.)<sup>21</sup>

The remaining papers in this group, the article on “The Silk Trade” and the “Petition on Free Trade,” have not the same intellectual interest. The “Petition” exemplifies Mill’s capacity for lucid and forceful draftsmanship; the disquisition on the silk duties, his capacity for bringing general principles to bear on the argument of particular instances. The only addition to the general position developed in the papers on the Corn Laws is the argument in the paper on the silk trade that “the high rate of wages occasioned by our corn laws, though highly prejudicial to all classes of capitalists, by lowering the general rate of profit, is not more prejudicial to those who are exposed to foreign competition than to those who are not; and that nothing, therefore, can be more utterly unwarranted than the claim of the silk manufacturers to peculiar protection on account of it” (I.135).

## INCOME AND PROPERTY TAXATION

The bulk of the material in this collection which relates to income and property taxation is in the form of evidence before the two parliamentary committees of 1852 and 1861—the review of Baer of 1873, although valuable as evidence of Mill’s continued capacity to consider new ideas, is not of great significance. This material is intensely interesting as providing a spectacle of Mill under cross-examination by some of the acutest intellects of the day, from Gladstone downwards. But it is extremely unsystematic. The questions and answers pass from one aspect of the subject to another as the interrogation is passed round the members of the committees; and these in turn choose their own order and focus of attention. To realize the significance of what is going on it is necessary, with the aid of the relevant chapters of the *Principles*, to have a more systematic picture of Mill’s main positions on this group of subjects.<sup>22</sup>

There are three outstanding features of Mill’s attitude to the problems of the taxation of incomes and property. First, he opposed the graduation of taxes on incomes. Secondly, he favoured the exemption of savings. Thirdly, he favoured stringent limitations on inheritance and steep graduation of death duties.

Mill’s opposition to the graduation of the income tax was based both on grounds of equity and incentive. He was in favour of exemption at the lower end of the scale—which, of course, arithmetically involved a certain degree of graduation since the lump sum exempted must be a diminishing proportion of the actual income taxed. But beyond “the amount . . . needful for life,

health, and immunity from bodily pain,”<sup>23</sup> he saw no equitable reason for differentiation. The doctrine that £100 from £1,000 was a heavier (proportionate) impost than £1,000 from £10,000 seemed to him “too disputable altogether, and even if true at all, not true to a sufficient extent, to be made the foundation of any rule of taxation.” But beside that, he argued that to “tax the larger incomes at a higher percentage than the smaller, is to lay a tax on industry and economy; to impose a penalty on people for having worked harder and saved more than their neighbours.”<sup>24</sup>

This did not mean that he opposed *any* differentiation of tax rates. As will be seen from his evidence before the two government committees, he devoted much thought and energy to the search for a just differentiation between “earned” and “unearned” incomes. And this search led him to the conclusion which is the second of the salient features of his principles of taxation, that a just income tax would exempt all savings. He argued this on the ground that what distinguishes the recipients of temporary incomes from those who enjoy incomes in perpetuity is the necessity governing the planning of the former, of saving to provide for themselves and their families when their temporary incomes cease. But he also argued it on the general ground which, despite the opposition of the protagonists of “common sense,” has been argued since by so many high authorities, from Irving Fisher downwards, that the taxation of savings in fact hits income twice. That a non-graduated income tax which exempted savings would be in effect a proportional tax on expenditure did not worry him in the least, since his conception of justice in the taxation of income was exactly that.<sup>25</sup>

But while considerations both of equity and incentive led Mill to oppose graduation where the direct results of work and saving were concerned, they led him in just the opposite direction when it was a matter of property passing at death. He believed in freedom of bequest. But he did not believe in freedom of inheritance. He believed with Bentham that, if anything was to be done to diminish inequality, the moment of death was the appropriate time. And in this connection he went further than any of his predecessors, and most of his successors, in this field. He was in favour of setting an absolute upper limit on the amount which might be received by inheritance or gift. But failing this, he regarded progressive duties as highly appropriate. “The principle of graduation (as it is called,) that is, of levying a larger percentage on a larger sum, though its application to general taxation would be in my opinion objectionable, seems to me both just and expedient as applied to legacy and inheritance duties.”<sup>26</sup>

It is the appearance of these principles and their defence under cross-examination which lend continuing interest and importance to these records of Mill’s evidence.

## V. LABOUR

We now come to papers in which, in contrast to his more technical preoccupations in the items already discussed, Mill is concerned with economic organization and its evolution in the

light of general social philosophy. The first group of these is concerned with labour and its future.

Mill's fundamental attitude on this problem is enshrined in the famous chapter "On the Probable Futurity of the Labouring Classes" in the *Principles* (IV, vii). This chapter, according to his account<sup>27</sup>, owed much to the influence of Mrs. Taylor, who eventually became his wife. But whatever the inspiration it must always be regarded as one of the most authoritative statements of his general social philosophy and his hopes and fears for the future. The opening sections, with their fine contrast between what he calls the theory of dependence and protection and the theory of self-dependence,<sup>28</sup> are indeed among the most outstanding pronouncements on the fundamental principles of classical liberalism; and the fact that in the present age we seem to have chosen as a basis of social policy the former principle rather than the latter does not render them any less relevant. But the two essays here reprinted and to be discussed under this heading throw much useful supplementary light on the thought underlying the chapter.

The germs of such thought are very clearly to be discerned in the article, from the *Edinburgh Review* of 1845, on the then-fashionable handbook of benevolent paternalism, Arthur Helps' *The Claims of Labour*. The intentions of this article are well stated in an extract from a letter from Mill to Macvey Napier which is reprinted with the editorial note prefatory to the present reproduction. However well intentioned, the tendency of works such as Helps' book, Mill argues, is "to rivet firmly in the minds of the labouring people the persuasion that it is the business of others to take care of their condition, without any self control on their own part," and he goes on to maintain that it is "very necessary to make a stand against this sort of spirit while it is at the same time highly necessary . . . to shew sympathy in all that is good of the new tendencies, & to avoid the hard, abstract mode of treating such questions which has brought discredit upon political economists & has enabled those who are in the wrong to claim, & generally to receive, exclusive credit for high & benevolent feeling" (I.364).

The article certainly fulfils these intentions. After a preliminary survey of the influences from Malthus to Carlyle and the revelations of the great commissions which had led to increased interest in the "condition of the people question," he plunges into a statement of the paternalist theory which he was proposing to criticize. "Their theory appears to be, in few words, this—that it is the proper function of the possessors of wealth, and especially of the employers of labour and the owners of land, to take care that the labouring people are well off:—that they ought always to pay good wages;—that they ought to withdraw their custom, their patronage, and any other desirable thing at their disposal, from all employers who will not do the like;—that, at these good wages, they ought to give employment to as great a number of persons as they can afford; and to make them work for no greater number of hours in the twenty-four, than is compatible with comfort, and with leisure for recreation and improvement. That if they have land or houses to be let to tenants, they should require and accept no higher rents than can be paid with comfort; and should be ready to build, at such rents as can be conveniently paid, warm, airy, healthy and spacious cottages, for any number of young couples who may ask for them." He contends

that it “is allowable to take this picture as a true likeness of the ‘new moral world’ which the present philanthropic movement aims at calling into existence” (I.372-3).

Now, if things are to be run this way, he asks, are we prepared to accept the inevitable accompaniments? The states of society which have assumed such duties on the part of the wealthy have been states in which the condition of the poor has been one of virtual unfreedom. Paternal care implies paternal authority. “The higher and middle classes might and ought to be willing to submit to a very considerable sacrifice of their own means, for improving the condition of the existing generation of labourers, if by this they could hope to provide similar advantages for the generation to come. But why should they be called upon to make these sacrifices, merely that the country may contain a greater number of people, in as great poverty and as great liability to destitution as now? If whoever has too little, is to come to them to make it more, there is no alternative but restrictions on marriage, combined with such severe penalties on illegitimate births, as it would hardly be possible to enforce under a social system in which all grown persons are, nominally at least, their own masters. Without these provisions, the millennium promised would, in little more than a generation, sink the people of any country in Europe to one level of poverty. If, then, it is intended that the law, or the persons of property, should assume a control over the multiplication of the people, tell us so plainly, and inform us how you propose to do it.” (I.375.)

The fact is, he contends, that until there is proper restraint upon numbers, there can be no hope of permanent relief of poverty. “And how is this change to be effected, while we continue inculcating” upon the working classes “that their wages are to be regulated for them, and that to keep wages high is other people’s business and not theirs? All classes are ready enough, without prompting, to believe that whatever ails them is not their fault, but the crime of somebody else; and that they are granting an indemnity to the crime if they attempt to get rid of the evil by any effort or sacrifice of their own. The National Assembly of France has been much blamed for talking in a rhetorical style about the rights of man, and neglecting to say anything about the duties. The same error is now in the course of being repeated with respect to the rights of poverty. It would surely be no derogation from any one’s philanthropy to consider, that it is one thing to tell the rich that they ought to take care of the poor, and another thing to tell the poor that the rich ought to take care of them; and that it is rather idle in these days to suppose that a thing will not be overheard by the poor, because it is not designed for their ears. It is most true that the rich have much to answer for in their conduct to the poor. But in the matter of their poverty, there is no way in which the rich *could* have helped them, but by inducing them to help themselves; and if, while we stimulate the rich to repair this omission, we do all that depends on us to inculcate upon the poor that they need not attend to the lesson, we must be little aware of the sort of feelings and doctrines with which the minds of the poor are already filled. If we go on in this course, we may succeed in bursting society asunder by a Socialist revolution; but the poor, and their poverty, we shall leave worse than we found them.” (I.375-6.)

The remainder of the article is devoted to the author’s own proposals for improvement of the condition of the people. It expatiates on the need for education, both at school and beyond, and, with a footnote reference to the experiments of M. Leclaire which figure so largely in the pivotal



chapter in the *Principles*, it hints at Mill's own solution, "raising the labourer from a receiver of hire—a mere bought instrument in the work of production, having no residuary interest in the work itself—to the position of being, in some sort, a partner in it" (I.382).

It is arguable that the very uncompromising nature of parts of this article is different in tone and temper from what it would have been if written after the movement towards some sort of socialism which took place in Mill's thinking after the events of 1848. But on the essential core of the argument against paternalism, there is no reason to believe that Mill's position altered greatly, and it is a very significant circumstance that he should have still thought it worthy of preservation and republication when in 1859 he came to collect his papers in *Dissertations and Discussions*.

The second paper here reprinted, the article on Mill's friend Thornton's book *On Labour*, is of much greater historical significance, for it contains both the celebrated retraction regarding the wages fund and Mill's most mature reflections on the ethics and economics of collective bargaining and trade unionism.

The retraction of belief in the existence of a determinate wages fund caused some sensation at the time of its appearance, and indeed it may be held to be one of the influences bringing about the end of the ascendancy of classical theory in Great Britain. The treatment of wages in the *Principles* had followed classical tradition in this respect. In the long run, wages depended on the tendencies of population increase; in the short run, given the labour force, they depended upon a fund of determinate size destined for the employment of labour. Now, confronted with Thornton's argument that if individual employers' demand for labour was not thus inelastic, the aggregate demand could not be inelastic either, Mill abandoned this position, saying: "The doctrine hitherto taught by all or most economists (including myself), which denied it to be possible that trade combinations can raise wages, or which limited their operation in that respect to the somewhat earlier attainment of a rise which the competition of the market would have produced without them,—this doctrine is deprived of its scientific foundation, and must be thrown aside." Thornton's critique had destroyed "a prevailing and somewhat mischievous error. It has made it necessary for us to contemplate, not as an impossibility but as a possibility, that employers, by taking advantage of the inability of labourers to hold out, may keep wages lower than there is any natural necessity for; and *è converso*, that if work-people can by combination be enabled to hold out so long as to cause an inconvenience to the employers greater than that of a rise of wages, a rise may be obtained which, but for the combination, not only would not have happened so soon, but possibly might not have happened at all. The power of Trades' Unions may therefore be so exercised as to obtain for the labouring classes collectively, both a larger share and a larger positive amount of the produce of labour; increasing, therefore, one of the two factors on which the remuneration of the individual labourer depends. The other and still more important factor, the number of sharers, remains unaffected by any of the considerations now adduced." (II.646.)

It is clear that the practical implications of this admission fully justified the sensation which it caused. Its intellectual status, however, in the history of economic analysis, is not so impressive. Thornton's critique had been preceded by a general attack on current formulations of the laws of supply and demand; and in dealing with this, Mill had shown masterly insight and analytical abil-

ity. But when he comes to the matter of the wages fund, it is as though the realization that his earlier formulations had been wrong deprived him of his habitual critical insight and compelled merely a bold admission of error. As Taussig has well shown, the analysis at this point becomes faltering and jejune.<sup>29</sup> Of course, it was right to admit that the money demand for labour at any moment was much less determinate than the rigid formulations of the wages fund theory had assumed. But it was not helpful to speak as if all that had been said of the dependence of real wages on the real accumulations of the past lost all relevance in the light of Thornton's strictures; and it is arguable that from the theoretical, as distinct from the practical point of view, the retraction brought as much confusion as clarification. It is not without significance that in the seventh edition of the *Principles*, the last to appear in his lifetime, Mill made little alteration of what he had said before. A sentence on the power of combinations to raise wages, which earlier had predicted that unemployment would follow any attempt to raise the rate of wages above that which "distributes the whole circulating capital of the country among the entire working population," was rewritten in terms of the narrow limits "of obtaining . . . an increase . . . at the expense of profits."<sup>30</sup> And in the Preface there is a reference to recent "instructive discussion" between himself and Thornton, the results of which, "in the author's opinion, are not yet ripe for incorporation in a general treatise on Political Economy."<sup>31</sup>

After the drama of the retraction, the second part of the paper, with its reflections on the ethics and economics of collective bargaining and trade unionism, comes as something of an anti-climax. But it is valuable, nevertheless, as affording a more extended treatment than elsewhere of the difficult questions with which it deals. The opening sections, with their illuminating contrast between the *a priori* and the utilitarian approaches to the problems of productive organization and distributive justice, are as good as anything Mill ever wrote on this matter. And the statement of his attitude to the various problems presented by the activities of combinations of labourers is more thorough and systematic than the treatment of these matters in the *Principles*. There are no conspicuous departures from the views expressed in that treatise, but there is much more elaboration; and the total effect is a complex one. Mill is desperately anxious to be fair; and because he felt that the unions of that time performed valuable functions in raising the self-respect of their members and providing (perhaps) organizations which might eventually transcend the status of mere sellers of hired labour in the form of self-governing associations of cooperative producers—"a transformation" which "would be the true euthanasia of Trades' Unionism" (II.666)—he was prepared to find excuses for practices which one would expect him to condemn. Practices restrictive of output are indeed roundly denounced. But in contrast, practices which raise wages in some sectors at the expense of the general body of workers receive a qualified extenuation: "all such limitation inflicts distinct evil upon those whom it excludes—upon that great mass of labouring population which is outside the Unions; an evil not trifling, for if the system were rigorously enforced it would prevent unskilled labourers or their children from ever rising to the condition of skilled" (II.662). But it is urged that there are "two considerations, either of which, in the mind of an upright and public spirited working man, may fairly legitimate his adhesion to Unionism." The first is the educational and evolutionary value of unionism; the second, "a less elevated, but not fallacious point of view," namely the Malthusian, is that the unions

at least preserve something which would otherwise be swallowed up by the indiscriminate increase of the unreflecting: "As long as their minds remain in their present state, our preventing them from competing with us for employment does them no real injury; it only saves ourselves from being brought down to their level" (II.664).

Similarly, while violence, defamation of character, injury to property, or threats of any of these evils in the course of trade disputes is condemned, there is a defence of the social compulsions exercised to induce workers to form a union or take part in a strike. "As soon as it is acknowledged that there are lawful, and even useful, purposes to be fulfilled by Trades' Unions, it must be admitted that the members of Unions may reasonably feel a genuine moral disapprobation of those who profit by the higher wages or other advantages that the Unions procure for non-Unionists as well as for their own members, but refuse to take their share of the payments, and submit to the restrictions, by which those advantages are obtained. It is vain to say that if a strike is really for the good of the workmen, the whole body will join in it from a mere sense of the common interest. There is always a considerable number who will hope to share the benefit without submitting to the sacrifices; and to say that these are not to have brought before them, in an impressive manner, what their fellow-workmen think of their conduct, is equivalent to saying that social pressure ought not to be put upon any one to consider the interests of others as well as his own. All that legislation is concerned with is, that the pressure shall stop at the expression of feeling, and the withholding of such good offices as may properly depend upon feeling, and shall not extend to an infringement, or a threat of infringement, of any of the rights which the law guarantees to all—security of person and property against violation, and of reputation against calumny." (II.659-60.) All of which, in the twentieth century, sounds rather naive from the author of *On Liberty* who foresaw so many inimical trends. But it is a revealing picture of the frame of mind of men of goodwill in the sixties and seventies, when defence of combinations of workers seemed to be defence of one of the better hopes of humanity; and it does not in the least settle the question of what Mill's attitude would have been to more recent manifestations of what such combinations can do when given special privileges by the law.

## VI. PROPERTY AND ITS SOCIAL CONTROL

Next comes a group of papers which, in one way or another, spring from Mill's interest in various aspects of the institutions of property and their susceptibility to social control. This is a sphere in which his thought was avowedly tentative and experimental. He believed firmly that throughout the greater part of civilized history private property in various forms had served positive functions, functions which must be performed somehow if there is to be order and progress—the preservation of peace, the safeguarding of the fruits of accumulation, the reward of enterprise and initiative. But he did not believe that these institutions were immutable. They depended on opinion and volition and were capable of variety and development. They were also perhaps capable of being superseded by other arrangements, if these arrangements were such as to secure the same fundamental desiderata. The distinction, to which he attached such impor-

tance, between the laws of production which partook “of the character of physical truths”<sup>32</sup> and the laws of distribution which were of human origin, was fundamental to his thinking here; and as is well known—and as we shall be discussing further in the next section—he was not unwilling to contemplate the eventual emergence of certain forms of collectivist ownership and control. But within the sphere of existing institutions, he believed in development and improvement. “The principle of private property,” he argued, “has never yet had a fair trial in any country; and less so, perhaps, in this country than in some others. The social arrangements of modern Europe commenced from a distribution of property which was the result, not of just partition, or acquisition by industry, but of conquest and violence: and notwithstanding what industry has been doing for many centuries to modify the work of force, the system still retains many and large traces of its origin. The laws of property have never yet conformed to the principles on which the justification of private property rests. They have made property of things which never ought to be property, and absolute property where only a qualified property ought to exist. They have not held the balance fairly between human beings, but have heaped impediments upon some, to give advantage to others; they have purposely fostered inequalities, and prevented all from starting fair in the race. That all should indeed start on perfectly equal terms, is inconsistent with any law of private property: but if as much pains as has been taken to aggravate the inequality of chances arising from the natural working of the principle, had been taken to temper that inequality by every means not subversive of the principle itself; if the tendency of legislation had been to favour the diffusion, instead of the concentration of wealth—to encourage the subdivision of the large masses, instead of striving to keep them together; the principle of individual property would have been found to have no necessary connexion with the physical and social evils which almost all Socialist writers assume to be inseparable from it.”<sup>33</sup>

We have seen already, in the discussion of Mill’s attitude to problems of taxation, his willingness to alter existing arrangements in regard to the law of inheritance. The papers discussed in the present section illustrate further in various ways this essentially empirical approach to the possible evolution of various aspects of the institution of property.

The minutes of evidence here entitled “The Savings of the Middle and Working Classes” together with the short note on “The Law of Partnership” are a product of Mill’s lively interest in the reform of the law so as to permit industrial investment and association without commitment to unlimited liability of the property of the persons concerned. It was his belief that reform of this sort would serve the double purpose of making available for development a larger volume of saving, and at the same time facilitating, on a much larger scale than that then prevailing, the active participation of the working classes in the organization of industry. This involved changes both in the law relating to partnership and the law relating to joint-stock companies, and to both these movements Mill lent the weight of his support. In the papers here reprinted the main burden of his argument is directed to the law of partnership, in respect of which he contended that the prohibitions of associations *en commandite*, as in the French law, had as little justification as the ancient laws against usury. On the larger question of the desirability of limited liability for investors in joint-stock companies, he expresses here some slight reserve on the ground that the privilege involved, if granted, should be extended to all individuals. But we know from his discussion

of this question in the *Principles* that he was indeed thoroughly in favour of it. Indeed, his statement of the justification of such arrangements may well be regarded as the classic formulation of the principle. "If a number of persons choose to associate for carrying on any operation of commerce or industry, agreeing among themselves and announcing to those with whom they deal that the members of the association do not undertake to be responsible beyond the amount of the subscribed capital; is there any reason that the law should raise objections to this proceeding, and should impose on them the unlimited responsibility which they disclaim? For whose sake? Not for that of the partners themselves; for it is they whom the limitation of responsibility benefits and protects. It must therefore be for the sake of third parties; namely, those who may have transactions with the association, and to whom it may run in debt beyond what the subscribed capital suffices to pay. But nobody is obliged to deal with the association: still less is any one obliged to give it unlimited credit. The class of persons with whom such associations have dealings are in general perfectly capable of taking care of themselves, and there seems no reason that the law should be more careful of their interests than they will themselves be; provided no false representation is held out, and they are aware from the first what they have to trust to." When the law has "afforded to individuals all practicable means of knowing the circumstances which ought to enter into their prudential calculations in dealing with the company, there seems no more need for interfering with individual judgment in this sort of transactions, than in any other part of the private business of life."<sup>34</sup>

The next set of papers falling within this group are "Leslie on the Land Question" and the manifesto on "Land Tenure Reform." It is well known from famous passages in the *Principles* that Mill regarded property in land as needing a justification different in kind from the justification of other forms of property. "The essential principle of property being to assure to all persons what they have produced by their labour and accumulated by their abstinence, this principle cannot apply to what is not the produce of labour, the raw material of the earth."<sup>35</sup> This is not to say that he was hostile to all forms of private land ownership; on the contrary, he attached great, probably exaggerated, value, for instance, to peasant proprietorship. But it does mean that he regarded land, or what Ricardo would have called the original powers of the soil (including position), as having a special significance in economic analysis and a special position in social philosophy: "with property in moveables, and in all things the product of labour . . . the owner's power both of use and of exclusion should be absolute, except where positive evil to others would result from it: but in the case of land, no exclusive right should be permitted in any individual, which cannot be shown to be productive of positive good."<sup>36</sup> Thus he favoured in certain instances the break-up (with proper compensation) of large estates and their redivision among small proprietors. He favoured special provisions in the law safeguarding the position of tenants. He was fiercely against exclusive rights of access to scenic areas. And he supported special kinds of taxation designed to take from landowners the element of unearned increment in the value of their holdings. "They grow richer, as it were in their sleep, without working, risking, or economizing," he said. "What claim have they, on the general principle of social justice, to this accession of riches?"<sup>37</sup>

The two papers reprinted in this collection, although by no means exhausting Mill's contribution to this subject, for which it is necessary also to go to the *Principles* and to the speeches, provide a very fair indication of this general attitude. The review of Clifffè Leslie's *Land Systems* is devoted largely to illustrations of the principle that the "maxims of free trade, free contract, the exclusive power of everyone over his own property, and so forth" are not applicable, or not applicable without serious limitations, to the control of landed wealth. As Professor R. D. C. Black has shown in his notable study, *Economic Thought and the Irish Question*,<sup>38</sup> Mill had a much better record than other economists of the day in correct insight into the nature of the economic problems of Ireland, and this paper is perhaps especially valuable as a concise statement of his attitude in this respect.

The second paper, the *Explanatory Statement of the Programme of the Land Tenure Reform Association*—the title used on its initial publication—is valuable as an explicit statement of the actual reforms in the law relating to property in land which Mill's general views on the subject led him to support. Its content is best summarized by the reproduction of the ten points of the programme on which Mill's paper is a running commentary:

I. To remove all Legal and Fiscal Impediments to the Transfer of Land.

II. To secure the abolition of the Law of Primogeniture.

III. To restrict within the narrowest limits the power of Tying up Land.

IV. To claim, for the benefit of the State, the Interception by Taxation of the Future Unearned Increase of the Rent of Land (so far as the same can be ascertained), or a great part of that increase, which is continually taking place, without any effort or outlay by the proprietors, merely through the growth of population and wealth; reserving to owners the option of relinquishing their property to the State at the market value which it may have acquired at the time when this principle may be adopted by the Legislature.

V. To promote a policy of Encouragement to Co-operative Agriculture, through the purchase by the State, from time to time, of Estates which are in the market, and the Letting of them, under proper regulations, to such Co-operative Associations, as afford sufficient evidence of spontaneity and promise of efficiency.

VI. To promote the Acquisition of Land in a similar manner, to be let to Small Cultivators, on conditions, which, while providing for the proper cultivation of the land, shall secure to the cultivator a durable interest in it.

VII. Lands belonging to the Crown, or to Public Bodies, or Charitable and other Endowments, to be made available for the same purposes, as suitable conditions arise, as well as for the Improvement of the Dwellings of the Working Classes; and no such lands to be suffered (unless in pursuance of the above mentioned ends, or for peculiar and exceptional reasons) to pass into Private hands.

VIII. All Lands now Waste, or requiring an Act of Parliament to authorize their inclosure, to be retained for National Uses: Compensation being made for Manorial rights and rights of Common.

IX. That while it is expedient to bring a large portion of the present Waste Lands under Cultivation for the purposes and on the principles laid down in the preceding articles, it is desirable that the less fertile portions, especially those which are within reach of populous districts, should be retained in a state of wild natural beauty, for the general enjoyment of the community, and encouragement in all classes of healthful rural tastes, and of the higher order of pleasures; also, in order to leave to future generations the decision of their ultimate uses.

X. To obtain for the State the power to take possession (with a view to their preservation) of all Natural Objects, or Artificial Constructions attached to the soil, which are of historical, scientific, or artistic interest, together with so much of the surrounding land as may be thought necessary; the owners being compensated for the value of the land so taken.

The two papers next to be considered, that on “Corporation and Church Property” and that on “Endowments,” are concerned not only with the question of the right of the state to modify the conditions of foundations and endowments but also with the question of the support and control of higher education. Separate in the time of their writing by more than thirty-five years, the emphasis of the argument differs; but the essential content remains the same.

“Corporation and Church Property” is chiefly concerned to show that “there is no moral hindrance or bar to the interference of the Legislature with endowments, though it should even extend to a total change in their purposes” and then to inquire “in what spirit, and with what reservations, it is incumbent on a virtuous Legislature to exercise this power” (I.195). As a utilitarian, believing that, in the end, only consideration of the happiness of individuals should influence moral judgment, Mill is clear that it is intolerable that the wishes of dead men should be allowed to bind the dispositions of resources for more than a limited period after their death. If circumstances change, rendering their instructions no longer appropriate, then it is in the general interest that the legislature should intervene and impose new conditions. If there is proper compensation to the expectations of any persons enjoying benefits under the original dispensation, then it cannot be argued that anyone is injured by such intervention; the corporation as such has no grievance. If the law assumes “that a man cannot know what partition of his property among his descendants, thirty years hence, will be for the interest of the descendants themselves,” it cannot be assumed that “he may know (though he have scarcely learnt the alphabet) how children may be best educated five hundred years hence; how the necessities of the poor may then be best provided for; what branches of learning, or of what is called learning, it will be most important to cultivate, and by what body of men it will be desirable that the people should be taught religion, to the end of time” (I.199).

This, however, does not mean that endowments and foundations are in themselves undesirable. Much as he admired him, Mill was not in agreement with Turgot, who had taken this view. On the contrary, he urged that they had functions to fulfil particularly in regard to education, in respect of which their existence was a positive good. It was indeed the duty of governments to provide funds for such purposes. But it “is impossible to be assured that the people will be willing to be taxed for every purpose of moral and intellectual improvement for which funds may be re-

quired.” If, however, there were “a fund specially set apart, which had never come from the people’s pockets at all, which was given them in trust for the purpose of education, and which it was considered improper to divert to any other employment while it could be usefully devoted to that; the people would probably be always willing to have it applied to that purpose. There is such a fund, and it consists of the national endowments.” (I.216.) While, therefore, it is incumbent on the state to interfere with the conditions of endowments when these have ceased to serve a useful purpose, it is desirable that the interference should involve, not appropriation of the funds for the general purposes of public expenditure, but rather a better discharge of the useful functions originally intended.

Mill returns to this theme in the second paper and develops at greater lengths the argument for the existence of decentralized initiative in regard to education and research. A certain Mr. Fitch, an authority on the abuses of endowments, had made statements which almost implied the abolition of centres of this sort—“a doctrine breathing the very spirit, and expressed in almost the words, of the apologies made in the overcentralised governments of the Continent for not permitting any one to perform the smallest act connected with public interests without the leave of the Government” (II.616). But the “truth needs reasserting, and needs it every day more and more, that what the improvement of mankind and of all their works most imperatively demands is variety, not uniformity” (II.617). “Because an endowment is a public nuisance when there is nobody to prevent its funds from being jobbed away for the gain of irresponsible administrators; because it may become worse than useless if irrevocably tied up to a destination fixed by somebody who died five hundred years ago; we ought not on that account to forget that endowments protected against malversation, and secured to their original purpose for no more than two or three generations, would be a precious safeguard for uncustomary modes of thought and practice, against the repression, sometimes amounting to suppression, to which they are even more exposed as society in other respects grows more civilised.” (II.621.)

Beyond this, in this paper Mill is led to argue the positive benefits, especially to higher education, of the existence of suitably constituted endowments. He is not sanguine that free competition in education will provide what is desirable without the help, example, and stimulus of education provided this way. “It must be made the fashion to receive a really good education. But how can this fashion be set except by offering models of good education in schools and colleges within easy reach of all parts of the country? And who is able to do this but such as can afford to postpone all considerations of pecuniary profit, and consider only the quality of the education . . .? The funds for doing this can only be derived from taxation or from endowments; which of the two is preferable? Independently of the pecuniary question, schools and universities governed by the State are liable to a multitude of objections which those that are merely watched, and, in case of need, controlled by it, are wholly free from; especially that most fatal one of tending to be all alike; to form the same unvarying habits of mind and turn of character.” (II.623.) It is not clear to me that in the twentieth century, with the drying up of so many sources of private endowment, Mill would necessarily have frowned on extensive support of higher education from state sources. But it is very obvious that he would still have been foremost among those who seek, by one means or another, to insulate it as far as possible from direct operation and control from parliaments and



ministers; and I suspect that he would have shown more approval to a tax system such as that of the United States, which provides direct and powerful incentives to gifts for educational and cultural endowments through its death duties, than that of Great Britain, which actively resists any movement in that direction.

Finally in this group there comes the short but important paper on “The Regulation of the London Water Supply.” Here is an instance where, the technical conditions of production rendering impossible the existence of such a degree of competition as in his opinion justified the private property system as an agent of supply, Mill was prepared to recommend thoroughgoing municipalization. In such circumstances, he argued, the case for government regulation of some sort was indisputable. Whether this should take the form of control of existing companies or of direct governmental operation, he held, was a matter to be decided on consideration of the technical circumstances in each case arising. So far as London water was concerned, in the absence of a suitable organ of London government, he favoured the appointment of a commissioner with elastic powers of reorganization and control. Had there existed a suitable municipal authority, he would have had “no hesitation in expressing an opinion, that to it . . . should be given the charge of the operations for the water-supply of the capital” (II.435).

This leads conveniently to our last section.

## VII. SOCIALISM

The two papers bearing on Socialism which appear in this collection are of very different importance. The review of Newman’s *Lectures on Political Economy*, written as Mill was moving into his phase of greatest sympathy with socialism, is important principally as a demonstration of Mill’s strongly negative reaction to what he thought to be unfair criticism of socialist plans and principles; it is of some interest also as the sole example in the classical literature of any discussion of the problem of pricing under socialism. In contrast, “Chapters on Socialism,” written towards the end of his life, are of major importance as an indication of his final views on the subject.

The vicissitudes of Mill’s attitude to socialist proposals for the future organization of society are reasonably well known so far as the documentation is concerned.<sup>39</sup> There is a phase of considerable sympathy, coinciding with the period of his revulsion from Benthamism: this is mentioned in the *Autobiography*, but the authentic contemporary expression thereof is to be found in a letter to Gustave D’Eichthal.<sup>40</sup> This is followed by a mood of greater distance exhibited in the relevant chapter (II, i) in the first edition of the *Principles*—an exposition which, to Mill’s annoyance but not altogether without justification, impressed some readers as being definitely anti-socialistic. Then under the influence of the aftermath of 1848, Mill, now very much under the influence of his wife in this respect, moves into the position of overt, if cautious, sympathy as expressed in the third edition of the *Principles*—a phase which in the *Autobiography* Mill said would class them both “under the general designation of Socialists.”<sup>41</sup> Finally, in 1869, he sat down to write the chapters here reproduced, which were published after his death by his stepdaughter,

Helen Taylor, who can certainly be trusted not to have released anything which did not do justice to his most mature views; and these certainly show much greater reserve than is shown in the phase represented by this third edition of the *Principles*. But the chapters are incomplete, and the question remains: what does this latest phase amount to?

It is very clear that there had been a sharp recoil from any sort of sympathy with revolutionary socialism in its totalitarian aspects. There is a sharp denunciation of all this in these chapters (see especially II.748-9), and there is a letter to Georg Brandes, of March 1872, on the goings-on of the First International, which makes quite clear the persistence of this mood.<sup>42</sup>

So far as the more moderate and limited proposals for piecemeal experiment are concerned, I do not doubt that Ashley is right when he contends that there has been some retreat from the position of the chapters in the third edition of the *Principles*. It would be wrong to suggest that there is now no sympathy: that is certainly not the case. But there is certainly much more caution and, I would judge, more inclination to insist on what can be done by reform within the institutional framework of the private property system. I am reasonably clear that if the details of the treatment of the main problems of socialist organisation discussed respectively in the *Principles* and in these *Chapters* were placed in parallel columns and shown to some outside investigator, ignorant of the context of the query, he would judge the second column to show a position much less positive, much more sceptical, than the first.

In the last analysis, however, more important than these nuances is the fact that the position of the third edition is by no means so strong as might be judged, either from the indications of change in the Preface or in the relevant passage in the *Autobiography*. The discussion of socialism in the chapter on property is not to be judged in isolation. It must be evaluated in conjunction with the chapter “On the Probable Futurity of the Labouring Classes,” a chapter to which we know Mill attached peculiar importance, the more general sections having been written in close conjunction with his wife. And in that chapter, it is clear that Mill’s utopia is not nearly so much in the duo-decimo editions of the new Jerusalem (to use the contemptuous phrase of the *Communist Manifesto*), which he had discussed with such fairness and attempt at sympathetic understanding in the chapter on property, but in the development of workmen’s co-operatives—self-governing corporations foreshadowed, as he thought, by the experiments of Leclaire and others in Paris and elsewhere. In the last analysis, that is to say, Mill’s socialism proves to be much more like non-revolutionary syndicalism than anything which would be called socialism at the present day.

And that, after all, should not be so surprising if we remember the famous passage in *On Liberty* alluding to these matters. As we have seen, where there was no competition, Mill was not unwilling to experiment with municipal ownership and control. But on a future in which state ownership had become widespread, his verdict was unequivocal. “If the roads, the railways, the banks, the insurance offices, the great joint-stock companies, the universities, and the public charities, were all of them branches of the government; if, in addition, the municipal corporations and local boards, with all that now devolves on them, became departments of the central administration; if the employés of all these different enterprises were appointed and paid by the

government, and looked to the government for every rise in life; not all the freedom of the press and popular constitution of the legislature would make this or any other country free otherwise than in name. And the evil would be greater, the more efficiently and scientifically the administrative machinery was constructed—the more skilful the arrangements for obtaining the best qualified hands and heads with which to work it.”<sup>43</sup>

## VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The papers collected in these volumes are undoubtedly best read in conjunction with the *Principles* and the essay *On Liberty*: they throw light on the evolution and significance of these masterpieces, and are in turn illuminated by them. But taken by themselves, they would still represent a very significant achievement, a body of pronouncements on economic theory and the relations between economics and social philosophy which has no obvious rival among the productions of other writers on these subjects in the literature of the period. As to the two chief essays in *Some Unsettled Questions*, “Thornton on Labour and Its Claims,” “Corporation and Church Property,” the unfinished “Chapters on Socialism”—we should have to look far to discover productions of parallel weight and stimulus.

When Mill lay dying, it is reported that he said, “My work is done.” By this he obviously did not mean that all the causes he stood for, all the propositions he had advanced, had been triumphant. He meant, rather, that he had had his say, that the circumstances of his life had permitted him adequately to set forth his views on the various matters on which he wished to make a contribution. And that was surely true. He had indeed developed and elaborated a system of thought so comprehensive and impressive that it came to dominate, perhaps more than it should have done, the thought of his generation, and it is not surprising that eventually there should have been some reaction against it, a reaction which we can now see went much too far and ran the risk of losing much of great value. Yet, in the end, the historic value of Mill’s contribution did not reside either in the range or in the finality of the elements of the system; it was rather in the spirit thereof. It is for this reason that for a generation disillusioned with systems, he once more appears as a highly admirable figure: a man with a firm hold on the ultimate values of truth and justice and liberty, with strong principles and a strong belief in their applicability; yet, once the high spirits and arrogance of youth had been transcended, fair in argument, willing to learn from experience, empirical in practical judgment, experimental in action.

London School of Economics, December 1966

Robbins

## Endnotes

[1] See a letter to Professor Rau (20/3/52), reprinted in Hugh S. R. Elliot, ed., *The Letters of John Stuart Mill* (London: Longmans, Green, 1910), I, 168-70.

[2] *Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Applications to Social Philosophy*, in *Collected Works* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul), III, 498.

[3] See my *Robert Torrens and the Evolution of Classical Economics* (London: Macmillan, 1958), 70-2. This, Mill's earliest essay in economic theory, will appear in the forthcoming volume of his works devoted to contributions to newspapers.

[4] *Autobiography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1924), 85.

[5] F. Y. Edgeworth, *Papers relating to Political Economy* (London: Macmillan, 1925), II, 22-3.

[6] *The Wealth of Nations*, ed. E. G. Wakefield (London: Knight, 1835-9), II, 367.

[7] See below, 12. Subsequent references to the present volumes are given in the text.

[8] Gary S. Becker and William Baumol, "The Classical Monetary Theory: The Outcome of the Discussion," *Economica*, XIX (Nov. 1952), 355-76.

[9] Letter to Walter Coulson (22/11/50), in Elliot, ed., *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, I, 157. This was not one of Mill's more urbane utterances; presumably some of Harriet's tittle-tattle about Mrs. Taylor and himself had come to his ears: "Mr. Kingsley's notions must be little less vague about my political economy than about my socialism when he couples my name with that of a mere tyro like Harriet Martineau."

[10] This passage is retained in the *Principles*; see II. 462-3.

[11] *Observations on the Principles which Regulate the Course of Exchange; and on the Present Depreciated State of the Currency* (London: Lloyd, 1810), which Huskisson described as containing "the most complete exposition of the whole doctrine of exchange that I have met with in any language." *The Speeches of the Rt. Hon. William Huskisson* (London: Murray, 1837), I, 56n.

[12] See P. Sraffa, ed., *The Works and Correspondence of David Ricardo*, IV (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1951), 325-56.

[13] *Ibid.*, IX (Cambridge, 1952), 302.

[14] For a thorough discussion of Blake's pamphlet and the controversy arising therefrom, see B. A. Corry, *Money, Saving and Investment in English Economics, 1800-1850* (London: Macmillan, 1962), 162-8.

[15] Thomas Tooke, *Thoughts and Details on the High and Low Prices of the Last Thirty Years* (London: Murray, 1823).

[16] A Letter to Lord Archibald Hamilton on Alterations in the Value of Money (London, 1823).

[17] For a fuller discussion of these issues, see my *Robert Torrens and the Evolution of Classical Economics*, chap. v.

[18] See his unsigned article, "Lord Overstone on Metallic and Paper Currency," *Edinburgh Review*, CVII (Jan., 1858), 248-93.

[19] See the 2nd and 3rd editions of his *Principles and Practical Operation of Sir Robert Peel's Act of 1844 Explained and Defended* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1857 and 1858). See also my *Robert Torrens and the Evolution of Classical Economics*, 336-41.

[20] It is interesting to see that in this evidence Mill speaks out against the issue of small notes, which he had defended so passionately in his youthful paper on the crisis of 1826, his ground now being that the prohibition of issue retained in the country a quantity of gold which could be used to replenish the reserve in case of necessity. See II. 509-10.

[21] This second paper is also notable for the high praise awarded Perronet Thompson's *Catechism on the Corn Laws*, one of the leading vehicles of the more popular propaganda on the subject. "Mr. Thompson is master of his subject, and has disposed of the fallacies with great philosophic accuracy" (I.152). But Mill goes out of his way to repudiate any endorsement of Thompson's pamphlet on rent, which had criticized Ricardo on palpably superficial grounds.

[22] On the contemporary discussion of such issues, Dr. Shehab's useful monograph, *Progressive Taxation* (Oxford, 1953), may be consulted.

[23] *Principles*, III. 809-10.

[24] *Ibid.*, 810-11.

[25] So far as I am aware, he made no reference to the minimum standard in this connection. This might have presented difficulties at that time, but in our own day it is easy to conceive of alleviations through the pension system or the issue of vouchers for tax-free goods.

[26] *Principles*, III. 811-12.

[27] *Autobiography*, 174.

[28] *Principles*, III. 758-66.

[29] F. W. Taussig, *Wages and Capital* (New York: Appleton, 1899), chaps. xi and xii.

[30] *Principles*, III. 930.

[31] *Ibid.*, II. xciv.

[32] *Principles*, II. 199. See also *Autobiography*, 174-5.

[33] *Principles*, II. 207-8.

[34] *Principles*, III. 898.

[35] *Ibid.*, II. 227.

[36] *Ibid.*, 231-2.

[37] *Ibid.*, III. 819-20.

[38] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960.

[39] There is a chapter discussing these vicissitudes in some detail in my *The Theory of Economic Policy in English Classical Political Economy* (London: Macmillan, 1961).

[40] *Autobiography*, 161-4; Francis E. Mineka, ed., *The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill, 1812-1848*, in *Collected Works* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), 88-9.

[41] *Autobiography*, 162.

[42] Elliot, ed., *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, II, 334-5.

[43] *On Liberty* (London: Parker, 1859), 198-9.

## VOLUME VI - ESSAYS ON ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND THE EMPIRE. INTRODUCTION BY JOSEPH HAMBURGER

### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume VI - Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by Joseph Hamburger (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/245/21290>>.

### INTRODUCTION

Mill the philosopher, the economist, the general essayist and critic appears here in yet another capacity—as a radical journalist and party politician. Most of the articles in this volume were written to define the purpose of, and give direction to, the Radical party in Parliament during the 1830s; and even the articles on Ireland and the early articles on other subjects provide evidence of Mill's radical inclinations at other times, though, of course, Mill's discussion of Ireland is also important in the history of English controversy about that island. Most of these essays were written for journals that Mill helped to establish: the *Westminster Review*, the *Parliamentary History and Review*, the *London Review*, and the *London and Westminster Review*. The only exceptions were the independently published pamphlet *England and Ireland*, and his contributions to the *Monthly Repository*, which was edited by his friend, the Radical and Unitarian, William Johnson Fox. His successive contributions to each of these journals is closely related to the history of Benthamite radicalism; and, especially when combined with his correspondence, they show that Mill's radicalism during the 1820s and 1830s defined a distinct and important episode in his life, and that he participated in events significant in parliamentary history. This introduction, except for the last part on Ireland, describes Mill's radicalism during this early period, including his rationale for a Radical party, and his activities on behalf of that party during the 1830s. It also, in describing the relation of the mental crisis to his radicalism, shows that his resolution of the crisis allowed him to continue working and writing for the radical cause despite the changes in outlook and political philosophy that accompanied it.

Since most of the articles in this volume deal with party programmes and tactics, they emphatically belong in the realm of practice, and they are markedly different from the theoretical writings on politics that we usually associate with Mill.<sup>1</sup> Practically oriented as these articles were, however, they also had a theoretical dimension, for he promoted a political enterprise with arguments that originated in Benthamite political philosophy. Mill's radicalism, as an extension of the Benthamite position, is readily distinguished from other radical doctrines. Its principled basis al-

lowed him to claim that it was uniquely philosophic, and thus it justified his invention and use of the phrase “Philosophic Radicalism.”

## A RADICAL EDUCATION

Mill’s career as a radical reformer began with his early education. When he was only six his father thought of him as the one to carry on the work begun by Bentham and himself. James Mill, during a period of illness, told Bentham of his hope that, in the event of his own death, his son would be brought up to be “a successor worthy of both of us.”<sup>2</sup> James Mill, however, lived to carry out his educational mission himself, and he accomplished it with great effectiveness. John Stuart Mill later recalls having had “juvenile aspirations to the character of a democratic champion”; and, he continues, “the most transcendent glory I was capable of conceiving, was that of figuring, successful or unsuccessful, as a Girondist in an English Convention.”<sup>3</sup>

Mill’s wish to be a reformer was given additional impetus in 1821 (at age fifteen) when he read *Traité de législation*, Dumont’s redaction of Bentham. His education up to this time “had been, in a certain sense, already a course of Benthamism”: but the impact of this book was dramatic—it was “an epoch in my life; one of the turning points in my mental history.” All he had previously learned seemed to fall into place; Mill now felt he had direction and purpose as a reformer. Bentham’s book opened “a clearer and broader conception of what human opinions and institutions ought to be, how they might be made what they ought to be, and how far removed from it they now are.” Consequently Mill “now had opinions; a creed, a doctrine, a philosophy; in one among the best senses of the word, a religion; the inculcation and diffusion of which could be made the principal outward purpose of a life.” This new understanding was the initiation of Mill into radical politics, for he now had a “vista of improvement” which lit up his life and gave “a definite shape” to his aspirations.<sup>4</sup>

Mill’s early assimilation of radicalism was evident in “Brodie’s History of the British Empire” (3-58 below),<sup>5</sup> an article written at age eighteen. He used Bentham’s ideas to analyze seventeenth-century constitutional conflicts and to criticize Hume’s defence of Charles I. Hume wrote a “romance,” Mill said, which generally “allies itself with the sinister interests of the few” while being indifferent to the “sufferings of the many,” and he failed to consider “the only true end of morality, the greatest happiness of the greatest number” (3-4). Mill savagely criticized Hume as a defender of Stuart despotism, a dissembler, a perjurer (49), who involved himself in a “labyrinth of falsehood” (43). Indulgent to Stuart persecution (17), Hume became “the open and avowed advocate of despotism” (16). When Mill turned his attention to the parliamentary opposition, he tried to cast the Independents as seventeenth-century versions of nineteenth-century Radicals. They were republicans who upheld “the religion of the enlightened, and the enlightened are necessarily enemies to aristocracy” (47).<sup>6</sup>

Bentham’s views on sinister and universal interests and the need for democratic reforms, and his belief that the most important conflict was between the aristocracy (represented by Whigs and



Tories) and the people (represented by Radicals), were passed from Bentham to James Mill and subsequently to John Stuart Mill and the Philosophic Radicals. Bentham was critical of all institutions sanctioned by traditional authority, especially the common law and the British constitution. He regarded all law-making and administration of public affairs as disfigured by the aristocratic (and monarchical) monopoly of power. This monopoly created sinister interests which had many undesirable consequences, including unnecessary wars and unjustifiable empire building, but Bentham especially emphasized domestic corruption. The monarch and the aristocracy obtained benefits, such as sinecures and pensions, denied to others. The government, supposedly acting as trustees for the people, instead adopted the principle that “the substance of the people was a fund, out of which . . . *fortunes* . . . ought to be—*made*.” Such predatory activity and the improper distribution of “power, money, [and] factitious dignity” were made possible by “*separate*, and consequently with reference to the public service, . . . *sinister* interests.”<sup>7</sup> This concept of sinister interests was central to Bentham’s radical political analysis.

Bentham’s remedy was “democratic ascendancy.” Under it, office-holders would be restrained from seeking corrupt benefits. Universal suffrage, secret ballot, and annual parliaments would subject office-holders to scrutiny by those who stood to lose from the existence of sinister interests; thus these democratic practices would promote “the *universal interest* . . . of the whole people.” Democratic ascendancy was recommended as the best means to the desired goal, the greatest happiness of the greatest number.<sup>8</sup>

Any persons or groups, whatever their social class or economic condition, could, according to Bentham, have sinister interests, but in the circumstances of the early nineteenth century the aristocracy was the most obvious and compelling example of a class that enjoyed such corrupt interests. His analysis pointed to fundamental conflict, under existing constitutional arrangements, between the aristocracy and the remainder of the populace. In this dispute the aristocracy was represented by the Whigs and the Tories, and the populace by Radicals, whom he also called “People’s-men.”<sup>9</sup> This conflict superseded the contest of parties familiar to most observers, and although it was invisible to many, to Bentham it was the more significant contest. Whigs and Tories, far from being enemies, were not significantly different. “Both parties . . . acting under the dominion of the same seductive and corruptive influence—will be seen to possess the same separate and sinister interest:—an interest completely and unchangeably opposite to that of the whole uncorrupt portion of the people.”<sup>10</sup> Despite their superficial quarrels, the two aristocratic parties shared a class interest: “That which the Tories have in *possession* . . . the Whigs have before them in *prospect* and *expectancy*.”<sup>11</sup>

Bentham laid the foundation of the Mills’ radicalism, but James Mill generated most of the argument and rhetoric that John Stuart Mill adopted in his early years. Young Mill read his father’s works, usually if not always in manuscript, conversed about them at length with him, and proof-read some as well. Among these works was the *History of British India*, which, James Mill said, “will make no bad introduction to the study of civil society in general. The subject afforded an opportunity of laying open the principles and laws of the social order. . . .”<sup>12</sup> There were also James Mill’s *Encyclopaedia Britannica* articles, which diagnosed problems and outlined remedies on

such matters as government, colonies, education, law, the press, prisons, and poor relief.<sup>13</sup> And a few years later there were his articles in the *Westminster Review* on the main Whig and Tory quarterlies and the parties they represented.<sup>14</sup>

Parliamentary reform was regarded by Bentham and James Mill as supremely important, for they assumed that all other reforms, those of tariffs, education, and law, for example, would be achieved without difficulty once the popular or universal interest was represented in Parliament. An early statement of James Mill's arguments for radical reform of Parliament may be found in his essay "Government," although John Stuart Mill probably was familiar with them from his father's unpublished dialogue on government composed on the Platonic model.<sup>15</sup> Written in an austere style for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Government" in fact was a polemical statement, as both Ricardo and John Stuart Mill recognized.<sup>16</sup>

The essay, far more extreme than was apparent, was influential in shaping the political thought of Philosophic Radicalism. Frequently it has been suggested that because it was a defence of the middle class, it was not an argument for complete democracy. This interpretation, however, ignores the fact that it was in its main features consistent with Bentham's *Plan of Parliamentary Reform*, a fully democratic work. Certainly John Stuart Mill regarded his father as a democrat. James Mill, he said, "thought that when the legislature no longer represented a class interest, it would aim at the general interest," and therefore "a democratic suffrage [was] the principal article of his political creed."<sup>17</sup> James Mill's severest and most discerning critic, Thomas Babington Macaulay, also recognized that Mill was "in favour of pure democracy."<sup>18</sup>

James Mill's rationale for a democratic suffrage was an important link between Bentham's advocacy of universal suffrage and John Stuart Mill's radicalism during the 1830s. "Government," which was more widely read than any of his other political writings, had a powerful impact on the young Radicals, becoming "almost a text-book to many of those who may be termed the Philosophic Radicals."<sup>19</sup> James Mill's influence was greatly reinforced by his conversation with the notable, even if not large, group of disciples that gathered around him during the 1820s and early 1830s, including some that John Stuart Mill brought into the fold: Charles Austin, Edward Strutt, John Romilly, William Ellis, and John Arthur Roebuck. James Mill's impact was enhanced by the distance between these disciples and the aging Bentham (now in his seventies), who at this time was more interested in law reform and codification than in parliamentary politics. Bentham's distance from the Radicals close to the Mills was accentuated by his intimacy with John Bowring, who was disliked and distrusted by James Mill. In 1825 some of these tensions surfaced when the Mills and their followers reduced their contributions to the *Westminster Review* and began publication of the *Parliamentary History and Review*, a journal in which they proclaimed Bentham's principles without Bowring's editorial interference.

Many, in addition to his son, have testified to James Mill's strengths as a political teacher. George Grote, who began his parliamentary career as a Radical in 1833, recalled James Mill's "powerful intellectual ascendancy over younger minds."<sup>20</sup> Roebuck, despite an early quarrel with James Mill, called him his political and philosophical teacher and said, "To him I owe greater obligations than to any other man. If I know any thing, from him I learned it."<sup>21</sup> Another of John

Stuart Mill's young friends, William Ellis, said of his early encounter with James Mill, "he *worked a complete change* in me. He taught me how to think and what to live for." Indeed, Mill supplied him "with all those emotions and impulses which deserve the name of religious."<sup>22</sup> Harriet Grote, the historian's wife, also observed that under James Mill's influence "the young disciples, becoming fired with patriotic ardour on the one hand and with bitter antipathies on the other, respectively braced themselves up, prepared to wage battle when the day should come, in behalf of 'the true faith,' according to Mill's 'programme' and preaching."<sup>23</sup> Such strong influence allowed John Stuart Mill to say that his father "was quite as much the head and leader of the intellectual radicals in England, as Voltaire was of the *philosophes* of France."<sup>24</sup>

This comparison with the *philosophes*, made by John Stuart Mill more than once, identifies the spirit in which he and the other Philosophic Radicals approached politics. His father's opinions, he said,

were seized on with youthful fanaticism by the little knot of young men of whom I was one: and we put into them a sectarian spirit, from which, in intention at least, my father was wholly free. What we (or rather a phantom substituted in the place of us) were sometimes, by a ridiculous exaggeration, called by others, namely a "school," some of us for a time really hoped and aspired to be. The French philosophes of the eighteenth century were the example we sought to imitate, and we hoped to accomplish no less results.<sup>25</sup>

The Philosophic Radicals' sectarian spirit was evident in their use of a distinctive jargon irritating to others. John Stuart Mill's adopting the utilitarian label as a "sectarian appellation,"<sup>26</sup> for example, led Macaulay to ridicule "the project of mending a bad world by teaching people to give new names to old things." The utilitarians, Macaulay added, invented "a new sleight of tongue."<sup>27</sup> Mill also confessed that "to *outrer* whatever was by anybody considered offensive in the doctrines and maxims of Benthamism, became at one time the badge of a small coterie of youths."<sup>28</sup>

Mill and others in his coterie displayed this sectarian spirit in the London Debating Society where they preferred to engage in political debate with ideological opposites whose principles were as clear and explicit as their own. Mill's group, not the liberal moderates or trimming Whigs (such as Macaulay), provided the opposition to the Tories in the Society, and almost every debate, Mill recalled, "was a *bataille rangée* between the 'philosophic radicals' and the Tory lawyers." The debates, he said, were unusual for being philosophically extreme, so that the opponents were "thrown often into close and *serré* confutations of one another."<sup>29</sup> In noting that the Society was the only arena in which such conflict was to be found, Mill was making an allusion to the defects of Parliament itself as well as giving a hint of the worldly ambitions which were linked to his and the other Philosophic Radicals' political speculations.

Their conduct and opinions did not go uncriticized. Henry Taylor, an official in the Colonial Office and later author of *The Statesman*, regarded John Stuart Mill's views in the 1820s as being "at heart something in the nature of political fanaticism," and in the London Debating Society Taylor spoke against the same facet of radicalism that provoked Macaulay's famous critique of

James Mill.<sup>30</sup> William Empson also complained about “the most peremptory and proselytizing seminary of *ipse dixitists*, (to use one of their own beautiful words,) which has ever existed.” The Benthamite Radicals reminded Empson of “those abstract and dogmatical times when men were principally distinguished by the theory of morals that they might happen to profess.”<sup>31</sup> Macaulay, at this time a prolific publicist but not yet in the House of Commons, suggested that the disciples of James Mill (whom he called a “zealot of a sect”)<sup>32</sup> were potentially dangerous.

Even now [1827], it is impossible to disguise, that there is arising in the bosom of [the middle class] a Republican sect, as audacious, as paradoxical, as little inclined to respect antiquity, as enthusiastically attached to its ends, as unscrupulous in the choice of its means, as the French Jacobins themselves,—but far superior to the French Jacobins in acuteness and information—in caution, in patience, and in resolution. They are men whose minds have been put into training for violent exertion. . . . They profess to derive their opinions from demonstrations alone. . . . Metaphysical and political science engage their whole attention. Philosophical pride has done for them what spiritual pride did for the Puritans in a former age; it has generated in them an aversion for the fine arts, for elegant literature, and for the sentiments of chivalry. It has made them arrogant, intolerant, and impatient of all superiority. These qualities will, in spite of their real claims to respect, render them unpopular, as long as the people are satisfied with their rulers. But under an ignorant and tyrannical ministry, obstinately opposed to the most moderate and judicious innovations, their principles would spread as rapidly as those of the Puritans formerly spread, in spite of their offensive peculiarities. The public, disgusted with the blind adherence of its rulers to ancient abuses, would be reconciled to the most startling novelties. A strong democratic party would be formed in the educated class.<sup>33</sup>

Such criticism was not likely to undermine the confidence of John Stuart Mill and his fellow enthusiasts. The Philosophic Radicals were distinguished, Mill said, for writing with an “air of strong conviction . . . when scarcely any one else seemed to have an equally strong faith in as definite a creed. . . .” Thus the public eye was attracted by “the regular appearance in controversy of what seemed a new school of writers, claiming to be the legislators and theorists of this new [reformist] tendency.”<sup>34</sup>

## RADICALISM INTERRUPTED: THE MENTAL CRISIS

During the middle and late 1820s John Stuart Mill might have felt confidence in his future as a leading member of an influential coterie, but his commitment to radicalism was shaken by his mental crisis and related events, particularly, at the end of the decade, by Macaulay’s critique of James Mill’s “Government,” John Austin’s arguments in his course of lectures on jurisprudence at the University of London in 1829-30, and the early writings of Auguste Comte and the St. Simonians.

The mental crisis, which beset him in the autumn of 1826, made Mill indifferent to reform. Having been converted, as he reported, to a political creed with religious dimensions, and having seen himself as “a reformer of the world,” he now asked himself if the complete reform of the world would bring him happiness and, realizing it would not, he felt that the foundations of his life had collapsed. “I was thus, as I said to myself, left stranded at the commencement of my voyage, with a well equipped ship and a rudder, but no sail; . . . ambition seemed to have dried up within me. . . .”<sup>35</sup> Mill for a time lost his political calling.

This crisis was responsible, as Mill acknowledged, for an “important transformation” in his “opinions and character.”<sup>36</sup> So far as opinions were concerned, the change came, not directly from the crisis, but from certain subsequent events. These events occurred after the period of his greatest dejection had ended but before his recovery of purpose and confidence. In fact, by undermining his old beliefs, the crisis opened the way for a commitment to new ideas. Part of the process was the undercurrent of negative feelings about James Mill that are evident in his record of the crisis.

The first of these events, the publication in 1829 of Macaulay’s critiques of James Mill’s “Government,” did much to shake John Mill’s beliefs. Macaulay charged James Mill with using *a priori* reasoning inappropriate to political analysis, and argued that Mill compounded this error by making deductions from inadequate premises. James Mill’s democratic prescription, Macaulay argued, would not necessarily promote policies reflecting the universal interest.<sup>37</sup> This attack, John Stuart Mill confessed, “gave me much to think about.” Though, he says,

the tone was unbecoming . . . there was truth in several of his strictures on my father’s treatment of the subject; that my father’s premises were really too narrow, and included but a small number of the general truths, on which, in politics, the important consequences depend. Identity of interest between the governing body and the community at large, is not, in any practical sense which can be attached to it, the only thing on which good government depends; neither can this identity of interest be secured by the mere conditions of election. I was not at all satisfied with the mode in which my father met the criticisms of Macaulay.<sup>38</sup>

Mill now thought there was something “fundamentally erroneous” in his father’s “conception of philosophical Method.”<sup>39</sup>

Also contributing to the change in Mill’s beliefs were John Austin’s lectures (which Mill attended during the session that began in November, 1829) and his exposure to St. Simonianism. Whereas Macaulay’s attack undermined his confidence in the soundness of “Government,” and by extension much else, without providing anything to put in its place, John Austin and the St. Simonians suggested to Mill political principles that were alternatives to his old radicalism and that, at least to their authors, seemed incompatible with Benthamite radicalism. Mill’s adoption of several ideas from Austin and the St. Simonians for a while prevented him from resuming his former role as a champion of the older radicalism. Only after an intellectual struggle was he able to accommodate the new ideas to the old.

The most important of these new ideas concerned political authority. In 1829 he began to develop the view that it ought to be exercised by those with special knowledge of public matters, and began speaking about the “authority of the instructed.”<sup>40</sup> Since this notion circumscribed the political role of ordinary citizens, he also advocated the multitude’s deference to knowledgeable authority. These opinions, markedly alien to Benthamite radicalism and his father’s political principles, had their origin in writings of the St. Simonians and in John Austin’s lectures on jurisprudence (which is not to say that Austin’s political thought and St. Simonianism were the same).<sup>41</sup>

Austin’s advocacy of vesting authority in those with knowledge was closely tied to his complete confidence that the method of science could be applied to most fields of knowledge. He was so impressed by the achievements of natural science and the progress of political economy that he looked forward to a parallel emergence of political and moral science. By using the principle of utility, these sciences would discover the sources of improvement, and the result would be a science of ethics, including the sciences of law, morality, and political science. Since such scientific knowledge was accessible only to comparatively few, however, authority could be properly exercised only by them, and most persons were expected to accept their conclusions “*on authority, testimony, or trust.*”<sup>42</sup>

These ideas made Austin anything but a radical. He had been an orthodox Benthamite until, in 1827, he began a year-and-a-half stay in Germany, but his new attitudes to authority and trust were incompatible with the democratic arrangements proposed by Bentham. Austin unmistakably rejected radicalism in his denying that “the power of the sovereign flows from the people, or [that] the people is the fountain of sovereign power.”<sup>43</sup> He also complained about “the stupid and infuriate majority,” and condemned Radical leaders, saying that “the guides of the multitude [were] moved by sinister interests, or by prejudices which are the offspring of such interests.”<sup>44</sup> John Mill noted Austin’s move away from radicalism, reporting that in Germany Austin “acquired an indifference, bordering on contempt, for the progress of popular institutions. . . .”<sup>45</sup> Austin’s relations with Bentham became somewhat strained at this time, and Sarah Austin (whose views were very close to her husband’s) said she “excite[d] horror among [her] Radical friends for not believing that all salvation comes of certain organic forms of government.”<sup>46</sup>

Another alternative to Benthamism was St. Simonianism. Mill became acquainted with the sect in 1829 and 1830, and he claimed to have read everything they wrote, though, of course, he did not share all their beliefs.<sup>47</sup> Among other things, he found in St. Simonian writings a theory of history that asserted that society progressed through alternating stages, called organic and critical. Organic epochs are characterized by widely shared beliefs and clearly defined, shared goals. In such periods society is arranged hierarchically, with the truly superior having the power to direct moral, scientific, and industrial activity. Although there is gross inequality, there is no discontent and no conflict. For the St. Simonians, organic eras existed when Greek and Roman polytheism were in full vigour (ending, respectively, with Pericles and Augustus), and when Catholicism and feudalism were at their height.<sup>48</sup> Critical epochs, in contrast, are characterized by deep scepticism about the values and beliefs of the preceding organic era and finally by rejection of them. All forces join to destroy the values and institutions of the preceding era, and when this destruction is

accomplished, one finds irreligion, lack of morality, and egoism, as particular interests prevail over the general interest. In the resultant anarchy, there is conflict between ruler and ruled, and men of ability are ignored. The St. Simonians found examples in the periods between polytheism and Christianity and from Luther to the present.<sup>49</sup>

St. Simonian ideas, like Austin's, were far removed from Benthamite radicalism, implying, as they did, that organic were superior to critical periods, and approving cultural and religious unity and hierarchy. All that Benthamite radicalism aimed to achieve assumed the continued existence of a critical epoch, and radicalism's highest achievement would have involved the most extreme development of the distinguishing characteristics of critical eras. The Radicals' blindness to the necessary supercession of critical periods by organic ones was, for the St. Simonians, a disqualifying limitation.

These ideas—both Austin's and the St. Simonians'—had a powerful impact on Mill. He came to believe that those most instructed in moral and political subjects might “carry the multitude with them by their united authority.”<sup>50</sup> His assumption that most persons “must and do believe on authority” was an implicit rejection of Benthamite views on the role of a sceptical electorate always alert to the operation of sinister interests.<sup>51</sup> The full extent of his commitment to these new ideas was evident in his “The Spirit of the Age,” which appeared in 1831, but even earlier his changed ideas were reflected in changed activities. Unlike his father, Mill for a few years thought there was little point in stimulating public opinion; he dropped out of the London Debating Society in 1829 and wrote little for publication.<sup>52</sup> Although he claimed to have “entered warmly”<sup>53</sup> into the political discussions of the time when he returned from Paris in September, 1830, his manuscript bibliography records few publications on domestic politics during the reform period, and during the height of the Reform Bill agitation he was “often surprised, how little” he really cared about extra-parliamentary politics. “The time is not yet come,” he wrote, “when a calm and impartial person can intermeddle with advantage in the questions and contests of the day.”<sup>54</sup>

Mill recovered his sense of calling as a reformer and his radical beliefs, but only after he accommodated his new ideas about the authority of the instructed to Benthamite radicalism. He felt compelled to make the accommodation:

I found the fabric of my old and taught opinions giving way in many fresh places, and I never allowed it to fall to pieces, but was incessantly occupied in weaving it anew. I never, in the course of my transition, was content to remain, for ever so short a time, confused and unsettled. When I had taken in any new idea, I could not rest till I had adjusted its relation to my old opinions, and ascertained exactly how far its effect ought to extend in modifying or superseding them.<sup>55</sup>

The process of weaving anew, which involved influences coming from Coleridge, Carlyle, and Harriet Taylor, as well as from John Austin and the St. Simonians, continued for much of his life, but it was a major occupation for him during the 1830s.

If Mill's metaphor of weaving suggests a harmonious intertwining, it is somewhat misleading, for initially his old and new ideas were not so much woven together as simply combined. Rather

than choose between them, Mill now regarded both the old ideas, which emphasized popular control, and the new, which emphasized instructed leadership, as equally necessary: “the grand difficulty in politics will for a long time be, how best to conciliate the two great elements on which good government depends; to combine the greatest amount of the advantage derived from the independent judgment of a specially instructed Few, with the greatest degree of the security for rectitude of purpose derived from rendering those Few responsible to the Many.”<sup>56</sup> This combination was necessary because each of its main ingredients was by itself insufficient. Benthamite radicalism provided a popular check on authority but made no provision for instructed authority. By attempting to combine these two approaches, Mill was hoping to provide for “the two great elements on which good government depends.”<sup>57</sup>

This wish to combine two diverse outlooks led Mill to use the language of eclecticism. He described the truth as “many sided,”<sup>58</sup> and advocated “a catholic spirit in philosophy.”<sup>59</sup> Trying to combine fragments of the truth and to reconcile persons who represented different “half truths,”<sup>60</sup> he sought “practical eclecticism,”<sup>61</sup> and he tried to keep “as firm hold of one side of the truth as [he] took of the other.”<sup>62</sup>

At this time Mill thought of his political speculations as taking place on a higher plane than they had occupied earlier. Whereas previously he (like Bentham and his father) had regarded certain model institutions as the end result of speculation, now, without rejecting his old conclusions about model (i.e., democratic) institutions, he went further. In his words, “If I am asked what system of political philosophy I substituted for that which, as a philosophy, I had abandoned, I answer, no system: only a conviction, that the true system was something much more complex and many sided than I had previously had any idea of, and that its office was to supply, not a set of model institutions, but principles from which the institutions suitable to any given circumstances might be deduced.”<sup>63</sup> Of course, viewed from this higher plane, James Mill’s contribution to political philosophy was greatly diminished. Thus John Mill became “aware of many things which [his father’s] doctrine, professing to be a theory of government in general, ought to have made room for, and did not.”<sup>64</sup> He no longer accepted “Government” as embodying scientific theory, and thought his father should have answered Macaulay by acknowledging that the essay was not a scientific treatise but only a tract in support of parliamentary reform.<sup>65</sup> Although he did not use the phrase in reference to his father, clearly he thought James Mill had grasped only a “half-truth.”

Mill’s search for ways of combining the diverse understandings of Bentham and his father, on the one hand, and of Austin and the St. Simonians, on the other, was revealed most clearly in his articles on Bailey, Tocqueville, Bentham, and Coleridge (and much later, of course, in *Considerations on Representative Government*). Whereas he castigated as false democracy the simple majoritarianism which he associated with the recommendations of Bentham and James Mill, he saw true or rational democracy as the kind that, in allowing for representation of minorities, including the minority of the educated, facilitated leadership by the instructed few in combination with a democratic suffrage that provided popular control. This line of thinking was also evident in his belief that the main thrust of eighteenth-century political philosophy, represented by the *philoso-*



*phes* on the Continent and in England by Bentham (and, by implication, his father), had to be combined with the main theme of nineteenth-century thought as represented by the German romantics and in England by Coleridge. Whereas Bentham taught the need for popular control, Coleridge, with his notion of a clerisy, promoted the idea of enlightened authority that commanded deference from the populace. “Whoever could master the premises and combine the methods of both [Bentham and Coleridge], would possess the entire English philosophy of their age,”<sup>66</sup> Mill said, and described his wish to synthesize Bentham and Coleridge as a “scheme of conciliation between the old and the new ‘philosophic radicalism.’”<sup>67</sup>

In combining the new ideas with the old radicalism, Mill was greatly helped by a theory of history that allowed him to visualize the progressive development of society. He was exposed to such a theory in St. Simonianism, which provided him with a “connected view . . . of the natural order of human progress.”<sup>68</sup> This permitted him to assume that the combination of enlightened leadership and democratic control would be viable; that is, true democracy as he understood it could come to exist.

After Mill had persuaded himself that the old radicalism was reconcilable with his new ideas, he could co-operate with the other Radicals in practical politics. While he had some goals that were not theirs, he shared their wish for an extended suffrage, shorter parliaments, and the secret ballot. The “change in the premises of my political philosophy,” he says, “did not alter my practical political creed as to the requirements of my own time and country. I was as much as ever a radical and democrat, for Europe, and especially for England.”<sup>69</sup> Democracy, however, would have put into practice only some of Mill’s political principles, whereas for the other Radicals it would have been closer to complete fulfilment of their hopes.

In the absence of complete agreement, relations between Mill and the other Philosophic Radicals were somewhat strained. Since they were willing to apply only some of his political principles, he regarded them as narrow. They saw “*clearly* what they did see, though it was but little.” As they were narrow, he regarded them as incomplete, “half-men.”<sup>70</sup> All the same, he was “able to cooperate with them in their own field of usefulness, though perhaps they would not always join [him] in [his].”<sup>71</sup> Mill also subjected his father to two standards of judgment, approving his ideas at one level but not the other. There was oblique criticism of him in an appendix to Edward Lytton Bulwer’s *England and the English* (London, 1833) and in references to spokesmen for the philosophy of the eighteenth century in the essay on Bentham; also in the *Autobiography* Mill confessed to feeling quite distant from James Mill’s “tone of thought and feeling,” and said his father probably considered him “a deserter from his standard,” although at the same time “we were almost always in strong agreement on the political questions of the day.”<sup>72</sup>

Although Mill was willing to co-operate with the other Philosophic Radicals, their feelings about him were affected by suspicions that his new ideas undermined his status as a Radical. Roebuck complained about Mill’s belief “in the advantages to be derived from an Aristocracy of intellect.”<sup>73</sup> Mrs. Grote referred to that “wayward intellectual deity John Mill,”<sup>74</sup> and after the publication of the article on Bentham, Francis Place expressed the view “that [since] John Mill

has made great progress in becoming a German Metaphysical Mystic, excentricity [*sic*] and absurdity must occasionally be the result.”<sup>75</sup>

During the 1830s Mill advocated both parts of his political philosophy. On some occasions he explained the need for allowing the “instructed few” a large measure of authority; at other times he emphasized the more restricted vision of Benthamite radicalism, and sought to be the guide and tactician for the parliamentary Radicals. In the latter mood, he looked for fairly quick results, whereas in the former he was trying to prepare the ground for the acceptance of new principles to be realized in the more distant future. Although his explanations of the new ideas mainly appeared in essays published in other volumes of the *Collected Works*, occasionally these ideas are found in articles in this volume. A notable example is his anticipation of his proposal in *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861) for a Legislative Commission in an article of 1834 in the *Monthly Repository* (160).<sup>76</sup>

## THE RATIONALE FOR A RADICAL PARTY

Mill became a political journalist to implement his radical creed. He often wished to be in Parliament with other Philosophic Radicals, and only his official position at India House prevented his going to the hustings.<sup>77</sup> Consequently he turned to journalism with the belief—or the hope—that “words are deeds, and the cause of deeds.”<sup>78</sup> He looked enviously at France where “editors of daily journals may be considered as individually the head, or at lowest the right hand, of a political party.”<sup>79</sup> There was the example of Armand Carrel, who “made himself, without a seat in the legislature or any public station beyond the editorship of his journal, the most powerful political leader of his age and country” (380). With ambition to play such a role, Mill, in cooperation with his father and Sir William Molesworth, set up a new quarterly journal in 1835 (initially the *London Review* and, after a merger in 1836, the *London and Westminster*). It was to be “a periodical organ of philosophic radicalism, to take the place which the *Westminster Review* had been intended to fill.” One of its principal purposes “was to stir up the educated Radicals, in and out of Parliament, to exertion, and induce them to make themselves, what I thought by using the proper means they might become—a powerful party capable of taking the government of the country, or at least of dictating the terms on which they should share it with the Whigs.”<sup>80</sup> Mill was the real though not the nominal editor, and after Molesworth withdrew in 1837 he became the proprietor as well.

Mill in his journalism frequently discussed Radical party goals, explaining that constitutional change, that is, organic reform, was essential, but that it was only a means to the real end, improvement. Thus he said that Radicals wanted codification of the laws, cheap legal procedures, access to the courts for the poor, abolition of the corn laws and of restrictions on industry, elimination of useless expenditures, improvement of conditions in Ireland, and a rational administration (348, 397). Thinking the Reform Act of 1832 “wholly insufficient” (186), he did not expect much improvement from the post-Reform Bill parliaments, and therefore advocated organic reform, that is, a more democratic constitution. Of course, if improvements could have been

achieved without such fundamental changes, Mill would have been satisfied, but he assumed that the aristocratic classes were unwilling to make more than trivial concessions to liberal opinion. Thus, although constitutional changes were only the means to general improvement, Mill said, “necessary means we believe them to be” (348).<sup>81</sup> Consequently, the demand for organic reforms became the hallmark of Philosophic Radicalism.

Although Radicals might differ about how far to go in shifting power away from the aristocracy, they agreed about the kind of change required: “it must be by diminishing the power of those who are unjustly favoured, and giving more to those who are unjustly depressed: it must be by adding weight in the scale to the two elements of Numbers and Intelligence, and taking it from that of Privilege” (479). The traditional Radical programme for achieving this change emphasized universal suffrage, secret ballot, and frequent elections. Mill said little about annual parliaments but appears to have wanted shorter, perhaps triennial, ones. He was outspoken in calling for the ballot, not only because it would reduce bribery and intimidation of electors, but because it would help shift the balance of power: once it became a cabinet measure, “reform will have finally triumphed: the aristocratical principle will be completely annihilated, and we shall enter into a new era of government.”<sup>82</sup> As to the franchise, he wanted to see it greatly extended at this time, but he did not press for universal suffrage, although he regarded it as ultimately necessary and desirable. By arguing that it could be put off for a time, he was not doubting its importance and value but was recognizing that it was unlikely that a broadly based radical movement could be formed if extremists within it insisted on universal suffrage. He therefore called for its gradual introduction and was evidently pleased when its not being a pressing issue allowed him to avoid an unequivocal statement of his opinion (482, 488-9).<sup>83</sup> When he could not avoid stating his view, however, Mill, although hesitantly, showed his hand, as when he said of the parliamentary Radicals:

They are the only party who do not in their hearts condemn the whole of their operative fellow-citizens to perpetual helotage, to a state of exclusion from all direct influence on national affairs. . . . They look forward to a time, most of them think it is not yet come, when the whole adult population shall be qualified to give an equal voice in the election of members of Parliament. Others believe this and tremble; *they* believe it, and rejoice; and instead of wishing to retard, they anxiously desire . . . to hasten this progress. (397.)

Of course, this description of the parliamentary Radicals was a description of Mill himself.

Mill’s wish to promote a Radical party with a programme of organic reform rested on the assumption that a fundamental conflict was taking place between the aristocratic and non-aristocratic classes over control of government. This notion was adopted from Bentham and his father, but the language Mill used to describe the conflict was more varied than theirs: the Disqualified vs. the Privileged; Natural Radicals vs. Natural Opponents of Radicalism; Numbers and Intelligence vs. Privilege; the Aggrieved vs. the Satisfied; the Many vs. the Few. Whatever the labels, Mill, like Bentham and his father, had in mind a conflict between Radicals, as spokesmen for the universal or general interest and representing the “People,” and Conservatives, as spokes-

men for particular or sinister interests and representing the Aristocracy. Mill's analysis was evident in much of what he wrote during the 1830s, but it was presented most elaborately in the remarkable essay, "Reorganization of the Reform Party," where he described the conflict as arising out of social structure. Political views, he explained, were a matter of social position, interest, and class (465-95 *passim*, esp. 469).<sup>84</sup>

Mill's view of the aristocratic classes was not very different from his father's. They were, generally, the landed and monied classes, especially the former, and they controlled the legislature, the House of Commons as well as the House of Lords (101-2 and 184). They made laws in their own interest, most notably the monopolistic Corn Laws which made bread unnecessarily expensive for the poor (170, 470), and also in defence of their amusements, as Mill explained in his early article on the Game Laws, which had important consequences for a great part of the agricultural population (101-3, 107). They also biased justice by administering the laws in their own class interest (471, 483). Furthermore, they administered the Poor Laws; and the army, navy, and civil patronage belonged to them exclusively (170). Altogether the government was "a selfish oligarchy, carried on for the personal benefit of the ruling classes" (479). The Church, too, was but a branch of the aristocracy (471).<sup>85</sup> In short, the aristocracy had vast unjust power; it was exploitive, selfish, and indifferent to the interests of others. Clearly its members, the bulwark of what Mill called the Privileged, Conservative, Satisfied Classes, exploited their sinister interest at the expense of the people (469-70).

In opposition to the aristocratic classes, Mill portrayed the combination of groups that made up the Numbers and Intelligence and who, in their struggle against Privilege, became "natural Radicals" (468, 470). All who suffered deprivation as a result of aristocratic exclusions—whether through legislation or custom—were the Disqualified, and therefore by definition opposed to the Privileged.

All who feel oppressed, or unjustly dealt with, by any of the institutions of the country; who are taxed more heavily than other people, or for other people's benefit; who have, or consider themselves to have, the field of employment for their pecuniary means or their bodily or mental faculties unjustly narrowed; who are denied the importance in society, or the influence in public affairs, which they consider due to them as a class, or who feel debarred as individuals from a fair chance of rising in the world; especially if others, in whom they do not recognize any superiority of merit, are artificially exalted above their heads: these compose the natural Radicals; to whom must be added a large proportion of those who, from whatever cause, are habitually ill at ease in their pecuniary circumstances; the sufferers from low wages, low profits, or want of employment. . . . (470.)

Such was Mill's attempt to define the comprehensive coalition of the discontented.

Turning to the sources of such discontents, Mill looked to amount of property and to occupational and financial circumstances—in other words, to class. First, there were the middle classes, the majority of whom, including the bulk of the manufacturing and mercantile classes (except those in protected trades), were on the side of change. In addition, there were the ten-pound elec-

tors in the towns, who belonged to the “uneasy classes,” for they lived a life of struggle and had no sense of fellow feeling with the aristocracy (476). In part these were Dissenters, who had their own grievances against the Church to supplement those they experienced as members of the middle class. “Between them and the aristocracy, there is a deeper gulph fixed than can be said of any other portion of the middle class; and when men’s consciences, and their interests, draw in the same direction, no wonder that they are irresistible” (476).<sup>86</sup>

There was another aspect of middle-class discontent about which Mill was perceptive, perhaps because he personally experienced it. It arose less from inequities leading to material deprivation than from resentments about social status, and it was experienced by “the men of active and aspiring talent” who had skilled employments “which require talent and education but confer no rank,—what may be called the non-aristocratic professions. . . .” Such persons were natural Radicals, for, Mill asked, “what is Radicalism, but the claim of pre-eminence for personal qualities above conventional or accidental advantages” (477)? As examples Mill mentioned stewards and attorneys, but one recalls his claims for “the most virtuous and best-instructed” in “The Spirit of the Age,”<sup>87</sup> and his observation that journalists and editors, who were influential but regarded as ungentlemanly, did not enjoy public recognition of their real power (163-4). All such persons together might be called the intelligentsia. Of course, the word was not used in England in Mill’s time, but there can be little doubt that he had in mind the phenomenon to which it refers when he discussed the political outlook of such persons.<sup>88</sup>

There is a class, now greatly multiplying in this country, and generally overlooked by politicians in their calculations; those men of talent and instruction, who are just below the rank in society which would of itself entitle them to associate with gentlemen. Persons of this class have the activity and energy which the higher classes in our state of civilization and education almost universally want. . . . They are, as it is natural they should be, Radicals to a man, and Radicals generally of a deep shade. They are the natural enemies of an order of things in which they are not in their proper place. (402-3.)

In this statement, which suggests his resentment at exclusion from a deserved political station in society, Mill (despite his position in the East India Company) identified with the class of which he said, “We are felt to be the growing power . . .” (403). His identification with such persons may explain the bitterness that is evident in some of his observations about the aristocracy (162).

Mill gave equal prominence to the working class as the other main constituent part of the opposition to the aristocracy. This was not only a matter of taking note of Chartism during the late 1830s, for before then Mill complained about the injuries done to “the people of no property, viz. those whose principal property consists in their bodily faculties.” Like the middle class and those with small property, “the most numerous and poorest class has also an interest in reducing the exorbitant power which is conferred by large property” (218, 219). So Mill included in the large, naturally radical body “the whole effective political strength of the working classes: classes deeply and increasingly discontented, and whose discontent now [1839] speaks out in a voice which will not be unheard” (478).

In discussing both middle and working classes as the opposition to the aristocracy, Mill was not unaware of conflicts of interest that divided the working from the middle classes. He took note of disagreements about universal suffrage; of quarrels between supporters of the Church and Dissenters; and above all, of “an opposition of interest, which gives birth, it would seem, to the most deep-rooted distrusts and aversions which exist in society—the opposition between capitalists and labourers” (479). When the Chartists were providing evidence of class conflict between proletariat and bourgeoisie, Mill proposed that such antagonism be subordinated to the other kind of class conflict—between the aristocracy and the non-aristocratic classes—that was required by his political position. He appealed to the middle and working classes to co-operate in taking the next step, which was opposition to the aristocracy by a parliamentary Radical party (480-1). Since many middle-class radicals would not agree to universal suffrage, such co-operation required postponement of that demand, which was what the Chartists most wanted. The wish to postpone universal suffrage was also supported by Mill’s belief that education ought to precede full democracy. Meanwhile it was necessary to redress the practical grievances of the working classes without yet allowing them full participation. “The motto of a Radical politician should be, Government *by means of* the middle for the working classes” (483).<sup>89</sup> Despite this concession to middle-class fear of the working class, Mill went far in asking that there should be “some members returned chiefly by the working classes. We think it of importance that Mr. Lovett and Mr. Vincent [both Chartists] should make themselves heard in St. Stephen’s as well as in Palace yard [i.e., in the House of Commons as well as in public meetings], and that the legislature should not have to learn the sentiments of the working classes at second-hand.” (489.)

Mill’s supportive words for the middle class, like his father’s, were not intended to promote the interest of that class to the exclusion of the working class, nor was he particularly sympathetic to the middle class. He criticized the shopocracy (162) and, in urging that the working classes have some representation, said, “We would give [them] power, but not all power. We wish them to be strong enough to keep the middle classes in that salutary awe, without which, no doubt, those classes would be just like any other oligarchy. . . .” (489.) It is evident that Mill was far from being comfortable with middle-class rule:

The people of property are the stronger now, and will be for many years. All the danger of injustice lies from them, and not towards them. Nothing but the progressive increase of the power of the working classes, and a progressive conviction of that increase on the part of their superiors, can be a sufficient inducement to the proprietary class to cultivate a good understanding with the working people; to take them more and more into their councils; to treat them more and more as people who deserve to be listened to, whose condition and feelings must be considered, and are best learned from their own mouths; finally, to fit them for a share in their own government, by accustoming them to be governed, not like brute animals, but beings capable of rationality, and accessible to social feelings. (219-20.)

Mill’s view of party politics during the 1830s was shaped by his belief that party conflict ought to reflect the class conflict between the aristocracy and its opponents. A Radical party should represent the anti-aristocratic interest of the diverse groups which Bentham and James

Mill called the numerous classes or the People. Their party was to rest “on the *whole body* of radical opinion, from the whig-radicals at one extreme, to the more reasonable and practical of the working classes, and the Benthamites, on the other.”<sup>90</sup> Far from excluding the working classes, Mill said, “A Radical party which does not rest upon the masses, is no better than a nonentity” (396). The labels he used for this party varied—it was the Radical party, popular party, Reform party, liberal party, Movement party—but whatever the label, “the small knot of philosophic radicals,” as he called them, to whom Mill offered guidance throughout the decade, was to be the most advanced part of it, and he hoped it would provide the party with leadership.

On the other side of the great conflict Mill looked for an aristocratic party made up of both Whigs and Tories. The Whigs were included despite their use of a liberal and reformist rhetoric that superficially distinguished them from the Tories. They were attached to the existing distribution of power as much as the Tories and were equally “terrified at the remedies” (297). In response to popular pressure the Whigs occasionally made concessions, and at these times Mill allowed a place for the most liberal of them in a comprehensively defined Radical or Reform party, but his wish and expectation was that they would combine with the Tories in an aristocratic party. This would be the party of “the English oligarchy, Whig and Tory,” and its organ (Mill said in 1834) was Lord Grey (262).

Since Radicals and Conservatives had clearly defined views on the large issue of democracy and aristocracy, they deserved to survive, but the Whigs, because of their half-hearted equivocations, did not. Thus he regarded the Whigs as “a coterie, not a party” (342), and rather optimistically noted that Conservatives and Radicals were gaining strength “at the expense not of each other, but of the Indifferents and the *juste milieu*,” and, he added, “there will soon be no middle party, as indeed what seemed such had long been rather an appearance than a reality” (341).<sup>91</sup> The realignment of parties Mill wanted would remove the equivocating Whigs and make political conflict an accurate representation of the underlying class conflict. He did not use the word “realignment,” but the phenomenon to which it refers was in his mind, as it was in Bentham’s and James Mill’s. Forcing the Whigs (other than the most liberal of them) to acknowledge their shared aristocratic interest with the Tories would create a place for a Radical party that was not a subordinate partner in an uneasy alliance with the Whigs. The proper alignment would come, he said, “when the present equivocal position of parties is ended, and the question is distinctly put between Radicalism and Conservatism” (477).<sup>92</sup>

Mill’s view on party realignment illuminates his use of the phrase “Philosophic Radical.” His fairly precise notion of the meaning of the term—which he himself coined—sharply contrasts with the loose usage among historians, for whom it has referred to such things as Benthamism, utilitarianism, liberalism, laissez-faire doctrine, and radicalism so loosely defined as to include the mixture of economic and political ideas of Adam Smith, Bentham, the Mills, Nassau Senior, and Cobden.<sup>93</sup> Mill invented the phrase to identify a small group among the many radicals who existed during the 1820s and 1830s. This group was deeply influenced by James Mill and most had associated with John Stuart Mill in the London Debating Society and in the production of the *Parliamentary History and Review*. Among them were George Grote, who later distinguished himself

as an historian of Greece and of Greek philosophy; John Roebuck, who had a long and prominent career as a member of Parliament; and Charles Austin, who had a dazzling success at the bar. Older than most of the others, Joseph Parkes, a successful attorney and political agent, played a part in their deliberations; although less an enthusiast than the others, he shared some of their convictions. Francis Place, the legendary Radical tailor, must be included, although his age and his participation in the Radical movement from the 1790s gave him a special position. It also would be difficult to exclude Harriet Grote, whose lively political interests and aggressive temperament made her an active participant. Others became associated with the Philosophic Radicals during the 1830s—Henry Warburton, Charles Buller, and Sir William Molesworth being most noteworthy. What characterized the group was their association with the Mills and a belief—held by some with greater enthusiasm than by others—that by means of party realignment the Radicals could replace the Whigs. This belief was promoted by several of these Philosophic Radicals in their journalism and their parliamentary careers.

Mill used the adjective “philosophic” in describing the Radicals with whom he felt a close affinity because they took a principled—a philosophic—position on politics. Mill’s political philosophy—or perhaps one should say half of it, the part derived from Bentham and James Mill—was mainly occupied with justifying democracy against aristocratic government. He contrasted the Philosophic Radicals with historical Radicals who demanded popular institutions as an inheritance from the distant past; with metaphysical Radicals whose belief in democracy was based on a notion of abstract natural rights; with Radicals marked by irritation with a particular policy of government; and with “radicals of position, who are radicals . . . because they are not lords” (353).<sup>94</sup> Mill’s favoured Radicals deserved to be called philosophic because they traced practical evils back to their cause, which was the aristocratic principle. Thus their motto was “enmity to the Aristocratical principle” (353).<sup>95</sup>

This justification for the adjective “philosophic” makes the label appropriate not only for Radicals, for there was an opposing position which was also philosophic. There was a type of Tory “who gives to Toryism (what can be given to it, though not to Whiggism) something like a philosophic basis; who finds for [his] opinions the soundest, the most ingenious, or the most moral arguments by which they can be supported” (335). This was “speculative Toryism,” such as Coleridge’s:

As whatever is noble or disinterested in Toryism is founded upon a recognition of the moral duty of submission to rightful authority, so the moral basis of Radicalism is the refusal to pay that submission to an authority which is usurped, or to which the accidents of birth or fortune are the only title. The Tory acknowledges, along with the right to obedience, a correlative obligation to govern for the good of the ruled. . . . (478-9.)<sup>96</sup>

In the House of Commons, however, Toryism was quite different; it acted on behalf of the aristocratic “selfish oligarchy” (479); it was the Toryism for which Sir John Walsh “gets up and vents . . . shattered and worn-out absurdities,” including a defence of Tory policy in Ireland (335). Even Peel was disdained by Mill (403-4). Yet because Toryism could address the large ques-



tion of aristocracy and democracy it was capable of having philosophic status. The Whigs, in contrast, although “a portion of the privileged class,” and “hostile to any thorough reform,” pretended to favour reform on behalf of the people, and consequently could be seen to be unprincipled. “Since the questions arising out of the Hanoverian succession had been set at rest, the term Whig had never been the symbol of any principles” (342).

A consequence of Mill’s “philosophic” approach to politics was a preference for conflict between extreme parties, a preference which placed the highest priority on the issue of aristocracy versus democracy. Mill, in describing how the Philosophic Radicals and the Tories gained domination of the London Debating Society, said, “our doctrines were fairly pitted against their opposites,” and with evident pride he reported that these debates “habitually consisted of the strongest arguments and most philosophic principles which either side was able to produce.”<sup>97</sup> Later he encouraged such conflict in the House of Commons because it would be a contest “between the representatives of the two great principles,—not between two men whose policies differ from one another only by the shadow of a shade” (495). In such a contest the Whigs would be set aside and “the question [would be] distinctly put between Radicalism and Conservatism” (477).

Mill’s confidence that the Whigs could be set aside, to be replaced by a Radical party led by the Philosophic Radicals, may seem surprising in retrospect. Yet he clearly believed that if the Philosophic Radicals played their cards correctly, that is, aggressively, the Radicals would become an independent party and might ultimately gain office. As unrealistic as this view appeared to many contemporaries,<sup>98</sup> it did not seem impossible to Mill (or to his father or to the other Philosophic Radicals).<sup>99</sup> That he seriously entertained this possibility is an indication of his doctrinairism and his high political ambition during the 1830s. Sophisticated and careful as Mill was, his words show that he thought the Philosophic Radicals eligible for the highest offices. There were Radicals in and out of Parliament, he said, with the talent and energy which in time would qualify them to play a distinguished part in either a government or an opposition (386).<sup>100</sup> He also spoke about the prospective party of moderate radicals as “*our party*,”<sup>101</sup> and discussed what would happen “the moment a Ministry of Moderate Radicals comes into power.” “All things,” he said, “are ripe for it,” and its leader “is sure of everything, to the Premiership inclusive” (494, 495).<sup>102</sup> A similar speculation in the *Spectator* did not exclude Mill; in describing a possible Radical cabinet, in addition to Durham (as Prime Minister), Grote (Exchequer), Hume (Home Secretary), Buller (Colonies), Warburton (Board of Trade), Molesworth (Board of Control), John Romilly (Solicitor General), it mentioned, without suggesting offices, Roebuck, Charles Austin, and Mr. John Mill.<sup>103</sup>

Since Mill denied the Whigs their usual position as a major party, they regarded his views on parliamentary politics as doctrinaire. His arguments indeed had many doctrinaire features (which were present despite his reaction against his own early Benthamite sectarianism): he looked for large-scale change, and he depreciated reforms that did not contribute to the redistribution of power;<sup>104</sup> he was uncomfortable with compromise, and he criticized compromisers and trimmers as unprincipled;<sup>105</sup> he assumed that considerable changes could be achieved easily;<sup>106</sup> and, as mentioned, he regarded conflict with an ideological opposite as the worthiest kind, and so was

critical of moderates who stood for gradual change. This last feature of the Philosophic Radicals' approach was identified by the Whig publicist Francis Jeffrey as early as 1826, when he responded to James Mill's castigation of Whigs as insincere reformers and moderates: "The real reason of the animosity with which we [Whigs] are honoured by the more eager of the two extreme parties, is, that we . . . impede the assault they are impatient mutually to make on each other, and take away from them the means of that direct onset, by which the sanguine in both hosts imagine they might at once achieve a decisive victory."<sup>107</sup> Although other moderate critics of the Philosophic Radicals did not match Jeffrey's incisive rhetoric, they recognized the doctrinairism. Fonblanque, once a Radical himself, late in the 1830s called them (and especially John Mill) Ultras, fanatical Radicals, pseudo-Liberals, Detrimentals, Wrongheads, and, since their tactics would have led to a Tory government, Tory Radicals.<sup>108</sup>

Mill was aware of the "philosophic" origin of the ambition he entertained for radicalism. And he was also aware of British uneasiness with anything theoretical. "There is no passion in England for forms of government, considered in themselves. Nothing could be more inconsistent with the exclusively practical spirit of the English people." (339.) Indeed, England was "a nation *practical* even to ridiculousness; . . . a nation given to distrust and dislike all that there is in principles . . ., and whose first movement would be to fight against, rather than for, any one who has nothing but a principle to hold out" (392-3). In this uncongenial environment, Mill tried—though hardly with success—to conceal the theoretical aspect of his political enterprise. He used the phrase "Philosophic(al) Radical" rather infrequently (165, 191, 212, 353),<sup>109</sup> and he tried to divert attention from the "philosophic" side of his radicalism by using equivalent phrases, these too used sparingly. They included "thorough Reformers" (292, 322, 378, 380), "complete reformers" (301, 307), "enlightened" Radicals (378), "decided Radicals" (389), "real reformers" (326), and "more vigorous Reformers" (322). Mill explained that "because this designation [Philosophic Radicals] too often repeated gave a *coterie* air which it was felt to be objectionable, the phrase was varied."<sup>110</sup> Despite such attempts to evade criticism, the Philosophic Radicals, including Mill as their self-appointed spokesman, attracted increasing attention as the size of the Whig majority in Parliament diminished and Radical votes became more important.

## RADICAL PARTY TACTICS

Since Mill wished to promote Radical leadership of the reform party in Parliament, the tactics he recommended to the other Philosophic Radicals focused on their relations with the Whigs. Much of what he suggested depended on his estimate of Whig policy on reform. Those in the Whig government, like their supporters, varied greatly in their reformist zeal, but they were sufficiently favourable to reform for Lord Grey's government to cultivate a liberal image by calling itself the Reform Ministry.

This image, when combined with pressures for additional reform from the press and the liberal wing of their own party, created a dilemma for the Whig leadership, according to Mill. In the face of demand for reform, the Whigs had to choose either to make concessions and become

more reformist than Whig, or they could refuse concessions and become hardly distinguishable from the Tories. They “must either join with the Tories in resisting, or with the Radicals in carrying, improvements of a more fundamental kind than any but the latter have yet ventured to identify themselves with” (326). Whichever choice they made, the reform cause would be promoted. If they chose concession, considerable improvements would be made: “there is hardly any limit to what may now be carried *through* the Ministry” (192). On the other hand, if the Whigs resisted and were forced to coalesce with the Tories, much good would result even if the government was then openly opposed to additional reform. For then the Radical party would be invigorated and the country would be “delivered from the anomalous state, in which we have neither the benefits of a liberal government, nor those of a liberal opposition; in which we can carry nothing through the two Houses, but what would be given by a Tory ministry, and yet are not able to make that vigorous appeal to the people out of doors, which under the Tories could be made and would be eagerly responded to” (385). If this situation occurred, of course, the realignment strategy would have been implemented; that is, the Radicals would have ceased to be a mere appendage to the Whigs and the Radical party would have achieved independent existence.<sup>111</sup>

The Whigs may have faced a dilemma, but Mill was not without one of his own, for he wanted both additional reform *and* the establishment of an independent Radical party, and Whig policy that promoted one of these goals made the other harder to attain. If the Whigs made concessions to the pressures for additional reform, Radicals, even extreme Radicals, became more generous in the support of the government, and thus the achievement of independence for the Radical party became more difficult. On the other hand, the gaining of such independence would be facilitated by Whig resistance to further reform. For Mill’s former goal to be achieved, the Whig leadership would have had to move to the left; for the latter, they would have had to move to the right. Since Mill wanted both results, he was inevitably dissatisfied, no matter what the Whigs did. His response to the dilemma changed as the decade unfolded. During the first four years or so following the Reform Bill, Mill thought the Whigs could be persuaded to make concessions, and therefore he recommended conditional support of their governments. Increasingly during these years, however, he became disappointed with them, despite the abolition of slavery and the passing of the New Poor Law. A turning-point came later in the decade when the Whigs’ unequivocal refusal to consider reform of the constitution put an end to Mill’s expectations that Radicals and Whigs might co-operate. Thereafter he urged the Philosophic Radicals to adopt a more independent line of conduct, and he experienced exhilaration at the prospect of a separate Radical party. Yet, even in this mood, he complained about the lack of movement towards the implementation of the Radical programme.

Either of Mill’s goals, however, could be promoted by pressure on the Whig government, and therefore throughout the decade he called on the Philosophic Radicals to “attempt much” (395). They were supposed to “put forward, on every fitting occasion, with boldness and perseverance, the best political ideas which the country affords” (191). Despite their small numbers, the strong public support for radicalism would allow a few to accomplish great things: “there is a vitality in the principles, there is that in them both of absolute truth and of adaptation to the particular wants of the time, which will not suffer that in Parliament two or three shall be gathered together

in their name, proclaiming the purpose to stand or fall by them, and to go to what lengths soever they may lead, and that those two or three shall not soon wield a force before which ministries and aristocracies shall quail” (397-8).<sup>112</sup> Despite what Mill saw as their great opportunity, however, some of the Philosophic Radicals were unaggressive. Grote, from whom so much was expected, deeply disappointed Mill. “Why does not Mr. Grote exert himself” (314n)?<sup>113</sup> The Radicals, Mill said, were without policy, a leader, or organization, and therefore they failed to call forth their strength in the country (467). Mill sometimes called them torpid (327) and ciphers (165) and accused them of lacking courage (212), though there were exceptions, notably Roebuck, whom Mill generally praised.<sup>114</sup>

Putting pressure on the Whig government should have been easy, Mill thought, for he assumed that the great burst of reform agitation that forced aristocratic acceptance of the Reform Act manifested a fundamental change, making public opinion permanently favourable to further reform. Therefore he thought opinion would support either a Whig-led reform party or a genuine Radical party in opposition to both Whigs and Tories. The events of 1831-32 revealed a public angry and outspoken enough to be capable of intimidating the governing classes (430).<sup>115</sup> These events changed the understanding of the constitution, “which [since the Reform Bill] enables the people to carry all before them when driven by any violent excitement” (299). Mill thought the governing classes knew it could happen again: “where the public voice is strong and unanimous, the Ministry must now go along with it” (317). Although public opinion became much less agitated after the Reform Bill passed into law, Mill assumed that “there [was] a great deal of passive radicalism in the electoral body,”<sup>116</sup> and he confidently announced that “England is moderate Radical” (389).<sup>117</sup> He also thought this latent opinion could be reawakened at any time, and therefore that the “progress of reform appears . . . certain” (292).<sup>118</sup>

The period immediately following the Reform Bill understandably began with high Radical hopes. The aristocracy apparently had suffered a severe defeat, and the Whigs, despite their sponsorship of the Reform Bill and their hopes for party advantage from it, were worried about its long-term consequences. In May 1832 Mill thought there was “nothing definite and determinate in politics except radicalism; and we shall have nothing but radicals and whigs for a long time to come.”<sup>119</sup> It is not known what Mill thought when his Radical friends in Parliament sat on the opposition benches,<sup>120</sup> but it should have gratified him, for it set them off from the Whigs as the nucleus of a new party. He also must have been pleased by Grote’s motion on the ballot, which was supported by 106 votes and threw Whigs and Tories together to defeat it by a majority of 105.<sup>121</sup> After his initial enthusiasm, however, the first session of the Reform Parliament was, on the whole, disappointing to Mill. Although the Whigs adopted the reform label and introduced some measures of reform, he depreciated most of the proposed legislation because it was so far removed from the organic reform sought by genuine Radicals. Slavery was abolished; the Bank Charter was renewed; and free competition in the China tea trade was established as part of the renewed East India Company charter. Mill was not opposed to these things, but they fell far short of what he wanted. When the government defended its record in the first session with its pamphlet *The Reform Ministry and the Reformed Parliament*, Mill, in his review of it, complained that it “passes over three-fourths of the essentials of the case.” The Whigs must be judged, he wrote, not

only by what they had done, but by considering “what they have opposed, and so *prevented* from being done.”<sup>122</sup>

In these circumstances—the Whigs were the only agency through which reform could be achieved, yet they proposed only changes that Mill regarded as insufficient—it was difficult to withhold support, and yet it was also difficult to be enthusiastic. So Mill acceded to the Philosophic Radicals’ voting in support of the government, but he called on them to be demanding, and he held out the threat of renewed agitation of public opinion and a return to the nervous days prior to the Reform Bill.

Three events in 1834 reduced Mill’s uneasiness about Philosophic Radical support of the Whig government. First, the resignation of Stanley and Graham in May signalled a reduction of conservatism in the cabinet (252, 285). Next, the government sponsored the Poor Law Amendment Act. Although not an organic reform, it was far-reaching and dear to all whose views on administration and poor relief had been shaped by Bentham and the political economists. This was the one achievement of the session, Mill said; he had not expected such a development, especially as there was no public clamour for it; consequently “we give them [the Whigs] due honour” (285). Finally, Lord Grey retired and was replaced by Melbourne. The retirement of Grey, a man of the 1790s, would allow the Whigs to be more responsive to the needs of a new age (263-5). As this period of Whig-Radical relations ended, Mill thought that the Whigs might regain the popularity they enjoyed in 1832, and that their errors of omission would be forgiven. “From us, and we believe from all the enlightened reformers, they may expect, until they shall have had a fair trial, not only no hostility, but the most friendly encouragement and support. They must now throw themselves upon the people.” (243.)

Such a trial had to be postponed, for in November, 1834, the Whigs were turned out and replaced by a Tory government under Peel. Mill and the Philosophic Radicals were jubilant, for they correctly assumed that this would be a brief interlude, and they were delighted to witness the Whigs in defeat. The Whigs now joined the Philosophic Radicals on the opposition benches, and the Radicals—about seventy of them—co-operated with the Whigs to expel Peel from office.<sup>123</sup> When the Whigs under Melbourne returned to the government benches in April, 1835, the Philosophic Radicals’ old problem—of defining their relation to the Whigs—returned in an acute form, for they had to adopt a position that took into account both their recent co-operation with the Whigs in opposition and their long-standing enmity to them.

Mill now offered guidance to the Philosophic Radicals from the pages of the *London Review*, which began publication just as the change in government took place (297). In a brief comment which was a postscript to his father’s political article, Mill said he did “not call upon the thorough Reformers to declare enmity against [the Whig Ministry], or to seek their downfall, because their measures will be half-measures . . . nor even because they will join with the Tories in crying down all complete reforms . . .” (292). At the same time, Mill suggested that the Philosophic Radicals refuse any offers of office. This he called “qualified and distrustful” support, and in the next issue he warned that such co-operation might not last very long (297).<sup>124</sup> In keeping with this advice,

the Philosophic Radicals sat on the government side, to indicate their support of the Whig Ministry, but below the gangway, to demonstrate their distance and independence from it.<sup>125</sup>

A crisis in this arrangement occurred as the Municipal Corporations Bill passed through Parliament, for this legislation and the way it was amended raised fundamental questions for the Radicals. The Bill provided for the elimination of the “little oligarchies,” as the Webbs later called them, that ruled in towns, and replaced them with town councils elected by household suffrage.<sup>126</sup> Although not fully democratic, the Bill went rather far in that direction. It pleased the Radicals, even delighted some of them, including Mill, who said “the destructive part . . . is of signal excellence,” and he acknowledged that, despite deficiencies in its constructive part, there was much merit, particularly the extension of the suffrage to householders, for which the Ministers were “entitled to great praise” (303). Overall, Mill said, it was “one of the greatest steps in improvement ever made by peaceable legislation in the internal government of a country” (308). The features of the Bill that elicited such praise were not altered by several amendments made in the House of Lords.

Yet the Philosophic Radicals were so eager to assert their fundamental principles that several of them, including Mill, responded angrily to the Lords’ amendments. It was the Lords’ tampering that caused the difficulty, because the Radicals, recalling the submission by the House of Lords in 1832, interpreted the post-Reform Act constitution as tolerating an upper house only so long as it remained quiescent. The suggestion that the House of Lords had a veto indicated that the Lords, as Roebuck said, “have not yet acquiesced in this arrangement,” as they did not comprehend their “real position.”<sup>127</sup> For Mill the Bill was “a challenge of the House of Lords to mortal combat” (302); and to allow the Lords’ amendments to stand would be “to abandon all the ends to which the Reform Bill was intended as a means” (343). Roebuck, Place, Molesworth, and even Grote were extremely angered, even more, it seems, than Mill.<sup>128</sup> Their anger was so great that they criticized the House of Lords as a second chamber, and in the end, Mill joined them. “An entire change in its constitution is cried out for from the remotest corner of the three kingdoms; and few would be satisfied with any change short of abolishing the hereditary principle” (313). He proposed an upper house chosen by the lower. The choice was to be made from the existing peerage supplemented with qualified persons not in the Commons who were to be given peerages. This was not the best design he could make, but only the result of his attempt to “re-model” the existing House of Lords. Its purpose was a second chamber “unlikely to set itself in opposition to what is good in the acts and purposes of the First.”<sup>129</sup> As well as attacks on the Lords, this episode produced complaints about the “truckling” by the Whig government and its moderate radical supporters (317).

Mill continued, however, to recommend cautious and selective support of the government, despite his disapproval of its yielding to the Lords on the Municipal Corporations Bill. Although he complained about the appearance of a tacit compromise between the government and the thorough reformers, he said, in October, 1835: “We do not wish the Radicals to attack the Ministry; we are anxious that they should co-operate with them. But we think they might co-operate without yoking themselves to the ministerial car, abdicating all independent action, and leaving

nothing to distinguish them from the mere Whig coterie. . . ." (316.) In April, 1836, Mill continued to argue that the Whigs deserved support from the thorough reformers, for they introduced or at least promised a marriage bill that removed certain grievances of dissenters; a bill for the registration of births and deaths; a bill to consolidate turnpike trusts; an Irish Corporation reform bill; and a measure of church reform (322-5). A far cry from organic reform, these proposals were yet enough to justify his call for support of the government. Despite his distrust of Whigs, he was reluctant to call for an attempt to turn out the government (344). At the same time, however, he asserted Radical independence and looked forward to the realignment of parties (326-7).

Mill's mixed view reflected certain difficulties which he and the other Philosophic Radicals faced. Their principles made co-operation with the Whigs disagreeable and directed them to an independent course of action. The political situation in 1836 also might have encouraged them to adopt aggressive tactics, for Melbourne's majority, including Irish and moderate radicals, was perhaps fifty or sixty, and Mill thought Melbourne dependent on the small group of Philosophic Radicals for support.<sup>130</sup> Other circumstances, however, called for restraint, for it became evident that the large number of moderate radicals, whose support was required for the implementation of the Philosophic Radicals' realignment strategy, might not go along with an attempt to turn out the Whig government. These so-called "200 ballot men," the "nominal" Whigs, supported Grote's ballot motion and were more reformist than the Whig leadership, but probably would keep the Whigs in office rather than risk a Tory government.

Among the small group of Philosophic Radicals there was disagreement. Aggressive, anti-Whig tactics were advocated by Molesworth and Roebuck, strongly supported by Francis Place and Harriet Grote. Molesworth's "Terms of Alliance between Radicals and Whigs" (January, 1837) was a clear and forthright statement of their position.<sup>131</sup> Others were more cautious, though not without sympathy for the extremists; these included Grote, Buller, Warburton, and Hume. Both Joseph Parkes and Fonblanque were vigorously opposed. The issue was hotly debated (as Harriet Grote put it) "as to the true play of the Rads."<sup>132</sup>

Mill, like the Philosophic Radical group as a whole, was of two minds. He took note of "the plan which [Molesworth] and several other of the radical members have formed and are executing. I think them quite right."<sup>133</sup> He also said, "As for me I am with the extreme party; though I would not always go so far as Roebuck, I entirely agree with those who say that the whole conduct of the Whigs tends to *amortir l'esprit public*, and that it would be a good thing for invigorat[ing] and consolidating the reform party if the Tories were to come in."<sup>134</sup> In this spirit he lamented Fonblanque's desertion, evident in his effective criticism of the Philosophic Radicals and in his appeal to moderate radicals for support of the Melbourne government. Mill said it was only Fonblanque's "past reputation for radicalism which prevents him from being mistaken for a ministerialist with radical inclinations" (380). He also complained that since 1835 Fonblanque had "acted as if his first object was to support and glorify the ministers, and the assertion of his own political doctrines only the second" (379).<sup>135</sup> Yet in the same letter in which he identified himself with the extreme party, Mill also noted, "the country does not go with us in [the extreme tactics] and therefore it will not do for the radicals to aid in turning out the ministry; by doing so

they would create so much hostility in their own party, that there would be no hope of a real united reform party with the country at its back, for many years. So we must linger on. . . .”<sup>136</sup> Doctrine called for one line of conduct; circumstances pointed to another: as Mill said, they were in a “false position.”<sup>137</sup>

In late 1837 Mill suddenly broke loose from the “false position” by declaring open hostility to the Whig government. He was provoked to do so by Lord John Russell’s “Finality” speech, and he was joined in this move by other Philosophic Radicals, who recently had been deeply disappointed by the thinning of their ranks in the elections of August, 1837.<sup>138</sup> In response to Radical amendments to the Address urging consideration of an extended suffrage, ballot, and shorter parliaments,<sup>139</sup> Russell said the amendments would repeal the Reform Act, whereas he regarded that Act as a final measure and not one he was willing to repeal or reconstruct.<sup>140</sup> Not only did Russell declare his opposition to further constitutional reform, but he carried with him a majority of the moderate radicals, who refused to vote for the Radical amendments.<sup>141</sup> Most of the Philosophic Radicals, both in and out of Parliament, were depressed by this development, but Mill was angry. He attended a meeting at Molesworth’s house in order to rouse the others. He argued that “the time is come when all temporizing—all delicacy towards the Whigs—all fear of disuniting Reformers or of embarrassing Ministers by pressing forward reforms, must be at an end.”<sup>142</sup> Now outspoken in advocating complete separation from the Whigs, he urged the Philosophic Radicals to “assume the precise position towards Lord Melbourne which they occupied in the first Reformed Parliament towards Lord Grey. Let them separate from the Ministry and go into declared opposition.” (412.)

Events arising out of the Canadian rebellion of 1837-38 were to be the occasion for Mill’s last call for the organization of a Radical party in opposition to Whigs and Tories. Initially, Canadian events clouded his hopes for renewed Radical activity, for the Philosophic Radicals’ response contributed to their isolation from the moderate radicals. When in January, 1838, the government proposed the suspension of the Canadian constitution for four years and the creation of a high commissioner, the Philosophic Radicals were opposed, but failed to gain support from liberal reformers and moderate radicals.<sup>143</sup> Edward Lytton Bulwer taunted them about their disagreements with other reformers:

Those who were called philosophical Radicals, . . . were . . . the same small and isolated knot of Gentlemen, who, on the first day of this session declared so much contempt of the Reform Bill, and so much hostility to the Government [in response to Russell’s Finality speech], who now differed also from the whole people of England in their sympathy for a guilty and absurd revolt. Whether those Gentlemen called themselves Radicals or not, the great body of Liberal politicians neither agreed with them in their policy for Canada nor their principles for England.<sup>144</sup>

The small size of the Philosophic Radical vote (six to thirty-nine at this juncture) demonstrated their isolation.

Mill defended the Philosophic Radicals in the *London and Westminster* for January, 1838, but Fonblanque in the *Examiner*, like Bulwer in the House of Commons, criticized the “Grote con-



clave” for sympathizing with colonial rebellion. “The London Reviewer,” he wrote, “asserts that the alliance between the Ministry and the Radicals is at an end; but how many members out of the Radical minority of little less than 200 have spoken or acted as if the alliance was at an end, or as if they desired it to be at an end. . . .?”<sup>145</sup> Fonblanque’s observations must have had a ring of truth, for Mill was acutely aware of the cleavage between the Philosophic Radicals and the other, more moderate radicals in the House of Commons. He had already complained that the Canadian question “suspends all united action among Radicals, . . . sets one portion of the friends of popular institutions at variance with another, and . . . interrupts for the time all movements and all discussions tending to the great objects of domestic policy” (408). He was so dismayed by this development that the next two numbers of the *London and Westminster Review* appeared without his usual political article (though he did publish the essays on Vigny and Bentham, as well as shorter articles), and the number for October, 1838, did not appear at all.<sup>146</sup> Mill could well say that the Canadian question “in an evil hour crossed the path of radicalism.”<sup>147</sup>

Mill’s outlook changed suddenly in October, 1838, when he learned of Durham’s resignation as Governor General in Canada, consequent on the Whig government’s failure to sanction the ordinances by which he granted amnesty to most of the captured rebels but transported a few of their leaders to Bermuda. In view of Durham’s anger towards the Melbourne Ministry, Mill thought Durham might be prepared to lead the liberal reformers and moderate radicals in a challenge to the Whig government, especially as he had always been much more a reformer than his Whig colleagues—indeed, so much so, that in 1834 he had called for the ballot, triennial parliaments, and household suffrage.<sup>148</sup> The opportunity to turn this event to Radical party advantage was greatly facilitated by the presence of Buller and Wakefield on Durham’s staff in Canada. They sent Mill information about Durham’s outlook and tried to direct Durham’s attention to the possibility of turning the Canadian affair to domestic political advantage. Wakefield reported to Molesworth that Durham “is mortally but coolly and immovably offended at everything Whig,”<sup>149</sup> and Buller, having read Mill’s recent political articles, wrote, “You will see what attitude the Radicals ought to assume with respect to his returning now at open defiance with Whigs and Tories. . . . Circumstances seem to be approaching, in which it will be perfectly possible for us to force him into power. The cue of all Radicals then is to receive him not as having failed, but as having done great things. . . . But you know best what is to be done.”<sup>150</sup> Durham was to be cast as the popular leader who could bring together the coalition of moderate radicals, liberal reformers, and Philosophic Radicals that Mill wished to establish as the party of the “natural Radicals.”

Mill’s depressed mood now quickly evaporated. Durham’s resignation, he said, “has awakened me out of a period of torpor about politics.” With obvious enthusiasm he wrote to Molesworth: “The present turn in Canada affairs brings Lord Durham home, incensed to the utmost (as Buller writes to me) with both Whigs and Tories—Whigs especially, and in the best possible mood for setting up for himself; and if so, the formation of an efficient party of moderate Radicals, of which our Review will be the organ, is certain—the Whigs will be kicked out never more to rise, and Lord D. will be head of the Liberal party, and ultimately Prime Minister.”<sup>151</sup> Even in

his *Autobiography*, years later, Mill observed that “any one who had the most elementary notions of party tactics, must have attempted to make something of such an opportunity.”<sup>152</sup>

Durham sailed for England on November 1st and was due to arrive a month later. Mill thought there was “a great game” to play in the next session of Parliament. He realized Durham’s course of action was uncertain, but he believed the result “will wholly depend upon whether Wakefield, we ourselves, and probably Buller and his own resentment,” on the one hand, “or Bulwer, Fonblanque, Edward Ellice, the herd of professing Liberals, and the indecision and cowardice indigenous to English noblemen,” on the other, “have the greatest influence in his councils.” Mill added, “Give us access to him *early* and I will be *d....d* if we do not make a hard fight for it.”<sup>153</sup>

Mill’s article “Lord Durham’s Return” (December, 1838)—quickly published in an unscheduled issue of the *London and Westminster*—carefully followed Buller’s advice to show Durham not as having failed, but as having done great things. Although most of the article was a defence of Durham’s conduct and policy in Canada, Mill carefully combined with the Canadian matter an account of the significance of Durham’s resignation for domestic politics. When he told Molesworth that Durham was returning prepared to set up for himself, Mill explained that “for the purpose of acting at once upon him and upon the country in that *sens* I have written an elaborate defence of him.”<sup>154</sup> Durham’s mission to Canada, he wrote, could become “the turning point of English politics for years to come,” because it involved “the prospects of the popular cause in England . . . [and] the possibility of an effective popular party” (447). He held out the hope that this could become a major party and “break the power of the aristocratic faction” (448). Here he saw an opportunity finally to achieve the party realignment to which his Philosophic Radical doctrine was directed.

A meeting was held to co-ordinate the efforts of those working with Mill. Rintoul, editor of the *Spectator*, agreed to publish extracts of Mill’s article before it could appear in the *London and Westminster Review*.<sup>155</sup> Wakefield, who returned from Canada ahead of Durham, went with Molesworth to Plymouth to meet Durham, apparently in hope of persuading him to act on his resentment and of stage-managing an enthusiastic popular reception.<sup>156</sup> On the Whig side, Edward Ellice, a former Whig whip and owner of vast tracts of land in Canada, tried to blunt Radical efforts. To his son, who had accompanied Durham as a private secretary, Ellice wrote that the public “are not prepared for a Durham, Wakefield, and Buller Cabinet, and mark my words, that if they come home with that expectation, they will be laughed at.”<sup>157</sup> He warned Durham against the “recommendations of the writer in the Westmr. Review!”<sup>158</sup> He also saw danger in Buller, who, though “an intelligent, handy, and most amiable fellow . . . has neither experience, or prudence, and is in the hands of the younger Mill (I wish it were the elder one) a person very much of his own character—with considerable learning, and critical talent—but also a ‘denisen of Utopia.’”<sup>159</sup>

Mill’s efforts went for nought. Durham refused to play the part for which he was cast by Mill. Although he felt personal animosity towards his former colleagues and remained moderately radical in opinion, he was unwilling to attempt a party rebellion, especially in view of the dis-

agreements among reformers. He also was reported to have called the Radicals “great fools.”<sup>160</sup> Mill at last recognized that his goals for a Radical party were impracticable. Durham’s conduct, he said,

cannot lead to the organization of a radical party, or the placing of the radicals at the head of the movement,—it leaves them as they are already, a mere appendage of the Whigs; and if there is to be no radical party there need be no Westminster Review, for there is no position for it to take, distinguishing it from the Edinburgh. . . . In short, it is one thing to support Lord Durham in *forming* a party; another to follow him when he is only joining one, and that one which I have so long been crying out against.

He also said, “if the time is come when a radical review should support the Whigs, the time is come when I should withdraw from politics.”<sup>161</sup> And this he now proceeded to do.

## DEMISE OF THE PHILOSOPHIC RADICAL PARTY

When his article “Reorganization of the Reform Party,” which had been planned for publication in January, 1838, finally appeared in April, 1839, it could serve only as an epitaph to Radical hopes, and Mill regretted its appearance “in a posture of affairs so unsuitable to it.”<sup>162</sup> He published two more numbers and then ended his connection with the review, deciding that it was “no part” of his “vocation to be a party leader.”<sup>163</sup>

Now in 1839, little more than a decade after the dream of establishing a powerful parliamentary party first took shape, John Stuart Mill began to share a sense of failure with the other Philosophic Radicals. The moderate reformers continued to oppose the aggressive tactics designed to force the Whigs to coalesce with their “natural” aristocratic allies, the Tories. The Melbourne government’s existence became increasingly tenuous, and moderate reformers and Whigs alike became more and more critical of those on their left who threatened it. The *Edinburgh Review* described the extreme Radicals as “a small, conceited, and headstrong party” that should be called “the sect of the *Impracticables*.”<sup>164</sup> The cleavage between the Radicals and the moderate reformers remained, and the expected merger of Whigs and Tories into an aristocratic party did not take place. On the contrary, the Whigs continued to look upon the Tories as their strongest opponents, whereas the Philosophic Radicals were regarded as merely an annoying faction. Both in public opinion and in electoral organization, the Tories throughout the decade increased their strength. In 1839, far from having merged into an aristocratic party, the Whigs and Tories were poised against one another in a fairly even struggle; the aristocratic factions that Mill had been opposing for more than a decade continued to dominate the political scene.

The Philosophic Radicals were too disheartened by 1839 to celebrate their part in provoking the resignation of the Whig government, an event which two years earlier would have brought them to a high pitch of excitement.<sup>165</sup> Nor were they much moved by the increase in conversions to the ballot. When the Whig Macaulay defended Grote’s motion in 1839, Mill said the ballot “is

passing from a radical doctrine into a Whig one.”<sup>166</sup> As Chartism rose to prominence the Philosophic Radicals also lost their sense of leadership in the democratic movement. Although they might have welcomed it—after all, the Philosophic Radicals could agree in principle with the six points of the Charter—they were made uneasy by some of the violent Chartist rhetoric and by the Chartists’ criticism of private property and opposition to repeal of the Corn Laws. They also disapproved of the Chartists’ use of the language of class, which rested on assumptions that challenged Philosophic Radical doctrine about universal and sinister interests.<sup>167</sup> The Philosophic Radicals were also depressed by the attrition of reform sentiment after the passing of the Reform Bill; as Mill said, “Their lot was cast in the ten years of inevitable reaction, when the Reform excitement being over . . . the public mind desired rest.”<sup>168</sup>

Mill and his associates recognized that they had so dwindled as to become insignificant. They could no longer regard themselves as the nucleus from which a great party would soon grow. Macaulay said in 1839 that the Radical party was reduced to Grote and his wife; and Grote himself was depressed by the diminution, saying he “felt indisposed to remain as one of so very small a number as now constituted the Radical cluster.”<sup>169</sup> Mill was poignantly aware that hopes for the party, both as it existed and as he had imagined it, had dissolved. “Even I,” he said, “who have been for some years attempting it must be owned with very little success, to induce the Radicals to maintain an independent position, am compelled to acknowledge that there is not room for a fourth political party in this country—reckoning the Conservatives, the Whig-Radicals, and the Chartists as the other three.”<sup>170</sup> As Mill put it in his *Autobiography*, “the instructed Radicals sank into a mere *côté gauche* of the Whig party.”<sup>171</sup>

The bitterness turned several of the Philosophic Radicals against active politics. Harriet Grote, for example, confessed feeling “sick and weary of the name of politics”; at times, she said, “I sigh over those ten years of infructuous devotion to the public service; unrequited even by [Grote’s] constituents . . . and only compensated by the esteem and admiration of some dozen high-minded men.”<sup>172</sup> Mill’s feelings, as Caroline Fox reported, were similar: “‘No one,’ he said with deep feeling, ‘should attempt anything intended to benefit his age, without at first making a stern resolution to take up his cross and to bear it. If he does not begin by counting the cost, all his schemes must end in disappointment.’”<sup>173</sup> He also confessed being “out of heart about public affairs—as much as I ever suffer myself to be,” and soon he had “almost given up thinking on the subject.”<sup>174</sup>

Of course the Philosophic Radicals did not cease to have political opinions, but now that they acknowledged the disappointment of their ambition for radicalism, their attitude to the Whigs softened considerably. Mill, Buller, and even Roebuck began contributing to the *Edinburgh Review*, and Mill appears to have been the intermediary between Napier, the editor, and some of the former contributors to the *London and Westminster*.<sup>175</sup> Harriet Grote made peace with the Whigs by accepting an invitation to Holland House, and George Grote, who ten years earlier avoided aristocratic company as a matter of principle, now accompanied her “without any twinges of conscience.”<sup>176</sup> Mill’s views had altered sufficiently for him to tell Fonblanque in 1841 that “there

is nothing of any importance in practical politics on which we now differ for I am quite as warm a supporter of the present [Whig] government as you are.”<sup>177</sup>

Since parliamentary politics ceased to be a preoccupation, several of the Philosophic Radicals turned to authorship. Molesworth worked on his edition of Hobbes, and Grote on his *History of Greece*. Even Place and Roebuck took to writing history. And Mill too began his series of essays on French historians, though his main preoccupation was with his *System of Logic*, on which he had been working at intervals throughout the previous decade. Now that his plan for a parliamentary party devoted to fundamental constitutional changes had failed, his interest in politics, with its emphasis on institutions, diminished, and he turned to the realm of thought. Having been disappointed as a politician, he downgraded political activity and looked to philosophy for improvement. He consoled himself with the belief that he was entering an era when “the progress of liberal opinions will again, as formerly, depend upon what is *said* and *written*, and no longer upon what is *done*. . . .”<sup>178</sup>

## IRELAND

That Mill’s disillusionment, which put an end to his hopes for a Radical party, did not conclude his radicalism, is nowhere so evident as in what he said and wrote about Ireland. In his journalism just after the famine, the *Principles of Political Economy* (1848), and speeches, mainly in the House of Commons from 1866 to 1868, he poured forth a powerful condemnation of the social system and economy in Ireland and of the way that country was governed by England. His essay on Irish affairs in the *Parliamentary History and Review* perhaps is partially an exception, for it focusses mainly on Ireland as an issue in British domestic politics. The 1848 speech and the pamphlet *England and Ireland* (1868), however, demonstrate Mill’s radical rejection of old ways and his search for far-reaching remedies.

The extent of Mill’s radicalism was evident in his sympathetic understanding of Irish rebelliousness. He even suggested a moral basis for outrages against the landlord; the Whiteboys and Rockites, he said, “fought for, not against, the sacredness of what was property in their eyes; for it is not the right of the rent-receiver, but the right of the cultivator, with which the idea of property is connected in the Irish popular mind” (513). Mill also claimed that the more a person emphasizes obstacles to reform, “the further he goes towards excusing, at least as to intention, the Irish revolutionary party” (503). Moreover, there was the example of the French Revolution. Before 1789 the peasantry in France was more destitute and miserable than Irish cottiers, but the revolution led to a great shift in peasant ownership: “the result was the greatest change for the better in their condition, both physical and moral, of which, within a single generation, there is any record.” Who was to say, Mill asked, that Irish anticipations of similar benefits from an Irish revolution were wrong? (503.)

Mill’s sympathetic understanding was not directed only to material circumstances in Ireland, for he was also sensitive to the stirrings of Irish nationalism. He knew that conditions had im-

proved since the famine, especially because of emigration, and that many old grievances had been removed. Yet to be complacent—for gentlemen “to soothe themselves with statistics”<sup>179</sup> — was to bask in a fool’s paradise and to misunderstand Fenianism, which was “a rebellion for an idea—the idea of nationality” (510).<sup>180</sup> The rulers of Ireland “have allowed what once was indignation against particular wrongs, to harden into a passionate determination to be no longer ruled on any terms by those to whom they ascribe all their evils. Rebellions are never really unconquerable,” Mill added, “until they have become rebellions for an idea.” (510.)

Disaffection was so great that only a remedy of revolutionary proportions would have a chance of relieving it. Thus in 1868 Mill asserted that “revolutionary measures are the thing now required,” and he added, “In the completeness of the revolution will lie its safety” (518-19). He also said, “Great and obstinate evils require great remedies.”<sup>181</sup>

Mill’s analysis in this case emphasized economic considerations, both in the identification of abuses and in the prescription of remedies, but since he focussed on the conflict of interest between landlord and tenant, it is reminiscent of his Philosophic Radical assumption that the class conflict between aristocracy and the people took precedence over all other issues. His analysis in 1868, which is similar to what he wrote about Ireland in his *Principles of Political Economy*, recognized a variety of causes for Irish rebelliousness, but the land question, he said, outweighed all others.<sup>182</sup> Irish wretchedness was the result of “a radically wrong state of the most important social relation which exists in the country, that between the cultivators of the soil and the owners of it” (502). Against the background of overpopulation and underemployment (84-5), the specific problem was vulnerability to arbitrary eviction and arbitrary increases of rent of tenants who worked the land (516-17). Consequently, the bulk of the population “cannot look forward with confidence to a single year’s occupation of [the land]: while the sole outlet for the dispossessed cultivators, or for those whose competition raises the rents against the cultivators, is expatriation” (515). As a result, improvements were not made, and poverty was added to insecurity: “these farm-labourers are entirely without a permanent interest in the soil” (514).<sup>183</sup>

Mill’s remedy was to alter the system of land tenure by changing the relationship between landlord and tenant. He proposed making “every farm not farmed by the proprietor . . . the permanent holding of the existing tenant” (527). The rent would be fixed by an official tribunal; the state would guarantee that the landlord received the rent and that rents were not arbitrarily increased.<sup>184</sup> In this way Mill proposed to eliminate exploitation by landlords and, by making tenants secure, give them incentives to make improvements.

The genuinely radical character of this proposal arose from its implications for the doctrine of private property. Mill argued, as he had already done in the *Principles of Political Economy*, that land has characteristics that distinguish it from property created by labour and skill.<sup>185</sup> In contrast, land is “a thing which no man made, which exists in limited quantity, which was the original inheritance of all mankind, and which whoever appropriates, keeps others out of its possession. Such appropriation,” he goes on, “when there is not enough left for all, is at the first aspect, an usurpation on the rights of other people.” (512.) Using ideas and language from Locke’s famous chapter on property, Mill changed Locke’s argument as it applied to land,<sup>186</sup> asserting that the

idea of “absolute property in land,” especially when the land is “engrossed by a comparatively small number of families,” is an obstacle to justice and tranquillity (512). Vicious conditions in Ireland were “protected and perpetuated by a wrong and superstitious English notion of property in land” (502). Indeed, there was a contradiction between English law and Irish moral feelings (512-13).<sup>187</sup>

The pamphlet *England and Ireland*, in which, as Mill said, he spoke his “whole mind,”<sup>188</sup> was written late in 1867 against the background of intense Fenian activity in England as well as in Ireland, marked by the killing of a policeman during the rescue of captured Fenians in Manchester and the trial and execution of the rescuers.<sup>189</sup> Mill’s pamphlet, which was “probably the most influential single contribution to the extended debate on Irish land problems which was carried on in England between 1865 and 1870,”<sup>190</sup> caused a great furore, largely because it aggravated fears about the security of property in England where landlords were apprehensive that radical Liberals and spokesmen for the working classes would use Mill’s observations about property in Ireland as authority for an attack on the landed classes generally.<sup>191</sup> There were many who were surprised that Mill cast doubts on the doctrine of private property, among them former Philosophic Radicals such as Joseph Hume and John Arthur Roebuck.<sup>192</sup> Mill explained that he put forth extreme views to startle his readers and prepare them at least to accept other measures. He subsequently said his proposals “had the effect of making other proposals, up to that time considered extreme, be considered comparatively moderate and practicable.”<sup>193</sup>

Radical as Mill’s views were on land tenure and landed property in Ireland, he rejected the most radical political solution, that of separation. He understood that the Fenians wanted independence and that, regardless of concessions, it might be impossible to divert them from this nationalist goal.<sup>194</sup> Yet he had recently written in *Representative Government* that the Irish and Anglo-Saxon races were “perhaps the most fitted of any two in the world to be the completing counterpart of one another.”<sup>195</sup> When in 1868 he considered the relation between the two countries, he concluded that Irish independence would be bad for Ireland and dishonourable to England (520-1, 523-4, 526).<sup>196</sup> Therefore he ended the pamphlet with a statement of hope that reconciliation was still possible (531-2).<sup>197</sup>

In his discussions of Ireland Mill revealed an intense moral concern as an aspect of his radicalism that was much less evident in what he wrote as a Philosophic Radical, where he generally argued on grounds of consequences and utility. That Ireland engaged his moral feelings is evident in his eloquent statements of sympathy for the Irish—they were the “poorest and the most oppressed people in Europe” (66)—and in his outrage with the causes of this condition: “The social condition of Ireland . . . cannot be tolerated; it is an abomination in the sight of mankind” (503). Mill made it clear that within the rationalist and utilitarian there was indignation, sympathy, and moral passion.

## Endnotes

[1] See *Essays on Politics and Society, Collected Works [CW]*, XVIII-XIX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977).

[2] Letter from James Mill to Jeremy Bentham, 28 July, 1812, in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, ed. John Bowring, 11 vols. (Edinburgh: Tait; London: Simpkin, Marshall; Dublin: Cumming, 1843), X, 473.

[3] John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography, CW*, I, ed. J. M. Robson and Jack Stillinger (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 65-7.

[4] *Ibid.*, 67-71.

[5] Page references to material printed in this volume are given in the text.

[6] Mill had to acknowledge, however, that among the Independents there was a willingness to persecute (47) and that they participated in the regicide, which was an “act of a nest of despot, [who were] removing a rival despot out of their way” (53).

[7] Plan of Parliamentary Reform, in the Form of a Catechism, with Reasons for Each Article: With an Introduction, Showing the Necessity of Radical, and the Inadequacy of Moderate, Reform (London: Hunter, 1817), xi-xii, ccxxiii.

[8] *Ibid.*, xxxvi-xxxvii, cclxix-cclxx, cccvi.

[9] *Ibid.*, cccvi.

[10] *Ibid.*, cccvi-cccvii.

[11] *Ibid.*, cccvii.

[12] Letter to David Ricardo, 19 Oct., 1817, *The Works and Correspondence of David Ricardo*, ed. Piero Sraffa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), VII, 195-6.

[13] Reprinted in *Essays* (London: printed Innes, n.d. [1825]).

[14] “Periodical Literature: *Edinburgh Review*,” *Westminster Review*, I (Jan., 1824), 206-49; “Periodical Literature: *Quarterly Review*,” *Westminster Review*, II (Oct., 1824), 463-503.

[15] *Autobiography, CW*, I, 67. See John M. Robson, *The Improvement of Mankind: The Social and Political Thought of John Stuart Mill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), 17, n42, for the suggestion that “Government” may have been based on this dialogue. “Government” was written for the *Supplement to the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1824), IV, 491-505. Parts (in half-volumes) were issued separately between 1815 and 1824; the part containing this article appeared in September, 1820.

[16] Ricardo thought Mill was right to avoid discussion of the secret ballot, as “it would have given the article too much the appearance of an essay on Reform of Parliament which it was perhaps desirable to avoid” (letter to James Mill, 27 July, 1820, *Works and Correspondence of David Ricardo*, VIII, 211); John Stuart Mill thought his father should have acknowledged that he was “writing an argument for parliamentary reform” (*Autobiography, CW*, I, 165).



[17] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 109. James Mill's belief in democracy was deliberately obscured in "Government" as a matter of prudence and rhetoric. His well-known eulogy of the middle class, far from indicating a wish to restrict the suffrage to the middle class, served to show that the suffrage could be safely entrusted to the classes with lesser rank because they would be guided by the exemplary middle class. For a fuller discussion of Mill's essay as a defence of universal suffrage and of the middle-class theme, see Joseph Hamburger, *Intellectuals in Politics: John Stuart Mill and the Philosophic Radicals* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 36-8, 49-52; and Joseph Hamburger, "James Mill on Universal Suffrage and the Middle Class," *Journal of Politics*, XXIV (1962), 172-83. Although Mill pointed to an electorate without pecuniary or property qualifications, he suggested the exclusion of men under forty and of women. Women's interests, he argued, were involved in their father's and husband's; and men under forty were protected by virtue of older men's not distinguishing between their sons' interests and their own ("Government," *Utilitarian Logic and Politics: James Mill's "Essay on Government," Macaulay's Critique and the Ensuing Debate*, ed. Jack Lively and John Rees [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978], 79-80). Unlike class and property qualifications, age and gender were not regarded as relevant to definitions of democracy.

[18] Speech of 10 July, 1833, *Speeches by Lord Macaulay*, ed. George Malcolm Young (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 126.

[19] John Stuart Mill, "Mr. Mill," *CW*, I, 594.

[20] *The Minor Works of George Grote* (London: Murray, 1873), 284.

[21] Letter to Henry Brougham, 29 June, 1836, Brougham Papers, University College, London.

[22] Florence Fenwick Miller, "William Ellis and His Work as an Educationist," *Fraser's Magazine*, n.s., XXV (Feb., 1882), 236. John Black, editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, remembered "the force of [James Mill's] personal character. . . . Young men were particularly fond of his society; and it was always to him a source of great delight to have an opportunity of contributing to form their minds and exalt their character." ("Death of Mr. James Mill," *Morning Chronicle*, 25 June, 1836, 3.)

[23] Harriet Grote, *The Personal Life of George Grote* (London: Murray, 1873), 23. Joseph Parkes said of Henry Warburton that James Mill had been "his chief political instructor" (Obituary, *The Times*, 21 Sept., 1858, 7; evidence of Parkes's authorship: letter from Parkes to Brougham, 23 Sept., 1858, Brougham Papers, University College, London).

[24] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 213. For their activities, see the Introduction to *CW*, I, xii-xiii.

[25] *Ibid.*, 111.

[26] *Ibid.*, 83.

[27] Macaulay, "Bentham's Defence of Mill: Utilitarian System of Philosophy," *Edinburgh Review*, XLIX (June, 1829), 296.

[28] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 81. Whereas his father avoided using terms like democracy and universal suffrage, John Stuart Mill showed no such restraint (for example, “Speech on the British Constitution,” 19 May, 1826, in James McCrimmon, “Studies toward a Biography of John Stuart Mill,” Ph.D. thesis, Northwestern University, 1937, 358).

[29] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 133. On economic issues the opposition came from the Owenites.

[30] *Autobiography of Henry Taylor* (London: Longmans, 1885), I, 78-9, 90-5; Macaulay, “Mill’s *Essay on Government: Utilitarian Logic and Politics*,” *Edinburgh Review*, XLIX (Mar., 1829), 159-89. See also Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 24, n6.

[31] “Bentham’s Rationale of Evidence,” *Edinburgh Review*, XLVIII (Dec., 1828), 463. The phrase *ipse dixitism* derives from Bentham. See, e.g., *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, ed. J. S. Mill, 5 vols. (London: Hunt and Clarke, 1827), I, 127. For Mill’s use of the term, see *ibid.*, 126n, and “Speech on the British Constitution,” in McCrimmon, “Studies,” 346.

[32] “Utilitarian Theory of Government, and the ‘Greatest Happiness Principle,’” *Edinburgh Review*, L (Oct., 1829), 124.

[33] “The Present Administration,” *Edinburgh Review*, XLVI (June, 1827), 260-1. Whereas Macaulay’s analysis in 1827 indicates that the Philosophic Radicals are dangerous, in the better known 1829-30 articles he leans more to the view that they are ridiculous.

[34] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 103.

[35] *Ibid.*, 137, 139, 143.

[36] *Ibid.*, 137.

[37] “Mill’s *Essay on Government*,” 161-2, 168-9, 176-7, 181-2. For discussion of the Mill-Macaulay controversy, see the introduction by Lively and Rees to *Utilitarian Logic and Politics*, 1-51; and Joseph Hamburger, *Macaulay and the Whig Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 49-62.

[38] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 165.

[39] *Ibid.*, 167.

[40] Letter to Gustave d’Eichthal, 7 Nov., 1829, *Earlier Letters [EL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, *CW*, XII-XIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), XII, 40.

[41] For a different estimate of the connection between Mill’s views in 1831 and his father’s, see William Thomas, *The Philosophic Radicals: Nine Studies in Theory and Practice, 1817-1841* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 176. See Richard B. Friedman, “An Introduction to Mill’s Theory of Authority,” in *Mill: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Jerome B. Schneewind (New York: Anchor, 1968), 379-425, for the illuminating suggestion that Austin’s views on authority influenced Mill. The questions as to whether Mill was exposed earlier to Austinian or St. Simonian ideas on this subject and as to which had the greater influence remain unanswered.

[42] *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined* (London: Murray, 1832), 61-4.

[43] *Ibid.*, 323. For evidence of Austin's orthodox Benthamite radicalism before 1827, see his "Disposition of Property by Will—Primogeniture," *Westminster Review*, II (Oct., 1824), 503-53.

[44] Province of Jurisprudence, 59, 86.

[45] Autobiography, CW, I, 185.

[46] Letter to Jane Welsh Carlyle, 25 Dec., [1832], National Library of Scotland.

[47] Autobiography, CW, I, 171, 173-5.

[48] *The Doctrine of Saint-Simon: An Exposition*, ed. and trans. Georg G. Iggers (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), 52-3, 93, 198, 206-7.

[49] *Ibid.*, 52, 54-5, 206-7.

[50] "Rejected Leaves of the Early Draft of the *Autobiography*," CW, I, 616.

[51] Letter to d'Eichthal, 9 Feb., 1830, *EL*, CW, XII, 48.

[52] Mill thought it was "utterly hopeless and chimerical to suppose that the regeneration of mankind can ever be wrought by means of working on their opinions" (*ibid.*, 47; *Autobiography*, CW, I, 137, 163). This opinion influenced the argument in *On Liberty*, CW, XVIII, 257. Henry Cole said the London Debating Society was "in a bad way, doubtless owing to the secession of Mill and his friends" (entry of 19 Feb., 1830); after Goldsmid introduced the question, "that the utilitarian system of philosophy is pernicious and absurd," Cole said there was no debate, but only "a satirical [*sic*] reply from C. Buller he being the only disciple of that system present" (entry of 8 Jan., 1830; Cole's Diary, 1827-1834, Victoria and Albert Museum).

[53] Autobiography, CW, I, 179.

[54] Letter to John Sterling, 20 to 22 Oct., 1831, *EL*, CW, XII, 78. This letter was written less than two weeks after the riots at Derby and Nottingham. Mill was not completely indifferent, however; he wrote an article recommending several friends as parliamentary candidates (*Examiner*, 2 Sept., 1832, 569); he contributed £1 to the National Political Union (British Library, Place Collection of Newscuttings, Set 63, Vol. 1, f. 276); and he attended the meeting to organize the Parliamentary Candidates Society on 14 Mar., 1831 and contributed £1 (letter from Francis Place to Bentham, 18 Mar., 1831, Bentham Papers, University College, London).

[55] *Autobiography*, CW, I, 163-5. "The decade 1830 to 1840 was that in which he put together the strands of the past with the filaments of the present, and it ended with the assertion of his independent position" (Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 32).

[56] "Rationale of Representation" (July, 1835), CW, XVIII, 24.

[57] Mill also said, "what was good in the influences of aristocracy, is compatible, if we really wish to find it so, with a well-regulated democracy" ("De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [I]," [1835], CW, XVIII, 54). Mill's wish to combine the two outlooks was also evident in his consideration of the "three great questions in government." Bentham provided an answer to only one of them, "By what means are the abuses of . . . authority to be checked?" Bentham's pro-

posal of democratic checks was accepted by Mill, but he was worried that these checks might restrict public functionaries too much. To the other questions, however, Bentham gave no answer whatsoever: “To what authority is it for the good of the people that they should be subject?” and “How are they to be induced to obey that authority?” (“Bentham,” *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, *CW*, X, ed. J. M. Robson [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969], 106.) Consideration of these questions and possible answers to them arose from the work of Austin, the St. Simonians, and Coleridge.

[58] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 169-71.

[59] Letter to Sterling, 4 Nov., 1839, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 411.

[60] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 171.

[61] Letter to d’Eichthal, 7 Nov., 1829, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 42.

[62] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 169.

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] *Ibid.*, 165.

[65] *Ibid.*, 165, 177.

[66] “Coleridge,” *CW*, X, 121.

[67] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 209. Also the *London Review* “ought to represent not radicalism but neoradicalism” (letter to Edward Lytton Bulwer, 23 Nov., 1836, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 312).

[68] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 171.

[69] *Ibid.*, 177.

[70] Letter to Thomas Carlyle, 22 Oct., 1832, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 126-8.

[71] Letter to Carlyle, 17 Sept., 1832, *ibid.*, 117.

[72] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 189.

[73] *Pamphlets for the People* (London: Ely, 1835) (no. 20, 22 Oct., 1835), 3. All the same, Roebuck in his *Pamphlets for the People* reprinted extracts from the *London Review* and approved Mill’s Review for its “general tendency . . . [and] most of the leading doctrines”; all contributors (and Roebuck was one of them) shared “a common purpose, and agree[d] in the general principles of their moral and their political system” (“Democracy in America”; “The London Review and the Irish Church Question,” *ibid.*, 1-4, 7). Political co-operation continued, despite their personal quarrel, so that Mill said his differences with Roebuck “became so strongly pronounced that we ceased to be allies either in opinion or in action except as to the immediate objects of radicalism” (“Early Draft,” *CW*, I, 154).

[74] Letter to Place, 16 Aug., 1837, British Library, Add. MSS 35150, f. 279.

[75] Letter to Thomas Falconer, 2 Sept., 1838, British Library, Add. MSS 35151, f. 86.

[76] Among other examples, see 164 for an allusion to Coleridge's conversation about clergy and clerisy; and 227-8 for a theoretical defence of state responsibility for religious instruction on the ground that religion is closely connected with conscience and duty (the editor, W. J. Fox, in a footnote—227n—took exception to this suggestion that the state might legislate in matters of religion).

[77] "I often wish I were among them [the Radical party in the House of Commons]; now would be the time for knitting together a powerful party, and nobody holds the scattered threads of it in his hands except me. But that cannot be while I am in the India House. I should not at all mind leaving it if I had £300 a year free from anxiety and literary labour, but I have at most £100." (Letter to John Pringle Nichol, 29 Jan., 1837, *EL, CW, XII*, 324.) "For the first time these ten years I have no wish to be in Parliament" (letter to John Robertson, 6 Aug., 1837, *ibid.*, 345).

[78] "Armand Carrel," *London and Westminster Review [L&WR]*, XXVIII (Oct., 1837), 69.

[79] "Letter from an Englishman to a Frenchman, on a Recent Apology in the 'Journal des Débats,' for the Faults of the English National Character," *Monthly Repository*, VIII (June, 1834), 393-4.

[80] *Autobiography, CW, I*, 207, 221. "The principal radicals in parliament and many of those out of it have a scheme for starting a new quarterly review. . . . The first promoters of it were Roebuck, Buller, and I. . . ." (Letter to Carlyle, 22 Dec., 1833, *EL, CW, XII*, 201.)

[81] See also 401; and compare 61.

[82] Letter to Alexis de Tocqueville, 7 Jan., 1837, *EL, CW, XII*, 317. For an account of Mill's view on the secret ballot at this time in relation to his later opposition to it, see Bruce Kinzer, "J.S. Mill and the Secret Ballot," *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, V (Summer, 1978), 19-39.

[83] In 1839 he favoured household suffrage (467). "Happily there is no necessity for a speedy decision of the question" ("Rationale of Representation" [July, 1835], *CW, XVIII*, 32).

[84] The argument in this article was anticipated in "Parties and the Ministry" (395-6, 401-3).

[85] See also 287, 262-3, 270-1.

[86] The Scots and Irish were also included (472-3, 477-8).

[87] "The Spirit of the Age. No. 5," *Examiner*, 29 May, 1831, 340. "Society may be said to be in its *natural* state, when worldly power, and moral influence, are habitually and undisputedly exercised by the fittest persons whom the existing state of society affords. . . . Society may be said to be in its *transitional* state, when it contains other persons fitter for worldly power and moral influence than those who have hitherto enjoyed them." ("The Spirit of the Age. No. 3," *ibid.*, 6 Feb., 1831, 82.)

[88] For scepticism about the use of the term "intellectuals," see Thomas, *Philosophic Radicals*, 449-50.

[89] Also, “the Radicals may claim to themselves, as their peculiar office, a function in politics which stands more in need of them than any other: this is, the protection of the poor” (396).

[90] Letter to Bulwer, 3 Mar., 1838, *EL, CW*, XIII, 380. In another formulation Mill described “a phalanx, stretching from the Whig-Radicals at one extremity (if we may so term those among the persons calling themselves Whigs who are real Liberals) to the Ultra-Radicals and the Working Classes on the other” (467).

[91] Also, “it deserves notice as one of the signs of the times, that the Whig *coterie* is not renewed. There are no young Whigs.” (344-5.)

[92] For an account that attempts to explain Mill’s politics without reference to the quest for realignment, see Thomas, *Philosophic Radicals*, *passim*.

[93] Mill said in 1851, “‘Philosophic Reformers’ is a worn-out and gone by expression; it had a meaning twenty years ago” (letter to John Chapman, 9 June, 1851, in *Later Letters [LL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, *CW*, XIV-XVII [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972], XIV, 68).

[94] Mill also classified Radicals, other than Philosophic Radicals, as “demagogic radicals, such as Wakley, and . . . the historical radicals of the Cartwright school, and . . . the division of property radicals if there be any” (letter to Albany Fonblanque, 30 Jan., 1838, *EL, CW*, XIII, 370).

[95] Mill also used the adjective “educated,” but the adjective “philosophic” was not merely a synonym for “educated.”

[96] Speculative Toryism, it may be noted, although opposed to Philosophic Radicalism in the realm of practical politics, somewhat resembled the position associated with Austin and the St. Simonians and Coleridge, which, according to Mill, complemented Benthamite radicalism in the realm of philosophy. See also 402 on men of speculative ability who were “theoretically Tories.”

[97] “Early Draft,” *CW*, I, 132. Extreme Tories sometimes had a reciprocal perception. Disraeli said, “A Tory and a Radical, I understand; a Whig—a democratic aristocrat, I cannot comprehend” (*Whigs and Whiggism: Political Writings*, ed. William Hutcheon [London: Murray, 1913], 19). Also, the Radical or Utilitarian party was called “a more shrewd, intelligent, and philosophical class of men than the Whigs, accustomed to a closer method of reasoning” (James B. Bernard, *Theory of the Constitution* [London: Ridgway, 1834], 5). For an illuminating account of the sources of Mill’s beliefs about conflict, see Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 191-9.

[98] Palmerston, in asking whether Molesworth thought of coming into office with his own followers, advised “if he meant to be a leader of a party, to improve his knowledge of Parliamentary strategy” (*Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates [PD]*, 3rd ser., Vol. 41, cols. 489, 521-3 [6 Mar., 1838]). Lord John Russell taunted the Radicals with the problems they and the country would have if Grote were Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House, and he asked whether

Molesworth's administration could command a majority (*Letters to the Electors of Stroud, on the Principles of the Reform Act*, 6th ed. [London: Ridgway, 1839], 32, 35).

[99] Roebuck looked forward to the time when "we . . . shall take up our position at the *head* of the opposition" and when "*we* shall govern" (letter to Brougham, 7 Sept., 1836, Brougham Papers, University College, London). James Mill foresaw the time when the "powers of government will be put in [the Philosophic Radicals'] hands" ("State of the Nation," *London Review*, I [Apr., 1835], 18).

[100] Also, "If Radicalism had its Sir Robert Peel, he would be at the head of an administration within two years . . ." (404). Here Mill alludes to Peel's skills in parliamentary management; for his estimate of Peel's politics, see 403-4.

[101] Letter to Robertson, 30 Jan. or early Feb., 1838, *EL, CW*, XIII, 371.

[102] Mill later recognized that he "had expected too much" and that he had had "an exaggerated sense of the possibilities" (*Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 203, 205).

[103] *Spectator*; 9 Dec., 1837, 1164, 1166; see also *ibid.*, 16 Dec., 1837, 1192.

[104] For example, in 1826 Mill did not think Catholic Emancipation very significant, as it would not improve conditions in Ireland; it was hotly debated by both aristocratic parties because it would not remove the "great abuses" which benefited the class represented by both those parties (66-7). For Mill's view on the abolition of slavery, see 180 below. In "these days of Movement, the place which any session, any single event, will occupy in history, depends not upon the intrinsic importance of the event, or value of the Acts of Parliament which have passed during the session; but upon the far greater consideration, how much it has helped forward the Movement, or contributed to hold it back" (284).

[105] Mill referred to the "middle course which so often unites the evils of both extremes with the advantages of neither" (216).

[106] For example, "The approaching session will be next to that of 1830/1831, the most important since 1688—and parties will stand quite differently at the commencement and at the close of it" (letter to Tocqueville, 7 Jan., 1837, *EL, CW*, XII, 317). Mill also spoke of "the practicability of Utopianism" ("Rationale of Representation" [1835], *CW*, XVIII, 42).

[107] "Moore's *Life of Sheridan*," *Edinburgh Review*, XLV (Dec., 1826), 35.

[108] *Examiner*, 6 Aug., 1837, 497; 27 Aug., 1837, 545; 3, 10, and 17 Sept., 1837, 563, 581, 595; 28 Jan., 1838, 49; 4 Feb., 1838, 65-6; letter to Lord Durham, 2 Jan., 1837, Lambton Papers, in the Lambton Estate Office, Chester-le-Street, County Durham. Fonblanque regarded the reasoning of Mill and his associates as bizarre but purposeful; he characterized it in the following way: "With a Whig Ministry we play second or third parts, but with a Tory Ministry we should fill the first ranks in opposition. Therefore, as what is best for the exhibition of ourselves is best for the public, it is best for the public that there should be a Tory Ministry." (*Examiner*, 4 Feb., 1838, 66.)

[109] See also “Mr. Mill,” in *CW*, I, 594; letter to Fonblanque, 30 Jan., 1838, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 370. For use of the phrase by others, see *Spectator*, IX, 1051 (Nov., 1836); 1251 (31 Dec., 1836); XII, 34 (12 Jan., 1839); *Examiner*, 23 Jan., 1838, 808; *Morning Chronicle*, 29 Jan., 1838, 3; William James, in *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 40, col. 1169 (15 Feb., 1838).

[110] Letter to Fonblanque, 30 Jan., 1838, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 370. This letter arose out of disagreements about Mill’s attribution of Philosophic Radical opinions to Fonblanque and criticism of Philosophic Radicals by Fonblanque.

[111] Mill referred to the Radicals as needing “to shake off the character of a *tail*” (letter to Bulwer, 3 Mar., 1838, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 380); and he asked, “why have they sunk into a mere section of the supporters of the Whig Ministry” (344-5)?

[112] Also, “what a power they [the complete reformers] might wield, if they . . . were not, unhappily, (with some meritorious exceptions,) the least enterprising and energetic” (301).

[113] “Nobody disappointed my father and me more than Grote. . . . We had long known him to be fainthearted. . . . If his courage and energy had been equal to the circumstances, or to his knowledge and abilities, the history of those ten years of relapse into Toryism might have been very different.” (“Early Draft,” *CW*, I, 155.) This passage was left out of the *Autobiography*, where Mill wrote, “I can perceive that the men were less in fault than we supposed, and that we had expected too much from them” (*CW*, I, 117).

[114] On Roebuck, see 191, 200-1, 202, 307n, 385-6, 389, 452n-3n. On Buller, see 324. On Hume, see 326.

[115] He says, “we now know that they [the Ministers] will yield to gentle violence” (285); “did any political body . . . ever reform itself, until it trembled for its existence” (491)?

[116] Letter to Fonblanque, 3 Feb., 1838, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 374.

[117] “To the people . . . let them hold themselves in readiness. No one knows what times may be coming. . . . Let England and Scotland be prepared at the first summons to start into Political Unions. Let the House of Commons be inundated with petitions. . . .” (*Ibid.*, 26.) It hardly need be said that Mill’s estimates were exaggerated and even unrealistic. This was a feature of the doctrinairism mentioned above, xxxii-xxxiii. Another example: “If any ministry would now bring forward the ballot, they would excite greater enthusiasm than even that which was excited for the Reform Bill” (letter to Tocqueville, 7 Jan., 1837, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 317).

[118] “Radicalism is a thing which must prevail” (407).

[119] Letter to Carlyle, 29 May, 1832, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 107.

[120] For evidence that the Radicals sat on the opposition benches, see Hamburger, *Intellectuals in Politics*, 122-3.

[121] *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 17, col. 667 (26 Apr., 1833).

[122] “The Ministerial Manifesto,” *Examiner*, 22 Sept., 1833, 593.



[123] Estimates of the size of the Radical group varied: Parkes said there were seventy or eighty; Richard Potter said there were more than fifty; Thomas Young put the number at seventy-eight (letter from Parkes to Durham, 26 Jan., 1835, Lambton Papers; letter from Young to Edward Ellice, 3 Mar., 1835, Ellice Papers, National Library of Scotland; Potter's Parliamentary Diaries, Vol. 8, f. 2 [entry of 18 Feb., 1835], London School of Economics and Political Science).

[124] See also a letter from Mill to Aristide Guilbert, 8 May, 1835, *EL, CW, XII*, 261. James Mill made similar recommendations ("State of the Nation," *London Review*, I [Apr., 1835], 16-18).

[125] Henry Reeve, "Personal Memoir of Mr. Grote," *Edinburgh Review* (July, 1873), 138, 232.

[126] Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English Local Government* (1908), 11 vols. (Hamden: Archon, 1963), III, 748-9.

[127] Roebuck, "The Crisis: What Ought the Ministers to Do?," *Pamphlets for the People* (no. 12, 27 Aug., 1835), 8; "The Conduct of Ministers Respecting the Amendments of the House of Lords," *ibid.* (no. 14, 10 Sept., 1835), 1.

[128] *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 30, cols. 1162-8, 1435-6. Mill criticized the Philosophic Radicals for not forcing more divisions, "not to carry their propositions, but to force public attention to the subject" (308n; evidently written and published in September at the earliest).

[129] "The House of Lords," *Globe and Traveller*, 16 Oct., 1835, 2.

[130] "Without the systematic support of the Radicals, [the Ministry] could not exist for a day" (345).

[131] *L&WR*, XXVI, 279-318. Mill, who corrected and altered this article, called it "a *coup de parti*, a manifesto as we say of the radicals (or rather *for* the radicals) on the subject of the Whigs" (letter to Tocqueville, 7 Jan., 1837, *EL, CW, XII*, 316). Harriet Grote called Molesworth "the Mirabeau of the day. . . . His [article] has given him a high reputation among our Philosophical Radicals." (Letter to Frances Eliza von Koch, 7 Feb., 1837, *The Lewin Letters: A Selection from the Correspondence and Diaries of an English Family, 1756-1884*, ed. Thomas Herbert Lewin [London: Constable, 1909], I, 353.)

[132] Letter to Place, 28 Jan. [1837], British Library, Add. MSS 35150, f. 235.

[133] Letter to Tocqueville, 7 Jan., 1837, *EL, CW, XII*, 316-17.

[134] Letter to Guilbert, 19 June, 1837, *ibid.*, 338.

[135] Fonblanque had financial difficulties in maintaining the *Examiner*, and money for the paper was raised by Ellice and Durham. "The rescue completed the conversion of the *Examiner* from radicalism to moderate Whiggism. . . . The *Examiner* had by 1838 become an organ of the ministry," according to Thomas, who argues that "It would be over-simple to conclude that Fonblanque had been bought. . . . But he had compromised his independence, and if his critics like Roebuck and Mill had known of the scheme to pay his debts, they would have been more indignant than they were." (*Philosophic Radicals*, 328-9.)

[136] Letter to Guilbert, 19 June, 1837, *EL, CW, XII*, 338.

[137] Letter to Tocqueville, 7 Jan., 1837, *ibid.*, 317. Greville said the Radicals found their “hands tied,” and therefore they “lingered on,” but they were “very irate and sulky.” Yet, “as they still think that there is a better chance of their views being promoted by the Whigs remaining in, they continue to vote with them in cases of need” (*The Greville Memoirs, 1814-1860*, 8 vols. [London: Macmillan, 1838], III, 401; entry of 25 June, 1837).

[138] Roebuck, Hume, Ewart, and Thompson were defeated, and Grote ranked last among the four successful candidates in the City of London; he won by a margin of six votes (he had led the poll in 1832). Hume was soon returned for Kilkenny. Fonblanque said the election marked “the wide chasm that now separates the main body of the Radicals from the extreme section” (*Examiner*, 4 Mar., 1838, 130). Unlike his fellow-Radicals, Mill managed to find comfort in the election results: “The Radicals *seem* to have lost most only because they have lost some of their most leading men, but those will come in again for some other place very soon; and a great number of the new members are very decided Radicals . . .” (letter to Robertson, 6 Aug., 1837, *EL, CW*, XII, 345). See also 388-9.

[139] Amendments were moved by Wakley, seconded by Molesworth, and supported in speeches by Hume and Grote. Grote said, “Conservative principle was really predominant in Parliament, and when he said Conservative he meant the negation of all substantial reform” (*PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 39, cols. 37-48, 58-60 [20 Nov., 1837]). Molesworth said the Whig Ministry “adopts Tory principles in order to retain office” (*ibid.*, Vol. 41, cols 488-9, 577 [6, 7 Mar., 1838]). Hume said, “Little now remains either in principle or in act between the Tories and the Whigs” (letter to Place, 1 Jan., 1838, British Library, Add. MSS 35151, f. 48). And Grote added, it was “not at all worth while to undergo the fatigue of a nightly attendance in Parliament for the simple purpose of sustaining *Whig* conservatism against *Tory* conservatism” (letter to John Austin, Feb., 1838, in Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 127).

[140] *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 39, cols. 46, 69-70 (20 Nov., 1837).

[141] Wakley’s first amendment, for an extension of the suffrage, received twenty votes; among the twenty were Grote, Hume, and Leader (Wakley and Molesworth were tellers) (*ibid.*, col. 81 [20 Nov., 1837]). In view of this result, Wakley did not bother to divide the House on his two other amendments.

[142] “To the Electors of Leeds,” *Morning Chronicle*, 4 Dec., 1837, 1 (advertisements), and *Spectator*, 2 Dec., 1837, 1149. Although the article was nominally by Molesworth, Mill wrote all but a few words at the beginning and the end (*Bibliography of the Published Writings of John Stuart Mill*, ed. Ney MacMinn, J. R. Hains, and James McNab McCrimmon [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1945], 49-50). For Mill’s account of the meeting at Molesworth’s house, see *EL, CW*, XII, 365.

[143] *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 37, cols. 37, 137-44; Vol. 38, cols. 211, 216-48. Roebuck lost his seat in 1837, but he spoke at the bar of the House as agent for the Canadian legislature.

[144] *Ibid.*, Vol. 40, cols. 398-9 (23 Jan., 1838).

[145] *Examiner*, 4 Feb., 1838, 66, 65. Fonblanque referred to the “\*\*\*\*\* conclave,” but he left no doubt that the asterisks stood for Grote.

[146] Mill did include a brief article in the second edition of the July number, which was published in August: “Lord Durham and His Assailants” (437-43 below). The second edition was probably made necessary by demand for Mill’s article “Bentham.”

[147] Letter to Bulwer, 5 Mar., 1838, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 382.

[148] Mill said that generally, though rich landowners would support one of the aristocratic parties, there were exceptions. “In all privileged classes there are individuals whom some circumstance of a personal nature has alienated from their class, while there are others sufficiently generous and enlightened to see the interest of their class in the promotion of the general interest. . . . Lord Durham is such a man.” (473.) For an account of Durham’s opinions and his reputation among Radicals, see Thomas, *Philosophic Radicals*, 338-71.

[149] Letter of 29 Sept., 1838, in Millicent Fawcett, *Life of the Right Hon. Sir William Molesworth* (London: Macmillan, 1901), 201.

[150] Letter to Mill, 13 Oct., 1838, Report of the Public Archives for the Year 1928, ed. Arthur G. Doughty (Ottawa, 1929), 74-6.

[151] Letter of 19 Oct., 1838, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 390.

[152] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 223.

[153] Letter to Robertson, [Nov., 1838,] *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 391-2.

[154] Letter of 14 Nov., 1838, *ibid.*, 391. Mill closely followed Buller’s agenda for such an article and he even used some of Buller’s language.

[155] *Spectator*, 24 Nov., 1838, 1108-9. This was probably how Durham became acquainted with Mill’s defence of his conduct.

[156] Some of the Philosophic Radicals did not approve of Mill’s defence of Durham’s ordinance; indeed Roebuck said it justified “an act of undisguised tyranny” (letter to Brougham, 31 Aug., 1838, Brougham Papers, University College, London). Roebuck’s views were probably dictated by his personal sentiments (he was born in Canada) and his service as agent of the Canadian legislature which put him in close touch with Papineau, the leader of the rebellion. Mill defended Durham’s ordinance against the criticism of it in Parliament by John Temple Leader, who cooperated with Roebuck, especially after Roebuck’s loss of his seat (440-3).

[157] Letter of 23 Oct., 1838, Ellice Papers, National Library of Scotland.

[158] Letter to Durham, 29 Nov., 1838, in Chester New, *Lord Durham* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), 479.

[159] Letter from Ellice, sr., to Durham, n.d. [c. Dec., 1838], Lambton Papers.

[160] Letter from E. J. Stanley to Parkes, 20 Jan., 1837, typescript, University College, London. Durham’s observation was made before the controversies about Canada.

[161] Letter to Robertson, 6 Apr., 1839, *EL, CW*, XIII, 396-7.

[162] *Ibid.*, 397.

[163] Letter to Sterling, 28 Sept., 1839, *ibid.*, 406.

[164] Thomas Spring-Rice, "Present State and Conduct of Parties," *Edinburgh Review*, LXXI (Apr., 1840), 282-3.

[165] The Government resigned in May, 1839, after it carried a bill for the suspension of the Jamaican constitution by only five votes. Ten Radicals (including Grote, Hume, Leader, and Molesworth) voted with the Tories, and ten others stayed away. The Whigs continued in office, however. For Mill's reaction, see *EL, CW*, XIII, 400.

[166] Letter to John Mitchell Kemble, 14 Oct., 1839, *ibid.*, 410.

[167] Even Mill referred to "brutish ignorance" and to "the barbarians" who would gain influence through universal suffrage; he did not condemn all Chartists, however, for whereas the "Oastlers and Stephenses represent only the worst portion of the Operative Radicals," the intelligent leaders of the Working Men's Association in London, who framed the Charter, "represent the best and most enlightened aspect of working-class Radicalism" (485).

[168] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 203-5.

[169] Harriet Grote, *The Philosophical Radicals of 1832: Comprising the Life of Sir William Molesworth, and Some Incidents Connected with the Reform Movement from 1832 to 1842* (London: Savill and Edwards, 1866), 63; *Greville Memoirs*, IV, 176.

[170] Letter to Macvey Napier, 22 Apr., 1840, *EL, CW*, XIII, 430.

[171] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 205.

[172] Letter to Leon Faucher, 27 Aug., 1839, in *Lady Eastlake, Mrs. Grote* (London: Murray, 1880), 75; letter to Raikes Currie, Nov., 1842, in *George Grote, Posthumous Papers: Comprising Selections from Familiar Correspondence during Half a Century*, ed. Harriet Grote (London: Clowes, 1874), 70-1.

[173] Caroline Fox, *Memories of Old Friends*, ed. Horace N. Pym, 3rd ed. (London: Smith, Elder, 1882), I, 138 (entry of 20 Mar., 1840). She added, "This was evidently a process through which he (Mill) had passed, as is sufficiently attested by his careworn and anxious, though most beautiful and refined, countenance." She also described a walk with Mill and Sterling: "They talked on politics. I asked if they would really wish for a Radical Government. . . . John Mill sighed out, 'I have long done what I could to prepare them for it, but in vain; so I have given them up, and in fact they have given me up.'" (*Ibid.*, 151, entry of 27 Mar., 1840.) And in 1833 he had written, "every honest and considerate man, before he engages in the career of a political reformer, will inquire whether the moral state and intellectual culture of the people are such as to render any great improvement in the management of public affairs possible. But he will inquire too, whether the people are likely ever to be made better, morally or intellectually, without a *previous* change in the government. If not, it may still be his duty to strive for such a change at what-

ever risks.” (“Alison’s History of the French Revolution,” *Monthly Repository*, 2nd ser., VII [Aug., 1833], 514-15.)

[174] Letter to d’Eichthal, 25 Dec., 1840; and letter to Robert Barclay Fox, 9 Sept., 1842, in *EL, CW, XIII*, 456, 543.

[175] Letters to Napier, 27 Apr., 1840, 21 Sept., 1840, *ibid.*, 431, 444.

[176] Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 132.

[177] Letter of 17 June, 1841, *EL, CW, XIII*, 478.

[178] Letter to George Henry Lewes, [30 July, 1841,] *ibid.*, 483.

[179] Speech of 12 Mar., 1868, *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 190, col. 1518.

[180] Also, “So deadly is the hatred, that it will run all risks merely to do us harm, with little or no prospect of any consequent good to itself” (509).

[181] Speech of 12 Mar., 1868, cols. 1517-18.

[182] *Ibid.*, col. 1516. See also *Principles of Political Economy, CW, II-III*, ed. J. M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), II, 316-19, 324-8.

[183] Scepticism about the argument that the land tenure system was the main cause of Ireland’s economic difficulties can be found in Barbara Lewis Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 12-13, 195. “From the premise that the land law contained investment disincentives, we can draw no conclusions about actual historical development without an examination of the concrete economic situation. Such an examination for post-Famine Ireland will reveal a pattern of tenure customs in which eviction was rare, rents were moderate, and tenant investment incentives were established.” (13.)

[184] See also speech of 12 Mar., 1868, cols. 1523-4, 1527-8, 1532; *Autobiography, CW, I*, 280.

[185] See *Principles of Political Economy, CW, II*, 208, 228-32, 326. A hint of this doctrine appeared as early as 1826; see 108. Steele has argued that Mill’s extreme and emotional position in the 1868 pamphlet sharply contrasted with cautious, moderate judgments on the same issues in his *Principles of Political Economy*, even as revised in 1865. He acknowledges that Mill in the *Principles* challenged belief in absolute private property in land at an abstract level; and that there was plenty in the *Principles* to inspire hostility to landlordism. But he also holds that Mill was reluctant to alter laws of property; that “he substantially withdrew the harsh criticism of Irish landlords and retracted the endorsement of fixity of tenure.” Steele concludes that the 1868 pamphlet “unsaid—though it did not refer to—virtually everything about Irish land in the latest editions of the *Principles*.” (E. D. Steele, *Irish Land and British Politics: Tenant-Right and Nationality, 1865-1870* [London: Cambridge University Press, 1974], 49-50, 53, 55; E. D. Steele, “J. S. Mill and the Irish Question: The *Principles of Political Economy, 1848-1865*,” *Historical Journal, XIII* [1970], 216, 226-8, 232-3, 236.)

[186] Another modification of Locke’s argument occurs in the speech of 12 May, 1866, *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 183, col. 1095; Mill alludes to Locke’s argument (in *The Second Treatise of Government*

[1690], Chap. v) that private property in land had its origin in improvements and says that “unless we recognise on the same ground a kindred claim in the temporary occupier [i.e., the tenant], we give up the moral basis on which landed property rests. . . .”

[187] This argument was akin to Mill’s characterization of political economy as a science that requires flexible application in light of particular circumstances (speech of 12 Mar., 1868, cols. 1525-6). See also his spirited defence of political economy at 91-2.

[188] *Autobiography*, CW, I, 280.

[189] E. D. Steele, “J.S. Mill and the Irish Question: Reform, and the Integrity of the Empire, 1865-1870,” *Historical Journal*, XIII (1970), 419, 425.

[190] R. D. Collison Black, *Economic Thought and the Irish Question, 1817-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 53. See also 60-2 on the parliamentary debate concerning Ireland, in which Mill’s pamphlet was discussed by, among others, Mill himself (on 12 Mar., 1868). See also 34, 51, 53-7, 70 on Mill’s views on Irish land tenure in relation to classical economic theory and contemporary pamphlet literature.

[191] Steele, “Mill . . . *Principles of Political Economy*,” 216; Steele, “Mill . . . Integrity of the Empire,” 420, 437. For an account of the press reaction to Mill’s pamphlet, see the latter, 438-42.

[192] Steele, “Mill . . . Integrity of the Empire,” 438. On Hume and Roebuck, see Steele, “Mill . . . *Principles of Political Economy*,” 218, 220. In 1837 Mill said the people of property ought to consider “that even *their* interests, so far as conformable and not contrary to the ends for which society and government exist, are safer in the keeping of the Radicals than anywhere else” (398). Thus “the Radicals are the only true Conservatives” (399).

[193] Letter to Philip Henry Rathbone, 9 Jan., 1869, *LL*, CW, XVII, 1545. See also letter to John Elliot Cairnes, 10 Mar., 1868, *ibid.*, XVI, 1373; *Autobiography*, CW, I, 280.

[194] Speech of 12 Mar., 1868, col. 1518.

[195] *Considerations on Representative Government*, CW, XIX, 551.

[196] See also 214-18; *LL*, CW, XVI, 1328. Steele suggests that Mill was moved by concern for the security of England against invasion as well as a combination of complacency about English institutions, patriotism, and imperialist sentiments which prevented him from seriously considering independence (“Mill . . . Integrity of the Empire,” 430, 432-3, 435, 450).

[197] Thus he said, “I maintain that there is no country under heaven which it is not possible to govern, and to govern in such a way that it shall be contented” (speech of 12 Mar., 1868, col. 1523).

## VOLUME VII - A SYSTEM OF LOGIC RATIOCINATIVE AND INDUCTIVE. INTRODUCTION BY R.F. McRAE

### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume VII - A System of Logic Ratiocinative and Inductive, Being a Connected View of the Principles of Evidence and the Methods of Scientific Investigation (Books I-III)*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by R.F. McRae (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/246/39762>>.

### INTRODUCTION

John Stuart Mill's *System of Logic* is his principal philosophical work. Its subject matters cost him more effort and time to think through than those of his other writings, including the *Political Economy*, which, though of comparable scope, was, he says, far more rapidly executed. He believed that the *System of Logic* was destined to survive longer than anything else he had written, than even, perhaps, the essay *On Liberty*. In so far as it introduces technical material, it has contributed the Four Experimental Methods—though usually criticised in one way or another—to almost every later textbook on logic which treats of induction. Mill would appear, therefore, to have succeeded in his intention of doing for inductive arguments what Aristotle, in originating the rules of syllogism, did for ratiocination or deduction. The survival of Mill's *System of Logic* as a philosophical work is a consequence of other features. It was conceived in controversy, and on many subjects it still remains pertinent to controversy because of the classic formulation it gives to one of a set of alternative theses, whether at the very beginning of the book in the theory of meaning, or at the end in the idea of a social science. It consequently has a survival value greatly extending beyond any that can be estimated by the number of adherents to its doctrines. The *System of Logic* has survived also in a third, and ghostly, fashion under the labels "empiricism" and "psychologism," with the varying connotations which these have. Mill himself was not in the least averse to labels. He saw himself as protagonist in a conflict of "schools." If, however, some general, undistorted, view is to be taken of his *System of Logic*, it becomes necessary to give precision to the applicability of these two labels, often interconnected as they are, as, for example, in a recent description of it as an "attempt to expound a psychological system of logic within empiricist principles."<sup>1</sup>

R. P. Anschutz has forcefully drawn attention to the fact that Mill did not regard himself as an empiricist but as in fundamental opposition to empiricism.<sup>2</sup> By empiricism Mill meant "bad generalization" and "unscientific surmise." His own position he identified with "the School of Experience." It may have been natural enough for Mill to have retained the term "empiricism" in

its ordinary, as well as in its older philosophical use, and in any case, it aptly covered the type of political theory associated with Mackintosh and Macaulay. The latter's attack on his father's *Essay on Government* caused Mill to see that Macaulay "stood up for the empirical mode of treating political phenomena, against the philosophical; that even in physical science, his notion of philosophizing . . . would have excluded Newton and Laplace."<sup>3</sup> However, the members of what Mill called "the School of Experience" are today more generally called the British empiricists, and he is counted among them. To speak of Mill's empiricism is to speak of his adherence to what he described as "the prevailing theory in the eighteenth century," a theory which had its starting point, as he believed every system of philosophy should, with two questions, one about the sources of human knowledge, and the other about the objects which the mind is capable of knowing. With regard to the first question, the answer of this school was that "all knowledge consists of generalizations from experience. . . . There is no knowledge *à priori*; no truths cognizable by the mind's inward light, and grounded on intuitive evidence. Sensation, and the mind's consciousness of its own acts, are not only the exclusive sources, but the sole materials of our knowledge." With regard to the second question their answer was, "Of nature, or anything whatever external to ourselves, we know . . . nothing, except the facts which present themselves to our senses, and such other facts as may, by analogy, be inferred from these."<sup>4</sup> This means that the "nature and laws of Things in themselves, or of the hidden causes of the phenomena which are the objects of experience," are "radically inaccessible to the human faculties." Nothing "can be the object of our knowledge except our experience, and what can be inferred from our experience by the analogies of experience itself. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

In general, the term "experience" refers in the *System of Logic* to observation that something is the case and to experimentation as an adjunct of such observation. When Mill states the empirical thesis that "all knowledge consists in generalization from experience," he is using the term in this sense. For example, he asks about the proposition, All men are mortal, "whence do we derive our knowledge of that general truth? Of course from observation. Now all that man can observe are individual cases. From these all general truths are drawn, and into these they may again be resolved." But Mill also uses "experience" to refer to the undergoing of sensations and feelings, or having what he calls collectively "states of consciousness." It is this sense of "experience" which is indicated when he says that "sensation and the mind's consciousness of its own acts are . . . the sole materials of our knowledge." This too is a familiar empirical thesis, but by virtue of the kind of experience to which it refers, it is different from the first thesis, and it constitutes the basis of Mill's phenomenalism. Both senses of the term "experience" are common and philosophically neutral, but the first of them, observation that something is the case, ceases to be taken in neutral fashion when it is reduced to, or considered to mean the same in the end as the second, namely, having sensations. While acknowledging in the *System of Logic* that he is here on disputed philosophical territory, Mill does perform this reduction, as in the following example which he gives of something which can be observed to be the case.

Let us take, then, as our example, one of what are termed the sensible qualities of objects, and let the example be whiteness. When we ascribe whiteness to any substance, as, for instance, snow; when we say that snow has the quality whiteness, what



do we really assert? Simply, that when snow is present to our organs, we have a particular sensation, which we are accustomed to call the sensation of white. But how do I know that snow is present? Obviously from the sensations which I derive from it, and not otherwise. I infer that the object is present, because it gives me a certain assemblage or series of sensations. And when I ascribe to it the attribute whiteness, my meaning is only, that, of the sensations composing this group or series, that which I call the sensation of white colour is one.<sup>6</sup>

We must then distinguish two levels of empiricism in Mill, one in which “experience” refers to observation of what is the case and to experimentation as related to it, and the other more radical level, that of his phenomenalism, in which all experience is reduced to one kind, namely, undergoing sensations, feelings, and other “states of consciousness.” On which of these levels of empiricism are Mill’s logical doctrines constructed?

On the relation of logic to experience Mill appears to take two contradictory positions, one in his *Autobiography* and the other in the Introduction to the *System of Logic*. In the *Autobiography* he says, “The German, or *à priori* view of human knowledge, and of the knowing faculties, is likely for some time longer (though it may be hoped in a diminishing degree) to predominate among those who occupy themselves with such inquiries, both here and on the Continent. But the ‘System of Logic’ supplies what was much wanted, a text-book of the opposite doctrine—that which derives all knowledge from experience, and all moral and intellectual qualities principally from the direction given to the associations.”<sup>7</sup> In the Introduction to the *System of Logic*, however, Mill proclaims the philosophical neutrality of logic. “Logic is common ground on which the partisans of Hartley and of Reid, of Locke and Kant, may meet and join hands. Particular and detached opinions of all these thinkers will no doubt occasionally be controverted, since all of them were logicians as well as metaphysicians; but the field on which their principal battles have been fought, lies beyond the boundaries of our science”(14). Mill concludes the Introduction with this remark: “. . . I can conscientiously affirm that no one proposition laid down in this work has been adopted for the sake of establishing, or with any reference to its fitness for being employed in establishing, preconceived opinions in any department of knowledge or of inquiry on which the speculative world is still undecided” (14-15).

Mill’s claim for the neutrality of logic derives from a distinction which he makes between two ways in which truths may be known. Some are known directly, that is, by intuition; some are known by means of other truths, that is, are inferred. Logic has no concern with the former kind of truths, nor with the question whether they are part of the original furniture of the mind or given through the senses. It is concerned only with inferred truths. Moreover, while there is much in our knowledge which may seem to be intuited, but which may actually be inferred, the decision as to what part of our knowledge is intuitive and what inferential is something which also falls outside the scope of logic. It belongs to what Mill calls Metaphysics, a term he uses in such a way as to include psychology and theory of knowledge. It is clear from his description of metaphysics in the Introduction that it is this science, not logic, which decides the issue which separates “the German, or *à priori* view of human knowledge” from that which “derives all knowledge from experience.” In the *Autobiography*, however, Mill looked to his *Logic* to settle the issue.

The notion that truths external to the mind may be known by intuition or consciousness, independently of observation and experience, is, I am persuaded, in these times, the great intellectual support of false doctrines and bad institutions. . . . And the chief strength of this false philosophy in morals, politics, and religion, lies in the appeal which it is accustomed to make to the evidence of mathematics and of the cognate branches of physical science. To expel it from these, is to drive it from its stronghold. . . . In attempting to clear up the real nature of the evidence of mathematical and physical truths, the “System of Logic” met the intuitive philosophers on ground on which they had previously been deemed unassailable. . . .<sup>8</sup>

The apparent contradiction dissolves, however, as the course of Mill’s argument reveals that it rests on no assumptions about the nature of direct knowledge, and reaches a conclusion which, if valid, would subvert the *à priori* school. The argument also reveals the nature and extent of Mill’s empiricism.

Because twentieth-century empiricists, with their predominantly Viennese background, express their doctrine in the language, not of the British empiricists, but of Leibniz and Kant, it will be useful to state Mill’s argument in this latter, more familiar language. Leibniz distinguished between two kinds of propositions, truths of reason and truths of fact. Truths of reason are necessary and their opposites are impossible, that is, contain a contradiction. A necessary truth can be shown to be so by a mere analysis of its terms; the analysis will reveal the concept of the predicate to be contained within the concept of the subject. A truth of fact, on the other hand, is not necessary but contingent. By this Leibniz means, not that the predicate is not contained within the concept of the subject, but that no finite analysis, however far it is pursued, can ever show the concept of the predicate to be contained within that of the subject, for the required analysis is infinite. Only by experience can it be known that the subject and predicate are connected. Kant modified Leibniz’s division in an important way by introducing a further distinction, one between analytic and synthetic judgments. Analytic judgments, like Leibniz’s truths of reason, are those in which the concept of the predicate is contained within that of the subject. Synthetic judgments, a type not recognized by Leibniz, are, on the other hand, those in which the concept of the predicate is *not* contained within that of the subject. No analysis of the concept of the subject can extract it. Where an analytic judgment is merely explicative of the concept of the subject, a synthetic judgment is ampliative; it extends our knowledge of the subject. Kant now enlarged Leibniz’s class of necessary truths so that it should include not only propositions which were analytical, but also some which were synthetic, that is, some whose negation did not contain a contradiction. These synthetic propositions, being necessary, could only be known to be true independently of sense experience. Modern empiricists have adopted the Kantian distinction between the analytic and the synthetic as so basic that it has been labelled one of the “dogmas of empiricism.”<sup>9</sup> But while accepting Kant’s distinction, they of course rule out the possibility of the class of synthetic propositions which are necessary. Like Leibniz they hold that all necessary truths are analytical.

Mill makes a distinction which, he says, corresponds to “that which is drawn by Kant and other metaphysicians between what they term *analytic*, and *synthetic*, judgments; the former being

those which can be evolved from the meaning of the terms used” (116n). Mill’s distinction is between propositions which are merely verbal or relate to the meaning of terms, and propositions which assert matters of fact. Verbal propositions, those “(. . . in which the predicate connotes the whole or part of what the subject connotes, but nothing besides) answer no purpose but that of unfolding the whole or some part of the meaning of the name, to those who did not previously know it” (113). Every man is a corporeal being, or Every man is rational, would be examples. Real propositions, on the other hand, “predicate of a thing some fact not involved in the signification of the name by which the proposition speaks of it. . . . Such are . . . all general or particular propositions in which the predicate connotes any attribute not connoted by the subject. All these, if true, add to our knowledge: they convey information, not already involved in the names employed” (115-16).

But while Mill accepts the distinction between analytic and synthetic propositions, this is not for him one between two kinds of truths. Verbal propositions are “not, strictly speaking, susceptible of truth or falsity, but only of conformity or disconformity to usage or convention; and all the proof they are capable of, is proof of usage . . .” (109). Analytic propositions are not, then, as they are for Leibniz, Kant, and modern empiricists, necessary truths, for they are not truths at all. Some examples of what Mill considered to be true propositions, that is, propositions asserting matters of fact, would be: All men are mortal, Two straight lines cannot enclose a space, Two and one is equal to three, Every fact which has a beginning has a cause, The same proposition cannot at the same time be false and true. All these assert something about what is the case in *this* world. They do not assert what would be, in the language of Leibniz, true in all possible worlds. In the case of two of these propositions, the arithmetical one and the principle of contradiction, Mill considered, and rejected, the possibility that they were not assertions of matters of fact, and therefore neither true nor false, but were merely verbal or analytical. Indeed, he acknowledged great plausibility in the view that the “proposition, Two and one is equal to three . . . is not a truth, is not the assertion of a really existing fact, but a definition of the word three; a statement that mankind have agreed to use the name three as a sign exactly equivalent to two and one; to call by the former name whatever is called by the other more clumsy phrase” (253). Mill did not, however, consider the possibility of looking at geometry in this way; “that science cannot be supposed to be conversant about non-entities” (225). Geometrical theorems add to our knowledge of the world. Consequently he thought it fatal to the view that the science of numbers is merely a succession of changes in terminology, that it is impossible to explain by it how, when a new geometrical theorem is demonstrated by algebra, the series of translations brings out new facts. Mill takes note also—again with some degree of sympathy—of those who regard the principle of contradiction as “an identical proposition; an assertion involved in the meaning of terms; a mode of defining Negation, and the word Not” (277), and indeed he is willing to go part way with this. “If the negative is true the affirmative is false,” is merely an identical proposition, for what the negative means is only the falsity of the affirmative. But the statement that the same proposition cannot at the same time be false and true, is not a merely verbal one but a generalization about facts in the world. The principle of contradiction states a truth.

The distinction between verbal, or analytic, and real, or synthetic, propositions has an important bearing on Mill's conception of the nature of logic. For him logic is primarily concerned with real propositions, that is, assertions of matters of fact, or propositions which are either true or false. It is, in his words, a "logic of truth." But there are two ways in which truths are known. Some are known directly, some are known by inference from other truths. Logic is concerned only with the second of these two ways. This means that Mill's logic is concerned with the way in which we infer from some truths other truths which are quite distinct from them. Such inference Mill calls "real," in order to contrast it with merely "apparent" inference. The latter kind occurs in instances of equivalence or implication, for in these the conclusion asserts no new truth, but only what is already asserted in the premises: "the conclusion is either the very same fact, or part of the fact asserted in the original proposition." Moreover, the logic of truth requires an interpretation of the syllogism different from any it has traditionally received. Mill finds it unanimously admitted that a syllogism is invalid if there is anything in the conclusion which is not contained in the premises. This being so, syllogism cannot, then, be inference at all, though it may perform some important function in relation to inference. This function Mill sought to determine. In short, formal logic, which some have taken to be the whole of logic, is not concerned with inference, and must be sharply contrasted with the logic of truth. Its sole aim is consistency. As a logic of consistency it performs a subordinate, but indispensable, role in relation to the logic of truth, for consistency is a condition for truth.

If thought be anything more than a sportive exercise of the mind, its purpose is to enable us to know what can be known respecting the facts of the universe: its judgments and conclusions express, or are intended to express, some of those facts: and the connexion which Formal Logic, by its analysis of the reasoning process, points out between one proposition and another, exists only because there is a connexion between one objective truth and another, which makes it possible for us to know objective truths which have never been observed, in virtue of others which have. This possibility is an eternal mystery and stumbling-block to Formal Logic. The bare idea that any new truth can be brought out of a Concept—that analysis can ever find in it anything which synthesis has not first put in—is absurd on the face of it: yet this is all the explanation that Formal Logic, as viewed by Sir W. Hamilton, is able to give of the phænomenon; and Mr. Mansel expressly limits the province of Logic to analytic judgments—to such as are merely identical. But what the Logic of mere consistency cannot do, the Logic of the ascertainment of truth, the Philosophy of Evidence in its larger acceptance, can. It can explain the function of the Ratiocinative process as an instrument of the human intellect in the discovery of truth, and can place it in its true correlation with the other instruments.<sup>10</sup>

But Mill's logic is not only a logic of truth; it is intended to be a "logic of experience," and as such to subvert the doctrines of the German or *à priori* school.<sup>11</sup> Its single most important thesis, that on which the whole conception of the logic of experience rests, is that all inference is from particulars to particulars. This is by no means advanced by Mill as a dogma. It is given as the conclusion of an argument in which he examines the nature of the syllogism. It is to be observed

that in doing so, Mill adopts as his example of the syllogism, one in which the major premise, All men are mortal, is obviously a generalization from observation. The minor premise asserts that the Duke of Wellington is a man, and the conclusion is drawn that the Duke, who was alive at the time, is mortal. Mill points out that the conclusion is not inferred from the generalization stated in the major premise, for it is already included in that generalization. The evidence for the mortality of the Duke of Wellington is the same as that for all men, namely John and Thomas and other known individual cases. It is on the basis of this instance of the syllogism that Mill maintains his general principle that all inference is from particulars to particulars. But what the argument presupposes is that all universal propositions are empirical generalizations, as in his example, All men are mortal. This, however, is just the issue which separated Mill from the German or *à priori* school. The latter maintained that there are some propositions which are necessary, and that necessary propositions cannot be got by empirical generalization. They must therefore be *à priori*. Of the five examples which were cited earlier of propositions which Mill regarded as truly asserting matters of fact, four would have been regarded by Kant as necessary, namely, the arithmetical and geometrical propositions, the causal axiom, and the principle of contradiction, although he would not, as Mill did, have considered this last to be an assertion of fact.<sup>12</sup> As necessary, they cannot be derived from experience. But Mill is not only opposing the German or *à priori* school. In the case of mathematics he felt that he was opposing almost everyone. "Why," he asks, "are mathematics by almost all philosophers, and (by some) even those branches of natural philosophy which, through the medium of mathematics, have been converted into deductive sciences, considered to be independent of the evidence of experience and observation, and characterized as systems of Necessary Truth?" (224.)

Because it is the deductive sciences which give rise to the illusion that there are systems of necessary truth, an important part of Mill's defence of the main thesis of his logic of experience is to consider the nature of deduction and of the deductive sciences, in order to get rid altogether of the distinction between induction and deduction as two opposed types of inference. There is only one kind of inference. Mill's account of deduction is clear in spite of the fact that his key word in the account, "reasoning," is sometimes used in a broad sense, sometimes in a more narrow and technical sense, without notice of change from one to the other being given. In what Mill calls "the most extensive sense of the term," reasoning is a synonym of inference, and he frequently couples the words "reasoning or inference." In its narrower sense it is the process which is exemplified in the syllogism, and is alternatively called by him ratiocination or deduction. But syllogism or ratiocination or deduction is not inference; it is rather what in theology and law is called interpretation. "All inference is from particulars to particulars: General propositions are merely registers of such inferences already made, and short formulae for making more: The major premise of a syllogism, consequently, is a formula of this description: and the conclusion is not an inference drawn *from* the formula, but an inference drawn *according to* the formula: the real logical antecedent, or premise, being the particular facts from which the general proposition was collected by induction" (193). Just as in a case of law or of theological dogma, the

only point to be determined is, whether the authority which declared the general proposition, intended to include this case in it; and whether the legislator intended his

command to apply to the present case among others, or not. This is ascertained by examining whether the case possesses the marks by which, as those authorities have signified, the cases which they meant to certify or to influence may be known. The object of the inquiry is to make out the witness's or the legislator's intention, through the indication given by their words. This is a question, as the Germans express it, of hermeneutics. The operation is not a process of inference, but a process of interpretation.

In this last phrase we have obtained an expression which appears to me to characterize, more aptly than any other, the functions of the syllogism in all cases. (194.)

The term induction applies equally to inference from particulars to a general proposition or formula, and to inference from particulars to particulars according to the formula. Usage, however, tends to limit the term induction to the former, and to call the interpretation of the formula deduction. Hence, Mill will speak of an inference to an unobserved case as consisting of "an Induction followed by a Deduction; because, although the process needs not necessarily be carried on in this form, it is always susceptible of the form, and must be thrown into it when assurance of scientific accuracy is needed and desired" (203).

The task of determining whether Socrates or the Duke of Wellington have the marks which justify bringing them under the general formula, All men are mortal, is easily accomplished by observation, and the result stated in the minor premise. But not all cases are so simple. The minor premise may by itself have to be established by an induction followed by a deduction or interpretation, that is, by a syllogism. The succession of deductions or interpretations may, as required, be extended indefinitely, and this is pre-eminently the case in the mathematical sciences, where the inductions themselves may be obvious, while yet it may be far from obvious whether particular cases come under these inductions. Geometry rests on a very few simple inductions, the formulae of which are expressed in the axioms and a few of the so-called definitions.

The remainder of the science is made up of the processes employed for bringing unforeseen cases within these inductions; or (in syllogistic language) for proving the minors necessary to complete the syllogisms; the majors being the definitions and axioms. In those definitions and axioms are laid down the whole of the marks, by an artful combination of which it has been found possible to discover and prove all that is proved in geometry. The marks being so few, and the inductions which furnish them being so obvious and familiar; the connecting of several of them together, which constitutes Deductions, or Trains of Reasoning, forms the whole difficulty of the science, and with a trifling exception, its whole bulk; and hence Geometry is a Deductive Science. (218.)

Every science aspires to the condition of mathematics, that is, to be a deductive science, resting on a small number of inductions of the highest generality.<sup>13</sup> A science begins as almost wholly observational and experimental, each of its generalizations resting on its own special set of observations and experiments. Some sciences, however, by being rendered mathematical, have already advanced to the stage of becoming almost entirely "sciences of pure reasoning; whereby

multitudes of truths, already known by induction from as many different sets of experiments, have come to be exhibited as deductions or corollaries from inductive propositions of a simpler and more universal character” (218). But they are not, says Mill, to be regarded as less inductive by virtue of having become more deductive.

A deductive science is, then, one which is distinguished from an experimental science, not as being independent of observation and experiment, thereby constituting a system of necessary truth, but one whose conclusions are arrived at by successive interpretations of inductions of great generality, instead of resting directly on observation and experiment. Whewell, who was for Mill the chief spokesman for the *à priori* school in matters of science, found him to be much too optimistic—in the light of the history of the sciences—about the efficacy of deduction in their progress. Whewell was, however, prepared to accept Mill’s account of the nature of deduction as being the interpretation of the formula contained in the major premise.

I say then that Mr. Mill appears to me especially instructive in his discussion of the nature of the proof which is conveyed by the syllogism; and that his doctrine, that the force of the syllogism consists in an *inductive assertion, with an interpretation added to it*, solves very happily the difficulties which baffle other theories of this subject. I think that this doctrine of his is made still more instructive, by his excepting from it the cases of Scriptural Theology and of Positive Law, as cases in which general propositions, not particular facts, are our original data.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, while the main thesis of Mill’s logic of experience, that all inference is from particulars to particulars, is derived from an analysis of the syllogism, that analysis is inconclusive for Mill’s purpose; Whewell is quite happy to accept the analysis, since it allows that the general proposition expressed in the major premise may be an original datum not derivative from particular facts. In this class Whewell would put the axioms of geometry, which he would say are necessary truths and hence incapable of being inductively arrived at. To complete the case for his main thesis Mill must dispose of the doctrine that there are necessary truths, such as, Two straight lines cannot enclose a space. Because we cannot, according to Mill, look at any two straight lines which intersect without seeing that they continue to diverge, he asks what reason there is for maintaining that our knowledge of the axiom is grounded in any other way than through that evidence of the senses by which we know other things. This experiential evidence is quite sufficient. “The burden of proof lies on the advocates of the contrary opinion: it is for them to point out some fact, inconsistent with the supposition that this part of our knowledge of nature is derived from the same sources as every other part” (232). Mill finds that the *à priori* case is made to rest on two arguments, both of which he takes from Whewell.

The first argument is that we are able to perceive in intuition that two straight lines cannot enclose a space. Whewell calls it “imaginary looking,” and maintains that by means of it alone, and without any real looking, that is independently of, and prior to, visual perception, we can “see” that the two straight lines cannot enclose a space. But for Mill this is easily explainable by the abundantly experienced fact that spatial forms in the imagination can exactly resemble those given to visual perception. Hence it is possible to conduct experiments with lines and angles in

the imagination, and to know that the conclusions hold for observable lines and angles in the external world. Whether we work with mental diagrams or real figures, the conclusions are inductions.<sup>15</sup> Mill must be counted among those philosophers who believe that geometry rests on intuition, if we include under this heading what he calls “inspection” or “contemplation,” whether in imagination or visually. He sees no reason for maintaining that such intuition has any *à priori* form. Against such a position as Kant’s, who maintains that there must be *à priori* forms of intuition if the necessity which characterizes mathematical propositions is to be accounted for, Mill would simply deny that there is any necessity in the mathematical propositions to be accounted for.

This brings us to the second argument for the apriority of certain truths, namely that they are necessary, and must, therefore, be known independently of experience. Whatever force this argument has depends on what is meant by the term “necessary,” and in particular what meaning it has for those who use it to qualify the term “truth.”

Mill recognized that in popular usage there were two kinds of necessity which were referred to, logical necessity and causal necessity. The latter he variously calls philosophical or metaphysical or physical necessity. He remarks in one of his letters, “You are probably, however, right in thinking that the notion of physical necessity is partly indebted for the particular shape it assumes in our minds to an assimilation of it with logical necessity.”<sup>16</sup> In his *Autobiography* Mill writes:

during the later returns of my dejection, the doctrine of what is called Philosophical Necessity weighed on my existence like an incubus. I felt as if I was scientifically proved to be the helpless slave of antecedent circumstances; as if my character and that of all others had been formed for us by agencies beyond our control, and was wholly out of our own power. . . . I pondered painfully on the subject, till gradually I saw light through it. I perceived, that the word Necessity, as a name for the doctrine of Cause and Effect applied to human action, carried with it a misleading association; and that this association was the operative force in the depressing and paralysing influence which I had experienced.<sup>17</sup>

Thereafter, Mill says, he discarded altogether “the misleading word Necessity.” The theory which released him from his dilemma is contained in the chapter of the *Logic* entitled “Of Liberty and Necessity,” and which he described to de Tocqueville as “the most important chapter” in that work. There he writes, “The application of so improper a term as Necessity to the doctrine of cause and effect in the matter of human character, seems to me one of the most signal instances in philosophy of the abuse of terms, and its practical consequences one of the most striking examples of the power of language over our associations. The subject will never be generally understood, until that objectionable term is dropped.” (841.)

Hume had maintained that necessity, or necessary connection, is an essential part of our idea of cause and effect. He claimed to have shown just what our idea of necessity is, or what we mean when we use the term. Mill does not at all agree with Hume as to what the term means, but he agrees that the term is used with meaning.<sup>18</sup> He himself, however, uses an expression which he regards as less objectionable. He points out that when we define the cause of a thing as the



antecedent which the thing invariably follows, we do not mean that which the thing invariably *has* followed in our past experience, but that which it invariably *will* follow. Thus we would not call night the cause of day. The sun could cease to rise without, for all we know, any violation of the laws of nature. “Invariable sequence . . . is not synonymous with causation, unless the sequence, besides being invariable, is unconditional.” “This is what writers mean when they say that the notion of cause involves the idea of necessity. If there be any meaning which confessedly belongs to the term necessity, it is *unconditionalness*. That which is necessary, that which *must* be, means that which will be, whatever supposition we may make in regard to all other things.” (339.)

Thus the word necessity is eliminated from the treatment of causation, and a synonym will also be found for the word when used in its logical sense, namely certainty.<sup>19</sup> The conclusions of a deductive science are said to be necessary as following certainly or correctly or legitimately from the axioms and definitions of the science, whether these latter, either as inductions or as assumptions, are true or false. But the *à priori* school refers to the axioms or principles of a science themselves as necessary truths. In what sense are they said to be necessary? For this sense Mill turns to Whewell as representative of the school. According to Whewell the necessity of a necessary truth lies in the impossibility of conceiving the reverse. “Now I cannot but wonder,” says Mill, “that so much stress should be laid on the circumstance of inconceivableness, when there is such ample experience to show, that our capacity or incapacity of conceiving a thing has very little to do with the possibility of the thing in itself; but is in truth very much an affair of accident, and depends on the past history and habits of our own minds” (238). Psychological impossibilities are contingent facts with a fluctuating history, and Mill points out that the history of science has abounded with “inconceivabilities” which have become actualities.

It has been noted that Mill denies that there are two kinds of inference, inductive and deductive. All inference is inductive. In this regard he stands in direct contrast with those who hold that all inference is deductive, an inference being valid by virtue of the relation of implication which holds between propositions. If the latter view of the nature of inference is taken, then according to some, Hume included, induction could be justified only if every induction could be put in deductive form with one supreme premise, such as the principle of the uniformity of nature or the causal axiom. Only then would inductive conclusions be implied, and hence logically valid.

It is sometimes said that not only did Mill share this view as to what is required to make inductions valid, but he also undertook to justify the one supreme premise by induction. To assert that the principle which justifies induction is itself an induction from experience is, of course, to argue in a circle. Hume’s conclusion was, therefore, that inductive inference cannot be justified, that is to say, converted into a deductive inference. But Mill, it is widely thought, happily committed himself to the circle. Let us consider, then, Mill’s position in relation to what is variously called the problem of induction, or Hume’s problem, or the justification of induction. Mill says:

the proposition that the course of nature is uniform, is the fundamental principle, or general axiom, of Induction. . . . I hold it to be itself an instance of induction. . . . Far from being the first induction we make, it is one of the last, or at all events one of those which are latest in attaining strict philosophical accuracy. . . . The truth is, that

this great generalization is itself founded on prior generalizations. The obscurer laws of nature were discovered by means of it, but the more obvious ones must have been understood and assented to as general truths before it was ever heard of. . . . In what sense, then, can a principle, which is so far from being our earliest induction, be regarded as our warrant for all the others? In the only sense, in which . . . the general propositions which we place at the head of our reasonings when we throw them into syllogisms, ever really contribute to their validity. As Archbishop Whately remarks, every induction is a syllogism with the major premise suppressed; or (as I prefer expressing it) every induction may be thrown into the form of a syllogism, by supplying a major premise. If this be actually done, the principle which we are now considering, that of the uniformity of the course of nature, will appear as the ultimate major premise of all inductions, and will, therefore, stand to all inductions in the relation in which . . . the major proposition of a syllogism always stands to the conclusion; not contributing at all to prove it, but being a necessary condition of its being proved; since no conclusion is proved, for which there cannot be found a true major premise. (307-8.)

This makes it clear that Mill is not seeking to solve Hume's problem, for the latter rests on the assumption that inductive inference is justified only if it can be shown to be a deductive inference. But since for Mill there is no such thing as deductive inference, and since the major premise of the syllogism into which any induction can be formulated, forms no part of the proof for the inductive conclusion, he cannot be considered to mean by "the warrant" for induction, what those who have concerned themselves with Hume's problem have called the "justification" of induction. The formulation of an induction syllogistically or deductively does not, for Mill, relate an inference to the evidence for it. It is rather the interpretation of an induction, in which the major premise, as we have seen, is a formula, not *from which* the conclusion is inferred, but in *accordance with which* the conclusion is inferred. It is, in Mill's language, a warrant or authorization for inferring the conclusion from the particulars which constitute the evidence for it. It warrants the inference because it states in, for example, the proposition, All men are mortal, that having the attributes of a man is satisfactory evidence for the inference to the attribute mortality. The function of the minor premise in turn is to state that in the particular case in question, that of the Duke of Wellington, this evidence does exist for the inference that he will die. According to this account of the syllogism it is not necessary that inductions or inferences in order to be sound should be warranted. It is the evidence from the particular facts alone, and not they together with a general warrant, which makes an induction or inference valid, and this will be no less true for the induction to the principle of the uniformity of nature than for any other induction. Of course, as the ultimate warrant for all other inductions, the principle cannot itself as an induction be warranted by a formula. But its validity, like that of other inductions, is independent of any general warrant. Contrary to a common misunderstanding there is no circle in Mill's account of "the ground of induction."

This throws some light on the way in which Mill conceived the nature of scientific explanation. Although in the deductively ordered sciences major premises state general matters of fact

(either the uniformities of coexistence in the case of the axioms of mathematics, or of succession in the case of the laws of physical science), they nevertheless function as formulae or rules for making inferences from particular facts to particular facts, as well as providing security that the inferences have been correctly made. To explain a particular fact is, for Mill, to show that the way in which it came about is an instance of a causal law. The fact is *explained* when its mode of production is deduced from a law or laws. To explain a law is in turn to deduce it from another law or laws more general than itself, and the ultimate goal of the sciences is to find “the fewest general propositions from which all the uniformities existing in nature could be deduced” (472). Viewed in terms of the directional function for inference which Mill assigns to major premises in deductions, this means that scientific explanation consists not in dispelling the mysteries of nature, but in bringing the formulae for inferring particulars from particulars under the fewest and most general formulae for inferring. So far as laws are viewed in their character as statements of general matters of fact, Mill says, “What is called explaining one law of nature by another, is but substituting one mystery for another; and does nothing to render the general course of nature other than mysterious; we can no more assign a *why* for the more extensive laws than for the partial ones” (471).

The case against the *à priori* school is for Mill complete when he has established that all inference is from particulars to particulars. It is this which makes his logic a logic of experience, for he could consider himself to be on philosophically neutral ground in asserting that *particular* facts, not known inferentially, can be known only by observation. The empiricism of Mill’s logic is solely of that kind in which “experience” refers to observation that something is the case. So far as the more radical type of empiricism is concerned, in which “experience” refers to feelings and states of consciousness, and on which his phenomenalism is built, Mill scrupulously seeks to avoid resting his logical theory on it, in order that the partisans of Hartley and of Reid, of Locke and of Kant, can meet on common ground. However conspicuous the appearance of Mill’s phenomenalism in the *System of Logic*, it is never used for grounding his logical theory, nor on the other hand is it in any respect the outcome of his argument. When Mill introduces phenomenalist doctrines they are accompanied by expressions of the following sort:

here the question merges in the fundamental problem of metaphysics properly so called: to which science we leave it (59).

For the purposes of logic it is not of material importance which of these opinions we adopt (65).

But, as the difficulties which may be felt in adopting this view of the subject cannot be removed without discussions transcending the bounds of our science, I content myself with a passing indication, and shall, for the purposes of logic, adopt a language compatible with either view of the nature of qualities (67).

Among nameable things are:

. . . Bodies, or external objects which excite certain of those feelings, together with the powers or properties whereby they excite them; these latter (at least) being included rather in compliance with common opinion, and because their existence is

taken for granted in the common language from which I cannot prudently deviate, than because the recognition of such powers or properties as real existences appears to be warranted by a sound philosophy (77).

As a logic of truth whose concern is with propositions asserting observable matters of fact in a world of things denoted by names, Mill's logic rests on a certain ontology which is reflected in "common language," and which as such provides neutral ground for metaphysicians of different schools. For Mill as a phenomenalist metaphysician the only constituents of matters of fact are individual sensations and permanent groups of possible individual sensations, some of which on occasion become actual. However, common language, he observes, allows for no designation of sensations other than by circumlocution. It cannot designate them by attribute-words. On the other hand for Mill, author of the logic of experience, the constituents of the observed matters of fact from which inferences are made are of quite a different nature, and they are of two kinds, either substances or the attributes by which substances are designated. The substances are individuals, and the attributes are universals. While a sensation is always individual, "a quality, indeed, in the custom of the language, does not admit of individuality; it is supposed to be one thing common to many."

In his various discussions of universals Mills rejects each of realism, conceptualism, and nominalism. Of realism he has this to say,

Modern philosophers have not been sparing in their contempt for the scholastic dogma that genera and species are a peculiar kind of substances, which general substances being the only permanent things, while the individual substances comprehended under them are in a perpetual flux, knowledge, which necessarily imports stability, can only have relation to those general substances or universals, and not to the facts or particulars included under them. Yet, though nominally rejected, this very doctrine . . . has never ceased to poison philosophy. (175.)

It is, however, important to take note of the kind of realism which Mill was rejecting. In order to do so we must look first at his distinction between general names and individual or singular names, and also at his distinction between concrete and abstract names. A general name is one which can be affirmed of an indefinite number of things because they possess the attributes expressed by that name; an individual name is one which can be truly affirmed, in the same sense, of only one thing. A concrete name is one which stands for a thing or things. Thus "white" is a concrete name, for it is *the name of all things which are white*. "Whiteness" on the other hand is an abstract name, for it is the name of the attribute possessed by those things. By realism Mill means the doctrine according to which "concrete general terms were supposed to be, not names of indefinite numbers of individual substances, but names of a peculiar kind of entities termed Universal Substances" (757). But, while Mill's concrete general names do not refer to real universals, but only to individual things, the attributes to which his abstract names refer perform the functions of real universals in his theory of inference. He warns the reader that in using the term "abstract name" he is not following the unfortunate practice initiated by Locke of applying it to names which are the result of abstraction or generalization. He is retaining the sounder scholastic usage, according to which an abstract name refers to an attribute as opposed to a thing or object.

A concrete general name denotes many different objects, but in the case of an abstract name, “though it denotes an attribute of many different objects, the attribute itself is always conceived as one, not many” (30). And so it is in Mill’s account of the import of propositions and of the syllogism:

Every proposition which conveys real information asserts a matter of fact. . . . It asserts that a given object does or does not possess a given attribute; or it asserts that two attributes, or sets of attributes, do or do not (constantly or occasionally) co-exist. . . .

Applying this view of propositions to the two premises of a syllogism, we obtain the following results. The major premise, which . . . is always universal, asserts, that all things which have a certain attribute (or attributes) have or have not along with it, a certain other attribute (or attributes). The minor premise asserts that the thing or set of things which are the subject of that premise, have the first-mentioned attribute; and the conclusion is, that they have (or that they have not), the second. (177.)

The realism involved in this did not escape Herbert Spencer. Mill’s reply to his criticism is instructive:

Mr. Herbert Spencer . . . maintains, that we ought not to say that Socrates possesses *the same* attributes which are connoted by the word Man, but only that he possesses attributes *exactly like* them. . . .

The question between Mr. Spencer and me is merely one of language; for neither of us . . . believes an attribute to be a real thing, possessed of objective existence; we believe it to be a particular mode of naming our sensations, or our expectations of sensation, when looked at in their relation to an external object which excites them. (178n-179n.)

But Mill says that he has chosen to use the phraseology “commonly used by philosophers” because it seems best. As he goes on, however, he indicates the unavoidability of regarding attributes as real universals if there is to be any such thing as language at all:

Mr. Spencer is of opinion that because Socrates and Alcibiades are not the same man, the attribute which constitutes them men should not be called the same attribute; that because the humanity of one man and that of another express themselves to our senses not by the same individual sensations but by sensations exactly alike, humanity ought to be regarded as a different attribute in every different man. But on this showing, the humanity even of any one man should be considered as different attributes now and half-an-hour hence; for the sensations by which it will then manifest itself to my organs will not be a continuation of my present sensations, but a repetition of them; fresh sensations, not identical with, but only exactly like the present. If every general conception, instead of being “the One in the Many,” were considered to be as many different conceptions as there are things to which it is applicable, there would be no such thing as general language. A name would have no general meaning if *man* connoted one thing when predicated of John, and another, though closely resembling, thing when predicated of William. (179n.)

Thus language prohibits Mill from basing his theory of inference on phenomenalism.

The principal characteristics of Mill's empiricism, so far as it is related to his logical doctrines, can be summed up. It is observational, not sensational as in his phenomenalism. It is metaphysically neutral, in the sense of being based on an ontology embedded in "common language," even though the terms it uses, like attributes, powers, states, are for Mill, as a phenomenalist, "not real things existing in objects" but "logical fictions."<sup>20</sup> Mill's empiricism differs from that of Hume and modern empiricists in general in that in his all inference is inductive, while in theirs all valid inference is deductive. It is more radical than theirs in that it includes mathematics within its scope, and that on the ground, which they reject, that mathematical propositions assert matters of fact. They prefer to regard them as necessary, or, in Mill's language, as merely "verbal." Finally, it is an empiricism in which the ideal of any science is to become deductive instead of directly experimental, or "empirical" in the old sense of the term. It achieves this ideal to the extent that less general warrants to infer (or major premises) can be brought under more general warrants.

We come now to the second way in which Mill's logic has been characterized. It has been said, for example, that "Mill is the one great logician of the school which, following Hume, tried to rest logic upon psychology."<sup>21</sup> Mill's own often quoted words appear to give ample justification for taking this view. He says of logic, "It is not a Science distinct from, and coordinate with, Psychology. So far as it is a science at all, it is a part, or branch, of Psychology; differing from it, on the one hand as a part differs from the whole, and on the other, as an Art differs from a Science. Its theoretic grounds are wholly borrowed from Psychology, and include as much of that science as is required to justify the rules of the art."<sup>22</sup>

There are four distinct views which are, or might be, taken as to the sense in which Mill's logic is grounded in psychology. First, we may consider a statement by Ernest Nagel: "What is characteristic of Mill is his conception of what the *basic facts* are to which beliefs should be subjected for testing, and what are the essential requirements for the process of testing them. The theoretical grounds of logic, he explicitly argued, are 'wholly borrowed from Psychology'; and it is the psychological assumptions of sensationalistic empiricism that are made to support the principles of evidence which emerge in the *Logic*."<sup>23</sup> Mill's sensationalistic empiricism is given in the important chapter of *The System of Logic*, "Of the Things denoted by Names," which incorporated much of what he was later to say in "The Psychological Theory of the Belief in an External World."<sup>24</sup> It is a chapter which is decisive for his account of the import of propositions and for his theory of syllogism. But while "the psychological theory" is incorporated in the chapter, it does not exhaust it. Moreover, as we have already observed, not only does Mill maintain that "for the purposes of logic it is not of material importance" whether we adopt the psychological theory or not, but his logic is also, in fact, entirely independent of the psychological theory. The *basic facts* to which beliefs should be subjected for testing are those of an observational, not a sensationalistic, empiricism.

Secondly, we can consider Husserl's reference to "the misled followers of British empiricism," according to whose point of view "concepts, judgments, arguments, proofs, theories, would be psychic occurrences; and logic would be, as John Stuart Mill said it is, a 'part or branch of psy-

chology.’ This highly plausible conception is *logical psychologism*.”<sup>25</sup> But does this cover Mill’s own case? It would at first appear so. “Our object,” he says, “will be, to attempt a correct analysis of the intellectual process called Reasoning or Inference, and of such other mental operations as are intended to facilitate this. . . .” (12). In turning to the subject of inference in Book II, Mill says, “The proper subject, however, of Logic is Proof” (157). To understand what proof is, it is necessary first to understand the nature of what is proved, namely, propositions, for it is propositions which are believed or disbelieved, affirmed or denied, as true or false. In inquiring into the nature of propositions we must, says Mill, distinguish, as all language recognizes, between “the state of mind called Belief” and “what is believed”; between “an opinion” and “the fact of entertaining the opinion”; between “assent” and “what is assented to”:

Logic . . . has no concern with the nature of the act of judging or believing; the consideration of that act, as a phenomenon of the mind, belongs to another science. Philosophers, however, from Descartes downward, and especially from the era of Leibnitz and Locke, have by no means observed this distinction and would have treated with great disrespect any attempt to analyse the import of Propositions, unless founded on an analysis of the act of Judgment. A proposition, they would have said, is but the expression in words of a Judgment. The thing expressed, not the mere verbal expression, is the important matter. When the mind assents to a proposition, it judges. Let us find out what the mind does when it judges, and we shall know what propositions mean, and not otherwise. (87.)

Mill observed that almost every writer on logic in the two previous centuries had treated the proposition as a judgment in which one idea or conception is affirmed or denied of another, as a comparison of two ideas, or, in the language of Locke, as perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas. But, Mill points out, an account of the process occurring in the mind is irrelevant to determining the nature of propositions, for propositions are not about our ideas but about things. “The notion that what is of primary importance to the logician in a proposition, is the relation between the two *ideas* corresponding to the subject and predicate, (instead of the relation between the two *phenomena* which they respectively express), seems to me one of the most fatal errors ever introduced into the philosophy of Logic; and the principal cause why the theory of the science has made such inconsiderable progress during the last two centuries” (89).

Mill has said that to understand the nature of proof it is necessary to understand the nature of propositions, for it is these which are proved. But, in turn, to understand the nature of propositions, or the meaning of what is asserted, it is necessary to consider the nature of the meanings of names, for in every proposition one name is asserted of another name, the predicate of the proposition being the name which denotes what is affirmed or denied, and the subject being the name which denotes the person or thing of which something is affirmed or denied. It is because the import of propositions is determined by the import of names that the consideration of the latter becomes the starting point for the analysis of reasoning or inference. In treating of the import of names one of Mill’s principal intentions is to depsychologize the theory of meaning in radical fashion. A meaning of a name is not an idea in the mind; it is not a mental phenomenon. This forms the basis of his attack on conceptualism. Mill says, “. . . I consider it nothing less than

a misfortune, that the words Concept, General Notion, or any other phrase to express the supposed mental modification corresponding to a class name, should ever have been invented. Above all, I hold that nothing but confusion ever results from introducing the term Concept into Logic, and that instead of the Concept of a class, we should always speak of the signification of a class name.”<sup>26</sup> Nor is the meaning of a name the thing or things *denoted* by the name. Its meaning is what the name *connotes*—that attribute or set of attributes by the possession of which things can be said to be denoted by that name. A meaning is a real universal. So far as concepts and judgments are concerned, Mill’s logic is not an exemplification of what Husserl calls psychologism, but, rather, a forceful condemnation of it.<sup>27</sup>

Thirdly, it has been said of Mill that “In his view logical and mathematical necessity is psychological; we are unable to conceive any other possibilities than those which logical and mathematical propositions assert.”<sup>28</sup> Mill denied that logical principles (the so-called laws of thought) and mathematical axioms possessed necessity. It was those whom he opposed who attributed necessity to them, and the necessity which they attributed was, according to Mill, nothing but the psychological inability to conceive their negation. Such psychological inability could be fully accounted for by the laws of association, and it had no bearing on the truth or falsehood of the logical or mathematical propositions asserted. These are true only as they are generalizations from the facts of experience. When Sir William Hamilton says of the laws of identity, contradiction, and excluded middle, “To deny the universal application of the three laws is, in fact, to subvert the reality of thought; and as this subversion is itself an act of thought, it in fact annihilates itself. When, for example, I say that A is, and then say that A is not, by the second assertion I sublimate or take away what, by the first assertion, I posited or laid down; thought, in the one case, undoing by negation what, in the other, it had by affirmation done,” Mill simply comments, “This proves only that a contradiction is unthinkable, not that it is impossible in point of fact.”<sup>29</sup> This third version of psychologism attributed to Mill’s conception of logic is repudiated by him in his criticisms of Spencer in Book II, Chapter vii. In Book V, “On Fallacies” it appears among the first in the five classes of fallacies.

Fourthly, it might be said that Mill’s statement that logic is a branch of psychology confuses questions of validity with questions of fact. This is perhaps what is most often meant by the term psychologism as applied to a theory of logic. Mill’s statement occurs in his analysis of Sir William Hamilton’s conception of logic as a science, and it is important to consider it within that context. Hamilton had said that logic is both a science and an art, without, however, in Mill’s view finding any satisfactory basis for distinguishing between the science and the art. As science its subject matter is stated to be “the laws of thought as thought.” Mill finds that by this Hamilton means that the laws are “the conditions subject to which by the constitution of our nature we cannot but think.” But it soon turns out that this is “an entire mistake”; that they are not laws which by its nature the mind cannot violate, but laws which it ought not to violate if it is to think validly. Laws now mean precepts or rules.

So that, after all, the real theory of Thought—the laws, in the scientific sense of the term, of Thought as Thought—do not belong to Logic, but to Psychology: and it



is only the *validity* of thought which Logic takes cognisance of. It is not with Thought as Thought, but only as Valid thought, that Logic is concerned. There is nothing to prevent us thinking contrary to the laws of Logic: only, if we do, we shall not think rightly, or well, or conformably to the ends of thinking, but falsely, or inconsistently, or confusedly. This doctrine is at complete variance with the saying of our author in his controversy with Whately, that Logic is, and never could have been doubted to be, in Whately's sense of the terms, both a Science and an Art. For the present definition reduces it to the narrowest conception of an Art—that of a mere system of rules. It leaves Science to Psychology, and represents Logic as merely offering to thinkers a collection of precepts, which they are enjoined to observe, not in order that they may think, but that they may think correctly, or validly.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless Mill thinks that with this Hamilton is nearer the mark. Logic is not the theory of thought as thought, but the theory of valid thought, not of thinking, but of valid thinking. At the same time he does not agree with Hamilton's final position, or that into which Mill drives him, in so far as it implies that logic is merely an art. The art, the set of rules, does have theoretical grounds, and these belong to psychology, though constituting a very limited part of it; that is, it "includes as much of that science as is required to justify the rules of art." Here Mill is using the term psychology in the broadest sense, to include everything that comes under the heading of thinking; it includes not only what, by the definition of psychology given in the *System of Logic*, would be an inquiry into the laws or uniformities according to which one mental phenomenon succeeds another; it also includes "a scientific investigation into the requisites of valid thinking," or the conditions for distinguishing between good and bad thinking. The first kind of inquiry, concerned as it is with what is common to all thinking, good or bad, valid or invalid, "is irrelevant to logic, unless by the light it indirectly throws on something besides itself." Logic for Mill borrows nothing from it. Logic is concerned only with the second kind of inquiry. If Mill calls this latter a branch of psychology, it is solely because "the investigation into the requisites of valid thinking" is *theory of valid thinking*, a type of theory which is essential for the grounding of rules, or of logic as an art. Not only does Mill's statement that logic is "a part or branch of Psychology" not imply a confusion of questions of *justification* or *validity* with questions of *fact*, the statement occurs within a discussion dominated by the great importance which he attaches to keeping separate the two kinds of questions.

For Mill there were in logic two sets of rules: the rules of the syllogism for deduction, and the four experimental methods for induction. The former he considered to be available in "the common manuals of logic." The latter he considered himself to be formulating explicitly for the first time. The question as to how these rules of art can be viewed as grounded in the science of valid thinking must be brought under the larger question as to how rules of art in general are grounded in science. For Mill, the way in which they are grounded is universally the same for all arts in which there are rules. He distinguishes two kinds of practical reasoning. One is typified in the reasoning of a judge, the other in that of a legislator. The judge's problem is to interpret the law, or to determine whether the particular case before him comes under the intention of the legislator who made the law. Thus the reasoning of the judge is syllogistic, for syllogism or deduction

consists in the interpretation of a formula. The legislator's problem, on the other hand, is to find rules. This depends on determining the best means of achieving certain desired ends. It is science alone which can determine these means, for the relation between means and ends is the relation between causes and effects. In this second kind of practical reasoning, art prescribes the end, science provides the theorem which shows how it is to be brought about, and art then converts the theorem into a rule. In this way propositions which assert only what ought to be, or should be done, are grounded on propositions which assert only matters of fact.

The task of finding the rules of logic, whether of deduction or of induction, is of the same type as the legislator's. Knowledge of what ought to be done, as expressed in the rules of art, must be grounded on knowledge of what is the case, as expressed in the theorems of science. The rules of the syllogism are the rules for interpreting an induction; the rules of induction are the rules for "discovering and proving general propositions." What then are the theoretical foundations of these two classes of rules? So far as the rules for interpreting inductions are concerned Mill has nothing to say, for he is not concerned with the task of finding them. They exist already in the manuals of logic as the rules of the syllogism. But he sees himself as confronted with the task of stating in "precise" terms or, "systematically and accurately," the rules or canons of induction for the first time, and the problem of their derivation does concern him, for he had both to find them and to justify them.<sup>31</sup> In accordance with his own account of the logic of practice Mill looks to matter of fact to ground his rules for "discovering and proving general propositions." "Principles of Evidence and Theories of Method are not to be constructed *à priori*. The laws of our rational faculty, like those of every other natural agency, are only learnt by seeing the agent at work." (833.) In the Preface to the 1st edition, in which he describes what he had undertaken to do in the *System of Logic*, Mill says, "On the subject of Induction, the task to be performed was that of generalizing the modes of investigating truth and estimating evidence, by which so many important and recondite laws of nature have, in the various sciences, been aggregated to the stock of human knowledge" (cxii). He found that what metaphysicians had written on the subject of logic had suffered from want of sufficient acquaintance with the processes by which science had actually succeeded in establishing general truths, and even when correct they had not been specific enough to provide rules. On the other hand scientists, who had only to generalize the methods which they themselves use to get at the theoretical basis for the rules, had not thought it worthwhile to reflect on their procedures.

This suggests that Mill considered that the rules of induction are to be got by generalizing or reconstructing the procedures which the history of science reveals scientists actually to have used. It would appear as though Mill shared exactly Whewell's conception of how we arrive at a theory of scientific method. Whewell says:

We may best hope to understand the nature and conditions of real knowledge by studying the nature and conditions of the most certain and stable portions of knowledge which we already possess: and we are most likely to learn the best methods of discovering truth, by examining how truths, now universally recognized, have really been discovered. Now there do exist among us doctrines of solid and acknowledged

certainty, and truths of which the discovery has been received with universal applause. These constitute what we commonly term *Sciences* and of these bodies of exact and enduring knowledge, we have within our reach so large and varied a collection, that we may examine them, and the history of their formation, with a good prospect of deriving from their study such instruction as we seek.<sup>32</sup>

Whewell criticized Mill's four experimental methods on the ground that they were not derived from the actual procedures of scientists as revealed in the history of science. "Who will tell us," he asks, "which of the methods of inquiry those historically real and successful inquiries exemplify? Who will carry these formulæ through the history of the sciences, as they have really grown up; and show us that these four methods have been operative in their formation; or that any light is thrown upon the steps of their progress by reference to these formulæ?" (Quoted by Mill, 430.)

If Mill found his canons of induction by generalizing and reconstructing the procedures successfully followed by natural scientists, their derivation from this source does not appear in the *System of Logic* itself. Illustrations are given, but it is evidently not on these that the generalizations are based, for the illustrations were sought after the canons were formulated. When his publisher's referee had suggested that more of these be added to the text, Mill replied, "I fear I am nearly at the end of my stock of apt illustrations. I had to read a great deal for those I have given. . . ." <sup>33</sup> His debt to Bain for producing examples was considerable.<sup>34</sup> How Mill actually arrived at his rules indicates, however, that he means by "generalization" something other than Whewell's induction from the history of science. The groundwork for Mill's rules is to be found in the chapters on causation which precede the enunciation of the rules, for he says, "The notion of Cause being the root of the whole theory of Induction, it is indispensable that this idea should, at the very outset of our inquiry be, with the utmost practicable degree of precision, fixed and determined" (326).

In the means-end relation, with which the rules of induction are concerned, the desired end is the solution of a problem—"the discovering and proving general propositions"—the means consists in the way in which the problem is solved. The generalizing which Mill performs lies not in generalizing the means used by scientists, but in generalizing and reconstructing what he considered to be the nature of their problem, or of reducing their inquiries to one fundamental type. The problem in its full generality having in his view been ascertained, Mill then proceeds to solve it. Indeed the very statement of the problem dictates the solution; there is no need to consult the history of science for its solution. The method of solution once found can then be formulated in canons; or in the language of Mill's logic of practice, "Art . . . converts the theorem into a rule or precept."<sup>35</sup> In so far as the "Four Methods" can be said to be a generalization of scientists' actual modes of investigation, it is not because Mill has taken those modes of investigation themselves as his data, but because the scientist must, in successfully solving his problem as subsumed under the general form given by Mill, have used the method of solution dictated by that general problem. Nor is Mill's generalization of the *problem* of scientific investigation in any direct sense an induction from the history of science, but rests on a conception of the whole course of nature as one in which the general uniformity is made up out of separate threads of uniformity holding

between single phenomena. The course of nature is a web composed of separate fibres, a “collective order . . . made up of particular sequences, obtaining invariably among the separate parts” (327). These separate threads are the laws of nature or the laws of causation. The task of the scientist, and the main business of induction, is to discover these separate threads, or “to resolve this complex uniformity into the simpler uniformities which compose it, and assign to each portion of the vast antecedent the portion of the consequent which is attendant on it” (379). The antecedents in the complex having been discriminated from one another, and the consequents also, it remains to be determined which antecedents and consequents are invariably connected. That being the nature of the problem, it is solved by methods of elimination, which are described by Mill as “the successive exclusion of the various circumstances which are found to accompany a phenomenon in a given instance, in order to ascertain what are those among them which can be absent consistently with the existence of the phenomenon. . . . [W]hatever can be eliminated, is not connected with the phenomenon by any law. . . . [W]hatever cannot be eliminated, is connected with the phenomenon by a law.” (392.)

To return now to the definition of logic as the science as well as the art of reasoning, in which the science consists of an analysis of the mental process which takes place when we reason, and the art consists of the rules grounded on that science, it can be said that in the case of induction the mental process consists in the solving of a problem stated in its full generality. Mill discovers what this mental process is by directly solving the problem himself. The account of this process constitutes the theoretical part of the logic of induction and is found in the chapters on causation; it reveals the means-end relation which provides the foundation for the rules of discovering the solution for any particular problem which can be subsumed under the general problem of induction. In basing the rules of art on the theoretical relation between means and end no more confusion arises here between questions of validity and questions of fact than in any other sphere of practice concerned with the means to a desired end.

In conclusion it may be remarked that any logic which deals with inference, as well as any which deals with scientific method, is concerned with a psychological process. Only persons with mental capacities infer or are governed by methods. In so far as Mill considered the principal subject matter of logic to be inference, and not implication, he was quite correct in asserting it to be a branch of psychology. This, and no more, constitutes the psychologism of his *System of Logic*. But Mill, in taking inference to be his subject, is in so numerous a company—one, moreover, composed of such varied types of logical theorists—that one wonders why he should have been so singled out in this regard, if not for merely having called a spade a spade.

## Endnotes

[1] *Philosophy of Recent Times*, ed. J. B. Hartmann (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), I, 14.

[2] *The Philosophy of J. S. Mill* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953), 73-7.

[3] *Autobiography*, ed. Jack Stillinger (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), 95.

[4] “Coleridge,” in *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, ed. J. M. Robson, *Collected Works*, X (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 125.

[5] *Ibid.*, 128-9.

[6] *Logic*, 65 below. Henceforth references to the present edition of the *Logic* are given in parentheses in the text.

[7] Autobiography, 134.

[8] *Ibid.*, 134-5.

[9] W. V. Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism,” *From a Logical Point of View* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 20ff.

[10] An Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy, 4th ed. (London: Longmans, 1872), 477-8.

[11] “But mine professes to be a logic of *experience* only, & to throw no further light upon the existence of truths not experimental, than is thrown by shewing to what extent reasoning from experience will carry us.” Letter to John Sterling, 4 Nov., 1839, in *Earlier Letters*, ed. F. E. Mineka, *Collected Works*, XIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 412. Hereafter cited as *EL*, *CW*.

[12] The principle of contradiction belongs for Kant to logic, and he does not speak of logical principles as true.

[13] In the physical sciences these inductions would not be of uniform coexistences, as they are in the mathematical sciences, but of uniform successions, that is, causal laws. The “whole problem of the investigation of nature” consists in this: “What are the fewest assumptions, which being granted, the order of nature as it exists would be the result? What are the fewest general propositions from which all the uniformities existing in nature could be deduced?” (472.)

[14] *On the Philosophy of Discovery* (London: Parker, 1860), 289-90.

[15] For Mill it is merely a fact of our experience that space in our part of the universe is uniformly the same. He believed that there was ample evidence that it was the same also in the region of the fixed stars, but he accepts the possibility of space being differently constituted elsewhere. It would appear that, if the notion of non-Euclidean geometries were to make sense for Mill, it would have to be in terms of the possibility of experiencing elsewhere alternative kinds of actual space.

[16] To Thomas Squire Barrett (6/5/72), in *Later Letters*, ed. F. E. Mineka and D. Lindley, *Collected Works*, XVII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 1890.

[17] Autobiography, 101-2.

[18] Hume says, “Necessity may be defined two ways, conformably to the two definitions of *cause*, of which it makes an essential part. It consists in the constant conjunction of like objects, or in the inference of the understanding from one object to another.” (*An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894], 97.) By the latter Hume means the psychological

compulsion to make the inference. Mill would reject both these definitions. He would reject the first on the grounds that causation is not mere uniformity, but unconditional uniformity, unconditional being for Mill a synonym of necessary; and the second on the ground that it has no relevance to facts in the external world.

[19] See the Textual Introduction, xci below, for references to successive revisions involving “necessity.”

[20] While there would seem to be no escape from the ontology embedded in “common language” so long as we are compelled to speak, Mill is completely hostile to the conception of language as a reflection of, and a clue to, the nature of things. He considered this notion to be a very extended and ancient prejudice: “scientific investigation among the Greek schools of speculation and their followers in the middle ages, was little more than a mere sifting and analysing of the notions attached to common language. They thought that by determining the meaning of words, they could become acquainted with facts.” (760.) According to Whewell, whom Mill here quotes with approval, it was Thales who was the founder of this method of doing philosophy. “When he was asked,” says Whewell, “‘What is the *greatest* thing?’ he replied ‘*Place*; for all other things are *in* the world, but the world is *in* it.’ In Aristotle we have the consummation of this mode of speculation. The usual point from which he starts in his inquiries is, that *we say* thus or thus in common language.” (Quoted by Mill, 761.) Mill’s case against this use of common language is the same as his case against conceptualism. “The propensity to assume that the same relations obtain between objects themselves, which obtain between our ideas of them, is here seen [with language] in the extreme stage of its development” (762).

[21] Brand Blanshard, *The Nature of Thought* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1948), I, 468.

[22] An Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy, 461-2.

[23] John Stuart Mill’s Philosophy of Scientific Method, ed. Ernest Nagel (New York: Hafner, 1950), xxxii.

[24] Chapter xi of An Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy.

[25] Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, tr. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), 153-4.

[26] *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy*, 1st ed. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1865), 331-2. In the 3rd ed. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1867), the first of the two sentences quoted was revised to read: “. . . I think that the words Concept, General Notion, and other phrases of like import, convenient as they are for the lighter and every-day uses of philosophical discussion, should be abstained from where precision is required” (388).

[27] Mill’s criticism is less harsh in the *Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy* than in the *System of Logic*. “Many writers have given good and valuable expositions of the principles and rules of Logic, from the Conceptualist point of view. The doctrines which they have laid down respecting Conception, Judgment, and Reasoning, have been capable of being rendered into

equivalent statements respecting Terms, Propositions, and Arguments; these, indeed, were what the writers really had in their thoughts, and there was little amiss except a mode of expression which attempted to be more philosophical than it knew how to be. To say nothing of less illustrious examples, this is true of all the properly logical part of Locke's Essay. His admirable Third Book requires hardly any other alteration to bring it up to the scientific level of the present time, than to be corrected by blotting out everywhere the words Abstract Idea, and replacing them by 'the connotation of the class-name.' " (414.)

[28] D. W. Hamlyn, "Empiricism," *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), II, 503.

[29] An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, 492-3.

[30] *Ibid.*, 460-1.

[31] The extent of the novelty which Mill attributed to his formulation of the canons is indicated in a letter to Sir John Herschel, 1 May, 1843: "You will find that the most important chapter of the book, that on the four Experimental Methods, is little more than an expansion & a more scientific statement of what you had previously stated in the more popular manner suited to the purpose of your 'Introduction' " *EL, CW, XIII*, 583). As for Bacon, it was he who recognized *elimination* as "the foundation of experimental inquiry." For his criticism of the ancients' *inductio per enumerationem simplicem* he "merited the title . . . of Founder of the Inductive Philosophy. The value of his own contributions to a more philosophical theory of the subject has certainly been exaggerated." (Below, 392, 313.) "A revolution is peaceably and progressively effecting itself in philosophy, the reverse of that to which Bacon has attached his name. That great man changed the method of the sciences from deductive to experimental, and it is now rapidly reverting from experimental to deductive." (482.) On the failure of Bacon's inductive logic to produce any actual scientific results, Mill says, "But this, though not unfrequently remarked, has scarcely received any plausible explanation; and some, indeed, have preferred to assert that all rules of induction are useless, rather than suppose that Bacon's rules are grounded on an insufficient analysis of the inductive process. Such, however, will be seen to be the fact, as soon as it is considered, that Bacon entirely overlooked Plurality of Causes." (763.) It is not uncommon to link Mill's conception of induction not only with Bacon's but also with Hume's, as given in the section of his *Treatise of Human Nature* entitled, "Rules by which to judge of causes and effects." However, Mill makes no mention of Hume in this regard.

[32] *The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences* (London: Parker, 1847), I, 1.

[33] *EL, CW, XIII*, 514.

[34] For examples of Bain's assistance, see the Textual Introduction, lxviii and lxxi ff. below.

[35] *Logic*, 945. Mill provides five canons, with the titles, the Method of Agreement, the Method of Difference, the Joint Method of Agreement and Difference, the Method of Residues, and the Method of Concomitant Variations, but he calls them collectively "the Four Methods of Experimental Inquiry" without giving any direct explanation of this anomaly. For an explanation, see the Textual Introduction, n49 on lxviii below.





# VOLUME IX - AN EXAMINATION OF WILLIAM HAMILTON'S PHILOSOPHY. INTRODUCTION BY ALAN RYAN

## SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume IX - An Examination of William Hamilton's Philosophy and of The Principal Philosophical Questions Discussed in his Writings*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by Alan Ryan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/240/40818>>.

## INTRODUCTION

### I. REPUTATION OF THE WORK

An examination of Sir William Hamilton's philosophy is not a widely read work; nor is it very highly regarded, even by those who are most attracted to Mill's writings on philosophy. It contains some instructive set-pieces, which have preserved a sort of exemplary interest: Mill's analysis of Matter in terms of "permanent possibilities of sensation," his confessedly abortive analysis of personal identity in similarly phenomenalist terms, his analysis of free-will and responsibility, and his ringing declaration that he would not bow his knee to worship a God whose moral worth he was required to take on trust—all these still find their place in contemporary discussions of empiricism. Mill's analysis of the nature of judgment and belief perhaps engages the interest of those who hope to explore the problems raised by *A System of Logic* in a secondary source. But it is doubtful whether many readers who leave the *Logic* wondering quite what Mill really thought about the epistemological status of arithmetic and geometry find themselves helped by reading the *Examination*; nor does it add much to Mill's earlier account of causation, beyond the effective demonstration that whatever rivals there were to Mill's account, Hamilton's was not one.

In part, the fallen position of the *Examination* is the result of the obscurity into which its target has fallen. If the *Examination* is not much read, then Hamilton's edition of Reid's *Works*<sup>1</sup> is certainly not read now, as it was in Mill's day, for Hamilton's elaborate "Dissertations on Reid." The most recent discussion of Reid's philosophy, for example, treats Hamilton as a late and somewhat eccentric contributor to the philosophy of common sense.<sup>2</sup> Hamilton's *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*,<sup>3</sup> of whose repetitive and elementary character Mill was severely critical, were something of an embarrassment to their editors when they appeared after Hamilton's death. Now they are simply unreadable. The one accessible source for Hamilton's opinions is the volume of collected essays, *Discussions on Philosophy and Literature, Education and University Reform*,<sup>4</sup> in which he reprinted his contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*. Even those essays now attract the educational historian rather more than the philosopher; Hamilton's attack on the corruption and incompetence of

early nineteenth-century Oxford excites more interest than his critique of Cousin's views on the Absolute.

To the destruction of Hamilton's philosophical reputation, Mill's *Examination* contributed a good deal. Mark Pattison, reviewing the *Examination* in *The Reader*, exclaimed:

The effect of Mr Mill's review is the absolute annihilation of all Sir W. Hamilton's doctrines, opinions, of all he has written or taught. Nor of himself only, but all his followers, pupils, copyists, are involved in the common ruin. The whole fabric of the Hamiltonian philosophy is not only demolished, but its very stones are ground to powder. Where once stood Sebastopol bidding proud defiance to rival systems is now  
a coast barren and blue  
Sandheaps behind and sandhills before.<sup>5</sup>

The enthusiasm with which Pattison contemplated the ruin of Sir William's followers may have had rather more to do with the academic politics of Oxford, in which Pattison and Hamilton's disciple H. L. Mansel were fiercely opposed to one another, than to any very exact appreciation of just which of Hamilton's doctrines had suffered just what damage. But, although Hamilton's friends and followers ignored Pattison's advice that they "had better erect a monument to him, and say nothing about Mr Mill's book,"<sup>6</sup> they could not restore Hamilton's status. Mill might not have shown that the intuitive school of metaphysics was inevitably doomed to obscurity and muddle, but it was generally held that he had shown Hamilton himself to be at best obscure, at worst simply incompetent.

Whether Hamilton was worth the expenditure of Mill's powder and shot is another question. W. G. Ward, writing some years after in the *Dublin Review*,<sup>7</sup> thought that Mill had done well to take on one representative figure of the anti-empiricist school and pursue him steadily through all the cruces of the argument between associationism and its opponents. But Mark Pattison thought that the cracking of dead nuts just to make sure they were empty was a task which wearied both those who undertook it and those who watched them do it. It is, at the very least, doubtful whether Mill was wise to devote quite so much attention to Hamilton, for the *Examination* falls awkwardly between the twin tasks of providing a complete critical exposition of Hamilton's philosophy on the one hand and of providing an equally comprehensive defence of associationism on the other. In effect, Mill's defence of associationism is spread over the notes he supplied to James Mill's *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*,<sup>8</sup> and over his reviews, as well as through the *Examination*. Whatever else may be said for this defence, its organization impedes the reader of the *Examination*, who is likely to resent having to recover Mill's views on perception, say, from an argument conducted at several removes from the issues, in which Mill complains of the injustice of Hamilton's attacking Thomas Brown for supposed misrepresentation of the views of Thomas Reid.<sup>9</sup> It also does something to account for the fact that the criticisms of Mill were criticisms of his positive claims on behalf of associationism more frequently than they were positive defences of Hamilton. Perhaps Mill should have ignored Hamilton altogether, and stuck to the positive task; he certainly left a great many openings for his critics, and might have been better advised to stop them up rather than triumph over Hamilton.

There are more serious problems than these in the way of the reader of the *Examination*. Mill's critique of Hamilton and Mansel was one engagement in the battle between empiricism and rationalism. But it was an engagement in which the combatants employed intellectual weapons which we find difficult to use. The argument between Mill and Hamilton is, in their terms, an argument about the nature and contents of "consciousness"; it is in some sense an argument about psychological issues. But whereas we now tend to draw a sharp distinction between the empirical inquiry into the mind and its powers which we call psychology, and the non-empirical inquiry into the possibility of knowledge or into the intelligibility of knowledge-claims which we now call philosophy, no such distinction appears in the *Examination*. Where we are tolerably sure that philosophical claims about the nature of space and time, or about the nature of perception, ought to be immune from empirical confirmation and disconfirmation, Mill and Hamilton were not. This difference does not make for difficulties with Mill alone; it means that the views of all other philosophers are "read" rather differently by Mill and Hamilton from the way it is natural to us to read them. Thus, Kant's contribution to philosophy is treated as a contribution to psychology. Where, for instance, we might interpret Kant's account of the *synthetic a priori* as entailing that it is a sort of nonsense, though not strictly a grammatical or syntactical sort of nonsense, to suggest that there might be regions of space and time in which the laws of geometry or arithmetic do not apply, Hamilton plainly took the claim to be one about the incapacity of the mind to *conceive* non-Euclidean space or things which were not countable; and Mill was equally ready to understand Kant in this way, differing over the issue of whether our incapacity to conceive such a space or such objects was part of the original constitution of the mind or the result of experience. To some extent, therefore, readers of the *Examination* have to engage in a process of translation in order to feel at home with Mill's argument. Sometimes there are cases which seem to defy the process. Mill's discussion of how we might come to have the concept of space, for instance, is, as we shall see, very awkward if it is read as an empirical hypothesis about how the furniture of the mind might have been built; and it is more awkward still if it is read as what we now call philosophy.

Against such a background, the proper task of a critic is a matter for debate. Even if we can decently evade any obligation to show that the *Examination* is a neglected masterpiece, there is a good deal left to do. The task is partly historical and partly philosophical, and it is perhaps an instance of those cases where the history is unintelligible without the philosophy, as well as the other way about. Firstly, something has to be said about why Mill should have decided to write the *Examination* at all, and about the reasons for its immediate *succès* both *d'estime* and *de scandale*. Then, something must be said about the life and career of Sir William Hamilton, and at least a little about the role of Mill's other main antagonist, H. L. Mansel. Once the appropriate background in Mill's career has been filled in, and the main characters have been identified, I shall go on to provide a substitute for the extended analytical table of contents which was once (though it was not part of the *Examination*) such a useful feature of scholarly works. My account will be both expository and critical, and some at least of the distinctive philosophical views of Hamilton and Mansel will be there explored.

## II. MILL'S MOTIVATION

Why should Mill in particular have devoted himself to writing such a book as the *Examination*?<sup>10</sup> From his reading of the *Discussions* shortly after its appearance, Mill had inferred that Hamilton occupied a sort of halfway house, subscribing neither to his own enthusiasm for the principle of the association of ideas nor to the excesses of post-Kantian Continental philosophy, in which, as Mill saw it, we were supposed to know intuitively all sorts of implausible things. Mill explains in his *Autobiography*, however, that his reading of Hamilton's posthumously published *Lectures* during 1861 alerted him to the fact (a fact confirmed by his subsequent study of the "Dissertations on Reid") that Hamilton was a much more committed and unrestrained intuitionist than he had previously supposed.<sup>11</sup>

As readers of the *Autobiography* will recall, Mill was very insistent that the struggle between the intuitionists and the school of "Experience and Association" was much more than an academic argument over the first principles of the moral sciences. In explaining why he had written the *System of Logic*, Mill had said that "it is hardly possible to exaggerate the mischiefs"<sup>12</sup> caused by a false philosophy of mind. The doctrine that we have intuitive and infallible knowledge of the principles governing either our own selves or the outside world seemed to him

the great intellectual support of false doctrines and bad institutions. By the aid of this theory, every inveterate belief and every intense feeling, of which the origin is not remembered, is enabled to dispense with the obligation of justifying itself by reason, and is erected into its own all-sufficient voucher and justification. There never was such an instrument devised for consecrating all deep seated prejudices.<sup>13</sup>

The *System of Logic* was in quite large part directed at William Whewell, and, up to a point, Mill was right to see Whewell as the defender of conservative and Anglican institutions—he was Master of Trinity, and Mill had refused to attend Trinity as a youth for obvious anti-clerical reasons.<sup>14</sup> The *Examination* is described in terms which suggest that Mill thought it necessary to return to the attack on the same front. The difference between the intuitionists and the associationists, he says,

is not a mere matter of abstract speculation; it is full of practical consequences, and lies at the foundation of all the greatest differences of practical opinion in an age of progress. The practical reformer has continually to demand that changes be made in things which are supported by powerful and widely spread feelings, or to question the apparent necessity and indefeasibleness of established facts; and it is often an indispensable part of his argument to shew, how those powerful feelings had their origin, and how those facts came to seem necessary and indefeasible.<sup>15</sup>

One might doubt whether there was any very close practical connection between, say, a Kantian view of knowledge and conservatism on the one hand, and a Humean view and liberalism on the other. Certainly it is hard to imagine Hume welcoming the French Revolution, had he lived to see it, and it is not very difficult to construct radical political philosophies of a broadly

intuitionist kind. Kant at least welcomed the French Revolution, even if he trembled before the execution of Louis XVI.<sup>16</sup>

But Mill had no doubt that some such connection did hold.

I have long felt that the prevailing tendency to regard all the marked distinctions of human character as innate, and in the main indelible, and to ignore the irresistible proofs that by far the greater part of those differences, whether between individuals, races, or sexes, are such as not only might but naturally would be produced by differences in circumstances, is one of the chief hindrances to the rational treatment of great social questions, and one of the greatest stumbling blocks to human improvement.<sup>17</sup>

He therefore decided that it was right to produce something more combative and controversial than a treatise on the associationist philosophy of mind. It was necessary to attack the chief exponent of the opposite view—hence what some readers will surely think of as the grindingly negative tone of a good deal of the *Examination*. Mill, in many ways, was ill-fitted to assault Hamilton in this fashion; he was too fair-minded to let Hamilton's case take its chances, and therefore encumbered his attack with enormous and tedious quantities of quotation from Hamilton. Yet at the same time he was so entirely unsympathetic to Hamilton that he rarely paused to wonder if some rational and useful case might be extracted from the confused jumble, which was all that Hamilton's writings eventually seemed to him to amount to. In a way, he could neither do his worst to Hamilton, nor could he do his best for him.

Yet the attack was a sort of duty, especially in view of the use made of Hamilton's philosophy of the conditioned by his pupil Mansel. H. L. Mansel's Bampton Lectures had aroused a good deal of indignation from the time of their delivery in 1858, and they went into several editions, with replies to critics appended to new editions. Mansel's aim had been something like Kant's—to limit the pretensions of reason to make room for faith. Accordingly, he had argued that we were obliged as a matter of faith to believe that God was everything that was good, although "good," as applied to the Almighty, was a term which was at best related only by analogy to "good" applied to a human being. Mill thought that this conclusion amounted to using Hamilton's doctrine to justify a "view of religion which I hold to be profoundly immoral—that it is our duty to bow down in worship before a Being whose moral attributes are affirmed to be unknowable by us, and to be perhaps extremely different from those which, when we are speaking of our fellow-creatures, we call by the same names."<sup>18</sup>

The implausibility of Mill's attempt to line up the progressives behind the doctrine of association and the reactionaries behind the doctrine of intuitive knowledge is neatly illustrated by his conjoining Hamilton and Mansel in this fashion. Their political allegiances were practically as far apart as it was possible to get. Mansel was politically a Tory, and was conservative in educational matters too. He was one of the most powerful defenders of the old tutorial arrangements that characterized teaching at Oxford and distinguished it from the Scottish and German universities. Hamilton, on the other hand, was a liberal in politics, thought the tutorial system beneath con-

tempt, thought Oxford colleges entirely corrupt, and, had he been able, would have swept away the whole system in favour of something modelled on the Scottish system.

Mill's intention of provoking a *combat à outrance* was wholly successful. The *Examination* attracted much more attention than the *System of Logic* had done.<sup>19</sup> Mansel's long review of it, *The Philosophy of the Conditioned*—which only covered the first few chapters on the principle of the relativity of knowledge and the attack on his Bampton Lectures—came out within months. James McCosh produced a volume, *In Defence of Fundamental Truth*, intended to defend those parts of Hamilton's philosophy which were most characteristic of the Scottish philosophy of common sense. Within two years Mill was preparing a third edition of the *Examination* in which these and several other extended attacks were answered; the furore continued in the years before Mill's death, with the appearance in 1869 of John Veitch's *Memoir of Sir William Hamilton Bart.*, a pious defence of the opinions as well as the life of his old teacher, and W. G. Ward's further assault on associationism in the *Dublin Review* in 1871. The balance of the comments was undoubtedly hostile to Mill, less because of a widespread enthusiasm for the doctrines of Sir William Hamilton than because of a widespread fear that their rejection must lead to what McCosh almost invariably conjoined as "Humeanism and Comtism"—a mixture of atheism and dubious French politics. In this sense Mill's belief that he was fighting the pious and the conservative was absolutely right, for it was they—with the exception of some support from Herbert Spencer on the one topic of self-evidence—who were his hostile reviewers. Even then, some of the supposedly pious and the conservative were more in sympathy with Mill than with Hamilton. Two notable adherents were William Whewell, who, for all that he was Mill's victim on many occasions, had no doubt that Hamilton was an intellectual disaster who had set the course of speculation back by twenty years, and F. D. Maurice, who had been a harsh and persistent critic of Mansel for years.

It is difficult to know when this interest in the argument between Mill and Hamilton died.<sup>20</sup> From what evidence there is, it looks as though an interest in the *Examination* lasted so long as the *System of Logic* was still doing its good work in changing the philosophical syllabus in Oxford and Cambridge. But during the 1870s a new and in many ways more professional generation of philosophers became prominent, who had in one sense absorbed as much as they needed of Mill's work and, in another, were determined to clear away his intellectual influence. In Oxford at any rate, it was T. H. Green and F. H. Bradley who set the pace; and they were not inclined to defend Hamilton for the sake of refuting Mill, especially when their epistemological allegiances were Hegelian rather than patchily Kantian. So Bradley's *Ethical Studies* contains an extremely effective analysis of Mill's account of personal identity, but does not bother with the rest of the contest between the transcendental and empiricist analysis of the relations between mind and matter. And Green, though he applies to Mill the criticisms he develops against Hume, does not treat the *Examination* as the *locus classicus* of Mill's views. Thereafter, it seems that anyone much interested in Mill's philosophy would look into the *Examination* only for the range of topics mentioned at the beginning of this Introduction.

### III. HAMILTON AND MANSEL

ALTHOUGH THE NAME OF HAMILTON is scarcely mentioned now, except in connection with his doctrine of the quantification of the predicate, it seems a proper estimate of his eminence in the first half of the nineteenth century to say that he and Mill were the two people in Britain whose names might occur to a philosophically educated foreigner who was asked to name a British thinker of any distinction. Sorley's *History of English Philosophy*, for instance, links the two names together in precisely this sense.<sup>21</sup> And it seems that if one had asked teachers in American universities during the middle years of the century what contemporary influences they felt from Britain, they would have talked of Hamilton and Mill—though a little later the influence of Spencer would no doubt have been, if anything, stronger.

Hamilton was born in Glasgow on 8 March, 1788, in one of the houses in Professors' Court, for his father was Professor of Botany and Anatomy. His father died when William was only two years old, but there is no evidence that the family suffered any financial difficulties in consequence, and Mrs. Hamilton's character was quite strong enough to ensure that the absence of the father's hand was not much felt.

After attending both Scottish and English schools and Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities, Hamilton began in 1807 a distinguished academic career at Balliol College, Oxford. In spite of his exceptional erudition and an epic performance in the final examination in Classics, as a Scot he received no offer of a fellowship, and returned to study law at Edinburgh, being admitted to the bar in 1813. His legal career was distinguished solely by a successful application (heard by the sheriff of Edinburgh in 1816) to be recognized as the heir to the Baronetcy of Preston and Fingalton.

If his nationality cost him the first opportunity of academic preferment, it was his Whig sympathies that scotched the second when, in 1820, he failed to succeed Thomas Brown in the Chair of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh. The following year he obtained an underpaid and undemanding Chair in Civil History, but he made no mark in intellectual circles until 1829, when he began to contribute to the *Edinburgh Review*.

His first article, on Cousin, was an editor's nightmare, being late in arrival, much too long, and completely beyond the grasp of most of the readers of the *Review*.<sup>22</sup> But it was a great success with Cousin himself, and it served notice on the outside world that someone in the British Isles was abreast of European philosophy. It was for the *Edinburgh* that Hamilton wrote the most readable of his work: the two essays on "The Philosophy of the Conditioned" and on "Perception," his essay on "Logic" which contains (at least on Hamilton's reading of it) the first statement of the doctrine of the quantification of the predicate, and his condemnation of the intellectual and legal condition of the University of Oxford. It cannot be said that they were thought, even at the time, to be uniformly readable; Napier, the editor, was frequently reduced to complaining of the excessive length, the overabundant quotations, and the archaic forms of speech which Hamilton indulged in.<sup>23</sup> But, as Mill's account would lead one to expect, it is these essays, reprinted in his *Discussions*, which show Hamilton at his best and most accessible. Even then, there are longueurs attributable less to the mania for quotation than to the combative manner of the author. The es-

say on perception, for instance, is so grindingly critical of Thomas Brown that the reader loses patience with the argument.

In 1836, however, academic justice was at last done. The Chair of Logic and Metaphysics in Edinburgh fell vacant, and this time the City Council elected him, by eighteen votes to fourteen. The composition of lectures for the courses he was now obliged to give followed very much the same pattern as his literary exploits—everything was done too late and too elaborately; so in his first year Hamilton not infrequently worked until dawn the night before delivering his lectures, and then took what rest he could while his wife got the day's lecture into shape for delivery. Shortly after the election, he embarked on his edition of the *Works* of Reid. This was a characteristically acrimonious business, in which Hamilton started work at the suggestion of Tait, the Edinburgh bookseller, then took offence at the financial arrangements proposed by Tait (who seems to have expected a volume of Reid's writings with a short preface, rather than something with as much of Hamilton's erudition as Reid's thinking in it, and who was not willing to pay for labours he had no wish to see anyone undertake), and published the edition at his own expense in 1846.<sup>24</sup>

Hamilton's active career was relatively brief. In 1844 he suffered a stroke, which did not impair his general intellectual grasp, but left him lame in the right side and increasingly enfeebled. He had to have his lectures read for him much of the time, although he managed to keep up a reasonably active role in the discussion of them. He was, however, well enough to see the republication of his earlier essays and to carry on a violent controversy with Augustus De Morgan, both about their relative priority in the discovery of the principle of the quantification of the predicate, and about its merits. De Morgan was vastly entertained by the violence of Hamilton's attacks, both because he enjoyed the resulting publicity it conferred on his own work and, so far as one can see, because he liked having an argument with someone so uninhibited in his aggression as was Hamilton.<sup>25</sup> Others were less sure: Boole, thanking Hamilton for the gift of a copy of the *Discussions*, took the opportunity to say: "I think you are unjustifiably severe upon my friend Mr De Morgan. He is, I believe, a man as much imbued with the love of truth as can anywhere be found. When such men err, a calm and simple statement of the ground of their error answers every purpose which the interests either of learning or of justice can require."<sup>26</sup> The effort was wasted twice over, seeing that Hamilton was unlikely to become more moderate, and De Morgan was perfectly happy to be abused.

Hamilton's health became worse after a fall during 1853, and he became less mentally active in the last two or three years of his life. Retirement, however, was impossible, since he could not live without the £500 a year that the Chair gave him.<sup>27</sup> Despite these outward difficulties, and the acerbity of his writings, all was not gloom and grimness. Hamilton's domestic life was strikingly happy; when he died on 6 May, 1856, he left behind a devoted family, loyal pupils, and a good many friends as well.

A matter of much more difficulty than establishing the outward conditions of his life is working out how Hamilton came to exercise such a considerable influence on the philosophical life of the country. He created enthusiastic students, of whom Thomas S. Baynes became the most professionally and professorially successful, but otherwise it seems to have been the weight of learn-



ing of a half-traditional kind which backed up the reception of his views. His innovations in logic, for instance, were produced in articles which were largely devoted to a minute chronicle of the fate of deductive logic in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. His views on perception, or on the relativity of knowledge, are always placed in the framework of an historical analysis of the sort which the higher education of the time encouraged. How much it assisted his, or anyone's, understanding of Kant to yoke him with Plato for the purposes of comparison and contrast is debatable, but the weight it added to his arguments looked to some of his audience very much like intellectual power rather than mere weight. He was more or less an intellectual fossil thirty years after his death, however. Sir Leslie Stephen's account of Hamilton in the *Dictionary of National Biography* presents him as an eccentric and pedantic leftover from the Scottish school of common sense. And Stephen's marginal comments in his copy of the *Discussions* display the exasperation Hamilton is likely to induce; at the end of "Philosophy of the Conditioned," the pencilled comment reads: "A good deal of this seems to be very paltry logomachy. His amazing way of quoting 'authorities' (eg Sir K. Digby, Walpole & Mme de Stael) to prove an obvious commonplace is of the genuine pedant. And yet he had a very sound argument—only rather spoilt."<sup>28</sup>

Henry Longueville Mansel was Hamilton's chief disciple in Oxford.<sup>29</sup> Born in 1820 he shone as a pupil first at Merchant Taylor's School and then at St. John's College, Oxford; and in 1843, with a double First in Mathematics and Classics, he settled down with great pleasure to the task of tutoring clever undergraduates; he was regarded throughout the university as its best tutor. He held the first appointment as Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy, and therefore counts R. G. Collingwood, Gilbert Ryle, and Sir Peter Strawson among his intellectual progeny. With his interest in Kant and his German successors, and his astringent, largely destructive approach to the subject he professed, he might almost be said to have set the boundaries of the subsequent style.

Mansel was a productive writer: his *Prolegomena Logica* appeared in 1851; his *Metaphysics*, which was an expansion of a substantial essay for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in 1860. He was most widely known as the author of *The Limits of Religious Thought*, the Bampton Lectures for 1858. This work was reprinted several times, and aroused a great deal of controversy, in which F. D. Maurice played an especially acrimonious role. Philosophically, Mansel was greatly indebted to Kant, but he was very hostile to Kant's theology and to Kant's moral philosophy alike. *The Limits of Religious Thought* was described by Mansel himself as

an attempt to pursue, in relation to Theology, the inquiry instituted by Kant in relation to Metaphysics; namely, *How are synthetical judgments à priori possible?* In other words: Does there exist in the human mind any direct faculty of religious knowledge, by which, in its speculative exercise, we are enabled to decide, independently of all external Revelation, what is the true nature of God, and the manner in which He must manifest Himself to the world . . . ?<sup>30</sup>

The answer he gave was that there was no such faculty of religious knowledge, and that natural theology was quite unable to set limits to the nature and attributes of God. Moreover, he

shared none of Kant's certainty that our moral faculty allowed us to judge supposed revelations by their consistency with divine goodness. What goodness is in the divinity is not a matter on which human reason is fit to pronounce.

Mansel was not only a productive writer; he wrote elegantly and lucidly. There are many reasons for wishing that it had been Mansel's *Metaphysics* which Mill had examined, rather than Hamilton's *Lectures*, and the clarity of Mansel's prose is not the least. Even in the pious context of the Bampton Lectures he is witty—replying to a critic who complains that Mansel's attack on rationalism in theology is an attempt to limit the use of reason, he says that it is only the improper use of reason he is rejecting: "All Dogmatic Theology is not Dogmatism, nor all use of Reason, Rationalism, any more than all drinking is drunkenness."<sup>31</sup> It was not surprising that progress came quickly. In 1855 he was elected to the Readership in Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy, and in 1859 to the Waynflete Professorship. Mansel's wit and exuberance were, however, not matched by physical strength. His acceptance of the Chair of Ecclesiastical History in 1866 was a partial recognition of the need to conserve his energy, and a move to London as Dean of St. Paul's in 1868 more explicit recognition. Besides, by the mid-1860s he was finding the moderately reformed Oxford increasingly uncongenial to his conservative tastes. In 1871 he died suddenly in his sleep.

The contrasts between Mansel and Hamilton are so complete that it is difficult to know why Mansel was so devoted a follower of "the Edinburgh metaphysician"—for his devotion did indeed extend to employing Hamilton's logical innovations in rather unlikely contexts, and even to defending them against De Morgan.<sup>32</sup> What is evident so far is that Mansel required nothing much more than an ally against the pretensions of Absolute Idealism; but that judgment plainly understates the strength of his conviction. It is obviously preposterous to think of Mansel and Hamilton as sharing any *political* commitment which would account for such a degree of conviction. It is more reasonable to suppose that they shared something which one can only gesture towards by calling it a matter of religious psychology. Mansel genuinely seems to have thought that an acknowledgement of the limitations of human reason was a more reverent attitude towards the unknowable God than any attempt to look further into His nature, and he seems to have been impressed by a similar outlook in Hamilton:

True, therefore, are the declarations of a pious philosophy:—"A God understood would be no God at all;"—"To think that God is, as we can think him to be, is blasphemy."—The Divinity, in a certain sense, is revealed; in a certain sense is concealed: He is at once known and unknown. But the last and highest consecration of all true religion, must be an altar—Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ—"To the unknown and unknowable God."<sup>33</sup>

Hamilton's insistence that his doubts about Absolute knowledge are not only compatible with, but in some sense required by, Christian revelation is practically the theme of Mansel's Bampton Lectures. Between them and Mill there was a gulf, therefore, but one less political than Mill's *Autobiography* suggests. It was the gulf between Mill's utterly secular, this-worldly temperament and their sense of the final mysteriousness of the world. The harshness of Mansel's attack on the

*Examination* in *The Philosophy of the Conditioned* reflects his resentment of this matter-of-fact approach to the world, a resentment which cannot have been soothed by the fact that in Oxford, as elsewhere, the staples of a Christian philosophy, such as Butler's *Analogy*, were losing ground to such textbooks as the *System of Logic*.<sup>34</sup>

#### IV. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CONDITIONED

The opening shots of Mill's campaign against Hamilton's philosophy are directed against "the philosophy of the conditioned." The burden of Mill's complaint against Hamilton is that his attachment to what he and Mill term "the relativity of knowledge" is intermittent, half-hearted, explained in incoherent and self-contradictory ways. He accuses Hamilton of both asserting and denying that we can have knowledge of Things in themselves, and of giving wholly feeble reasons for supposing that we cannot conceive of, particularly, the nature of space and time as they are intrinsically, but can nevertheless believe that they are genuinely and in themselves infinite. It is this part of Hamilton's philosophy that Mansel's essay on *The Philosophy of the Conditioned* had to endeavour to rescue; his Bampton Lectures on *The Limits of Religious Thought* hung on the negative claim that the human mind could not conceive of the nature of the Deity, so that He remained inaccessible to philosophical speculation, and on the positive claim that there was still room for belief in such an inconceivable Deity. Mansel's version of the philosophy of the conditioned was intended to repel the pretensions of philosophy in the sphere of religion. "Pantheist" philosophers of the Absolute, such as Hegel and Schelling, were unable to provide knowledge of an Absolute that might replace, or be recognized as the philosophically reputable surrogate of, the God of Christianity; less ambitious philosophers were shown to be unable to restrict the attributes of a Deity by the categories of human reason. As this account suggests, the Kantian overtones in Mansel's work are very marked, and, as we shall see, *The Philosophy of the Conditioned* gives a very Kantian interpretation of Hamilton.

Yet the oddity, or perhaps we should only say the distinctive feature, of Hamilton's philosophy on its metaphysical front was the combination of the critical philosophy of Kant with Reid's philosophy of common sense. Hamilton's position seems at first to be exactly that of Reid. He sided with Reid and common sense in holding that "the way of ideas" is suicidal, that any theory which presents the external world as a logical construction from the immediate objects of perception (construed as "ideas") simply fails to account for the world's true externality. In particular, he held, with Reid, that what we perceive are things themselves, not a representation of them, or an intermediary idea. Moreover, *some* of the properties which we perceive things to possess really are properties of the objects themselves, and not contributions of the percipient mind. The secondary qualities he was willing to recognize as not existing in the object itself, but primary qualities were wholly objective, not observer dependent. The knowledge we have of things, however, still remains in some sense relative or conditioned. The question is, in what sense?

It is at this point that the invocation of Kant's criticalism causes difficulties, for Hamilton could afford to take only a few details from Kant if he was not to run headlong against Reid. Above all, he wanted to side with Kant against Kant's successors, and to deny that we can know anything of the Absolute or the Unconditioned. He wanted, that is, to deny the possibility of a positive pre- or post-critical metaphysics, in which it was supposed to be demonstrated that Space and Time were in themselves infinite—or not. But he did not want to follow Kant in his "Copernican revolution"; or, rather, he could not have intended to do anything of the sort. For Hamilton did not think that the contribution of the percipient mind to what is perceived is anything like as extensive as Kant claimed. The implication for metaphysics of the "relative" or "conditioned" nature of human knowledge he certainly took to be what Kant claimed it to be:

The result of his examination was the abolition of the metaphysical sciences,—of Rational Psychology, Ontology, Speculative Theology, &c., as founded on mere *petitiones principiorum*. . . . "Things in themselves," Matter, Mind, God,—all, in short, that is not finite, relative, and phaenomenal, as bearing no analogy to our faculties, is beyond the verge of our knowledge. Philosophy was thus restricted to the observation and analysis of the phaenomena of consciousness; and what is not explicitly or implicitly given in a fact of consciousness, is condemned, as transcending the sphere of a legitimate speculation. A knowledge of the Unconditioned is declared impossible; either immediately, as an intuition, or mediately, as an inference.<sup>35</sup>

But he refused to draw Kant's conclusions about the subjectivity of space and time, and denied that the antinomies showed that they were only forms of intuition:

The Conditioned is the mean between two extremes,—two inconditionates, exclusive of each other, *neither of which can be conceived as possible*, but of which, on the principles of contradiction and excluded middle, *one must be admitted as necessary*. On this opinion, therefore, our faculties are shown to be weak, but not deceitful. The mind is not represented as conceiving two propositions subversive of each other, as equally possible; but only, as unable to understand as possible, either of two extremes; one of which, however, on the ground of their mutual repugnance, it is compelled to recognise as true.<sup>36</sup>

In effect, Hamilton's view seems to have been that Reid and common sense were right in holding that what we perceive are real, material objects, located in an objective space and time, objectively possessed of (some of) the properties we ascribe to them, but that Kant was right in holding that those properties which we can ascribe to them must be adapted to our faculties, "relative" in the sense of being related to our cognitive capacities.

The question of the sense in which all our knowledge is thus of the relative or the conditioned is not quite here answered, however. For there remains a considerable ambiguity about the nature of this relativism, or relatedness. The simplest reading turns the doctrine of relativity into a truism. It amounts to saying that what *we* can know depends in part upon our perceptive capacities, and that beings with different perceptual arrangements from our own would perceive the world differently. In that sense, it is no doubt true that what *we* perceive of the world is only an

aspect of the whole of what is there to be perceived. More philosophically interesting is an exploration of why we seem able to agree *that* we might in principle perceive the world quite otherwise than we do, but find it impossible to say much about *how* we might do so. Mill, however, pursues that topic no further than to its familiar sources in the questions asked by Locke—whether a man born blind could conceive of space, for instance (222ff.). Mill’s chief complaint is that Hamilton confuses several senses of relativity together, when talking of the relativity of knowledge, and that the only sense he consistently adheres to is this truistic sense. In any real sense, says Mill, Hamilton was not a relativist:

Sir W. Hamilton did not hold any opinion in virtue of which it could rationally be asserted that all human knowledge is relative; but did hold, as one of the main elements of his philosophical creed, the opposite doctrine, of the cognoscibility of external Things, in certain of their aspects, as they are in themselves, absolutely (33).

When Hamilton attempts to reconcile this objectivist account with the doctrine of the relativity of knowledge, flat contradiction is only averted by retreat into banality:

He affirms without reservation, that certain attributes (extension, figures, &c.) are known to us as they really exist out of ourselves; and also that all our knowledge of them is relative to us. And these two assertions are only reconcilable, if relativity to us is understood in the altogether trivial sense, that we know them only so far as our faculties permit. (22.)

Mill was not the severest critic of Hamilton on this score. J. H. Stirling’s critique of Hamilton’s account of perception treats Hamilton’s views with complete contempt. The contradiction between the objectivist account and the relativist account of our knowledge of the outside world is so blatant that Hamilton cannot have failed to notice it. Where Mill suspects Hamilton of mere confusion, Stirling accuses him of disingenuousness. Mill demurely declines to press any such charge (cv). He did not even suggest that Reid and Kant made awkward allies in principle. In an earlier article on “Bain’s Psychology” he had indeed yoked Reid and Kant together as members of the *a priori* school of psychological analysis. But he went on to point out that the question of the connection between our faculties and the nature of the external reality was an issue of ontology rather than psychology; and here Reid was “decidedly of opinion that Matter—not the set of phenomena so called, but the actual Thing, of which these are effects and manifestations—is cognizable by us as a reality in the universe.”<sup>37</sup> This comment suggests that Mill thought of Hamilton as discussing metaphysics in a wide sense—both “the science of being” and psychology; Reid, Kant, and Hamilton were allies in so far as they belonged to the same camp in psychology, but they made an ill-assorted trio in matters of ontology. Here Kant and Reid belonged to different camps and no one could tell where Hamilton stood. Mansel’s reply to Mill was to insist that everything in Reid, and everything in Hamilton which expressed an allegiance to Reid, should be as it were put in Kantian brackets. We might perceive things themselves, but the “thing itself” which we perceive is not the “thing-in-itself,” but only the phenomenally objective thing. The thing known in perception was the appearance to us of a noumenon of which nothing whatever could be known.<sup>38</sup>

There is something to be said for Mansel's claims. Reid at times writes as if knowledge is doubly relative: in the knower, it is a state of an ego of which we only know the states, though convinced that it exists as a continuing substance; and, in the known, what we know is states of things external to us, though again we are irresistibly convinced of their continued substantial existence. But we cannot safely go far along this path. Reid did not like to talk of substances, and certainly did not wish to introduce them as mysterious substrates; to the extent that Mansel rescues Hamilton by claiming that external things are known "relatively" as phenomena related to imperceptible noumena, he goes against the evident thrust of Reid's views. The further one presses Hamilton's attachment to Kant beyond his avowed enthusiasm for the destructive attack on positive metaphysics, the harder it is to get any textual backing for the case. It is doubtless true that a sophisticated Kantian would have been untroubled by Mill's attack, but it is quite implausible to suggest that that is what Sir William Hamilton was.

At all events, Mill's approach to Hamilton is initially entirely negative. Mill does not put forward any view of his own on the relativity of knowledge. The reason is a good one so far as it goes. Mill's distinction between the *a priori* and *a posteriori* schools of psychology is one which only partially overlaps his main theme. For in the *Examination*, just as in the *Logic*, Mill's hostility is directed against those who attempt to infer the nature of the world from the contents and capacities of our minds. In principle, there is no reason why there should be any overlap between *a priorism* in psychology and the view that mental capacities and incapacities reflect real possibilities and impossibilities in the world. *A priorism*, as Mill describes it, is a psychological approach which refers our most important beliefs about the world, and our moral principles, too, to instincts or to innate capacities or dispositions. The sense in which these are *a priori* is not very easy to characterize, although the fact that many of the instinctive beliefs described by the *a priori* psychologists of Mill's account coincide with the judgments described by Kant as *synthetic a priori* suggests most of the appropriate connotations. Thus the perception that objects occupy a space described by Euclidean geometry embodies the instinctive judgment that bodies *must* occupy space, and the necessity ascribed to the truths of geometry reflects the instinctive judgment that, for instance, two straight lines *cannot* enclose a space, and so on. Such judgments, says Mill, purport to be *a priori* in the sense that they have to be presumed true before experience is possible, or at any rate characterizable. Whether they are held to be *temporally* prior to experience is, he recognizes, not essential: there is no need to deny that children have to learn arithmetic in order to deny that its truths reflect the teachings of experience. Mill sees that it is quite arguable that the capacity to recognize necessities of thought is one which matures in the child, and requires experience to set it to work. Indeed, at times, he seems to suggest that the dispute between *a priori* and *a posteriori* psychologists is an empirical dispute in which there need not be only two opposing sides. For if the issue is one of how much of an adult's understanding of the world we can account for as the result of individual learning, there will be a continuum between psychologists who stress the extent to which such an understanding is as it were preprogrammed into the human organism and those who stress how much of it can be accounted for by trial-and-error learning from the organism's environment. In like manner, with reference to the area of moral and prudential reasoning, there would be a similar continuum between those who see us as relatively plastic and malleable

organisms and those who claim to see some moral and prudential attachments more or less genetically built in.

Now, in so far as the argument proceeds in these terms, it will still follow a pattern which is visible in Mill's own approach. That is, the environmentalist must attempt to show some way in which the capacity, whose acquisition he is trying to explain, could have been built up through experience; the innatist will respond by showing that there are features of such a capacity which are simply omitted or more subtly misrepresented by such an account. The question of how much of what we perceive of the world is to be credited to the programme by which the percipient organism organizes its physical interaction with the world, and how much is to be set down to learning, is then an empirical question, or rather a whole series of empirical questions. This was the point at which Mill and Herbert Spencer came close to agreement. Spencer's long discussion of the nature of intuitive knowledge in the *Fortnightly Review* is a protest against being assigned to the rationalist camp by Mill, in which Spencer's central point is that when we refer our sensations to external objects as their causes this is, as it were, a hypothesis proffered by the organism, a hypothesis which we cannot consciously shake, and one on which we cannot help acting. Nonetheless, it is only a hypothesis; it is, however, one which seems to have been programmed into us by evolution, and one whose reliability is most readily accounted for by the theory that the external world is, indeed, much as we perceive it is.<sup>39</sup> The doctrine is not one which would perturb Mill; he ascribed something very like it to Reid.<sup>40</sup>

This assertion, however, does imply that Mill's own interest in the relativity of knowledge as a central issue in epistemology rather than psychology, would necessarily be slight. That the organic constitution of human beings sets limits to what they could hope to know about the world was an uninteresting empirical truth; interesting truths about the ways in which we were prone to illusions in some areas, or about the ways in which we estimated the size, shape, movement, or whatever of external bodies, would emerge piecemeal. Mill never quite propounded a version of the verification principle, and therefore never went to the lengths of suggesting that what one might call transcendental relativism or transcendental idealism was simply meaningless, because its truth or falsity could make no observational difference. But he came very close.

He came particularly close when he turned from Hamilton's views on the positive relativity of knowledge to Hamilton's negative case, as set out in his critique of Cousin. In his attack on Cousin, Hamilton had denied that we can ever attain to positive knowledge of "the Infinite" and "the Absolute"; Mill dismantles Hamilton's various arguments to this effect, distinguishing Kantian arguments to show that we can know nothing of noumena from arguments against the possibility of an "infinite being." They are, he points out, directed at very different targets. That our knowledge is phenomenal, not noumenal, "is true of the finite as well as of the infinite, of the imperfect as well as of the completed or absolute" (58-9). The "Unconditioned," in so far as it is to be identified with the noumenal, is certainly not an object of knowledge for us. But "the Absolute" and "the Infinite" are in considerably worse shape than the merely noumenal. These, though Hamilton never meant to go so far, are shown up as a tissue of contradictory attributes: "he has established, more thoroughly perhaps than he intended, the futility of all speculation re-

specting those meaningless abstractions ‘The Infinite’ and ‘The Absolute,’ notions contradictory in themselves, and to which no corresponding realities do or can exist” (58). To Mansel’s reply that Hamilton had not tried to argue that they were meaningless abstractions, Mill had a ready retort:

I never pretended that he did; the gist of my complaint against him is, that he did not perceive them to be unmeaning. “Hamilton,” says Mr Mansel, “maintains that the terms absolute and infinite are perfectly intelligible as abstractions, as much so as relative and finite.” *Quis dubitavit?* It is not the terms absolute and infinite that are unmeaning; it is “The Infinite” and “The Absolute.” Infinite and Absolute are real attributes, abstracted from concrete objects of thought, if not of experience, which are at least believed to possess those attributes. “The Infinite” and “The Absolute” are illegitimate abstractions of what never were, nor could without self-contradiction be supposed to be, attributes of any concrete. (58n.)

Mill’s harassment of Hamilton on the Absolute and the Infinite has few lessons of great moment. It is interesting that Mill does not adopt, as he might have done, Hobbes’s method of dealing with the question of infinity. Where Hobbes had said that “infinite” characterizes not the attribute itself, but our incapacity to set a limit to whatever attribute is in question, Mill treats it as an attribute, that of being greater than any completed attribute of the appropriate sort—a line of infinite length is thus longer than any completed line. Some attributes could be characterized as absolutely present, but not infinitely so, others as infinitely but not absolutely present. The purity of water has an absolute limit, viz., when all impurities are absent, but there is no sense to be given to the notion of infinitely pure water. Concerning this issue, Mill changed his mind on minor points from one edition to another. He began by claiming that power could be infinite, but knowledge only absolute, because absolute knowledge meant knowing everything there is to be known; but under pressure from Mansel and other critics, he agreed that a being of infinite power would know everything he could think or create, so that his knowledge would be infinite also (37-8). But he is casual about such concessions, quite rightly seeing them as having little bearing on the main question, whether there is any sense at all to be attached to such notions as “the Absolute.”

It is surprising that Mill does not press his opponents harder on the meaninglessness of propositions about beings with infinite attributes and the rest. Mansel in particular, but Hamilton also, was very vulnerable to the charge that in showing God or the Unconditioned to be beyond our conceiving, they had also shown them to be beyond our believing. Both Hamilton and Mansel were utterly committed to the principle that what was not a possible object of knowledge was nevertheless a proper object of belief. Mansel stated his position with characteristic lucidity in the Preface to his Bampton Lectures:

“the terms *conceive*, *conception*, &c., as they are employed in the following Lectures, always imply an apprehension of the *manner* in which certain attributes can coexist with each other, so as to form a whole or complex notion. . . . Thus when it is said that the nature of God as an absolute and infinite being is inconceivable, it is not



meant that the terms *absolute* and *infinite* have no meaning—as mere terms they are as intelligible as the opposite terms *relative* and *finite*—but that we cannot apprehend *how* the attributes of absoluteness and infinity coexist with the personal attributes of God, though we may believe *that*, in some manner unknown to us, they do coexist. In like manner, we cannot *conceive how* a purely spiritual being sees and hears without the bodily organs of sight and hearing; yet we may *believe that* He does so in some manner. Belief is possible in the mere fact (τὸ ὄν). Conception must include the manner (τὸ πῶς).<sup>41</sup>

The obvious question invited is, *what* is the mere fact believed in? If we cannot form any conception of the state of affairs which is said to be the object of our belief, it is not clear that we can be said to know what we believe at all. Mill’s attack on the discussion of “the Infinite” and “the Absolute” concentrates, as we have just seen, on the claim that they cannot be talked about because they are literal self-contradictions; Mansel does not quite go to the length of saying that self-contradictory propositions might be true, though we cannot imagine how, and Mill does not press on him the obvious dilemma that he must either say *that*, or admit that the terms he is using no longer bear their usual meaning, and perhaps bear no clear meaning at all.

What Mill does argue against Hamilton is that no sooner has Hamilton routed those of his opponents who believe that we have direct knowledge of the unconditioned, or perhaps an indirect and implicit knowledge only, than he joins forces with them by letting what they describe as “knowledge” back into his system under the label of “belief.” If one were looking for the weak points in Mill’s account of Hamilton, this brief attack would surely be one place to seek them in. In essence, Mill’s complaint is that whatever Hamilton had maintained about the relativity of knowledge, and whatever scepticism he had evinced about the Unconditioned, everything would have been

reduced to naught, or to a mere verbal controversy, by his admission of a second kind of intellectual conviction called Belief; which is anterior to knowledge, is the foundation of it, and is not subject to its limitations; and through the medium of which we may have, and are justified in having, a full assurance of all the things which he has pronounced unknowable to us; and this not exclusively by revelation, that is, on the supposed testimony of a Being whom we have ground for trusting as veracious, but by our natural faculties (60).

Mill’s outrage is intelligible enough. If one supposes that philosophical first principles are supposed to furnish a set of premises from which we can deduce the general reliability of our knowledge, then some such method as that of Descartes is the obvious one to pursue, and it would seem that first principles must be better known than anything that hangs upon them. At least it would seem scandalous to any Cartesian to suppose that we merely *believed* in our own existence and yet *knew* that bodies could not interpenetrate or that the sun would rise again in the morning. Yet it is doubtful whether this is how Mill ought to have understood Hamilton. Spencer, who tackled the issue more sympathetically, suggested a more plausible interpretation, and one which does more justice than Mill’s to the difference between a Cartesian and a Kantian view of first principles. Mill, who treats the difference between belief and knowledge very much as twen-

tieth century empiricism was to do—that is, regarding knowledge as justified true belief (65n)—cannot allow for a difference in the ways of treating particular knowledge claims and claims about the whole of our knowledge. But Spencer does just that. When we claim to know something, we assume that we can set our belief against external evidence; but we cannot peel off the whole of our knowledge of the world from the hidden world of which it is knowledge and claim that we now know that it is knowledge.<sup>42</sup> All we can do is *believe* that it really is knowledge. More than one twentieth-century philosopher of science has similarly claimed that we can only make sense of the sciences' claim to supply us with knowledge of the world if we *believe* in an occult, underlying, objective order in the world, which is beyond experience but accounts for its possibility.

It is only when Mill comes to sum up the successes and failures of the philosophy of the conditioned that he supplies the reader with what is most required—an explanation of what Mill himself understands by inconceivability, and how he explains it, in opposition to the intuitionists and innatists. The explanation occupies a considerable space, but it is worth noticing two main points. The first is Mill's claim that the majority of cases of inconceivability can be explained by our experience of inseparable associations between attributes, and the other his claim that most of the things that Hamilton claims to be inconceivable are not difficult, let alone impossible, to conceive. What is most likely to scandalize twentieth-century readers is the way Mill treats it as an empirical psychological law that we cannot conjoin contradictory attributes, and therefore cannot conceive things with contradictory attributes. The source of the scandal is obvious: we are inclined to hold that it is a matter of logic that a thing cannot have inconsistent attributes, not because of any property of things or our minds, but because a proposition is logically equivalent to the negation of its negation, and to ascribe a property and its contradictory to an object is simply to say nothing. The assertion negates and is negated by the denial of it. The law of non-contradiction, on this view, cannot be interpreted psychologically, without putting the cart before the horse: that a man cannot be both alive and not alive is not the consequence of our *de facto* inability to put the ideas of life and death together.

Mill, however, suggests something like a gradation, from flat contradiction through decreasingly well-attested repugnances of attributes:

We cannot represent anything to ourselves as at once being something, and not being it; as at once having, and not having, a given attribute. The following are other examples. We cannot represent to ourselves time or space as having an end. We cannot represent to ourselves two and two as making five; nor two straight lines as enclosing a space. We cannot represent to ourselves a round square; nor a body all black, and at the same time all white. (69-70.)

But he goes on to make something nearer a sharp break between flat contradiction and everything else:

A distinction may be made, which, I think, will be found pertinent to the question. That the same thing should at once be and not be—that identically the same statement should be both true and false—is not only inconceivable to us, but we cannot

imagine that it could be made conceivable. We cannot attach sufficient meaning to the proposition, to be able to represent to ourselves the supposition of a different experience on this matter. We cannot therefore even entertain the question, whether the incompatibility is in the original structure of our minds, or is only put there by our experience. The case is otherwise in all the other examples of inconceivability. (70.)

These, Mill begins by saying, are only the result of inseparable association; but he rather confusingly qualifies this by suggesting that even there the inconceivability somehow involves the contradictoriness of what is said to be inconceivable: “all inconceivabilities may be reduced to inseparable association, combined with the original inconceivability of a direct contradiction” (70). The point he is making is, evidently, the following. We cannot conceive of a state of affairs characterized as A and not-A, because the conception corresponding to A is just the negative of the conception of not-A. In other cases, there is no direct contradiction; it is A and B we are asked to conceive jointly, and if we are unable to do so it is because *in our experience* B is always associated with not-A. Hence the attempt to conceive A and B turns out to be special case of trying to conceive A and not-A, and the real point at issue between Mill and the opposition is the nature of our certainty that in these proposed instances B really does imply not-A. Mill thinks it is an empirical conviction, implanted by experience, reflecting the way the world actually *is*, but telling us nothing about how it *has* to be. The opposition have no common doctrine; the Kantian members of it think that the conviction reflects how the world *has* to be, but only in the sense that since “the world” is a phenomenal product of our minds working upon unknown and unknowable data it must obey the laws of our own minds; Catholic transcendentalists like W. G. Ward claimed to be objectivists and realists on this issue, where the Kantians were subjectivists and phenomenologists; they held that real inconceivabilities in our minds reflect the necessity of a certain rational structure to the universe, a structure that is not a matter of choice even for Omnipotence itself. So, in attacking Mill’s attempt to explain the truths of mathematics in experiential terms, Ward says:

I have never even once experienced the equality of  $2+9$  to  $3+8$ , and yet am convinced that not even Omnipotence could overthrow that equality. I have most habitually experienced the warmth-giving property of fire, and yet see no reason for doubting that Omnipotence (if it exist) can at any time suspend or remove that property.<sup>43</sup>

Mill himself makes something like a concession to the Kantian mode of analysis, though it is a physiological rather than a psychological version of transcendental idealism that he perhaps offers. In the body of the text he claims that “a round square” is in principle no more inconceivable than a heavy square or a hard square; to suppose that one might exist is no more than to suppose that we might simultaneously have those sensations which we call seeing something round and those which we call seeing something square:

we should probably be as well able to conceive a round square as a hard square, or a heavy square, if it were not that, in our uniform experience, at the instant when a thing begins to be round it ceases to be square, so that the beginning of the one impression is inseparably associated with the departure or cessation of the other (70).

But in a later footnote he drew back:

It has been remarked to me by a correspondent, that a round square differs from a hard square or a heavy square in this respect, that the two sensations or sets of sensations supposed to be joined in the first-named combination are affections of the same nerves, and therefore, being different affections, are mutually incompatible by our organic constitution, and could not be made compatible by any change in the arrangements of external nature. This is probably true, and may be the physical reason why when a thing begins to be perceived as round it ceases to be perceived as square; but it is not the less true that this mere fact suffices, under the laws of association, to account for the inconceivability of the combination. I am willing, however, to admit, as suggested by my correspondent, that “if the imagination employs the organism in its representations,” which it probably does, “what is originally unperceivable in consequence of organic laws” may also be “originally unimaginable.” (70n-1n.)

The note nicely illustrates the difficulty of seeing quite what Mill’s case was. Even here he seems determined to appeal to the laws of association, and yet the case he is partially conceding is that there are structural constraints on what things *can* be perceived and therefore come to be associated. Evidently the one thing he is determined not to concede is that the laws of the Macrocosm can be inferred from the laws of the Microcosm; but as he says, he is here at one with Hamilton and Mansel.

Yet it is this view which Mill mostly writes to defend, and perhaps in a form which does set him apart from Hamilton and Mansel. For Mill plainly treats the question of what we can and cannot conceive as a flatly factual one, and so, in turn, he treats the laws of number or the findings of geometry as flatly factual too. Indeed, he goes so far as to claim that even with our present mental and physical constitution we could envisage alternative geometries and different arithmetical laws. “That the reverse of the most familiar principles of arithmetic and geometry might have been made conceivable, even to our present mental faculties, if those faculties had coexisted with a totally different constitution of external nature, is,” says Mill, “ingeniously shown in the concluding paper of a recent volume, anonymous, but of known authorship, ‘Essays, by a Barrister’ [i.e., Fitzjames Stephen]” (71n), and he quotes the paper at length. The gist of it is that we can perfectly well imagine a world in which  $2+2=5$ ; for all we need imagine is a world in which “whenever two pairs of things are either placed in proximity or are contemplated together, a fifth thing is immediately created and brought within the contemplation of the mind engaged in putting two and two together” (71n). Mill does not suggest, what is surely rather plausible, that such a statement of the case is self-destructive, in that it presupposes that what we should say under such conditions is not that  $2+2=5$ , but, as he does say, that associating pairs creates a fifth object. The supposition, of course, is much more complicated in any case than Mill allows. As Frege later argued, things are only countable under a common concept—a cow and a sheep are not a pair of cows nor a pair of sheep, but they are a pair of animals, mammals, familiar English objects, and so on. Are we to suppose that they spontaneously generate a fifth something or other when conceptualized one way but not another? Can we stop the process by thinking of four things, not as two pairs but as a trio and an individual? Are addition and subtraction supposed to

cease to be isomorphic, so that  $5-2=3$ , even though  $2+2=5$ ? Nor is it clear what the notion of contemplating pairs is going to embrace. If I read a word of six letters, do I read a word of three pairs of letters, and if so, is it not a word of at least seven letters? Or will it stay one word of only six letters so long as I read it as one word only—in which case how will anyone ever *learn* to read? There is, no doubt, *something* contingent about the fact that our system of geometry and arithmetic apply in the world, but it is hardly so flatly contingent as this account suggests.

Mill is much more persuasive when he sets out to deny Hamilton's claims about the limitations from which our thinking necessarily suffers. Mill distinguishes three kinds of inconceivability, which, he says, Hamilton habitually confuses. The first is what we have been examining until now, the supposed impossibility of *picturing* the states of affairs at stake, either directly or indirectly as the result of its making contradictory demands on the imagination. The second is the apparent incredibility of what is perfectly visualizable. Mill's example is the existence of the Antipodes; we could model a globe in clay and recognize that there need be no absolute "up" or "down," but still fail to see how people could remain on the surface of the globe at what we were sure to think of as its underside (74-5). Finally, there is a sense in which an event or state of affairs is inconceivable if it is impossible to see what might explain it: "The inconceivable in this third sense is simply the inexplicable." Mill says, and quite rightly, that it merely invites confusion to employ "inconceivable" to cover mere inexplicability:

This use of the word inconceivable, being a complete perversion of it from its established meanings, I decline to recognise. If all the general truths which we are most certain of are to be called inconceivable, the word no longer serves any purpose. Inconceivable is not to be confounded with unprovable, or unanalysable. A truth which is not inconceivable in either of the received meanings of the term—a truth which is completely apprehended, and without difficulty believed, I cannot consent to call inconceivable merely because we cannot account for it, or deduce it from a higher truth. (76.)

Oddly enough, it was Mansel who got into the most serious muddle here, and for no very obvious reason. He denied that Hamilton had ever used the term "inconceivable" to cover more than the unimaginable, and yet, as we have seen already, employed the term himself in Mill's third sense. We believe *that* the will is free, but we cannot explain *how* it is, and so, on Mansel's view, we have here a believable inconceivability.<sup>44</sup> Had he stuck simply to saying that we can conceive *that* something is the case where we cannot conceive *how* it is, there would be no problem—what is imaginable and credible is the bare fact, what is unimaginable is a mechanism which might account for it. The connection, as Mill is quick to see, between the narrower, proper senses of inconceivable, and the wider, improper sense, is that the offer of a hypothetical mechanism to account for a phenomenon makes it so much the easier both to visualize it and to believe in its existence. None of this, of course, is to deny that Mansel is quite right to suggest that the mind does indeed boggle at the task of *explaining* how the physical interaction of brain and world results in perceptions which are themselves not in any obvious sense physical phenomena at all; all it shows is that there is no point in muddying the waters by suggesting that the *facts* are inconceivable when what one means is that they are in certain respects inexplicable.

Having cleared up these terminological difficulties, Mill then embarks on the question of whether, as Hamilton claims, the philosophy of the conditioned shows that there are propositions about the world which are inconceivable and yet true. The examples Mill has in mind, as we have seen, are such propositions as that space is finite, or, conversely, that space is infinite. The language of conceivability causes a few more difficulties, even after Mill's sanitizing operations, for between Mill and Mansel there remains a difference of opinion on the question of what it is to have a conception of any state of affairs. Mansel seems to require that there should be some kind of one-to-one relationship between the elements in our conception and that of which it is the conception. Mill does not entirely repudiate this view; it will serve as a criterion for having an *adequate*—or perhaps one had better say, a complete—conception of the phenomenon that one should be able to enumerate the elements in one's conception and match them to the components of the thing conceived. But, says Mill, in one of his most felicitous moves, it is impossible to have a wholly adequate conception of anything whatever, since everything and anything can be envisaged in an infinite number of ways. The obsession with the infinite and absolute in Hamilton and Mansel is ill-defended by Mansel's arguments about adequacy, since, says Mill, there is no suggestion that a number like 695,788 is inconceivable, and yet it is pretty clear that we do not enumerate its components when we think of it (84).

What, then, is it for us to conceive of space as infinite, or conversely, as finite? On Mill's view, we can conceive of an infinite space by simply conceiving of what we call space and believing that it is of greater extent than any bounded space.

We realize it as space. We realize it as greater than any given space. We even realize it as endless, in an intelligible manner; that is, we clearly represent to ourselves that however much of space has been already explored, and however much more of it we may imagine ourselves to traverse, we are no nearer to the end of it than we were at first. . . . (85.)

The same confidence applies to conceiving of space as finite. Mill supposes that all we need to imagine is that at some point or other an impression of a wholly novel kind would announce to us that we were indeed at the end of space. The extent to which neither Mill nor Hamilton, nor Mansel for that matter, takes the full measure of Kant is somewhat surprising. There is no suggestion that drawing the boundaries of space is conceptual nonsense because boundaries are something one draws *in* space, so that if space is finite it must be finite but unbounded. There is no attempt to explore further what could lead us to recognize an experience as, say, the experience of reaching the end of time or the end of space.

For, as we have seen, Mill does not do more than skirt round the suggestion that "infinite" may have something odd about it, if it is treated as an ordinary first-order predicate, or that "Space" may be the name of an object to which it is only dubiously proper to apply a predicate like "finite." Mill does not extend the notion of "meaninglessness" beyond its most literal applications. He thinks that it *is* impossible to conceive what is meant by a literally meaningless utterance, or one to which *we* can attach no meaning, but that this is not a philosophically interesting sort of inconceivability:

If any one says to me, Humpty Dumpty is an Abracadabra, I neither knowing what is meant by an Abracadabra, nor what is meant by Humpty Dumpty, I may, if I have confidence in my informant, believe that he means something, and that the something which he means is probably true: but I do not believe the very thing which he means, since I am entirely ignorant what it is. Propositions of this kind, the unmeaningness of which lies in the subject or predicate, are not those generally described as inconceivable. (78-9.)

For Mill, then, in so far as the states of affairs described by Hamilton as inconceivable are picked out by intelligible propositions, it becomes a question of fact, even if one which there is no hope of deciding, which branch of the antinomies proposed by Hamilton is true. In that case, what of the philosophy of the conditioned? The answer, says Mill, is that there is in it a good deal less than meets the eye. Hamilton's claim that "Thought is only of the conditioned," and that the "Conditioned is the mean between two extremes—two inconditionates, exclusive of each other, *neither of which can be conceived as possible*, but of which, on the principles of contradiction and excluded middle, *one must be admitted as necessary*,"<sup>45</sup> turns out to be nothing better than noise. It "must be placed in that numerous class of metaphysical doctrines, which have a magnificent sound, but are empty of the smallest substance" (88).

## V. GOD AND PROFESSOR MANSEL

With Hamilton thus routed, Mill turns to meet Mansel's application of the philosophy of the conditioned to religious thought. Neither Mill's attack nor Mansel's response stands out as a model of dispassionate and impersonal inquiry. Mill all but accuses the clergy of being under a professional obligation to talk nonsense (104), and Mansel replies in kind.<sup>46</sup> Mill opens his assault by paying Mansel a backhanded compliment: "Clearness and explicitness of statement being in the number of Mr. Mansel's merits, it is easier to perceive the flaws in his arguments than in those of his master, because he often leaves us less in doubt what he means by his words" (91). In fact, it is not always quite clear where Mansel does and where he does not rest on arguments borrowed from Hamilton; against Mill he tended to argue by complaining of Mill's defective appreciation of the history of philosophy, a procedure which has the defect of turning the interesting question of where Mill and Mansel disagreed over the possible extent of a human knowledge of God's nature into a much less interesting question, about the extent of Mill's acquaintance with traditional natural theology. Mansel was probably right in his conjecture that in some sense Mill thought traditional metaphysics was pointless and nonsensical, but he was far too annoyed to tackle the question that he had really set for himself—namely, if traditional natural theology and traditional metaphysics were as essentially flawed as *The Limits of Religious Thought* maintained, was Mill not right? Why was not agnosticism the proper resting place?

Still, Mill hardly encouraged Mansel to adopt a conciliatory attitude. After a rapid summary of Mansel's argument that we cannot form an adequate conception of God—since God as Absolute and Infinite is inconceivable by us—he comes to Mansel's conclusion that we can only fall

back on revelation. That the God thus revealed can or cannot have any particular characteristics, Mansel says it is not for reason to declare; the credibility of a revelation is a matter of historical probabilities, “and no argument grounded on the incredibility of the doctrine, as involving an intellectual absurdity, or on its moral badness as unworthy of a good or wise being, ought to have any weight, since of these things we are incompetent to judge” (90). It is not, says Mill, a new doctrine, but “it is simply the most morally pernicious doctrine now current . . .” (90).

Readers who have begun to weary of the hunting of the Absolute will probably take it on trust that in so far as “the Absolute” means the unrelated-to-anything-in-our-experience it is no great achievement to show that we have no knowledge of the Absolute. But Mill presses Mansel rather harder than this, for he at last challenges him to make good on the claim that we are able and indeed obliged on the strength of revelation to believe in this unknowable entity. Mansel, says Mill, succeeds in showing that “the Absolute” and “the Infinite” as defined by himself are simply self-contradictory; but, on Mill’s view, this entails their being also unbelievable. “Believing God to be infinite and absolute must be believing something, and it must be possible to say what” (98). Mansel’s argument to the effect that “the Absolute” and “the Infinite” are involved in self-contradiction is altogether too devastating for his own good, for Mansel certainly does not want to say that the divine nature is really and inherently contradictory. Mansel, indeed, went out of his way to deny any such suggestion; *credo quia impossibile* he thought unworthy of any sane man.<sup>47</sup> His reply to Mill, abusive though it is, shows how little he wished to get himself into such depths, for when Mill taunts him with not being able to say *what* the object of his belief is, he falls back on propositions which Mill readily admits to be intelligible, such as the proposition that God made the world, though we cannot tell how He did it. The explanation of the trouble is simple, though rather strange. Mansel thought it an aid to Christian belief to show that the sceptic could not attack its doctrines on rational grounds; but the way in which he rescued them from the sceptic was by making them too elusive to disbelieve. Inevitably the price he paid was making them too elusive to be believed either.

The single thing in the *Examination* that most heartened his allies and most outraged his opponents was Mill’s assault on what he took to be the immorality of Mansel’s doctrine of the unknowability of the moral attributes of God. To Mill the issue was simple enough. When the clergy talked of God’s power they generally meant what we would mean by talking of human power, for instance the divine ability to throw us into the inferno; only on God’s moral attributes did they equivocate and suggest that God’s goodness was not as mortal goodness.

Is it unfair to surmise that this is because those who speak in the name of God, have need of the human conception of his power, since an idea which can overawe and enforce obedience must address itself to real feelings; but are content that his goodness should be conceived only as something inconceivable, because they are so often required to teach doctrines respecting him which conflict irreconcilably with all goodness that we can conceive? (104.)

Whether it is or not, Mill’s case is that Mansel cannot hope to argue that God’s moral attributes are unlike their human analogues without thereby sacrificing the right to expect us to wor-



ship Him. There is, as any reader of Mansel's Bampton Lectures can see, an awkwardness in Mansel's case, analogous to the awkwardness of his epistemology. The case he presents is the familiar one: the Christian who believes in the infinite power and goodness of God is confronted with a world in which the just suffer and the wicked flourish. The austere Mansel does not argue in the Kantian manner that we are thereby licensed to expect a reconciliation of virtue and happiness in the life hereafter. What he does instead is suggest that the inscrutability of God extends to the inscrutable goodness He exhibits. It is not clear that Mansel intends to show that God's *goodness* is not ours; mostly, he argues that how God is working out an overall plan for His universe, a plan which is good in the same sense as a human plan would be good, simply remains unknowable. The goodness of God's agents particularly exercises Mansel: what would be cruelty or injustice if done otherwise than in obedience to God's commands is, we must hope, not cruelty or injustice after all. But, once again, it is less a matter of the imperfect analogy between human and divine attributes (which is the object of Mill's complaint) than of the imperfection of our knowledge of the Almighty's programme, for the sake of which these orders were given. In this light one can understand why Mansel's reply to Mill takes the form of a rather querulous complaint that surely Mill cannot deny that a son may recognize the goodness of his father's actions without wholly understanding them—and Mill does not deny it.

Mill, however, surely gets the best of the dispute, with his famous outburst, for all that Mansel tries to dismiss it as “an extraordinary outburst of rhetoric.”<sup>48</sup>

If, instead of the “glad tidings” that there exists a Being in whom all the excellences which the highest human mind can conceive, exist in a degree inconceivable to us, I am informed that the world is ruled by a being whose attributes are infinite, but what they are we cannot learn, nor what are the principles of his government, except that “the highest human morality which we are capable of conceiving” does not sanction them; convince me of it, and I will bear my fate as I may. But when I am told that I must believe this, and at the same time call this being by the names which express and affirm the highest human morality, I say in plain terms that I will not. Whatever power such a being may have over me, there is one thing which he shall not do: he shall not compel me to worship him. I will call no being good, who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go. (103.)

## VI. OTHER MAJOR ISSUES

As one might guess from the title of Mansel's *The Philosophy of the Conditioned*, it was that doctrine which Mansel, like Mill, saw as Hamilton's most distinctive contribution to philosophy (109). The rest of this Introduction will take its cue from the combatants, and confine itself to the piecemeal treatment of some major issues. The most interesting of these would seem to be the following: Mill's phenomenal analysis of matter and mind; his demolition of Hamilton's account of causation, which is perhaps a major curiosity rather than a major issue; his account of

conception, judgment, and inference, and his assessment of Hamilton's contribution to logic; and, finally, his analysis of the freedom of the will.

## MATTER AND MIND

Mill's account of matter and mind begins with what amounts to a hostile review of Hamilton's own hostile review of Thomas Brown's *Lectures on the Philosophy of the Mind*. (Hamilton's article appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* in October, 1830, and was reprinted in his *Discussions*.) Hamilton declared that it was a striking proof of the low state of intellectual life in Britain that Brown's *Lectures* had not hitherto received their just deserts:

The radical *inconsistencies* which they involve, in every branch of their subject, remain undeveloped; their unacknowledged *appropriations* are still lauded as original; their endless *mistakes*, in the history of philosophy, stand yet uncorrected; and their frequent *misrepresentations* of other philosophers continue to mislead. In particular, nothing has more convinced us of the general neglect, in this country, of psychological science, than that Brown's ignorant attack on *Reid*, and, through Reid, confessedly on *Stewart*, has not long since been repelled;—except, indeed, the general belief that it was triumphant.<sup>49</sup>

Hamilton claimed that Brown played fast and loose not only with the testimony of consciousness, a vice to which all philosophers are liable to succumb, but with the testimony of Reid. Brown was what Hamilton called a *cosmothetic idealist*, and Hamilton was at pains to insist that between the testimony of consciousness—which is all on behalf of “Natural Realism” or “Natural Dualism”—and the inferences of idealism there is a great opposition. Reid, on Hamilton's view, was a realist and dualist, where Brown falsely makes him out to be an idealist of the same kind as himself.

Mill devotes a chapter to showing not merely that Reid wavered in his convictions on the question, but that when he was plainly committed to any view, that view was cosmothetic idealism. Moreover, very few of Hamilton's arguments against Brown hold water, and when Hamilton adduces, to attack Brown, general principles, such as the impossibility of representative perception, the result, on Mill's account, is to leave Brown untouched and most of Hamilton's own argument in ruins (164). Mill distinguishes, with Hamilton, three views about perception which have been held by those he lumps together as cosmothetic idealists: the first is the view that what is really perceived is not a state of the perceiver's mind, but something else, whether a motion in the brain as in Hobbes or an Idea in the mind as in Berkeley; the second is the view that what is perceived *is* a state of mind, but that *it* and the perceiving of it are distinguishable. These two doctrines, says Mill, really are doctrines of mediate or representative perception, as Hamilton says they are. There is a something which is the direct object of perception and which represents the external object. The third view, however, and the view which Brown held, is not a theory of *representative* perception at all, for there is no *tertium quid*, no object of direct perception from which the existence of some other object is inferred. The object of perception here is “a state of mind

identical with the act by which we are said to perceive it” (155). There is here no very clear distinction between a certain sort of phenomenalism on the one hand and outright realism on the other, indeed—a point which Mill does not make, but which some current versions of a “sense data” theory of perception do.<sup>50</sup>

Brown’s account of the perception of external objects is invulnerable to the objection that there is no way of knowing whether the object of perception resembles, or truly or faithfully represents, the external object itself. For Brown does not claim that it bears any such relationship to anything external. The relation is causal, not pictorial. In effect, to perceive something in the outside world just is to be in a certain sensory state and to conclude non-inferentially that the cause of this state lies in something external to oneself. And this, says Mill happily, is the only rational interpretation to be placed on the views of Reid as well. Indeed,

if Brown’s theory is not a theory of mediate perception, it loses all that essentially distinguishes it from Sir W. Hamilton’s own doctrine. For Brown, also, thinks that we have, on the occasion of certain sensations, an instantaneous and irresistible conviction of an outward object. And if this conviction is immediate, and necessitated by the constitution of our nature, in what does it differ from our author’s direct consciousness? Consciousness, immediate knowledge, and intuitive knowledge, are, Sir W. Hamilton tells us, convertible expressions; and if it be granted that whenever our senses are affected by a material object, we immediately and intuitively recognise that object as existing and distinct from us, it requires a great deal of ingenuity to make out any substantial difference between this immediate intuition of an external world, and Sir W. Hamilton’s direct perception of it. (156-7.)

Brown, on Mill’s account, gets the better of Hamilton by consistently denying that some properties of things are known as they really are in the (unknowable) object and some not; Brown genuinely held the doctrine of the relativity of knowledge in an unconfused form (167). In this Brown was on the opposite side to both Reid and Hamilton, but it was an issue on which not even Hamilton was willing to suggest that Brown was unaware of the differences between his own views and those of Reid. Brown’s theory of perception explains *all* our knowledge of the attributes of matter in terms of the sensory promptings of an external cause, while Reid’s, like Hamilton’s, allows us “a direct intuition of the Primary Qualities of bodies” (176). Mill, of course, thinks that Brown’s view is the only one consistent with his premises; certainly, as Mill argues both earlier and later in the *Examination*, Hamilton can hardly hope to keep his half-way house. Either he must be a thoroughgoing vulgar realist and agree that what we see just are things, endowed with the attributes we see them to have, the plain man’s view; or else, if he is to allow himself such corrections of consciousness as are required when he says, for instance, that no two people see the same object, or indeed that each of us sees two “suns,” say, because we receive an image through each eye, and in so saying departs very widely from what any plain man believes, then he must adopt a much more wholesale subjectivism.

Mill’s own account of what we believe when we believe in the existence of the outside world is the best known part of the *Examination*. It is hard to know whether to be more surprised by the

confidence with which he puts it forward or by the contrast between that confidence and the diffidence, so reminiscent of Hume, with which he confesses that it will not yield a plausible analysis of mind. Mill's account of matter seeks to analyze it in terms of possible sensations. In effect, the requirements of something's being a material thing, distinct from our sensations of it, are the following: it must be public in the sense that it can be perceived by many different people, whereas each of them alone can have his actual sensations; it must be "perdurable," that is, it must exist unperceived, and must outlast the fleeting experiences of it which those who perceive it may have; and it must retain the same properties even if these make it "look different" in different circumstances.

We mean, that there is concerned in our perceptions something which exists when we are not thinking of it; which existed before we had ever thought of it, and would exist if we were annihilated; and further, that there exist things which we never saw, touched, or otherwise perceived, and things which never have been perceived by man. This idea of something which is distinguished from our fleeting impressions by what, in Kantian language, is called *Perdurability*; something which is fixed and the same, while our impressions vary; something which exists whether we are aware of it or not, and which is always square (or of some other given figure) whether it appears to us square or round—constitutes altogether our idea of external substance. Whoever can assign an origin to this complex conception, has accounted for what we mean by the belief in matter. (178-9.)

The question is, of course, whether an appeal to "possible sensations" can account for all this. Perhaps the first thing that should be said is that Mill is oddly reticent about employing the fact that human beings are *embodied* consciousnesses in any of the argument; later, he employs the sensations of muscular effort and resistance as part of the primitive data which he suggests the mind works on in arriving at a conception of space. But it is on the face of it odd to begin arguing about the belief in an *external* world without raising any question about what external can mean unless "external to me," and how it can mean that, unless we are spatially located from the beginning—and how, if we are so located, it can make any sense to begin to construct a world whose existence we seem to have to assume in order to talk about the constructive task in the first place. Mill can, of course, retort that he is *not* talking about spatial externality yet. What he is talking about initially is permanence; it is a second part of the case to show that a permanent object in sensation has to be construed—or is naturally to be construed—as a spatially external object. That is, so long as we do not insist on publicity, and do not have too many qualms about whether something could be *round* or *square* except in a spatially extended world, we could perhaps break up the belief in a material world into a belief in something permanent which holds together the objects of sense and into a second belief that it is located in space as well as in time. If we think of the percipient as a non-spatial ego in which subjective experiences inhere and which has a history as the history of one such being, we might think of the non-ego as the objective correlate of the percipient self. It is not at all clear that Mill had any such possibility in mind, and it is quite clear that we shall not get very much out of Mill's account by pressing it; nonetheless, to the extent that Mill takes over the terminology of Hamilton, in which we are said to be

conscious of an Ego and a non-Ego, the question whether the non-Ego is an external—that is spatially external—world is evidently an open one. The first step establishes a non-Ego as a deliverance of consciousness, if we side with Hamilton, and as an inference if we side with Mill; only subsequent steps can establish its nature.

Mill at any rate is eager to show that so long as the mind is credited with a capacity to form expectations, we can see how the mind would move from having had experiences in certain circumstances in the past, to believing in possible experiences realized by similar conditions in the future. These, Mill says, are not *bare* possibilities but conditional certainties—by which he merely means to insist that he does not suggest that, in the everyday sense, it is only “possible” that when we look at a chair we shall have the appropriate sensations. He means that we shall quite certainly have the appropriate sensations, but, of course, only in the appropriate conditions. The mind, then, faces the fact that its experiences occur in various determinate ways; it constructs the hypothesis that this orderliness will be found in all sorts of other areas, and finds it confirmed. The content of the hypothesis is that the world contains permanent possibilities of sensation, and the world turns out to do so. Mill is eager not to turn the Permanent Possibilities themselves into mental constructions; in a footnote replying to a critic who had complained that Mill had offered “no proofs that objects *are* external to us,” he says that he had never attempted any such proof:

I am accounting for our conceiving, or representing to ourselves, the Permanent Possibilities as real objects external to us. I do not believe that the real externality to us of anything, except other minds, is capable of proof. But the Permanent Possibilities are external to us in the only sense we need care about; they are not constructed by the mind itself, but merely recognised by it; in Kantian language, they are given to us, and to other beings in common with us. (187n.)

It is their givenness which explains the sense in which they are objective rather than subjective; whether this makes them external in a sense which would satisfy the plain man as well as the philosopher remains to be seen.

That there is an external world is a sort of hypothesis, then. It is formed entirely unconsciously, of course, but the awkwardness is not its genesis but its meaning. Mill seems unworried by this, and given the remark quoted immediately above, it is easy to see why. He could share Brown’s view of what the belief in an external world amounted to—namely belief in an underlying cause of our sensory experience—since his interest lay not in disputing the adequacy of the analysis, but in accounting for the fact thus analyzed without invoking anything like an original conviction of the existence of an external world. Not for nothing did Mill call his account the psychological theory of the belief in an external world; he thought that Hamilton, Reid, and for that matter Brown, too, had erred by adopting the “introspective” method of analysis, by which he meant that they were too ready to infer from the present existence of a belief in their own minds that it was part of the mind’s native constitution. The psychological theory was in principle no more than a genetic hypothesis, a hypothesis about how the belief could have grown up. As such, it seems to be a rather difficult one to bring to empirical test, although such a test seems appropriate for it; the difficulties are too obvious to be worth dwelling on, but they make one

wonder why Mill did not make more of the question whether there was any way of averting them. Would he have regarded infantile efforts at focussing on remote objects as evidence one way or the other? Would a new-born baby's recoil from what looks like a sheer drop be evidence about how original a sense of spatial location might be? In the absence of more discussion in Mill's work, speculation is fruitless.

Whether Mill's analysis of matter would satisfy the plain man's notions about matter is a question to which he does devote some attention. He has two rather different stances. The first is that the belief in matter goes beyond the belief in the permanent possibility of sensation: we move from believing that we shall have certain sensations under certain conditions to believing that the whole series of possible sensations has an underlying cause. Now, on this view, we are at any rate inclined to ask whether this belief in an underlying cause actually means anything—since it makes no observational difference whether or not there is such a cause, there is some difficulty in knowing what difference is made by its affirmation or denial. Believers in parsimony, Occam's Razor, or other austerities of thought will perhaps incline to reject it on the grounds that we should believe as little as we must to account for the facts; Mill thinks that Hamilton's "Law of Parsimony" should cause him an analogous embarrassment, but makes nothing of it in this context—he is concerned to reduce the number of our primary intuitions, rather than to purge the plain man's ontology. This being his aim, he is quite content to argue that

Whatever relation we find to exist between any one of our sensations and something different from *it*, that same relation we have no difficulty in conceiving to exist between the sum of all our sensations and something different from *them*. . . . This familiarity with the idea of something different from *each* thing we know, makes it natural and easy to form the notion of something different from *all* things that we know, collectively as well as individually. It is true we can form no conception of what such a thing can be; our notion of it is merely negative; but the idea of a substance, apart from its relation to the impressions which we conceive it as making on our senses, *is* a merely negative one. There is thus no psychological obstacle to our forming the notion of a something which is neither a sensation nor a possibility of sensation, even if our consciousness does not testify to it; and nothing is more likely than that the Permanent Possibilities of sensation, to which our consciousness does testify, should be confounded in our minds with this imaginary conception. All experience attests the strength of the tendency to mistake mental abstractions, even negative ones, for substantive realities. (185.)

On the whole, this argument suggests that the generality of mankind hold *mistaken* views about matter, though its intention may only be to suggest that they hold unverifiable views. But Mill also suggests that he and the plain man may not be at odds.

Matter, then, may be defined, a Permanent Possibility of Sensation. If I am asked, whether I believe in matter, I ask whether the questioner accepts this definition of it. If he does, I believe in matter: and so do all Berkeleians. In any other sense than this, I do not. But I affirm with confidence, that this conception of Matter includes the

whole meaning attached to it by the common world, apart from philosophical, and sometimes from theological, theories. The reliance of mankind on the real existence of visible and tangible objects, means reliance on the reality and permanence of Possibilities of visual and tactual sensations, when no such sensations are actually experienced. (183.)

This view, in contrast to the first one, suggests that the plain man *qua* plain man believes in Permanent Possibilities only; the belief in an unknowable underlying substance is either imposed on him by philosophers, or adopted by the plain man only *qua* amateur philosopher.

The argument between phenomenologists and their opponents has, of course, continued unabated ever since. It is not only the plain man who feels uneasily that Mill's "permanent possibilities of sensation" moves awkwardly between an account of matter which stresses that it is permanently and objectively available to be sensed, and one which dissolves that objective existence into the fact that minds are permanently available to sense—but not necessarily to sense anything other than their own contents. It is at the very best difficult to feel that a possible, but non-actual sensation is more solid, more material, more firmly part of the furniture of the world than an actual sensation is.

Before turning to Mill's attempt to provide a phenomenologist account of personal identity, therefore, we should look to Mill's expansion of his analysis of matter in the shape of his account of our knowledge of its primary qualities. Mill's analysis is devoted to several different tasks, of which the most important is to show that the "psychological theory" can deal with the generation of the idea of Extension, which

has long been considered as one of the principal stumbling blocks of the Psychological Theory. Reid and Stewart were willing to let the whole question of the intuitive character of our knowledge of Matter, depend on the inability of psychologists to assign any origin to the idea of Extension, or analyse it into any combination of sensations and reminiscences of sensation. Sir W. Hamilton follows their example in laying great stress on this point. (216.)

But Mill also wants to explain two other things, firstly, the difference between what we treat as subjective feelings as distinct from what we treat as perceptions of something in the object and, secondly, why we group the objective properties of bodies together as their primary qualities. These did not cause much controversy among Mill's critics, but the attempts at generating the idea of extension along the lines laid down in Bain's treatise on psychology did. The fundamental complaint was always the same, that all attempts to explain where we might have acquired the concept of extension presuppose that we have it already. As Mill says in the footnote in which he replies to them:

A host of critics, headed by Dr. McCosh, Mr. Mahaffy, and the writer in *Blackwood*, have directed their shafts against this chapter. . . . The principal objection is the same which was made to the two preceding chapters [on the Psychological Theory of the belief in an external world, and its application to mind]: that the explanation given of

Extension presupposes Extension: that the notion itself is surreptitiously introduced, to account for its own origin. (240.)

The distinction between sensations referred mostly to the subject of perception and those referred mostly to the object, Mill explains fairly casually. That we *can* refer the experience to an outer object is the major difference between sensation and other mental phenomena; so, the pleasure of a man eating a good meal *can* be said to inhere in the meal, but is more readily ascribed to the man than the meal, because pleasure and pain are part of a class of “sensations which are highly interesting to us on their own account, and on which we willingly dwell, or which by their intensity compel us to concentrate our attention on them.” The result is that in our consciousness of them “the reference to their Object does not play so conspicuous and predominant a part . . .” (212). Mill does not appeal to the way in which the pleasure and, to a lesser extent, the pain caused by a given object varies from one person to another as a reason for distinguishing the pleasure and pain from what causes them; nor does he suggest that there is anything problematic in treating secondary qualities like colour in the same way as pleasure and pain. The distinction he is interested in is really that which his opponents see as a distinction between the essence of matter, and all else. If we can imagine a thing losing its colour without ceasing to exist, and losing its capacity to give pain or pleasure without ceasing to exist, then colour and pleasure lie on the side of the secondary qualities; if we cannot imagine an object losing its extension or impenetrability without ceasing to exist, then these are its primary qualities. That we in fact agree in thinking of resistance, extension, and figure as the primary qualities of matter, indeed think of matter as consisting of these attributes “together with miscellaneous powers of exciting other sensations” (214), Mill readily admits. That we group these together he explains by the fact that sensations of smell, taste, and hearing do not cohere directly, but “through the connexion which they all have, by laws of coexistence or of causation, with the sensations which are referable to the sense of touch and to the muscles; those which answer to the terms Resistance, Extension, and Figure. These, therefore, become the leading and conspicuous elements. . . .” (213.)

So the question eventually comes to that of whether the associationist psychology can explain our conception of things as being spatially extended, with the implications that this property suggests, that they must have boundaries or figure, if we are to tell one thing from another, and that they must be less than wholly interpenetrable. Resistance, or relative impenetrability, Mill explains as an inference from the experience of obstructed muscular movement when this is combined with appropriate sensations of touch. The combination assures us that the impediment to movement is not internal paralysis or something similar. Figure, Mill deals with rather casually as the conjoined information of sight and touch; he invokes a good deal of not very persuasive psychological evidence to suggest that a blind man either has a different conception of figure from that of a sighted man or no conception at all, and even toys with the less than obviously coherent claim that a blind man might think the external world was composed entirely of one object. But it is evidently the analysis of extension that is crucial to his case. He makes it at second hand by way of an extended quotation from Bain. The gist of the case is simple enough. We have certain sensations connected with the contraction of our voluntary muscles, and these are different according to the extent of such contraction, so that we can discriminate half, wholly, or very par-



tially contracted muscles; these are associated with the sweep of a limb or other bodily movement. Now it would obviously be putting the cart before the horse if Mill and Bain were to employ the idea of a limb sweeping a certain amount of *space* in explaining the origins of our idea of space. Most of Mill's critics, as we have seen, said that this was just what they had done. Whether the charge can be rebutted is very difficult to decide. In a sense, Mill is between the devil and the deep blue sea. Any notion of the sweep of a limb which is distinctively *non-spatial* looks inadequate to generate a conception of space at all, while any notion adequate to the generation of a concept of space seems to get there by starting with some notion of space already. If we make the sweep of a limb purely temporal—that is, if we say that the non-spatial notion is simply one of the length of time it takes for sensations to succeed each other—we escape the charge of paralogism, but we do not get very close to the usual idea of space. Mill does not make this admission; on his analysis, the blind man's conception of space *is* temporal not spatial, and even the sighted majority have a conception which is basically temporal:

a person blind from birth must necessarily perceive the parts of extension—the parts of a line, of a surface, or of a solid—in conscious succession. He perceives them by passing his hand along them, if small, or by walking over them if great. The parts of extension which it is possible for him to perceive simultaneously, are only very small parts, almost the minima of extension. Hence, if the Psychological theory of the idea of extension is true, the blind metaphysician would feel very little of the difficulty which seeing metaphysicians feel, in admitting that the idea of Space is, at bottom, one of time—and that the notion of extension or distance, is that of a motion of the muscles continued for a longer or a shorter duration. (222-3.)

The temptation remains to say what is shown here is only that a man who has our conception of space can measure distances by the time it takes to cover them; it does nothing to suggest that time alone can convey that conception of space to one who does not have it. Just as Mill's analysis of the external world provides us with "possibilities of sensation" external to our actual sensations only in the same way that the number six is external to the series of numbers from one to four, so here he seems to offer us extension in one dimension when we want it in another.

The point at which Mill himself admitted to defeat was in the analysis of mind rather than matter. The general line that he saw himself obliged to pursue was what we should expect; if matter was a permanent possibility of being sensed, the "Ego" should be amenable to analysis as the permanent possibility of having sensations. Mill's first concern is to show that there is nothing in such a phenomenalism to justify charges of atheism or all-embracing scepticism. If the mind is a series of mental states, there is no bar to immortality in that: a series can go on forever just as readily as a substance can. No doubt metaphysicians have been eager to argue that we *must* be immortal, on the grounds that the soul, being a substance, is indestructible, but such arguments, says Mill, are so feeble that philosophers have increasingly given them up. The existence of God is equally untouched: "Supposing me to believe that the Divine Mind is simply the series of the Divine thoughts and feelings prolonged through eternity, that would be, at any rate, believing God's existence to be as real as my own" (192). And the existence of other minds is as well vouched for on phenomenalist as on substantialist premises. We know in our own cases that be-

tween bodily effects and their bodily causes there intervene mental events—sensations, motives, and so on—and we infer inductively that the same thing is true in other cases; we see bodies like our own and believe on excellent evidence that there are minds associated with them. “I conclude that other human beings have feelings like me, because, first, they have bodies like me, which I know, in my own case, to be the antecedent condition of feeling; and because, secondly, they exhibit the acts, and other outward signs, which in my own case I know by experience to be caused by feelings” (191). Mill thus concludes that Reid’s accusation, that the phenomenalist ends as a solipsist, fails.

But this is not to say that the phenomenalist position is freed of all difficulty. The pressure in favour of phenomenalism is the same in the case of mind as in the case of matter; we have no knowledge of mind as it is in itself, only of its phenomena. Just like Hume, Mill holds that what we perceive are the mind’s modifications, such as thoughts, sensations, desires, and aversions. What we have in the way of evidence is a stream of experience; is the mind or the self more than such a stream, therefore? Mill answers that it seems that it must be more. The reason lies in the nature of memory and expectation. In themselves memories and expectations are simply part of the stream of consciousness, but their oddity is that they essentially involve *beliefs*, and beliefs of an awkward kind. When we expect a future experience, we expect something to happen to *us*, and when we remember a past experience, we remember that something happened to *us*.

Nor can the phenomena involved in these two states of consciousness be adequately expressed, without saying that the belief they include is, that I myself formerly had, or that I myself, and no other, shall hereafter have, the sensations remembered or expected. The fact believed is, that the sensations did actually form, or will hereafter form, part of the self-same series of states, or thread of consciousness, of which the remembrance or expectation of those sensations is the part now present. If, therefore, we speak of the Mind as a series of feelings, we are obliged to complete the statement by calling it a series of feelings which is aware of itself as past and future; and we are reduced to the alternative of believing that the Mind, or Ego, is something different from any series of feelings, or possibilities of them, or of accepting the paradox, that something which *ex hypothesi* is but a series of feelings, can be aware of itself as a series. (194.)

In essence, Mill’s problem is that if matter is a hypothesis that a mind formulates to account for the regularity of its experience, a unitary self must be presupposed to do the hypothesizing, and a unitary self that, furthermore, can view *its* experience as something regular enough to need explaining by such a hypothesis. But if my construction of my experienced world depends on a prior identification of the data of experience as my sensations and so on, there seems no hope of accounting for *me* in the same terms—for, out of what would *I* construct *me*? Mill insists in a long footnote that he merely intends to leave open the question of what the mind’s nature really is, neither, as some of his critics have alleged, adopting the “psychological theory” in spite of the objections, nor accepting the common view of the mind as a substance (204n-7n). Indeed, says Mill in the main text,

The truth is, that we are here face to face with that final inexplicability, at which, as Sir W. Hamilton observes, we inevitably arrive when we reach ultimate facts; and in general, one mode of stating it only appears more incomprehensible than another, because the whole of human language is accommodated to the one, and is so incongruous with the other, that it cannot be expressed in any terms which do not deny its truth (194).

This abstemiousness about putting forward any explanation of the inexplicable did not save Mill from Bradley. In his *Ethical Studies* Bradley did his best to kill off the psychological theory with a famous joke: “Mr. Bain collects that the mind is a collection. Has he ever thought who collects Mr. Bain?”<sup>51</sup> and went on to say of Mill that when he had “the same fact before him, which gave the lie to his whole psychological theory, he could not ignore it, he could not recognize it, he would not call it a fiction; so he put it aside as a ‘final inexplicability,’ and thought, I suppose, that by covering it with a phrase he got rid of its existence.”<sup>52</sup> This judgment is transparently unjust, but there is something extremely unsatisfactory about Mill’s agnosticism all the same.

One cannot do the subject justice here, but we may at any rate agree that Mill could have done more. He could, for example, have explored the idea that the self can be a serial self, without needing a non-serial percipient self to give it unity, or that it is a logical construction which does not require a constructor; he could have pressed the “error theory” implicit in what he says about the way ordinary language favours one view of personal identity, and attempted to pull apart the implications of the language from the bare facts of the world. The fact remains that he did not.

## CAUSATION

Although there are grounds for treating Mill’s attack on Hamilton’s account of causation in conjunction with discussion of free-will—namely, that Mill discusses the “volitional” theory of causation while he is attacking Hamilton, and in the process commits himself to the view that we have no direct power over our own volitions (298-9)—there is more to be said for tackling it briefly and on its own. For on causation Mill adds nothing to his own account in the *Logic*, whereas on the subject of the freedom of the will he supplements what he says in the *Logic*, and in addition fills out the theory of punishment and the conception of justice that we find in *Utilitarianism* and *On Liberty*. His attack on Hamilton’s theory of causation is brief and dismissive. The issue was what we might expect: Hamilton appealed to the innate structure of the mind, and Mill thought the appeal quite illicit. On this topic Hamilton’s case was an odd one. For he did not appeal to a positive intuition of the connectedness of events, nor to anything like Kant’s synthetic *a priori* principle of the rule-governed succession of events. Rather, he appealed to an incapacity of the mind. The incapacity in question was the mind’s inability to conceive of what he called an “absolute commencement.” This incapacity, as Mill says, is on Hamilton’s account not entirely reliable as a guide to how things are, for acts of the free will are cases of just such an absolute commencement. It does seem at first, however, the sort of thing on which one *might* found a view

of causation. That is, we cannot regard any event as an uncaused happening, because we cannot conceive of any such thing; we must, therefore, look for the cause of it. The difficulty lies in Hamilton's explanation of the nature of the incapacity. Hamilton does not make any claim for its fundamental status. He explains it is a case of the general incapacity to imagine that there could be an increase or decrease in the quantum of existence in the world. This is, of course, a sort of relative of the principles of the conservation of energy or the conservation of matter; so read, Hamilton might be saying that the aim of causal explanation is to show how a fixed quantity of matter undergoes changes of form. The reason why he put the problem in this odd way was very probably his scholastic enthusiasm for the Aristotelian four causes, but Mill was surely right to say that the only one of the Aristotelian causes which corresponded to the modern conception of cause was the efficient cause. Hamilton went on to claim that the effect is the very same thing as the cause, presumably meaning only that effects must be made out of the same fixed quantum of matter. This was to ignore the efficient cause in favour of the material, and, in thus deciding to leave out of account the changeable element in causation, Hamilton simply left out causation. "Suppose the effect to be St. Paul's: in assigning its causes, the will of the government, the mind of the architect, and the labour of the builders, are all cast out, for they are all transitory, and only the stones and mortar remain" (292). In any case, says Mill, it is plainly absurd to suppose that the law of the conservation of matter is an original endowment of the mind; until they are taught otherwise, men believe that when water evaporates, it is annihilated, and do not think that when wood is reduced to ashes, the missing wood must be somewhere in some shape or other, even if only as smoke. It therefore looks as if Hamilton's interpretation of our incapacity to conceive an absolute commencement is suicidally ill-adapted to provide a theory of causation. Had he employed the principle in its most natural sense, as referring to the inconceivability of an uncaused *event*, it might have been bald, though it would have been addressed to the right topic; however, to employ it, not as a principle about the effects of events upon each other, but as a principle about the unchangeable quantity of existence in the world, made it simply irrelevant to the topic in hand.

## LOGIC

Mill declines to provide a positive account of causation, on the entirely proper grounds that he has done more than enough in that line in the *Logic*. Instead he turns to Hamilton's views on logic. Anyone who wearies of Mill's hounding of Hamilton through the questions of how we form concepts, what it is to judge something to be the case, and so on, will wish that Mill had declined the chase on the grounds that here, too, he had done enough in the first two books of the *Logic*. The question, what is a concept, resolves itself for Mill into the familiar question whether there are any abstract ideas; he offers a thumbnail sketch of the three possible views on universals, declares that Realism is dead beyond hope of revival, and proceeds to set out the rival attractions of Nominalism and Conceptualism. The view of the nominalists was that "there is nothing general except names. A name, they said, is general, if it is applied in the same acceptation to a plurality of things; but every one of the things is individual" (302), and this is the view of the me-

diaeval nominalists' successors such as Berkeley. The conceptualists, of whom Locke is representative, agree that "External objects indeed are all individual" but maintain nonetheless that "to every general name corresponds a General Notion, or Conception, called by Locke and others an Abstract Idea. General Names are the names of these Abstract Ideas." (302.) Mill complains of Hamilton that he will not settle for one or other of these positions, but seems to swing between agreeing with Berkeley that we simply cannot form ideas of, for example, a triangle which is neither isosceles nor scalene nor equilateral—in which case he would be a nominalist—and a manner of talking about "Abstract General Notions" which is only consistent with conceptualism. Mill himself settles for nominalism, by explaining that we may have abstractions without having any abstract ideas.

General concepts, therefore, we have, properly speaking, none; we have only complex ideas of objects in the concrete: but we are able to attend exclusively to certain parts of the concrete idea: and by that exclusive attention, we enable those parts to determine exclusively the course of our thoughts as subsequently called up by association; and are in a condition to carry on a train of meditation or reasoning relating to those parts only, exactly as if we were able to conceive them separately from the rest (310).

Attention is fixed by naming the *respect* in which we are to attend to whatever it is. Mill insists that words are therefore only signs, and there can be such things as natural signs; anything which will direct the attention in the appropriate way will form the basis of classification and conceptualization. "We may be tolerably certain that the things capable of satisfying hunger form a perfectly distinct class in the mind of any of the more intelligent animals; quite as much so as if they were able to use or understand the word food" (315).

Mill's eventual aim is to vindicate against Hamilton the doctrine that there can be a logic of truth as well as a logic of consistency. In the process he sets out to criticize Hamilton's account of what is involved in judgment and reasoning. The two basic complaints that Mill levels against Hamilton are that his account of judgment appears to make all true propositions analytic, and that his account of reasoning makes it impossible to see how one can ever *find out* something by reasoning. Here again we are in a much-trodden field, and one where there has since Mill's day been a continuous effort to disengage questions of logical implication from questions about the novelty to any particular reasoner of the conclusion he reaches by deductive inference. In the matter of judgment, Mill had an interest in insisting on the importance of *belief*, and thus of the idea of truth. In editing his father's *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, he had remarked on the imperfections of the associationist analysis of belief in terms of the association of two ideas.<sup>53</sup> To believe that the grass is green and to deny that the grass is green, we need to have the same propositional content in mind; it is the judgment we make of its being true to fact or false to fact that is different. In so far as associating ideas is supposed to be mentally analogous to depicting a state of affairs, it leaves out what is distinctive about judging that something is or is not the case; for a picture to become an assertion or a denial it needs to have something else added to it, namely the judgment that it is or is not how things are.

Mill takes up the theme against Hamilton with additions. Hamilton had rashly suggested that judgment was a process of seeing whether one concept was part of another, though he also claimed that in judgment we looked to see if two concepts were capable of coexistence or were mutually repugnant. But this argument he glossed in such a way as to suggest at any rate that such an inspection yielded what we should normally think of as a synthetic judgment. We put together such concepts as *water*, *rusting*, and *iron*, and if they are congruent, reach the judgment that “water rusts iron.” Mill comments pretty sharply on this fearful muddle. It confuses judgments about the compatibility of our concepts with judgments about the coexistence of attributes in the world, and in any event does not make the necessary move from contemplating a state of affairs as possible to asserting that it is actualized.

The discussion is complicated to some degree by the psychological overtones of any discussion of concepts. Hamilton at times seems to be wanting to say that an established truth *is* analytic, in that our concepts embody everything we associate with that of which they are the concept; so, only new truths would be synthetic, and they would make us revise our concepts in such a way that what had been synthetic now became analytic. This cannot be said to be an attractive doctrine in general, nor can Hamilton be said to have showed much sign of really wishing to articulate it; it would mean that a statement such as “all men are mortal” would be speaker-relative both in meaning and in epistemological status. For somebody whose concept “man” included “mortal” it would be analytic, and for somebody whose concept did not, it would be synthetic. Even then, in Hamilton’s account, we are not much further forward, for if concepts are *congruent* when propositions are possibly true, and if they are related *as part to whole* when they are necessarily true, how are they related when something is said to be true only contingently? As Mill complains, the necessary reference to a belief about the world seems to have been omitted.

Take, for instance, Sir W. Hamilton’s own example of a judgment, “Water rusts iron:” and let us suppose this truth to be new to us. Is it not like a mockery to say with our author, that we know this truth by comparing “the *thoughts*, water, iron, and rusting?” Ought he not to have said the *facts*, water, iron, and rusting? and even then, is comparing the proper name for the mental operation? We do not examine whether three thoughts agree, but whether three outward facts coexist. If we lived till doomsday we should never find the proposition that water rusts iron in our concepts, if we had not first found it in the outward phænomena. (332.)

Mill’s chapter on reasoning is concerned with the problem which had haunted the *Logic*, that is, how can reasoning give us new knowledge? Mill requires a theory of reasoning which accounts for the way in which we can, by bringing judgments to bear on each other, learn what we could not know by inspecting them separately. The conventional complaint against Mill to the effect that he habitually confuses psychological and logical questions really does seem warranted here, for most of his objections to Hamilton boil down to the claim that if we move from “all men are mortal” via “Socrates is a man” to “Socrates is mortal” by seeing that a concept comprehended under a concept is comprehended under any concept that comprehends that second concept, then it is impossible to see how we could *move* from premises to conclusion. Did we once have the greater concept clear in our mind, subsequently forget part of it, and then recall it (343-5)? Mill

produces what he takes to be a conclusive refutation of the “conceptualist” view that reasoning is eliciting the implications of concepts, when he offers geometrical reasoning as a plain case of achieving new knowledge of things rather than merely of concepts by a process of reasoning alone.

Here are two properties of circles. One is, that a circle is bounded by a line, every point of which is equally distant from a certain point within the circle. This attribute is connoted by the name, and is, on both theories [that is, Nominalism and Conceptualism], a part of the concept. Another property of the circle is, that the length of its circumference is to that of its diameter in the approximate ratio of 3.14159 to 1. This attribute was discovered, and is now known, as a result of reasoning. Now, is there any sense, consistent with the meaning of the terms, in which it can be said that this recondite property formed part of the concept circle, before it had been discovered by mathematicians? Even in Sir W. Hamilton’s meaning of concept, it is in nobody’s but a mathematician’s concept even now: and if we concede that mathematicians are to determine the normal concept of a circle for mankind at large, mathematicians themselves did not find the ratio of the diameter to the circumference in the concept, but put it there; and could not have done so until the long train of difficult reasoning which culminated in the discovery was complete. (346-7.)

This discussion, of course, ties in with Mill’s account of geometry in the *Logic*, with its insistence that geometry was not about definitions but about the things picked out by the definitions.<sup>54</sup>

Mill goes on to criticize Hamilton’s account of logic in terms which the preceding discussion would lead us to expect. Hamilton intended, so far as one can see, to describe logic as a purely formal science, and to explain the domain of what we should now call philosophical logic as that of the analysis of the mental operations necessary for valid thinking and inference—concept formation, definition, and so on. But this is notoriously an area in which the absence of an adequate notation hindered all efforts at distinguishing clearly between formal and material considerations. Mill, moreover, was an unabashed primitivist in such matters. He complained in the *Examination* that Hamilton’s attempt to explicate the law of noncontradiction by such formulae as “ $A = \text{not-}A = 0$ ” or “ $A - A = 0$ ” was merely a “misapplication and perversion of algebraical symbols” (376), and his letters reveal that he had no inkling of the importance of the work of Boole.<sup>55</sup> In the absence of an adequate notation, it is difficult to develop a coherent account of what is meant by restricting the notion of logic to formal considerations. Mill is wholly successful in showing that Hamilton made a fearful chaos of it. What everyone since has found less convincing is Mill’s positive account of a logic which should be wider than the logic of consistency. It is not that his fundamental position is incoherent, though it is loosely stated.

If any general theory of the sufficiency of Evidence and the legitimacy of Generalization be possible, this must be Logic κατ’ ἐξοχήν, and anything else called by the name can only be ancillary to it. For the Logic called Formal only aims at removing one of the obstacles to the attainment of truth, by preventing such mistakes as render our thoughts inconsistent with themselves or with one another: and it is of no impor-

tance whether we think consistently or not, if we think wrongly. It is only as a means to material truth, that the formal, or to speak more clearly, the conditional, validity of an operation of thought is of any value; and even that value is only negative: we have not made the smallest positive advance towards right thinking, by merely keeping ourselves consistent in what is, perhaps, systematic error. (369-70.)

Here, evidently, Mill divides general logic into what one might call the realm of inductive support on the one hand, and the realm of deductive implication on the other. The general principle that deductive arguments are conclusive because there is no way to affirm their premises and deny their conclusions without self-contradiction is one which Mill seems to adopt for himself. The so-called principle of non-contradiction, says Mill, “is the principle of all Reasoning, so far as reasoning can be regarded apart from objective truth or falsehood. For, abstractedly from that consideration, the only meaning of validity in reasoning is that it neither involves a contradiction, nor infers anything the denial of which would not contradict the premises.” (378.) Yet Mill does not want to draw such a sharp line between inductive and deductive arguments as either his opponents at the time or his successors now would do. The suggestion, even in the quotation immediately above, is that where objective truth or falsehood *is* in question, there is a sense of “validity” other than that employed in deductive reasoning. And that in turn suggests another heretical doctrine, that Mill thinks of the relation between premises and conclusions as relations of evidential support; some evidential support is so good that when we see plainly what we are saying we see that we should contradict ourselves by simultaneously asserting the premises and denying the conclusion. But instead of concluding that induction and deduction are wholly different operations, Mill inclines to the view that there is no real inference in deductive arguments.

The twentieth-century reader’s unease at all this must be a good deal increased by two passages which betoken the same unwillingness to give any weight at all to the formal/material distinction. Mill seems at first to see that there is something odd about the so-called law of identity which, he agrees, lies at the basis of all reasoning, though it is not clear what it is that he dislikes. At one point he suggests that the law of identity amounts to saying that a statement true in one form of words remains true in another form of words bearing the same meaning. To elucidate the law, says Mill, we need very much more than a statement like “A is identical with A.” We need, indeed,

a long list of such principles as these: When one thing is before another, the other is after. When one thing is after another, the other is before. When one thing is along with another, the other is along with the first. When one thing is like, or unlike, another, the other is like (or unlike) the first: in short, as many fundamental principles as there are kinds of relation. For we have need of all these changes of expression in our processes of thought and reasoning. (374.)

If the law of identity is fundamental in reasoning, it must be a general licence “to assert the same meaning in any words which will, consistently with their signification, express it” (374). This suggests that Mill does not think that identity is a property of things, but wishes to gloss it in terms of the equivalence of propositions. But he ends by admitting to some uncertainty whether the fundamental laws of logic are really necessities of thought or merely habits which we have



acquired by seeing that these laws apply to all phenomena. That they do apply to phenomena, Mill certainly says here. Speaking of the laws of identity, contradiction, and excluded middle, he says,

I readily admit that these three general propositions are universally true of all phenomena. I also admit that if there are any inherent necessities of thought, these are such. I express myself in this qualified manner, because whoever is aware how artificial, modifiable, the creatures of circumstances, and alterable by circumstances, most of the supposed necessities of thought are (though real necessities to a given person at a given time), will hesitate to affirm of any such necessities that they are an original part of our mental constitution. Whether the three so-called Fundamental Laws are laws of our thoughts by the native structure of the mind, or merely because we perceive them to be universally true of observed phenomena, I will not positively decide: but they are laws of our thoughts now, and invincibly so. They may or may not be capable of alteration by experience, but the conditions of our existence deny to us the experience which would be required to alter them. (380-1.)

Mill's last encounter with Hamilton on the logical front concerns two doctrines on which Hamilton very much prided himself. These are the claim that we can and should distinguish between syllogisms taken in "extension" and taken in "comprehension," and the doctrine of the quantification of the predicate. Mill is very fierce against the first, but mostly because he thinks Hamilton failed to see that the extension of a class is no clue to the meaning of a class name. Thus the meaning of "table" is explained by the attributes in virtue of which tables are such; anyone who knows what they are knows what "table" means and what a table is. The number of things which happen to be tables is neither here nor there; to know that they *are* tables requires that we know the attributes of tables already, and once we know that, we know all there is to be known about the meaning of the word "table." Whether this view entails that there is no light to be cast on the syllogism by treating it in terms of the calculus of classes is debatable. Mill follows Hamilton into a fog of visual imagery. According to Hamilton, says Mill, we should think of "all oxen ruminant" as meaning "If all creatures that ruminant were collected in a vast plain, and I were required to search the world and point out all oxen, they would all be found among the crowd on that plain, and none anywhere else. Moreover, this would have been the case in all past time, and will at any future, while the present order of nature lasts." (387.) Mill's objection is not that this is not implicit in the proposition, but that such a claim is not what is present to the mind. What is present to the mind is that two attributes are conjoined.

Hamilton is now best remembered for his doctrine of the quantification of the predicate. This is not to say that he is kindly remembered for it; it is little more than a curiosity of the history of logic, and Hamilton's own version of it has been described as presented with "quite fantastic incompetence."<sup>56</sup> The most that anyone now tries to do is rescue Hamilton from such charges. It is, however, hard to see quite what Hamilton was trying to add to the traditional theory of the syllogism, the more so because his later elucidations of the doctrine, produced in the heat of controversy with De Morgan, not only diminish the claims of the doctrine in respect of the number of new forms of proposition added to the traditional square of opposition, but, as

De Morgan pointed out, render invalid syllogisms he had earlier claimed as valid. Mill does not tackle Hamilton on these technical issues. Rather, he challenges him on his claim that the quantification of the predicate is a principle of mental hygiene. Hamilton appeals to “the self-evident truth,—That we can only rationally deal with what we already understand, determines the simple logical postulate,—*To state explicitly what is thought implicitly.*”<sup>57</sup> The postulate is a fairly ludicrous piece of advice; conversation would be impossible if we said *everything* we thought.

The true place of the doctrine of the quantified predicate lies in the theory of the syllogism, and particularly in the area of Aristotle’s claims about the permissible and impermissible forms of proposition. Hamilton’s claim that we can quantify the predicate makes good sense in the case of affirmative propositions like “all x is y” or “some x is y,” where we can give clear meaning to “all x is some y” and “all x is all y,” and again to “some x is all y” and “some x is some y.” Even here there is trouble lurking, since “all x is all y” may be interpreted either as “every x is every y”—which is true if there is only one x, only one y and x is y—or as a class-proposition to the effect that everything in x is in y and vice versa. Hamilton plainly wanted to read it as a class proposition, and only so could it give the required meaning to what he called “parti-partial negatives” like “some x is not some y,” where he wanted to admit as possible propositions even “some A is not some A” as in “*Some animal (say, rational) is not some animal (say, irrational).*”<sup>58</sup> Then when pressed by his critics, he added the doctrine that *some* meant, not *some at least*, but *some only*, and this move collapsed the particular affirmative and particular negative propositions of the traditional square of opposition into each other, so destroying the claim that with the quantified predicate we achieve eight distinct forms of proposition, which can be put into four pairs of contradictories in the usual way.

The whole subject of how to interpret the quantification of the predicate in the case of negative propositions is bedevilled by the awkwardness of the verbal formulae involved, and it is no wonder that Hamilton and De Morgan argued at cross-purposes for the better part of twenty years. However sympathetic to the quantification of the predicate one may feel, it seems clear that most of what Hamilton hoped to achieve is much more readily achieved by resorting to Euler circles. With the aid of these and the predicate calculus it is possible to spell out several versions of what is implied by Hamilton’s claims. No point which can readily be related to Hamilton’s thought is served by so doing, and, because syllogistic logic is of interest to most modern logicians for what it suggests about the capacity of mediaeval logicians to anticipate twentieth-century controversies, rather than for more directly instructive reasons, Hamilton’s muddles, late in the day, are unexciting stuff. One can say on Hamilton’s behalf that the theory of the quantification of the predicate opens up an interesting area of logic, which remained largely inaccessible until a more adequate notation was developed. The later history of the subject runs through De Morgan’s speculations about the “numerically definite” syllogism and on to twentieth-century work on “the logic of plurality.” But to all this Mill had no contribution to offer, and Hamilton rather a small one.

On the issues as he saw them Mill’s demolition of Hamilton’s claims for the doctrine is brief, lucid, and complete. He objects to Hamilton’s rewriting of *some* as “*some only*”; although Ham-

ilton may be right that there is a *sous entendu* of conversation to the effect that if I have seen, and know that I have seen, all your children, I should not remark merely that I had seen some of them, this fact is no reason to clutter up the theory of the syllogism (400-1). “Some A is B” is a single judgment, says Mill, and the predicate calculus would no doubt be thought to be on his side in formalizing it as  $\exists x(Ax \ \& \ Bx)$ , but “some only of A is B” is a compound judgment, and here, too, the modern formula would give Mill comfort, for it would be  $\exists x(Ax \ \& \ Bx) \ \& \ \exists x(Ax \ \& \ -Bx)$ . The same doubling up is required also when we attempt to quantify the predicate in the case of universal affirmatives. So, says Mill, Hamilton is *not* asking us to make explicit what is already implicit, since what he says is implicit (that is, in our minds already) is nothing of the sort. The Hamiltonian rewritings merely substitute two judgments for one. Mill adds a footnote to explain that we individuate judgments by way of seeing what *quaesitum* we answer, and he quotes one of Hamilton’s own authorities to the effect that the “cause why the quantitative note is not usually joined with the predicate, is that there would thus be two *quaesita* at once; to wit, whether the predicate were affirmed of the subject, and whether it were denied of everything beside” (400n-1n). Mill’s conclusion is what one would expect:

The general result of these considerations is, that the utility of the new forms is by no means such as to compensate for the great additional complication which they introduce into the syllogistic theory; a complication which would make it at the same time difficult to learn or remember, and intolerably tiresome both in the learning and in the using. . . . The new forms have thus no practical advantage which can counter-vail the objection of their entire psychological irrelevancy; and the invention and acquisition of them have little value, except as one among many other feats of mental gymnastic, by which students of the science may exercise and invigorate their faculties. (403.)

Given that Hamilton’s claims had been for the psychological and theoretical merits of the doctrine, it is hard to blame Mill for not going out of his way to find a more plausible and persuasive version of the doctrine to criticize.

## FREEDOM OF THE WILL

The last issue on which we shall see how Mill takes Hamilton to task is that of the freedom of the will. As we should imagine, the Philosophy of the Conditioned found the questions of how the will determined action, and how the will was itself moved (if not determined) to act, the occasion for a riot of declared nescience. Mansel, whose commitment to the unanswerability of ultimate questions was stronger than Hamilton’s, placed the question whether and in what way the will was free on the list of topics where philosophy proceeded by denying the intelligibility of the claims of reductionists, materialists, and necessitarians, rather than by defending an articulated account of the nature of the will and its free operation. But it was, if anything was, the central issue on which he proposed to stand and fight. For Mansel, the two opposing armies were those of the philosophy of Personality on the one side and those of Necessity on the other, and, al-

though he did not do anything to defend this view of the nature of the battlefield or his own place in the ranks of the personalists in *The Philosophy of the Conditioned*, the opposition itself appears plainly enough almost throughout his Bampton Lectures.<sup>59</sup> Mill attacks some of the *obiter dicta* in Mansel's *Prolegomena Logica*, but in criticism he sticks pretty closely to Hamilton. However, for most readers, Mill's positive views provide the interest of the chapter, for Mill commits himself to a number of views on punishment, the nature of justice, and the analysis of responsibility which outraged his critics at the time, and which still are live philosophical positions.

Mill says, rather plausibly, that Hamilton's account of the freedom of the will is central to the whole Philosophy of the Conditioned. Hamilton brings the supposed incapacity of the human mind to conceive an "absolute commencement" into head-on conflict with our apparently intuitive conviction that we are free agents, whose acts of will are indeed absolute commencements. Hamilton's Philosophy of the Conditioned, moreover, denied the teachings of common sense on the freedom of the will. Where Reid had come close to Dr. Johnson's famous assertion that "we know our will is free, and there's an end on't,"<sup>60</sup> Hamilton thought we *knew* nothing of the sort. Even Reid had agreed that people act from motives; a motive must in some fashion determine the action—even if the motive was not a direct cause of action, it was surely one of the co-operating causes which determined the will, and the will in turn was the direct cause of the action (444). Mill gratefully acknowledges Hamilton's assistance in repudiating Reid's common-sense position, though he does so in a somewhat barbed fashion: "Sir W. Hamilton having thus, as is often the case (and it is one of the best things he does), saved his opponents the trouble of answering his friends, his doctrine is left resting exclusively on the supports which he has himself provided for it" (445). But the freedom of the will is central to Hamilton's metaphysics in more than providing a paradigm of the conditioned nature of thought, and in more than providing a point at which Hamilton's distinctive views emerged clearly by contrast with those of Reid. For Hamilton's theology rested on human freedom. In effect, he held that the existence of a non-natural origin of action was the chief ground for supposing that there was a personal Creator, rather than, say, a material First Cause or a Platonic Form, at the origin of the universe. It is not just that the human personality provides, and has to provide, the model in terms of which we imagine God to ourselves—this was the burden of Mansel's case—it is that unless human agency is somehow outside the ordinary natural course of events, there is no reason why the universe should not be thought of as having a wholly natural origin.

Mill does not so much argue against this view, though he does do so, as complain about the wickedness of resorting to such arguments at all:

the practice of bribing the pupil to accept a metaphysical dogma, by the promise or threat that it affords the only valid argument for a foregone conclusion—however transcendently important that conclusion may be thought to be—is not only repugnant to all the rules of philosophizing, but a grave offence against the morality of philosophic enquiry (438-9).

The only thing about Mill's attack on Hamilton's theology that is of much philosophical interest is negative. Mill does not suggest that a (really or only apparently) contracausal freedom of

agency could have appeared in the world by purely natural processes. He insists instead that Hamilton's argument for the existence of God is a poor one compared with his own favoured argument, that from design (439).<sup>61</sup> And he argues against Hamilton that a necessitarian or determinist could believe in God as a First Cause with no more difficulty over the First Cause's own origins than the libertarian had. But he does not suggest anything like the kind of theory of emergent properties which might explain the way in which a sufficient degree of, say, neurological complexity and brain capacity causes a change of kind in the determination of action without introducing supernatural causes. The fact has a certain historical interest in showing how little Mill had absorbed of the evolutionary theory which would so naturally have provided him with just such an explanation.

All this, however, is almost by the way. For Mill's aim is to present the positive case for necessitarianism or—since he rejected the idea of any “*must* in the case, any necessity, other than the unconditional universality of the fact” (446)—what he preferred to call determinism. The determinist holds no more complicated a belief than that human actions are not exempt from the causality in terms of which we explain all other phenomena. He holds that “volitions do, in point of fact, follow determinate moral antecedents with the same uniformity, and (when we have sufficient knowledge of the circumstances) with the same certainty, as physical effects follow their physical causes” (446). Mill encourages us to test the belief against evidence, both individual and social, and assures the reader that it is confirmed by the predictability of people's behaviour. Mill, like empiricists before and after him, assumes rather readily that all prediction rests upon knowledge of physical causes. There is no such thing as real unpredictability, no genuine indeterminacy in the facts; all there is is the residual ignorance of the observer. “The cases in which volitions seem too uncertain to admit of being confidently predicted, are those in which our knowledge of the influences antecedently in operation is so incomplete, that with equally imperfect data there would be the same uncertainty in the predictions of the astronomer and the chemist” (446). Such uncertainties do not induce the scientist to abandon his belief in the universal reign of causality, and they ought not to induce anything of the sort in human affairs: “we must reject equally in both cases the hypothesis of spontaneousness . . .” (446).

Hamilton had expressed uncertainty about the revelations of consciousness on the subject of free will. Mill thinks that this is proper, because the only *unchallengeable* deliverances of consciousness are those where there really is no room for error—whatever I now feel, I really do now feel, and cannot think I do not. But freedom is not a matter of current feeling; it is a hypothesis, namely, the hypothesis that I could have done something other than what I actually did do. As a counterfactual, its content is *ex hypothesi* not present to consciousness; so consciousness simply cannot tell us that we are free. Although Mill half credits Hamilton with this realization, he argues that Hamilton sometimes lapses into saying we intuit our own freedom—inconceivable though it is on his own account to do so—and argues that, more interestingly, Hamilton holds that what we intuit is not our *freedom* but rather *our moral responsibility*, in which freedom of the will is implicit. This introduction of the concept of responsibility gives Mill the opportunity to leave Hamilton's case on one side, and to return to the argument with the Owenites which dominates the discussion of freedom and necessity in Book Six of the *Logic*. Mill wishes to distinguish his

own, determinist doctrine from two species of Fatalism. The first is pure or Asiatic fatalism, which “holds that our actions do not depend upon our desires. Whatever our wishes may be, a superior power, or an abstract destiny, will overrule them, and compel us to act, not as we desire, but in the manner predestined.” (465.) The second doctrine is that of Owenite fatalism, or “Modified Fatalism”:

our actions are determined by our will, our will by our desires, and our desires by the joint influence of the motives presented to us and of our individual character; but that, our character having been made for us and not by us, we are not responsible for it, nor for the actions it leads to, and should in vain attempt to alter them (465).

The doctrine Mill held against both varieties of fatalism was not fatalist, merely determinist: that

not only our conduct, but our character, is in part amenable to our will; that we can, by employing the proper means, improve our character; and that if our character is such that while it remains what it is, it necessitates us to do wrong, it will be just to apply motives which will necessitate us to strive for its improvement, and so emancipate ourselves from the other necessity (466).

The Owenites had argued from their position of modified fatalism that it was unjust to punish people, or, which was in their eyes, though not in everyone’s, the same thing, that punishment was ineffective as a means of social control and therefore amounted to gratuitous cruelty. The reason why their views on punishment mattered to Mill in the *Examination* was perhaps rather different from the reason why they mattered when he was writing the *Logic*. In his youth, Mill had obviously been very vulnerable to the accusation that his character had been made for him, and not by him, and that he was an artefact of James Mill’s designing. The argument in the *Logic* is directed almost entirely to showing that we can improve our characters, that we are not the helpless slaves of antecedent circumstances, and can choose to become something other than we have so far been brought up to be. The discussion in the *Examination* is less passionate. It takes off from the fact that, on Mill’s analysis, the idea of responsibility is wholly bound up with the idea of punishment. To show that there is an analysis of responsibility consistent with determinism is, in effect, to show that there is such a thing as just punishment in a determinist world.

Mill accepts that it is unjust to punish people for what they cannot help, or when they could not have acted otherwise than they did. But his analysis of what we mean when we say that a person could have acted otherwise rephrases the statement, in the classical empiricist mould, as a claim that the person would have acted otherwise if he or she had so chosen. That all else could have remained unchanged, and that the person in question should have acted differently, is what Mill denies. When Mansel says that we know that we could have acted differently, even if *everything* else had been the same, Mill agrees, “though the antecedent phænomena remain the same: but not if my judgment of the antecedent phænomena remains the same. If my conduct changes, either the external inducements or my estimate of them must have changed.” (448n.) We cannot act against our strongest motive, so freedom must consist in being able to act according to it. Mill goes on to claim that this kind of freedom is entirely consistent with determinism—as it evidently

is—and that it is entirely consistent with holding ourselves and others responsible for their actions. Mill begins by insisting that “Responsibility means punishment” (454). He distinguishes at once between two different ways in which we may be said to be liable to punishment.

When we are said to have the feeling of being morally responsible for our actions, the idea of being punished for them is uppermost in the speaker’s mind. But the feeling of liability to punishment is of two kinds. It may mean, expectation that if we act in a certain manner, punishment will actually be inflicted upon us, by our fellow creatures or by a Supreme Power. Or it may only mean, knowing that we shall deserve that infliction. (454.)

Mill sees that it is the idea of deserving punishment which needs explaining. Expecting to suffer is very obviously consistent with a complete absence of free will.

Mill, in essence, provides a naturalistic theory of punishment. If a society has some sense of right and wrong, then those who cultivate anti-social dispositions, and threaten the security and well-being of everyone else, will naturally be thought to be behaving wrongly, and will be objects of fear and dislike to everyone else. They will therefore be left out of the distribution of common benefits and will have whatever measures of self-defence others think necessary employed against them. The wrongdoer

is certain to be made accountable, at least to his fellow creatures, through the normal action of their natural sentiments. And it is well worth consideration, whether the practical expectation of being thus called to account, has not a great deal to do with the internal feeling of being accountable; a feeling, assuredly, which is seldom found existing in any strength in the absence of that practical expectation. (455.)

Now it is noticeable here that Mill introduces a consideration which haunts the subsequent discussion of punishment much as, with its contractual overtones, it haunts Mill’s account of justice in *Utilitarianism* and much as it haunts *On Liberty*. This is the suggestion that society is founded on some sort of implicit agreement about the reciprocity of good and evil; we get security against the attacks of others in return for our forbearance, and we are punished when we break this agreement. Being practically held to account is a way of having the reciprocal nature of social agreement brought home to us. People who never enter into egalitarian relations cease to have notions like “fair play” in their moral lexicon. The importance of some such conception of justice as fairness is not much developed anywhere in Mill’s work, though it emerges in Mill’s interpretation of what utility requires. Here it emerges in what he says about the retributive element in punishment, and in a rather Kantian interpretation of the connection between punishment and the good of the criminal himself.

The main aim of Mill’s account, however, is to show how punishment is not shown to be unjust on determinist interpretations of it. After arguing, rather neatly, that even if we believed that the “criminal” class consisted of creatures who had no control at all over their noxious behaviour we should endeavour to control them by measures very like what we now call punishment, he confronts head on the opponent who says that all this is beside the point. The root of the difficulty is a question of justice: “On the theory of Necessity (we are told) a man cannot help acting

as he does; and it cannot be just that he should be punished for what he cannot help” (458). Mill’s first response to this is at least odd, at worst catastrophic. He says that the claim that the criminal could not help it needs qualification; if he is of vicious temperament, the criminal cannot help committing the crime, but if “the impression is strong in his mind that a heavy punishment will follow, he can, and in most cases does, help it” (458). On this view the threat of punishment is a countervailing motive, which so to speak pushes the criminal in the opposite direction to that in which his criminal character pushes him. Mill’s critics all saw that there was something very wrong here, but nobody seems to have pointed out that, on Mill’s analysis, anyone who commits a crime can always make precisely the claim that Mill is trying to rebut. If he cannot help doing wrong when he is not threatened, the proper conclusion to draw is that when he is threatened and still offends, those who have threatened him have not done so effectively. If he could not help it, *unthreatened*, how can he help it, inadequately threatened?

Mill’s great concern to show that we are responsible for our characters may be thought to indicate some awareness of the trouble he had caused himself. The criminal who explains to the court that it is unfortunate that he has such a bad character, but that once he had it, it overwhelmed all the threats the law was prepared to utter, could be told that he had no more business going around with a bad character than he would have had going around with a loaded revolver. The retort, however, will not do much to save Mill’s case. Anyone who is faced with that argument can simply respond by saying that without a sufficient motive to improve his character he *could not* improve it; given the initial badness of his character, it was no use looking to any internal motive for change; and as for the absence of an external motive, how could he be blamed for that? Mill, indeed, does not linger on the question of the agent’s motives. He turns rather to the question of what makes punishment just. In explaining this, he gives hostages both to fortune and to Kant. Punishment has two proper goals, the good of the criminal and the defence of the just rights of others. If punishment is not inflicted to protect the just rights of others, it is mere aggression on the individual punished. But, many of Mill’s readers might wonder, how can he argue that a proper purpose of punishment is to do the offender good? Is not *On Liberty* devoted to denouncing precisely such a claim? And when Mill says: “To punish him for his own good, provided the inflictor has any proper title to constitute himself a judge, is no more unjust than to administer medicine” (458)—is this not in flat contradiction to his attacking Whewell for suggesting that the law on quarantine was for the sufferer’s own good?<sup>62</sup> Mill responds to this charge in a long footnote. He seems to see only part of the point, for he begins by saying that of course we punish children for their own good, and we may treat “adult communities which are still in the infantine stage of development” in the same way; but he seems to draw back a little over adult offenders. “And did I say, or did any one ever say, that when, for the protection of society, we punish those who have done injury to society, the reformation of the offenders is not one of the ends to be aimed at, in the kind and mode, at least, of the punishment?” (459n.) There is here, perhaps, a suggestion to the effect that Mill accepts Kant’s view that nobody can be punished *simply* to do him good, but that once he forfeits his right to immunity from all punishment, we may properly consider how to reform him when we consider what punishment to inflict.



The same awkwardness emerges when Mill talks of the legitimate defence of our just rights as a ground of punishment. Looked at from society's point of view, it is just to punish offenders who transgress the rights of others, "as it is just to put a wild beast to death (without unnecessary suffering) for the same object" (460). To say this seems precisely to ignore the whole question of the distinction between punishment applied to free moral agents and mere measures of social control applied to non-human creatures. But then Mill moves on to the question of whether the criminal can complain of being treated unjustly, and says that the crucial element in holding ourselves responsible for our actions lies in our recognizing that other people have *rights*. Doing so is, in essence, placing ourselves at their point of view, and if we do so we shall see that there is no injustice in their defending themselves against any disposition on our part to infringe those rights. Once again, the importance of equality emerges in the observation that we shall more readily recognize the justice of their defending their rights by punishing offences against them, the more often we have ourselves stood up for our own rights in this way. Something much nearer an appeal to fairness than to simple utility is evidently at stake.

Thereafter, Mill's account is very like Hume's or, indeed, one may say, like most empiricist accounts. *Mere* retribution is of no value, and would amount to gratuitous cruelty; something like retribution is warranted, as a way of satisfying the natural hostility and outrage which criminal acts arouse in us, but such a justification is instrumental, a case of means-ends argument, and not an appeal with arithmetical overtones to fitness or to an eternal justice. The means-ends arguments for punishment reinforce the determinists' case, for it would evidently be both silly and cruel to inflict punishment where it could not modify behaviour, or to threaten it where it could not do so in prospect. Mill appeals to the same considerations to explain why we should punish only the guilty. If we are aiming to deter people from committing crimes, there is no point in punishing those who have not committed crimes, since there is then no basis for an association of ideas between the crime on the one hand and the punishment on the other.

It goes without saying that Mill raises all sorts of issues that have not been tackled here. The general implausibility of his analysis of responsibility has been argued at length in various other places, and almost every point he makes about motivation, about the justification of punishment, and about the compatibility of freedom and determinism has been the subject of exhaustive, but still quite unexhausted controversy for the past hundred years. A review of these arguments is not necessary here. Two negative points will suffice. It is worthy of notice that Mill does not seem to see that his opponents are groping, even if only dimly, towards the crucial point that what we call punishment is very far from being a means of social control of an obviously utilitarian kind. Why, for example, do we not endeavour to remodel the characters of those who have not yet offended, but who are likely to? Why do we not set penalties for offences for maximum deterrence at minimum cost? So effective would capital punishment be if threatened for parking offences that it is doubtful if more than one or two persons a year would be executed in the whole United States, yet the idea seems absurd. Mill has nothing to say about this issue, perhaps because he takes for granted constraints on the utilitarian calculus which are of rather doubtfully utilitarian origin. Secondly, it is worth noticing that the two places where the *Examination* is at its most interesting and least persuasive are where Mill discusses personal identity and where he analyzes individual

responsibility. The reason is easy enough to point to, and extremely hard to explicate. In essence, Mill's epistemology requires us to treat our own selves and our own behaviour as if they are external objects and the behaviour of external objects. We can, of course, treat other persons in this "external" or third-person fashion; we can treat some parts of our past in this way, and, up to a point, our own distant futures. The wholesale assimilation of the first-person and third-person view of the world looks much more problematic. If it *is* essentially an incoherent project, we should expect the incoherence to appear just where it does in the *Examination*, that is, when our view of our own identity is being assimilated to our view of the identity of other persons and objects, and when our control over our own activity is being assimilated to the control we may exercise over things and over other persons. If readers of the *Examination* are unlikely to find it quite such an exemplary work of empiricist self-criticism as Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*, it will, at least in these respects, stand the comparison.

## Endnotes

[1] Thomas Reid, *Works*, ed. Sir W. Hamilton, 6th ed. (Edinburgh: Maclachlan and Stewart, 1866).

[2] Selwyn Grave, *The Scottish Philosophy of Common Sense* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960).

[3] Ed. John Veitch and Henry Longueville Mansel, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1859-60).

[4] 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1866). (1st ed., 1852; 2nd ed., 1853, used by Mill in the *Examination*.)

[5] Mark Pattison, "J. S. Mill on Hamilton," *The Reader*, V (20/5/65), 562.

[6] *Ibid.*, 563.

[7] William George Ward, "Mr. Mill's Denial of Necessary Truth," *Dublin Review*, n.s. XVII (Oct., 1871), 285-6.

[8] James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, 2 vols., 2nd ed., ed. J. S. Mill (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1869).

[9] E.g., *Examination*, 167ff. below. Subsequent references, which are all to the present edition, are given in parentheses in the text.

[10] See *Autobiography*, ed. Jack Stillinger (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), 161-2.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Ibid.*, 134.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] But see Jerome B. Schneewind, *Sidgwick's Ethics and Victorian Moral Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 96n, where Whewell appears as a rather liberal churchman.

[15] Autobiography, 162.

[16] *Kant's Political Writings*, ed. Hans Siegbert Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 144-6.

[17] Autobiography, 162.

[18] *Ibid.*, 163.

[19] *Examination*, ciii: "a host of writers, whose mode of philosophic thought was either directly or indirectly implicated in the criticisms made by this volume on Sir W. Hamilton, have taken up arms against it, and fought as *pro aris et focis*."

[20] Rudolf Metz, *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1938), Chap. i, gives a brief but lucid account of the final phases of the Scottish common-sense tradition.

[21] William Ritchie Sorley, *A History of English Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 240.

[22] John Veitch, *Memoir of Sir William Hamilton* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1869), 146ff.

[23] *Ibid.*, 173-4.

[24] *Ibid.*, 207-8.

[25] See Augustus De Morgan, *On the Syllogism, and Other Logical Writings*, ed. Peter Heath (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), xvii-xviii.

[26] Veitch, *Memoir*, 344.

[27] See *ibid.*, 286-93, for an account of Hamilton's vain attempts to secure an adequate pension.

[28] Marginalia in the copy of *Discussions*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1866), in the London Library, 38.

[29] For an account of Mansel's life, see John William Burgon, *The Lives of Twelve Good Men*, 2 vols. (London: Murray, 1888), II, 149-237.

[30] Mansel, *The Limits of Religious Thought*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1859), xliii.

[31] *Ibid.*, ix-x. He also enjoyed entertaining children with jokes and outrageous puns. Burgon says that on one occasion when Mansel was out driving with friends, a little girl in the party exclaimed that a donkey by the roadside seemed to have got its head stuck in a barrel. "Mansel was heard to murmur softly to himself,—'Then it will be a case of *asphyxia*.'" (Burgon, *Lives of Twelve Good Men*, II, 213.) And such outrages were not reserved for children alone; later when Mansel was showing a visitor the interior of St. Paul's, the man "complained of the heathenish character of the monuments. 'Just look at *that* now,'—(pointing to a huge figure of Neptune). 'What has *that* got to do with Christianity?' '*Tridentine* Christianity, perhaps,' suggested Mansel." (*Ibid.*)

[32] De Morgan, *On the Syllogism*, xxi.

- [33] *Discussions*, 15n; cf. 34n-5n below.
- [34] Burgon, *Lives of Twelve Good Men*, II, 201.
- [35] *Discussions*, 16.
- [36] *Ibid.*, 14-15.
- [37] "Bain's Psychology" (1859), in *Essays on Philosophy and the Classics, Collected Works*, XI (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 341, 343.
- [38] Mansel, *The Philosophy of the Conditioned* (London: Strachan, 1866), 81ff.
- [39] Herbert Spencer, "Mill *versus* Hamilton—The Test of Truth," *Fortnightly Review*, I (15 July, 1865), 548.
- [40] "Bain's Psychology," *CW*, XI, 343-4.
- [41] *Limits of Religious Thought*, 5th ed. (London: Murray, 1867), xin-xiin. (Not in the 4th ed.)
- [42] Spencer, "Mill *versus* Hamilton," 548.
- [43] Ward, "Necessary Truth," 298-9.
- [44] Mansel, *Limits of Religious Thought*, 5th ed., xvi, 95ff. (Not in the 4th ed.)
- [45] *Discussions*, 14.
- [46] *Philosophy of the Conditioned*, 170-1.
- [47] *Limits of Religious Thought*, 4th ed., vii.
- [48] *Philosophy of the Conditioned*, 167.
- [49] *Discussions*, 44.
- [50] See Jonathan Bennett, *Locke, Berkeley, Hume* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), Chap. vi.
- [51] Francis Herbert Bradley, *Ethical Studies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), 39n.
- [52] *Ibid.*, 40n.
- [53] James Mill, *Analysis*, I, 402n-4n.
- [54] J. S. Mill, *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive, Collected Works*, Vols. VII and VIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), VII, 224-7 (II, v, i).
- [55] Mill to John Elliot Cairnes (5/12/71), in Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, eds., *The Later Letters, Collected Works*, Vols. XIV-XVII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XVII, 1862-3.
- [56] Arthur Norman Prior, *Formal Logic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 148.
- [57] *Discussions*, 646.
- [58] *Ibid.*, 163.
- [59] See Mansel, *Limits of Religious Thought*, 4th ed., 56ff.

[60] James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill and L. F. Powell, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934-50), II, 82.

[61] See, e.g., "Theism," in *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society, Collected Works*, X (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 446-52, 456.

[62] J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, in *Essays on Politics and Society, Collected Works*, Vols. XVIII and XIX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), XVIII, 223; and "Whewell's Moral Philosophy," *CW*, X, 197-8.

## VOLUME X (1) - ESSAYS ON ETHICS, RELIGION, AND SOCIETY. INTRODUCTION BY F.E.L. PRIESTLEY

### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume X - Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by F.E.L. Priestley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/241/21454>>.

### INTRODUCTION

The essays collected in this volume are the main documents for the illustration and exposition of John Stuart Mill's thoughts on ethics and religion and their function in society. Since his system of ethics is avowedly Utilitarian, these documents, arranged chronologically, present the development of Mill's Utilitarianism as given in published utterance. Questions about the precise nature of his doctrine are capable of being approached in various ways, of which we have, in this edition, chosen two. It is possible to take the essay *Utilitarianism* as Mill's definitive statement of his doctrine and subject it to a rigorous analysis, seeking precise shades of meaning, testing the logical consistency and coherence of the argument, by means of the techniques and criteria of the modern philosopher. This task and this approach have been undertaken here by Professor D. P. Dryer, whose thorough and careful study follows this general introduction. It is also possible to follow the patterns of thought, and the patterns of exposition, in the successive works included here, and to treat them in terms of the history of ideas—in this case the development of Mill's ideas—and in terms of rhetoric, or what might be called the strategy or tactics of presentation and argument. This is to remember that Mill is not purely a philosopher, but a man of letters and a controversialist. It is this second task, and this second approach, that I undertake in this general introduction.

### MILL, BENTHAM, AND UTILITARIANISM

It is natural for discussions of Mill's variations from Benthamism to start with evidence of his discontent or restiveness under Bentham's rule, and the main documents called in to supply that evidence are the *Autobiography* and the essays on Bentham and on Coleridge. As one reads Mill's retrospective account of what he himself was like before the mental crisis of 1826, that is, during the period of complete committal to Benthamism, one is struck by how closely the portrait of the

young Mill resembles the portrait the more mature Mill draws of Bentham. Bentham's "principle of utility" was "the keystone" which "gave unity" to his conceptions of things, and formulated for him "a creed, a doctrine, a philosophy, . . . a religion."<sup>1</sup> The "description so often given of a Benthamite, as a mere reasoning machine," he says, "was during two or three years of my life not altogether untrue of me." Zeal "for what I thought the good of mankind was my strongest sentiment. . . . But my zeal was as yet little else, at that period of my life, than zeal for speculative opinions. It had not its root in genuine benevolence, or sympathy with mankind; though these qualities held their due place in my ethical standard. Nor was it connected with any high enthusiasm for ideal nobleness." "[My] father's teachings tended to the undervaluing of feeling"—as also did Bentham's. (76-7.)

As he looks back on what he was, Mill recognizes of course in himself the suppressed potentialities that differentiate him from Bentham: "no youth of the age I then was, can be expected to be more than one thing, and this was the thing I happened to be," but of the absent "high enthusiasm for ideal nobleness," he comments: "Yet of this feeling I was imaginatively very susceptible; but there was at that time an intermission of its natural aliment, poetical culture, while there was a superabundance of the discipline antagonistic to it, that of mere logic and analysis" (76-7). He also recognizes from this later perspective the power of his father's feelings, but the fact remains that the feelings are given little place in James Mill's system. The whole Benthamite system of the regeneration of mankind, to which the young Mill fully subscribed, was to be the "effect of educated intellect, enlightening the selfish feelings" (78). The inevitable egoism of man was to be modified into an enlightened egoism.

The first movement of emancipation from the narrow mould of Benthamism was a very slight one: the rejection of Bentham's contempt for poetry. This came first through "looking into" Pope's *Essay on Man*, and realizing how powerfully it acted on his imagination, despite the repugnance to him of its opinions. It is significant that in retrospect Mill connects this momentary stirring of the imagination by poetry, quite apart from the appeal of its opinions, with the "inspiring effect," "the best sort of enthusiasm," roused by biographies of wise and noble men. These stirrings are, as he points out, of greater meaning from the vantage-point of maturity than they were at the time. They did not affect the "real inward sectarianism" of his youth; they were evidence merely of a suppressed potentiality (79-80). It is, nevertheless, this suppressed potentiality which distinguishes the young Mill from Bentham himself.

The actual process of cracking the shell of his "inward sectarianism" begins with his mental crisis in the autumn of 1826. The great end of Benthamism was the production of pleasure (or, to accept Bentham's extension, happiness). Now Mill found his life devoid of happiness. To the vital question, "Suppose that all your objects in life were realized; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to, could be completely effected at this very instant: would this be a great joy and happiness to you?" his "irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered, 'No!'" And, as he puts it, "the whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell down." (94.)

What is strongly suggested by Mill's account, and by the criticism of the doctrine of association taught him by his father and Bentham which immediately follows in the *Autobiography*, is that the crisis of apathy, of loss of incentive, had brought home to him with full force the objection commonly made to Utilitarianism as a system of ethics, that it provided no source of obligation. "I was," he says, ". . . left stranded . . . with a well-equipped ship and a rudder, but no sail; without any real desire for the ends which I had been so carefully fitted out to work for: no delight in virtue, or the general good. . . . [N]either selfish nor unselfish pleasures were pleasures to me." To "know that a feeling would make me happy if I had it, did not give me the feeling." ". . . I became persuaded, that my love of mankind, and of excellence for its own sake, had worn itself out. . . ." (97-8, 95.) The cause of his state he finds in the education to which he had been subjected, which was, as he recognizes, the kind of education through which Bentham and James Mill looked for the progressive improvement of mankind. His teachers, he says, "seemed to have trusted altogether to the old familiar instruments, praise and blame, reward and punishment," linked to behaviour in the educational pattern of association derived from Helvetius (96). These associations Mill now saw as artificial and mechanical, not natural. They are, in fact, deliberately created or cultivated prejudices (or, to use a more modern terminology, states of conditioning). There is thus a conflict between this whole area of Bentham's thought and that area which concerns itself with critical analysis. Bentham's constructive thought, his plan for progress through enlightenment, reveals a fatal dichotomy. In so far as it is conceived in terms of rewards and punishments to induce the desired behaviour by mechanical association, that is, in so far as it derives from Helvetius and Beccaria, it is at odds with the kind of enlightenment represented by Bentham's critical attacks on received notions and stereotyped habits of thought, conducted through rational analysis. As Mill points out, "we owe to analysis our clearest knowledge of the permanent sequences in nature; the real connexions between Things, not dependent on our will and feelings; natural laws. . . ." "The very excellence of analysis . . . is that it tends to weaken and undermine whatever is the result of prejudice. . . ." (97, 96.)

A consideration of these passages in the *Autobiography* indicates first of all that Mill is separating the two aspects of Bentham's system, the constructive and the critical, and showing why he largely rejects the former, while still generally approving of the latter. This whole procedure suggests a detached and rational weighing of Benthamism difficult to reconcile with the obvious agitation of Mill's mind at this time. But to a large extent the agitation is in fact connected with the detached rational estimate. There can be no doubt that the maturing Mill became intellectually dissatisfied with the narrow and rigorous schematization which both Bentham and his father delighted in. Nor is there much doubt that any wavering or back-sliding, any questioning of the orthodox doctrine of what was to James Mill, as to John Stuart, a "religion," smacked to both of heresy and betrayal. It is significant that as late as 1833, Mill is still anxious to keep his heretical views from his father. Some of the anguish, then, is undoubtedly that of a pillar of the faith, beset by intellectual doubts, and in constant communion with the founder of the church.

But much in the *Autobiography* also suggests a less rational and perhaps even more powerful influence at work. This is an enormous sense of the impoverishment of his own nature, of the denial of a vital part of it, of a suppression of its full potentialities, through the narrowness of the



system in which he had been educated. It would be hard to find in any autobiography a passage with more dreadful implications than the one in which Mill records that he read through the whole of Byron, “to try whether a poet, whose peculiar department was supposed to be that of the intenser feelings, could rouse any feeling in me” (103). The nightmarish sense of a paralyzed sensibility, to be tested by the most violent provocation at hand, as if one were applying a powerful current to a nerve one feared to be dead, conveys a profound sense of despair, more profound than that in Arnold’s “buried life.”

As is well known, it was from Wordsworth’s poems that Mill derived “a medicine for [his] state of mind,” “a source of inward joy, of sympathetic and imaginative pleasure, which could be shared in by all human beings. . . .” “From them,” he says, “I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed. . . . I needed to be made to feel that there was real, permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation. . . . And the delight which these poems gave me, proved that with culture of this sort, there was nothing to dread from the most confirmed habit of analysis.” (104.) One is again reminded of Arnold, and his tribute to Wordsworth as the poet who, “when the age had bound Our souls in its benumbing round, . . . spoke, and loosed our heart in tears,” and who “shed On spirits that had long been dead, Spirits dried up and closely furl’d, The freshness of the early world.”<sup>2</sup>

In his depression, Mill had been brought to the belief that “the habit of analysis has a tendency to wear away the feelings . . .” (96). Since he had been taught by his education not only that the proper exercise of the mind was this habit of analysis, but also that “the pleasure of sympathy with human beings, and the feelings which made the good of others . . . the object of existence, were the greatest and surest source of happiness” (97), he had seemed to be faced with a dilemma. It is from this dilemma that Wordsworth delivered him, as the last sentence quoted above shows.

In his rebellion, emotional and intellectual, against Bentham, Mill sees himself, in retrospect, as if in violent reaction. He notes of a later stage that he had “now completely turned back from what there had been of excess in my reaction against Benthamism” (169). He describes himself, during the reaction, as influenced by the Coleridgeans, and moving towards their position. But he also speaks of the truths “which lay in my early opinions, and in no essential part of which I at any time wavered” (118).

The central question of the nature of Mill’s Utilitarianism clearly involves his attitude towards Bentham and Bentham’s system. But the implications of his reaction against Bentham are neither clear-cut nor simple. An analogy is suggested by his own description of his early enthusiasm for Benthamism as a religion. Heretics are not all of one sort: some reject the old religion totally and subscribe to another set of beliefs, some wish to abandon parts of the orthodox doctrine as excrescences or debasements or perversions, some question the definitions and doctrines and seek a re-definition. Mill had obviously been brought up to accept Benthamism as the full and orthodox doctrine of the utilitarian creed. As a heretic, he could either see himself as rejecting Utilitarianism or as rejecting Bentham’s definition of it. It is clear that he saw himself as doing the latter.

## “REMARKS ON BENTHAM’S PHILOSOPHY”

That Mill’s heresy is of the “revisionist” sort is made evident not only by the very obvious fact of his defence of Utilitarianism in the essay on that subject, but by an examination of the essays on Bentham and on Coleridge. The “Remarks on Bentham’s Philosophy” which Mill wrote anonymously in 1833 as an appendix to Lytton Bulwer’s *England and the English* is notable for its direct challenge of Bentham’s interpretation of the doctrine of Utility: “he has practically, to a very great extent, confounded the principle of Utility with the principle of specific consequences. . . . He has largely exemplified, and contributed very widely to diffuse, a tone of thinking, according to which any kind of action or any habit, which in its own specific consequences cannot be proved to be necessarily or probably productive of unhappiness . . . is supposed to be fully justified. . . .”<sup>3</sup> This confusion has been the “source of the chief part of the temporary mischief” Bentham as a moral philosopher “must be allowed to have produced” (7-8). He has ignored the question whether acts or habits not in themselves necessarily pernicious, may not form part of a pernicious character. In ignoring states of mind as motive and cause of actions, Bentham is in fact ignoring some of the consequences, for “any act . . . has a tendency to fix and perpetuate the state or character of mind in which itself has originated” (8). And by thus limiting consideration of the morality of an act to “consequences” narrowly conceived, Bentham has, Mill implies, given some sanction to those who see Utilitarianism as merely a doctrine of expediency; “a more enlarged understanding of the ‘greatest-happiness principle,’ ” which took far more into account than Bentham’s “consequences,” would not be open to this interpretation (7).

Although Bentham entitles his work *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, it is perhaps fortunate, says Mill, that he concerns himself mainly with legislation rather than morals, “for the mode in which he understood and applied the principle of Utility” was more conducive to valuable results in relation to legislation (7). But even here, the narrowness of his definition of the principle leads him to fail in “the consideration of the greater social questions—the theory of organic institutions and general forms of polity; for those . . . must be viewed as the great instruments of forming the national character . . . ” (9). The deficiency in Bentham’s understanding of the principle of Utility is further aggravated, in his speculations on politics, by the deficiency of his method of “beginning at the beginning”: he starts with a view of man in society without a government, and then considers sorts of government as alternative constructions to be hypothetically applied and evaluated. This method, says Mill, “assumes that mankind are alike in all times and all places, that they have the same wants and are exposed to the same evils, and that if the same institutions do not suit them, it is only because in the more backward stages of improvement they have not wisdom to see what institutions are most for their good” (16). This is vastly to over-simplify the real problem of politics. It is to ignore the function of political institutions as “the principal means of the social education of a people,” to be fitted specifically to the particular needs of the circumstances and national character at a particular stage of civilization. Since different stages demand the production of different effects, no one social organization can be fitted to all circumstances and characters.

The reductive simplicity of this aspect of Bentham's thought proceeds ultimately from the similar simplicity of his view of human nature. He "supposes mankind," writes Mill, "to be swayed by only a part of the inducements which really actuate them; but of that part he imagines them to be much cooler and more thoughtful calculators than they really are" (17). He ignores the profound effect of habit and imagination in securing political acquiescence, and the effect upon habit and imagination of continuity of political structure and especially its outward forms. He ignores, in short, what Burke calls "prejudice," and which Burke rightly recognizes as to some extent indicating an adaptation of institutions, "associated with all the historical recollections of a people," to their national character (17). It is this historical continuity "which alone renders possible those innumerable compromises between adverse interests and expectation, without which no government could be carried on for a year, and with difficulty even for a week."

If the narrowness of Bentham's view of human nature introduces such serious deficiencies into his political thought, in the area of moral thought Mill sees its effect as positively vicious. In asserting that "men's actions are always obedient to their interests," Bentham by no means intended "to impute universal selfishness to mankind, for he reckoned the motive of sympathy as an *interest*. . . . He distinguished two kinds of interests, the self-regarding and the social. . . ." But the term *interest* in vulgar usage gets restricted to the self-regarding, and indeed the "tendency of Mr. Bentham's own opinions" was to consider the self-regarding interest "as exercising, by the very constitution of human nature, a far more exclusive and paramount control over human actions than it really does exercise." As soon as Bentham has shown the direction in which a man's selfish interest would move him, he habitually "lays it down without further parley that the man's interest lies that way" (14). This assertion Mill goes on to support with quotations from Bentham's *Book of Fallacies*. "By the promulgation of such views of human nature, and by a general tone of thought and expression perfectly in harmony with them," he flatly charges, "I conceive Mr. Bentham's writings to have done and to be doing very serious evil. . . . It is difficult to form the conception of a tendency more inconsistent with all rational hope of good for the human species, than that which must be impressed by such doctrines, upon any mind in which they find acceptance." "I regard any considerable increase of human happiness, through mere changes in outward circumstances, unaccompanied by changes in the state of the desires, as hopeless. . . . No man's individual share of any public good which he can hope to realize by his efforts, is an equivalent for the sacrifice of his ease, and of the personal objects which he might attain by another course of conduct. The balance can be turned in favour of virtuous exertion, only by the interest of *feeling* or by that of *conscience*—those 'social interests,' the necessary subordination of which to 'self-regarding' is so lightly assumed." (15.)

Mill reinforces his case by further criticism of Bentham's psychology—the inadequacy of his list of motives, or "springs of action," the inferiority of his doctrine to Hartley's in omitting "the moral sense," the falseness of his notion that "all our acts are determined by pains and pleasures *in prospect*," as implied in the calculus of *consequences* (12). Mill also introduces something like Godwin's distinction between the morality of an act and the virtue of the actor. The virtuous man is deterred, not by a view of consequences, or of future pain, but from the painful "thought of committing the act," a pain which precedes the act. "Not only *may* this be so," Mill adds, "but

unless it be so, the man is not really virtuous.” Again, consequences depend on deliberation, but he who deliberates “is in imminent danger of being lost” (12). Mill might seem here to be arguing a doctrine of “moral sense,” an immediate, not deliberative apprehension of the moral quality of an act. He is certainly defining virtue in terms of moral disposition, or motive, like the intuitionists. But in view of his rejection in *Utilitarianism* of any cognitive element in “moral sense,” we must conclude that here the deterrent “painful thought” performs only a psychological, not an epistemic function. What Mill is doing, then, is substituting an account of moral sense in terms of his empirical psychology for that offered by the intuitionists. His reference to Hartley serves to remind us that Hartley also attempts to reconcile in this fashion, at least to some degree, the opposed empirical and intuitionist schools of moral philosophy.

Where Bentham is successful, Mill argues, is in those areas which do not involve moral philosophy. Penal law, for example, “enjoins or prohibits an action, with very little regard to the general moral excellence or turpitude which it implies. . . .” The legislator’s object “is not to render people incapable of *desiring* a crime, but to deter them from actually *committing* it” (9). Again, in his efforts to reduce law to a science, in his deductions of principles, and the separating of historical, technical, and rational elements, in his exploding of “fantastic and illogical maxims on which the various technical systems are founded” (10), in his concepts of codification of the law, Bentham, operating purely critically, is brilliantly successful, and Mill pays him full tribute.

How far Mill’s estimate of Bentham, in this essay of 1833, is accurate or just to Bentham need not concern us here. What we are solely concerned with is to determine the exact state of Mill’s own thought, and particularly of its relation at this point to Utilitarianism.

What we first note is the sharp separation of Bentham as moral philosopher from Bentham as analyst and proponent of the philosophy of law, the first being attacked as not only inadequate but positively pernicious, the second being praised almost without qualification. We note secondly that Bentham the moral philosopher is described almost totally in terms of what he derives from Helvetius and Beccaria: the egoistic psychology, the reduction of motive to simple, undifferentiated pleasure and pain, the defining of virtue and vice simply by means of consequences, the restriction of consideration to the action and not including the virtue of the actor or his motives, the mechanical theory of association which, by linking pain or pleasure to certain actions, will “educate” the egoistic individual into socially useful behaviour. The extent to which Bentham in fact modifies the rigorous pattern of Helvetius and Beccaria is minimized. Mill suggests, indeed, that the modifications weigh very lightly in Bentham’s own habits of thought.

What we have in this essay is, then, a point-by-point rejection of practically all the main elements in the structure of the system of Utilitarianism as conceived by Helvetius and Beccaria. It is clear that if their system is taken to be the pure and orthodox doctrine, Mill is at this moment an anti-Utilitarian. But it is also clear from the essay that this is not how the matter appeared to Mill. He insists rather that the structure he is attacking is not the true doctrine, but a false one raised entirely upon the foundations of a false psychology, a false view of human nature. He is, in short, not the type of heretic who rejects the whole religion, but the type who sees himself, not as

a heretic, but as the exponent of the true faith, warped in its transmission by the narrowness of vision of the prophets before him.

#### “SEDGWICK”

The essay on Bentham, written in 1838 as a review of Bentham’s collected *Works*,<sup>4</sup> and the essay on Coleridge, published in 1840, continue the pattern established by the essay of 1833. But in the meantime Mill had been provoked by Sedgwick’s *Discourse* into a defence of Utilitarianism. This, being a public and avowed performance, and not, like the earlier essay, anonymous, gave Mill a limited opportunity, as he says, to insert into his defence of “Hartleianism and Utilitarianism a number of the opinions which constituted my view of those subjects, as distinguished from that of my old associates.” “My relation to my father would have made it . . . impossible . . . to speak out my whole mind . . . at this time.” He was obliged “to omit two or three pages of comment on what I thought the mistakes of utilitarian moralists, which my father considered as an attack on Bentham and on him.”<sup>5</sup>

The modern reader, with the less-guarded essay of 1833 to place beside the defence of 1835, can savour the ironies of the situation. As he reads Mill’s scornful rejection of Sedgwick’s argument that “waiting for the calculations of utility” is immoral, since “to hesitate is to rebel,”<sup>6</sup> he is likely to recall the passage Mill wrote in 1833: “The fear of pain *consequent* upon the act, cannot arise, unless there be *deliberation*; and the man as well as ‘the woman who deliberates,’ is in imminent danger of being lost.<sup>7</sup> And as he reads the attack on Sedgwick’s contention that the principle of utility has a “debasement” and “degrading” effect (66), he remembers, from the text of 1833, that “the effect of such writings as Mr. Bentham’s, if they be read and believed and their spirit imbibed, must either be hopeless despondency and gloom, or a reckless giving themselves up to a life of that miserable self-seeking, which they are there taught to regard as inherent in their original and unalterable nature” (16).

Mill’s relation to his father has not only made it impossible, as he says, to speak out his whole mind; it has undoubtedly forced him into a degree of disingenuousness. As he begins his defence of the theory of utility against Sedgwick’s attack, he lays down a *caveat*: “No one is entitled to found an argument against a principle, upon the faults or blunders of a particular writer who professed to build his system upon it, without taking notice that the principle may be understood differently, and has in fact been understood differently by other writers. What would be thought of an assailant of Christianity, who should judge of its truth or beneficial tendency from the view taken of it by the Jesuits, or by the Shakers?” (52.) In the context, the implication is that the wrong understanding of the principle of utility is Paley’s; in the context of the essay of 1833 the wrong view can also be Bentham’s. “A doctrine is not judged at all until it is judged in its best form” (52). This *caveat* is repeatedly, but often unobtrusively, inserted into the attack on Sedgwick. Mill speaks of the doctrine of utility “when properly understood.” He insists that “clear and *comprehensive* views of education and human culture” must form the basis of a philosophy of morals; that “all our affections . . . towards human beings . . . are held, *by the best teachers of the theory of util-*

*ity*” to originate in the natural human constitution; he accuses Sedgwick of “lumping up” the theory of utility with “the theory, *if there be such a theory*, of the universal selfishness of mankind” (71; italics added).

It is clear to those who know the essay of 1833 that the *caveat* is directed against Bentham, that Bentham is the counterpart of the Jesuits and Shakers, but no explicit sign of this intention appears. The only mention of Bentham in the whole essay is indeed, when set against the context of 1833, highly misleading: Paley, says Mill, would doubtless admit that men are acted upon by other than selfish motives, “or, in the language of Bentham and Helvetius, that they have other interests, than merely self-regarding ones” (54). This remark does not, it will be noted, actually make any statement about the doctrines of Bentham and Helvetius, but only about their language—specifically the term “interest”—but it permits the reader to interpret it as a statement about doctrine.

Mill does, however, in spite of these ambiguities, insert some of those ideas that he sees as modifications or correctives of Benthamism. When, for example, he attributes the “lax morality taught by Paley” to Paley’s confusion of utilitarianism with expediency, and objects at length to the narrow definition of “consequences” (56), he directs nominally against Paley the same arguments he directed in 1833 against Bentham. His insistence on the importance of poetry, along with autobiographies and novels, in broadening views of human nature, in supplying knowledge of “true human feeling” (56), and in the formation of character, again parallels passages in the *Autobiography* and in the essay of 1833. So does his list of feelings—the chivalrous point of honour, envy and jealousy, ambition, covetousness; although his immediate point is to analyze them all into products of association, he is nevertheless suggesting an enlargement of Bentham’s “springs of action.” And his comment upon the effects of the “excessive cultivation” of “habits of analysis and abstraction upon the character” records precisely the same rebellion as that recorded in the *Autobiography*. The steady emphasis upon character and motive, the inclusion of effects on character among “consequences” of an act, and the tendency to turn attention away from Bentham’s sort of “consequences” to these, insert into the essay, at least by implication, many of the fundamental criticisms of Bentham made in 1833.

## “BENTHAM”

By 1838 James Mill, as well as Bentham, was dead, and John Stuart Mill was free to write without wounding his father by his heresy or disloyalty. The essay on Bentham is his first public exercise of this freedom. His emancipation is proclaimed in the opening paragraph, where he praises in perfectly equal terms Bentham and Coleridge, “the two great seminal minds of England in their age,” the proponents of the philosophy in which Mill had been reared, and of the philosophy which he in general thinks of as its antithesis. In the context of the relatively long essay on Bentham, this first paragraph and the one following it create a peculiar effect. We are told that both men effected a revolution in the “general modes of thought and investigation” of their time, that both were closet-students, never read by the multitude, that their influences have “but

begun to diffuse themselves” over society at large, Bentham’s over the “Progressive class,” Coleridge’s over the “Conservative,” and that to Bentham it was given “to discern more particularly those truths with which existing doctrines and institutions were at variance; to Coleridge, the neglected truths which lay *in* them”—talents which suggest in broad and relatively conventional terms Progressive and Conservative attitudes.<sup>8</sup> The reader of 1838 might well have wondered why this very general preamble and this laudatory but unspecific tribute to Coleridge should preface a long and detailed essay concerned exclusively with Bentham. As we are now able to recognize, and as probably the reader of 1840 could recognize with the essay on Coleridge before him, the introductory paragraphs are not an introduction to the essay on Bentham. They are an introduction to Mill’s thoughts about Bentham, which is a somewhat different and more complex subject. We can now see, with the *Autobiography* available to us, why Mill thinks of Coleridge as well as Bentham at this point. The reader of “Coleridge” would understand the force of the final introductory sentence about each philosopher’s approach to doctrines and institutions.

Any reader, however, is likely to feel that the treatment of Bentham in the essay contrasts in its severity with the praise in the introduction, and indeed Mill himself at a later date had misgivings.<sup>9</sup> The contrast is perhaps more apparent than real. As in the essay of 1833, Mill does not underestimate what he takes to be Bentham’s real achievement: “to refuse an admiring recognition of what he was, on account of what he was not” is an error, he says, “no longer permitted to any cultivated and instructed mind” (82). The praise he now gives Bentham goes a good deal further than Mill was willing to go in 1833. At that time it was difficult for him to value any but the critical side of Bentham’s philosophy. Now he discriminates and elaborates. Bentham is still the great “*subversive*, or, in the language of continental philosophers, the great *critical*, thinker of his age and country” (79). But his importance is to be estimated fully neither by the quality of his critical analysis—which shows no subtlety or power of recondite analysis—nor by his achievement in the area in which he really excelled, the correction of practical abuses. His importance lies in his widespread and lasting influence. “It was not Bentham by his own writings; it was Bentham through the minds and pens which those writings fed—through the men . . . into whom his spirit passed” (79). And this spirit was not purely negative and critical; it included a positive and constructive element. He “made it a point of conscience” not to assail error “until he thought he could plant instead the corresponding truth” (82). But again, his real value lies not in those conclusions he took for truth, but in the method, combining critical analysis with positive synthesis. He reformed philosophy, but it “was not his doctrines which did this, it was his mode of arriving at them.” “It was not his opinions, in short, but his method, that constituted the novelty and the value of what he did; a value beyond all price, even though we should reject the whole, as we unquestionably must a large part, of the opinions themselves.” (83.)

Freed of the necessity of accepting and praising Bentham’s opinions, and free to make this radical disjunction of his method from its doctrinal product, Mill can praise whole-heartedly. It was the doctrines that had been the stumbling-block. As soon, however, as he begins to examine the method to which he has ascribed a revolutionary novelty, he is seized by fresh doubts. The novelty and originality are perhaps not in the method after all, but in “the subjects he applied it to, and in the rigidity with which he adhered to it” (83). The method, considered as a logical con-

ception, has certain affinities “with the methods of physical science, or with the previous labours of Bacon, Hobbes, or Locke. . .” (83). The novelty now becomes “not an essential consideration” of the method, but of its application. And here the novelty appears in “interminable classifications,” “elaborate demonstrations of the most acknowledged truths.” “That murder, incendiarism, robbery, are mischievous actions, he will not take for granted without proof. . . .” (83.)

Up to this point, one gets a sense of deliberate anticlimax, starting with a great seminal mind, dismissing the doctrines and opinions produced by it, praising the method it developed, only to cast suspicion on the originality involved, and ending with a reduction to the phrases above, with the slighting “interminable,” “elaborate,” “most acknowledged.” Having thus invited the reader virtually to dismiss Bentham, doctrines, method, and all, Mill proceeds to a patient and detailed demonstration of the value, despite its and its begetter’s shortcomings, of Bentham’s method, the “method of detail.” In it Mill sees an “application of a real inductive philosophy to the problems of ethics.” And so, after an anticlimactic nadir, we come back to praise.

The peculiarity of this pattern is open to more than one explanation. It could be a purely rhetorical device, in which Bentham’s opponents are thrown off balance and disarmed by concession after concession, until, just as all seems conceded and their victory complete, Bentham’s greatness is re-asserted on grounds they had overlooked. But one gets the sense here rather of following the windings of Mill’s own mind, as he sorts out what he himself has acquired from Bentham: not doctrine, for much of that he had rejected in 1833; not method, for he himself had argued for an imitation of the inductive sciences rather than of geometry in moral and political philosophy. It could then only be the way in which Bentham had developed and applied the method, the precise nature of the “habit of analysis” he and James Mill had taught their pupil. From his father Mill had learned, he believed, subtlety of analysis; from Bentham the “exhaustive method.”<sup>10</sup>

And this of course brings Mill back again, after giving Bentham due credit, to the limitations of the “habit of analysis” in general, and to Bentham’s limitations in particular. In what seems to be a general anxiety in this work to be fair to his subject, he first explains the sort of breadth Bentham’s mind possessed: “he sees every subject in connexion with all the other subjects with which in his view it is related. . .” (88-9). He thus preserves himself against one kind of narrow and partial views—but “Nobody’s synthesis can be more complete than his analysis” (89), and a system based upon an imperfect analysis will be exceedingly limited in its applicability. Bentham’s analysis is limited in various ways: first of all by his contemptuous dismissal of all other thinkers and schools of thought, whose speculations he dismissed as “vague generalities.” The “nature of his mind,” says Mill, “prevented it from occurring to him, that these generalities contained the whole unanalysed experience of the human race” (90). One catches here, particularly in the last phrase, a hint of Mill’s own discovery, recorded in the *Autobiography*, of the vast areas of human experience, and especially of the unanalyzed and unanalyzable experience embodied in imaginative writing, which Bentham so glibly dismissed.

Furthermore, in ignoring thinkers of the past, Bentham is ignoring “the collective mind of the human race.” “The collective mind does not penetrate below the surface, but it sees all the



surface.” And by refusing to consider views opposed to his own, Bentham limits his own vision, for “none are more likely to have seen what he does not see, than those who do not see what he sees” (91).

It is at this point that Mill develops his theory of the half-truth, conceived generally in terms of polarity. “The hardest assertor . . . of the freedom of private judgment—the keenest detector of the errors of his predecessors, and of the inaccuracies of current modes of thought—is the very person who most needs to fortify the weak side of his own intellect, by study of the opinions of mankind in all ages and nations, and of the speculations of philosophers of the modes of thought most opposite to his own.” “A man of clear ideas errs grievously if he imagines that whatever is seen confusedly does not exist. . . .” (91.)

Bentham’s most serious limitation, however, was “the incompleteness of his own mind as a representative of universal human nature. In many of the most natural and strongest feelings of human nature he had no sympathy; from many of its graver experiences he was altogether cut off; and the faculty by which one mind understands a mind different from itself, and throws itself into the feelings of that other mind, was denied him by his deficiency of Imagination.” (91.) Behind these sentences lie not only the explanation of the incompleteness of Bentham’s analysis of human nature, of the reductive simplicity of his “springs of action,” but also a strong suggestion of Mill’s own experience in the early years recorded in the *Autobiography*—of the sensitivities of an imaginative child and youth dismissed as nonsense. This suggestion is reinforced by the description Mill gives, immediately after this passage, of the sort of Imagination Bentham lacked—a description in words taken from Wordsworth’s *Preface* to the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1800. Without this imagination, Mill continues, “nobody knows even his own nature, further than circumstances have actually tried it and called it out” (92). There can be no doubt that at this point he is recalling his own emotional crisis, and the release of self-knowledge he owed to Wordsworth.

Bentham’s knowledge of human nature is “wholly empirical,” that is, based on his own experience, and “he had neither internal experience nor external. . . .” “He was a boy to the last. Self-consciousness . . . never was awakened in him.” “Knowing so little of human feelings, he knew still less of the influences by which those feelings are formed. . . .” (92, 93.) Mill’s sentences flow on, one after the other, evenly, balanced, poised, and almost totally damning.

From Bentham’s denial of “all truths but those which he recognizes” flows the bad influence he has had upon his age: “he has, not created a school of deniers, for this is an ignorant prejudice, but put himself at the head of the school which exists always. . . : thrown the mantle of intellect over the natural tendency of men in all ages to deny or disparage all feelings and mental states of which they have no consciousness in themselves” (93).

It will be noted that this is a very different accusation, in its description of the source and nature of Bentham’s bad influence, from that of 1833. Then the influence was ascribed to his positive doctrines; now it arises from his failure to recognize that his own truths are merely “fractional truths.” And after praise of “one-eyed men,” Mill sets out to assert the value of Bentham’s limited visions of these fractional truths. The assessment suggests why he has substituted “fractional” for “half”; as he details Bentham’s conception of human nature, and then the elements ignored

by it, the fraction representing Bentham's share of the whole truth becomes evidently small. "Man is never recognised by him as a being capable of pursuing spiritual perfection as an end; of desiring, for its own sake, the conformity of his own character to his standard of excellence, without hope of good or fear of evil from other source than his own inward consciousness." This "great fact in human nature escapes him." (95.) If he occasionally speaks of "love of justice" as inherent in almost all mankind, it is impossible to tell "what sense is to be put upon casual expressions so inconsistent with the general tenor of his philosophy" (95n). Neither the word "self-respect" nor the idea it indicates occurs even once in his writings. The sense of honour, of personal dignity, the love of beauty, of order, of congruity, the love of abstract power, of action,—none of these "powerful constituents of human nature" finds a place among his "Springs of Action." Even his doctrine of sympathy does not include "the love of *loving*, the need of a sympathising support, or of objects of admiration and reverence." These omissions arise, not from the absence of these elements in Bentham's own nature, but from his having "confounded all disinterested feelings which he found in himself, with the desire of general happiness" (96)—that is, although Mill does not explicitly say so, from a deficiency of analysis.

In 1833, it was the reduction of motives in Bentham's view of human nature that led to his bad influence; now the influence is minimized: "he has not been followed in this grand oversight by any of the able men who, from the extent of their intellectual obligations to him, have been regarded as his disciples." "If any part of the influence of this cardinal error has extended itself to them, it is circuitously, and through the effect on their minds of other parts of Bentham's doctrines." (97.)

But having thus, after a fashion, absolved Bentham from the serious charges made in 1833, Mill now goes on to examine, "in a spirit neither of apology nor of censure, but of calm appreciation," how much Bentham's view of human nature will accomplish in morals, and how much in political and social philosophy. In morals, it will do nothing "beyond prescribing some of the more obvious dictates of worldly prudence, and outward probity and beneficence" (97-8). For Mill, full emphasis is on the word "outward." In short, Benthamite ethics will be merely prudential and external. Self-education, "the training, by the human being himself, of his affections and will," is "a blank" in his system, and without it, the regulation of outward actions "must be altogether halting and imperfect" (98). The system is not, then, valid even as a system of prudential and external ethics.

Moreover, the system is totally useless for regulating "the nicer shades of human behaviour, or for laying down even the greater moralities . . . which tend to influence the depths of the character quite independently of any influence on worldly circumstances" (98). In Bentham's *Deontology*, one finds that the *petite morale* almost alone is treated, "and that with the most pedantic minuteness, and on the *quid pro quo* principles which regulate trade" (99). The fraction of truth in Bentham's ethics has by now become an infinitesimal.

What of his social doctrine? Again, "it will do nothing . . . for the spiritual interests of society; nor does it suffice of itself even for the material interests" (99). It offers, in effect, an exact parallel with the ethics. It ignores national character as the ethics ignore individual character. "A philoso-

phy of laws and institutions, not founded on a philosophy of national character, is an absurdity” (99). But Bentham’s opinions on national character would be even more worthless than his totally inadequate opinions on individual character. “All he can do is but to indicate means by which, in any given state of the national mind, the material interests of society can be protected,” leaving to others the important question whether the use of those means would injure the national character (99). His philosophy can, then, “teach the means of organizing and regulating the merely *business* part of the social arrangements”—and that is all (99). It cannot deal with anything involving reference to moral influences. Bentham mistakenly thought the business part of human affairs was the whole of them, or at least all that the legislator and moralist are concerned with. Since for Mill the “business part” cannot be dealt with without reference to moral influences, and a philosophy of morals not founded on a philosophy of character is as absurd as a philosophy of laws and institutions not founded on a philosophy of national character, Bentham’s social philosophy and moral philosophy are alike absurd.

Yet he goes on to speak of the “business part” as the field of Bentham’s greatness, “and there he is indeed great” (100). The greatness is entirely as a critical philosopher, except in the philosophy of law. As in 1833, here he can praise Bentham unreservedly. But as he turns, with obvious relief, to this area, he tries to temper his judgment on Bentham’s performance in moral and social philosophy, using a mathematical image more admirable for its neatness than for its cogency. He has, after all, reduced the “fractional truths” in Bentham virtually to vanishing point. Now he praises Bentham for having “originated more new truths” than the world “ever received, except in a few glorious instances, from any other individual. . . . Nor let that which he did be deemed of small account because its province was limited. . . . The field of Bentham’s labours was like the space between two parallel lines; narrow to excess in one direction, in another it reached to infinity.” (100.) As Mill well knows, in the mathematical juggling implied in his image, the area enclosed by his parallel lines will remain an infinite area however closely the distance between the lines approaches zero without reaching it. He has brought Bentham’s lines very close together indeed; the precise nature of their infinite extension would perhaps be hard for Mill to define.

Even his praise of Bentham’s philosophy of law is rather more tempered than in 1833 or, to put it perhaps more accurately, Bentham’s status as legal philosopher is more sharply separated from his status as political philosopher. The same accomplishments are praised, and the same large reservation is made about Bentham’s ignoring of national character in his thoughts on government. But new criticisms are introduced. “The Benthamic theory of government has made so much noise in the world of late years; it has held such a conspicuous place among Radical philosophies, . . . that many worthy persons imagine there is no other Radical philosophy extant” (105-106). Of the “three great questions in government,” the first two, “to what authority is it for the good of the people that they should be subject,” and “how are they to be induced to obey that authority,” must have varied answers according to the “degree and kind of civilization” already attained by a people, and their “peculiar aptitudes for receiving more” (106). These questions Bentham does not seriously concern himself with. The third question, “how are abuses of this authority to be checked,” has a less variable answer, and is Bentham’s main concern. His answer is, by responsibility of the authority to “the numerical majority,” whose interest he takes to

coincide with the interest of the whole community. This assumption, the “fundamental doctrine of Bentham’s political philosophy,” Mill challenges. “Is it, at all times and places, good for mankind to be under the absolute authority of the majority of themselves?” Since this absolute authority will control, not only actions, but minds, opinions, and feelings, he goes on to demand, “Is it . . . the proper condition of man, in all ages and nations, to be under the despotism of Public Opinion?” (106-107.) Of the three great questions in government, then, Bentham virtually ignores two, and supplies a questionable answer for the third. The Radical philosophy which has become so dominant through his influence places all its faith in the rule of a numerical majority, a faith Mill was increasingly inclined to question.

Mill challenges, in fact, that whole concept of government which Halévy has described as “the artificial identification of interests,” and which he sees as the Benthamite doctrine. To achieve an identity of interests, Mill says, would be to achieve identity of “partialities, passions, and prejudices,” “to make one narrow, mean type of human nature universal and perpetual, and to crush every influence which tends to the further improvement of man’s intellectual and moral nature” (107). The doctrine, in short, by which Benthamism aims at producing a just yet stable society, will end by producing a static one, and the static society becomes an unjust society. There must be provision, then, for “a perpetual and standing Opposition to the will of the majority,” and not, as in Bentham’s scheme, for every ingenious means of “riveting the yoke of public opinion” round the necks of all public functionaries. “Wherever all the forces of society act in one single direction, the just claims of the individual human being are in extreme peril.” The exercise of the power of the majority must be “tempered by respect for the personality of the individual, and deference to superiority of cultivated intelligence” (108-109).

Having thus again, on the subject of government, reduced Bentham’s “fractional truth” to virtual insignificance, Mill again starts to redress the balance by asserting the value of Bentham’s “political speculations.” What he has just been suggesting as a misuse of Bentham’s “great powers,” the exhausting of “all the resources of ingenuity in devising means for riveting the yoke of public opinion closer and closer,” he now describes as pointing out “with admirable skill the best means of promoting, one of the ideal qualities of a perfect government—identity of interest between the trustees and the community for whom they hold their power in trust” (109). The shift from blame to praise of Bentham is accompanied, one notes, by a shift in interpretation of the doctrine of identity of interests: it is no longer the identity (and identification) of the interests of the individual and of the community, but of the interests of the rulers and of the community. Since Bentham relies on responsibility of the rulers to the numerical majority as the “best means of promoting” this end, a principle Mill has just attacked, it is difficult to see how the variation can salvage Bentham’s value.<sup>11</sup> Mill also praises Bentham for his attention to “interest-begotten prejudice,” particularly as displayed in “class-interest, and the class morality founded thereon,” although noting at the same time that in the psychology of self-deception religious writers, with their superior knowledge of the “profundities and windings of the human heart,” had penetrated much deeper than he (109).

Then finally, Mill turns to the subject in which we are most interested, and which he gives every evidence of having deliberately avoided. “It may surprise the reader,” he says, and indeed it may, “that we have said so little about the first principle . . . with which his name is more identified than with anything else; the ‘principle of utility,’ or, as he afterwards named it, ‘the greatest-happiness principle.’ ” A great deal could be said on the subject, “on an occasion more suitable for a discussion of the metaphysics of morality, or on which the elucidations necessary to make an opinion on so abstract a subject intelligible could be conveniently given.” But a discussion of the principle of utility is not “in reality necessary for the just estimation of Bentham” (110). On the face of it, to say that the discussion of a philosopher’s “first principle,” the principle with which his name is identified, is not necessary for a just estimation of him is a surprising *dictum*. It is here also of very great importance. Obviously, if the principle of utility is irrelevant to an estimate of Bentham, Bentham is irrelevant to an estimate of the principle of utility. The process of separation of Bentham from the doctrine is complete.

But the fact of Bentham’s Utilitarianism remains to be explained, or even explained away. It is there in Bentham’s system, Mill says in effect, from a special kind of psychological compulsion. To Bentham, “systematic unity was an indispensable condition of his confidence in his own intellect,” and the principle of utility serves to create that systematic unity: “it was necessary to him to find a first principle which he could receive as self-evident, and to which he could attach all his other doctrines as logical consequences” (111). This was, then, a psychological necessity for Bentham; he had to have a system. But the value of his thought clearly does not lie in the system or in the achievement of its construction. The implication is strong that another principle might easily have given him another system, that this would have given him equal confidence, and produced equally valuable results. This is why, presumably, an estimate of his achievement does not depend on the validity of his principle or of his system.

Thus, by another route, Mill brings us back to the conclusion that Bentham’s greatness does not lie in his body of doctrines, but in his method. Yet the method itself, which for Bentham is clearly inseparable from system-building, has been opened further to criticism. As to the “greatest-happiness principle,” Mill records his entire agreement with the principle “under proper explanations”—a significant qualification. These explanations he obviously has no intention of going into in detail at this time, but he drops a few hints. “We think utility, or happiness, much too complex and indefinite an end to be sought except through the medium of various secondary ends. . . .” Mankind, being “much more nearly of one nature, than of one opinion about their own nature,” can agree more readily about these intermediate ends than about the first principles; and “the attempt to make the bearings of actions upon the ultimate end more evident than they can be made by referring them to the intermediate ends, and to estimate their value by a direct reference to human happiness, generally terminates in attaching most importance, not to those effects which are really the greatest, but to those which can most easily be pointed to and individually identified” (110-11). So much for the “felicific calculus.”

Then Mill repeats the charge of 1833: that Bentham ignores, among his “consequences,” the effect of actions upon the agent’s own mind and character. He further expands this theme. “The

cold, mechanical, and ungenial air which characterizes the popular idea of a Benthamite” is a result of Bentham’s one-sided treatment of actions and characters solely in terms of the *moral* view. And again, this error belongs to him, “not as a utilitarian, but as a moralist by profession” (112). Mill’s correction is to distinguish three aspects of every human action: the moral (of its *right* and *wrong*), the aesthetic (of its *beauty*), the sympathetic (of its *loveableness*). “The first addresses itself to our reason and conscience; the second to our imagination; the third to our human fellow-feeling” (112). In effect, Mill is rejecting the tendency of strict Utilitarianism to ignore the morality of the agent, as he has done in insisting on effects on character as consequences. He does not here, like William Godwin, distinguish and separate the morality of an action (judged by consequences) and the morality of an agent (judged by motive or intention), since he clearly sees these as only artificially separable. His introduction of the aesthetic is also notable—it clearly reflects the response recorded in the *Autobiography* to narratives of great lives, and it brings Mill at this point curiously close to the school of Shaftesbury.

It seems certain that thoughts of his own childhood and youth are in Mill’s mind at this point, since he moves directly from these considerations of the qualities of an action to Bentham’s peculiar dislike of discussions of taste (“as if a person’s tastes did not show him to be wise or a fool, cultivated or ignorant, gentle or rough, sensitive or callous, generous or sordid, benevolent or selfish, conscientious or depraved,” Mill observes (113) in a tone of rebuke), and to his equally peculiar opinions on poetry. The famous “pushpin is as good as poetry” is shown to be less anti-cultural than its quoters usually suppose, but “All poetry is misrepresentation” is allowed to be Bentham’s characteristic view (114). This view proceeds, as does Bentham’s intricate and involved style, from a fallacious view of the nature and possibility of precision in language. The view carries with it the paradox that in trying to write with absolute precision, Bentham “could stop nowhere short of utter unreadableness, and after all attained no more accuracy than is compatible with opinions as imperfect and one-sided as those of any poet or sentimentalist breathing” (115).

So closes the “impartial estimate” of Bentham’s “character as a philosopher, and of the results of his labours to the world.” And again, the paradoxical statement, that after “every abatement . . . there remains to Bentham an indisputable place among the great intellectual benefactors of mankind” (115). What is one to make of the paradox? Is the praise merely the tribute of personal loyalty to an early guide, philosopher, and friend, all of whose ideas have been outgrown? This is perhaps the dominant impression given by the footnote Mill added to refute Brougham’s view of Bentham’s character, but here the concern is with defence of character. In the essay itself, there is no separation of Bentham the man from Bentham the philosopher, which would have been an obvious way of paying personal tribute. It is, on the contrary, clear that Mill, while undercutting and dismissing virtually all Bentham’s claims to serious consideration as a thinker, nevertheless retains in some peculiar way a great respect for him as an intellectual influence and force. And although his specific praise is directed almost entirely to the critical side of Bentham’s work, to his demolishing of legal fictions, and so on, it is apparent that Mill, as in 1833, sees him as more than a preparatory destroyer, more than a Voltaire, for example. He is not merely the wrecker clearing old houses from the site to prepare for new building; he is in some sense an architect of the new, even if his plans seem all wrong. I spoke earlier about different

kinds of heretic, and perhaps Mill would not object to the suggestion of an analogy drawn from the history of Buddhism. The two great branches of Buddhist thought were named (by the later branch) the Hīnayāna, or Inferior Vehicle, and the Mahāyāna, or Great Vehicle. Ānanda, the first reciter of the Scriptures (Sūtra), was held by the Mahāyāna to have had an imperfect grasp of their meaning, and to have taught them to disciples with an equally imperfect grasp. He nevertheless made the Great Vehicle, the more enlightened interpretation, possible; and also, through his own teachings and those of his disciples, established the Buddhism which the Mahāyāna would re-interpret and reform. If one grants that Utilitarianism has no Buddha, and consequently no inspired Scriptures, it is still possible to see Bentham as the Ānanda of Utilitarianism, the Benthamites as Hīnayāna Utilitarians, and Mill as seeking to establish Mahāyāna Utilitarianism. This would make Bentham, like Ānanda, a “great seminal mind,” one who has opened up “rich veins of original and striking speculation,” one who has been “the teacher of the teachers,” whose modes of thought have “inoculated a considerable number of thinking men.” He has established a whole school of Utilitarians and Radicals, based on his Inferior Vehicle; this is the great preliminary accomplishment to prepare for the Great Vehicle. Consequently, although Bentham’s statement of the doctrines is now to Mill erroneous and therefore unimportant as a statement of the true religion, Bentham himself is to be honoured.

#### “COLERIDGE”

When we turn to the essay on Coleridge, first published in 1840, we have been led by the Bentham essay into certain expectations. We are now to see examined the other “seminal mind,” and perhaps to inspect other half or fractional truths. A reader with a clear memory of the earlier essay might also wonder whether Coleridge’s truths are to be subjected to the same rather devastating scrutiny as Bentham’s. The opening of the essay is so close in its pattern to the earlier one as to arouse this suspicion. For here again, Bentham and Coleridge are praised equally as “the great questioners of things established”; Bentham, “beyond all others,” has led men to ask of a received opinion, Is it true?; Coleridge, What is the meaning of it? Both have exerted influence far beyond their immediate followers. Coleridge is praised for his Burkean sense of the collective wisdom enshrined in long-established beliefs, whose duration is “at least proof of an adaptation in it to some portion or other of the human mind, . . . some natural want or requirement of human nature which the doctrine in question is fitted to satisfy. . . .”<sup>12</sup> Each of them thus sees what the other does not.

In all this expansive tolerance and appreciation, the harsh comments on Bentham seem forgotten, and the reader who recalls phrases from the essay on Bentham is likely to read with some surprise the pronouncements, “If a book were to be compiled containing all the best things ever said on the rule-of-thumb school of political craftsmanship, and on the insufficiency for practical purposes of what the mere practical man calls experience, it is difficult to say whether the collection would be more indebted to the writings of Bentham or of Coleridge,” and “Of their methods of philosophizing, the same thing may be said: they were different, yet both were legitimate

logical processes.” (121.) And those who remember the whittling away of Bentham’s claims to originality here discover that his originality is greater than Coleridge’s: “Bentham so improved and added to the system of philosophy he adopted, that for his successors he may almost be accounted its founder; while Coleridge . . . was anticipated in all the essentials of his doctrine by the great Germans of the latter half of the last century. . .”; “he is the creator rather of the shape in which it has appeared among us, than of the doctrine itself.” (121.)

After this opening, very close in its tone of relaxed generosity to the introduction in the companion essay, Mill turns to an elaboration of his theory of half-truths, which he now gives not merely a supplementary rôle, as in the first essay, but a function of active dialectic. He emphasizes the importance, “in the present imperfect state of mental and social science, of antagonist modes of thought,” illustrating by examples of the controversy between primitivists and progressivists, and between supporters and opponents of aristocracy (122). But just when his reference to “Continental philosophers” has led the reader to expect a further development of the dialectic pattern, he virtually rejects it for a theory of alternative extremes between which opinion oscillates. All that is positive in opposed opinions is often true, and it would be easy to choose a path “if either half of the truth were the whole of it,” but it is very difficult to frame, “as it is necessary to do, a set of practical maxims which combine both” (123).

He finds at this point, in other words, no evidence in the history of opinion to support a belief either in the dialectic process, by which thesis and antithesis produce a synthesis, or in half-truths which become supplementary and form a whole. Even if a just balance between extremes exists in the mind of the wiser teacher, “it will not exist in his disciples, still less in the general mind” (124). Improvement consists only in a lessening of the amplitude of swings of the pendulum. The image suggests a remote hope of an eventual dead centre, but the passage is, for Mill, curiously pessimistic.<sup>13</sup> In this context he treats the “Germano-Coleridgian doctrine” in terms of reaction against eighteenth-century empiricism. What the change here in the exposition of half-truths as oscillations rather than as supplementary discoveries implies, is that Mill is prepared to grant only limited validity to the “Germano-Coleridgian doctrine,” viewing it as an excessive swing of the pendulum rather than as a valuable corrective and completion of its opposite half-truth.

And this indeed is what his treatment suggests. As he describes the opposed philosophies, the versions he offers indicate, if not a bias, at least a very uneven grasp of the two. When he ascribes to Kant, for example, a claim that the human mind has “a capacity, within certain limits, of perceiving the nature and properties of ‘Things in themselves,’ ” and when he describes what he takes to be Coleridge’s (and Kant’s) theory of perception and of *a priori* truths (125), one feels that his comprehension is so faulty as to suggest that he has not taken the metaphysical and epistemological parts of their philosophy very seriously. In similar fashion, he seems to accept unquestioningly the vulgar misinterpretation of the “common sense” of the Scottish school. There is no reason to suspect Mill in this of deliberate distortion or bias. As he says, “Disputants are rarely sufficient masters of each other’s doctrines, to be good judges what is fairly deducible from them,” or, he might have said, to be good judges of the doctrines. And, he continues, “To combine the different parts of a doctrine with one another, and with all admitted truths, is not indeed a small



trouble, nor one which a person is often inclined to take for other people's opinions. Enough if each does it for his own. . . ." (128.) Mill recognizes indeed that each philosophy, the empirical and the rational, "has been able to urge in its own favour numerous and striking facts" which have taxed the metaphysical resources of the other philosophy to explain. His own opinion, which he presents, he says, as a "bare statement," is that the truth lies with empiricism, with "the school of Locke and of Bentham" (128).

Taken as a declaration of adherence, not to these two philosophers and their doctrines in detail, but to the general philosophy which they represent, this "bare statement" makes it clear that whatever half-truths he is going to find in Coleridge will not be found in his metaphysical positions, in his theory of knowledge, or of the imagination. The philosophical Coleridge who today attracts so much attention, particularly from literary critics, forms no part of Mill's concern. And if the reader has been led by the openings of this and the companion essay on Bentham to expect the Coleridge half to be fitted neatly to the Bentham half, as indeed he might well be, he will be surprised by the relative scarcity of specific references to Bentham and his ideas. He will find, after a description of the state to which English institutions were brought in the eighteenth century, an expansion of the comparison made in the first essay: "This was . . . a state of things which . . . was sure in no great length of time to call forth two sorts of men—the one demanding the extinction of the institutions and creeds which had hitherto existed; the other that they be made a reality: the one pressing the new doctrines to their utmost consequences; the other reasserting the best meaning and purposes of the old. The first type attained its greatest height in Bentham; the last in Coleridge." (145-6.)

The one extensive and important reference to Bentham is in relation to first principles of government. Coleridge's theory of government, although "but a mere commencement, not amounting to the first lines of a political philosophy," is still asserted to be superior to any other the age has produced, including the Benthamic (153). "The authors and propounders" of the Benthamic theory (presumably Bentham and James Mill) "were men of extraordinary intellectual powers, and the greater part of what they meant by it is true and important. But when considered as the foundations of a science, it would be difficult to find among theories proceeding from philosophers one less like a philosophical theory, or, in the works of analytical minds, anything more entirely unanalytical." And Mill then proceeds to apply to the "complex notions" of "interest" and "general interest" the sort of critical analysis Bentham liked to apply to traditional phrases, "breaking them down into the elements of which they are composed" (153). The analysis reveals and challenges many of Bentham's assumptions.

It first challenges Bentham's assumption that the interests of the middle class are most likely to be identical with the general interest, interpreting "interest" in Benthamic terms: "If by men's interest be meant what would appear such to a calculating bystander, judging what would be good for a man during his whole life, and making no account, or but little, of the gratification of his present passions, his pride, his envy, his vanity, his cupidity, his love of pleasure, his love of ease"—one notes how Mill here implies that Bentham unconsciously substitutes an "ideal spectator" for the actual man, and also how once again he calls attention to the limitations of Ben-

tham's "springs of action"—"it may be questioned whether, in this sense, the interest of an aristocracy, and still more that of a monarch, would not be as accordant with the general interest as that of either the middle or the poorer classes. . ." (154). The point here is that interests in this idealized form would in fact be identical. Every man, no matter what his class, would take the same detached, unimpassioned, and unbiased view of the consequences of each action. "And if men's interest, in this understanding of it, usually governed their conduct," Mill adds, "absolute monarchy would probably be the best form of government" (154). He thus suggests a complete hiatus between the psychological premisses on which Bentham's political system is founded, and its conclusions, which favour a democracy with power in the hands of the middle class.

But men in fact, he goes on, "usually do what they like, often being perfectly aware that it is not for their ultimate interest, still more often that it is not for the interest of their posterity. . ." (154). Nor, when they do believe an object is permanently good for them, do they assess its value accurately. The problem of politics is not whose *permanent* interests are likely "to be most in accordance with the end we seek to obtain," but "who are they whose immediate interests and habitual feelings" are. And the end itself, the "general good," is "a very complex state of things, comprising . . . many requisites which are neither of one and the same nature, nor attainable by one and the same means." "A government must be composed out of the elements already existing in society, and the distribution of power in the constitution cannot vary much or long from the distribution of it in society itself." (154.)

Mill makes no explicit connection between these criticisms of Bentham and the ideas of Coleridge, but an implicit connection is established by the tenor of the whole essay, which constantly sets up the views of Coleridge, or of the "Germano-Coleridgian school," against the *esprit simpliste* of the eighteenth-century thinkers. Where the Lockean school, for example, had in thinkers like Condillac "affected to resolve all the phenomena of the human mind into sensation, by a process which essentially consisted in merely *calling* all states of mind, however heterogeneous, by that name," a philosophy consisting "solely of a set of verbal generalizations, explaining nothing, distinguishing nothing, leading to nothing" (129), Coleridge not only takes up the more complex analysis of Hartley, but tries to solve difficulties remaining in Hartley's system.<sup>14</sup> Again, the Continental *philosophes*, in their simple optimism, assume that the destruction of institutions will itself establish the ideal society. Coleridge, on the other hand, is aware of the problems of establishing and maintaining a society, of the difficulty of obtaining the habit of obedience and acquiescence on which a society depends. He defines the three requisites: a system of education in discipline, a feeling of allegiance or loyalty, and a principle of social cohesion (a national sense or sense of community). The recognition of these requisites by the Germano-Coleridgian school provides the first inquiry into the "inductive laws of the existence and growth of human society." This school is the first to have produced a philosophy of society, "in the only form in which it is yet possible, that of a philosophy of history, . . . a contribution, the largest yet made by any class of thinkers, towards the philosophy of human culture" (139). Mill sees this contribution as springing particularly from their recognition of national character, and its formation by national education, which is at once the source of permanence and of progress in a society, the first as a system of discipline, the second as a stimulant to the faculties. The Germano-Coleridgian school,

in their views on “the various elements of human culture and the causes influencing the formation of national character, . . . throw into the shade everything which had been effected before. . .” (141).<sup>15</sup>

Coleridge’s views on the Established Church and on the English Constitution are also set against the context of the eighteenth-century thinkers, the simple views both of those who clung to them because they were there, and of those who hoped great things from their abolition. Coleridge’s clear separation<sup>16</sup> of the function of the Church as the *clerisy* from the functions of a church as a religious body, his objection to identifying the Church with its clergy, constitute in Mill’s view a fruitful analysis of a complex relationship of an institution to its society. Similarly, his views on the opposite interests of the State in permanence and progression, and his relating of these interests to the five classes of citizens, strike Mill as a valid analysis of the English political scene.

Even in political economy, where he finds Coleridge generally “an arrant driveller” he praises his opposition to “the *let alone* doctrine,” and his insistence on “the idea of a *trust* inherent in landed property.” The first opposes the dominant eighteenth-century purely negative view of government, in favour of a view of the State as “a great benefit society, or mutual insurance company, for helping . . . that large proportion of its members who cannot help themselves,” and Mill quotes with approval Coleridge’s three “positive ends” for government to pursue. The second rejects the Lockean view of *property*, as absolute proprietorship, in respect to land, as distinguished from the produce of labour. Mill here develops his own argument, that “when the State allows any one to exercise ownership over more land than suffices to raise by his own labour his subsistence and that of his family, it confers on him power over other human beings” (156-8). This power the State ought to control.

There are clearly a number of leading ideas which Mill shares with Coleridge, and which no doubt he acquired from the Coleridgians. But any Coleridgian must be struck by the limitations, rather than the extent, of the influence. It is significant that the greatest bulk of quotation is from *Church and State* and *Literary Remains*. The emphasis throughout is on political and social thought, and particularly on modes of analysis, not unlike Bentham’s, but yielding very different results. One gets the impression that Mill has been most struck by seeing the “habit of analysis” at work in a mind operating from very different assumptions than Bentham, and capable of more subtle analysis. More important still, it is a mind alive to the complexity of human nature, of human society, of human institutions, and a healthy corrective to the arid and formalist reduction of eighteenth-century thought. Contact with this mind has brought Mill out of the eighteenth century—but it has not destroyed totally his allegiance to his upbringing.

“WHEWELL”

If Mill’s residual allegiance is evident in the essay on Coleridge, it is vastly more so in that on Whewell. As we have seen in the review of Sedgwick, if an outsider attacked Bentham, Mill

sprang to the defence, even if the attack made charges he himself had made. In part he responds, one senses, as to a family affair: it is one thing to criticize one's relatives; for a stranger to make the same criticisms is a different matter. But there is more to it than this. At an earlier stage, it seems clear, Mill had hoped to establish a distinction between Benthamism and Utilitarianism. If, as seemed evident, Utilitarianism was becoming fixed in the popular mind as a system of egoistic hedonism, as what Carlyle called a "pig philosophy," the fault was Bentham's, and it was necessary, for the defence of Utilitarianism, to disavow a great part of his doctrines. The public must be taught that Benthamism is not true Utilitarianism. This is a conviction which Mill holds unwaveringly, however much his emotional attitude towards Bentham shifts and changes. The Benthamite doctrines he attacked in 1833 he continues to reject. But he does come to a questioning of his early tactics. If these failed to break the popular identification of Benthamism and Utilitarianism, then attacks on Bentham's doctrines merely provided support for the opponents of Utilitarianism. The comparison with religious reformers again springs to mind. Worshippers who are firmly held within the general faith, but discontented with the formulation of its doctrines, can be led into a reformed church; but attacks on the established orthodoxy will not necessarily convert the pagan—they may simply provide aid and comfort to the enemies of religion.

So Mill felt by the 1850s. The reaction against Utilitarianism, powerfully voiced by Carlyle, had been gaining in strength. It was soon to be reinforced by the eloquence of Ruskin and the savage comedy of Dickens. Utilitarianism itself was in danger. As Mill later recorded in the *Autobiography* (153), he continued to think his criticism of Bentham's doctrines in 1838 (and presumably also in 1833) was just, but he came to doubt "whether it was right to publish it at that time." The doubt is clearly as to tactics: "Bentham's philosophy, as an instrument of progress, has been to some extent discredited before it had done its work, and . . . to lend a hand towards lowering its reputation was doing more harm than service to improvement." This doubt as to tactics is expressed more strongly in 1854-5 than in 1861, as Professor Robson has noted.<sup>17</sup> Later, as Mill comments in the *Autobiography*, when he sensed a "counter-action . . . towards what is good in Benthamism," he felt justified in reprinting the "Bentham" and "Coleridge" essays, especially as he had "balanced" his criticisms of Bentham by "vindications of the fundamental principles of Bentham's philosophy" (153)—which earlier he would have called fundamental principles of Utilitarianism. Where he has toned down the explicit distinction between and separation of "Benthamism" and "Utilitarianism rightly understood," this is a change, not of his own doctrine, but of tactics. The new tactics are to include defence of Bentham, supplemented by a restatement of the fundamental principles. The new testament of Utilitarianism is to enlarge and correct the old, but not explicitly reject it.

The way in which the new tactics operate is first illustrated in the essay on Whewell's moral philosophy. The separation of Benthamism from the "principle of utility" is included, but not emphasized. "It would be quite open to a defender of the principle of utility, to refuse encumbering himself" with a defence of either Paley or Bentham. "The principle is not bound up with what they have said in its behalf, nor with the degree of felicity which they may have shown in applying it."<sup>18</sup> Whewell is wrong in imagining that Bentham either thought himself, or was thought by others, to be the discoverer of the principle. He was instead the first to erect on the

principle, as a foundation, “secondary or middle principles, capable of serving as premises for a body of ethical doctrine not derived from existing opinions, but fitted to be their test.” This “great service,” which for the first time makes possible “a scientific doctrine of ethics on the foundation of utility,” Bentham performed “in a manner, as far as it goes, eminently meritorious, and so as to indicate clearly the way to complete the scheme” (173). His eye was focussed rather on the exigencies of legislation than on those of morals.

This judgment of Bentham is in substance the same as that of 1838, but the difference in tone, and the lessening of emphasis on the negative interpretation, and increase on the positive, reveal the new approach. Bentham’s deficiencies are not denied, nor left unmentioned—his practical conclusions in morals were “mostly right,” “as far as they went,” but “there were large deficiencies and hiatuses in his scheme of human nature and life, and a consequent want of breadth and comprehension in his secondary principles, which led him often to deduce just conclusions from premises so narrow as to provoke many minds to a rejection of what was nevertheless truth” (173-4). He is the Bacon of moral science, not only in having, like Bacon, established a *method*, but also, like Bacon, in having worked many problems on insufficient data. Again, these are the same judgments as in 1838, shorn of the condemnatory tone and the rhetorical expansion. No suggestion is now made that Bentham’s shortcomings have led him into dangerous error, or that he has rendered any real disservice to the cause of Utilitarianism. All the emphasis is on his positive, though limited, service to morals. There is a further important positive defence of Bentham in this essay. Mill charges Whewell with a “serious injustice” to Bentham, in citing the *Deontology* as “the authentic exposition of Bentham’s philosophy of morals,” for making that book representative of all Utilitarianism, and for creating an “imaginary sect, of which the *Deontology* is to be considered the gospel.” The work “was not, and does not profess to be written by Bentham” (174-5). Yet Mill himself had, in 1838, deplored the *Deontology*, without denying Bentham’s authorship.

In conformity with the new tactics, most of the essay is a defence of the principle of utility, in the broader sense Mill would accept. In this sense, Whewell himself becomes a Utilitarian, since he speaks of moral rules as means to an end, and “of the peace and comfort of society; of making man’s life tolerable; of the satisfaction and gratification of human beings; of preventing a disturbed and painful state of society.” “When real reasons are wanted, the repudiated happiness-principle is always the resource.” In asserting that “when general rules are established, the feelings which gather round these ‘are sources not of opposition, but of agreement;’ that they ‘tend to make men unanimous; and that such rules with regard to the affections and desires as tend to control the repulsive and confirm the attractive forces which operate in human society . . . agree with that which is the character of moral rules,’ ” Whewell is actually expressing Benthamism (192-3).

Much also of the essay is defence by attack on Whewell’s own intuitionist moral theory. Here Mill can apply the actual analytic method of Bentham to the concept of “right” and of “Rights.” With a debator’s ruthlessness, he pushes Whewell’s Voluntarism into a conclusion he can charge with Hobbism, and with a combination of logic and fierce wit he exposes Whewell’s three “vi-

cious circles.” He reduces Whewell’s doctrine to farce by comparing Whewell and Bentham in “a parallel case,” the “principles of the art of navigation” (191).

But at two points he finds himself dealing with charges against Bentham very like charges he has himself made. The first is that Bentham does not sufficiently recognize “what Dr. Whewell calls the historical element of legislation.” Bentham imagines, says Whewell, “that to a certain extent his schemes of law might be made independent of local conditions,” although he recognizes “that different countries must to a certain extent have different laws” (195). Mill, too, had complained of Bentham’s ignoring “national character.” He had seemed, in fact, in the essay on Coleridge, to be in sympathy with the view that the “long duration of a belief . . . is at least proof of an adaptation in it to some portion or other of the human mind. . . .” (120). Now he writes: “The fact that . . . a people prefer some particular mode of legislation, on historical grounds—that is, because they have been long used to it,—is no proof of any original adaptation in it to their nature or circumstances, and goes a very little way in recommendation of it as for their benefit now” (196). What Whewell calls “an historical element,” which looks very much like what Mill called “national character,” is now reduced to “the existing opinions and feelings of the people,” which are indeed “partly the product of their previous history” (196). These opinions and feelings, Mill now says, limit what the legislator can do, not what is desirable to be done. Bentham is to be defended, then, by separating in him the ideal legislator and the practical.<sup>19</sup> This would seem to be a topic on which Mill has either modified or suppressed his earlier views. He appears here to be giving a sanction to *a priori* schemes of legislation, schemes which in Bentham’s case he has found to be based on too narrow a view of human nature to be tenable. He seems also to be lessening the importance of that *inductive* science of politics he had praised in the Coleridgians. But this is not the only possible conclusion. Given Mill’s doctrine of progress, and his tendency to see national character in terms of stages of progress in political maturity, changes in national character are clearly an essential process towards a conceivable ideal political society. His real quarrel with Bentham, which is suppressed here, is that his views on national character, like his views on human character, are so narrowly based as to be virtually worthless.

Similarly, when he defends Bentham against Whewell’s charge that he “does not fully recognise ‘the moral object of law’ ” (196), we recall Mill’s own complaint, that man is “never recognised by him as a being capable of pursuing spiritual perfection as an end; of desiring, for its own sake, the conformity of his own character to his standard of excellence, without hope of good or fear of evil from other source than his own inward consciousness” (“Bentham,” 95). We recall that for “self-education; the training, by the human being himself, of his affections and will,” Bentham’s system provides a complete blank (*ibid.*, 98). This complaint is so identical in essence to Whewell’s charge that Mill’s reply here provides an extreme example of the new tactics. Since Whewell is primarily concerned with moral philosophy, Mill has to defend Bentham as a moral philosopher, and the charge he now has to deal with is a highly central and important one. He is obviously in a difficult position. “It is fortunate for the world,” he had written in 1838, “that Bentham’s taste lay rather in the direction of jurisprudential than of properly ethical inquiry” (*ibid.*, 98). Now he is faced with defending incompetence. It is significant that he delays this vital issue until the end of his essay, that he gives it very brief treatment, and that he seizes gladly upon the

particular issue of the laws of marriage to escape from further dealing with the general charge. His specific general defence of Bentham, that no one more than he “recognises that most important, but most neglected, function of the legislator, the office of an instructor, both moral and intellectual” (197), neatly side-steps the whole issue of what sort of moral instruction Bentham’s legislator conceived of giving, or was capable of giving.

Throughout the essay, one can sense that Mill is happiest in attacking Whewell, happy in defending Utilitarianism in his own terms, and not happy but skilful in defending Bentham at carefully chosen points and by carefully chosen stratagems. It must have been with a feeling of relief that he turned to the other half of the new tactics, the definition of Utilitarianism in terms of his own doctrine. Here he could be much more master of the field of battle, choosing his ground and the directions of attack to suit his own purposes. For *Utilitarianism* is rather a campaign than a philosophical treatise. The essay on Whewell had in several ways prepared for the main battle: in its devastating attack on the intuitionist school, in its rejection of the notion that Utilitarianism was incompatible with religious orthodoxy, and in its suggestion of a universal, if often unconscious, acceptance of the principle of utility. The reduction of possible moral theories to only two possibles, the breaking of the link between the attacked theory (the intuitionist) and orthodoxy, and the argument that even those who thought they were intuitionists (like Whewell) were really Utilitarians, prepared the way for asserting Utilitarianism as the only possible universal ethical doctrine.

## UTILITARIANISM

In the “General Remarks” which constitute the opening chapter of *Utilitarianism*, Mill lays the foundation for the arguments to follow. As in the Whewell essay, he reduces the choice of schools of moral philosophy to two, the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*, rejecting the first, and asserting that whatever consistency any moral beliefs have attained is mainly due to the “tacit influence of a standard not recognized” by the *a priori* moralists, but indispensable to them.<sup>20</sup> He points to the endless controversies and disagreements over the criterion of right and wrong, over the *summum bonum*, over the foundation of morality, to suggest that the whole *a priori* effort to derive a moral system from a first principle has been a mistaken one, and that the demand for proof of first principles is futile. He repeats, by implication, his old charge that those who attempt to create a system of moral or political science on the analogy of mathematics, instead of the inductive sciences, are doomed to failure. But now his argument is reinforced by the contention that the confusion about the status and function of first principles extends to the sciences, including mathematics: “the detailed doctrines of a science are not usually deduced from, nor depend for their evidence upon, what are called its first principles.” Algebra, for example, “derives none of its certainty from what are commonly taught to learners as its elements, since these . . . are as full of fictions as English law, and of mysteries as theology” (205). This attack on the *a priori* and deductive in its traditional home and birthplace is a powerful preparation for his argument for the *a posteriori* moral philosophy.

Again, questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof. There is a “larger meaning of the word proof,” a kind of proof which is “within the cognisance of the rational faculty,” and which that faculty deals with otherwise than “solely in the way of intuition.” This is the mode by which “considerations may be presented capable of determining the intellect either to give or withhold its assent to the doctrine; and this is equivalent to proof” (208). The description of the mode, and the explicit rejection of the purely intuitive, again suggest the method of the inductive sciences. Mill intends, he says, to give such “rational grounds” for accepting or rejecting “the utilitarian formula” (208).

But first it is necessary that the formula should be correctly understood, not dealt with in “the very imperfect notion ordinarily formed of its meaning,” but cleared of grosser misconceptions and mistaken interpretations (208). These may, of course, include, although Mill does not say so, the misconceptions and misinterpretations, not only of the enemies of Utilitarianism, but also of its advocates. Of all the tasks before him in the essay, the restatement of what the doctrine is, the freeing of it from the adverse limitations imposed on it by Bentham, is obviously of the utmost importance. And here he can at last present his own interpretation, free of the necessity of either attacking or defending Bentham, at least explicitly. The second chapter, “What Utilitarianism Is,” becomes a defence and exposition of the doctrine according to Mill.

Before offering the formal definition from which he intends to develop his exposition, Mill deals with what he calls the “ignorant blunder” of supposing that the Utilitarians, “those who stand up for utility as the test of right and wrong,” use the term utility in the colloquial sense of the useful as opposed to the pleasurable (209). Since the doctrine as developed by Helvetius, Beccaria, and Bentham defines utility in terms of pleasure and avoidance of pain, the modern reader might find this apparent reversion to the classical separation of *utile* and *dulce* surprising and irrelevant. But partly through Bentham’s own insensitivity to the aesthetic, and partly through the narrow concept of education characteristic of the founders of the doctrine and many of their followers, Utilitarianism had indeed come to be associated with an ignoring of the aesthetic, and with an arid and doctrinaire approach to education and life. This view of the philosophy is immortally enshrined in Dickens’ Gradgrind and M’Choakumchild in *Hard Times*, and in his address to “Utilitarian economists, . . . Commissioners of Fact,” urging them to cultivate in the poor “the utmost graces of the fancies and affections, to adorn their lives, so much in need of ornament,” and not to drive romance utterly out of their souls. Mill himself had experienced the sort of starvation of the imagination and feelings Dickens is talking of, and had, like Dickens, recognized it as an unfortunate aspect of Benthamism. The new tactics I have spoken of lead him here to no admission of the source of this view of Utilitarianism, but merely to a dismissal of it as an ignorant blunder.

In accordance with the same tactics, he defines “the creed” in strict Benthamite terms: “Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure.” Again, “pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends. . . .” (210.) The



creed, as a confession of faith, is to be totally orthodox. He and Bentham are of the same faith. The difference is to lie in exegesis.

The first point to clarify concerns the nature of pleasure. To see in the pursuit of pleasure “a doctrine worthy only of swine” (here Mill undoubtedly recalls Carlyle’s phrase, “pig-philosophy”), to identify Utilitarianism with Epicureanism, and hold both in contempt, has been the practice of its “German, French, and English assailants.” But the Epicureans themselves recognize that “a beast’s pleasures do not satisfy a human being’s conceptions of happiness.” Every known Epicurean theory assigns “a much higher value as pleasures” to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of moral sentiments (the hierarchy suggests that of Hartley) than to those of “mere sensation.” It is true that Utilitarian writers in general have “placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasures chiefly in the greater permanency, safety, unconstliness, &c., of the former”—(an obvious allusion to Bentham’s use of the “felicific calculus” to give qualitative hierarchy a quantitative basis)—but it is “quite compatible with the principle of utility” to recognize that, as a matter of fact, “some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and valuable than others,” and it would be absurd, since quality enters into our estimation of all other things, that the “estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone” (210-11).

The insistence on qualitative assessment means more than a mere rejection of Bentham’s famous remark about push-pin and poetry. It involves primarily a rejection of the reductionist Helvetian psychology, which tended to analyse *all* pleasure ultimately down to simple sensual pleasure, in favour of the Hartleian, which recognizes that the process of association actually gives rise to a qualitative hierarchy of pleasures, ending with those of theopathy and the moral sense. Hartley thus offers an escape from the genetic reductionism which says, in effect, since all feelings, including the loftiest, originate in simple pleasure-pain reactions of sensation, they are ultimately nothing but these simple reactions. It is the reductionist psychology implicit in the calculus which lays Utilitarianism open to the charge of being simple hedonism. Moreover, it is the Hartleian, rather than the Helvetian psychology, which allows the possibility of Mill’s doctrine of progress, which allows him to assert that “it is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied.”

Since the term “pleasure” is so strongly associated with simple hedonism, Mill not only follows Bentham in substituting for it the broader term “happiness,” but moves from it to the still broader one, “satisfaction.” He thus broadens the whole base of the theory. In escaping from the narrow circle of the reductionist psychology, he may seem to be building his own circular argument. When he says, for example, that it is an “unquestionable fact” that “those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying, both, do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties” (211), the “fact” is unquestionable because those who do not so choose are *ipso facto* judged not “equally acquainted” or “equally capable.” And when he asserts that “no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base” (211), it is clear that selfishness and baseness denote a person of no feeling and conscience. But what Mill is actually doing is calling attention to a range of motives qualitatively

different from simple pleasure, and confirmed by observation as operative in human nature. The establishing of an ideal of higher conduct, of pursuits suitable to a "being of higher faculties," and the refusal to sink into a low category, may be motivated by pride, by the love of liberty and personal independence, by the love of power, the love of excitement, but it is most properly described as proceeding from "a sense of dignity." And this in fact, says Mill, leads to the greatest happiness. It is a necessary part of his doctrine of progress that men, unless rendered incapable "not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance," will voluntarily choose the higher pleasures (213).

Beccaria and Bentham had avoided qualitative assessments in the belief that the quantitative is more certain and more readily determined. Mill rapidly dismisses the calculus of pleasure and pain. Quantity of pleasure and pain is no more readily measured than quality. In either case, the only test is in "the feelings and judgment of the experienced" (213).

And finally, the Utilitarian standard is not "the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether." Utilitarianism could, therefore, only attain its end "by the general cultivation of nobleness of character" (213-14). By this line of argument, Mill has brought the doctrine round to an apparent total conformity with orthodoxy, to the view that virtue is the sole source of happiness. The doctrine of utility becomes "the rules and precepts for human conduct, by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; and . . . to the whole sentient creation." The two great obstacles are selfishness and want of mental cultivation, which both make life "unsatisfactory." The "highest virtue which can be found in man," as long as the world is in its present imperfect state, is the readiness to make an absolute sacrifice of one's own happiness. "The utilitarian morality does recognise in human beings the power of sacrificing their own greatest good for the good of others." And, paradoxically, "the conscious ability to do without happiness gives the best prospect of realizing such happiness as is attainable" (214-18). By this point, the simple original statement of doctrine, "that pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends," might seem to have been transformed out of existence. The transformation is no doubt partly tactical, at least in its mode of presentation, to show the compatibility of the doctrine with orthodox morality, but for the most part it is an elaboration of Mill's genuine view of the doctrine, as more briefly suggested in his earlier attacks on Bentham. If there is a special tactical intention in his assertion that "in the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility," it is still a profound part of Mill's interpretation of the doctrine, that "as between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires" the agent to be "as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator;" and that the doctrine of utility is as connected as any other ethical system with "beautiful or more exalted developments of human nature" and with varied "springs of action" (218-19).

This is the major re-statement of the essay. Mill easily disposes of some of the common charges against the doctrine, once he has established his own definition. Like William Godwin, he distinguishes between the morality of an action and the moral worth of an agent, and acknowledges that most actions will have a view to the good of a small circle of immediate family and

friends, rather than the whole of society. Like Godwin, too, he dismisses the notion that every act must proceed from a detailed and deliberate calculation of consequences. Many of these points, like the defence against the charge that the doctrine is one of mere expediency, had been dealt with in the “Whewell” essay.

In the third chapter, on the ultimate sanction of the principle of utility, he turns to the accusation that Utilitarianism provides no basis for obligation. In what might be termed the prototype of the doctrine, as presented by Helvetius, this accusation is well grounded. The psychology of Helvetius is so firmly fixed in egoistic hedonism that the impartial and disinterested spectator Mill posits is an impossibility, as is any motive which could lead to a preference for the general pleasure over the personal. But as we have seen, Mill’s radically different view of human nature, including a relatively orthodox view of moral character, creates for him no such problem. The aim of the Utilitarian philosophy is, as he defines it, to create through the improvement of education a “feeling of unity with our fellow-creatures” and to root it deeply in our character (227). When he links this aim with Christ’s intention, he is again asserting the compatibility of his doctrine with Christian ethical orthodoxy, and at the same time intimating that the source of obligation, in Christian and Utilitarian alike, must lie in moral disposition. Both ethics must rely on the formation of moral character, on the sentiments of the “ordinarily well brought up young person” (227).

The external sanctions of reward and punishment, whether physical or moral, whether from God or from our fellow men, along with disinterested devotion to God or to one’s fellow men, can be just as operative for any ethical system. So too with the internal sanction of the sense of duty. The pain attendant on the violation of duty is the essence of Conscience. Granted, says Mill, that Conscience is a highly complex feeling, “encrusted over with collateral associations,” but its binding force is constituted by it *qua* feeling—“a mass of feeling which must be broken through in order to do what violates our standard of right.” The ultimate internal sanction of all morality, then, is “a subjective feeling in our own minds.” Where the feeling does not exist, nor does the sanction. The belief in God, as an internal sanction, apart from expectation of reward or punishment (the external sanction), “only operates on conduct through, and in proportion to, the subjective religious feeling.” It will be noted that Mill by-passes the hotly argued question of the nature of Conscience: “Whatever theory we have of the nature or origin of conscience,” he says, “this is what essentially constitutes it”—a feeling (228-9). He thus sweeps aside the whole tradition, represented by the Cambridge Platonists and their successors, of Conscience as rational and cognitive in essence. This is again a reflection of his own views and at the same time a tactical move. It is not unorthodox to define Conscience as a feeling, and he has already argued that Utilitarianism is directed towards, and is capable of, producing such a feeling. The true Utilitarian will develop a Christian Conscience.

If the Christian objects that the Utilitarian Conscience is “implanted,” whereas the Christian is innate, Mill has an answer. Those who prefer the innate may consider the “regard to the pleasures and pains of others” as the innate feeling which is the essence of Conscience. And this indeed would be orthodox Utilitarianism as well. But acquired moral feelings are just as natural as

innate ones. Echoing Burke's "Art is man's nature" (and behind Burke, Aristotle) Mill asserts, "It is natural to man to speak, to reason, to build cities, to cultivate the ground, though these are acquired faculties"; the "moral faculty, if not a part of our nature, is a natural outgrowth from it. . ." (230). Indeed, the Utilitarian philosophy is based upon the naturalness of the social feelings of mankind. If social sentiments were artificial associations, they "might be analysed away" (231). Ultimately, then, the source of the feeling of the obligation is in the Conscience, which is itself a development and cultivation of the natural social feelings. And once again, apart from the elimination of the supernatural, Mill has suggested the compatibility of Utilitarianism and orthodox Christianity. He has also, of course, developed in detail an area of human behaviour and an area of Utilitarian theory neglected by Bentham.

The fourth chapter, "Of what sort of proof the principle of utility is susceptible," has been prepared for in the first chapter. The logic of the argument of this chapter, like that of the previous chapters, is rigorously examined in Professor Dryer's essay (lxxiiiiff below). What is important in the context of my argument is the discussion of virtue, which again has the effect of radically modifying the original doctrine, despite Mill's assertion to the contrary. The doctrine, says Mill, maintains "not only that virtue is to be desired, but that it is to be desired disinterestedly, for itself." The Utilitarians "not only place virtue at the very head of the things which are good as means to the ultimate end, but they also recognise as a psychological fact the possibility of its being, to the individual, a good in itself. . . ; and hold, that the mind is not in a right state, . . . not in the state most conducive to the general happiness, unless it does love virtue in this manner.." (235).

This is a very clever, and very carefully composed statement. It gives the appearance of putting Utilitarianism even more on the side of orthodoxy, of recognizing virtue as an end in itself, along with happiness. It would be easy for the orthodox to miss the qualifications. "Actions and dispositions are only virtuous because they promote another end than virtue"—that is, happiness. Once Utilitarians have decided "what *is* virtuous," they then "place virtue at the very head" (235). Would their decisions concerning what is virtuous coincide with the decisions of the orthodox? Is the "virtue" to be desired by the Utilitarians identical with the "virtue" to be pursued by the orthodox Christian? And is there not a difference between accepting virtue as an end in itself, and accepting "as a psychological fact" that it may become "to individuals" an end in itself? In fact, the modifications of Utilitarian doctrine are here more apparent than real. The associationist explanation of how minds come to think of what were originally means to an end as part of the end itself does not affect the real category of virtue. It does, however, by implication, perhaps remind the orthodox that in their own ethical system, virtue was originally a means to salvation, not an end in itself.

The psychological emphasis in this statement about utility and virtue might at first sight seem a digression from the subject of the chapter. It is instead a necessary preparation, for the only "proof" of which the principle of utility is susceptible is psychological. It can be determined only by "practised self-consciousness and self-observation, assisted by observation of others" (237). Examination of the psychological evidence leads Mill to an account, in terms of Hartleian asso-

ciationism, of the relations of will, desire, and habit. The will to virtue must start by desire and become habitual through education. “Will is the child of desire, and passes out of the dominion of its parent only to come under that of habit” (239). Habit alone imparts certainty in establishing a stable state of the will. The state of the will is a means to good, not intrinsically a good. Hence nothing is a good that is not pleasurable or a means to pleasure or to avoiding pain, and “the principle of utility is proved.” Whether the proof induces assent or not, Mill leaves to “the consideration of the thoughtful reader” (239). The kind of thoughtful reader he hoped for is undoubtedly someone like Professor Dryer, whose patient and careful analysis below ought to be read with care. The ordinary reader, less patient and less expert, might well be brought up short by Mill’s last paragraphs. After so much movement away from the original pleasure-pain formula, after pleasure had given way to happiness, then to satisfaction, then apparently to the pursuit of virtue, he has suddenly, in the space of one long paragraph, been whirled rapidly through a lecture on the psychology of volition to a Q.E.D. of the original premisses. The performance is a *tour de force* that must have had for many readers the baffling fascination of a magician’s trick. What is significant for the argument I have been conducting, however, is that in thus coming back full circle Mill is completing his tactical manoeuvre. He is not discarding Bentham and the original statement of the creed; he is giving the old creed its proper interpretation. He began with the formal (and narrow) statement, he elucidated, elaborated, corrected, and defended—now he brings the whole *corpus* of his exposition back to its starting point in the formal enunciation of the doctrine.

The fifth chapter of the essay is, in a sense, an appendix. In choosing “Justice and Utility” as its subject, Mill is able once again to argue that the principle of utility is not a principle of mere expediency. And since the concept of justice is associated with ideas of natural law, of absolute standards, and of the general ethical position implied in the title of Cudworth’s treatise, *The Eternal and Immutable Morality*, its discussion permits Mill to argue in detail, as he has argued generally elsewhere, that it is possible to derive from the principle of utility moral standards and rules as satisfactory as those of the intuitionist school. He consequently starts by attacking first the philosophy of innate ideas, and then that of moral sense. First he insists that “intellectual instincts” are no more infallible in judgment than animal instincts are in action (240). Then, turning to the second school, he inquires whether we have a sense of justice, peculiar and immediate like our senses of colour or taste. This inquiry he disposes of by an inductive appeal to the evidence, listing six varied notions of what is just or unjust.

He then proceeds to an analysis of the *feeling* which accompanies the idea of justice, examining on the way concepts of duty, rights, doctrines of punishment, doctrines of just wage, just taxation. The only sure criterion in all these matters is social utility. And justice is “a name for certain classes of moral rules, which concern the essentials of human well-being more nearly, and are therefore of more absolute obligation, than any other rules for the guidance of life. . .”; it is “a name for certain moral requirements, which, regarded collectively, stand higher in the scale of social utility, and are therefore of more paramount obligation, than any others. . .” (255, 259). Justice “is involved in the very meaning of Utility, or the Greatest-Happiness Principle.” “Ben-

tham's dictum, 'everybody to count for one, nobody for more than one,' might be written under the principle of utility as an explanatory commentary." (257.)

Two things are significant about the conclusion. One is that Mill repeats the definition of justice three times, with little substantial variation, as if to drive home again and again the two claims, that justice is not only *not* explained away and reduced to expediency by the principle of utility, but that it retains something like absolute status, and that the traditional concept of justice as fair play for all stands at the very heart of the doctrine. The other significant thing is the introduction of Bentham's name and his dictum, so that the pattern of affirming the unity of old creed and new exegesis noted at the end of chapter four is repeated at the end of the whole essay. Bentham is gathered in by name into the fold of the new church.

## AUGUSTE COMTE AND POSITIVISM

It is perhaps not too fanciful to see an analogy between Mill's attitude towards Comte and his later attitude towards Bentham, and to see this essay as a further practice of what I have called Mill's new tactics. Indeed the parallel is suggested by his comment at the opening of the essay, that the time has come to express a judgment on Positivism, now that Comte has "displayed a quantity and quality of mental power, and achieved an amount of success, which have not only won but retained the high admiration of thinkers as radically and strenuously opposed as it is possible to be, to nearly the whole of his later tendencies, and to many of his earlier opinions."<sup>21</sup> That Mill himself is one of the thinkers so described the rest of the essay makes evident. "It would have been a mistake," he continues, "had such thinkers busied themselves in the first instance with drawing attention to what they regarded as errors in his great work. Until it had taken the place in the world of thought which belonged to it, the important matter was not to criticise it, but to help in making it known." (264.) These sentences parallel exactly the terms in which he had defined his reasons for adopting the new tactics in dealing with Bentham. And the parallel suggests further that Mill, in seeing the need for the same tactics, sees at least something of the same relationship between Comte and Positivism as he had seen between Bentham and Utilitarianism: namely, a valid and important doctrine harmed in its definition and interpretation by the limitations of its proponent. And since Mill is not likely to extend these protective tactics to doctrines opposed to Utilitarianism, it also appears that he sees in Utilitarianism and Positivism a common cause.

This he soon makes fully explicit. He defines the "fundamental doctrine" of Positivism in very broad terms: "We have no knowledge of anything but Phaenomena; and our knowledge of phaenomena is relative, not absolute. We know not the essence, nor the real mode of production, of any fact, but only its relations to other facts in the way of succession or of similitude. These relations are constant. . . . The constant resemblances . . . and the constant sequences . . . are termed their laws. The laws of phaenomena are all we know respecting them." (265.) Only through these laws can we predict, and in some cases, control effects. This general statement of empiricism Mill easily identifies with the scientific mode of philosophy, imperfectly but partly

grasped by Bacon and Descartes, fully by Newton, Hume, and Thomas Brown; and “the same great truth formed the groundwork of all the speculative philosophy of Bentham, and pre-eminently of James Mill. . . .” “The philosophy called Positive is not a recent invention of M. Comte, but a simple adherence to the traditions of all the great scientific minds whose discoveries have made the human race what it is.” (267.)

Comte thus joins Bentham (and James Mill) as an apostle of the true philosophy, and an opponent of the Theological and Metaphysical—or, as Mill prefers to put it, a supporter of the Phaenomenal and Experiential philosophy against the “Personal, or Volitional explanation of facts” and the “Abstractional or Ontological” (267). Comte “has taken his place in a fight long since engaged, and on the side already in the main victorious.” He is on the side of the Nominalists against the Realists, of the Rationalists against the Voluntarists, the latter conflict being here defined in secular terms. Like Montesquieu, “even Macchiavelli,” Adam Smith “and the political economists universally,” Bentham “and all thinkers initiated by him,” Comte believes that “social phaenomena conform to invariable laws,” as do the phaenomena of Nature. He rejects “the whole system of ideas connected with supernatural agency,” and like Mill, sees the doctrine of Voluntarism as stemming from ignorance. “No one, probably,” Mill scoffingly remarks, “ever believed that the will of a god kept parallel lines from meeting, or made two and two equal to four; or ever prayed to the gods to make the square of the hypotenuse equal to more or less than the sum of the squares of the sides.” “In the case of phaenomena which science has not yet taught us either to foresee or to control, the theological mode of thought [that is, the Voluntarist] has not ceased to operate: men still pray for rain, or for success in war, or to avert a shipwreck or a pestilence, but not to put back the stars in their courses, . . . or to arrest the tides.” (288.) Like Bentham, Comte rejects the whole philosophy of law based on “the imaginary law of the imaginary being Nature,” along with divine rights and Natural Rights (299). In brief, Comte is, insofar as he expresses the fundamental principle of Positivism, a good Utilitarian, and conversely, Utilitarians are good Positivists. “All theories in which the ultimate standard of institutions and rules of action was the happiness of mankind, and observation and experience the guides . . . are entitled to the name Positive, whatever, in other respects, their imperfections may be” (299). As we have seen, they are also entitled, with the same qualification, to the name Utilitarian.

Granted this move towards identifying the two doctrines in their fundamental principles, it is with no surprise that we discover that “M. Comte has got hold of half the truth. . . .” (313). But by this time, the other half is not in the possession of Coleridgians or Kantians. Whatever weight Mill may have given in 1838 and 1840 to the notion of a synthesis of doctrinal thesis and antithesis, that notion has now been superseded by the progressive hierarchy of Comte.<sup>22</sup> Theological thought yields to Metaphysical, Metaphysical to Positive. The whole tradition of Germano-Coleridgian thought is now relegated to the Metaphysical. The half of truth M. Comte has not got is to be found, not there, but in “the so-called liberal or revolutionary school.” As in the earlier case of Bentham and Coleridge, and of the two traditions they represent, “each sees what the other does not see, and seeing it exclusively, draws consequences from it which to the other appear mischievously absurd” (313). The near-identity of phrasing makes more emphatic the radi-

cal change of reference. The two halves of truth now belong both within the same fundamental philosophic tradition.

To the extent to which Comte is an enemy of “the whole *a priori* philosophy, in morals, jurisprudence, psychology, logic,” and on the side of “observation and experiment” (300), he is, if not thoroughly Utilitarian, at least a valuable ally. In some respects (but only some), he is a sounder ally than Herbert Spencer or G. H. Lewes, both of whom fall back on *a priori* logic for their “ultimate test of truth” in “the inconceivability of its negative” (301). It is the total and radical nature of Comte’s rejection of “the metaphysical mode of thought” that seems to constitute his main claim to Mill’s praise (301). When the rigorous principle is applied, for example, to Bentham’s conception of social science, it leads Comte to the same conclusions as Mill had been led to earlier: that to start from “universal laws of human nature” and draw deductions from them is fallacious, because “as society proceeds in its development, its phaenomena are determined, more and more, not by the simple tendencies of universal human nature, but by the accumulated influence of past generations over the present. The human beings themselves, on the laws of whose nature the facts of history depend, are not abstract or universal but historical human beings, already shaped, and made what they are, by human society. This being the case, no powers of deduction could enable any one, starting from the mere conception of the Being Man, placed in a world such as the earth may have been before the commencement of human agency, to predict and calculate the phaenomena of his development. . . .” Facts of history must be “empirically considered” (307).<sup>23</sup>

Comte is, indeed, superior to Bentham in the greater rigour of his insistence on the empirical and inductive. “All political truth he deems strictly relative, implying as its correlative a given state or situation of society” (323). In thus emphasizing the importance of history as the body of social phaenomena from which the social scientist draws his conclusions by induction, Comte makes his greatest contribution. He is at his most striking in his long survey of universal history. This survey is concerned with “the main stream of human progress, looking only at the races and nations that led the van. . . . His object is to characterize truly, though generally, the successive states of society through which the advanced guard of our species has passed, and the filiation of these states on one another—how each grew out of the preceding and was the parent of the following state.” (318.) As Mill’s phrases, “led the van” and “advanced guard,” indicate, his approval of Comte as historian attaches to his philosophy of history as a doctrine of progress, his rôle as a new and more thorough Condorcet, more than to any really scientific quality in his historiography. Since Mill’s own Utilitarianism is strongly progressive, he welcomes the presentation of a mass of historical evidence, admittedly selective rather than truly “universal,” which offers inductive and empirical support for the “fact” of progress.

There is no doubt that Mill finds Comte’s analysis, in general terms, sound. He also praises the nice balance Comte observes between treating history (as Carlyle does) in terms of the influence of individuals, and treating it in terms solely of general causes. He is not unjust to the past, seeing (as Condorcet and Godwin had before him, though Mill does not note this) “in all past modes of thought and forms of society . . . a useful, in many a necessary, office, in carrying man-



kind through one stage of improvement into a higher.” He avoids the error of regarding the intellectual “as the only progressive element in man, and the moral as too much the same at all times to affect even the annual average of crime” (322-3). He links, in short, intellectual to moral progress. Nor does Comte think of moral progress as dependent solely on intellectual improvement. “He not only personally appreciates, but rates high in moral value, the creations of poets and artists in all departments, deeming them, by their mixed appeal to the sentiments and the understanding, admirably fitted to educate the feelings of abstract thinkers, and enlarge the intellectual horizon of people of the world” (324). Once again we hear unvoiced echoes of Mill’s view of Bentham and his limitations, from some of which at least Comte is free.

But at the same time, the balance must not be allowed to tip too far in reaction. Comte is not so far from Bentham as to hand over progress to the poets and artists. He does indeed, like Bentham, insist that “the main agent in the progress of mankind is their intellectual development,” and while it is true that the passions are “a more energetic power than a mere intellectual conviction,” the passions “tend to divide, not to unite, mankind.” “It is only by a common belief that passions are brought to work together, and become a collective force. . . .” The passions are the gale, but Reason must be the compass. “All human society,” as Godwin had argued, “is grounded on a system of fundamental opinions, which only the speculative faculty can provide,” and which only improvement of the speculative faculty can improve (316). Herbert Spencer is wrong in asserting that “ideas do not govern and overthrow the world; the world is governed or overthrown by feelings, to which ideas serve only as guides.” That is, he is wrong if he thinks this a refutation of Comte. The sentiments “are only a social force at all, through the definite direction given to them by . . . some . . . intellectual conviction,” and the sentiments do not of themselves “spontaneously throw up” convictions (317). “To say that men’s intellectual beliefs do not determine their conduct, is like saying that the ship is moved by the steam and not by the steersman” (317).

In many respects, then, Comte can be praised as another apostle of the true faith, a true Utilitarian in his fundamental principles, and free of some of the limitations of personality and of intellectual equipment which so narrowed Bentham. But his own limitations are more disastrous than Bentham’s. Even in the earlier work with which the first part of Mill’s essay deals, the *Cours de Philosophie Positive*, there is much that arouses Mill’s strong disapproval. In the first place, Comte’s psychology is inadequate. He gives psychology as a science no place in his classification, and “always speaks of it with contempt.” He reduces it, in fact, to a branch of physiology, totally rejecting introspection, or “psychological observation properly so called . . . internal consciousness.” As Mill dryly observes, “How we are to observe other people’s mental operations, or how interpret the signs of them without having learnt what the signs mean by knowledge of ourselves, he does not state” (296). Comte relies, as “Organon for the study of ‘the moral and intellectual functions’ ” on Phrenology, which, says Mill, is in process of becoming discredited as a science. Moreover, it tends to be entirely meaningless unless related to a psychology of association. Comte shows no knowledge, and makes no use, of the work of Hartley, Brown, and James Mill. The real scientific development of psychology has been made by Bain and Herbert Spencer. Comte’s failure to take psychology seriously as a mental science is not a “mere hiatus” in his system, but “the parent of serious errors in his attempt to create a Social Science” (298).

Probably even more culpable, from Mill's point of view, are some of Comte's political attitudes, his reliance on authority, his eagerness to commit power to single persons or small groups, his rejection, not only of popular sovereignty, but of any principle of responsibility. It is not only that Comte runs foul of most of Mill's fundamental political principles, and those of the Utilitarians generally, but also of the ethical attitudes underlying them. "No one to count as more than one" is an axiom at the heart of the Utilitarian ethic. Further, Mill is clearly shocked to find that Comte relegates to the "metaphysical," and hence to oblivion, "the first of all the articles of the liberal creed, 'the absolute right of free examination, or the dogma of unlimited liberty of conscience.'" Comte accepts the *legal* right, but "resolutely denies" the *moral* right (301). On a strict Utilitarian basis, of course, Comte is quite correct, and Mill himself would found an absolute right not on natural rights but on permanent utility. But he is pushed here, as in *On Liberty*, away from Utilitarian relativism into something like "metaphysical" absolutism, for fear, as he says, of the use to be made of the contrary doctrine. And although Comte by no means wishes "intellectual dominion to be exercised over an ignorant people," and is as strong an advocate of popular education as any Utilitarian, viewing the possibilities of such education with a "startling" optimism, his scheme to have a "salutary ascendancy over opinion" exercised by an *organized* body of "the most eminent thinkers" makes Mill decidedly nervous (314). So does Comte's dismissal of the whole revolutionary and liberal set of ideas as "metaphysical" and merely negative, and consequently as a serious impediment to the reorganization of society (301). Mill himself had insisted on the negative nature of eighteenth-century revolutionary thought, and the aberration of Rousseau in trying to found a positive philosophy of government on negation, but again he senses the presence of dangerous conclusions and applications. Though there is truth in what Comte says, Mill feels like the man "who being asked whether he admitted that six and five make eleven, refused to give an answer until he knew what use was to be made of it" (302).

Underlying his misgivings about the use Comte wishes to make of these ideas is his lively distrust of the whole programme for the future of society Comte seems to envisage. On the "statical" side of social phenomena, the laws of social existence "considered abstractedly from progress," Comte is relatively satisfactory. On the "dynamical" side, that of social progress, the laws of the evolution of the social state, he is at his weakest, trite and often invalid (309). For Mill, of course, the "statical" is important as a preliminary to the "dynamical"; his real concern is with the means of ensuring the progress of society and of man in society. Comte's means seem to him totally wrong.

Apart from the ideas we have been examining, there is much in the first part of the essay on Comte with which we need not concern ourselves here. The very interesting sections in which Mill discusses and criticizes Comte's classification of the sciences, his philosophy of science, the Organon of Discovery and the Organon of Proof, the difference between Laws and Causes, and so on, are important in other contexts. Our concern has been with the ethical, and with the political insofar as it touches the ethical.

In part two of the essay, as Mill turns to Comte's later writings, the balance of praise and blame shifts radically. None the less, the Religion of Humanity can be made to coincide in its es-

entials, as Mill sees them, with the essential ethical basis of Utilitarianism, and Comte can remain in some sense a high priest of the true creed. “The power which may be acquired over the mind by the idea of the general interest of the human race, both as a source of emotion and as a motive to conduct, many have perceived; but we know not if anyone, before M. Comte, realized so fully as he has done, all the majesty of which that idea is susceptible.” “We, therefore, not only hold that M. Comte was justified in the attempt to develop his philosophy into a religion, and had realized the essential conditions of one, but that all other religions are made better in proportion as, in their practical result, they are brought to coincide with that which he aimed at constructing.” (334-5.)

But if Comte is right in general principle, he is often wrong in interpretation and application. He falls into the error often charged against the Utilitarian moralists, in requiring “that the test of conduct should also be the exclusive motive to it” (335). And in his enthusiasm for loving one’s neighbour, he insists on conscious suppression of all self-regarding actions. If he merely meant “that egoism is bound, and should be taught, always to give way to the well-understood interests of enlarged altruism,” no one could object, least of all Mill. But his naïve phrenology, combined with a biological theory of organic growth or atrophy through use or disuse, leads him to something like the old ascetic mortification of the flesh (335).

Mill sees in this tendency a symptom of a general trend in Comte’s thought which underlies many of his errors, a tendency to accept as axiomatic “that all perfection consists in unity.” “Why is it necessary,” asks Mill, “that all human life should point but to one object, and be cultivated into a system of means to a single end? May it not be the fact that mankind, who after all are made up of single human beings, obtain a greater sum of happiness when each pursues his own, under the rules and conditions required by the good of the rest, than when each makes the good of the rest his only subject. . . ?” (337.) Comte’s passion for “unity” and “systematization” leads not only to a denial of the value Mill places upon variety, but to a system of compulsion towards uniformity. In Halévy’s terms, Comte plans the “artificial identification of interests,” while Mill believes in the “natural identification of interests,” as his words above indicate.

The “mania for regulation” by which Comte seems obsessed appears in full development in the *cultus* of the Religion of Humanity. The elaborate provision of ceremony, ritual, and doctrine strikes Mill, of course, as an unseemly imitation of Roman Catholicism. Earlier in the essay, in discussing Comte’s treatment of history, Mill had remarked that Comte had no understanding of Protestantism (321). It is equally evident that Mill has no understanding of Catholicism. It is interesting to recall how many writers, in the period from the French Revolution on into the nineteenth century, either from a conviction that Christianity ought to be destroyed, or from a belief that the Enlightenment had in fact virtually destroyed it, urge the creation of a new religion to supply the social need once filled by Christianity. And it is important to note how their conceptions differ as to what religion is, how it functions in society, and particularly how it serves as a social bond. The English Protestants define religion in terms of feeling, and of ethical attitudes. Arnold can thus express the hope that poetry can take over the task formerly performed by religion.<sup>24</sup> Their emphasis is wholly on the individual, and the inner sentiments; they do not think

at all in terms of any need of a corporate church, of corporate worship, of external ritual or sacraments. The Continental Catholics, on the contrary, think mainly in these terms, of religion as a corporate public act, of communal participation in ritual, of public symbols and festivals. The whole contrast is pointed up by Mill's rather astonished comment that Comte proposes prayers and devotional practices, not because the individual's "feelings require them, but for the premeditated purpose of getting his feelings up" (343). If Mill understands, as he undoubtedly does, some aspects of human psychology much better than Comte, it is also true that Comte understands others better than Mill.

The contrast is not simply that of Protestant and Catholic views of religion, however. There is also a contrast in their views of the primary need religion must fulfil for society. Just as Mill and Arnold differ in their diagnoses of English society, Mill fearing an excessive unity and uniformity, Arnold fearing an excess of individuality leading to moral and social anarchy, so Mill and Comte differ. Comte observes that in the pre-Positivist stage of society "the free development of our forces of all kinds was the important matter." Now, "the principal need is to regulate them." From this doctrine, Mill expresses his "entire dissent." He sees in Comte's scheme "an elaborate system for the total suppression of all independent thought." It seems obvious that Comte is concerned about the instability of the French society, about what he sees as the continuing effects of the negative and destructive forces of the Revolution. He sees the intellectuals as "desiring only to prolong the existing scepticism and intellectual anarchy," and as "rootedly hostile to the construction of the new" religious and social order (351-2). He has no faith in popular rule: "Election of superiors by inferiors, except as a revolutionary expedient, is an abomination in his sight." He has only "detestation and contempt" for "parliamentary or representative institutions in any form," and for a system in which the executive is responsible to an elected body (344). But Mill turns no attention to the national and historical context of Comte's project. And for this he has a double justification. Comte himself is presenting his system not in historical and relativist, but in absolute terms, taking the French situation as universal for the Positive period of history.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, for Mill there is no historical situation in any country in the mid-nineteenth century for which Comte's system would be valid.

There is no need here, nor would it be appropriate, to discuss all the interesting ideas in the essay. Mill's comments on the rôle of women, on Comte's views of the family and of marriage, on proper wages for workmen, on the idle rich, on "useful" knowledge, on Comte's system of education, on his limitation of books, provide links to a wide range of his writings. One curious note is that where Comte puts forward ideas which are "Positivist" in a twentieth-century sense, Mill sometimes disagrees. When Comte says, for example, that the scientist's concern with "complete proof," and a "perfect rationalization of scientific processes" is mere pedantry, and it "ought to be enough that the doctrines afford an explanation of phaenomena, consistent with itself and with known facts, and that the processes are justified by their fruits" (356). Mill disapproves, although he praises the comment "that the infinitesimal calculus is a conception analogous to the corpuscular hypothesis in physics; which last M. Comte has always considered as a logical artifice; not an opinion respecting matters of fact" (365).

The essay closes, in conformity with Mill's tactics, after so much devastating criticism, with high praise. Comte, like Descartes and Leibniz, whom he most resembles, has an "extraordinary power of concatenation and co-ordination," and has "enriched human knowledge with great truths and great conceptions of method." He is, in fact, greater than his predecessors, "not intrinsically, yet by the exertion of equal intellectual power in a more advanced state of human preparation" (368). His absurdities appear more ridiculous than theirs because our age is less tolerant of palpable absurdities.

The "concatenation and co-ordination" clearly refer to the sweeping view of history as a record of human progress. The "great truths and great conceptions of method" must apply, not to the "systematization, systematization, systematization," but to the fundamental Positivist principles, so closely identified with the Utilitarian, and to the scientific method, the use of history in search of generalizations and "laws" of human behaviour which Mill himself advocates.<sup>26</sup> Comte emerges finally, then, as a high priest of Utilitarianism and of the Religion of Humanity, misled into becoming High Priest and Pontiff of his absurd *cultus*.

### THREE ESSAYS ON RELIGION

The essays which Helen Taylor published after Mill's death as *Three Essays on Religion*, present, as she points out in her Introductory Notice, his "deliberate and exhaustive treatment of the topics under consideration." She also notes that although the first two, on Nature and on the Utility of Religion, were written between 1850 and 1858, while the third, on Theism, was not written until between 1868 and 1870, Mill certainly "considered the opinions expressed in these different Essays, as fundamentally consistent," and "his manner of thinking had undergone no substantial change."<sup>27</sup> Indeed, the various allusions to religious thought in his earliest ethical writings, the treatment of religious ideas in *On Liberty*, and in *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, all suggest that Mill's opinions on what his orthodox contemporaries meant by religion, both revealed and natural, stayed virtually constant throughout his mature career. All that changed was the openness and explicitness of his attack.

The fundamentals of his position have already been made clear. His thinking is firmly rooted in empiricism; his whole concept of truth is strongly defined by the "canons of induction"—truth is what can be proved by induction from empirical experience. His concept of a true religion is consequently of a religion of naturalism, as opposed to one of supernaturalism, a religion of the this-worldly as opposed to one of the other-worldly. The sort of religion he can approve of he finds in Comte's Religion of Humanity. The ethical system dependent on this religion is the Utilitarian. And finally, he sees this religion as an instrument of progress, of an emergent ethical evolution. These simple attitudes, which underlie all his comments on religion, provide the basic points of reference for the more elaborate treatment in the three essays.

The essay "The Utility of Religion" is directed towards persuading the reader that all the needs, both of society and of the individual, commonly thought of as satisfied by orthodox relig-

ion, can be fully satisfied without it, and that in fact the effects ascribed to religion have been due, not to religion itself, but to the force of opinion. Religious authority, by being in control of opinion and of education, has received credit for the support of the virtues, and for the instilling of them in the young, but Mill insists that the results of control by religious authority in no way differ from the results obtainable by essentially secular control: “early religious teaching has owed its power over mankind rather to its being early than to its being religious” (410). As to the sanctions religion lends to morality through its system of eternal rewards and punishments, morality needs no supernatural sanctions: moral truths are strong enough in their own evidence to retain the belief of mankind when once they have acquired it. Moreover, an application of Bentham’s calculus reinforces the impressions gained by observation that even infinite rewards and punishments postponed to the after life and never witnessed have little effect on ordinary minds. The real sanctions come from public opinion and the passions affected by it: “the love of glory; the love of praise; the love of admiration; the love of respect and deference; even the love of sympathy. . . .” “The fear of shame, the dread of ill repute or of being disliked or hated, are the direct and simple forms of its deterring power.” “Belief, then, in the supernatural . . . cannot be considered to be any longer required, either for enabling us to know what is right and wrong in social morality, or for supplying us with motives to do right and to abstain from wrong.” (417.) Cannot an ethical system for both society and the individual, then, be purely secular? Cannot the public and private morality be imposed merely by the power of education and public opinion, in the tradition of Utilitarianism? What need is there of a substitute Religion of Humanity to replace the old supernatural religion?

Once again, as Mill proceeds to answer these questions (which he does not explicitly ask) our thoughts revert to the *Autobiography* and the description of the crisis of his youth. “Religion and poetry,” he now writes, “address themselves, at least in one of their aspects, to the same part of the human constitution: they both supply the same want, that of ideal conceptions grander and more beautiful than we see realized in the prose of human life. Religion, as distinguished from poetry, is the product of the craving to know whether these imaginative conceptions have realities answering to them in some other world than ours.” Religion adds to “the poetry of the supernatural” a positive belief which unpoetical minds can share with the poetical. It satisfies the craving for “the better which is suggested” by the good partially seen and known on earth, the craving for “higher things.” The question for Mill is not whether this “poetry of the supernatural” is valuable: he readily acknowledges that it meets an important psychological need—but whether it has to be connected with the supernatural. Is it necessary, he asks, “to travel beyond the boundaries of the world which we inhabit” to obtain this good, or is “the idealization of our earthly life, the cultivation of a high conception of what *it* may be made . . . not capable of supplying a poetry, and, in the best sense of the word, a religion, equally fitted to exalt the feelings, and (with the same aid from education) still better calculated to ennoble the conduct, than any belief respecting the unseen powers” (420).

Such a religion can even offer, in terms of the human species, the aspirations appropriate to immortality and, in conjunction with a faith in progress, an earthly Paradise: “if individual life is short, the life of the human species is not short; its indefinite duration is practically equivalent to

endlessness; and being combined with indefinite capability of improvement, it offers to the imagination and sympathies a large enough object to satisfy any reasonable demand for grandeur of aspiration” (420). Once man has abandoned the “baseless fancies” of supernatural immortality, his mind will expand into new dimensions at thoughts of the Grand Etre and its limitless future. When it has expanded from love of country to love of the world, as it can be made to expand by proper training, the universal morality will be the Utilitarian:

A morality grounded on large and wise views of the good of the whole, neither sacrificing the individual to the aggregate nor the aggregate to the individual, but giving to duty on the one hand and to freedom and spontaneity on the other their proper province, would derive its power in the superior natures from sympathy and benevolence and the passion for ideal excellence: in the inferior, from the same feelings cultivated up to the measure of their capacity, with the superadded force of shame. . . . A support in moments of weakness would not be a problematical future existence, but the approbation . . . of those whom we respect, and ideally of all those, dead or living, whom we admire or venerate. . . . To call these sentiments by the name morality . . . is claiming too little for them. They are a real religion. . . . (422.)

Here is undoubtedly Mill’s lasting confession of faith. The Religion of Humanity fulfils all the conditions he demands: “The essence of religion is the strong and earnest direction of the emotions and desires towards an ideal object, recognized as of the highest excellence, and as rightfully paramount over all selfish objects of desire” (422). It fulfils them for him much more satisfactorily than orthodox (or unorthodox) Christianity.

Given an understanding of Mill’s religious position, and of the principles on which it is based, the long essay on Theism offers the reader no surprises. There can in fact be few works of Mill’s which show so little originality. Any reader familiar with nineteenth-century writings on religion will find himself constantly recalling other expressions of the same views. Much of the essay could as readily have been written by Huxley. The elaborate attack on *a priori* and *a posteriori* “proofs” of the Being and Attributes of God, carrying one’s mind back to Samuel Clarke and the eighteenth century, seems quaintly old-fashioned, especially when the *a priori* is so easily dismissed as “unscientific” (434). The most entertaining passages are those which exhibit the full savagery of Mill’s combative style, such as the one in Part II on man’s God-given potentialities for development: “It is to suppose that God could not, in the first instance, create anything better than a Bosjeman or an Andaman islander; or something still lower; and yet was able to endow the Bosjeman or the Andaman islander with the power of raising himself into a Newton or a Fénelon. We certainly do not know the nature of the barriers which limit the divine omnipotence; but it is a very odd notion of them that they enable the Deity to confer on an almost bestial creature the power of producing by a succession of efforts what God himself had no other means of creating.” (459.) Or again, in Part III, on God’s being either unable or unwilling to grant our desires: “Many a man would like to be a Croesus or an Augustus Caesar, but has his wishes gratified only to the moderate extent of a pound a week or the Secretaryship of his Trades Union” (466). The writing is often as lively as Mill’s best, even where the ideas are commonplace.

The criticism of Hume's essay on miracles in Part IV (471), the remarks on brain and mind and the warning against "giving *à priori* validity to the conclusions of an *à posteriori* philosophy" in Part III (461) are of interest as examples either of Mill's wish to be fair, or of his insistence on precise argument. But perhaps the most interesting part for its content is the final one, in which, like Tennyson and Browning, Mill asserts the value of imaginative aspirations, of hope, and of "cleaving to the sunnier side of doubt," as Tennyson puts it. One senses again here that other side of Mill, responding in something like poetic terms to the realities of the human situation and of human psychology. "To me it seems that human life, small and confined as it is, and as, considered merely in the present, it is likely to remain even when the progress of material and moral improvement may have freed it from the greater part of its present calamities, stands greatly in need of any wider range and greater height of aspiration for itself and its destination, which the exercise of imagination can yield to it without running counter to the evidence of fact . . ." (483). Or, as Arnold put it, "men have such need of joy! But joy whose grounds are true. . . ." <sup>28</sup>

Again, when Mill praises "the tendency, either from constitution or habit, to dwell chiefly on the brighter side both of the present and of the future," noting that "a hopeful disposition gives a spur to the faculties and keeps all the active energies in good working order," or when he observes that it is not necessary "for keeping up our conviction that we must die, that we should be always brooding over death," that we should not "think perpetually of death, but . . . of our duties, and of the rule of life" (484), we seem to be listening to Tennyson's Ancient Sage. When "the reason is strongly cultivated, the imagination may safely follow its own end, and do its best to make life pleasant and lovely inside the castle, in reliance on the fortifications raised and maintained by Reason round the outward bounds." The "indulgence of hope with regard to the government of the universe and the destiny of man after death . . . is legitimate and philosophically defensible." Such a hope "makes life and human nature a far greater thing to the feelings, and gives greater strength as well as greater solemnity to all the sentiments which are awakened in us by our fellow-creatures and by mankind at large" (485). Throughout this last section, Mill emphasizes the importance of the imagination, not to supplant reason, but to supplement it. Ultimately it is this addition of imagination to reason, of poetry to fact, which constitutes religion, especially "that real, though purely human religion, which sometimes calls itself the Religion of Humanity and sometimes that of Duty" (488).

Although there are clear connections between the essay "Nature" and the other two essays on religion, it does not fit simply into the pattern I have been tracing, nor are the issues it discusses all related simply or exclusively to Mill's religious thought. For some classes of reader, it will be by far the most interesting of the three essays. For students of literature concerned with the development of Romanticism, for example, it will be an important document.

It is easy to recognize in the essay a number of distinct, though related, themes. The words "nature" and "natural" have become a source, says Mill, of "false taste, false philosophy, false morality, and even bad law" (373). The last term, recalling Bentham's attacks on the concept of Natural Law, points up the first theme: an attack on "the great *à priori* fallacies," which are to be exposed here, as the list suggests, in aesthetic theory, in philosophy, and in moral philosophy



(383). The attack involves the rejection of Nature as an aesthetic norm, and of Nature as an ethical norm, and the repudiation generally of the injunction to “follow Nature.” Since these “*à priori* fallacies,” including the establishing of Nature as a norm, are based upon what Mill sees as a false metaphysical view of Nature, the first step is to correct this view. The “Nature” of a thing is simply “its entire capacity of exhibiting phenomena.” “Nature in the abstract is the aggregate of the powers and properties of all things. Nature means the sum of all phenomena, together with the causes which produce them. . . .” (374.) There is no justification for opposing Nature and Art, “Art is as much Nature as anything else . . . ; Art is but the employment of the powers of Nature for an end” (375). In this purely empirical sense, everything is Nature, and everything must conform to Nature, Nature being simply what *is*.

But there is another sense in which Nature means phenomena not caused by man, and in this sense a distinction can be made between Nature and Art. In this case, says Mill, the artificial is an improvement; man controls Nature to improve it. “If the artificial is not better than the natural, to what end are all the arts of life?” “All praise of Civilization, or Art, or Contrivance, is so much dispraise of Nature. . . .” (381.) So also in the ethical sphere. Cruelty is as natural as benevolence, and “the most criminal actions are to a being like man, not more unnatural than most of the virtues.” “There is hardly a bad action ever perpetrated which is not perfectly natural, and the motives to which are not perfectly natural feelings.” (401.) The moral man is, like the carefully tilled garden, a work of Art, not of Nature. “This artificially created or at least artificially perfected nature of the best and noblest human beings, is the only nature which it is ever commendable to follow” (396-7).

The setting up of Civilization in opposition to Nature, and the allusion to the “artificially perfected nature” of the best human beings point up the exact object of Mill’s attack. In the conflict between the competing Romantic doctrines of primitivism and progress, Mill is on the side of progress. He is particularly antagonistic towards the sentimental Romantic primitivism which exalts the natural instincts. “Savages are always liars,” he remarks (395). The sentiment of justice is wholly artificial in origin. No virtues are natural to man, merely a capacity for acquiring them (and also for acquiring vices). It is the duty of man to amend nature, including his own.

The notion of Nature as a norm is not, however, solely associated with or derived from primitivism. It is also part of Deist optimism, of the natural theology Mill attacks in the essay “Theism.” For the astro- and physicotheologians, Nature exhibited not merely a physical order, but an ethical one. But, asks Mill, “how stands the fact? That next to the greatness of these cosmic forces, the quality which most forcibly strikes every one who does not avert his eyes from it is their perfect and absolute recklessness.” Nature is totally amoral. “All which people are accustomed to deprecate as ‘disorder’ and its consequences, is precisely a counterpart of Nature’s ways.” “If imitation of the Creator’s will as revealed in nature, were applied as a rule of action . . . ; the most atrocious enormities of the worst men would be more than justified by the apparent intention of Providence that throughout all animated nature the strong should prey upon the weak.” Since Nature has no right or wrong, “Conformity to nature, has no connection whatever with right and wrong” (400).

The attack on the natural theologians links this essay with the essay on Theism, and the doctrine put forward in that essay, that the state of the natural world is compatible with a theory of a wise and benevolent, but not an omnipotent Creator, is put forward here, with an interesting reference to Leibniz. Much of the argument on the evidence offered by Nature for *a posteriori* discovery of the divine attributes parallels the more formal argument of the later essay on Theism. But there is much more looking backward to the eighteenth century and its controversies here; the essay on Theism, although it glances back occasionally, is solidly fixed in the world of Darwin and of the Higher Criticism.

Finally, it is possible to see in the essay on Nature a further significance. From the time of Helvetius and the early French Utilitarians, the taint of “naturalism” had clung to the doctrine. In its most narrowly rigorous form, it insisted that the sole absolute good was pleasure, the sole absolute evil, pain. It reduced motivation to the natural instinct to seek pleasure and avoid pain. In referring everything in ethics and in politics to these irreducible natural elements, and explaining everything in terms of primary natural instincts, it was not indeed setting up the natural as a norm, as the pattern of what ought to be. But it was setting up the natural as the pattern of what has to be, of what is and is inescapable. Moreover, in finding the origins of normative ideas, of ideals of value, in the purely natural, it attacked the validity usually ascribed to them. Those opponents who saw in the Helvetian doctrine a system of hedonist, egoist naturalism had some good reasons for their judgment. And it is a short step from proclaiming the inevitability of the natural to accepting it as the norm. If it is inevitably natural for dogs to bark and bite, then let them delight to do so. The natural becomes the right.

The “naturalistic” fallacy can then, and historically does, become part not only of the metaphysical views of Nature associated with Shaftesburian deists, neo-classical literary critics and pre-Romantic primitivism, but also of narrowly empirical Utilitarians. And since the Utilitarians tend to be “naturalistic” in the other sense of rejecting the supernatural and the “metaphysical,” the “naturalism” ascribed to them is seen as of the most opprobrious sort. As we have seen, Mill is constantly aware of the need to break the association of Utilitarianism with the tradition of Helvetius’ pattern. The essay on Nature, in defining precisely his attitude towards Nature and the natural, and the relation of the natural to the ethical norms of Utilitarianism, is Mill’s main reply to those who still think of Utilitarianism in the old terms of the “naturalistic” fallacy.

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## Endnotes

[1] The preceding quotations are from Mill’s *Autobiography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1924), 47. Subsequent references to this edition are given in parentheses.

[2] Matthew Arnold, “Memorial Verses,” ll.45-7, 54-7.

[3] “Remarks on Bentham’s Philosophy,” 8 below. Subsequent references are to the present edition, and are given in parentheses.

[4] Though generally taken to be a review of the whole of Bowring’s edition of Bentham’s *Works*, the article reviews only Parts I to IV of that edition (all that had appeared to that point); for a description of these parts and their place in the edition, see Bibliographic Appendix, 512 below.

[5] *Autobiography*, 140-1. Cf. Professor Robson’s comments, cxviii below.

[6] “Sedgwick,” 66 below. Subsequent references are to the present edition, and are given in parentheses.

[7] “Remarks on Bentham’s Philosophy,” 12.

[8] “Bentham,” 77 below. Subsequent references are to the present edition, and are given in parentheses.

[9] See John M. Robson, “John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, with some Observations on James Mill,” in M. MacLure and F. W. Watt, eds., *Essays in English Literature from the Renaissance to the Victorian Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 259-62.

[10] Cf. *ibid.*, 267-8, where Professor Robson suggests that Mill was praising not the detail of Bentham’s method, but his very adoption of a method in ethics, politics, and sociology.

[11] Mill struggled with this general problem, of course, for the next twenty years, resolving it (to his satisfaction and in theory) only in his *Considerations on Representative Government*.

[12] “Coleridge,” 119 below. Subsequent references are to the present edition, and are given in parentheses.

[13] Going beyond this immediate context, one should note Mill’s qualified approval of the Saint-Simonian and Comtean notion of the alternation of “critical” and “organic” periods, an alternation that does not preclude a final period in which freedom would unite with order (without, for Mill, any suggestion of an Hegelian synthesis).

[14] This is not to argue that Mill deserted the empirical and associationist school; his allegiance is perfectly clear, whatever the modifications, in his *Logic*, his edition of James Mill’s *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, and in his *Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy*, to mention only the most obvious examples.

[15] While Mill remained interested in this area, he never fully worked out the problems of reconciliation here indicated; his “Ethology” was not written.

[16] A separation made clearer and more complete by Mill than by Coleridge, and so carrying rather different implications.

[17] See the Textual Introduction, cxxn and cxxin below.

[18] “Whewell,” 167 below. Subsequent references are to the present edition, and are given in parentheses.

[19] This defence is also offered in the Introduction to Bentham's *Works*. In general, it may be said, Mill uses it to explain the position of the Philosophic Radicals, and especially of James Mill, on the Reform Bill of 1832 and related measures.

[20] *Utilitarianism*, 205 below. Subsequent references are to the present edition, and are given in parentheses.

[21] *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, 263 below. Subsequent references are to the present edition, and are given in parentheses.

[22] Cf. xx-xxi, xxix above.

[23] Probably Mill is here recalling not only Coleridge's influence on him, but also Macaulay's criticism of James Mill's *Essay on Government*.

[24] Cf. John M. Robson, *The Improvement of Mankind: The Social and Political Thought of John Stuart Mill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), 122n: "Bain reports, without noticeable sympathy, that Mill 'seemed to look upon Poetry as a Religion, or rather as Religion and Philosophy in one.' "

[25] Here one recalls Mill's criticism of Bentham's propensity to legislate for all mankind, regardless of the implications of the title of his *Influence of Time and Place in Matters of Legislation*.

[26] See especially Mill's *Logic*, Book VI, Chap. x, "Of the Inverse Deductive, or Historical Method."

[27] *Three Essays on Religion*, 371-2 below. Subsequent references are to the present edition, and are given in parentheses.

[28] Matthew Arnold, "Obermann Once More," ll.237-8.

**VOLUME X (2) - ESSAYS ON ETHICS, RELIGION, AND SOCIETY. “ESSAY ON  
MILL’S UTILITARIANISM” BY D.P. DRYER**

SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume X - Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by F.E.L. Priestley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985). Chapter: D.P. Dryer, Essay on Mill’s Utilitarianism. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/241/21464>>.

MILL’S UTILITARIANISM

The majority of serious students of ethics today are utilitarians, and those who are not see utilitarianism as the chief position in need of amendment. John Stuart Mill’s writings on ethics, and especially on utilitarianism, are thus of vital contemporary interest and importance. More than any other thinker, Mill is responsible for laying down the principal directions ethics has taken since his day. He did not, however, embody his full views in any single volume or one set of writings, and the main lines in ethics which he sketched were worked out in detail only after his death by Henry Sidgwick. A generation later, G. E. Moore sought to refine upon Sidgwick’s results, and subsequent ethical theory has taken Moore’s work as its starting point.

The most complete guide to undertaking a detailed examination of Mill’s ethical views is his *Utilitarianism*, and so I have used it as the basis of this introductory essay. His other essays on ethics are valuable as supplements to the opinions he puts forward in this work, and they are referred to where appropriate. Five main topics have been selected for detailed treatment in the discussion that follows. The first section sorts out some of Mill’s more important principles. Section II examines his dictum that the sole evidence that anything is desirable is that people desire it. In the third, consideration is given to what Mill holds that this evidence discloses. Section IV deals with Mill’s analysis of moral concepts. The discussion concludes with an examination of his views on the use of the principle of utility.

I. THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

Mill writes, “happiness is the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge of all human conduct. . . .”<sup>1</sup> He also makes it clear that the test is its promotion of happiness “to the greatest extent possible” (214). By such conduct Mill does not mean that which would promote happiness to the greatest extent conceivable, but that which would promote it to a

greater extent than would any alternative. Mill also makes it clear that when he speaks of the promotion of happiness as “the test by which to judge of all human conduct,” the aspect of conduct of which he means that it is a test is whether it should be done.<sup>2</sup> He thus holds that the test of whether something should be done is whether it would promote more happiness than would any alternative to it. Mill implies that if an action would satisfy this test, it should be done, and that if it would not, it is not one that should be done. Accordingly, the main principle which Mill maintains is that something should be done if and only if it would cause more happiness than would any alternative, and that something should not be done if and only if it would fail to cause as much happiness as would some alternative.

The chief support Mill offers for this principle is that “happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end. . .” (234). He distinguishes things desirable as a means and things desirable for their own sake. What is desirable for its own sake he speaks of as desirable as an end. He argues that it is because happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake that the test of conduct generally is its promotion of happiness. The principle he employs in taking this step is that if there is one sort of thing which is alone desirable for its own sake, then the promotion of it is the test of all human conduct. By test of human conduct he means test of what should be done. An action is then one that should be done if and only if it satisfies this test. Mill thus takes it for granted that something should be done if and only if its consequences would be more desirable than would those of any alternative to it.

From his main principle in turn Mill draws a conclusion about what it would be right to do and what it would be wrong to do. The question of whether it would be right or wrong to do a certain action is a question about its morality. Mill writes, “the morality of an individual action is . . . a question . . . of the application of a law to an individual case” (206). He thus holds that it would be wrong to do a certain action only if it would be at variance with a certain rule. If we ask what sort of rule he is referring to, Mill makes it clear that he means a rule that should generally be observed. By his main principle Mill has already given a general answer as to what should be done. In accordance with it he holds that a certain rule is one that should generally be observed if and only if its general observance would cause more happiness than would any alternative to its general observance.<sup>3</sup> Mill thus maintains that it would be wrong to do a certain action only if it would be at variance with such a rule.<sup>4</sup>

Some prolixity is required to clarify what Mill understands by an action that would cause more happiness than any alternative to it.<sup>5</sup> The only respect in which an action is thereby compared to its alternatives is its consequences, and the only consequences by which it is compared are those consisting of happiness and unhappiness. Mill writes, “By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure” (210). He states: “Of . . . philosophers who have taught that happiness is the end of life . . . [the] happiness which they meant was not a life of rapture; but moments of such, in an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures. . .” (215). Hence the only consequences of an action that are relevant are pleasures and pains. All the pleasures and pains among the conse-

quences of an action are relevant, whether remote or near, whether experienced by humans or by other sentient creatures.<sup>6</sup>

If Mill held that the only relevant difference among pleasures and pains was whether one was greater than another, there would be only six possibilities for the total effects of an action. They would contain (1) an excess of pleasure over pain, (2) an excess of pain over pleasure, (3) an excess of neither, (4) pleasure and no pain, (5) pain and no pleasure, (6) neither pleasure nor pain. Mill argues, however, that pleasures and pains differ in a further respect which is relevant—some are more desirable than others.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, eight possibilities may be distinguished with regard to the total effects of an action: (1) They contain some pleasures and no pains. (2) They contain both pleasures and pains, and regardless of whether there is an excess of pleasure over pain, the pleasures are on the whole more desirable than the pains are undesirable. (3) They contain both pleasures and pains; neither the pleasures nor pains are of sorts such that the pleasures on the whole are more desirable than the pains are undesirable or such that the pains on the whole are more undesirable than the pleasures are desirable; but there is an excess of pleasure over pain. (4) They contain some pains and no pleasures. (5) They contain both pleasures and pains, and regardless of whether there is an excess of pain over pleasure, the pains are on the whole more undesirable than the pleasures are desirable. (6) They contain both pleasures and pains; neither the pleasures nor pains are of sorts such that the pleasures on the whole are more desirable than the pains are undesirable or such that the pains on the whole are more undesirable than the pleasures are desirable; but there is an excess of pain over pleasure. (7) They contain no pleasures or pains. (8) They contain both pleasures and pains, and regardless of whether there is an excess of pleasure over pain, of pain over pleasure, or an excess of neither, the pleasures and pains they contain are of sorts such that the pleasures on the whole are not more desirable than the pains are undesirable and such that the pains on the whole are not more undesirable than the pleasures are desirable.

If (1) or (2) or (3) holds of a certain action, Mill would classify it as one that would cause an excess of happiness over unhappiness. If (4) or (5) or (6) holds, he would classify it as one that would cause an excess of unhappiness over happiness. If one of the other alternatives holds, he would classify an action as one that would cause an excess of neither.

Having distinguished the possibilities for any action, taken by itself, we may notice how any two actions taken at random may stand to one another in these respects. Since there are three possibilities for each, there are nine possible combinations. Call one action A and the other B. (1) Both A and B would cause an excess of happiness. (2) A would cause an excess of happiness but B would cause an excess of neither. (3) A would cause an excess of happiness but B would cause an excess of unhappiness. (4) A would cause an excess of neither but B would cause an excess of happiness. (5) Both would cause an excess of neither. (6) A would cause an excess of neither but B would cause an excess of unhappiness. (7) A would cause an excess of unhappiness but B would cause an excess of happiness. (8) A would cause an excess of unhappiness but B would cause an excess of neither. (9) Both would cause an excess of unhappiness. Within (9) three possibilities are to be distinguished: (9.1) B would cause a greater excess of unhappiness. (9.2) Neither would

cause a greater excess of unhappiness. (9.3) A would cause a greater excess of unhappiness. Also, within (1), that is, where both A and B would cause an excess of happiness, three possibilities are to be distinguished: (1.1) A would cause a greater excess of happiness. (1.2) Neither would cause a greater excess of happiness. (1.3) B would cause a greater excess of happiness. There are thus thirteen ways in which any two actions may stand to one another. These thirteen ways may be grouped into three. If (1.1), (2), (3), (6) or (9.1) obtains, Mill would say that A would cause more happiness than B or that B would cause less than A. If (1.3), (4), (7), (8) or (9.3) obtains, he would say that B would cause more happiness than A or that A would cause less than B. If any of the three remaining combinations obtains, he would say that either would cause as much happiness as the other.

We have noticed three ways in which Mill would hold that any two actions taken at random could stand to one another. If any set of two or more actions is considered, we may notice three ways in which one of the actions of the set might stand to the others: (1) it would cause more happiness than any of the others, (2) it would cause less happiness than some of the others, (3) it would cause as much happiness as any of the others. The only sort of set of two or more actions to which Mill directs attention is that made up of a certain action and of the alternatives to it. This set includes whatever an agent would succeed in doing upon a given occasion if he tried hard enough, and excludes whatever he would not succeed in doing no matter how hard he tried. Accordingly, Mill would distinguish three ways in which an action may stand to the alternatives to it: (1) it would cause more happiness than any alternative, (2) it would cause less happiness than some alternative, (3) it would cause as much happiness as any alternative.

So far attention has been paid to one set of features of which Mill's main principle makes mention, apart from their role in it. There is a second set of features of actions which this principle mentions—whether it is one that should be done or one that should not. What Mill's main principle asserts is a relation between features of the first set and features of the second. It asserts that something should be done if and only if it would cause more happiness than any alternative; that something should not be done if and only if it would cause less happiness than some alternative; and that a certain action is not one that should not be done if and only if it would cause as much happiness as any alternative.

By his main principle Mill thus declares that a certain feature is a universal and peculiar feature of actions that should be done, and that a certain other feature is a universal and peculiar feature of actions that should not be done. It implies that whenever anyone judges that a certain action should be done, this is a condition that must be fulfilled for the judgment to be true. This is the case whether the judgment is about a past or future action, an actual or possible action, something done by oneself or another, or something done by an individual, a nation, or any group. Mill's principle does not, however, imply that the only way by which anyone can know whether a certain action should be done is by seeking to make out whether it would cause more happiness than any alternative. Although Mill speaks of it as the "sole criterion," his principle is quite compatible with using many other tests. It is compatible with using now one test and now another. Nor does Mill's principle imply that it affords the only universal test by which to judge what



should be done. All that it does imply is that whatever other test be used, it must yield results compatible with this principle. Mill's principle does not supply the only test; it only lays down a condition to which any test must comply.

Although Mill's principle sets forth a universal and peculiar feature of actions that should be done, there is nothing about it which implies that this is the only universal and peculiar feature of such actions. It would be compatible with it to maintain, for instance, that something should be done if and only if it is commanded by God. Mill's principle provides nothing that rules this out. Indeed, it is conceivable that there are ten thousand other universal and peculiar features of actions that should be done. One consequence which Mill draws from his principle is that it would be wrong to do a certain action only if it would violate a rule the general observance of which would cause more happiness. Many would agree with Mill in this. They would agree that whenever anyone does what is wrong, he is violating a rule the general observance of which would in fact cause more happiness. But they would not hold that this is the reason it would be wrong to do it. They would hold that the reason it is wrong to do any action is that it violates God's law. They would urge that God wants his creatures to be happy and that because of this whoever disobeys God's laws violates a law the general observance of which would cause more happiness. They would agree with Mill that by doing what is wrong someone violates a rule the general observance of which would cause more happiness. But they would say that it is not because of this that someone is doing wrong; it is rather because he breaks a rule laid down by God.

There is nothing in this view incompatible with what we have so far seen of Mill's main principle. When we notice how Mill deals with such a view, we find that he takes a further step. He holds not merely that someone does what is wrong only if he breaks a rule the general observance of which would cause more happiness, but also that what he does is wrong because it violates such a rule. Mill maintains not merely that those rules which should generally be observed would in fact cause more happiness, but also that it is because their general observance would cause more happiness that they should be observed. He does not thereby deny that by violating rules that should generally be observed, someone is disobeying God's will. But he holds that the reason why a rule should be generally observed is not because it is prescribed by God but because its observance would cause more happiness.<sup>8</sup>

There is a further implication differentiating Mill from the view we have been considering. Those who maintain that the reason why a certain action is wrong is that it violates a rule laid down by God are committed to holding that if God should will something other than the happiness of his creatures, then an action would be wrong even though it would not violate a rule whose general observance would cause more happiness. Anyone who holds that an action is wrong because it violates a rule laid down by God is committed to holding that if there is no god or if he lays down no rules for men, then there is nothing which it would be wrong to do or wrong not to do. Mill not only holds that an action is wrong if it violates a rule the general observance of which would cause more happiness, he also contends that it is because it violates such a rule that an action is wrong. He thereby implies that even if God should will something other than the happiness of his creatures, or even if there is no god, an action would be wrong if it

were to violate a rule the general observance of which would cause more happiness.<sup>9</sup> In the first step, Mill asserts that a certain feature is a universal and peculiar feature of actions that should be done. In the second step, he states that it is because they have this feature that actions should be done.

There is nothing incompatible between Mill's principle and the view that something should be done if and only if it would bring about a greater realization of men's capacities than would any alternative. But his principle is incompatible with the view that something should be done because it would have this result. Similarly, Mill's principle is not incompatible with the view that something should be done if and only if it would bring about a greater fulfilment of human wants than would any alternative. But it is incompatible with the view that something should be done because it would have this result. One alternative to Mill's principle is the view that something should be done because it would maximize human happiness. Another alternative to it is that something should be done because it would maximize the agent's happiness. The former is the humanistic variant to Mill's principle; the latter the egoistic variant to it. In contrast to both, Mill's principle is the universalistic variant. Many other alternatives to Mill's principle are conceivable. One view already noted is that which maintains that something should be done because it would maximize fulfilment of human wants. The universalistic variant to this view is that something should be done because it would maximize fulfilment of wants generally. The egoistic variant is that something should be done because it would maximize fulfilment of the agent's wants. The theistic variant to this is that something should be done because it would maximize fulfilment of God's wants. Still another alternative is the view that something should be done because it would maximize the fulfilment of human capacities. Two further conceivable views are the egoistic and universalistic variants of this.

All such views differ from Mill's principle in but one respect. They all agree that there is some feature which not only holds of every action that should be done and only of such, but which also constitutes the reason why it should be done. They all agree that this feature consists in a respect in which an action compares with its alternatives. They are also all agreed that this feature consists in how an action's consequences would compare with those of its alternatives. These several views differ from each other and from Mill's principle only in the sorts of consequences which they specify and the sorts of beings to whom they accrue.

The chief support that Mill offers for his main principle, to vindicate it against such other views, is that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake. From this contention it does indeed follow that an action would have more desirable consequences than any alternative if and only if it would cause more happiness. But this contention does not by itself support his main principle. It does so only if a further premise is added, namely, that something should be done if and only if it would have more desirable consequences than any alternative. Mill does not explicitly avow this further premise. Yet, since he holds that the contention which he offers in support of his main principle does in fact support it, he may be presumed to take this premise for granted as not requiring any attention or defence. It then looks as if Mill contends that something should be done because it would cause more happiness, but that it is not only because of this that it should

be done; that the reason in turn why what would cause more happiness should be done is that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake.

One can at most speculate as to how Mill would meet this challenge. He might retort that the fact that an action would have more desirable consequences than any alternative could not be the ultimate reason why it should be done, since the ultimate reason why something should be done must consist in some other fact about it than the fact that it should be done, but in saying that an action would have more desirable consequences than any alternative, nothing more nor less is then said than that it should be done. Although it is not transparently evident that these are but two ways of saying the same thing, it is far from implausible to urge that by analysis they amount to the same. Two steps are involved in the analysis: (1) something should be done if and only if it would on the whole be more desirable for it to be done than any alternative; (2) it would on the whole be more desirable for something to be done than any alternative to it if and only if what would come of its being done would be more desirable than what would come of any alternative to it. If each of these is analytically true, nothing further is required.

In behalf of the first step, the following may be urged. Whenever it is said that something should be done it is implied that it is capable of being done. It is also implied that it is capable of not being done, that is, that some alternatives are capable of being done in its stead. When it is said that something should be done, it is not only implied that it is one of a number of alternatives; it is also implied that it stands in a certain relation to the others. When it is said that something should be done, it is not implied that it would be more desirable for some alternative to it to be done; nor is it implied that it would be as desirable for some alternative to be done in its stead. What is rather implied is the denial of both these implications. When it is said that something should be done, it is thus implied that it would on the whole be more desirable for it rather than any alternative to be done.<sup>10</sup> In behalf of the second step the following may be urged. It cannot be denied that an action may have consequences, and that whether it would be desirable for it to be done is affected by what would come of its being done. Nor can it be denied that the desirability of some alternative being done is affected by the desirability of what would come of it. It is then more desirable on the whole that one alternative rather than another be done if and only if what would come of the first would be more desirable than what would come of the other. Hence it would on the whole be more desirable for something to be done rather than any alternative if and only if what would come of it would be more desirable than what would come of any alternative.

The chief premise that Mill offers in support of his main principle is that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake. This premise affords support only in conjunction with the added premise, that something should be done if and only if it would have more desirable consequences than any alternative. Consequently, Mill's contention that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake cannot support his main principle against any sort of ethical theory which rejects the second premise. Against any such theory he seeks to vindicate his main principle by clearing up the relation of the conception of a wrong action and of an action which there is an obligation not to do to that of an action that should not be done.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, any sort of

ethical theory that rejects Mill's main principle but which holds that whether something should be done turns on how its consequences would compare with those of any alternative to it need not be incompatible with the second premise. To vindicate his main principle against any theory of that sort, it is sufficient for Mill to make good his contention that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake.<sup>12</sup>

Before we go on to examine how Mill seeks to make good this contention, certain implications of it may be noted. It implies that if A are the consequences of one action, X, and B the consequences of another action, Y, A would be more desirable for their own sake than B if and only if they would contain more happiness. It implies that if A should be the consequences of some other action than X, they would still be more desirable for their own sake than B. It thus implies that whether the consequences of an action are more desirable for their own sake than those of another does not depend on what action they are the consequences of. Mill's contention also implies that if A are the consequences of a natural occurrence and B the consequences of another natural occurrence, A would still be more desirable for their own sake than B. This thus means that whether one set of consequences is more desirable for its own sake than another does not depend on what caused them. It does not depend on A or B being a set of consequences. Mill's contention that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake has therefore a wider scope than his main principle. It implies that any state of affairs is more desirable for its own sake than another if and only if it contains more happiness than the other.

When Mill is described as speaking of one state of affairs as "containing more happiness" than another, it must be borne in mind that this expression is used in the same sense as that in which he understands the consequences of one action as related to those of another when he regards one action as "causing more happiness" than the other. Accordingly, Mill's contention that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake may be stated more fully as signifying that something is desirable for its own sake if and only if it is a state of affairs of one of three sorts: (1) a state containing some pleasure and no pain; (2) a state containing both pleasure and pain, but in which, whether or not there is an excess of pleasure over pain, the pleasures on the whole are more desirable than the pains are undesirable; (3) a state containing both pleasure and pain, and in which, although neither the pleasures nor pains are of sorts such that the pleasures on the whole are more desirable than the pains are undesirable or such that the pains on the whole are more undesirable than the pleasures are desirable, there is an excess of pleasure over pain. Mill likewise holds that something is undesirable for its own sake if and only if it is a state of affairs the opposite of one of these three.

Mill's contention implies that no inanimate thing or state of affairs made up only of inanimate things is desirable or undesirable for its own sake. It implies that no human being or human disposition is desirable or undesirable for its own sake. According to it, the only sort of matter that is desirable or undesirable for its own sake is a state of affairs comprising sentient beings. It implies that neither justice nor liberty nor peace is desirable for its own sake. It implies, moreover, that there is nothing desirable for its own sake save where there is life; and that there is nothing undesirable for its own sake save where there is life. Although Mill's contention affirms a certain

universal and peculiar feature of whatever is desirable for its own sake, it does not also state any such feature of whatever is desirable. While it implies that an inanimate thing, a human being, or justice or liberty or peace or life is not desirable for its own sake, it does not imply that none of these can be desirable for what will come of it. Mill's contention implies that although a certain state of affairs is desirable for its own sake, it may still be undesirable; and even though a certain state of affairs is undesirable for its own sake, it may still be desirable, for what comes of it. Mill's main principle implies that even if it would be undesirable for a certain action to be done, it would not follow that it should not be done. It implies that even if a certain action would have desirable effects, it should not be done, if some alternative to it would have more desirable effects. Mill's principle implies that even though the consequences of a certain action would on the whole be undesirable for their own sake, it may still be the case that it should be done. This would be the case if the consequences of any alternative to it would be more undesirable for their own sake.

## II. THE EVIDENCE OF WHAT IS DESIRABLE

Mill's argument to support his contention that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake contains two steps. In the first step he seeks to show that happiness is desirable; in the second, he seeks to show that it is the only thing desirable for its own sake. He writes, in the first step:

The only proof capable of being given that an object is desirable, is that people actually see it. . . . In like manner . . . the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it. . . . No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have . . . all the proof . . . which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons. (234.)

In the second step Mill acknowledges that men actually "do desire things which, in common language, are decidedly distinguished from happiness" (235). But he endeavours to show that "Whatever is desired otherwise than as a means to some end beyond itself, and ultimately to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness. . ." (237). Central to both steps in his argument is Mill's contention that the sole evidence that anything is desirable is that it is desired.

G. E. Moore urges that by asserting that the fact that something is desired is evidence that it is desirable, Mill is holding that if anything is desired it is desirable; and that by affirming that this is the sole evidence, Mill is holding that nothing is desirable unless desired. Moore also interprets Mill as inferring from this that "desirable" means "desired." He points out, moreover, that Mill uses the words "good" and "desirable" interchangeably. Hence Moore contends that Mill is claiming that "good" means "desired."<sup>13</sup> Moore urges two objections against Mill: first, that "desirable" does not mean "desired," and secondly, that even if something is desirable if and only if

it is desired, it is fallacious to infer that “desirable” means “desired.” Both objections fail to apply to Mill; Mill does not draw the inference Moore attributes to him, nor does he maintain that “desirable” means “desired.” Mill also does not hold that “visible” means “seen.” Instead he asserts that the proof that something is visible is that it is seen. Similarly, what he affirms is that the sole evidence that anything is desirable is that it is desired.

To this Moore urges two further objections, independent of the foregoing. The fact that something is desired would be evidence that it is desirable if and only if it is the case that from the mere fact that anything is desired it follows that it is also desirable. But from the mere fact that something is desired Moore objects that it does not follow that it is desirable. Moore does not question Mill’s contention that the fact that something is seen is proof that it is visible, for by “visible” is meant “capable of being seen.” He contends, however, that Mill is wholly unwarranted in arguing that “in like manner” the fact that a thing is desired is evidence that it is desirable, for he points out that by “desirable” is not meant “capable of being desired.” Just as “detestable” means not “capable of being detested” but “worthy of being detested,” so similarly, Moore urges, when something is said to be desirable, what is meant is that it ought to be desired, that it is worthy of being desired. From the fact that something is actually desired it does not follow that it ought to be desired.

Moore urges a second objection against anyone who would try to save Mill’s dictum by holding that Mill uses “desirable” in it to mean “capable of being desired.” He points out that Mill puts forth this dictum to establish the conclusion that the general happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake. If Mill is construed as using “desirable” in the sense of “capable of being desired” in his premise, Moore contends that his argument then becomes fallacious, since Mill does not use “desirable” in this sense in the conclusion. If anyone should still try to save Mill’s argument against this objection by urging that in the conclusion as well Mill means by “desirable,” “capable of being desired,” Moore contends that this will not do. He points out that in saying that happiness alone is desirable for its own sake, Mill makes it clear that he means that it alone is good for its own sake. Moore also points out that in saying that the general happiness alone is desirable for its own sake, Mill does not mean that it alone is capable of being desired for its own sake. Since Mill himself mentions that each person desires his own happiness, he acknowledges that men are capable of desiring something other than the general happiness for its own sake. Moore calls attention to another connection in which Mill makes this point. Mill remarks that it is a mistake to “confound the rule of action with the motive of it,” and continues, “ninety-nine hundredths of all our actions are done from other motives. . .” (219). Here too Mill makes it clear that, in saying that the general happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake, he in no way holds that the only desire from which men can act or the only desire of which they are capable is desire for the general happiness.<sup>14</sup>

D. Raphael and E. W. Hall seek to defend Mill against these objections urged by Moore.<sup>15</sup> They contend that Moore’s objections are beside the point, since they criticize Mill for doing something which he does not profess to do. They urge that Mill does not claim to prove that happiness is desirable because it is desired. They direct attention to what Mill has to say upon this

matter. Mill writes, “The medical art is proved to be good, by its conducing to health. . . .” He generalizes, “Whatever can be proved to be good, must be so by being shown to be a means to something admitted to be good without proof” (207-208). Here Mill is saying two things: first, that whatever can be proved to be good can be so proved only by being shown conducive to something else that is good; second, that since something cannot be proved to be desirable for its own sake by being shown to be desirable as a means to something else, no proof can be given of what is desirable for its own sake. This conclusion Mill at once qualifies: “Questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof.” Mill still concedes that such questions are not amenable to what is “commonly understood by proof,” but he contends that they are amenable to a “larger meaning of the word proof. . . . Considerations may be presented capable of determining the intellect either to give or withhold assent.” Moore recognizes that Mill does not claim to give a proof of what things are desirable for their own sake in terms of what is commonly understood by proof. He agrees with Mill that no such proof can be given of what things are desirable for their own sake. Moore also agrees with Mill that considerations may be presented in favour of thinking that certain things and not others are desirable for their own sake. Raphael and Hall err in accusing Moore of taking Mill to be offering a proof in the “commonly understood” sense. Moore’s objection is rather that one consideration which Mill presents “to determine the intellect to give assent” to what is desirable is invalid. Because something is desired it does not follow that it is desirable. Hence the fact that something is desired does not constitute evidence that it is desirable.

To make good his defence of Mill, Raphael must show that this consideration which Mill presents is not open to Moore’s objection. Raphael points out that in his *Logic* Mill maintains that whoever says that something should be done is recommending that it be done. Such a person, Mill writes, “speaks in rules, or precepts.”<sup>16</sup> Mill continues, such “propositions . . . enjoin or recommend that something should be. They are . . . expressed by the words *ought* or *should* be.”<sup>17</sup> Second, Raphael contends that Mill holds that “all rules or precepts are aimed at the promotion of ends.” He is referring to Mill’s remark, “All action is for the sake of some end, and rules of action, it seems natural to suppose, must take their whole character and colour from the end to which they are subservient” (206). Third, Raphael takes Mill as holding that “an ultimate end is that by reference to which we prove the propriety of adopting subordinate ends or particular rules.” He thereby construes Mill as maintaining that whenever men recommend something as desirable, their recommendations must ultimately have reference to an ultimate end. Finally, Raphael ascribes to Mill the view that “the ultimate end or criterion of human action is what human beings desire.”<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, Raphael maintains that what Mill means by his dictum that “the sole evidence . . . that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it” is that when “we recommend . . . as ‘desirable’ . . . our recommendations must ultimately have reference to actual desires.”<sup>19</sup>

Raphael’s interpretation of Mill’s dictum fails to free it of the objection urged by Moore. For Moore urges that even if someone aims at a certain thing as an ultimate end, that is, as an end for its own sake, it still makes sense to ask whether that at which he aims is desirable for its own sake. From the fact that it is aimed at for its own sake, it does not follow that it is desirable for its

own sake. Raphael also misrepresents Mill's dictum, in construing it as maintaining that when anything is recommended as desirable, the recommendation must ultimately have reference to men's desires. He construes it in this way by ascribing to Mill the view that when anything is recommended as desirable, it can be recommended only by reference to an ultimate end. Mill, however, does not hold that something can be shown to be desirable only by being shown to be a means to an ultimate end. He is instead concerned with how it is possible to make out what is desirable for its own sake. It is just in this connection that he puts forth his dictum.

Mill not only speaks of what is desired and what is desirable. Again and again he speaks of ends. In doing so, he makes many statements reminiscent of Aristotle. Aristotle writes, "Every action and pursuit is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim. . . . Will not the knowledge of it, then, have a great influence on life?"<sup>20</sup> In a similar vein, as we have seen, Mill says, "All action is for the sake of some end, and rules of action, it seems natural to suppose, must take their whole character and colour from the end to which they are subservient. When we engage in a pursuit, a clear and precise conception of what we are pursuing would seem to be the first thing we need. . . ." (206.) Mill also asserts, "Questions about ends are . . . questions what things are desirable." The "sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it" (234). Aristotle writes, "If, then, there is some end of the things we do, which we desire for its own sake (everything else being desired for the sake of this) . . . this must be the good and the chief good."<sup>21</sup> In virtue of such similarities, the objection Moore urges against Mill is equally applicable to Aristotle's arguments. Moore would contend that because there is that which is desired for its own sake, and all else that is desired is desired for the sake of it, it does not follow that it is desirable for its own sake, or that it alone is desirable for its own sake.

Mill also writes, "happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as end. . . ." Each of virtue, pleasure, money, power, and fame, "once desired as an instrument for the attainment of happiness, has come to be desired for its own sake. In being desired for its own sake it is, however, desired as *part* of happiness. The person is made, or thinks he would be made, happy by its mere possession. . . . Whatever is desired otherwise than as a means . . . to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness. . . ." (236-7.) Aristotle similarly writes,

Not all ends are final ends. . . . Now we call that which is in itself worthy of pursuit more final than that which is worthy of pursuit for the sake of something else, and that which is never desirable for the sake of something else more final than the things that are desirable both in themselves and for the sake of that other thing, and therefore we call final without qualification that which is always desirable in itself and never for the sake of something else. Now such a thing happiness, above all else, is held to be; for this we choose always for itself and never for the sake of something else, but honour, pleasure, reason, and every virtue we choose indeed for themselves. . . ., but we choose them also for the sake of happiness, judging that by means of them we shall be happy. Happiness, on the other hand, no one chooses for the sake of these, nor, in general, for anything other than itself.<sup>22</sup>



Here Aristotle distinguishes what is worthy of pursuit from what is pursued and what is desirable from what is desired. Yet in the third sentence he again exposes himself to Moore's objection: because something is chosen for its own sake and never for the sake of something else, it does not follow that it is "worthy of pursuit," "desirable in itself," or "always desirable in itself." In his *Logic*, Mill asserts: "Every art . . . enunciates the object aimed at, and affirms it to be a desirable object. The builder's art assumes that it is desirable to have buildings. . . . The hygienic and medical arts assume, the one that the preservation of health, the other that the cure of disease, are fitting and desirable ends."<sup>23</sup> Aristotle similarly writes, "In different actions and arts . . . the good of each [is] that for whose sake everything else is done . . . the end."<sup>24</sup> To this Moore's objection again applies. Undeniably that for the sake of which everything that is done in a certain sphere of activity is often something good, something desirable. But because there is that in a certain art or sphere of activity for the sake of which everything within it is done, it does not follow that it is desirable. Here it is to be noted that Mill is in complete accord with Moore's objection. He follows up the last passage by writing, "To this art [the Art of Life] . . . all other arts are subordinate; since its principles are those which determine whether the special aim of any particular art is worthy and desirable." Here Mill clearly recognizes that the fact that something is the aim of a certain pursuit in no way implies that that aim is desirable. Elsewhere Mill makes it quite clear that he holds that whether a certain pursuit should be engaged in depends not on what its aim is but on whether the consequences of engaging in it would be more desirable.

The core of Moore's objection to Mill's dictum, on the evidence for what is desirable, is that from the fact that something is aimed at, it does not follow that it ought to be aimed at; and that from the fact that something is desired, it does not follow that it ought to be desired. Mill is in complete accord with Moore on the general point of which these are instances. He devotes his entire essay, "Nature," to refuting the notion that nature, that which is, determines that which ought to be.<sup>25</sup> Mill is also in full agreement with the specific point Moore urges in objection to him. Neither nature generally nor man's own nature can determine what ought to be. Many a propensity is to be extirpated.<sup>26</sup> Because men have a propensity or desire for something, it in no way follows that it ought to be desired. A further look may then be taken at Mill's argument to see if it is free of Moore's objection.

In support of the conclusion that only happiness is desirable for its own sake, Mill urges that only happiness is desired for its own sake. Moore contends that in speaking of what is desirable for its own sake, Mill is speaking of what ought to be desired for its own sake. Moore objects that from the fact that something is desired it does not follow that it ought to be desired. We may then inquire what can be inferred from the premise that only happiness is desired for its sake. If something is incapable of being done, it cannot be the case that it ought to be done. Accordingly, (a) Only that which is capable of being desired for its own sake ought to be desired for its own sake.

Moore does not question that whatever is desired for its own sake is capable of being desired for its own sake. Similarly, it seems that (b) Only that which is desired for its own sake is capable of being desired for its own sake.

Completing the argument, (c) Only that which is desired for its own sake ought to be desired for its own sake. (d) Only happiness is desired for its own sake. (e) Hence, only happiness is desirable for its own sake.

The question at issue is not whether (d) is correct, but whether (c) is. Statement (c) follows from (a) and (b), so what calls for scrutiny is (b). If something is desired for its own sake it follows that it is capable of being desired for its own sake. It does not in like manner hold, nor can it be inferred from this, that if something is alone desired for its own sake it alone is capable of being desired for its own sake. Mill, however, does not include (b) in his argument. He does not hold that whatever is visible is seen; he contends rather that only that which is seen is that for which there is evidence that it is capable of being seen. Mill is similarly concerned to determine whether there is evidence that anything other than happiness is capable of being desired for its own sake. He urges that the only evidence that is offered is that virtue, money, power, and fame are desired for their own sake. Mill does not reject this evidence. Instead, he seeks to show that when any of these is desired for its own sake, it is desired only as a part of happiness. Instead of (b), Mill would aver (b') Only that which is desired for its own sake is that for which there is evidence that it is capable of being desired for its own sake.

From (a) follows (a') Only that for which there is evidence that it is capable of being desired for its own sake is that for which there is evidence that it ought to be desired for its own sake.

From (b') and (a') follows (c') Only that which is desired for its own sake is that for which there is evidence that it ought to be desired for its own sake.

Moore objects to Mill's dictum, on the evidence for what is desirable, by construing it as affirming that from the fact that something is desired it follows that it ought to be desired. Mill, however, does not hold that from the fact that something is desired, it follows that it ought to be desired. He does not maintain that whatever is desired ought to be desired; he speaks rather of the only evidence that something is desirable. Moore says that by "desirable" Mill means "ought to be desired," and it is only on this interpretation that he raises his objection against Mill's dictum. If Moore is correct in this, then what Mill's dictum maintains is (c'). Moore's objection against Mill's dictum carries no weight against it; there is nothing incompatible in affirming (c') and denying that whatever is desired ought to be desired.

Moore is correct in pointing out that when Mill argues that happiness is the only thing desirable for its own sake, he means by "desirable" not "capable of being desired" but "good," and that by "desirable for its own sake" he means "good in itself," "intrinsically good." Moore also contends that by "desirable" Mill, or anyone else, means "ought to be desired" or that which it would be good to desire. There is a fatal objection to this contention, at least in regard to Mill. Since Mill holds by his main principle that something ought to be done only if it would cause more happiness, he holds that something ought to be desired only if desiring it would cause more happiness. Hence if Mill is construed as meaning by "desirable," "ought to be desired," he would then be maintaining that the consequences of an action would be desirable only if desiring them

would cause more happiness. But this is clearly not what Mill contends; for him the consequences of an action would be more desirable only if that action would cause more happiness.

There is a further objection to contending that “desirable” means “ought to be desired,” which applies to Mill, or to anyone who agrees with him that something should be done only if its consequences would be more desirable. For he then holds that something ought to be desired only if the effects of desiring it would be more desirable. But if “desirable” is construed as “ought to be desired,” Mill would then have to say that the consequences of an action would be desirable only if desiring these consequences would have more desirable consequences. He would similarly have to say that the consequences of desiring the consequences of a certain action would be desirable only if desiring them in turn would have more desirable effects. And so on. But Mill clearly does not think that the desirability of the consequences of an action is affected by what would be the consequences of desiring these consequences, or by what would be the consequences of desiring the consequences of desiring the consequences of the action. He maintains that the consequences of an action would be more desirable only if it would cause more happiness.

Moore overlooks certain differences between the conception of that which ought to be desired and the conception of that which is desirable. When it is said that something ought to be done, it is implied that there is some respect in which it stands in contrast to anything capable of being done instead of it. “Ought” is a superlative, as is also the conception of that which ought to be desired, but the adjective, “desirable,” is a positive term, which takes the comparative “more desirable” and the superlative “most desirable.” In accord with Mill’s assumption that something ought to be done only if what would come of it would be more desirable for its own sake, something ought to be desired for its own sake only if what would come of so desiring it would be more desirable for its own sake. Hence if something ought to be desired for its own sake, it does not follow that it would be desirable for its own sake; and because something would be desirable for its own sake, it does not follow that it ought to be desired for its own sake. Since Mill’s dictum on the evidence for what is desirable cannot be taken as a dictum on the evidence for what ought to be desired, it must be given some other interpretation than that set forth in the preceding paragraph.

It is doubtful whether anyone sincerely believes that a certain thing should be done without feeling on the whole in favour of its being done. It is similarly extremely doubtful that anyone believes that something would be undesirable without feeling some displeasure at the thought of it, or that anyone is genuinely convinced that something would be desirable without to some measure feeling pleased at the thought of it. Someone may, indeed, believe that something would be desirable in a certain respect, and yet on the whole not be in favour of it, through thinking it undesirable in other respects. Nonetheless, Mill points out that no one feels pleased to some measure at the thought of a certain state of affairs, without feeling some desire for its occurrence (237). Someone does not therefore manage to convince another that something would be desirable unless he induces him to feel some desire for it. This suggests that what Mill may be maintaining by his dictum is that no one has evidence for believing something desirable unless he has

some desire for it. If it is interpreted in this way, it may be objected that people often believe that others desire something, and desire it for its own sake, without thinking that it would be desirable for its own sake. It may also be objected that on occasion a man is well aware that he desires something for its own sake, but still does not think that it would be desirable. These objections merely show that someone may believe that something is desired without believing that it would be desirable. They do not show that anyone is ever convinced that something would be desirable without having some desire for it. There is a further objection to Mill's dictum, if it is interpreted in this way. Someone has a desire for something whenever he believes it would be desirable. He has some desire for it, whether he is correct or mistaken in believing that it would be desirable. Consequently the fact that he has a desire for something cannot serve as evidence that what he believes would be desirable would really be such. What is rather the case is that the fact that someone believes that something would be desirable is evidence that he has some desire for it.

Although the fact of something's being desired cannot serve as evidence for the correctness of all judgments of what is desirable, it may still be the case that there are some such judgments for which it alone can serve as evidence. It is important to note the limitations which Mill himself places on the dictum that the only evidence that something is desirable is that it is desired. He does not hold that this is the evidence for all sorts of judgments of what is desirable. Nor does he claim that all desires are qualified to serve as evidence. Mill does not state that the only evidence that something is desirable as a means is that it is desired. He maintains that something is good as a means, desirable as a means, if and only if it would bring about something else that is desirable (207-8). He would contend that there is no evidence that it is desirable as a means unless there is evidence that it would have a certain effect. If something is desired in the belief that something desirable would come of it, Mill does not hold that such a desire is evidence that something desirable would come of it. He maintains that whether something is desired or not, it is desirable as a means just so long as it would have some desirable effects. He thus does not claim that the fact something is desired is either the sole evidence or even a part of the evidence to support a judgment that it is desirable as a means.

Mill also does not hold that the fact that something is desired is the sole evidence to support a judgment that it is intrinsically desirable, that is, desirable for its own sake. On this point he writes, "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have . . . all the proof . . . that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons." (234). Countless critics have urged that it is fallacious for Mill to infer that since each desires his own happiness therefore everyone desires the general happiness. Mill, however, does not here infer that the general happiness is desired. What he argues, rather, is that it is desirable. In this passage he certainly claims that the fact that each desires his own happiness is evidence that the happiness of each is desirable. But he does not base his claim that the general happiness is desirable on the evidence that it is desired. In a letter he explains, "when I said that the general happiness is a good . . . I merely meant . . . to argue that since A's happiness is a good, B's a good, C's a good, &c., the sum of all these goods must be a good."<sup>27</sup> Mill is holding that if the happiness of A is intrinsically desirable and the

happiness of B is intrinsically desirable and the happiness of C is intrinsically desirable, then the “sum” of the happiness of A and the happiness of B and the happiness of C is intrinsically desirable. Put generally, what Mill is arguing is that a whole is intrinsically desirable if it is made up of components which are intrinsically desirable and which exceed intrinsically undesirable components. Mill does not hold that the fact that a whole is desired for its own sake is either necessary or sufficient evidence that it is made up of an excess of intrinsically desirable components. Thus a second sort of judgment to which Mill does not apply his dictum is a judgment that something is intrinsically desirable because it is a whole containing an excess of intrinsically desirable components.

Moore and C. I. Lewis distinguish two further sorts of judgments of what is desirable to which Mill, for similar reasons, would not regard his dictum as applicable.<sup>28</sup> It does not apply to a judgment that something is desirable because it is a component of something intrinsically desirable. For example, when he considers it by itself, a mountain climber may well regard the toil he undergoes in reaching a mountain peak as undesirable in itself. Yet he would regard it as desirable because it enhances the desirability of the experience of reaching the mountain top, making the venture far more desirable than it would have been had he reached the peak by helicopter. In considering his toil as desirable for this reason, the climber is making a judgment which in one respect resembles judging that something is desirable as a means. He regards it as desirable because of its relation to something else. In another respect it differs. When something is judged desirable as a means, it is merely claimed that it would bring about something else desirable, whereas the climber regards one component of an experience as desirable because its experienced quality enhances the desirability of the whole experience of which it is a part. Although Mill also distinguishes that which is desirable because a part of happiness from that which is desirable because a means to happiness, he fails to mention that the fact that someone desires something because he “thinks he would be made” happy by its mere possession, supplies no evidence that it would actually enhance his happiness (236). A fourth sort of judgment is exemplified by the lover of mountain scenery who regards a certain mountain as desirable because of the delight to be had in beholding it. He is not regarding the mere existence of the mountain as desirable for its own sake. He regards the mountain as desirable because the experience of beholding it is desirable.

We have noticed four distinct ways in which something may be judged to be desirable: (1) as a means, (2) because it enhances the intrinsic desirability of something of which it is a part, (3) because it is an object of an intrinsically desirable experience, (4) intrinsically, because made up of an excess of intrinsically desirable components. By the fourth sort of judgment something is judged intrinsically desirable; by the other three, extrinsically desirable. All four sorts make the claim that something is desirable because it stands in a certain relation to something else. The evidence required for each is evidence that the relation obtains. Consequently no judgment of one of these sorts is one in which a desire for what is judged desirable is evidence of the correctness of the judgment. A fifth sort of judgment, fundamentally distinct from these four, is that something is intrinsically desirable independent of its relation to something else. For brevity, we may refer to such a judgment as a judgment of what is “desirable of itself.” Judgments of the

other four sorts are logically dependent on judgments of this sort, for what they affirm to be desirable they imply is related in a certain way, directly or indirectly, to something desirable of itself. The fifth sort of judgment is logically independent of the other four.

For someone to be assured whether he is correct in judging that something is desirable of itself, one preliminary is that he avoid confusing this judgment with the other four. For a judgment of this sort, it would be out of place to adduce the kind of evidence distinctively relevant to one of the four other sorts of judgments. When Mill speaks of desires as evidence of what is desirable, he would regard this dictum as holding only for judgments of the fifth sort. The same is true when he speaks of a preference for one sort of matter over another as evidence that the one is more desirable than the other. Even for judgments of the fifth sort Mill does not claim that every sort of desire or preference can serve as evidence. He does not hold that a desire for something qualifies as evidence if it rests on the belief that it would have desirable effects, or upon the beliefs on which judgments of the other three sorts rest. He contends that someone's preference for one sort of matter over another does not qualify as evidence unless he has had experiences of matters of both sorts and his preference is based on such experiences (211). He would not hold that his preference is based on such experiences unless they led him to it. Mill would hold that a preference by someone who has had such experiences would not qualify as evidence unless he was gladder at the one than the other. He therefore maintains that a preference for one sort of matter over another qualifies as evidence so long as it rests on nothing but having had experiences of matters of both sorts and having been gladder at the one than the other.

It may be presumed that Mill likewise holds that someone's desire for something of a certain sort does not qualify as evidence unless it rests on experience of matters of that sort. When someone desires something, he prefers its existence to its non-existence. Since he argues that a preference for one matter over another does not qualify as evidence unless it rests on experience of matters of both sorts, Mill may be presumed to hold that someone's desire for a certain thing does not qualify as evidence unless he has had experience of something of its sort, as well as some experience from which such a thing was absent. Mill would also hold that a desire by someone who had had such an experience would not qualify as evidence unless he was glad at what he experienced. He then holds that someone's desire for something qualifies as evidence so long as it rests on nothing but having had experience of something of that sort and having been glad at it. It would serve as evidence for someone else, as well as for him who had the desire. Mill would certainly admit that if someone was glad at what he experienced because he expected that something desirable would come of it, or if his gladness was mediated by another of the four sorts of judgments distinguished above, such gladness would not count as evidence. For the same reason, if he was glad at it because of the kind of person he is, that is, because he desired things of that sort, his gladness would not count as evidence, if his desire in turn was mediated by any of the four other sorts of judgments. Someone's gladness at what he experienced counts as evidence only if he was glad at it on its own account, only, that is, if his gladness was unaffected by any beliefs he has about its relation to other things. If this is a correct interpretation of Mill's dictum, he then holds that someone's preference or desire for something qualifies only secondarily as evi-

dence, and that the primary evidence anyone has of what is desirable of itself is having experienced it and being glad at it.

### III. WHAT IS DESIRABLE FOR ITS OWN SAKE

Having fixed on what Mill holds is the only ultimate evidence of what is desirable, we may now turn to what he maintains such evidence discloses. Mill urges that no one is ever glad on its own account at some state which his experience has disclosed to him unless some pleasure occurred in it, and therefore that no one is led by such experiences to desire like states to come about unless he expects that they will be pleasant. He also urges that no one is ever sorry on its own account about some state with which his experience has acquainted him unless there was something painful in it. Accordingly, the first thing which Mill argues that the relevant evidence discloses is that nothing is desirable of itself unless it is a state in which some pleasure is experienced and nothing is undesirable of itself unless it is a state in which some pain is felt.

Moore attacks Mill for maintaining that only pleasure is desired.<sup>29</sup> He concedes that in instances of many desires, pleasure is one feature of that of which someone is desirous. But he urges that on such occasions, what someone looks forward to and is desirous of is a pleasant walk or a pleasant conversation with a certain person, a pleasant party with certain companions or a pleasant smoke. To this some retort that while sometimes a walk, sometimes a smoke, sometimes a party is desired, each is desired only for the sake of the pleasure it will afford, so that it is pleasure alone which is desired for its own sake. Against this others urge that while the pleasure is one element of what someone looks forward to when he desires a walk, a smoke, or a party, the walk or the smoke or the party is also a component of what he is desirous of. Aristotle points out that when someone desires a certain walk but is denied it and is provided something else that affords him pleasure, his desire for the walk remains unfulfilled.<sup>30</sup> If pleasure alone were desired for its own sake, any pleasure would serve to fulfil a desire. Yet when someone desires a certain pleasant thing, his desire is fulfilled only by it, not by any pleasure at random. Secondly, Moore urges that on many occasions there is no expectation of pleasure characterizing that which someone is desirous of. Often someone desires to eat when hungry. While he feels pleasure at the prospect of eating, the prospect before his mind is simply that of eating certain things. A spectator watching a football game wants his team to score a goal. That of which he is thinking and of which he is desirous is its scoring. He has no thought of pleasure. When someone is struggling with a certain problem he desires a solution. No thought of pleasure is before his mind. Thirdly, Moore urges that although occasions are conceivable on which someone desires nothing but pleasure, if any occur, they are very rare; for what generally seems to be found is that someone is desirous of a pleasure of a certain sort, that is, a state characterized not only by pleasure but by other features as well.

There is nothing in these objections put by Moore which Mill does not agree with or which is incompatible with the evidence he adduces for what is desirable. Mill does not hold that only pleasure is desired. He agrees that there are many occasions on which that of which someone is

desirous includes no thought of pleasure. Mill points out that many things are desired as a means to a certain end, and he notices that when something is desired as a means, there is very often no thought of it as pleasant. Mill also does not maintain that whenever something is desired without thought of what will come of it, it may be described as being desired for its own sake. He points out that men often desire something simply because they are in the habit of pursuing it, and have no thought of what it will lead to. He adds, “any . . . person whose purposes are fixed, carries out his purposes without any thought of the pleasure he has in contemplating them, or expects to derive from their fulfilment . . .” (238). He does indeed contend that nothing is desired for its own sake unless it is expected that it will be a state of affairs in which some pleasure will be experienced. But he does not claim that there are any occasions upon which pleasure alone characterizes what is desired. Although he contends that only what is desired for its own sake is evidence of what is desirable of itself, he does not think that whenever someone desires something for its own sake this counts as evidence; he holds that a man’s desire of this sort counts as evidence only if it is based on experience of similar matters and he was glad on its own account at what he experienced.

According to Mill, the evidence whether one matter is more desirable of itself than another is of the same kind. He urges that no one who has ever actually had experience of two occasions in which only pleasure of the same sort was felt is gladder on its own account about one than the other unless it was more pleasant. Nor, he argues, is anyone, who has had experience of two occasions in which only pain of the same sort was felt, sorrier on its own account about one than the other unless more pain was felt in it; and no one is led by such experiences to prefer one to another of that sort unless he expects it would be less painful. No one with experience of toothaches prefers of itself a more severe to a less severe toothache. Accordingly, Mill argues, the relevant evidence further shows that as between two states in which only pleasure of the same sort is felt, one is more desirable of itself than the other only if it is more pleasant; and as between two states in which only pain of the same sort is felt, one is more undesirable of itself than the other only if it is more painful.

What evidence has someone in judging between states in which different sorts of pleasure or pain are felt? The same kind of evidence, Mill maintains. Someone has ultimate evidence for thinking the one more desirable of itself than the other only if he experienced both and was gladder at one than the other. Even though a toothache was more painful than a grief, someone has evidence for concluding that the grief was more undesirable of itself than the toothache if he experienced both and was sorrier at the grief. As between two painful states of different sorts Mill holds that the ultimate evidence that one was more undesirable of itself than the other is that someone who experienced both is sorrier at the one than the other. As between two pleasant states of different sorts he holds that regardless of whether one was more pleasant than the other, the ultimate evidence that it was more desirable of itself is that someone who experienced both was gladder at the one and is led by this to prefer, in the future, experiences like the one to experiences like the other. From this Mill ventures also to generalize what sorts of experiences are more desirable of themselves, independent of whether they are more pleasant: “the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments [have] a much higher



value as pleasures than . . . those of mere sensation,” than “bodily pleasures” (211). For such a generalization that compares sorts of pleasures, the experiences of many are clearly relevant: “Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure” (211). In making the generalization that pleasant experiences of one sort are more desirable of themselves than those of another sort, Mill does not deny that a certain experience of a less desirable sort may be so much more pleasant than one of a more desirable sort as to be more desirable than it, or that certain painful experiences of a less undesirable sort may be so much more painful as to be more undesirable. He does not deny that a certain bodily agony may be more undesirable of itself than a certain grief. Here too Mill holds that the ultimate evidence someone has that the bodily agony was of such an intensity that it was more undesirable than the grief, is his having experienced both and being sorrier about the agony (213).

Moore charges that Mill’s contention that some experiences are more desirable of themselves than others, even though not more pleasant, is inconsistent with his contention that nothing is desirable of itself unless it is a state in which some pleasure is experienced. Raphael seeks to free Mill of this charge of inconsistency by urging that Mill does not hold that it is possible “that a pleasure of higher quality may contain a lesser or no greater quantity of pleasure than a pleasure of lower quality.”<sup>31</sup> Raphael continues, “Mill’s criterion is preference, and I think he would say that to prefer one pleasure to another is to desire it the more strongly. And since he says later, in Chapter IV, that to desire a thing is the same as to think it pleasant, it follows, on this view, that to prefer a thing is to think it more pleasant.” Mill certainly holds that whoever prefers one thing to another desires it more. He also writes, “desiring a thing and finding it pleasant . . . are . . . inseparable” (237). But he does not claim that no one desires one thing more than another unless he expects that it will be more pleasant. Instead he writes,

If I am asked . . . what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. . . . If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, . . . we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account. (211.)

In pursuing the point further, Raphael gives up his contention that “the distinction of quality is, at bottom, the same as the distinction of quantity.” He no longer interprets Mill as holding that it is impossible for one experience to be more desirable of itself unless it is more pleasant. Instead, he takes Mill to mean that one experience is never *in fact* more desirable of itself unless it is more pleasant. In support of this, Raphael points out that when Mill remarks that it is “better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied,” Mill also denies that “this preference takes place at a sacrifice of happiness” (212). Raphael urges that although Socrates is dissatisfied and the fool not, it is consistent for Mill to maintain that Socrates is happier than the fool and his happiness more desirable, in so far as Socrates “enjoys a greater balance of pleasure over pain, than the fool.” Raphael does indeed show that in maintaining that it is better to be Socrates dissatisfied

than a fool satisfied, it would be consistent for Mill to hold that no experience is more desirable of itself than another unless it is more pleasant. In making this point, however, Raphael fails to show that Mill does in fact maintain that one experience is more desirable of itself than another only if it is more pleasant. Mill speaks, instead, of “what makes one pleasure more valuable than another . . . except its being greater in amount”; he writes of being “justified in ascribing . . . a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity . . .” (211). In a journal of 1854, Mill remarks, “Quality as well as quantity of happiness is to be considered; less of a higher kind is preferable to more of a lower.”<sup>32</sup> Raphael himself acknowledges that Mill would “say that a superior pleasure may be less intense than an inferior.”

Moore, however, charges that “Mill’s judgment of preference, so far from establishing the principle that pleasure alone is good, is obviously inconsistent with it. . . . If one pleasure can differ from another in quality, that means, that a pleasure is something complex, something composed, in fact, of pleasure *in addition to* that which produces pleasure.”<sup>33</sup> Mill is involved in no difficulty here. When he holds that only a pleasure is desirable of itself he is not holding that only the pleasantness of a pleasant experience is desirable. By a pleasure he understands a pleasant experience. He maintains that only a complex, that is, an experience having pleasantness as one of its features, is desirable of itself. The inconsistency with which Moore charges Mill is this:

Mill, therefore, in admitting that a sensual indulgence can be directly judged to be lower than another pleasure, in which the degree of pleasure involved may be the same, is admitting that other things may be good, or bad, quite independently of the pleasure which accompanies them. . . . [I]f you say, as Mill does, that quality of pleasure is to be taken into account, then you are no longer holding that pleasure *alone* is good as an end, since you imply that something else, something which is *not* present in all pleasures, is *also* good as an end.<sup>34</sup>

This charge is easily rebutted. In holding that some experiences are more desirable of themselves than others, although not more pleasant, Mill certainly admits that the intrinsic desirability of an experience may be enhanced by other components of it than the pleasure enjoyed in it. He would therefore agree with Moore that such components “may be good . . . independently of the pleasure which accompanies them.” But Mill would hold that such components are desirable as contributing to the intrinsic desirability of the experience. He does not maintain that any experience is desirable of itself if it has such other components but is not also pleasant. Consequently, when Mill argues that the relevant evidence shows that nothing is desirable in itself unless it is a state in which some pleasure is enjoyed, it is not inconsistent for him to argue that the relevant evidence also shows that some pleasant experiences are more desirable of themselves although not more pleasant.

One writer contends that Mill means by “‘pleasure,’ whatever is made the object of desire.”<sup>35</sup> Mill, however, does not hold that whenever anyone desires something as a means—say, having a tooth extracted—it is to be described as a pleasure. Mill also mentions that men often desire something simply because they are in the habit of pursuing it and that “any . . . person whose purposes are fixed, carries out his purposes without any thought of . . . pleasure.” Another writer

contends that Mill uses “pleasure” as “a technical term for whatever anyone desires for its own sake.”<sup>36</sup> Mill, however, does not regard an enjoyable experience as any less a pleasure when it comes to a man without having been desired. He maintains that some experiences are desired for their own sake more than others although not more pleasant. Moreover, while he holds that there is no happiness without pleasure, he does not think that when someone desires happiness for its own sake, what he desires is to be described as a pleasure.

Mill does not hold that the only things that are desirable of themselves are transient experiences in which pleasure alone is felt or that the only things that are undesirable of themselves are transient experiences in which pain alone is felt. He does not question that even if it involves both pleasure and pain, the whole of a man’s life, or some prolonged portion of it, may be desirable or undesirable of itself. We might expect Mill to hold that one portion of a man’s life is more desirable than another if the pleasant experiences comprising it are more pleasant and more numerous and the painful less painful and less numerous, provided these component experiences are not of more desirable sorts than others; and that in so far as some of the component experiences are of more desirable sorts than others, one portion of a man’s life is more desirable if its components are more desirable and its more desirable components are more numerous. In one passage Mill speaks as if one portion of a man’s life is happier and more desirable so long as these conditions alone are fulfilled. He writes, “. . . Greatest Happiness . . . is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity and quality. . . .” He immediately adds, “the test of quality, and the rule for measuring it against quantity, being the preference felt by those who, in their opportunities of experience . . . are best furnished with the means of comparison” (214). In this passage Mill speaks as if he regards the intrinsic desirability of a portion of a man’s life, taken on the whole, as dependent only on the intensity and intrinsic desirability of each of the several component pleasant and painful experiences and upon the proportion among them.

Elsewhere, however, Mill does not maintain that there is immediate evidence for the intrinsic desirability only of momentary experiences. For he urges that evidence that a man’s happiness is desirable is furnished by the fact that he desires it (234). From what Mill says regarding preferences, it is clear that he would not hold that a man’s desire for happiness supplied evidence unless he had experience of the matters comprising happiness and was glad at them. Mill also urges that the evidence that one sort of life is more desirable of itself than another is preference (211). But he does not hold that a man’s preference is evidence that one “mode of existence” is on the whole more desirable of itself than another, unless his experience has acquainted him with both and he was gladder at one sort than the other. He then holds that the ultimate evidence that one portion of a man’s life was intrinsically more desirable than another is that he who had experience of both was gladder on the whole at it. Mill would not hold that someone’s being gladder at one portion of life is evidence that it was more desirable on the whole, unless he was acquainted with the many experiences comprising each. In what way would he take account of the component experiences? In looking back over a portion of his life, someone will look upon some experiences that were quite desirable of themselves as detracting from the desirability of the whole and will see others of little desirability in themselves as appreciably enhancing the desirability of the

whole. In assessing the intrinsic desirability, on the whole, of a portion of a man's life, the desirability of each component experience to be reckoned with is not the desirability it has of itself but its desirability as contributing to the intrinsic desirability of that portion of life on the whole. In desiring his own happiness henceforth, moreover, it is then reasonable for a man to rate any experience that may befall him not in terms of its intrinsic desirability but in terms of its desirability as enhancing the desirability of his life on the whole.

When Mill speaks of the most desirable life for a man as an "existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in quantity and quality," he holds that a man's life is intrinsically more desirable the greater the preponderance of intrinsically desirable experiences comprising it. It is indeed logically possible that the greater the preponderance of intrinsically desirable experiences comprising a man's life the more it would also be made up of component experiences which enhanced its desirability on the whole. Yet it seems doubtful that this often in fact would be the case. Mill hardly faces this issue. At all events, he would hold that the reason why any experience is desirable as a component of happiness is not that it is desirable of itself but that it enhances the desirability of the life of which it is a part. It is doubtless not because he regards active pleasures as more pleasant or as of an intrinsically more desirable sort, but because he regards them as enhancing the desirability of life, that Mill speaks of a man's happiness as greater if it includes "many and various pleasures, with a decided predominance of the active over the passive . . ." (215).

Although Mill neglects to distinguish the desirability of a pleasant experience as a part of happiness from its desirability of itself, he uses this distinction with regard to other matters. Mill acknowledges that men desire for their own sake "things which, in common language, are decidedly distinguished from happiness" (235). He cites virtue, money, power, fame. In order to show that desires for these do not supply evidence that other things than happiness are intrinsically desirable, Mill seeks to argue that when any of these comes to be desired no longer as a means, it is desired only as a part of happiness. Moore urges three objections against this.<sup>37</sup> He contends that "these admissions are . . . in . . . glaring contradiction with his argument that pleasure . . . is the only thing desired." He reproaches Mill for holding that "'money,' these actual coins . . . are . . . a part of my pleasant feelings." He condemns Mill for holding that "what is only a means to an end, is the same thing as a part of that end." When Mill speaks of things desired as a part of happiness, he is not speaking of them as a part of pleasant feelings but as a part of "an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures. . ." (215). Mill's contention that nothing is desired for its own sake save that which involves some pleasant experience is not contradicted by his contention that objects of desire are characterized by other features as well. Mill also does not claim that whatever is desired as a means to happiness is desired as a part of happiness. He claims rather that certain things desired as a means to happiness come through that association to be desired no longer as a means, and that when this has occurred, they are desired as a part of happiness. C. D. Broad attacks Mill for contending that originally human beings desire things because they expect them to be pleasant and later come to desire other things as well by association. He urges that "it is unlikely that" humans in early infancy "have the experience of desiring . . . for a reason at all."<sup>38</sup> But Mill does not hold that infants originally desire

things only because they expect them to be pleasant. He points out that it is not the case that whatever even adults desire “they have the experience of desiring . . . for a reason.”<sup>39</sup>

Mill seeks to show that only happiness is intrinsically desirable by arguing that when anything else—virtue, fame, power, money—once desired as a means to happiness, comes to be desired for its own sake, it is desired only as a part of happiness. Even if that which is desired is in fact a part of “an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures,” this does not show that it is desired only as a part of happiness. Mill argues: “What was once desired as an instrument for the attainment of happiness, has come to be desired for its own sake. In being desired for its own sake it is, however, desired as *part* of happiness. The person is made, or thinks he would be made, happy by its mere possession. . . .” (236.) This argument is open to more serious objections. If Mill can succeed in showing that virtue, or fame, or power, or money comes to be desired only as a part of happiness, he can no longer hold that it is desired for its own sake. He then removes his ground for arguing that the “ingredients of happiness are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself. . . .” (235). And even if he is successful in showing that each comes to be desired only as a part of happiness, this in no way establishes that each is desirable as a part of happiness. The fact that a certain individual desires money because “it has come to be itself a principal ingredient of the individual’s conception of happiness” or because he “thinks he would be made happy by its mere possession” does not show that his happiness would in fact be enhanced thereby.

Mill is particularly concerned about virtue. He notices that a man is not virtuous unless he enjoys acting virtuously (239). Virtuous conduct is therefore not only desirable of itself; it is also a pleasant activity which is desirable because it enhances a man’s happiness. Mill also notices that men cannot be virtuous without acting disinterestedly (235). He urges that it is desirable that they be virtuous, for they then have dispositions leading them to do what is desirable (235). Mill hereby acknowledges that in this respect virtue is desirable as instrumental to happiness, not desirable as a component of happiness which enhances it. Although it is desirable that men be virtuous as a means to happiness, Mill notices that a man cannot be virtuous if he desires to be virtuous or to do what is virtuous as a means to happiness. A man cannot be virtuous unless he desires to do what is virtuous for its own sake. What appears to trouble Mill is how to acknowledge the disinterestedness of virtue without acknowledging that it is something other than happiness desired for its own sake, and therefore desirable for its own sake. The solution Mill adopts is that when a man desires virtue for its own sake, he desires it only as a part of happiness, that is, in the belief that it will enhance his happiness. This solution will not do. If a man desires to be virtuous because it will enhance his happiness, he falls short of being genuinely virtuous just as when he desires to be virtuous as a means to happiness. When a man desires to be virtuous he also hopes for happiness, but he does not desire to be virtuous out of the hope that it will yield him happiness. Mill overlooks another solution which his own line of reasoning affords. No one who considers the matter dispassionately regards it as desirable of itself that the virtuous suffer and the evil be meted out happiness.

Mill maintains that only happiness or what includes happiness is intrinsically desirable. He also commonly speaks of only a life or an extended portion of a life as happy or unhappy. This raises a further issue. If Mill thinks that only a period of life comprising several component experiences can be happy or unhappy, he must then deny that any momentary pleasant experience is intrinsically desirable and that any transient painful experience is intrinsically undesirable. On the other hand, Mill holds that if someone who has had first-hand acquaintance with an experience is glad on its own account that it occurred, this is conclusive evidence that it was intrinsically desirable. He would hold that this evidence would not be upset if later someone would be gladder if that particular pleasant experience had not occurred because it detracted from the happiness of a period of life of which it was a part. Mill also seems to maintain that if, among its many consequences, the only effect that an action has on a certain man is to cause him some brief pleasure, it then causes him happiness. Even if the brief pleasure it caused him was such that it detracted from his happiness, Mill would have to admit that it was intrinsically desirable. He can then not continue to adhere to the contention that the relevant evidence shows that only happiness is intrinsically desirable. Mill would not be troubled by this qualification, for he can still maintain that happiness or what includes happiness is invariably intrinsically more desirable than that which does not.

If Mill held that happiness is the only thing intrinsically desirable, he could not claim that the effects of one action are intrinsically more desirable than those of another if and only if it causes more happiness. But he can maintain this because he contends that the effects of one action are intrinsically more desirable than those of another if the one set of effects contains more happiness than does the other. Mill does not support this contention by direct appeal to the ultimate evidence for what is desirable but by inference from what it discloses. His inference is that since it is intrinsically desirable for A to be happy and intrinsically desirable for B to be happy and intrinsically desirable for C to be happy, it is intrinsically desirable for A and B and C each to be happy.<sup>40</sup> While he would hold that the reason why any experience is desirable as a component of a certain man's happiness is not that it is intrinsically desirable but that it enhances the desirability of his life on the whole, a like consideration does not apply regarding the "general happiness." Mill contends that a state of affairs comprising the happiness and unhappiness of many beings is intrinsically more desirable the more happiness it comprises and the greater the preponderance of happiness over unhappiness within it. Some critics charge him with introducing an extraneous consideration when he adds Bentham's dictum, "everybody to count for one, nobody for more than one." Mill, however, points out that when this dictum is understood as asserting that "equal amounts of happiness are equally desirable, whether felt by the same or by different persons," and that "one person's happiness, supposed equal in degree (with the proper allowance made for kind), is counted for exactly as much as another's," all that is spelled out by it is that the preponderance of happiness over unhappiness be "both in point of quantity and quality" and in nothing else (257, 214).

#### IV. ANALYSIS OF MORAL CONCEPTS

We have now to consider a further set of objections urged against Mill's utilitarianism. It is urged that if it is correct, whenever someone could more effectively promote the general happiness by taking another's automobile and continuing to use it without his consent, it would be quite right for him to do so. Whenever someone could make better use of another's house or clothing or other possession, there would be nothing wrong in his stealing it. The fact that it belonged to another would be irrelevant. It is contended that utilitarianism rides roughshod over all rights, not only rights of property. If a wife and children are burdened with a cantankerous husband and father, it would be right for her to drown him secretly and replace him with another husband, if everybody affected would be happier in consequence. Since utilitarianism reckons only with consequences, it is also urged that it can find no place for what is fair or just, or for men being rewarded as they deserve. Because it is unfair of a father to provide for some of his children while neglecting the others, or for some to cheat on their income tax while deriving the advantages from those who make full returns, or for many to toil long hours with little returns while the idle and lazy enjoy an abundance of good things, or for one to receive the credit for what another has accomplished—all this is irrelevant, so long as the resultant enjoyment is maximized. If the happiness of a country is best realized by slavery, it is claimed that any appeal to the injustice of slavery or to men's right to freedom are considerations of which utilitarianism can take no account.<sup>41</sup>

Utilitarianism is also criticized for holding that men have but one duty, to maximize enjoyment. This is not a duty to any specific persons. Humans and other animals are looked upon as only so many "dumping grounds" on which to bestow enjoyment. It is not denied that people have duties to promote the happiness of others, but what is urged is that they have duties to provide different sorts of happiness to different persons and other duties to certain persons than to promote their happiness.<sup>42</sup> A man has a duty to afford his wife certain enjoyments which he does not have a duty to furnish other women. He has duties to his children which he does not owe to other children. The happiness which he owes his children is different from that which he owes his wife. When someone has hired a man to paint his house, he thinks that it is right to pay him because he has promised to. He does not reckon whether some alternative use of his money would more effectively promote the general happiness. It is urged that utilitarianism takes account only of consequences but that duties such as these arise from an antecedent relationship in which someone stands to certain persons. It is pointed out that besides these duties, men have duties which they owe to all men—to tell the truth, for instance. Granted that this duty may be outweighed on occasion by a more stringent obligation, it is argued that it does not cease whenever the general happiness would be more effectively promoted by neglecting it. It is not denied that by doing what is right a man very often does what will in fact promote the general happiness, but it is urged that utilitarianism is guilty of gross oversimplification, disregarding the diversity of considerations determining what is the right thing to do. In virtue of these it is contended that it is very often morally incumbent on a man to do a certain thing whether or not it would maximize the general happiness.

Most of these objections are not to Mill's contention that happiness is the only thing intrinsically desirable; they rather criticize Mill for contending that questions of right and wrong are

questions of what would have the most desirable consequences. Mill seeks to cope with objections such as these by elucidating what is implied when it is asserted that it would be right or wrong or unjust to do a certain thing, and by analyzing what is meant when someone is said to have a right to something or to have an obligation to do a certain thing.

Mill notices that very often when people say that a certain thing ought not to be done they would not also be prepared to say that it would be wrong to do it. He writes, “the morality of an individual action is not a question of direct perception, but of the application of a law to an individual case” (206). He maintains that whenever it is asserted that it would be wrong to do a certain action, it is claimed that there is some “rule of morality” against it. He also writes, “it would be unworthy of an intelligent agent not to be consciously aware that the action is of a class which, if practised generally, would be generally injurious. . .” (220). From this it might be thought that Mill holds that all that is contained in the claim that there is a rule of morality against a certain action is that it is an action of a kind which generally ought not to be done. If this is Mill’s view, there is a fatal objection to it. Glancing at his fuel gauge, a motorist thinks he ought to get more gasoline. He thinks that he ought to do so in the belief that a motorist in general ought to replenish his supply of fuel when it is almost exhausted. Yet he would not think that he would be doing something wrong if he were not to get more gasoline. Mill does not maintain that to claim that there is a rule of morality against a certain action is simply to claim that it is an action of a kind which generally ought not to be done.

In his essay, *On Liberty*, Mill distinguishes two sorts of rules of conduct. He holds that a rule of conduct is not part of the law of the land unless infractions of it incur punishment by the government. To laws he contrasts rules sanctioned by general condemnation.<sup>43</sup> Since he also speaks of these as sanctioned by “moral coercion,”<sup>44</sup> it might be thought that he holds that when anyone claims that there is a rule of morality against a certain action, all that he is claiming is that it is an action of a kind which incurs general condemnation. Mill, however, does not deny that men often believe that it would be wrong to do a certain action although well aware that it is not of a sort that is generally condemned.<sup>45</sup> He does not maintain that the fact that an action is of a kind that incurs general condemnation entails that there is some rule of morality against it.<sup>46</sup> Instead, he writes, “We do not call anything wrong, unless we mean to imply that a person ought to be punished in some way or other for doing it; if not by law, by the opinion of his fellow creatures. . .” (246). Mill thus urges that when it is said that it would be wrong to do a certain action it is implied not that it is an action of a kind which is in fact generally condemned but rather that it is of a kind which ought in general to be condemned by others. In the same passage, he continues, “This seems the real turning point of the distinction between morality and simple expediency.” He contends that when it is said that it would be wrong to do a certain action, it is implied what others ought to do about it, by way of condemnation. For this, if for no other reason, the distinction between the notion of “wrong” and the notion of “ought not” cannot be erased.

Mill distinguishes something further implied in the claim that there is a rule of morality. He urges that no one claims that there is a rule of morality against a certain action without implying that it is a rule which ought in general to be observed.<sup>47</sup> The claim that a certain action is con-



trary to a rule which ought in general to be observed implies that it is an action of a kind which in general ought not to be done. The former is a stronger claim than the latter. When someone has in mind actions of a certain description and believes that such actions in general ought not to be done, his belief implies that actions of that description are in general capable of being avoided. But his belief does not also imply that men in general are capable of understanding the description of action which he has in mind or that they are capable of avoiding such actions through having such a description in mind. On the other hand, whoever claims that a certain rule ought in general to be observed implies that men in general are capable of observing it. He therefore implies that actions of the kind covered by the rule are of a description which is intelligible to men generally, and that it is a description simple enough and precise enough so that men generally are capable of making out whether some action they are considering would accord with the rule. Consequently someone may be correct in claiming that actions of a certain sort ought not to be done, but not correct in claiming that a rule against them ought in general to be observed.

Mill maintains that two claims are made when it is asserted that it would be wrong to do a certain action: it is not only implied that it is an action of a kind which ought in general to be condemned; it is also implied that it would be contrary to a rule which ought in general to be observed. If such an assertion carried only these two implications, it would not be inconsistent for someone to hold that it would be wrong for him to do a certain thing but deny that he ought not to do it. Although Mill does not speak clearly on this matter, something he says in discussing the concept of justice is applicable. He points out that even though a man believed that a certain action was of a sort which in general would be unjust, he would not regard that particular action as unjust if he believed that it would not be wrong to do it (259). It may be presumed that Mill similarly holds that even if someone believed that a certain action was of a kind which in general would be wrong, he would still not think that it would be wrong to do it if he did not think that it ought not to be done. He then acknowledges that when it is asserted that it would be wrong to do a certain action it is implied that it ought not to be done.

Some thinkers hold that “ought” is ambiguous. They contend that when it is said that someone ought to do something, sometimes all that is asserted is that he has an obligation to do it, while at other times this is not implied.<sup>48</sup> Mill notices that an action is spoken of as one that ought to be done both in contexts in which it is said that there is an obligation to do it and in contexts in which this would not also be said.<sup>49</sup> But he does not accept the view that “ought” is ambiguous on this account. He maintains that what differentiates a context in which it is said that someone has an obligation is that something more is then asserted. Mill holds that when it is asserted that someone has an obligation to do a certain thing it is implied that this is so in virtue of the sort of action it is. He contends that this assertion also carries an implication as to adverse responses by others for failure to act: “We do not call anything wrong, unless we mean to imply that a person ought to be punished in some way or other for doing it. . . . It is a part of the notion of Duty in every one of its forms. . . .” (246.) From this passage it might seem that Mill regards the claim that there is an obligation to do a certain thing as equivalent to the claim that it would be wrong not to do it. Mill, however, mentions two respects in which these claims differ. He notices that one

obligation may be overruled by another. When it is, it would not be wrong to fulfil it (259). Consequently the claim that someone has an obligation to do a certain thing implies rather that there is a presumption that it would be wrong for him not to do it. For the same reason, it implies not that he ought to do it but that there is a presumption that he ought to.

In the passage cited Mill continues: "It is a part of the notion of Duty in every one of its forms, that a person may rightfully be compelled to fulfil it. Duty is a thing which may be *exacted* from a person. . ." (246.) Exacted by whom? Mill distinguishes a perfect from an imperfect obligation according to whether there is some assignable person to whom a man is under an obligation (247). H. L. A. Hart contends that when it is asserted that one person, A, has an obligation to some assignable person, B, to do X, it is implied that it would be morally legitimate for B to compel A to do X, but not that it would be morally legitimate for others to compel A to do X.<sup>50</sup> Mill does not agree that when it is asserted, for example, that a wife has certain obligations to her husband, it is implied that it would not be wrong for him to force her to fulfil them. He holds rather that when it is asserted that A has an obligation to some assignable person, B, to do X, it is implied that it would in general not be wrong for others to compel A to do X, but he does not hold that it is implied that there are certain assignable persons for whom it would not be wrong to exercise such compulsion. As an example of an imperfect obligation Mill mentions the obligation to be generous. Although Mill writes, "It is a part of the notion of Duty in every one of its forms, that a person may rightfully be compelled to fulfil it," he later abandons this contention, and takes it rather as a distinguishing mark of a perfect obligation. For when it is said that someone has an obligation to be generous, Mill points out that it is not implied that it would not be wrong for others to force him to be generous. All that is implied is that there is a presumption that it would be wrong for him not to be generous.

Hand in hand with the question of what is claimed when someone is said to have an obligation is the question of what is claimed when someone is said to have a certain right. Some urge that sometimes when it is asserted that a man has a right to do something, all that is meant is that it would be right, that is, not wrong, for him to do it.<sup>51</sup> Mill does not acknowledge that this assertion ever bears this sense, for when it is asserted that a man has a certain right, it is implied that his right is capable of being violated by others. What more is implied? One suggestion is that to assert that a man has a right to something is equivalent to saying that others ought not to deprive him of it. Mill does not accept this view. Someone may hold that motorists who are running out of gasoline ought to stop at the nearest service station and yet deny that the operators of service stations have a right to their patronage. Mill would hold that by denying that they have a right to such patronage, one is denying that such motorists ought to be compelled to give the nearest service station their patronage. He maintains that when it is claimed that a man has a right to a certain thing, it is implied that in general others ought to prevent anyone from depriving him of it (250). Mill also contends that it is not claimed that a man has a right to a certain thing unless it is implied that others have an obligation not to deprive him of it. But he does not hold that this claim implies that it would invariably be wrong for anyone to deprive him of it, for the obligation not to deprive him of it may be overruled by another obligation. Mill therefore holds that the

claim that a man has a right to a certain thing implies rather than there is a presumption, that is, that in general, it would be wrong for anyone to deprive him of it.

Mill rejects the view that no one can have an obligation without another person having a right. He points out that when it is said that someone has an obligation to be generous, it is not implied that others have a right to his generosity. Mill certainly holds that the claim that a man has a right to a certain thing implies that others have an obligation not to deprive him of it. This he classifies as a perfect obligation: “duties of perfect obligation are those duties in virtue of which a correlative *right* resides in some person or persons. . .” (247). From this it may be thought that Mill holds that no one can have an obligation to an assignable person without the latter having a right. The ascription to Mill of such a view is not borne out by his own analysis, for he holds that the assertion that someone has an obligation not to deprive A of X implies that it would in general not be wrong for others to prevent him from depriving A of X. But Mill contends that the assertion that A has a right to X carries a stronger implication, namely, that others in general ought to prevent anyone from depriving A of X. If it would in general not be wrong for others to prevent anyone from depriving A of X, it does not follow that they also ought to.

Mill’s analysis of the concept of justice can readily be shown in relation to his analyses of the concepts that have just been considered. Here as hitherto the question is not what actions or sorts of actions Mill maintains are unjust, but what he holds is being said about an action when it is asserted that it would be unjust to do it. Mill makes five main points. First, he writes, “Justice implies something which it is . . . wrong not to do. . .” (247). Here Mill is maintaining that when it is asserted that it would be unjust for someone to do a certain thing, it is implied that it would be wrong for him to do it. It therefore implies whatever the latter implies. Accordingly, he states, “the idea of penal sanction . . . enters not only into the conception of injustice, but into that of any kind of wrong. We do not call anything wrong, unless we mean to imply that a person ought to be punished in some way or other for doing it; if not by law, by the opinion of his fellow creatures. . . .” (246.) Mill’s second point is that “Justice implies something which it is not only . . . wrong not to do, but which some individual person can claim from us as his moral right” (247). He here notices that not all actions regarded as wrong are also classified as unjust. Mill’s third point is that when it is asserted that it would be unjust for someone to do a certain thing, it is implied that if he were to do it he would be violating an obligation that he has to some other assignable person (247). Mill’s fourth point is that when it is asserted that it would be unjust for someone to do a certain thing, it is implied that he would thereby be depriving another person of something to which he has a right. Speaking of “this distinction . . . which exists between justice and the other obligations,” he writes, “justice, the term, . . . involve[s] the idea of a personal right . . . injustice . . . implies two things—a wrong done, and some assignable person who is wronged” (247). Here Mill urges that someone is not described as having done anything unjust if the wrong that he did was to other animals or to himself. He is not described as having done something unjust unless he is regarded as having done something wrong to another human being. When we think that it would be unjust for someone to do a certain thing, we imply that it would not in general be wrong for others to compel him not to do it. This implication is contained in Mill’s third point. He brings out a further implication of his fourth point when he writes: “When we think

that a person is bound in justice to do a thing, it is an ordinary form of language to say, that he ought to be compelled to do it” (245).

Mill’s fifth and last point is contained in the statement, “Wherever there is a right, the case is one of justice. . .” (247). If Mill means by this that whenever someone is said to have a right to something it is implied that it would be unjust to deprive him of it, then this fifth point is not compatible with what he says elsewhere. Mill holds that when it is claimed that a man has a right to a certain thing, it is implied that in general it would be wrong for anyone to deprive him of it. But he acknowledges that the obligation not to deprive him of it may be overruled by other considerations: “to save a life, it may not only be allowable, but a duty, to steal, or to take by force, the necessary food or medicine, or to kidnap, and compel to officiate, the only qualified medical practitioner. In such cases . . . we usually say, not that justice must give way to some other moral principle, but that what is just in ordinary cases is, by reason of that other principle, not just in the particular case.” (259.) Mill hereby points out that the claim that a man has a right to a certain thing does not imply that it would invariably be wrong for anyone to deprive him of it. In this passage he also writes, “justice is a name for certain moral requirements . . . of more paramount obligation, than any others.” Mill would certainly agree that the obligation to do what is just is absolutely paramount over all other considerations. But he also points out in this passage that the respect in which it is paramount is that when someone believes that a certain particular action would be of a sort which in general is unjust, but also believes that it would not be wrong to do it, he would not say that it would be unjust but not wrong to do it. He would instead say that since it would not be wrong to do it, it would not be unjust to do it. Mill points out that no one regards a certain action as unjust unless he also regards it as wrong.

Having focussed on Mill’s analyses of four chief concepts—right and wrong, obligation, a right, justice—we have now to notice certain bearings of these analyses. Mill holds that when it is asserted that it would be wrong for a man to do a certain action, it is not only implied that he ought not to do it, it is also implied that it is contrary to a rule which ought in general to be observed and that it is an action of a kind which ought in general to be condemned. He contends that this is all that is implied. Asserting that it would be wrong to do a certain action is then a short-hand way of making three distinct ought statements in regard to it. The adjectives “right” and “wrong” could then be eliminated from language. It is useful to retain them as a short-hand way of making these three distinct ought statements at once. A similar point applies to the other three concepts. Mill maintains that when it is asserted that a man has an obligation to do a certain action, all that is implied is that it is an action of a kind which in general it would be wrong not to do; and that when it is also understood that he is under an obligation to some assignable person to do it, all that is implied in addition is that it would in general not be wrong for others to compel him to do it. Since these implications in turn are equivalent to a number of ought statements, the assertion that someone has an obligation to do a certain action is also a short-hand way of making several ought statements in regard to it. Mill also holds that when it is asserted that a man has a right to a certain thing, it is not only implied that others in general ought to prevent anyone from depriving him of it; it is also implied that it would in general be wrong for anyone to deprive him of it. The noun, “a right,” could then be eliminated from language by replac-

ing it with the several ought statements to which it is equivalent. Finally, Mill maintains that when it is asserted that it would be unjust for a certain man to do a certain action, it is not only implied that it would be wrong for him to do it; all that is implied in addition is that if he were to do it he would be violating someone's right. Since each of these implications in turn is equivalent to a number of ought statements, the adjectives "just" and "unjust" could be eliminated from language, but are useful to retain as short-hand devices for asserting a cluster of ought statements.

Mill errs in two respects in his analysis of the concept of justice. When it is claimed that a man has a right to worship in accord with the dictates of his own conscience, it is not implied that if someone were to prevent him from worshipping in this manner, he would be doing something unjust. Similarly, a man who tortures or murders another is not described as doing something unjust, even though it is held that he is doing another wrong and is doing something that others in general ought to prevent anyone from doing. Consequently, Mill is not correct in maintaining that a man is described as doing something unjust whenever he is regarded as doing something wrong and as violating another's right. Sidgwick points out that Mill is also not correct in maintaining that whenever it is asserted that it would be unjust for someone to do a certain thing it is implied that others ought to compel him not to do it.<sup>52</sup> When it is claimed that a father is unjust to one of his children, it is not implied that others ought to use compulsion to prevent him. Mill can hardly be blamed for falling short in analysis of the concept of justice where others generally have failed. Although he is mistaken as to the specific set of ought statements which he holds is implied by the claim that it would be unjust to do a certain thing, his mistake in this does not show that there is not some set of ought statements to which this claim is equivalent.

What emerges from Mill's analyses is that there is a common element to assertions using the terms right and wrong, obligation, a right, just and unjust. He does not maintain that all these are but different ways of saying that a certain action ought or ought not to be done, or that they are not different from each other. He holds that each implies nothing but a number of ought statements. The correctness of each cannot be made out without making out whether what it implies is correct. Hence each can be made out to be correct if there is some answer in general as to what ought to be done and what ought not. To make out whether it would be wrong for a certain person to do a certain thing, it is not sufficient to make out that he ought not to do it. Mill holds that it also has to be made out that it would be contrary to a moral principle for him to do it. Mill contends that it would be contrary to a moral principle only if it would be contrary to a rule which ought in general to be observed. If there is a general answer as to what ought to be done, it can then be made out what rules ought generally to be observed and what sorts of actions ought in general to be condemned. Since the question whether it would be wrong for a certain action to be done is a question in part whether it would be contrary to a moral principle, the question whether it would be right or wrong for a certain action to be done is a question about the morality of it. Mill holds that since questions of whether it would be unjust for a man to do a certain thing, or of whether he has a certain obligation or a certain right, also carry implications about what it would be wrong to do, they also are moral questions. If there is a general answer as to what ought to be done, the answers to moral questions can be made out. Mill holds that if there

is such a general answer, it will apply not only to moral questions, but also wherever the question of what ought to be done arises and where moral considerations do not.<sup>53</sup>

Mill seeks to bring out how it can be determined whether it would be wrong to do a certain action by analyzing what is implied when it is asserted that it would be wrong to do it. We might similarly expect him to grapple with the question of how the correctness of any ought statement can be determined by inquiring what is implied by any such statement. Instead of taking this course, he inquires if there is a test in general for what ought to be done. We have seen that Mill maintains that something ought to be done if and only if it would maximize happiness. In putting forth this principle, Mill does not claim that when it is asserted that something ought to be done, it is implied that it would maximize happiness; he claims rather that it provides a test. Mill's analyses of assertions employing the concepts of wrong, obligation, a right and justice are logically independent of his claim as to what is the supreme test of what ought to be done. He holds that it is the supreme test of the correctness of such assertions because they are equivalent to sets of ought statements and it is the supreme test of ought statements generally: "if . . . happiness is the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge of all human conduct . . . it necessarily follows that it must be the criterion of morality, since a part is included in the whole."<sup>54</sup>

Two parts may be distinguished in Mill's contention as to what provides a supreme test. Although he does not say it, it may be presumed that he holds, in the first place, that when it is asserted that something ought to be done, it is implied that its consequences would be intrinsically more desirable than those of any alternative. The second step is his contention that the test of whether the consequences of something would be intrinsically more desirable than those of any alternative is afforded by whether it would cause more happiness. This he derives from the more general contention that the supreme test of whether one state of affairs is intrinsically more desirable than another is whether it contains more happiness. We may notice the bearing of each step in turn on moral judgments. In accord with the first step, Mill holds not only that a man ought not to do a certain action if and only if some alternative would have more desirable consequences, but also that a certain rule ought in general to be observed if and only if the observance of it would in general have more desirable consequences than would failure to observe it. The first step implies also that actions of a certain sort ought in general to be condemned if and only if the condemnation of such actions would in general have more desirable consequences than the absence of such general condemnation. Accordingly, Mill maintains that it would in fact be wrong for a man to do a certain action if and only if three conditions are fulfilled: (1) some alternative would have more desirable consequences, (2) it would be contrary to a rule the observance of which would in general have more desirable consequences than would failure to observe it, and (3) it is an action of a kind the condemnation of which would in general have more desirable consequences than the absence of such general condemnation.

By virtue of the second step, Mill contends that the supreme test of whether some alternative to a certain action would have more desirable consequences is whether it would cause more happiness; and that the supreme test of whether the observance of a certain rule would have more

desirable consequences is whether the observance of it would cause more happiness.<sup>55</sup> He therefore maintains that it would be correct to claim that it would be wrong for a certain man to do a certain action if and only if three conditions are fulfilled: (1) some alternative to it would cause more happiness, (2) it would be contrary to a rule the observance of which would in general cause more happiness than would failure to observe it, and (3) it is an action of a kind the condemnation of which would in general cause more happiness than would the absence of such general condemnation. In like fashion the conditions can be spelled out which Mill implies must be fulfilled for anyone to be correct in claiming that a certain man has an obligation to do a certain thing, that he has a right to a certain thing, or that it would be unjust for him to do a certain thing.

## V. THE USE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY

In maintaining that the supreme test of whether something ought to be done is whether it would maximize happiness, Mill does not hold that this is the only test which is used, or can be used, or ought to be used. He recognizes that many other tests are used and holds that others are often more suitable. He suggests, for example, that as a test of conduct, it is often helpful for a man to ask himself whether a morally perfect being would approve of it.<sup>56</sup> In speaking of other tests as often more suitable, Mill claims that other ways are available for making out whether something ought to be done than by considering directly all the happiness and unhappiness it would cause and comparing this with all the happiness and unhappiness that would be caused by each alternative to it. Mill speaks of a “subordinate,” “intermediate,” or “secondary” principle as being employed when it is determined that something ought to be done not by reckoning with these considerations but by reckoning with some other feature of it.<sup>57</sup> He contends that it is not even possible to make out the morality of a certain action without taking account of whether it accords with a rule of morality. But even when moral considerations do not arise, Mill recognizes that men usually make out what ought to be done, and he urges that it is usually suitable for them to make out what ought to be done not by means of the supreme principle but by some intermediate principle. He holds that some intermediate principle is also often more suitable for making out whether a certain rule ought in general to be observed and is such that infractions of it ought in general to be condemned. In what he maintains is the supreme test, Mill is making three claims: (1) that something ought to be done if and only if it would maximize happiness, (2) that the ultimate reason why something ought to be done is because it would maximize happiness, and (3) that other tests are sound or suitable only if they would yield results compatible with it. In speaking of intermediate principles as “corollaries” of the supreme principle, he means that they are sound only if they yield results compatible with it.

There are many theories of morality which Mill rejects. He rejects the theory that what is meant by calling an action wrong or that the reason why an action is wrong is that it is the breaking of a divine commandment. He rejects such a theory even when it is united with a form of utilitarianism, as in Paley and Austin. He rejects the doctrine that any information about nature

suffices to tell men what is right or wrong.<sup>58</sup> He objects to Comte for contending that anything is wrong if done from some other motive than desire for the greatest happiness of humanity.<sup>59</sup> He criticizes Bentham for not allowing that some experiences are more desirable than others independently of how pleasant they are. A further theory which Mill is particularly concerned to reject is what he calls the intuitive theory of morality.<sup>60</sup> By it he understands the theory that it is intuitively self-evident what kinds of actions are wrong and what kinds are obligatory, and that all that is required to make out that some particular action would be wrong, or another obligatory, is to make out that it would be an action of some such kind. Mill does not deny that there is an intuitive character to the manner in which many moral judgments are made. Quite often someone thinks a particular action would be wrong because it is of a kind which he believes to be wrong. Not questioning the belief he is employing, a certain kind of action presents itself to his mind as wrong in itself (227). Mill would also agree with W. D. Ross's remark, "When a plain man fulfils a promise . . . what makes him think it right to act in a certain way is the fact that he has promised to do so—that and, usually, nothing more. That his act will produce the best possible consequences is not his reason for calling it right."<sup>61</sup> But Mill would object that because the only thing that makes a man think that it would be wrong to do a certain action is the kind of action it is, it does not follow that the only reason why it would be wrong for him to do it is that it is an action of that kind. Because men often act upon a belief that actions of a certain kind are wrong, without reasoning further about it, he holds that it is not correct to infer that no reasons are to be given in behalf of such a belief and that certain kinds of actions are simply wrong in themselves.

Mill agrees with the intuitive theory that no one can make out by the principle of utility alone whether a certain action would be wrong or another obligatory. He would also point out that the principle of utility does not entail that men have but one obligation to others—to do what will cause most happiness. Because a certain action would cause most happiness it does not follow that it would not be wrong for others to compel it to be done. Moreover, the principle of utility does not entail that there is but one rule determining what is right or wrong. It does not imply that it would be wrong to do something if and only if it would cause less happiness than some alternative. If someone does something that will cause less happiness than would some alternative, it does not follow that he ought to be condemned by others for having done it. Far from maintaining that there is but one kind of action that is wrong, Mill holds that there are as many different kinds of wrong actions as there are rules which ought to be observed and ought to be enforced by moral sanctions. For determining in particular what is right or wrong, Mill contends that such rules are indispensable as subordinate principles. He also holds that such rules are often sufficient, no appeal to the principle of utility being called for.

When does Mill think that it is in place to appeal to the principle of utility to determine what it is right or wrong to do? He urges that someone is not warranted in believing that it would not be wrong to do a certain action simply because he is warranted in thinking that, considered by itself, it would cause more happiness. He writes, "though the consequences in the particular case might be beneficial—it would be unworthy of an intelligent agent not to be consciously aware that the action is of a class which, if practised generally, would be generally injurious. . . ."<sup>62</sup> Here Mill speaks of appeal to the principle of utility to determine whether it would be wrong to do a



particular action. Yet the appeal that is made is not to determine whether the particular action would have undesirable consequences but whether performance of actions of its kind would in general have undesirable consequences. Mill also holds that to be assured that it would be wrong to do a particular action, it is often sufficient for someone to think that it would be contrary to some rule which he believes ought generally to be observed, without testing on each occasion the correctness of the rule on which he is relying.<sup>63</sup>

A second sort of occasion on which Mill speaks of appeal to the principle of utility being called for is one in which someone is subject to conflicting rules. He writes, “only in . . . cases of conflict between secondary principles is it requisite that first principles should be appealed to” (226). Here appeal to utility is made to determine what particular action it would not be wrong to do. But Mill does not hold that when someone is faced with conflicting obligations, he can determine what it would not be wrong for him to do by disregarding his conflicting obligations and using the principle of utility to ascertain which action would have more desirable consequences. For whenever there is a question of whether it would be wrong to do a certain thing, the question of whether it would violate some rule remains. He holds rather that appeal to the principle of utility is called for to determine which obligation takes precedence. Yet Mill does not maintain that whenever there is a conflict of obligations such appeal is called for. He does not deny that such occasions recur and that men encounter them with their minds made up as to what kinds of obligation take precedence over others. They believe, for instance, that the obligation not to lie takes precedence in general over the obligation not to injure another; that the obligation not to injure another is more stringent than the obligation to help another; and that the obligation to help another who has helped one is greater than the obligation to benefit another who has not. Beliefs in rules of precedence such as these are second-order moral beliefs. Although he holds that it is often sufficient for men to resolve a conflict by means of such a belief, without appealing to the principle of utility, Mill urges that men cannot in the end be assured that they are correct in believing that one kind of obligation takes precedence in general over another without reckoning whether neglect of it would in general be more detrimental to human happiness than neglect of the other. Even where someone is correct in believing that one kind of obligation takes precedence in general over another, Mill urges that such a belief will not always suffice to enable him to resolve a conflict of obligations.

A third sort of occasion on which he speaks of appeal to the principle of utility being called for is one that presents an exception to a rule of precedence. He writes: “justice is a name for certain moral requirements . . . of more paramount obligation, than any others. . . . [P]articular cases may occur in which some other social duty is so important, as to overrule any one of the general maxims of justice. Thus, to save a life, it may not only be allowable, but a duty, to steal, or take by force, the necessary food or medicine, or to kidnap, and compel to officiate, the only qualified medical practitioner.” (259.)

Mill urges that all moralists recognize that every rule of morality admits of exceptions, and that there are occasions on which it would not be wrong to do a certain action even though it would violate a rule of morality. They thereby acknowledge that for it to be wrong to do a par-

ticular action, it is not sufficient that it be contrary to a rule of morality. Some further condition must be met. Mill points out that all moralists recognize that it would not be wrong for someone to do a certain action unless he also ought not to do it. Consequently if a certain action would violate a rule of morality, but it is not the case that it ought not to be done, it would then not be wrong to do it. Mill urges that where other moralists are at a loss is to state when this further condition is met. He not only affirms the principle that a certain action ought not to be done only if it would cause less happiness; he also speaks of appeal to this principle as called for to determine when to make an exception to a primary rule of morality, to determine when, for instance, it would not be wrong to steal, to lie, or to betray a solemn trust.

As an example of when it would not be wrong for someone to tell a certain lie, Mill cites an occasion in which “the withholding of some fact (as of information from a malefactor, or of bad news from a person dangerously ill) would preserve some one (especially a person other than oneself) from great and unmerited evil, and when the withholding can only be effected by denial” (223). Mill also points out that to be assured that it would not be wrong for a man to tell a certain lie, it is not sufficient to reckon with the “great evil” it would spare some person; against this must be weighed counter considerations.<sup>64</sup> Account must be taken of the damage the lie may do in “weakening the trustworthiness of human assertion” and in undermining the benefits dependent upon it. Secondly, account must be taken of the damage the man’s lie may do in “weakening reliance” others will place on his veracity on future occasions. Third, account must be taken of the degree to which his readiness to lie upon one occasion may “enfeeble” his “sensitive feeling on the subject of veracity,” thereby making him less reluctant to lie on other occasions and further damaging his trustworthiness.

We have noticed four sorts of occasions which Mill speaks of as calling for appeal to the principle of utility on a moral question. In the first it is appealed to to determine whether a rule ought generally to be observed; in the second, to determine whether one kind of obligation takes precedence over another; in the third, to determine when to make an exception to such a rule of precedence; in the fourth, to determine when to make an exception to a primary rule of morality. The example Mill gives of the last is determining when it would not be wrong to tell a lie. Mill does not mention whether someone need ever reckon whether to violate a rule whose general observance and enforcement would cause more happiness, but which is not also generally observed and enforced by moral sanctions. Nor does he mention whether someone need reckon whether his action would conform to such a rule. Mill speaks of using the principle of utility to determine when to make an exception to a rule only if it is not merely a rule whose general observance and enforcement would cause more happiness, but is also a rule which is generally observed and enforced. The only considerations he mentions as to be taken into account against someone’s telling a certain lie are undermining reliance on his word, undermining his character, and impairing trust in men’s assertions generally. These considerations are relevant only in so far as the rule in question is one that is generally observed.

Of the four sorts of occasions for which Mill speaks of appeal to the principle of utility, he gives examples only of the third and fourth. These examples indicate how he expects such an ap-

peal to be carried out. By the principle of utility, something ought to be done if and only if its consequences would be intrinsically more desirable than those of any alternative; and they would be intrinsically more desirable if and only if it would cause more happiness. A full use of this principle as a test therefore requires reckoning with all the alternatives, and with all the intrinsically desirable and undesirable consequences of each. An exclusive use of this principle as a test requires reckoning with nothing else. In the two examples Mill gives of appeal to the principle of utility, he mentions reckoning with but two alternatives—in one that of saving a certain person's life or not saving it, in the other that of telling a certain lie or not telling it. A full use of the principle of utility requires reckoning with all intrinsically desirable and undesirable consequences to all sentient beings. In his two examples Mill does not speak of reckoning with consequences to other animals or to all human beings. Elsewhere he writes that in most cases in which someone appeals to the principle of utility "the interest or happiness of some few persons, is all he has to attend to" (220). Use of the principle of utility as a test requires reckoning only with intrinsically desirable and undesirable consequences—only happiness and unhappiness. Mill, however, mentions saving a person's life as the only consequence to be reckoned with in the example he gives of breaking a rule of precedence. The only consequences he mentions to be reckoned with against someone's telling a certain lie are undermining reliance on his word, undermining his character, and impairing trust in men's assertions generally. He also reproaches Bentham for not including among consequences to be reckoned with effects of what a man does on his character.<sup>65</sup> Yet Mill does not hold that the preservation of a man's life is intrinsically desirable or that there is anything intrinsically undesirable about undermining character, about undermining reliance on a man's word, or about impairing general trust in men's assertions. He regards consequences such as these as undesirable only because they in turn would make for less happiness and he speaks of "weighing these conflicting utilities against one another" (223). Instead of a full use of the principle of utility, Mill would agree that reckoning with but a few alternatives and with but a few intrinsically desirable and undesirable consequences of each would be warranted if it would yield a result compatible with full use of the principle. It is not only this that Mill understands by appeal to utility. His examples show that he regards an appeal to utility as being made where what are reckoned with are other desirable and undesirable consequences than happiness and unhappiness.

Still greater latitude is to be observed in the argument which Mill holds is to be given for the desirability of men being compelled generally to observe certain rules. Among such rules he mentions those "which protect every individual from being harmed by others, either directly or by being hindered in his freedom of pursuing his own good," which prevent anyone from "wrongfully withholding from" another "something which is his due," or from depriving him "of some good which he had reasonable ground . . . for counting upon" (256). Although he speaks of such rules as grounded in "general utility" and as "more vital to human well-being than any" others, Mill does not feel called upon to show that use of compulsion to enforce them generally would make for more happiness than would absence of enforcement. He urges instead that men generally have such an intense interest in their enforcement that "if obedience to them were not the rule, and disobedience the exception, every one would see in every one else a probable enemy,

against whom he must be perpetually guarding himself.” “It is their observance which alone preserves peace among human beings. . . .”<sup>66</sup> He here argues that the enforcement of such rules is desirable because it is necessary to maintaining relationships among men which in turn are desirable because they are a necessary condition of men achieving to any degree anything desirable. Mill’s argument for the desirability of enforcing such rules is thus independent of any view as to what is intrinsically desirable, and therefore of his principle that happiness is the only thing intrinsically desirable.

Since he maintains that the principle of utility is the supreme test of conduct generally, Mill holds that it has application wherever anyone is pondering what to do, even though considerations of right and wrong are not or may not be involved.<sup>67</sup> A man wonders, Should I change my job? Should I go to the mountains for my holiday? Should I invite the Jones for the evening? Should I put on a blue tie this morning? A business considers whether to reduce a certain line of investment. A plumber considers whether he should use copper piping. A municipality hesitates whether to resurface certain roads. Citizens discuss whether their country should reduce certain import tariffs, withdraw its troops from a troubled region, or increase its aid to another country. Mill holds that the answer to any such question is correct if and only if the course of action would maximize happiness. Although Mill is concerned to show that the principle of utility is the supreme test of conduct generally, in *Utilitarianism* he is largely occupied with its role in coping with moral problems. He has far less in general to say about its use in regard to other practical problems. Mill does not maintain that the only motive from which men act is interest in maximizing happiness or that the only principle by which they should test whether something should be done is by whether it would maximize happiness. A man may think that he should do something because he would enjoy doing it, because it is to his interest, because it would afford another enjoyment, because it would be impolite or unconventional not to. Mill does not deny the diversity of considerations employed in determining what an individual or a group should do. Sometimes a political policy is recommended to promote material prosperity, sometimes to promote progress, or freedom or enlightenment, or to relieve certain needs. Although the principle of utility is the supreme test, Mill urges that men cannot avoid using various subordinate principles for determining what should be done, even where questions of right and wrong are not involved. He writes, “all rational creatures go out upon the sea of life with their minds made up on the common questions of right and wrong, as well as on many of the far more difficult questions of wise and foolish. . . . Whatever . . . the fundamental principle . . . we require subordinate principles to apply it by. . . .” (225.)

Mill urges that the happiness of all is more effectively promoted by each pursuing his own happiness, subject to rules required by the good of others, than by each making the good of others his object.<sup>68</sup> He also urges that each can more effectively promote his own happiness not by seeking it but by the active pursuit of ends beyond himself.<sup>69</sup> Whether individuals or groups are engaged in farming, banking, teaching, medicine, or any other distinctive pursuit, Mill urges that it is usually sufficient for them to determine what they should do by reckoning only with what would most effectively promote the end of the pursuit. They are then called upon to consider only “that certain consequences follow from certain causes.”<sup>70</sup> The conclusion that a certain thing

should be done rests also, of course, on the assumption that the end is desirable. But “in various subordinate arts . . . there is seldom any visible necessity for justifying the end, since in general its desirableness is denied by nobody.” Mill mentions two errors to which the adoption of universal practical maxims in any pursuit is subject. One error is that of overlooking that the prescribed mode of action is effective only under certain circumstances. Quite another error is that of overlooking that though it is effective, its “success itself may conflict with some other end, which may possibly chance to be more desirable.”<sup>71</sup> Where conflicting desirable ends are affected, Mill speaks of appeal to the principle of utility as called for. Yet for such appeal to be made, Mill does not require that only intrinsically desirable and undesirable consequences be reckoned with. Here too he regards an appeal to utility as being made where what are reckoned with are other desirable and undesirable consequences than happiness and unhappiness.

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## Endnotes

[1] *Utilitarianism*, 237. Subsequent references are to the present edition of *Utilitarianism*, and are given in parenthesis.

[2] *A System of Logic*, 8th ed. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1872), II, 552-4 (VI, xii, 6).

[3] “[H]appiness is the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge of all human conduct; from whence it necessarily follows that it must be the criterion of morality, since a part is included in the whole.” Morality consists of “the rules . . . by the observance of which . . . [happiness] might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured. . . .” (*Utilitarianism*, 237, 214.)

[4] “[A]ctions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness” (*ibid.*, 210).

[5] Cf. G. E. Moore, *Ethics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), Chapter 1.

[6] See *Utilitarianism*, 214; “Sedgwick,” 69.

[7] “According to the Greatest Happiness Principle . . . the ultimate end . . . is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity and quality . . .” (*Utilitarianism*, 214).

[8] See “Sedgwick,” 53; “Blakey,” 27; *Utilitarianism*, 222.

[9] See “The Utility of Religion,” 417.

[10] Mill comes closest to this when he writes: “The hygienic and medical arts assume, the one that the preservation of health, the other that the cure of disease, are fitting and desirable

ends. These . . . propositions . . . do not assert that anything is, but enjoin or recommend that something should be. They are . . . expressed by the words *ought* or *should be*. . .” (*Logic*, II, 552-3; VI, xii, 6.)

[11] See §§ IV and V, xcv-cxiii below.

[12] See §§ II and III, lxxiii-xcv below.

[13] G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), §40.

[14] “Bentham,” 96; “Remarks on Bentham’s Philosophy,” 112.

[15] D. D. Raphael, “Fallacies in and about Mill’s *Utilitarianism*,” *Philosophy*, 30 (1955), 344-57; E. W. Hall, “The ‘Proof’ of Utility in Bentham and Mill,” *Ethics*, 60 (1949), 1-18.

[16] *Logic*, II, 546 (VI, xii, 1).

[17] *Ibid.*, 553 (VI, xii, 6)

[18] Raphael, 346.

[19] Raphael, 348.

[20] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. D. Ross (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), 1094a1.

[21] *Ibid.*, 1094a17.

[22] *Ibid.*, 1097a27.

[23] *Logic*, II, 552 (VI, xii, 6).

[24] *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1097a16.

[25] See “Nature,” 377.

[26] *Ibid.*, 398.

[27] *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, ed. Hugh S. R. Elliot (London: Longmans, Green, 1910), II, 116 (to Henry Jones, 13/6/68).

[28] See More, *Ethics*, 167, 250, *Principia Ethica*, §121; C. I. Lewis, *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1946), 486, 432.

[29] *Principia Ethica*, §42.

[30] *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1175b1.

[31] Raphael, 352.

[32] “Diary,” in *Letters*, ed. Elliot, II, 381 (23/3/54).

[33] *Principia Ethica*, §48.

[34] *Ibid.*, §48.

[35] Anon., "Utilitarianism," in J. O. Urmson, ed., *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers* (London: Hutchinson, 1960), 384.

[36] Anon., "John Stuart Mill," *ibid.*, 268.

[37] *Principia Ethica*, §43.

[38] *Five Types of Ethical Theory* (London: Kegan Paul, 1930), 190.

[39] *Utilitarianism*, 238; "Sedgwick," 59.

[40] See lxxxii above.

[41] J. Rawls, "Justice as Fairness," *Philosophical Review*, 67 (1958), 164-94.

[42] E. F. Carritt, *Theory of Morals* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), 40.

[43] *On Liberty* (London: Parker, 1859), 14-15.

[44] *Ibid.*, 21.

[45] See "The Utility of Religion," 410.

[46] See "Whewell," 184.

[47] Morality may be defined as "the rules and precepts for human conduct, by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind. . ." (*Utilitarianism*, 214).

[48] H. A. Prichard, *Moral Obligation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), 67.

[49] See *Logic*, II, 552-4 (VI, xii, 6). Cf. *Letters*, ed. Elliot, I, 229-31 (to W. G. Ward, 28/11/59).

[50] "Are There Any Natural Rights?" *Philosophical Review*, 54 (1955), 178, 183, 184.

[51] *Ibid.*, 179.

[52] H. Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics* (London: Macmillan, 7th ed., 1907), 265.

[53] See *Logic*, II, 552-6 (VI, xii, 6-7).

[54] *Utilitarianism*, 237; cf. "Whewell," 189.

[55] See *Utilitarianism*, 214; "Whewell," 172; "Remarks on Bentham's Philosophy," 8.

[56] See "Theism," 486.

[57] See *Utilitarianism*, 224-5; "Whewell," 173; "Bentham," 110; "Blakey," 29 below.

[58] See "Nature," 378.

[59] See Auguste Comte and Positivism, 335.

[60] See *Utilitarianism*, 206; "Whewell," 170; "Sedgwick," 51.

[61] *The Right and the Good* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1930), 17.

[62] *Utilitarianism*, 220; cf. "Whewell," 180.

- [63] See *Utilitarianism*, 225; “Bentham,” 111.
- [64] See *Utilitarianism*, 223; “Whewell,” 182.
- [65] See “Bentham,” 98; “Remarks on Bentham’s Philosophy,” 8; “Sedgwick,” 56.
- [66] *Utilitarianism*, 255; cf. “Whewell,” 192.
- [67] See *Logic*, II, 552-6 (VI, xii, 6-7).
- [68] Auguste Comte, 337.
- [69] See *Autobiography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1924), 100.
- [70] *Logic*, II, 554 (VI, xii, 6).
- [71] *Ibid.*, 550 (VI, xii, 4).



**VOLUME XI - ESSAYS ON PHILOSOPHY AND THE CLASSICS. INTRODUCTION BY  
F.E. SPARSHOTT**

SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XI - Essays on Philosophy and the Classics*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by F.E. Sparshott (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/248/21734>>.

INTRODUCTION BY F. E. SPARSHOTT

Compilers of collected works must garner the rough with the smooth, and a volume that consists largely of book reviews must be expected to hold much that has turned to no such aureate earth as, buried once, men want dug up again. But Mill did not share this expectation. Such zombies as his massive reviews of Grote were called up to walk the pages of *Dissertations and Discussions*. The quality of the works reviewed here tends to justify the disinterment: of them all, perhaps only those of William Smith and Gustav Wiggers have quite dropped out of scholarly sight. Grote's *Greece* and *Plato*, Fraser's *Berkeley*, and Whately's *Logic* hold their places on our shelves, though we leave them there to gather undisturbed their kindred dust.

I propose to introduce this gallimaufry disjointedly, saying a little about the background of each component in turn, though not quite in the chronological order, spanning more than four decades, in which they are printed here. It will be seen that some themes recur; but it seems idle to pretend to impose a systematic order on these mostly occasional pieces.

WHATELY AND FORMAL LOGIC

of all the writings reprinted here, the review of Whately has attracted most attention from commentators, both for its intrinsic interest and as a forerunner of the *System of Logic*. Alexander Bain called it "a landmark not merely in the history of [Mill's] own mind, but in the history of logic."<sup>1</sup> Yet Mill himself exempted it from the general resurrection in *Dissertations and Discussions*. Why? Partly, no doubt, because it was superseded by the *System of Logic*: of the works in this volume that Mill did reprint, none falls within the scope of a later treatise. Whately was only one of a series of logicians whose work Mill discussed in 1827 with that "Society of Students of Mental Philosophy" which had begun to meet at the Grotes' in Threadneedle Street two years before;<sup>2</sup> and it was from those discussions that the opening books of the *Logic* began.<sup>3</sup> But the Whately review was not merely superseded; in the one place in the *Logic* where he cites this earlier work, Mill describes it as "containing some opinions which I no longer entertain,"<sup>4</sup> And Kubitz suggests

that the main reason for not reprinting the article was that he had recanted its views on the significance of deductive method.<sup>5</sup> The scope of this recantation, which went with a reversal in his views on the possibility of an inductive logic, will occupy us shortly. But the decisive factor could have been one that had little to do with any shift in doctrine. For Mill, perhaps more than for most reviewers even in that polemical age, a review was a political act, serving to encourage or chasten the righteous and to dismay the adversary. In 1831 Whately was “one of the fittest men in the country to hold a high station in a national church such as I conceive it should be”;<sup>6</sup> but by the time the first two volumes of *Dissertations and Discussions* were published in 1859, though Bailey, Grote, and Bain were still around to be admonished and cheered, Whately as Archbishop of Dublin had long confined his activities to spheres where reviewers could neither help nor harm.<sup>7</sup>

Mill’s failure to reprint the Whately review, however explained, must be regretted by his posthumous friends. His reputation as a logician has suffered among the philosophical laity because the doctrine of the syllogism developed in the *Logic* has been taken for a general theory of syllogistic logic as such. Mill’s belated care in distinguishing the logic of truth from the logic of consistency, and his insistence that only the former concerns him,<sup>8</sup> has not compensated for his failure to provide a coherent exposition of the latter; in fact, he seems to blend an exposition of syllogistic in terms of consistency with a justification in terms of truth. But the Whately review makes it clear that Mill understood the nature and value of formal logic as a study of the form of valid arguments and a device for testing them. In fact, his vindication of this study against its recent neglect is couched in terms rather like those used by careless readers nowadays against his own *Logic*. But though this vindication saves Mill’s popular credit by giving meaning to the provisos with which the doctrine of the *Logic* is hedged, it does not explain that doctrine itself. If syllogism is proper to the analysis of proofs, why should it figure at all in an account of discovery? An examination of Whately’s book yields a possible answer.

Mill’s polemic (5-6 below) against those who supposed there could be a separate inductive logic (as opposed to procedural rules for inductions) is a reflection of Whately’s own arguments. Syllogism, he urged, is the unique form of valid argument.<sup>9</sup> Therefore induction, in so far as it is a form of argument, must be syllogistic; in so far as it is not syllogistic it cannot be a form of argument at all, but a mere process of inquiry that as such must fall outside the scope of logic.<sup>10</sup> An inductive argument is nothing but a syllogism in barbara with the suppressed major premise: “What belongs to the individual or individuals we have examined, belongs to the whole class under which they come.”<sup>11</sup> So now we have two syllogisms, an inductive one:

Mortality is a property of Socrates and Coriscus  
 All properties of Socrates and Coriscus are properties of all men

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Mortality is a property of all men;  
 and a deductive one:

All men are mortal  
 The Iron Duke is a man

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The Iron Duke is mortal.

But the deductive one merely carries out a decision, or exemplifies a commitment, we made in the inductive one—and the decision is the implausibly sweeping one that *whatever* is true of the men we know is probably true of all men (and hence of Wellington).

The position implied by this move of Whately's, and apparently endorsed by Mill, is a very strange one. Inductive reasoning is subsumed under the logic of consistency, and the consistency required is that of abiding by the commitment made in the extravagant major premise of the inductive syllogism. But all this syllogistic machinery is quite useless: if in any case we are going to start with Coriscus and his friends, and end up with Arthur Wellesley, there is no point in making a detour through "all men." Accordingly, Mill was to write in the *Logic* (*CW*, VII, 162) that in "Reasoning or Inference properly so called," "We set out from known truths, to arrive at others really distinct from them." Small wonder, then, that he did not reprint the Whately review, in which he proclaimed the impossibility of the condition on which the *Logic* was to be constructed, and excluded from the proper sphere of logic the whole of "Reasoning or Inference properly so called"!

But it was a serious and genuine impasse that confronted Whately and the young Mill alike. Whately observes: "The justly celebrated author of the *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, and many others, have objected to the syllogism altogether, as necessarily involving a *petitio principii*; an objection which, of course, he would not have been disposed to bring forward, had he perceived that, whether well or ill-founded, *it lies against all arguments whatever*."<sup>12</sup> Well, perhaps; but the consequence—with which Whately in the ensuing pages vainly grapples—is either to expel reasoning from the province of discovery or to reduce discovery to the rearrangement of terms. It was precisely for freeing logicians from this impasse that the doctrine of the syllogism in Mill's *Logic* was to be praised by Whewell.<sup>13</sup> Mill's final solution, in which all real reasoning is from particulars to particulars,<sup>14</sup> amounts to saying that the appearance of syllogism in the processes of reasoning is only an appearance. What looks like a major premise ("All men are mortal") is really no such thing: it is only a sort of *aide-mémoire*, serving two purposes. It reminds us that a number of objects have been examined and found both human and mortal, and registers a *decision* to let these examined cases stand as sufficient evidence for the inference that, when anything else is found to be human, it can be expected to be perishable. If syllogisms are what formal logic studies, this is not syllogism but pseudo-syllogism, for the warrant for an inference is not the same as a premise in an argument. Unfortunately, Mill had not emancipated himself sufficiently from Whately and company to make this distinction clear. William Kneale seems to be right in tracing the difficulties in Mill's account to his "failure to realize the incompatibility of a good new insight with a bad old tradition in which he had been educated."<sup>15</sup> But Kneale seems not to have attended to quite the relevant parts of the bad tradition—his book does not mention Whately at all—and allows himself to be baffled by Mill's contention that the major premise of a syllogism can serve two purposes: a contention which, we have seen, becomes intelligible when it is seen as the solution to a problem posed by Whately and his peers.

The story I have now unfolded is not the whole story. Mill had begun studying logic ten years before, at the age of twelve, not with Aldrich and Whately's other predecessors as text-book writers, but with Aristotle's *Organon*, accompanied by the scholastics whom he extols in his review, and followed by Hobbes.<sup>16</sup> And it could have been from Aristotle that he learned how different a syllogism in investigation could be from a syllogism in analysis. But he shows no sign of having noted what Aristotle has to say about syllogisms in investigation. To turn from Whately to the *Posterior Analytics* is to enter a different and saner world, in which the conclusion of a scientific syllogism is not a proposition like "The Duke of Wellington is mortal" but one like "The moon suffers eclipse," and the inquiry which it concludes does not take the form of discovering classes to which its subject belongs but that of discovering causal relations in which it is involved.<sup>17</sup> The "discovery of middle terms" is not the unfolding of a system of class-inclusions (Wellington is a Duke, is a Briton, is a man, is a mammal, is an animal), but a reference to "the failure of light through the earth's shutting it out," involving the discovery that the moon is a body shining by reflected light and the means of that light's occlusion. And the conclusion is not so much "Thus we may infer that the moon will undergo eclipse" as "So that explains why it is that the moon undergoes eclipse." The eclipse of the moon, whose occurrence is affirmed in the conclusion, is neither datum nor discovery, but problem. Science is conceived not as observing and classifying individuals, but as probing the workings of systems and mechanisms. Kneale, very reasonably, asks why Mill even ignores the possibility that a major premise might state a connection of attributes rather than record a summary of cases.<sup>18</sup> But apparently he does ignore it. This whole side of Aristotle's logic must have seemed to him meaningless or hopelessly archaic. Why? Part of the reason appears in what he says in the *Logic* about propositions: "The first glance at a proposition shows that it is formed by putting together two names" (*CW*, VII, 21). It is true that syllogistic logic relies on the supposed reducibility of any proposition to the copulation of two terms, but that is a far cry from asserting that every proposition is evidently composed of two names. Why "names"? Why two? In what sense "putting together"? This unintelligible assertion harks back to the theory of language attempted by Hobbes; in Mill's time it must have seemed very antiquated indeed.<sup>19</sup> But Mill, like many revolutionaries—the men of Thermidor saw themselves as ancient Romans; Mazzini slept with Tacitus under his pillow—was in some things very old-fashioned, using the far past as a lever to unseat the near past, as his passionate Graecophilia and the defiant championing of the school logic sufficiently attest. After all, what made his father the apostle of progress in psychology was his *revival* of Hartley against the new-fangled Germanism. To this defiant antiquarianism belongs the Locke-like atomism of the doctrine of propositions, with the analogous reductivism that makes all reasoning go from particulars to particulars and also, in the controversy with Bailey, the inability to come to terms with any treatment of the facts of vision that does not reduce them to the association of simple percepts. A recent book argues persuasively that the whole of Mill's philosophical activity is designed to subsume all subject matters under a single method, analysing them into components that retain their identity and are linked (like "names" in a proposition) in a merely mechanical unity by relations of addition and subtraction.<sup>20</sup> This claim is so far true that, as we shall see later, Mill uses the analogy of chemical combination, in which compounds have properties not derivable from those of their admitted elements, to justify his insistence that such an analysis shall be deemed performable even in cases

where it cannot in fact be carried through. If this was indeed his ambition, it seems one more proper to the seventeenth century than to the nineteenth.<sup>21</sup>

The retention of an appearance of duplication in the logics of truth and of consistency, with what looks like the same syllogistic form prevailing in both, is more than merely a hangover from Whately's theory of induction. Something like it seems to be required by the contention that logic is an art as well as a science. This is a point on which Mill endorses Whately's position against Hamilton;<sup>22</sup> and in Whately it may well reflect the systematic preoccupations of the compilers of the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, who placed his article in Part I among the pure sciences, separated by a great distance from the arts and applied sciences of Part IV among which Whately conceded that his contemporaries might have expected to find it. But of what is logic the art?

Logic . . . may be considered as the Science, and also as the Art, of reasoning. It investigates the principles on which argumentation is conducted, and furnishes rules to secure the mind from error in its deductions. Its most appropriate office, however, is that of instituting an analysis of the process of the mind in Reasoning; and in this point of view it is, as has been stated, strictly a *Science*: while, considered in reference to the practical rules above mentioned, it may be called the *Art* of reasoning.<sup>23</sup>

Mill's review (8-9) contains the materials for a different account, according to which the *science* of logic would lie in the analysis of the principles whereby arguments are determined to be valid,<sup>24</sup> and the *art* would lie in the use of these principles to evaluate arguments; but in the end, while repudiating the "commonsense" tradition that would equate logic with a sort of mental hygiene,<sup>25</sup> he slips like Whately into making the art of logic the *art of reasoning*.<sup>26</sup> But if that is what logic is, and if true reasoning must lead to new knowledge, and if the rules of an art and the doctrines of the corresponding science differ only in that the art determines the end to which the science establishes the means,<sup>27</sup> and yet the syllogism (on which the science of logic depends) can never lead to new knowledge, we are landed in an impasse from which only desperate measures could free us. Such a desperate measure might be Mill's device whereby the logic of truth is constructed on the basis of something that looks like syllogism but really is not.

Syllogistic logic, though not so formulated by its inventor, only works smoothly if stated in terms of class-membership and class-inclusion. It is thus especially suited to Mill's preferred nominalistic metaphysics of juxtaposed particulars. Whately, who preferred to speak in terms of "essences," is rightly censured by Mill for the appalling mess he made of the doctrine of predicates. As Mill says (3), he was better talking about logic than expounding logic itself, and posterity has assented to Mill's later judgment that his distinction lay not in any contribution to logical theory, but in doing "more than any other person to restore this study to the rank from which it had fallen in the estimation of the cultivated class in our own country."<sup>28</sup> His qualities of mind were better shown in training his spaniel to climb a tree before an admiring audience in Christ Church Meadows, and to dive thence into the Cherwell, than in ordering coherently the relations of term, proposition, and argument. In fact, as Mill hints, the offending exposition of the predicates was cribbed word-for-word from the Latin of the wretched Aldrich.<sup>29</sup> Mill's own account of

the matter in his review, confessedly a restatement of traditional doctrine in terms of a purified nominalism, is admirably clear, precise, and consistent.

The saving nominalism that brought light to the murk of the predicables is also responsible for the major positive contribution of Mill's review, his scouting of Whately's familiar and superficially plausible but ultimately unworkable distinction between nominal and real definitions (27-8). All definitions, he says, define verbal expressions, but some are and some are not accompanied by the claim that the defined term stands for an existent. This laying of an ancient ghost, the only passage retained and quoted in the *Logic*,<sup>30</sup> was historically of decisive importance.<sup>31</sup> Even the Archbishop saw the light; by the eighth edition, scarcely a trace of the offending doctrine is allowed to remain. By this time, too, Whately is apologizing for and virtually dissociating himself from the doctrine of predicables, in terms that can be explained only by supposing that he had studied Mill's animadversions and appreciated their justice.<sup>32</sup>

Whately's treatment of fallacies departs from his forerunners' and accords with modern pedagogical practice in seeking to relate logical analysis to the kinds of arguments and subject matters encountered in the world at large. But Mill's praise of this treatment as abounding with "apt examples and illustrations drawn from almost all the most interesting subjects in the range of human knowledge" (29-30) might mislead a modern reader. As a man of the cloth, Whately takes a third of his examples—43 out of 119, on a rough count—from theological controversy. This may be more than personal predilection. In theology, where observation can do so little, one has to reason *a priori*, and the place of deduction is assured.<sup>33</sup> In the sciences, where reality keeps creeping in, reasoning *a posteriori* can hardly be resisted; and the total lack of interest in theology, so untypical of his place and time, that Mill avowed in later life<sup>34</sup> may go far to explain why he never wrote the handbook on traditional formal logic that at the age of twenty-one he showed himself so well equipped to compile.

Mill's long and powerful vindication of logical analysis (5-14), with which nothing in the *Logic* is at variance, is followed by an assertion with which the *Logic* seems more at odds: "The province of reasoning in the investigation of truth is immense." For by "reasoning" here he means that strictly deductive argumentation which he was later to stigmatize as mere verbal rearrangement and hence not worthy of the name of reasoning at all.<sup>35</sup> This deductive element, described as playing a dominant part in every science but chemistry and physiology (14), is in fact mathematics, which one must admit does not look much like that reasoning based on the *dictum de omni et nullo* to which Mill's argument would require its reduction. Alan Ryan ascribes this vindication of deductive reasoning in part to a desire to show the importance of systematic reasoning in economics, in part (following the lead of the *Autobiography*, 94-7) to a wish to champion his father's aprioristic *Essay on Government* against Macaulay's empiricist critique;<sup>36</sup> but probably the main reason why Mill says it is that it is plainly true. But it does pose a problem, to which Mill felt he lacked the solution. Since geometry deduces unexpected conclusions from its axioms and definitions (33), deduction must be able to serve as a heuristic device. But how can it be so? What is deduced from premises must be contained in them, so that what one seems to discover must be what one in some sense already knew without knowing it. The 1828 solution to this difficulty,

which is that one might have failed to put two and two together, seemed to leave “a mist still hanging over the subject” (*Autobiography*, 109); it was in 1830-31, the *Autobiography* tells us, that reflection on Dugald Stewart led him to the realization, expressed in the *Logic*, that in scientific reasoning it is the general propositions themselves that are the heuristic devices, the nerve of the reasoning lying always in the progression from particular cases to particular cases.<sup>37</sup> With this fateful step comes a repudiation of the pure nominalism adumbrated in 1828: class-membership and class-inclusion as the basic relations in syllogism are rejected in favour of the transitive relation of being-a-mark-of,<sup>38</sup> and geometry becomes in effect the methodology of engineering. But, of course, the transitivity of being-a-mark-of is useful in investigation only if there are real kinds in nature. As we remarked in discussing the predicables, formal logic must treat classifications as arbitrary; but arbitrary classifications are heuristically null. It follows that a logic of investigation must repudiate formal logic.<sup>39</sup> And that is what the *Logic* does.

If contemporary notions of formal logic are correct, Mill had a juster and clearer view of the matter in 1828 than appears in the *Logic*. The young whippersnapper was justified in the arrogance he showed in his censure of a rival critic: “A good critic on Whately should have laid down as a standard of comparison, the best existing or the best conceivable *exposition of the science*, & examined how far Whately’s book possesses the properties which should belong to *that*.”<sup>40</sup> Mill clearly implies that his own recently-published review had shown him able to do what George Bentham had failed to do. And he was right. But it is a mistake to think of the *Logic* as a giant stride in the wrong direction. The *Logic* had to turn its back on the logic of consistency in order to devote itself to the logic of truth. Even the notorious account of mathematics becomes less scandalous if one sees it as sketching a mathematics of truth rather than of consistency.<sup>41</sup> The issues remain vexed to this day.<sup>42</sup> Jevons’s much-quoted remark that “Mill’s mind was essentially illogical” was at best a half-truth.<sup>43</sup> He had the talent but lacked the will. At twenty-one he was already in a position to expound, organize, restore, and clarify the traditional formal logic, and intended to do so.<sup>44</sup> A year or two later he decided to do something else instead.

Mill lived to see the beginnings of the great revival of formal logic that has marked so deeply the face of philosophy in the last century. In this revival he took no part, partly for the reasons we have seen and partly no doubt because formal logic is a young man’s game. What is more surprising is that he did not approve of it. It was too complicated. Logic was a necessary art, and therefore should be plain and simple, as Whately’s had been. The elaboration of formal calculi was a distraction from the serious business of the mind.<sup>45</sup> But that, after all, is the sort of thing elderly savants usually say about what the bright young men are doing.

## THE PLATO VERSIONS

Mill “was, quite as much as Grote, a Greece-intoxicated man”;<sup>46</sup> and, unlike the historian, had twice tasted the intoxicant himself, travelling the country from end to end.<sup>47</sup> Two aspects of the Greek past he found especially heady: Athenian democracy and Platonic philosophy. His first public testimony to the latter infatuation was the series of “Notes on Some of the More Popular

Dialogues of Plato” published in the *Monthly Repository* in 1834-35. The origin of these notes—ill-named, since they are in fact translations with relatively minor omissions and comments<sup>48</sup>—is obscure. He tells Carlyle they were written “long ago,” and says in his *Autobiography* that they were written “several years earlier” than their publication.<sup>49</sup> But when and why were they written? The paper on which the unpublished ones were written is almost all watermarked 1828 (a few sheets being 1825), which provides a *terminus post quem* at least for these copies.<sup>50</sup> Richard Garnett, who had access to W. J. Fox’s correspondence as editor of the *Repository*, seems to date them to 1830, but this appears to be a mistake.<sup>51</sup> Packe (136) puts them “probably after his depression of 1826, when he was attempting to rescue Greek humanism and the Socratic method of analysis from the ruins of his father’s teaching,” but this is only a guess, and if they played an important part in his therapy it is strange that a fact so germane to the theme of his *Autobiography* should not be mentioned there. He says (42) they were made for his own satisfaction; but why? An accomplished Greek scholar, as Mill was, might make a translation to settle the meaning of a text in his own mind; but even those that were never printed are written in a manner that suggests an intended public other than the writer himself. Mill’s complaint (39-40) about the contemporary state of Platonic studies in England would justify the publication of all nine versions in book form, but if that was intended one does not see why it was not done—there was no improvement in the situation to make the need less pressing. But if they were meant neither for the public nor for Mill himself, for whom? Possibly for his siblings, for whose education he maintained a lively concern. The only other likely person who might profit from such reading and evoke the labour of preparing it would be the fascinating and brilliant but imperfectly educated Mrs. Taylor, whom Mill met in 1830, the date putatively assigned to the translations by Garnett. But Mill says they were already old when she saw them.

Why were these nine dialogues selected for translation? There need be no answer, for Mill may have meant to do more, but he suggests one (adapted from Schleiermacher): they are those dialogues of manageable length in which we observe in action “the service rendered to philosophy by Socrates” in advancing the methodology of the moral sciences (41). Socrates appears in them not as teacher but as debater, or (in the *Apology*) as champion of his methods in debate, and concerned with political and moral questions rather than with the natural sciences. Such a selection would suit Mill’s lifelong preoccupation, already clearly marked, with the need for a methodical science and philosophy of practice. Like his praise of the unfashionable scholastics in the Whately review, his rescue of the unfashionable sceptic from the fashionable dogmatist and dreamer in Plato<sup>52</sup> belongs to a campaign to resurrect the methodical and empirical side of all western thought.<sup>53</sup> That this was the basis of selection is confirmed by Mill’s practice of omitting or summarizing those passages in which Plato forsakes the presentation of argument for the description of action, and faithfully rendering all the logic-chopping. If I had begun a series of translations thus motivated I would have begun with the *Meno* and would have done the *Crito* before the *Laches*;<sup>54</sup> but omissions mean nothing.

A different ground of selection, however, gives an even closer fit. Mill’s title refers to “Some of the More Popular Dialogues of Plato.” This gives us pause. In what sense can the *Parmenides* have been “more popular” than, say, the *Symposium*? The only plausible answer is to be found in



Schleiermacher's attempt to establish both a canon and a systematic order (supposed, with dire effects on the Platonic scholarship of the following decades, to coincide with the order of composition) for Plato's output.<sup>55</sup> Schleiermacher divided the corpus into three groups, each with an appendix of minor works. With one exception, the dialogues translated by Mill constitute the whole of Schleiermacher's first, or "elementary" group, plus the *Apology*, the first dialogue in its appendix. The one exception, the *Gorgias*, is the first of the second ("preparatory") group, but its insistence on the distinction between art and mere practice makes it so central to Mill's concerns as to explain its being taken out of order.<sup>56</sup>

Whatever its source, Mill's choice of dialogues was probably not based on a direct study of Schleiermacher's Introduction. Though Mill claims to have learned German around 1825,<sup>57</sup> there is little evidence that he often exercised this skill,<sup>58</sup> and he never cites Schleiermacher otherwise than in Thirlwall's translations.<sup>59</sup> The introductory note to the *Protagoras* attributes to Schleiermacher the view that the value of the Socratic dialogues lies in their method of inquiry, and not in any results that the discussion may reach or (more typically) fail to reach (41; compare the note on the *Phaedrus*, 62). But this note, like the corresponding notes to the other dialogues, must have been added to the original translation at the time of publication.<sup>60</sup> For, at the time when they were first written, Mill was oblivious to this methodological possibility. The unpublished versions of the *Charmides*, *Laches*, *Euthyphro*, and *Lysis* all end with a dismissive remark to the effect that because the dialogue ends with no *Q.E.D.* it is to be considered as "a mere dialectical exercise" (italics added).

If the translations were made or exhumed with a view to Mrs. Taylor's edification, their appearance in the *Monthly Repository* needs no further explanation: Mill's connection with the magazine, to which he began to contribute in 1832, came about through Harriet's membership in the congregation and intellectual circle of its editor, W. J. Fox.<sup>61</sup> Nor is it hard to explain the discontinuation of the series, despite its favourable reception: by the summer of 1835 Fox was losing interest in the *Repository*,<sup>62</sup> and at the same time Mill was becoming more involved with the *London Review* (the first number appeared in July of that year), the burden of which being made heavier for him by his father's failing health. In fact, the Plato versions are almost the last things he contributed to the *Repository*<sup>63</sup> —soon the boot was on the other foot and he was soliciting Fox for contributions.<sup>64</sup> Nor, again, does the order of presentation raise any problem: those left to the last and ultimately excluded are (besides the forbidding *Parmenides*) those devoted to particular areas of conduct and hence contributing least directly to Mill's methodological concerns.

Mill's strictures on the condition of Platonic studies in England at this time have been more often quoted than evaluated, but they appear to be just. Schleiermacher's translation inaugurated the critical study of Plato, which by this time was in full swing in Germany. Yet the English works mentioned by Mill are virtually all there had been since 1750.<sup>65</sup> Nor did matters improve much. Except for Wayte's *Protagoras* (1854), there were no serious English contributions to Platonic studies until the sixties, when a stream of editions and commentaries began to flow that has not yet dried up. Grote's *Plato* is in fact one of the first fruits of this revival. For the complete translation desiderated by Mill the English had to wait for Benjamin Jowett, who finally (in Lewis Campbell's

phrase) “succeeded in making Plato an English classic” in 1871.<sup>66</sup> This English Plato was the Plato of the *Republic* (of which Jowett began to work on his never-to-be-completed edition in 1856), not of the *Protagoras*; the élitist, not the methodologist. But no doubt this Plato also would have been welcome at India House.<sup>67</sup>

Among the most striking themes in the introductory notes that Mill provides is the defence of the sophists against the strictures of the “Tory perverters of Grecian history” in the *Quarterly Review*.<sup>68</sup> Mill’s characterization of Plato’s attitude to Protagoras seems eminently just; he is indeed treated as a respectable inquirer with an imperfect technique, not as a disreputable agitator. But the issue is joined on political grounds: the sophists, like the Benthamites, believed in seeking rational solutions to moral and political problems; their conservative opponents believed, like good tory squires, that what was good enough before the war was good enough now, and regarded the sophists as dangerous and subversive meddlers. It is in the latest and longest of Mill’s treatments of this theme, in the *Plato* review (387-404), that he first fully expounds the contemporary animus behind his defence. The full case the radicals had to meet was that Athenian morals steadily declined from the time of Marathon on; that this decline was a consequence of the rise of democracy and its concomitant, the attempt to ground morals on reason; that the only true source of morality is the intuition of a rustic aristocracy; and that any criticism of the squirearchy is an attempt to make the worse appear the better cause. The student of Greek literature cannot but recognize in this thesis a misreading of Aristophanes’ *Clouds* (read by Mill at the age of eight) by someone with naïve notions about the methods of comic writers, and it is visibly an apologia for the sort of tory politics Mill had been programmed by Bentham and his father to overthrow.

Mill’s long excursus on the sophists in the *Plato* review is substantially a rehearsal of Grote’s own account in his *History*, which Mill extols in his review of that work (328-9). Mill’s estimate of Grote’s achievement seems justified. In his article on Grote in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.), J. M. Mitchell remarks that Grote valued the sophists more highly than anyone had before or would again; but that, had it proved true, would still have missed the point. What Grote does is present massive evidence on which his reappraisal rests, and with which any reversal of his verdict must reckon; and those who have disagreed with him have for the most part merely repeated opinions whose untenability Grote had conclusively proved. But the battle still continues: the sophists are still endowed with “every virtue under heaven” by all good liberal democrats seeking ancestry.<sup>69</sup> Such historical shadow-boxing has its ironies, however. What to Mill is an imperfect rationalism, valued as a step towards Plato’s profounder analysis and away from the traditionalism that remained the real enemy, is in some modern eyes a praiseworthy empiricism to be pitted against the evil technocratic totalitarianism of Plato.<sup>70</sup>

Besides the attraction of its presentation of the sophists, Mill is drawn to the *Protagoras* by finding in Socrates a champion of the principle of utility (61). To those who nowadays call themselves utilitarians, and think of utilitarianism as concerned to promote the good of all, this comes as a shock, since what Socrates advocates against Protagoras is a strictly egoistic hedonism: the possibility that a man might consider anyone else’s welfare is not even mooted. The shock was

shared by Grote, since we find Mill writing to him (in what connection we do not know): “[P. S.]—As you truly say the Protagorean Socrates lays down as the standard, the happiness of the agent himself; but his standard is composed of pleasure and pain, which ranges him, upon the whole, on the utilitarian side of the controversy.”<sup>71</sup> But in fact Mill seems to be fairly consistent in equating the principle of utility, as he does here, with “the doctrine that all things are good or evil, by virtue solely of the pleasure or the pain which they produce.” An equivalent account is given in “Professor Sedgwick’s Discourse” in 1835,<sup>72</sup> and again in the second chapter of *Utilitarianism* (where, as here, the names of Epicurus and Bentham are conjoined);<sup>73</sup> that the happiness sought should be that of the “greatest number” is called for not by the “principle of utility” but by the “Greatest-happiness Principle.”

The notes on the *Phædrus* afford interesting sidelights on what we found to say about the views on logic and philosophy expressed and implied in the Whately review. Plato’s method of collection and division is subtly revamped to become “decomposition and recomposition,” a method of “philosophical *analysis*” (93) that is proclaimed as the unique method of philosophy and common to all “systems of logic.” This answers to what Ryan identifies as Mill’s own preference in method; but Plato’s own account, which speaks of a classificatory process of collection followed by one of sorting, seems at least to be of a different kind. In the same connection, Mill writes here as if to claim objective backing for a classificatory scheme were necessarily to ascribe to a class some substantive individuality separate from that of the objects classified (94). It is just this equation that Mill gave up when, as we saw, he abandoned nominalism in his *Logic*. Meanwhile, it has the interesting consequence that Mill defends something like the “ordinary language” philosophy of the late J. L. Austin: since nothing exists save spatio-temporal particulars, investigations of mental and moral phenomena reduce to the clarification of concepts, and this in turn to the examination of how words are used.<sup>74</sup>

The notes on the *Gorgias* reflect the same bias that led Mill to describe his omission of the dramatic portions of the dialogues as regrettable only on aesthetic grounds (42). As in his review of Grote’s *Plato* (406-7), he assumes that Plato’s concern is with the intellectual structure of knowledge, and that Socrates is a seeker of definitions rather than an examiner of lives. It is in this purely negative dialectic that Plato’s value for the nineteenth century is mainly to be found (382-3). Many years later, the accident of Grote’s order of composition in his uncompleted *Aristotle*, which gave the *Topics* a more prominent place than he probably intended, gave Mill his last and best opportunity to sing the praises of abstract debate as an intellectual discipline, whose value he learned in Grote’s house as a young man among the Brangles (508-10). This love of logic-chopping might seem at odds with Mill’s determined empiricism, but is actually of a piece with it. Rigorous inductive procedures, the discovery of which in the moral and mental sciences was Mill’s chief intellectual enterprise, depend on the unremitting endeavour to overthrow one’s own cherished beliefs; and it is just this that the lost art of dialectic—so curiously prevalent in the dogmatic middle ages, and abandoned in the sceptical revival of letters—sought to encompass. Meanwhile, however, the assumption that Plato’s interest in the epistemology of morals is confined to the use of argument in the service of moral persuasion leads Mill to make heavy weather of the *Gorgias*, which he finds to be a tissue of fallacies (149, 395). Plato’s version of the Socratic

equation of virtue with knowledge, identified by Mill as the key to his thought on these matters (60), had nothing to do with the kind of understanding that is devoid of personal commitment. Mill says, rightly, that no intellectual demonstration can show that “a life of obedience to duty is preferable, so far as respects the agent himself, to a life of circumspect and cautious selfishness” (149), and that Plato might have furnished Socrates’ interlocutors with rebuttals of his arguments. But what happens in the *Gorgias* is something else. Socrates discovers internal contradictions, not in abstract hedonism, but in the complex values by which ambitious Polus and proud Callicles believe themselves to live. Their lives are shown to be unintelligible to themselves—a point that is evident only when one considers the dramatic settings of the dialogues, which Mill omits. Even in the reading of the dialectic itself Mill’s strictures show a misunderstanding, in their use of such unplatonic language as “a life of obedience to duty.” Mill presupposes that the moral choice is always one between devotion to self and service to others, idealism and virtue being identified with the latter. It is simply a matter of whose interests shall be served. But the Callicles of the *Gorgias* is an idealist of a sort, a sort that our twentieth-century relativism makes it easier for us to see pervading Greek culture and that Nietzsche was the first in modern times to detect and extol.

Honesty, as Mill says, is not the best policy, and Socrates in the *Gorgias* is not arguing that it is. But Mill’s normally cool tone takes on an oddly histrionic pathos as he sings the misfortunes of the virtuous in this wicked world. The tone is that of a man who feels that his own virtue has been unjustly despised and rejected, and whose toil has been without reward. Is this perhaps a memory of those dreadful days of 1826 when Mill first found that the life-work for which he was predestined meant nothing to him? Or can it be only that the world’s reception of his innocent liaison with Mrs. Taylor (as of W. J. Fox’s matrimonial ventures) had shown little comprehension and less generosity?

Among the unpublished translations, that of the *Parmenides* alone incorporates commentary, and its treatment is in other ways untypical. For the opening section, in which Socrates figures in his habitual manner, Mill follows his usual practice of rendering the argumentative bits and omitting the rest—even, rather misleadingly, the passage where Zeno explains why he has done what he did (128<sup>a</sup>1-<sup>e</sup>5).<sup>75</sup> But in the notoriously baffling second part of the dialogue, in which Socrates is silent, Mill abandons his usual practice because, as his comments show, he does not take the discussion (and hence the task of translating it) seriously. Reasonably rejecting the would-be profundities of the neoplatonic commentators, for whom it plumbs metaphysical depths,<sup>76</sup> he takes the alternative to be that it is a mass of quibbles. Still looking for the results overtly established at the end of a dialogue, rather than at what is effectively achieved in the course of it, he inevitably finds this one futile: that it might contribute vastly though indirectly to the clarification of such concepts as “one,” whose ambiguity reduced the earlier discussion between Socrates and Parmenides to incoherence, does not occur to him.<sup>77</sup> The result is that Mill’s abbreviations and omissions reflect no opinion of the purpose of the dialogue and prevent the reader from forming his own. Thus Mill omits a large part (136<sup>e</sup>5-137<sup>e</sup>3) of the conversation in which Parmenides clarifies his attitude to the “laborious game” he is to play, and substitutes his own denigration of the proceedings as “verbal quibbles.” Equally unfortunate is his handling of the passage in which Parmenides introduces the concept of an “instant” in time that is not a part of time but has no dura-

tion, surely one of the most fruitful suggestions in the history of thought. Mill interrupts his translation here (from 156<sup>c</sup>1 to 157<sup>b</sup>5), and substitutes a paraphrase in which he suppresses Parmenides' assertion that when a thing starts to move there can be no period of time during which it is neither in motion nor at rest, misrepresents the claim that the beginning of movement must be instantaneous as saying that the thing "is for an instant neither in motion nor at rest, but between both," and then sarcastically refers to his own misrepresentation as "This happy idea" (235).

Mill's actual omissions in this part of the dialogue seem to be due to mounting fatigue and disgust—and, no doubt, a courteous unwillingness to bore possible readers. As far as 147<sup>c</sup>1 his translation is only slightly condensed, except that he omits (as F. M. Cornford was later to do) the replies of Parmenides' respondent, in the hope that they would make no difference.<sup>78</sup> At this point he breaks off, with the caustic comment, "It is unnecessary to adduce more than a specimen of this mode of enquiry" (235), and resorts to brief summary. But he starts translating again at 155<sup>e</sup>2, resorts to summary at 156<sup>c</sup>1, resumes translation for 157<sup>b</sup>5 to 159<sup>b</sup>2, omits a transitional sentence there, gives a slightly shortened version of 159<sup>b</sup>5 to 160<sup>b</sup>2—though what he says Parmenides concludes at that point is *not* what Plato says he concludes!—and from then on merely summarizes what he takes to be the general drift.

Mill's opening attempt to characterize in general terms the class of theories to which Plato's theory of "Ideas" belongs is not so much a comment on the purport of the *Parmenides* as a vain attempt to explain it away. It is not surprising that Mill was baffled. In his day the materials for any sort of comprehension of pre-platonic philosophy were not accessible, as is abundantly shown by his description of Parmenides as "a Pythagorean philosopher" (222) and his supposition that the *Way of Truth* rested on the assumption that there was a "mysterious virtue in the word *one*" (223). This is not so much a mistake as a reflection of an ignorance Mill had no ready means of remedying. As for Plato's dialogue itself, any comprehension of that was virtually precluded by Schleiermacher's supposition that it was an early work of Plato's, rather than one intermediate in date between the *Republic* and the *Sophist*.

Mill's final remark, that the second part of the *Parmenides* is unfit for its purported purpose of "mental gymnastics" because it exploits ambiguities of language rather than removing them, may or may not be true. That judgment probably depends on whether one expects readers to rest content in a mass of mutually contradictory conclusions without seeking to extricate themselves. True or false, the remark leaves one puzzled. Why spend so much time on a work whose upshot one deplores and whose intentions one does not even profess to understand? Why not stop translating at the point where Socrates bows out? But perhaps only the attempt revealed that it was not worth doing.

Whether to expose, to analyse, or to exploit, the second part of the *Parmenides* is undoubtedly concerned with ambiguities. That fact in itself is a good reason for not translating it, if one is not obliged to, and in any case not translating it without the sort of incidental explication that Mill eschews. For part of the point of the whole affair must be that the initial hypothesis does not mean, as Mill renders it, "Unity exists." "Ἐν ἑστίν," unaccented as Plato wrote it, is ambiguous

between “One is,” “One exists,” and “It is one,” at least. “Unity exists” would not seem to be a plausible alternative; but if we assume, as Mill assumes, that a mystification of the sort he describes is intended, “Unity exists” would be the appropriately mystifying phrase. Thus do we deceive ourselves.

Our strictures on Mill’s handling of this very odd dialogue imply no criticism of Mill himself. On the contrary. What he did he did for private purposes of his own, and had the good sense not to publish the results. For this abstention he is to be commended. We may deplore the work, but have no right to blame the workman.

## GROTE AND GREECE

George Grote, twelve years older than Mill, was one of his closest associates and allies. “‘Mill, the elder,’ she [Mrs. Grote] would say, ‘had seized him at the most enthusiastic time of life, and narrowed him, under the idea that he was emancipating him.’”<sup>79</sup> Scion of a Tory banking family of German extraction, he had been at school with Connop Thirlwall at Charterhouse, and formed there an enthusiasm for classical letters that he never lost. But on leaving school, in the intervals of keeping up the family end of the bank for his squire-playing father, his inquiring mind led him to the study of that modish subject, political economy; and it was in David Ricardo’s house, early in 1819, that he met James Mill. The meeting changed his life by converting him to the radical cause, though it was not until his father’s death in 1830 that he felt able to play an active part in politics.<sup>80</sup>

Grote’s first and greatest service to the radical cause was to embark on a history of ancient Greece. In the culture of the time, classical civilization was paradigmatic, and the available history was that of Mitford, full of errors and fuller of anti-democratic prejudice. Any reasonably accurate and ample history could be sure to supersede it. But in the meantime, as we have noted, an attack on the sophists was an allegorical attack on philosophical radicals everywhere, and a repetition of Aristophanes’ diatribes against Cleon was a blow against any democrat of the day.<sup>81</sup>

The polemical intent to write a counterblast against Mitford is avowed in Grote’s Preface to his first volume. But in a way the work is a natural outgrowth of an earlier study of Greek mythology, inspired by the notion (not then a usual one) that mythology has historical value as, and only as, a revelation of the self-image of the people who made up and preserved the myths.<sup>82</sup> It was some months later that his wife claims to have given him the idea (quite impracticable at the time, in view of his business and family commitments) of writing a history.<sup>83</sup> But nagging has its limitations and, despite Harriet’s scheme of priorities,<sup>84</sup> the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832 inspired Grote to forsake literature for activism. He presented himself as candidate for the City of London in the radical interest, was elected, and for ten years laid the history aside.<sup>85</sup> By 1838 it was plain that the parliamentary radicals were falling apart, and Grote lost interest,<sup>86</sup> but did not yet feel ready to resume the history. He filled in the time reading Aristotle.<sup>87</sup> In June 1841 he did not stand for re-election and planned to resume work on the “Opus Magnum” in the spring of

1842.<sup>88</sup> In 1843 we find him working at it eight hours a day;<sup>89</sup> that summer he retired from the family bank, and from that time on the *History* and its successors poured forth in a majestic, if sluggish, torrent.<sup>90</sup>

As an expert and respected businessman, a working politician in troubled times, a polyglot and indefatigable master of contemporary scholarship, and (for the later volumes) an expert on the affairs of Switzerland, whose geographical and political divisions afforded such striking analogies with those of ancient Greece,<sup>91</sup> Grote was outstandingly equipped to make realistic sense out of the biased and fragmentary traditions of Greek historiography. His history won immediate acceptance as a standard work. But time was unkind. Within twenty years, Schliemann's excavations had raised hopes for the reconstruction of early history that Grote hoped he had shown could never be fulfilled;<sup>92</sup> and in the decades to come the deciphering, dating, and interpreting of the inscriptions with which the Greeks had loved to deface their environment was to emancipate Greek history for ever from that haggling over written records to which Grote and his coevals had been confined. Grote lacked the sharpness of mind and style that in a like situation saved Gibbon from oblivion,<sup>93</sup> and his history ceased to be valuable as soon as it ceased to be indispensable.

Grote awaited the reception of his first two volumes with anxiety. George Cornwall Lewis had offered to review them for the *Edinburgh*, but it was too late: Mill had asked first, and the books were already in his hands.<sup>94</sup> Harriet was disappointed. She had tried to enlist Nassau Senior's support in ensuring the suitability of the *Edinburgh's* reviewer, with a hint that Lewis would be acceptable.<sup>95</sup> It is true that Lewis had a special interest in the mythological questions that occupy most of these volumes, and Mill had none; it is also true that Mrs. Grote tended to value people for their social standing, and Lewis was in line for a baronetcy. But in any case a certain coolness had developed between Mill and the Grotes, partly for personal reasons,<sup>96</sup> and partly because Mill was struggling to free himself from what he saw as the doctrinaire narrowness of their radical orthodoxy.<sup>97</sup> But Mill retained his admiration and affection for Grote as a person and as a hellenist, and his review proved to be "in every sense, a labour of love; love of the subject, love of the author, and admiration of the work."<sup>98</sup> It took Mill four days to write and three to re-write, "but I had to read and think a good deal for it first."<sup>99</sup> This reading included the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* for his discussion of the "Homeric question."<sup>100</sup> Mill throws himself into the cultural game of classical philology with adept enthusiasm, and his disagreement with Grote on the *Iliad* points the contrast between the two men that divided them politically: Grote relies on mechanical criteria of consistency, whereas Mill emphasizes the organic bonds of feeling that unite the whole. This is plainly the Mill who tempered Bentham with Coleridge.

Mill holds the Greek experience to be exemplary not only because our epigonic civilization looks back to it for instances and excuses, but because the Greeks invented what we think of as civilization, raising themselves from barbarism by their own efforts and invention. That is why such a "philosophical history" as Grote was attempting (but Thirlwall was not) was so important. Their secret, if we could find it, might hold the clue of that mental and moral science that should tease out of the smoky squabbles of the nineteenth century the utilitarian millennium of liberty

and happiness. Between the lines of Mill's review we read that Grote had not unveiled that secret.<sup>101</sup> It is just on the crucial point of how a merely traditional theology and mythology give way to rationalizing ones that Mill finds Grote wanting. Of course there is a sense in which the Greek myths were arbitrary inventions, but Grote seemed blind to the way in which a story can be both known to be invented and believed to be true, exemplary rather than allegorical, and showing in the character of its narrative a response to a need of the mind, as yet inarticulate, for explanations that should have a certain pattern. It is to this quest for the explanatory character of mythology, which the modern reader finds reminiscent of Lévi-Strauss rather than of Grote, that Mill is presumably alluding when he tells Bain that his review has "introduced no little of the Comtean philosophy of religion."<sup>102</sup>

A student of Mill's ethical theory will note his interest in the institutions of Sparta as illustrating "the wonderful pliability, and amenability to artificial discipline, of the human mind" (302), as well as the limitations of such disciplines as soon as their constraints are removed. This belief is important to the moralist in Mill, concerned with an education that should instil in everyone the artificial motive of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." By psychological necessity, men act in such a way as to maximize their pleasures, though the mechanisms of sympathy include among these a delight in the welfare of one's associates. But this psychological law places no restriction on what may be desired; it only means that men must be effectively trained to take pleasure as they should. The Spartan experience shows what improbable results such training can achieve. But Sparta has a second lesson for us, in the glamour this horrid régime held for Greeks born under happier institutions. How to explain the fascination of evil? Doubtless the admirers of Sparta, second-rate sensitive minds, overlooked its character as a whole and noted only its freedom from those political and social vices from which they suffered in their own cities. The observation, perhaps a commonplace, seems just, though our contemporaries might trace the admiration for totalitarianism to urges buried deeper; it is also familiar to the hellenist, being precisely the explanation Plato offers in his *Republic* for the dynamics of political degeneration. Also in the *Republic*, whatever its Comtian ancestry, is a large part of the argument on how myths are invented, propagated, and believed. In all his moral and political thought, Mill shows himself very deeply a Platonist: not in the foolish modern sense that he "believes in" the "theory of ideas," but in the way in which the very detail and texture of his thought reflects that of Plato.

Seven years later, Mill had another go at Grote in the *Edinburgh*. When he saw this second review in print he said it read "slighter & flimsier than I thought it would," but Grote was pleased:

It seems to me executed in John's best manner. It is (as you say) essentially and throughout a *review* of the book; keeping the author, and not the reviewer, constantly in the foreground. It is not, certainly, a review *of the eleventh volume*; so far "Fish" was right in the remarks which he made on it;<sup>103</sup> but I do not think he did anything like justice to its merits, either as a composition or as a review. It is certainly complimentary to *me*, in a measure which I fear will bring down upon me the hand of the reactionary Nemesis. . . .<sup>104</sup>



One has the impression that Lewis at least, though not Grote, felt that Johannes Fac-Totum was thrusting himself in again.<sup>105</sup> Whatever Grote may say, Mill's review, for all its compliments and quotations, is a survey of Greek history in relation to Mill's well-known preoccupations, which could be dressed up as a review only because the political interests of radical author and radical reviewer so largely coincided.<sup>106</sup> Among these common concerns we have already noted the vindication of those philosophic radicals, the sophists; in this review we find its counterpart, an exposition of the military, moral and intellectual failings of the pious and plutocratic Nicias that serves to show the rottenness of squirearchies everywhere—and no doubt, by indirection, of that venerable scandal of the British army, the purchase of commissions.<sup>107</sup>

Grote had to admit that Mill had not really reviewed the volumes he purported to deal with. The situation in this regard is scarcely changed by Mill's inclusion in the *Dissertations and Discussions* version of extracts (amounting to some 30 per cent of the whole) from his reviews of earlier volumes. The reason is that the exemplary function Mill ascribed to the Greeks was fulfilled only by the Athenians at the time of their political and cultural supremacy, with which the present volumes were not concerned.<sup>108</sup> Mill's Athenophilia is shown already by his inclusion of the long quotation from Neibuhr in the otherwise trivial review he printed in 1840 (241-3). The present manifestation of it, with its almost ludicrous encomium on the fun-loving Athenian populace, reveals not only the thrust of Mill's political programme but the structure of his personal values.<sup>109</sup> Genius and joy, personal freedom and intellectual culture flourish only in an atmosphere that exacts public service but ignores idiosyncracies of word and act, an atmosphere that requires political institutions such as only "a succession of eminent men" could devise. In such a society Mill would be praised for his engagement in public affairs and not censured for his private affair with Mrs. Taylor; in such a society such men as Bentham and the Mills secure freedom and joy for their fellows. Mill shows less sign of misgiving now than he had in the 1840 review that the values modern times have added to the Athenian scheme of functional democracy—internationalism, kindness, mildness of manner, bureaucratic efficiency and the techniques of political representation—might be incompatible with the vivid individualism of the Athenians; but this insouciance is consistent with his methodological atomism. Relations of cause and effect, means and ends, are of course recognized in the world of values, so that we see how (for example) a prerequisite of the flourishing of genius is a lack of inhibition; but the positive goods at which society aims are dealt with in the breathtakingly arithmetical fashion familiar to readers of *Utilitarianism*. The sum of two goods is a good.<sup>110</sup> Mill seems not to want to admit that, just as when my interests and yours conflict we must compromise or fight, a society may have to sacrifice *parrhesia* to mild manners or mild manners to *parrhesia*.

Within the encomium on Athens, a certain tension may be felt. Its democratic institutions are praised as the work of a "succession of eminent men"; yet the failings of its operations are excused on the ground that its policies did not express the sound heart of the Athenian working stiff,<sup>111</sup> since the "conduct of affairs was habitually in the hands of the rich and great" (331). Does this statement mean that eminent men, not popular movements, create democratic institutions; but within such institutions popular movements are good and eminent men are bad? Perhaps it does mean that—and perhaps it is true.<sup>112</sup> In any case, the tension is relieved when we infer from

the context that the praised eminence is one of ability, the bad greatness merely one of wealth and family. Yet when we reflect on the individuals thus involved in praise and dispraise—Solon, Cleisthenes, Miltiades, Pericles, Nicias, Cleon, Alcibiades—we may think that this review at least takes no clear stand on that most intractable of political issues, the proper relation of outstanding individuals to a democratic constitution.

One feature of Mill's praise of Athens may strike the modern reader as strange: his readiness to condone Athenian imperialism, on the excuse that force may be necessary to inaugurate the reign of reason. This apologia—considerably toned down, on Harriet's protest,<sup>113</sup> from the version in a *Spectator* review<sup>114</sup>—comes oddly, we may think, from so staunch a champion of the liberties of women and slaves.<sup>115</sup> But Mill's position is necessitated by that belief in Progress whose absence he was to deplore in Aristotle (505).<sup>116</sup> His attitude is coloured, at least, by his experience as an official of the East India Company, as appears sufficiently from the reference in his earlier review (290) to Sleeman's Indian observations as a revelation of primitive mentality;<sup>117</sup> but his opinion is articulated more clearly in the remarks on Indian affairs in his personal papers.<sup>118</sup> The local "native" régime may be a set of interlopers or usurping tyrants; but an Imperial government, remote from local squabbles, has no other concern than the welfare of all its charges. Besides, in most cases if not in all, the powers of the central government are those ceded to it by the local authorities in the interests of efficiency, economy, or political advantage. Of the ruling notions of modern anti-colonialism, that all cultures are created equal and that no Indian can be an alien anywhere in the subcontinent, Mill shares neither. It is in fact the gravest charge against Nicias that his failure in the unprovoked aggression against Syracuse betrayed the cause of Athenian imperialism:

If the Athenians had succeeded they would have added to their maritime supremacy all the Greek cities of Sicily & Italy. . . . Even if they had failed & got away safe, Athens could never have been subdued by the Peloponnesians. . . . Perhaps the world would have been now a thousand years further advanced if freedom had thus been kept standing in the only place where it ever was or could then be powerful. I thought & felt this as I approached the town till I could have cried with regret & sympathy.<sup>119</sup>

Although Grote's work has been left far behind by the advance of scholarship, the patience and amplitude with which he set out all the evidence he did have and teased out the last shred of its significance gave his work some permanent value as a guide to the historiographical tradition. In fact, he goes far to justify Mill's strong claim "that there is hardly a fact of importance in Grecian history which was perfectly understood before his re-examination of it" (328). This residual value is a function of his patient prolixity. Writing of Macaulay's history a few years later, Mill summed up: "What a difference between it & Grote's *Hist. of Greece*, which is less brilliant, but far more interesting in its simple veracity & because, instead of striving to astonish he strives to comprehend & explain"<sup>120</sup>—provided, of course, that we bear in mind that the simple veracity is that of a proselytizing radical.

The review of Grote's *Plato and the Other Companions of Sokrates* is, if anything, less of a review than those of his *History*. The fault, if fault it be, is not all Mill's. A comprehensive survey of an

author's work can hardly be reviewed otherwise than by measuring it against the standard view of that work, and we have seen that the state of British Platonism was still such that no standard view could be said to exist.<sup>121</sup> Mill's opening description of Grote's achievement suggests an additional reason. Grote's picture of Plato, though painstakingly traced, is anything but sharply delineated. Years before, Mill had remarked that Plato was taking Grote "a length of time only to be warranted by using the opportunity to speak out very plainly on the great subjects—a thing I rather wish than expect he will be found to have done. . . ." <sup>122</sup> And if Mill could at last find much in Grote to praise, it was not because these misgivings were unjustified.<sup>123</sup> The three laborious volumes are a remarkable compendium of scholarly opinion and philological lore, full of sagacity, and embodying just such an abstract of the several dialogues as Mill had thought proper to prepare himself.<sup>124</sup> But it is hard to believe that even in their day they can have afforded much moral or metaphysical excitement, and only the loyal eye that discerned the genius of Harriet Taylor could have detected in their author one of the leading metaphysicians and psychologists of his age.

As its scale might suggest,<sup>125</sup> Mill's review was long premediated,<sup>126</sup> and he warned Grote that he would be using the book as a springboard for his own considered view of Plato's achievement.<sup>127</sup> He re-read the whole of Plato, in Greek, to prepare himself,<sup>128</sup> and to good effect: he provides a majestic survey, a truly remarkable synthesis even with Grote before him, revealing once more his gift for the even-handed presentation of a mass of fact. "I have seldom given so much time and pains to a review article," he told Grote.<sup>129</sup> Yet, though steadily enlightened, one is seldom astonished. Mill, now almost sixty, treads the round of his Platonic preoccupations: the merits of the sophists, the value of a negative dialectic, the praise of intellectual independence and a high moral tone, the preference of methods over results and the antipathy to dogma. But he is able to indulge these preferences because Grote shares them. As with the *History*, Mill thinks Grote's *Plato* important as the first systematic treatment of its subject from the point of view of the "experience philosophy"—from which it follows, again as with the *History*, that since this is the only true philosophy Grote's treatment is the first that really illuminates its subject. Up to now, Plato's achievement had been obscured by the orientalizing neoplatonists and German transcendentalists who preferred the obscurantism of his senility to the inquisitiveness of his vigorous youth.<sup>130</sup> These two schools of Platonism, the disputatious and the arcane, are with us still; and, in so far as Anglo-American academic orthodoxy is still wedded to one or another form of the "experience philosophy," the Platonism of Grote and Mill is substantially that still imparted to most anglophone undergraduates. But in one fundamental way all Platonists of that age are sundered from all those of today, by a crippling defect of which Mill is well aware (385-7). They had no way of dating Plato's dialogues otherwise than by circular inference from a conjectural development in his thought. Just two years after Grote's first edition, such a method was discovered and published,<sup>131</sup> and despite many problems its main results are unchallenged. One of the points agreed on is the first to be established, and suffices to undermine Grote's whole structure: the *Sophist* and *Statesman* must be later than the *Republic*. This makes it impossible to think of Plato as steadily degenerating from dialectical maturity to dogmatic dotage (or, as the opposing school would have it, wading from shallow scepticism into mystic profundity). At the same time, the dis-

covery that the critique of the “theory of ideas” in the *Parmenides* is later than the dialogues which argue most unequivocally in favour of that theory has made today’s scholars reluctant to accept the view assumed by Mill and his coevals, that the theory of ideas was a simple-minded doctrine in which Plato basked content.<sup>132</sup>

The effect of establishing an unexpected order for the composition of the dialogues is not only to rewrite Plato’s intellectual biography. It makes Plato a much more difficult writer than Mill and Grote took him for: whatever he is up to, it cannot be the straightforward things we used to think, and we have to read him with much greater caution. Mill and Grote acknowledge the difficulty of interpreting the meanings of the dialogues as total compositions, but suspect no difficulty in their parts. It is noteworthy that though Mill affirms broadly that all the arguments of the *Gorgias* and the *Phædo* are fallacious he does not specify the fallacies. He does not even analyze the arguments. And the attribution of the “theory of ideas” to an “imperfect conception of the processes of abstraction and generalization” (421) rests on no serious consideration of what the Platonic Socrates says and the reasons he actually gives for saying it. This sort of superficiality, however, was probably inevitable in the then state of Platonic studies, even without the disconcerting results of stylometry: only after the sort of overview established by Grote had become thoroughly familiar would it be feasible for a more penetrating critique to look into the actual fine structure of the arguments. Indeed, much of the work has yet to be done. If classical studies are moribund, they will die in their infancy. Meanwhile Mill and Grote, true apostles of Progress, assume that Plato’s thought belongs to the childhood of the race and that contemporary thought has nothing to learn from him (see 421): he is to be judged by how close he has come to the position reached by nineteenth-century empiricist radicals. For that reason it seemed suitable to make a study of Plato an opportunity for speaking out on the great questions of the day. Mill, just like the transcendentalist interpreters he complains of, will let Plato inspire him but not disquiet him.

Because Mill is not prepared to discover that Plato’s thoughts are other and better than his own, he is apt to say that Plato has “failed to grasp” a point on which they are at odds. Thus he blames Plato for his thinking that techniques of measurement were a sufficient guard against error, and for “overlooking that it is not the act of measurement which rectifies them, but the perceptions of touch which the measuring only ascertains” (420). Plato is not overlooking this belief; he is denying it. The disagreement is radical. Plato’s Socrates is clearly presented as believing that getting one’s sums right can be a significant moral passion, and that it is the moral passion of the just man. The appeal to a method is essential.<sup>133</sup> Indeed, it is rather strange that Mill does not recognize here a reliance on calculation akin to that of a Benthamite legislator. But his remarks on the handling of “justice” in the *Republic* are full of puzzling things. How can he say that Plato’s ethic allows no place for that paradigm of Athenian justice, Aristides, whose “justice” lay in his unfaltering adherence to the highest convictions of his own place and time? The *Republic* locates such a man very precisely, as the man of moral courage, in a passage where Plato also affirms another essential point that Mill accuses him of denying, that such tenacity of one’s proposals is a *precondition* of any “justice” based on independent intellectual comprehension. Again, we wonder how Mill can accuse Plato of *ignoring* the fact that justice has to do with the rights of other people (419), when the fact that justice is “another’s good” is a key point in the case Socrates is called on

to meet. It seems strange that Mill should have missed so much of what is going on, especially as his remarks on the discrepancies between the “mixed modes” of Greek and English thought show him so well aware of the dangers of relying on the customary associations of English terms when discussing Greek philosophy. Part of the explanation may be found in the final chapter of *Utilitarianism*, where justice figures as a set of entrenched principles and patterns of behaviour exempted from felicific calculation and calling on its own special set of instinctual resources. The whole arrangement of thought is quite alien from Plato’s. Mill is so deeply imbued with the sort of moral psychology inaugurated by Hobbes that he is unable to entertain the very different moral psychology envisaged, on grounds no better and no worse than his, by Plato.

The praise of Athenian democracy in the review of Grote’s *History* should prepare us for a denunciation of Plato, whose ideal institutions in the *Republic* seem designed to remove not only what Mill sees as the incidental vices of that polity but, very specifically, each of its merits. It comes as something of a surprise, then, to find Plato praised for recognizing “that the work of government is a Skilled Employment” (436), even though this praise is tempered with censure for having gone too far and denied the unskilled any say in the direction of their affairs. Perhaps the surprise is mitigated when we read in Mill’s diary for 20 March, 1854: “The Reform Bill of the present year and the plan of opening the Civil Service of Government to universal competition, are the most wonderful instances of unsought concession to the democratic principle—the former in its ordinary, the latter in its best, sense—which a reformer had imagined even in his dreams.”<sup>134</sup> In a reformer’s dreams, apparently, the institutions of Plato’s *Republic* are, in the best sense, democratic.

With Plato finally squared amply away, Grote was free to turn to his beloved Aristotle. It would be an understatement to say that he did not live to complete his task. No lifetime would suffice to write, scarcely to read, a treatise of the majestic proportions implied by the two stout volumes he left for Bain and Robertson to edit. And, as the scale of his writings increased,<sup>135</sup> Grote himself was slowing down. He was in his late seventies and, though he secluded himself faithfully in the mornings, Harriet would find him snoozing over his papers. Though the treatment of the logical works is lucid as ever, his discussion of the principle of contradiction as expounded in the *Metaphysics*, which is the last completed portion of his work, betrays a gently wandering mind.

Grote himself thought the account of Aristotle’s psychology, written independently for the third edition of Bain’s *The Senses and the Intellect* in 1868, was the best thing he had done;<sup>136</sup> but the learned world soon consigned the whole of his Aristotelian studies to a common oblivion. Mill’s review is a most delicate act of piety. He praises the book in general terms, without specifying how Grote has advanced the understanding of his subject. He subtly maintains the pretence that almost all he knows about Aristotle he knows from reading Grote, while in taking issue with his views on Protagoras he implies that the old man’s mind was still worth arguing against. In fact, however, there is more of interest in Mill’s review than in all of Grote’s two volumes.

In his review of the *Plato*, Mill had urged that Aristotle was easier than Plato for modern readers to understand. But many of his own remarks strike us as showing a lack of comprehen-

sion of what Aristotle is up to that is not paralleled in his treatment of Plato. In fact, though he knows Aristotle's logical works intimately, and has studied his political, ethical, and rhetorical writings at first hand, his remarks on the psychological, physical, and metaphysical writings show only such knowledge as one might derive from an article in an inferior encyclopedia.<sup>137</sup> Thus he castigates Aristotle for erecting "chance" and "spontaneity" into independent causative principles (482-3), whereas what Aristotle is doing in the relevant passage (*Physics*, II, which Mill had not read) is analyzing the nature of the error committed by those who make that supposition. For the most part, his misunderstandings are of two kinds. In the first place, he supposes that whenever Aristotle discusses such topics as "matter," "form," or "privation," he is isolating *components* of the universe, as though he were carrying out the sort of metaphysical analysis that (we have suggested) Mill himself thought proper; whereas one of Aristotle's avowed aims is to refute the Platonic thesis that such terms as "form" and "soul" denote separate entities.<sup>138</sup> In the second place, more generally, he pays little attention to Aristotle's actual arguments, and hence regularly misconstrues the type of explanation that Aristotle purports to offer. The complaint that analyses in terms of matter and form "give no power of prediction" (503) presupposes that Aristotle's "First Philosophy" is either an abortive attempt at physical theory or a misguided failure even to make the attempt; but to presuppose that is to debar oneself from considering what Aristotle actually says, hence what he might mean by what he says, and hence again what might be the point of saying it. The diatribe against the German "transcendentalists" in the *Plato* review shows a similar blind antipathy to every dimension of understanding save one, that expounded in the *Logic*, and attacks just those qualities in German thought that were already enabling German scholars to take the first significant steps in the re-discovery of Aristotle. When he blames Aristotle and the other Greeks for not believing in Progress, the attack is two-edged. Aristotle's contemporaries had not opened their minds to that form of understanding that might conduce to an endless series of changes in human arrangements, but Mill's mind is still closed (as in his unregenerate Benthamite youth) to any form of understanding not so directed. Nothing in Mill is so disconcerting as the combination of his air of massive tolerance, the breadth and judiciousness of his surveys of the intellectual scene, with a crippling dogmatic narrowness in metaphysical method.

Some aspects of Mill's treatment of the logical issues have been noted already. In this area, too, Mill construes Aristotle as addressing himself with greater or less success to Mill's concerns, without seriously considering whether Aristotle might not legitimately have different concerns of his own. Mostly on the basis of the *Topics*, Aristotle is said to have shown a reliance on simple induction that was possible for him only because its failures were not yet apparent—it was the failure of simple induction that enabled Bacon to look for something better.<sup>139</sup> But the *Topics* is not concerned with induction. Aristotle is only laying down a rule for debates: generalizations must be allowed to stand unless actual counter-examples can be produced. And in the *Analytics* there is no place for a logic of induction at all, but only a process in which one leaps to a conclusion about the way things are. Neither Mill nor Grote alludes to that celebrated image of the rallying of a routed army, in which Aristotle shows how very far his concerns in the matter are from theirs.<sup>140</sup> But perhaps Mill should be understood to mean only that if Aristotle had had a logic of

induction, it could only have been one based on simple induction; and that would probably be true, for “Mill’s Methods” are well named.<sup>141</sup>

The discussion of the principle of contradiction reveals a more complex disagreement. Grote’s treatment is confused, and it is not clear what he thought Aristotle’s doctrine really was, but Mill finds in Grote himself the doctrine that the principle can be established only by induction from particular instances in which it is conceded to hold. As Mill points out, the question is a vital one for a convinced inductivist. But Mill misses Grote’s point, which is the perfectly reasonable one that this is how the sort of *ad hominem* refutation that Aristotle relies on would have to proceed. However, Grote himself seems to be mistaken in supposing that Aristotle is speaking of an argument that one could use against someone who denied the principle of contradiction. Aristotle’s position seems rather to be only that anyone who makes a definite statement must in fact rely on the principle, whatever he may say, because the meaningfulness of his statement rests on the denial of the contradictories of the definitions of the words he uses—if a man abjures statement, he cannot of course be refuted, but he cannot be agreed with either: he forswears communication. The position that Mill takes up against Grote, and in effect against Aristotle, is approximately that which a modern logician would adopt, that the principle of contradiction simply embodies the rule for the correct use of negative terms: a proposition and the negation of its negation are the same proposition. But in going on to say, “the axioms in question . . . have their root in a mental fact which makes it impossible to contravene them” (499-500), Mill courts disaster. If he is to maintain his particularism, a mental fact must be a fact about the mind of some individual on some specific occasion. But about whose mind, at what time, is it a fact that the principle of contradiction cannot be contravened? Worse, to write thus is to imply that what is impossible is not that a proposition and its contradictory should both be true, but that they should both be believed to be true by the same person at the same time. But, since no mental fact prevents me from changing my mind about something I am saying even while I am saying it, our sole ground for saying that such a combination of beliefs is impossible is that they are logically incompatible. This lapse into an indefensible and misplaced psychologism comes strangely from Mill, who as we shall see had elsewhere insisted that a proposition was not proved true by the impossibility of disbelieving it, and it is interesting to find it in such close proximity with the extensive footnote in which Mill fires the last shot in his long campaign against Grote’s subjectivist reading of Protagoras (500n-501n). Mill’s pretence that in this matter his difference from Grote is merely a verbal one is charitable, but untenable: if Grote was unmoved by Mill’s annihilating argument in the *Plato* review (426 ff.), he was incorrigible.<sup>142</sup> Mill could not reconcile himself to the existence in the world of men, otherwise apparently rational, who believed themselves to believe that whatever a man believes “is true for him.”<sup>143</sup>

In a letter to Pasquale Villari on 28 February, 1872, Mill wrote: “You judged truly that the loss of Mr. Grote leaves a great blank in my life. He was the oldest & by far the most valued of my few surviving old friends.”<sup>144</sup> Four months after his review of the *Aristotle* appeared, Mill joined the majority.

## BERKELEY AND BAILEY

The review of Fraser's *Berkeley* has an impressive air of omniscience. As the reviewer follows his subject through the realms of metaphysics, mathematics, medicine, and political economy, he never admits or reveals himself to be at a loss. He compliments Berkeley on the early completion of his system with the sympathetic respect of one who, like him, had known everything at an age when his contemporaries had yet to learn that they knew nothing. In Berkeley, as in Plato, Mill finds a kindred spirit. All three men had put their intellects at the service of a moral passion; had disguised the subtleties of their arguments in an easy and eloquent style where cogency and sophistry intertwined; had used a single intellectual method and style to bring a wide range of phenomena within the compass of a single system; had preferred the manner of the debater to that of the expositor, though Mill published no dialogues. Nonetheless, one is surprised when Mill claims that Berkeley excelled all metaphysicians in "philosophic genius," and bases his claim on a revolution he effected in the state of philosophy.<sup>145</sup> Surely Berkeley's impact was less than Plato's, who found philosophy brick and left it marble, and no greater than that of the other luminaries Mill enumerates. But one glance at Mill's list of Berkeley's major innovations makes all plain. Berkeley made the Mills, father and son, possible, and it is only because this seems a lesser feat to us than it did to Mill that we esteem him less. Bailey wrote shrewdly when he attributed the blind vehemence of Mill's defence of Berkeley's theory of vision to filial piety.<sup>146</sup> It may even be that Bailey's taunt opened Mill's eyes to the relationship, for the Bailey review states reservations about Berkeley's technical competence that the Fraser review expressly withdraws.<sup>147</sup>

Fruitful and suggestive as they are, the three theses that Mill singles out as founding "the true analytic method of studying the human mind" seem neither cogent nor clear. The first one states that "the connection between our impressions of sight and the facts they indicate can be discovered only by direct experience" (457). This view seems odd. What could this independent order of indicated facts be? How is it discovered? If we have independent access to it, how do we decide that its status is that of something indicated rather than indicating? Indeed, Berkeley's point was that there are no such ultimate and privileged facts: all experiences can be related to all other experiences, and the reality to which they are to be referred is nothing but the complex internal structure of the world of experience itself. This point will occupy us later. Meanwhile, the second thesis singled out by Mill is that there can be no abstract general ideas: all ideas are particular, and are ideas of particulars. But what are ideas (Mill speaks here as if they were pictures one stored in one's head), and how are they to be individuated? Mill takes up this problem in connection with the third thesis, but seems unaware of its urgency in relation to the second. Berkeley, indeed, might think there was no problem. If a man can use the phrase "a horse" with reference to a collectivity of experiences which, though its structure is indescribably complex, is familiar enough to work with, there may be no difficulty in principle in his using the phrase "my idea of a horse" in similar vague reliance on his capacity to find his way around his head. But this is, precisely, not an analytic method. Mill here offers a sketch for an analytic version that relies on his distinction (first expounded in the Whately review, 24) between the denotation and connotation of terms. It is baffling in its brevity. A name is "common to an indefinite multitude of individual



objects,” but “is a mark for the properties . . . which belong alike to all these objects” (458). So it seems that only individual substances exist; but properties are identical in all their instantiations, and words are identical on all occasions of their utterance. Plato’s beard, it seems, is far from closely trimmed; and it is not clear just what Mill thinks Berkeley’s denial of general ideas has achieved, or what relation he sees between Berkeley’s contention that every idea must refer to an individual and his own contention that every word must stand for an *indefinite number* of particulars—a contention which it is easier to harmonize with Wittgenstein’s later notions about following rules than with earlier empiricist theories of reference. But these are tangled issues, and Mill’s own footnote at this point shows that they cannot be effectively broached in so restricted a context as this.

The third thesis is that of immaterialism itself: that the system of appearances is self-sufficient, and that nothing is gained by postulating any unobservable “matter” to sustain it. Mill, like most commentators, thinks Berkeley failed to rise to the height of his own argument when he substituted a divine will and consciousness for the missing material substratum. All we need postulate, says Mill in Heracleitean vein, is the *permanent possibility* of sensations, “or, to express it in other words, a law of uniformity in nature, by virtue of which similar sensations might and would have recurred, at any intermediate time, under similar conditions” (464). Mill states the fundamental objection to Berkeley’s move with admirable vigour and succinctness, though he recognizes that it was for the sake of this move that the pious undergraduate devised his system: the same argument that shows ideas to be inseparable from minds also shows that each idea is inseparable from the mind that conceives it and from the occasion of its conception; and the “notion” whereby an idea is held to imply the presence of a spiritual force apt to produce it is groundless. But he shows himself rather insensitive to the reasons that support Berkeley’s unfortunate postulate. For we may ask, as many have asked, what could be meant by a “permanent possibility.” Philosophers since Aristotle have agreed that the word “possibility” cannot be understood as standing for any independent reality or state of affairs, but only for the potentialities of some actual system or structure. Nor does one make the idea of a permanent possibility any more plausible by equating it with a law of nature. A law of nature, one might think, could be no more than a description of a sequence of phenomena, unless that sequence itself is a sample of a coherent reality, or a partial manifestation of a coherent will. Mill underrates the stubbornness of this question. But the argument is probably irresoluble, and there will always be four parties to the debate: those, like Berkeley, who boggle at reducing the fabric of nature to a hypothesis about the minute patch of the fabric that someone has perceived or will perceive; those, like Mill, who cannot surmount the impossibility of specifying what such a reality would be otherwise than in terms of what would in certain circumstances be perceived; those who see both parties as victims of obsessive verbal ideologies whose practical consequences must be identical and which accordingly cannot merit allegiance; and those, the happy majority, with neither the will nor the wit to grapple with the issues involved.

In contrast with the special pleading in relation to the three metaphysical theses, the overall assessment of Berkeley’s activity is impressively just and broadly based. The range and keenness of Mill’s mind seldom appear to better advantage. The review of Bailey—written, like the first of

the Grote reviews, with astonishing speed<sup>148</sup> —and the reply to Bailey’s rejoinder have the same air of reasonableness, sympathy, and force. They convince one that the unfortunate autodidact,<sup>149</sup> of whom Mill speaks with more sorrow than anger, has met with justice tempered with as much mercy as the case allowed; and Packe, for one, takes his word for it that Bailey was demolished.<sup>150</sup> Yet an uneasy suspicion may enter. The weight of prejudice is now on the other side, and the informed modern reader finds Berkeley’s theory of vision as incomprehensible as Bailey found it. Could it be that he had seen something that Mill overlooked? After all, Mill’s account of what Bailey said is not very full. A reading of Bailey confirms our suspicions.

Bailey sometimes expresses himself loosely, but builds a formidable argument against the Berkeleyian position.<sup>151</sup> So far from answering it, Mill seems not to have grasped it; certainly one could not guess from reading Mill what the argument was. The misunderstandings between the two men are far-reaching, and the issues themselves dismayingly complex. I fear that my attempt to clarify the issues will only add new confusions. But an attempt seems necessary.

Since the publication of Berkeley’s *Commonplace Book*, as Mill recognizes in his 1871 review, it has been clear that the separate publication of the *New Theory of Vision* was merely a tactical manoeuvre. Berkeley was already in possession of the arguments whereby the *Principles of Human Knowledge* would show that sensations of touch are as certainly “in the mind” as are sensations of vision. But the *New Theory of Vision* had argued that whereas visual sensations are “in the mind” the sense of touch gives us direct knowledge of an external world, so that by associating our visual sensations with tactile ones we can refer them to the external world that is their cause. This is an absurd position. As Bailey insists, citing Berkeley’s own later works, the five senses are on precisely the same footing in the matter of external reference.<sup>152</sup> Yet, as Mill says (453-4), most philosophers had accepted the theory of vision and rejected general immaterialism, as though the arguments for the former would not sustain the latter. How was this logical monstrosity possible? Partly, as we shall soon see, because of the compelling attractiveness of one particular image; partly, according to Bailey, because Berkeley’s supporters confused the issue of how we judge distances with the quite separate issue of how we initially form the notion of an external world;<sup>153</sup> but partly, no doubt, because if any of the senses is to have the status of sole testimony to reality, it can only be the sense of touch. But the argument demonstrating the priority of touch is an old Aristotelian one from speculative biology, and rests on taking the initial distinction between self and other for granted: an organism must sustain itself by interaction with its environment, and this interaction takes place at the surface of the body, so that the distance senses must refer in a general way to what might impinge on the skin. But this is a far cry from the epistemological reduction in which tangible properties alone are ascribed to reality, and in which the proper objects of vision are held to be subjective phenomena that have the proper objects of touch as their sole objective referent.

The argument of Bailey’s book rests on a foundation that Mill never mentions. This is the distinction between externality, the fact that we locate the objects of vision in a world outside ourselves, and distance, the fact that we locate them within that world at various distances from ourselves. He urges that the distinction between inner and outer is not one that could be learned

from any experience, but must be presumed innate: after all, a newly-hatched turtle immediately makes for the water, which it must therefore perceive as “outside.”<sup>154</sup> In any case, the alleged priority of touch over sight in this matter is a myth: “When an object is printed on the retina, the object is *seen* to be external as directly and immediately as the object is *felt* to be external.”<sup>155</sup> The location of objects at various distances from the observer, on the other hand, is indeed learned in experience, if not actually *from* experience (Bailey finds the last point hard to determine, because human infants are less fully developed at birth than the young of other species, and hence are slower in the development of all their faculties). But the relevant experience is not exclusively tactile, and need not be tactile at all, for visual space is a self-contained system that is generated by the complex structure of appearances as the eyes change conformation and viewpoint. Nor is it the case, as some Berkeleians supposed, that change of viewpoint is a tactual matter because it depends on the muscular sensations of perambulation: children have the full use of their eyes at an age when they lack effective use of their legs and are carried everywhere by their mothers.<sup>156</sup> This visual space is of course correlated with tactile space, but if it were not a space in its own right there could be no correlation. And, again, the initial correlations between the spaces must be intuitive, because they could not be learned.<sup>157</sup> Mill counters this last move by citing the experience of people who have recovered their vision by surgery and at first cannot interpret what they see. Unfortunately he relies on the Cheselden case (264),<sup>158</sup> which does not support him: it is that of a boy who has to catch his cat and hold her before he can tell she is not his dog. But, as Bailey points out,<sup>159</sup> the terms in which Cheselden describes this episode show that the boy could already recognize the feline shape as constant through its various occurrences and transformations, and, apparently, that he could use visual cues to help him catch the cat; what he could not do was correlate this recognized form with a familiar tactile form—in Cheselden’s words, he “often forgot which was the cat, and which the dog.”

Mill’s appeal (262) to the structure of the eye as conclusive evidence for the Berkeleian hypothesis tends to confirm Bailey’s claim that the hypothesis rests essentially on a single argument: that distance must be invisible, because the three-dimensional world projects on the retina a two-dimensional image. This image “painted on our retina,” in the significant phrase used by Mill (253) and unwisely accepted by Bailey, is the true object of vision. It is as though there were a second organ of vision gazing at the retina, which is envisaged as a tiny screen set up inside the head, like a *camera obscura*.<sup>160</sup> And the image on this screen is thought of as like the image of a pinhole camera: flat, simultaneously clear and detailed and sharp in all its parts.<sup>161</sup> It is astonishing that this entirely fictitious notion of the facts of vision should have dominated the psychology of the senses for so long.<sup>162</sup> It is plainly derived, in Mill’s give-away phrase, from “as much of optics as is now commonly taught in children’s books” (253), and in particular from a simple diagram showing how light-rays pass in straight lines from solid objects through the pupil to their images “in the fund of the eye”: in these diagrams, distance is indeed represented by what Berkeley so unintelligibly says it is, “a line directed endwise to the eye” and projecting a single point on the retina.<sup>163</sup> This is gibberish. Optical diagrams do not represent the processes of vision. Bailey points out that only a material line (a thin wire, or something of the sort) could project anything in the fund of the eye, and then only if it stopped short of the eye itself; and if it did project

anything in the fund of the eye it would have to be visible.<sup>164</sup> If what Berkeley is talking about is the line we draw in our diagrams when we are explaining the laws of optics, this is not the sort of thing that can either project or fail to project anything. As Bailey says, “The distance of an object from us is *not* a line presented endwise to the eye: distance is *not* represented on the retina by a point. These are phrases which describe no real facts.” And to Mill’s unfortunate contention (254)—“the distances of objects from us are represented on our retina in all cases by single points; and all points being equal, all such distances must appear equal, or rather, we are unable to see them in the character of distances at all”—he responds, unanswerably: “If distances are seen, and seen to be equal, and yet not seen in the character of distances at all, will the critic be obliging enough to say in what character they are seen?”<sup>165</sup> Mill does not help himself by saying (267) that objects, the spaces between objects, and the distances between objects and the eye, are all projected on the retina in the same way: it only becomes more obvious that he is using a language that is quite inappropriate to the phenomena. Yet Bailey wins only a debating victory. For the reason why Mill is so bewildered by Bailey’s obtuseness in failing to see the obvious is that he is not thinking about the implications of the language he is using: he is simply reminding Bailey of characteristics that the pinhole-camera image and the optical diagram really do have. And Bailey has no right to object, since he himself accepts the language of “painting on the retina” that makes Mill’s remarks seem apposite.

Bailey seems always about to discover the delusive nature of the optical diagram as a representation of the facts of vision, but never quite succeeds. Because the retinal image is literally inside the head, and because visual imagery is in a sense subjective and in that sense “in the mind,” the Berkeleians wrote as if the visual world were originally seen to be inside the head. Bailey sees that this is absurd: “If an external object can be perceived by sight *as such*, it must be perceived also to be distant; to stand apart, or occupy a different portion of space from the being which perceives it.”<sup>166</sup> But he cites the Berkeleian argument in a way that shows he has missed the essential point, that if there are such things as primordial and uninterpreted data of sensation they must be seen neither “as” inside nor “as” outside, since it is from such data that the concepts of inside and outside must themselves be constructed or derived.<sup>167</sup> Similarly, though the retinal image is two-dimensional, our visual data can be neither two-dimensional nor three-dimensional, since those terms derive their meaning from reference to a space within which both solid and flat objects can be distinguished. Bailey recognizes and remarks that within this visual world flat things may be mistaken for solid ones and solid things for flat ones, and that in both cases (whatever Mill may say) the correction is less likely to be supplied by the sense of touch than by a closer look;<sup>168</sup> but he quotes Berkeley’s own fundamental observation, that *visibilia* must in themselves be neither plane nor solid but have figure and shape in another mode, only to reject it as involving a contradiction.<sup>169</sup>

The crucial consideration, that the clear and distinct retinal image is a fiction, is hidden from Bailey and Mill alike. The closest they come to recognizing it is in their discussion of Wheatstone’s recent (1838) demonstration of the stereoscopic mechanisms of binocular vision. It is amusing to see how the two theorists deal with these facts. Bailey attributes the muscular sensations derived from the accommodation of the two eyes to the sense of sight;<sup>170</sup> Mill, for whom

only what can be read from the optical diagram can be visual, associates the same sensations with the sense of touch. If Mill's position seems ridiculous, this is not because Bailey is right, but because this analytical method of dividing labour among the senses and the intellect and other "faculties" cannot be made to work. Bailey claims that the stereoscopic phenomena themselves show that the perception of "geometrical solidity" does not depend on inference; but Mill has only to reply that he never denied there were distinctive visual phenomena associated with distance, he only said that the fact of their association must be inferred. And after all, he says, Wheatstone's researches show no more than that we have to do with two retinal images, not one. Neither theorist shows any awareness that because of the indistinctness of peripheral vision, the shallow field of the lens of the eye, and so on, a viewer must be restlessly active in *constructing* a visual field that would have the characteristics they attributed to the retinal image.<sup>171</sup> Seeing is a complex activity, not a passive reception of stimuli. Bailey comes a little way towards realizing this fact; Mill does not even begin.

The issue between Mill and Bailey resists clarification, not merely because they are victims of a common delusion, but because each is involved in a hopeless confusion of terms. What do they mean by "distance"? Mill speaks as if it were a sort of visible object, the ghost of a dimension; Bailey as if it were a homonymous term referring to disparate properties of visual and tactile spaces. What makes their controversy so hard to follow is that they both assume that the term "distance" must function as the name of an object, of which it might make sense to assert or deny that it was visible; whereas in actuality the word functions in a much more various and elusive way, alluding to a complex and pervasive aspect of our experience, and to the mass of heterogeneous procedures that go by the name of "measurement."<sup>172</sup>

One aspect of this terminological vagueness and confusion was clear to Mill. He complains of Bailey's question-begging use of the term "perception," a term that combines a clear reference to sensory experience with a quite indeterminate claim of some sort of real status for the objects of that experience.<sup>173</sup> Bailey makes facile fun of this legitimate and serious complaint by quoting James Mill—an authority, as he maliciously observes, that every Westminster Reviewer is bound to respect—as saying, "I believe that I see distance and form; in other words, perceive it by the eye, as immediately as I perceive the colour."<sup>174</sup> "Who does not see that the word thus employed has a precise meaning?" he asks, and explains: "When I speak, without any qualifying adjunct, of perceiving an object by sight, I simply mean seeing it; when I speak of perceiving an object by touch, I simply mean feeling it." But distance, form, and colour, which are what James Mill says he perceives, are not objects at all in what seems to be Bailey's sense. The whole question turns on what one may properly be said to "see," and what one should mean when in the context of a psychological discussion one says that a subject "sees" something. And on this subject Bailey complacently wallows in a slough of confusion. Mill, he insists, is wrong to say that when we mistake a plane for a solid "our error consists in *inferring* that it is solid," for "The perception of solidity, or, if the phrase be preferred, the undoubting belief that we see a solid object is, in both cases, equally an impression produced at once upon the mind through the eye, without any process of reasoning or suggestion"; it is an affection of the optic nerve that produces "a certain affection of the mind called *seeing an object*," so that "the third dimension of space is seen" whether one is look-

ing at a real solid thing or being deceived by a *trompe-l'œil*—“The only difference is, that, in one case, the solidity is real, in the other illusory.”<sup>175</sup> But how can a belief be an impression produced through the eye? And how can “seeing an object,” which presupposes that there is an object to be seen, be called an affection of the mind? Even Bailey sees that this is going too far, and adds a cautionary—but, unfortunately, nonsensical—footnote: “We cannot, of course, in the common acceptance of terms, say that we see what does not really exist. . . . It is scarcely necessary to warn the reader that in this discussion *geometrical* solidity alone is intended”; and adds on the next page that such illusions cannot be dispelled simply by the information that they are illusions, “although we no longer infer that the appearance before us is attended with the usual accompaniments of solidity.” One sees what is intended—that the discrimination of shapes by the eye is a purely visual skill, learned by exercising the eye,<sup>176</sup> and that inference is involved only when we suppose that other sorts of sensory experience would be correlated with the visual data—but Mill is hardly to be blamed if he treats such bumbling with contempt.<sup>177</sup> Mill, for his part, uses the word “see” in a programmatic way that is consistent both with itself and with his project of analytic reduction: one can be said to “see” only what can be distinguished on the retinal image in the optical diagram that purports to show how the eye works. Everything else is attributed, on principle and without further ado, to the inferential and associative activities of the intellect, even though (as Bailey justly remarks) no inference can be detected, the grounds and conclusion of the alleged inference cannot be isolated, and no known or conceivable process of association could have the results claimed. Never mind. What the retinal image cannot contain must be contributed by the intellect. It is as though Mill were committing an aggravated form of the error he was later to stigmatize in his father’s *Analysis*, supposing that the word “see” contained a reference to the physical organ of sight as part of its meaning.<sup>178</sup>

Although Mill is right when he says that Bailey’s use of the word “perception” fogs all the issues, Bailey seems justified in rejoicing that to adopt Mill’s vocabulary and speak of “sensation” and “inference” would be “to adopt the theory which I controvert,” since the whole question at issue is whether the alleged distinction can be made.<sup>179</sup> And he might have added that the word “sensation” itself is fraught with ambiguities. Berkeley, as quoted by Bailey,<sup>180</sup> uses “sensations” to mean “objects purportedly perceived,” for he gives the sun and the stars as examples of sensations; Bailey uses “sensations” rather as some later philosophers have used the phrase “sense data”; Mill uses the word to mean “acts of sensing.” The trouble is not that the wrong words are used, but that there is no consistent use of any set of words to make all the necessary distinctions.

On the main issue, Bailey has much the best of the argument. If “distance is in reality a mere tactual conception,” it seems impossible that this could be “mistaken for a visual perception.”<sup>181</sup> Surely “We cannot believe we have any particular sensation, unless we either *have it* or *have had it* at some prior period.”<sup>182</sup> It is absurd to argue, as Mill does (259), that our neglect of the tactile content of our visual percepts is like our failure to attend clearly and distinctly to the meanings of familiar words: for, of course, we *can* distinctly recall the meaning of any familiar word, if we choose to attend to it,<sup>183</sup> but we cannot by any analogous feat of attention recover the alleged tactile content of our visual impressions of distance. Mill admits that our notions of tactile space are much vaguer and less consistent than our notions of visual space.<sup>184</sup> This admission in itself gives

his contention that three-dimensional space is fundamentally tactile a wildly paradoxical air. Unfortunately, he also accepts that “the mind . . . does not dwell upon the sign,<sup>185</sup> . . . but rushes at once from the sign to the thing signified” (257).<sup>186</sup> But then, asks Bailey in triumph, “In what state must the mind be when we are looking at external objects? What is it that the understanding is engaged with? A neglected sign and an indistinct idea, between which the mind is thus bandied about, must assuredly produce a very obscure and unsteady discernment, while, in point of fact, nothing can be clearer or firmer than our perception of space in all directions, when we look round the room or out of the window.”<sup>187</sup> But Bailey is still using that word “perception” in a way that begs the question at issue. The confusion is hopeless. Mill’s protégé Alexander Bain managed to clarify some of the issues, as we shall now see, but it is doubtful whether Mill fully appreciated his contribution.

## BAIN AND PSYCHOLOGY

Samuel Johnson took care, when writing his parliamentary reports, “that the *Whig Dogs* should not have the best of it.” Mill and his associates took a similarly functional view of the periodical press,<sup>188</sup> and the review of Bain is no more a work of dispassionate judgment than the reviews of Grote. Bain supplied Mill with up-to-date scientific data for his *Logic*, and reviewed it in 1843 in the *Westminster*, to which he had begun to contribute in 1840.<sup>189</sup> In 1846 he was a summer guest of the Grotes at Burnham Beeches;<sup>190</sup> Mill recommended him for the Examinership in Logic and Mental Philosophy at the University of London;<sup>191</sup> Grote got him appointed to the new chair of English and Logic at Aberdeen,<sup>192</sup> and supplied an account of Aristotle’s psychology for the third edition of *The Senses and the Intellect* as well as a history of ancient psychology and ethics for Bain’s *Mental and Moral Science* of 1868; Bain and Grote joined Mill in annotating James Mill’s *Analysis*. Bain wrote a life of one Mill and an appreciation of the other, and edited Grote’s posthumous works. It seems a small world these intellectual radicals came to move in. In the circumstances, Mill’s suggestion (342n) that he only decided to review Bain after carefully weighing the respective merits of his work and Spencer’s seems disingenuous—especially when we learn that Mill had advised Parker to publish Bain’s first volume, and joined Grote in guaranteeing him against loss in publishing the second.<sup>193</sup> In the *Autobiography*, issued posthumously under Mill’s own name, the pretence of impartiality was dropped.<sup>194</sup>

Mill’s review makes much of a distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* schools of psychology. Bain does not mention this distinction, and it is a puzzling one. Psychologists of both persuasions seem equally *a posteriori* in their methods: they seek to uphold their views by citing facts in approximately the same amounts—though not always the same facts.<sup>195</sup> If anything, for reasons that will appear, it is the supposed apriorist who is more ready to appeal to experience, the self-styled aposteriorist who relies on dogma.<sup>196</sup> Basically, as Mill insists they must, both follow the same method: that of reducing the complex operations of a living organism to the development in experience, in accordance with regular and predictable processes, of the simplest possible original operations. All and only what cannot be acquired must be assigned to instinct. Where the

two schools differ is in what they say when confronted by a complex phenomenon of which neither can demonstrate the analysis. They then dogmatize in different directions. The apriorists, instead of acknowledging a pragmatic limit to analysis, announce the discovery of an ultimate and forever irreducible intuition or instinct; the aposteriorists invent a spurious analysis in terms of whatever entities their method postulates. Mill indeed recognizes (350) the existence of this temptation and the importance of resisting it; but in fact neither he nor Bain shows any scruples in the way they invoke the “principle of association” which Mill claims “extends to everything” (347).<sup>197</sup>

As an example of the divergent dogmatisms of the two schools we may consider the alleged infinity of time and space. Apriorists, Mill says, claim that the mind’s belief in this infinity is instinctive, on no better ground than that nothing in our experience can be infinite; but the true explanation is not far to seek. Because we have no experience of a spatial or temporal point without neighbours, whenever we imagine such a point we imagine it (from force of habit) as neighboured; hence, we can imagine no limits to time and space, and therefore find their finitude unthinkable and call them “infinite” (345-7).<sup>198</sup> But, we may ask, from what experience does the alleged association proceed? We know places where there are things, and places where there are no things; times when things happen, and times when nothing much happens. But in what sort of experience do moments of time and points of space, as such, form elements? What is supposed to be the difference between a time when time ends and a time after which there is infinite time in which nothing happens? The alleged extrapolation from “experience” seems plausible only if one allows virtually any relation between any sort of real or ideal units to count as a case of “association.”

Bain, though this hardly appears from the review, was not prepared to fudge his psychology as Mill did. His attempt to anchor his associationism to the physiology of the nervous system effectively prevented him from doing so. The “chemical union” which Mill praises Hartley for introducing (347) allows one, as Bailey complained, to use the term “association” of almost any form of explanation that relates an experience to previous experiences or alleged constituents.<sup>199</sup> Bain’s speculative account of the processes of the nervous system eschews such vagueness. Knowledge is produced by the accumulation of patterns of electrical discharges, each of which records something known and figures in memory simply by being repeated. The patterns can combine mechanically, but cannot fuse. Bain is thus committed, as Mill was not, to the programme of actually discerning and disentangling the elements whose association is postulated. In the end, this scrupulous atomism makes associationism implausible by multiplying the required number of brain traces beyond credibility;<sup>200</sup> but at least we can guess what form an associationist explanation should take, which with Mill remains forever mysterious.

It was because Mill admitted “chemical” unions that he could with a good conscience invoke the “complete Baconian induction” whereby the apparently visual phenomena of distance are shown to be ultimately tactual in purport. As early as Leibniz’s *Nouveaux Essais* apriorists had complained against the aposteriorist assumption that an “innate” faculty must be one manifested in infancy: the point, they said, is not the moment in time at which an ability is first displayed, but



whether it admits of being analyzed without remainder into elements previously given in experience. But to say that a “chemical” union has taken place is to admit that such an analysis is in principle impossible; the issue can then be settled, if at all, only by appealing (as Mill does) to the circumstances in which an idea is first manifested.

It is true that Bain, who lacks Mill’s excuse, himself sometimes makes the assumption against which Leibniz complained. But Bain’s logical acumen was rather blunt. In fact, though a man of great learning and industry and a strong sense of fact, he had little gift for philosophical analysis. The pieces of his work are generally sober and well-informed, but are not always consistent among themselves; and this is nowhere more evident than in what he says of visual perception.<sup>201</sup> In the Book on “The Senses,” where his account is firmly linked to the physiology of eye and brain, the Berkeleian doctrine of the priority of touch has no place, and colour appears among *visibilia* as merely one of the means of differentiation of visible objects. But in the Book on “The Intellect” colour is back in its old place as the unique *visibile*,<sup>202</sup> and statements requiring the Berkeleian doctrine are interspersed with others more compatible with the doctrine worked out earlier.

Yet there can be little doubt as to what the overall theory is to which his account tends, and it differs far more widely from Mill’s than Mill is aware, even though the difference is less plainly marked in the first edition than in the later revisions. First, the “retinal image” as the static quasi-object of vision vanishes, and with it vanishes the independent significance of the findings of optics. “The optical sensibility does not give even visible form”;<sup>203</sup> the visual presentations at any moment “are but the hint to a mental construction” to which we carelessly attribute the qualities of a static picture;<sup>204</sup> in fact, temporal and spatial distinctions are revealed by movements, those involving vision being not parasitic upon but parallel to those involving touch.<sup>205</sup> The “suggestion of locomotive effort” is at the heart of our sense of real distance;<sup>206</sup> but the notion of extension “when full grown is a compound of locomotion, touch, and vision, any one implying and recalling all the others.”<sup>207</sup> Thus “extension, or space, as a quality, has *no other* origin and no other meaning than the association of these different sensitive and motor effects.”<sup>208</sup> Here is Berkeley’s Berkeley, restored to intelligibility, with the opticians’ Berkeley relegated to limbo at last; and Bain is able to recognize without embarrassment that our spatial sensibility incorporates such ineluctably visual elements as a sense of expansive compresence.<sup>209</sup>

Another vast area of confusion vanishes on the very first page. The old controversy had assumed that there was a problem about how we get from subject to object, from inner experience to outer world. But now we read that subject and object, outer and inner, are concepts that can only be acquired in contradistinction from each other;<sup>210</sup> and the baffling talk about “inside the mind” and “outside the mind,” as though the mind were the skull, is set aside just as firmly, though rather less clearly.<sup>211</sup> This done, we are free to return to the commonsense view that the notion of an external world rests on the experience of resistance to our bodies<sup>212</sup> —a factor which, Bain noted with mild surprise as soon as it was safe to do so, Mill was “almost singular” in overlooking.<sup>213</sup>

Mill notes as one of the merits of Bain's work that it rests on a solid account of neural activity. But his version of the theory of vision, in which he virtually claims that Bain agrees with him despite some over-emphasis on the activity of the eye muscles, shows how far he is from appreciating the difference this makes. For example, Mill still feels able to talk about the retinal image as a picture.<sup>214</sup> But, whether Bain was aware of it or not, the ground rules for such discussions had changed. From now on, one had a choice. Either one took account of the central nervous system, in which case the old-fashioned compartmentalization of the senses became irrelevant, or one confined oneself to epistemology and phenomenology, in which case Mill's style of generic analysis became inappropriate. Psychology could never be the same again.

Mill remarks shrewdly on the different levels on which the different sections of Bain's work proceed. The Book on "The Emotions," as he justly observes (361), is no more than a natural history; that on "The Will" is a sustained effort at reductive analysis in the old style of James Mill and the eighteenth century generally. But the Book on "The Senses" belongs to a new age, in which psychology would be turned into a positive science by recognizing that its first task was to establish what is in fact the case. Because of this disparate character of its parts, Bain's work could be regarded equally as a late production of speculation or an early product of science.<sup>215</sup> Mill, naturally enough, can see it only as a continuation of his own work with new aids. Yet we should be careful not to make too much of the differences between the two men. There is one essential point in the theory of vision that is common to both: that visual data are originally "signs" whose interpretation must be learned in experience and whose meaning is to be explained in terms of experience. This point holds true whether or not new-born animals have in-born tendencies to react to stimuli, of whatever kind.

It is in the Book on "The Will," as Mill suggests (354), that Bain shows his originality as a psychologist of the old school by trying to reduce all the phenomena of animal action to the terms of a new and very simple model: all skills are acquired by the modification of an original entirely random and generalized activity of the nervous system and hence of the muscles, and the modification is effected by simple reinforcement or inhibition through pleasure or pain. This implausible model seems to rely excessively on the singular helplessness of the neonate human. It is curious to see the enthusiasm with which Mill seizes on the description of the new-born lambs (358-9), a description which is made to support Bain's case only by the observer's gratuitous insistence on the randomness of the motions he describes. One wonders how many lambs would survive if their lives depended on such a series of chance contacts as is here supposed, without any initial tropism or IRM's. And one wishes Bain had indicated how he would have accounted for Bailey's new-born turtles, trekking to the sea.<sup>216</sup> It is precisely in this sort of model-building that Bain is weakest. It is his combination of unimaginativeness and implausibility (together, of course, with the obsolescence of all old science) that explains why we no longer read him but still read Hobbes, who knew so much less but suggested so much more.

Mill gravely understates (364) the oddness of one aspect of Bain's account of volition, his version of the development of the moral ideas. This is very different from Mill's own. Bain thinks of morality as wholly negative, a system of inhibitions built up in the first instance entirely by corpo-

ral punishment.<sup>217</sup> His dourness seems appropriate to the reputation of the calvinist and granitic city where he spent most of his life. From this point of view Mill's utilitarianism is not a theory of morals at all, but of something else. The phrase "moral approval" is explicitly called a misnomer, on the grounds that only *disapproval* can be moral.<sup>218</sup>

I have already noted Bain's account of the origin of our sense of the externality of the world. He ends his work by citing an account of the physical world tantamount to Mill's notorious formula, "permanent possibility of sensation"—cited, not from Mill, but from the *Idéologie* of Destutt Tracy. This fits in with the basic principle of Bain's work, played down in Mill's review: the principle of relativism, that consciousness can only be consciousness of *differences and changes*.<sup>219</sup> It follows immediately from this principle that the mind can have no knowledge of any "absolute." This relativism goes naturally with the discovery of the ceaseless activity of the nervous system, and it is plainly hard for Mill to adjust to it. The older philosopher is hampered by the empiricist traditions of atomism and reification, which turn the mind into a warehouse of ideas, and knowledge into an assemblage of separate facts about separate things. Thus he has little to say (beyond a faint protest) about Bain's doctrine of belief.<sup>220</sup> "As, in my view," says Bain, "Belief is essentially related to the active part of our being, I have reserved the consideration of it to the conclusion of the Treatise on the Will."<sup>221</sup> To believe anything is to act as if it were the case; hence, by extension, to have a propensity to act so; or, in cases where (as in believing that one would have enjoyed living in ancient Rome) no prospect of action arises, to be in a disposition that *would have* led to action had the occasion arisen. Mill is understandably puzzled to understand how such a position could be consistently developed and defended, and it must be admitted that (like much of Bain's work) it raises no fewer problems than it purports to solve, but it is at least clear that it forms part of a philosophy of process in which Bain feels so much at home that the details of its statement do not trouble him much. Precisely the same difference in mental set appears in Mill's later exchange with Bain on the subject of "potential energy."<sup>222</sup> Mill, with impeccable logic, and citing Hamilton for his definitions, points out that what is called "potential energy" is really potential motion. If it is anything at all it is a real force; but it seems to be postulated only as a fiction, to reconcile the observed phenomena with the dogma of the conservation of energy. But working scientists are notoriously insensitive to considerations of this sort.

Mill's support (365-7) of Bain's determinism also conceals a difference in approach, though not one that Bain emphasizes. Bain, like Mill, allows no validity to the "consciousness" of freedom, and for the reasons that Mill gives. But what is hidden from consciousness for Bain is not best described, as it is by Mill, as a hidden law obeyed by our volitions. For Bain, mental and neural phenomena run in parallel and do not interact. To every mental state answers a brain state. And the brain is an electrical machine, whose later states are accordingly a function of its earlier states and inputs. In fact, as many later writers were to point out, consciousness in Bain's theory is fundamentally misleading.<sup>223</sup>

Mill's comment on Ruskin's inadvertent aposteriorism in *Modern Painters*, apparently a casual aside in his treatment of the classification of emotions, is more important than it looks.<sup>224</sup> Aesthetic feelings and artistic practice have been strongholds of apriorists at least since Hutcheson

published his *Inquiry*,<sup>225</sup> and perhaps since the neoplatonists and Plato himself: a sense of beauty seems to resist derivation from or analysis into any other mental phenomenon. Bain spends a surprising amount of space on various attempted reductions,<sup>226</sup> but he shows little aptitude for these topics, and his later editions rely with relief on the authority of Sully. Ruskin, though some disparage his taste and reasoning power, has never been accused of deficiency in the *amount* of his aesthetic sensitivity. Perhaps Mill (himself found deficient in such sensibility—by Bain!) is hinting that it is not only philistine Scots who are prepared to reduce the aesthetic sense to a more general form of susceptibility.

What Mill says about the necessarily negative nature of the evidence for apriorism (349) sheds some light on a puzzling argument in *Utilitarianism*. Mill there argues that questions of ultimate ends do not admit of proof in the strict sense, but that the fact that each man desires his own happiness affords the sole possible proof that the happiness of all men is desirable.<sup>227</sup> Apparently, then, Mill is speaking of “proof” in some restricted or metaphorical sense, but it is not clear just what this sense should be. In the present passage, where Mill uses almost the same language,<sup>228</sup> the nerve of the argument is exposed: that the failure to disprove a thesis for which there is *prima facie* empirical evidence, though not proving the thesis true, must be allowed to serve in lieu of demonstration in all cases where it is logically impossible that anything better could be found. That would make good sense in the *Utilitarianism* passage. The things that ought to be desired must be among those things that can be desired, and the only logically possible way of showing that a thing can be desired is to show that it is in fact desired. “Ought” implies “can,” and possibility is parasitic on actuality. It always remains logically possible that someone should discover an actual, and hence possible, and hence possibly proper, object of desire that is not reducible to a component of happiness; but no one has yet, despite all endeavours, managed to do so.<sup>229</sup> Until they do, some form of utilitarianism must hold the field.<sup>230</sup> It is not, admittedly, clear that Mill means to argue to this effect in *Utilitarianism*, but his general aim of making the moral sciences truly scientific would lead us to expect him to follow the same lines in ethics as in psychology generally. And, just as in general psychology his analyses are rendered nugatory by his admission of canons of association according to which anything may be “chemically” analyzed into anything, so in ethics his argument becomes trivial because (as Bain complained) even the most self-abnegatory actions are interpreted as self-seeking through an analogously magical sort of transformation.

## TAINÉ AND THE UNDERSTANDING

Taine was forty-two when Hachette published his *grande pâtée philosophique* in April, 1870,<sup>231</sup> but he had been meditating it for twenty years: a theoretical underpinning for the historical works by which he is better remembered.<sup>232</sup> If one can show that all knowledge comes from experience, differences in style should reflect differences in experience: literary, artistic, and social histories should be explicable in terms of cultural traditions that could in turn be ultimately explained by

such factors as climate and terrain—Taine had nothing but contempt for George Grote, whose history treated politicians as free agents.<sup>233</sup>

Like Mill, Taine was something of an outsider in relation to the cultural establishment of his country. But whereas Mill and associates could use the forces of Scottish irredentism and northern nonconformism, not to mention the private empire of India House, and set up University College in Gower Street to be a counterweight to the port-sodden churchmanship of the ancient universities, Taine was up against a more tightly knit and centrally controlled cultural empire. Outside the official establishment there was nothing: one had to choose between taking it over oneself, and finding a niche in which to pursue (as so many French intellectuals have done since) one's private intellectual aims in the abundant leisure its ample rhythms afforded. As a youth, Taine was denied the prizes and professorships he sought, being thought too flashy in his brilliance and too unstable in his politics: but at thirty-five his growing literary fame won him appointment first as Examiner to Saint-Cyr and later (in succession to Viollet-le-Duc) as professor of aesthetics at the *École des Beaux-Arts*—though even then an attempt by the military authorities to terminate the controversial appointment had to be circumvented by the interposition of the Emperor himself. Nonetheless, the two men shared a feeling of being in an embattled minority. Thanking Taine for his series of articles on the *Logic* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Mill says that when he began to publish he was almost alone in his views, and that even now the empiricist philosophers were outnumbered twenty to one;<sup>234</sup> while Taine predicted that his own psychological work would find only a hundred readers in France and a hundred in the rest of Europe.<sup>235</sup>

Both in his review and elsewhere, Mill treats this split in the philosophic community as following national lines, suggesting that both Cousin's idealism and Hamilton's apriorism, against which Taine and he were pitting themselves, were Germanic in inspiration. But his letter to Taine repudiates this ascription of national affiliations to schools of thought. The French think of empiricism as peculiarly English, the English as typically French. In reality, intuitionism and empiricism are related dialectically: the dominance of either calls forth the other as its antithesis. Which of them happens to prevail in any particular milieu at any particular time is quite fortuitous; at the time of writing, Germany itself is swinging towards the empiricist pole. And Taine himself at one time spoke of Mill's philosophy as a re-working of Kant.<sup>236</sup>

Mill's review of Taine, like that of Bain, is not the first meeting of the two minds, but an episode in a long relationship. At first, Taine had not been deeply impressed: he found Jowett more progressive. "On vante beaucoup ici," he wrote in 1860, "la *Logique* de Stuart Mill et la *Psychologie physiologique* de Bain. Il y a du mérite, mais ce ne sont pas des génies."<sup>237</sup> But in 1861 he devoted to the *Logic* a series of articles which he later published as a monograph,<sup>238</sup> and in the preface to the latter version he sings to another tune: "En ce moment, la scène est vide en Europe. . . . Dans ce grand silence, et parmi ces comparses monotones, voici un maître qui s'avance et qui parle. On n'a rien vu de semblable depuis Hegel."<sup>239</sup> Mill acknowledged the accuracy of Taine's account of his views,<sup>240</sup> which appeared yet again as part of the *History of English Literature*,<sup>241</sup> and much of it was incorporated, sometimes with little change even in the wording, in Taine's own account of

induction in *De l'Intelligence*. It is therefore not surprising that Mill finds little in this part of the book to quarrel with.

Mill's review, with its reference to the foundation of knowledge on images, might mislead the uninitiated into thinking that Taine's background in associationism is the antiquated French ultra-Lockianism of Condillac, rather than the North-British neo-Hartleianism of the Mills and Bain. Taine himself thought otherwise: his original Preface acknowledges a debt to Condillac for one point only, and claims Mill, Bain, and Herbert Spencer as his chief creditors.<sup>242</sup> The fourth edition of 1883 supplements this general avowal with three specific acknowledgements: to Condillac, for the theory that all general ideas "se réduisent à des signes"; to Mill, for the theory of induction; and to Bain, for the account of the perception of space.<sup>243</sup> A letter of January, 1873, gives the reason for this explicitness: the British had treated his book as a mere re-hash of their own work. He virtually accuses Spencer of plagiarizing his views for the revised edition of *Principles of Psychology* and falsely claiming that Taine got them from him. He continues:

Il dit dans sa seconde préface que *L'Intelligence* "a fait connaître en France quelques-unes de ses maîtresses conceptions." Cela est inexact. Ceux à qui j'ai emprunté sont John Stuart Mill et Bain (Induction, sensation musculaire donnant l'idée de l'étendue), et je les ai cités tout au long. Je n'ai emprunté à Spencer qu'une phrase.

...

Pardonnez-moi ces revendications; je me suis aperçu en lisant les Revues anglaises que l'on faisait de mon livre une simple imitation, une transcription française des théories anglaises.—M. Stuart Mill, dans un article de juin 1870, a bien voulu que mon travail était entièrement original, et, à mon sens, cela se voit par la méthode employée, par les théories de détail et par les théories d'ensemble.<sup>244</sup>

The "article of June 1870" is of course the review included in this volume, from which, unlike Taine, I would have gathered that Mill was less impressed by the book's intrinsic merits than by its significance as portending a possible change in the climate of French opinion. Certainly he specifies no respect in which the book has advanced the study of its subject, treating its chief departure from his own views as a mere abandonment of the book's own principles.<sup>245</sup> But were the abandoned principles Taine's, or Mill's? A letter of 1872 suggests that Taine's intentions were far from empiricist, for one of the chief matters in which he claims originality is his metaphysical reduction of the individual to a mere series of events, "tous les événements de la nature n'étant que des formes diverses de la pensée."<sup>246</sup> And his earlier essay on Mill had strikingly contrasted Mill's approach with his own: "This theory of science is a theory of English science. . . . The operations, of which he constructs science, are those in which the English excel all others, and those which he excludes from science are precisely those in which the English are deficient more than any other nation. He has described the English mind whilst he thought to describe the human mind."<sup>247</sup>

Acknowledging Taine's thanks for his review, Mill apologizes both for its brevity and for its unformativeness. "Je sais combien cette notice est insuffisante mais j'ai voulu, au premier moment possible, attirer l'attention des hommes éclairés sur un livre dont la publication en France

me paraît destinée à faire époque. Votre livre n'a pas besoin d'être interprété. Il suffit qu'on le lise, car vous possédez parmi tant d'autres qualités, le génie de la clarté."<sup>248</sup> And he goes on to explain more fully where he differs from Taine about the status of axioms. His account of this doctrine had indeed been compressed to the point of unintelligibility, and seems in fact to have been derived from the earlier and cruder version in the monograph on Mill (according to which "abstraction" affords "an intermediate course between intuition and observation, capable of arriving at principles, as it is affirmed that the first is, capable of arriving at truths, as we find that the second is")<sup>249</sup> rather than from the more refined version adumbrated in *De l'Intelligence*.<sup>250</sup> Taine's mature doctrine seems to be as follows. The empirical concepts and generalizations reached by induction, even when based on intelligible relationships and not merely on observed regularities, can never be extrapolated to remote situations with more than probability (449). But the concepts that figure in the axioms of the exact sciences are not so much abstractions from experience as anticipations of experience, ideals to which experience can never be shown to conform (414). The laws of the exact sciences are disguised analytic statements, depending for their truth on the analyses and reconstructions on which the concepts contained in them ultimately depend (485). The laws of geometry and mechanics therefore have to do not with actual but with possible things. Their axioms depend not, as in Mill's empiricism, on likenesses recognized through an associative process, but on the identity of formal properties (480-6). In explicit contrast with Mill, Taine opposes the perceived *likeness* of two geometrical figures to the recognized *identity* of a geometrical construction. The repetition with which science deals is identical recurrence and not repeated likeness: we can thus be certain that identical causes will have identical effects, and in this sense the principle of induction is proved. But it is for experience to decide whether what we are confronted with is the same cause (540); scientific laws are universally applicable, but it is for observation to decide when they are exemplified (484-6). This position is indeed, as Taine claims, very far from Mill's. He agrees with Mill against the Germans in going from the particular to the general, instead of starting with a *Weltanschauung* and hoping that there will be somewhere for the chips to fall;<sup>251</sup> but his work cannot be brought within the boundaries of associationism. It seems to foreshadow the more sophisticated empiricism of such theorists as Nagel, for whom a scientific theory has the "necessity" of a mathematical equation but needs to be supplemented by less formal understandings as to how far any real situation may be deemed to conform to its specifications.<sup>252</sup> In particular, Mill seems to be wrong in accusing Taine of exploiting the ambiguity of the concept of sameness: on the contrary, his theory rests on contrasting resemblance with identity. But, although Mill may have missed the point of Taine's main argument, what he says is perfectly true of some of the incidental discussions. In a passage on geometrical proofs, Taine does indeed confuse identity with exact likeness, and derives the mathematical concept of equality from just this ambiguous notion of "the same."<sup>253</sup>

Perhaps from sheer incredulity, Mill disregards Taine's point that axioms about triangles are always valid and would always be applicable even if nothing came near enough to being triangular for this applicability to be very useful. The difference between Taine's language and Mill's is instructive: Mill, in his letter, speaks of the concepts of the exact sciences as idealizations of experience;<sup>254</sup> Taine calls them anticipatory constructions. It is this seemingly trivial difference in ter-

minology that enables Mill to say, “if the concept itself is the product of experience, the truth of the properties comes to us from the same source” (446). Taine, like most later thinkers, regards concepts as constructs rather than as products; and, if “product” were indeed the right word for them, whether the consequences alleged by Mill would follow must depend on the manner of their “production.” Here again, however, Taine’s carelessness or inconsistency lays him open to an objection that Mill makes more clearly in his letter than in his review. Even if one admitted the *a priori* character of such concepts as that of a straight line, he says, so that its properties were revealed to intuition rather than drawn from experience, “on peut dire que cette observation directe ne pourrait nous révéler que les propriétés du produit regardé comme conception mentale, c.à.d. des faits psychologiques, et qu’elle ne nous dit rien sur les lois générales de l’univers.”<sup>255</sup> For Taine had written, “The propositions of these sciences are not merely probable but certain beyond our little world; at all events, we believe it to be so, and, moreover, are unable to believe or conceive that it is otherwise” (450). Is this not just that “inconceivability of the opposite” whose adequacy as a test of truth Mill had challenged fourteen years before?<sup>256</sup> Not quite, perhaps, for what Taine says we cannot doubt is not that something is true but that its truth is necessary. But what sort of necessity is he really invoking? Logical, or merely psychological? Mill would concede the latter but deny its relevance. A mere habit of expectation has no evidential force, and Taine’s programme had been to substitute something stronger. Nor is this a momentary lapse of Taine’s pen. Years later we find him affirming that Kant’s question about the possibility of synthetic judgments *a priori* is a psychological one, to be settled by observation in the manner of Bain and Mill (not to mention himself), and that such observation shows them to be of two sorts. Some are disguised analytic statements: “Les autres ne sont pas valables; ils ne sont que des généralisations ou des anticipations de l’expérience; *a priori*, ils sont dépourvues [*sic*] de toute autorité; l’autorité qu’ils ont leur est conférée toute entière *a posteriori* par les expériences qui les confirment.”<sup>257</sup> What sort of psychological test could show whether a statement is a generalization from experience or an axiom in a deductive science one cannot imagine, and Taine’s attempt at a novel solution to Kant’s problem breaks down after all in total confusion. If Taine really did wish to found his epistemology on psychology, Mill was right after all: the claim of unrestricted validity for the axioms is as false to Taine’s principles as it is to Mill’s, though not exactly in the way Mill has in mind.

## MILL AND THE OPEN MIND

Scattered and occasional as they have been, our remarks seem to have tended after all towards one general conclusion. Mill prided himself on his open-mindedness,<sup>258</sup> and Bain concurred.<sup>259</sup> But on the topics covered in this volume this claim seems hardly justified. We saw him missing the main points in Bailey, misrepresenting Bain, using Grote as a peg to hang his own pet notions on, scrutinising Taine merely for possible agreements and disagreements, and professing, at the start of his review of Bain, an impartiality between schools of psychology that the associated correspondence belies. Again, though early a champion of traditional formal logic against the psychologizers, he was so far from seeing the significance of the transformation of logic that began with Boole and was already under way in his middle years that Jevons could see



his prestige as the main obstacle to logical reform. This judgment casts no discredit on Mill. A man of his precocity cannot be expected or required to be an innovator in old age, and the head-start of twenty-five years that he claims his father's forcing methods gave him could end by leaving him with too much to unlearn. Besides, open-mindedness is not soft-headedness. A man, unlike a government, is not called on to condone manifest errors, and all the incidental blindnesses and dogmatisms we have noted stem from his resolute opposition to a doctrine he believed to be fraught with immediate moral and political dangers.<sup>260</sup> All the same, a tension remains between the dogmatism he shows and the receptivity he claims. That this claim is so widely conceded is partly to be accounted for by the marvellous, almost hypnotic, breadth and equanimity of his expository style: his unexampled air of unruffled comprehensiveness and imperturbable reasonableness. Bain, a dull writer, completely missed this quality: "The language faculty in him was merely ordinary," he says.<sup>261</sup> But Mill himself knew how much he owed to the discipline of the civil service, which taught him so to cast a controversial minute that its recommendations would seem acceptable and even inevitable to his reluctant masters.<sup>262</sup> Alan Donagan has commented on the perfect expressiveness of Mill's controversial style, in which passion never appears as a fatty layer over the sinew of argument; but in taking this wiry force as index of a sincere heart he fails to note that it may represent a dexterity that distracts the eye from the workings of a devious mind.<sup>263</sup> When we consider the great speed at which some of these pieces were written we can only be astonished at the smooth force with which facts and arguments seem to conspire together in a natural order to draw Mill's conclusions for him. Only an independent reference to the books reviewed and the facts alleged can reveal the strong acids that were needed to blend such heterogeneous nutrients.

## NOTES

[1] Alexander Bain, John Stuart Mill. *A Criticism: with Personal Recollections* (London: Longmans, 1882), 36.

[2] J. S. Mill, *Autobiography*, ed. Jack Stillinger (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), 72: the meetings were held "two mornings in every week, from half past eight till ten, at which hour most of us were called off to our daily occupations." Their hostess called them "The Brangles," and described the subjects of their deliberations as "the quantification of the predicate and the inconceivability of the opposite"—Lady Eastlake, *Mrs. Grote*, 2nd ed. (London: Murray, 1880), 44; the more formal title of this society is given by J. M. Robson in his "Textual Introduction" to *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive, Collected Works*, VII-VIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), VII, liii. (Hereafter cited as *Logic, CW*, with volume and page numbers.)

[3] *Autobiography*, 72-4.

[4] *Logic, CW*, VII, 143.

[5] Oskar Alfred Kubitz, *The Development of John Stuart Mill's System of Logic*, Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, XVIII, No. 1 (Urbana, March, 1932), 33. This careful study remains indispensable for a full examination of the relation between the *Logic* and the Whately review.

[6] Letter from Mill to John Sterling, 20-22 Oct., 1831, in *The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill*, ed. F. E. Mineka, *Collected Works*, XII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 77. (Hereafter cited as *EL, CW*, with volume and page numbers.) In a letter from Mill to Gustave D'Eichthal on 6 Dec., 1831 (*EL, CW*, XII, 92), Whately figures as "One of the most 'progressif' men in this country," and in a letter to Macvey Napier of 1 May, 1846, he is still "a very remarkable & even eminent man" (*EL, CW*, XIII, 701).

[7] Richard Whately, 1787-1863: Principal of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, 1825; published his *Logic* in 1826 and his *Rhetoric* in 1828, both based on articles he contributed, probably about 1822, to the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* (London, 1817-1845); Archbishop of Dublin, 1831. Mill's enthusiasm is to be explained not only by Whately's liberal views but by the nature of his intellectual concerns: he succeeded Nassau Senior as Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, and endowed a chair of Political Economy at Trinity College, Dublin.

[8] *Logic, CW*, VII, 206. This passage was added to the sixth edition of 1865, and derives (as Mill notes, *ibid.*, 16) from the *Examination of Hamilton* published in that year. A statement of the distinction may be found, together with a just estimate of Aristotle's contributions to logic, on 479 ff. below.

[9] Richard Whately, *Elements of Logic*, 8th ed. (London: Fellowes, 1844), 24-5.

[10] *Ibid.*, 230.

[11] *Ibid.*, 233. Mill comments: "This is a just, and, so far as we are aware, an original remark; and its consequences are extremely important" (33).

[12] *Ibid.*, 239.

[13] "Mr. Mill appears to me especially instructive in his discussion of the nature of the proof which is conveyed by the syllogism; and . . . his doctrine, that the force of the syllogism consists in an *inductive assertion, with an interpretation added to it*, solves very happily the difficulties which baffle the other theories of this subject." (*On the Philosophy of Discovery* [London: Parker, 1860], 289-90.)

[14] *Logic, CW*, VII, 193.

[15] William and Martha Kneale, *The Development of Logic* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962), 377.

[16] *Autobiography*, 12-13. Mill's logic, like his psychology and ethics, remained throughout his life profoundly influenced by Hobbes.

[17] Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, especially I.13 and II.2.

[18] Kneale, *Development of Logic*, 376.

[19] For the development of theories of language in the eighteenth century, see Stephen K. Land, "Aspects of the Theory of Language in the Philosophy and Aesthetics of the Eighteenth Century" (University of Toronto Ph.D. Dissertation, 1971). More accessible but less complete is M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953).

[20] Alan Ryan, *Philosophy of John Stuart Mill* (London: Macmillan, 1970).

[21] Cf. C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962).

[22] J. S. Mill, *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, 4th ed. (London: Longmans, 1872), 446-51. (Hereafter referred to as *Examination*.)

[23] *Elements of Logic*, 1st ed. (reprinted Boston: Munroe, "Stereo-type Edition," 1848), 25.

[24] Kneale laments that Mill just missed recognizing that formal logic is, as it is now thought to be, "a science whose propositions are themselves second-order principles about principles of inference" (*Development of Logic*, 377).

[25] Whately attributes this view to Isaac Watts (*Logic*, 10). Compare the opening paragraph of Watts' *Logick* (1724) with its footnote: "Logick is the art of using Reason\* well in our enquiries after truth, and the communication of it to others." The footnote reads: "\*The word reason in this place is not confined to the mere faculty of reasoning, or inferring one thing from another, but includes all the intellectual powers of man" (Isaac Watts, *Works*, V [London: Barfield, 1810], 5).

[26] "In every instance in which we *reason* . . . a certain process takes place in the mind which is one and the same in all cases, provided it be correctly conducted" (Whately, *Logic*, 23). This statement is most misleading, because the "sameness" Whately attributes to the process is in effect only that its upshot shall be stutable in a way that conforms to logical rules.

[27] This seems to be implied by the formulation in *Logic, CW*, VIII, 943-52: "The art proposes to itself an end to be attained, defines the end, and hands it over to the science" (944). This is very different from the position taken in the *Examination*, according to which sciences and arts seldom correspond because the techniques forming a practice are likely to belong to many different theoretical enquiries. The latter doctrine is also in the *Logic*, but less prominently.

[28] *Logic, CW*, VII, 4.

[29] The passage quoted by Mill (21) is from Henry Aldrich, *Artis logicæ rudimenta*, ed. H. L. Mansel, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Graham, 1852), 24 ff. Mansel attributes the doctrine to Albertus Magnus.

[30] *Logic, CW*, VII, 143-4. Mill's reference to Whately's later qualifications of his doctrine is somewhat understated.

[31] Kneale, *Development of Logic*, 373.

[32] *Logic, CW*, VII, 127. Unfortunately he leaves the doctrine for which he is apologizing to stand as the core of his exposition, thus aggravating the confusion of which Mill had complained.

His statement (Preface, ix) that “no material errors have been detected, nor any considerable alterations found necessary,” is a half-truth: a confusion is not an error, exactly, and much that is not found necessary may be deemed desirable. I have not ascertained whether the eighth edition is the first in which the relevant corrections appear.

[33] Compare Bishop Berkeley’s remark on the fudging Isaac Newton permitted himself in his Method of Fluxions: “all which seems a most inconsistent way of arguing, and such as *would not be allowed of in Divinity*” (George Berkeley, *Analyst*, in *Works*, ed. Jessop and Luce, IV [Edinburgh: Nelson, 1951], 73 [§ 14], my italics). Mill himself acknowledges that in theology “the generalities are the original data,” but claims that in such studies “The operation is not a process of inference, but a process of interpretation” (*Logic*, *CW*, VII, 194).

[34] *Autobiography*, 27-8.

[35] *Logic*, *CW*, VII, 206-7.

[36] Ryan, *Philosophy of John Stuart Mill*, 6.

[37] Kubitz, *Mill’s Logic*, 23, attributes Mill’s recognition of a reasoning that proceeds entirely in terms of particular cases to his work on Bentham’s account of corroboration in legal evidence. I do not feel competent to evaluate this attractive notion; but we have seen that reflection on Whately’s account of the relations between induction and deduction would have sufficed.

[38] *Logic*, *CW*, VII, 181.

[39] It was in 1838, according to the *Autobiography*, 132, that Mill “was led to recognize Kinds as realities in nature.” This recognition, expounded in the *Logic*, *CW*, VIII, 718-23, was not a reversion to essentialism, because the “kinds” were regarded as sets of particulars between which the discoverable resemblances were inexhaustible. This seems to be a transmogrification of the “major premise” in Whately’s inductive syllogism.

[40] To John Bowring (10/3/28), *EL*, *CW*, XII, 23.

[41] The notion of a mathematics of truth seems odd; but compare Isaac Newton, *Mathematical Principles*, trans. Motte and Cajori (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), xvii (Preface to 1st ed.): “Geometry is founded in mechanical practice, and is nothing but that part of universal mechanics which accurately proposes the art of measuring.”

[42] For a review of twentieth-century debates on the relation between theory and experiment, see Israel Scheffer, *Science and Subjectivity* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967).

[43] Quoted by Michael St. John Packe, *The Life of John Stuart Mill* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1954), 81, from Algernon Taylor’s *Memories of a Student*. Jevons campaigned tirelessly against Mill’s prestige as an obstacle to the recognition of the reformed formal logic inaugurated by Boole. Mill “is really a bad logician” (*Letters and Journals of W. Stanley Jevons* [London: Macmillan, 1886], 366), and his logic is a “maze of self-contradictions” (*ibid.*, 333): the latter charge is illustrated by a list of seven mutually incompatible accounts given in the *Logic* of what geometry is.

Jevons does not stop to consider that there may be at least seven different sorts of enquiry sharing the name and form of geometry.

[44] *Autobiography*, 74.

[45] Mill to John Elliot Cairnes (5/12/71), in *The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill*, ed. F. E. Minneka and D. Lindley, *Collected Works*, XV (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 1862-3. (Hereafter cited as *LL*, *CW*, with volume and page numbers.)

[46] Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 94. There is a sly allusion here to Novalis' description of Spinoza as a "God-intoxicated man" (see 466 below).

[47] *Ibid.* In January, 1862, Mill invited Grote to come on a tour of Greece with Helen Taylor and himself, but Grote, now over seventy, refused. Mill's marginalia in his copy of Grote's *History* dwell frequently in critical detail on Grote's descriptions of Grecian geography.

[48] Mill's declaration of his intention "not to explain or criticise Plato, but to allow him to speak for himself" (60) is endorsed in a letter to Carlyle (2/3/34): "The Repository is also publishing some notes of mine upon Plato, mostly written long ago, which I thought might be of some interest & perhaps use, chiefly because they do not speculate and *talk about* Plato, but shew to the reader Plato himself" (*EL*, *CW*, XII, 218).

[49] His writings from 1832-34 included, he says: "abstracts of several of Plato's Dialogues, with introductory remarks, which, though not published until 1834, had been written several years earlier; and which I afterwards, on various occasions, found to have been read, and their authorship known, by more people than were aware of anything else which I had written, up to that time" (*Autobiography*, 119).

[50] See the Textual Introduction, lxxxi-lxxxii below.

[51] Richard Garnett, *The Life of W. J. Fox* (London: Lane, 1910), 106: "He tells us that the abstracts . . . had been prepared four years previously . . ." But the context suggests strongly that Garnett's source is the *Autobiography*. One suspects that Garnett substituted "some" for "several" in paraphrasing the passage cited in note 49, but began it with a "long s"; and his son, who completed and edited the MS. after Garnett's death, misread his father's hand.

[52] Compare his remarks (415 below) on the "two complete Platos in Plato—the Sokratist and the Dogmatist."

[53] For two rival traditions in European thought see Mill's remarks on Grote's *Plato*, 380 ff., and the correspondence with Taine noted below, lxxviii-lxx.

[54] However young Mill was when he made these translations, he had at least read the *Crito*: he tells us in his *Autobiography*, 5, that in 1813 he read "the first six dialogues (in the common arrangement) of Plato, from the Euthyphron to the Theætetus inclusive"—that is, *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phædo*, *Cratylus* and *Theætetus*.

[55] Schleiermacher's doctrine appears in the order adopted for his translation (I-V, 1804-10; VI, *Republic*, 1828), and is expounded in his introduction. His order is followed by Bekker in the

edition to which Mill refers (London: Priestley, 1826), but is not there accompanied by explanation; Mill could have been simply starting at the beginning of Bekker (with the *Gorgias* taken out of sequence), but that would not explain the phrase “more popular.” My information on Schleiermacher’s canon is taken from Grote’s *Plato*, 2nd ed. (London: Murray, 1867), I, 172.

[56] That the *Gorgias* was a favourite of the Mills is suggested by the existence of a manuscript summary of part of the dialogue (Stephanus pages 454-79), including the passage on art and practice, by James Mill. Professor Robert A. Fenn, through whose courtesy I have been able to examine a transcript, informs me that it must be no earlier than 1816, because of what it is written on the back of, and no later than 1830, because the handwriting is not yet gouty. Internal evidence makes it virtually certain that neither James nor John was using the other’s work.

[57] *Autobiography*, 72.

[58] The only citations of untranslated German works in the present volume seem to be those of Ueberweg and Brentano (386 and 504). At 388-9 Mill gives the English of a passage quoted by Grote in German.

[59] Cf. 41 and 151n. Thirlwall says nothing from which Schleiermacher’s scheme could be inferred; but he does refer to it as universally known and widely accepted by the learned world (*Philological Museum*, II [1833], 572), so it is probably idle to wonder how Mill came to know of it. (He may have seen or discussed Grote’s digests; see the Textual Introduction, lxxxix below.)

[60] This is suggested by Mill’s letter to W. J. Fox (10/10/33): “I also send three numbers of the *Plato* for your inspection and judgment. They cannot in any case be *used* until I return [from Paris] for it is necessary they should be carefully looked over, some passages altered, and *some preliminary matter written*. . . .” (*EL, CW, XII*, 185; latter italics mine.) The unpublished versions, except that of the *Parmenides*, lack any but the most cursory introductory notes. A letter to Carlyle of 5 October, 1833 (*EL, CW, XII*, 181), suggesting that Mill had just finished reading Thirlwall’s article, gives a plausible *terminus post quem* for the allusion to Schleiermacher.

[61] Cf. the reference in the *Autobiography*, 119, to “the *Monthly Repository*, a magazine conducted by Mr. Fox . . . with whom I had lately become acquainted, and for whose sake chiefly I wrote in his Magazine.” In a letter to Fox (3/4/32), he agrees to contribute on an occasional basis (*EL, CW, XII*, 97), and on 7 July, 1834, we find him explaining to the Editor of *Tait’s*: “all my spare time has been taken up in writing various things for the *Monthly Repository*, which, though a work of much smaller circulation, seemed to me to need any assistance which I could give it, more than yours did” (*LL, CW, XVII*, 1958).

[62] Cf. Garnett, *Life of W. J. Fox*, 172-5, who gives April 1835 as the turning-point after which Fox’s chief energies were devoted to the *True Sun*.

[63] His last contribution was “The Monster Trial,” IX (June, 1835), 393-6; aside from the *Apology*, he had nothing else in Vol. IX (Francis E. Mineka, *The Dissidence of Dissent* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944], 419).

[64] See *EL, CW, XII*, 298.

[65] The works alluded to by Mill are: Martin J. Routh's important edition of the *Euthydemus* and *Gorgias* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1784); Bekker's edition of the complete *Works* (reissued in London by Priestley, 1826); and the notorious complete translation by Sydenham and Taylor (various dates, first complete edition apparently 1793). The British Library catalogue knows no others except N. Forster's annotated edition of five dialogues (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1800), which is a mere reprint of a schoolbook first put out in 1745, and its eccentric supplement by the "juvenis semidoctus" William Etwall (*Platonis Dialogi Tres* [Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1771]). When Mill wrote, in fact, Routh's edition was the only serious English contribution to Platonic scholarship in over a century. Mill's source may have been the very full bibliography in Bekker's edition.

[66] Encyclopædia Britannica, 11th ed., s.v. "Jowett".

[67] Cf. xxxvi below. Grote himself thought the *Republic* decidedly Plato's *chef d'œuvre*: see his letter to Mill of June, 1865, quoted in Harriet Grote, *The Personal Life of George Grote* (London: Murray, 1873), 274.

[68] This obsessive theme is stated on 43, returned to at 79n and (with apologies for the repetition) at 144n, and recurs at 328-9 and 387 ff. in the Grote reviews. If the references to the *Quarterly Review* are meant literally, they must be to two articles by Thomas Mitchell, XXI (1819), 281-6, and XXVII (1822), 385-8 (for the authorship, see Hill Shine and Helen Chadwick Shine, *The Quarterly Review under Gifford* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949]). But if Mill knew of Mitchell's authorship the reference to "Certain Church of England writers" (43) is inapposite, since Mitchell damaged his worldly prospects by refusing to take orders. Mitchell says such things as "The hold . . . which a much more pernicious class of men, known since by the name of Sophist, assumed, was instantaneous, and almost universal" (281), and "It was our melancholy task once before to follow this pestilent race into their dark recesses . . ." (385).

[69] Cf. Ronald B. Levinson, *In Defense of Plato* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), especially 592-4.

[70] Cf. Karl R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, 4th ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), I. A Marxist critique would see the sophists rather as forgers of an ideology for the newly rising class, the mercantile men who guided the fortunes of the great trading cities of the middle fifth century. But such an ideology was too close to Mill's own for him to see it clearly in others; and in any case he was to live out his life in ignorance of Marx.

[71] *LL, CW*, XV, 764 (10/1/62).

[72] *Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society, Collected Works*, X (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 52.

[73] *Ibid.*, 209.

[74] The source of Mill's treatment (acknowledged in the review of Grote's *Plato*, 407-9) is Locke's discussion of "mixed modes." In general, we should not ignore the caveat entered by Mill in his letter to John Pringle Nichol of 14 October, 1834: "The few sketchy paragraphs which I

added to the notes on the Phaedrus do not give any just notion of my metaphysical creed” (*EL*, *CW*, XII, 237).

[75] The omission of 135a3-b3, which is barely consistent with Mill’s practice, may be due to an oversight.

[76] Cf. Proclus, *Commentary on the Timæus*, I.13: “The late Iamblichus is right in saying that the whole of Plato’s doctrine is contained in these two dialogues, *Timæus* and *Parmenides*.”

[77] The philosophical lexicon that makes up Book Delta of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* seems to consist mostly of materials taken from the *Parmenides*.

[78] Since the respondent, who is carefully described as young and inexperienced, demurs at some of Parmenides’ conclusions while he accepts others without a qualm, the optimism seems unjustified.

[79] Lady Eastlake, *Mrs. Grote*, 43. One gathers that the most objectionable effect of this narrowing was to make Grote reluctant to mingle with those members of the nobility and gentry whom it was his wife’s foremost delight to number among her friends; cf. Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 43.

[80] Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 21 ff. Mrs. Grote’s dates are generally unreliable, however: she has little sense of the difference between one year and another.

[81] Compare Alexander Bain’s comment on an earlier skirmish, Grote’s review of Mitford in the *Westminster* for April, 1826: “There can be little doubt that the persistent denunciations of Grecian democracy, of which Mitford’s book is a notable sample, were kept up for the sake of their application to modern instances; and Mr. Grote, by his vindication of Athens, has powerfully counterworked one of the machinations for retarding the growth of popular government in the present day” (Alexander Bain, ed., *The Minor Works of George Grote* [London: John Murray, 1873], [16]).

[82] A letter of 14 January, 1823 shows him “deeply engaged in the fabulous ages of Greece,” concerned to show the historical worthlessness of myths by “analogical matter from other early histories” (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 41). The first published testimony to his approach was his “Grecian Legends and Early History,” a review of Niebuhr’s *Griechische Heroen Geschichten* in the *Westminster Review* twenty years later (May, 1843; see Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 152); Mill refers to and quotes from this article in his review of Vols. I and II.

[83] “Toward the autumn of the year 1823, Mrs. Grote . . . thought it would be a fitting undertaking for him to write a new History of Greece himself . . .” (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 49). Lady Eastlake’s corroboration (*Mrs. Grote*, 74) presumably has no independent value; but the references on which Croom Robertson’s *DNB* article on Grote relies to falsify Harriet’s claim resist verification. Mrs. Grote also claims to have been the first to suggest to Sir William Molesworth that he should edit Hobbes (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 128).

[84] “The ‘History of Greece’ *must* be given to the public before he can embark in any active scheme of a political kind. . . . His reputation must be created by the ‘opus magnum’ (as John



Mill calls the ‘History’)” (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 67, allegedly citing her notebook for 1 February, 1831). And in September 1833: “G. did not apply himself, *as I earnestly besought him*, to the furtherance of his History during the winter . . .” (*ibid.*, 87; my italics).

[85] *Ibid.*, 75-153. Meanwhile, the need for a scholarly history, though not for a polemical one, was being fulfilled by Connop Thirlwall, whose *History of Greece* first appeared in eight volumes as part of Dionysius Lardner’s *Cabinet of History* (London: Longman, 1835-44).

[86] “I now look back wistfully to my unfinished Greek History. I hope the time will soon arrive when I can resume it” (letter of George Grote to John Austin, February, 1838, in Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 127).

[87] “George is well, and still *cloué* to Aristotle, day and night. I hope something will transpire some day, after all this devout application to said Philosopher’s works.” (Letter of Mrs. Grote, December, 1840, in *ibid.*, 136.)

[88] *Ibid.*, 143.

[89] *Ibid.*, 153.

[90] *History of Greece* (London: Murray): I and II, March, 1846 (revised ed., April, 1849); III and IV, April, 1847; V and VI, Dec., 1848; VII and VIII, March, 1850; IX and X, Feb., 1852; XI, April, 1853; XII, March, 1856; then *Plato and the other Companions of Sokrates* (London: Murray), 3 vols., spring, 1865. George began to run out of steam in the fall of 1870 and died in June, 1871, leaving his *Aristotle* incomplete. Two volumes were published posthumously in 1872 (2nd enlarged ed., 1880). The trifling matter of finding someone to publish all this stuff George (a timid and despairing man) left to his wife, who pitched on John Murray after finding that he was “considered to enjoy the confidence of the author class” (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 161).

[91] The study of Swiss affairs was deliberately undertaken for this purpose, presumably on the grounds that modern Greece (which Grote steadfastly refused to visit) was too backward to afford any worthwhile parallel. See the Preface to his *Letters on Switzerland*, quoted in Bain, ed., *Minor Works of Grote*, 102.

[92] Grote saw this trend coming and mistrusted it. In a letter to G. C. Lewis in 1863 he refers to “the rash and inconclusive method of the Egyptologists and Assyriologists, in trying to elicit from inscriptions the history of unrecorded ages,” a method that he attributes to “the German licence of conjecture” (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 264).

[93] As a specimen of Grote’s narrative style we might take the opening words of Chap. xciii: “It was about February or March 333, when Alexander reached Gordium; where he appears to have halted for some time, giving to the troops who had been with him in Pisidia a repose doubtless needful. While at Gordium, he performed the memorable exploit familiarly known as the cutting of the Gordian knot.” (*History* [New York: Collier, 1899], XII, 104.) Grote takes a page to get the knot cut.

[94] *EL, CW*, XIII, 699; Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 163 (letter from Lewis to Grote, 5 April, 1846).

[95] Letter of Mrs. Grote to N. W. Senior, February, 1846 (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 163).

[96] “When I first knew him, he was completely alienated from Mrs. Grote, while keeping up his intercourse with Grote himself; and as she was not the person to have an opinion without freely expressing it, I inferred that the estrangement had some reference to Mrs. Taylor” (Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 163-4). Cf. *EL, CW, XIII*, 572 (to Sarah Austin, 28/2/43): “As for Mrs. Grote, you know her, & would not expect either good feeling or good taste from her.” When Mrs. Grote wrote to thank Mill for his 1854 review, he exploded to his wife, “The impudence of writing to me at all & of writing in such a manner is only matched by the excessive conceit of the letter;” and Harriet had to point out that she was only trying to patch things up (*LL, CW, XIV*, 123). Said Mill: “my darling is I daresay right” (*ibid.*, 133).

[97] In a letter to R. B. Fox (23/12/40), after claiming credit for setting “the example of a professed logician & political economist who believes there are other things besides logic & political economy,” Mill writes, “one that will never be made to believe it at all, least in the sense I do, is one of the best of men & a highly instructed man too, Mr Grote—of whom Mrs Grote, with more natural quickness & natural liveliness, is in point of opinions the caricature” (*EL, CW, XIII*, 453-4). Cf. *ibid.*, 370, 377, for letters to the editor of the *Examiner* explaining how Mill’s radicalism had been diverging from that of the Grotes since 1829.

[98] Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 85.

[99] *Ibid.*, citing a letter from Mill of September, 1846.

[100] *Ibid.*, 86: “he perilously ventured to differ somewhat from Grote.”

[101] Cf. Mrs. Taylor’s letter to Algernon Taylor of 6 March, 1849: “I have not read Grote’s history, I should think it must be interesting—tho’ I think that knowing his ‘extreme opinions’ I should think it a defect that he does not indicate them more clearly, as there is ample and easy room to do in treating of the Greek Philosophers. extreme timidity is his defect, but this is a great one indeed in a public instructor.” (F. A. Hayek, *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor* [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951], 140.)

[102] Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 85, quoting Mill’s letter of September, 1846. Comte’s *Cours de philosophie positive* distinguishes three phases in human history: a theological phase, answering to imaginative modes of thought and monarchical or aristocratic modes of governance; a metaphysical phase, answering to aprioristic modes of thought and contractual or legalistic modes of governance; and a scientific phase, answering to empirical modes of thought and modes of governance yet unborn. The speculative tradition in French anthropology typified by Claude Lévi-Strauss in *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1966) seems ultimately to be Comtian in inspiration.

[103] “Fish” is George Cornewall Lewis, then (1852-55) editor of the *Edinburgh*.

[104] Letter of Grote to Harriet Grote, 14 October, 1853 (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 220). Mill’s disappointment is registered in a letter to his wife (9/1/54, *LL, CW, XIV*, 126).

[105] A certain needless officiousness appears in Mill's handling of the long quotation from Thucydides (318-19). His note indicates that he has made a few verbal changes, but in fact he has largely re-written the passage, though nothing relevant emerges from his revision that was not evident enough in Grote's perfectly adequate version.

[106] The character of the review is partly explained by Mill's letter to Lewis (4/5/53), agreeing to review Volumes IX-XI: "I think with you that there is now matter enough for an article, though more might have been made of the subject if there had been a greater amount of dissertation and discussion in the volumes" (*LL, CW, XIV*, 104). The review was mailed to Lewis on 24 August (*ibid.*, 107-8); and some revisions followed on 19 September (*ibid.*, 113). Lewis paid £25 for it (*ibid.*, 142).

[107] The Crimean War, which initiated the overdue reform of the old army system, fell between the publication dates of Grote's eleventh volume (the last reviewed by Mill) and his twelfth; it was just twelve months after Mill's review appeared that a yet more ineffable nobleman than Nicias, Lord Cardigan, led the Light Brigade in the wrong direction at Balaclava—25 October, 1854.

[108] Cf. *LL, CW, XIV*, 108: "as the history of Athenian greatness is concluded in them, the occasion is a natural one for surveying the whole history."

[109] Two of Mill's essential points, the unique way in which Greek institutions fostered individual worth and public spirit, and the specific contribution of democracy as a forcing-house for intellectual supremacy, were already made by Grote in his 1826 review of Mitford in the *Westminster* (see Bain, ed., *Minor Works of Grote*, 14).

[110] Cf. Mill's letter to Henry Jones (13/6/68): "as to the sentence you quote from my 'Utilitarianism'; when I said that the general happiness is a good to the aggregate of all persons I did not mean that every human being's happiness is a good to every other human being; though I think, in a good state of society & education it would be so. I merely meant in this particular sentence to argue that since A's happiness is a good, B's a good, C's a good, &c., the sum of all these goods must be a good." (*LL, CW, XVI*, 1414.)

[111] Cf. the sustained praise of the moral and political attitudes of the working class, and corresponding denigration of the middle and upper classes, in the letter to David Urquhart of 26 October, 1866 (*LL, CW, XVI*, 1208-9).

[112] Another possible echo of the *Republic*, in which the "ideal state" is established with the aid of an autocrat who could have no place in the state itself.

[113] Mill apologized in a letter (17/3/49): "I was wrong to express myself that way about the Athenians, because without due explanations it would not be rightly understood. I am always apt to get enthusiastic about those who do great things for progress & are immensely ahead of everybody else in their age—especially when like the Athenians it has been the fashion to run them down for what was best in them—& I am not always sufficiently careful to explain that the praise is *relative* to the then state & not the *now* state of knowledge & of what ought to be improved feeling. I *do* think, however even without those allowances, that an average Athenian was a

far finer specimen of humanity on the whole than an average Englishman—but then unless one says how low one estimates the latter, one gives a false notion of one’s estimate of the former.” (*LL, CW, XIV, 17-18.*) The degeneracy of modern man is a recurrent theme in Mill’s correspondence about this time: cf. *LL, CW, XIV, 45, 91-2, 93.*

[114] He had there spoken of Athenian supremacy as “imposed, indeed, and upheld by force—but the mildest, the most civilizing, and, in its permanent influence on the destinies of human kind, the most brilliant and valuable, of all usurped powers known to history” (*Spectator, 10 March, 1849, 228*). For how the Athenians mildly civilized Melos, see *Thucydides, V, 84-116*; but the *Edinburgh* version is correct in maintaining that the Athenian hegemony was not, in the first instance, imposed by force at all.

[115] Cf. his letter (19/9/53) on his revision of the article before publication: “I have made a little alteration in the paragraph about Greek slavery, but it might look too much like an apology for slavery” (*LL, CW, XIV, 113*).

[116] For Mill’s early belief “that the human mind has a certain order of possible progress, in which some things must precede others,” and “that different stages of human progress not only *will* have, but *ought* to have, different institutions,” and so on, see his *Autobiography, 97*. Progress is more concretely equated in the *Principles of Political Economy* with the growth of man’s power over nature through science and technology, increasing security of person and property leading to increased production and accumulation, and a growing capacity for reliable co-operation (*Collected Works, III [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965], 706-9*).

[117] William Henry Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official* (London: Hatchard, 1844). In his Preface to the second edition of the first two volumes, Grote thanks Mill for informing him of this work, as providing an example of polytheism on the hoof.

[118] See especially his diary entry for 26 January, 1854: “Perhaps the English are the fittest people to rule over barbarous or semi-barbarous nations like those of the East, precisely because they are the stiffest, and most wedded to their own customs, of all civilised people. All former conquerors of the East have been absorbed into it, and have adopted its ways, instead of communicating to it their own.” (*The Letters of John Stuart Mill, ed. Hugh S. R. Elliot, 2 vols. [London: Longmans, 1910], II, 363.*) Contrast his remark in the *Political Economy* that the Athenian Empire was unstable because “A small conquering community which does not incorporate its conquests, always ends by being conquered” (*CW, II, 16*). For various aspects of the imperial themes mentioned in the text, see *LL, CW, XVI, 998, 1371, 1391, 1473*. The *Political Economy* is surprisingly reticent on India.

[119] Letter to Harriet (21/3/55), *LL, CW, XIV, 384*.

[120] Letter to Arthur Hardy (29/9/56), *LL, CW, XV, 511*.

[121] In a letter to Theodor Gomperz of 30 April, 1865, Mill remarks on the lack of a British public adequately educated to appraise Grote’s achievement (*LL, CW, XVI, 1040*). Cf. his letter to John Chapman of the *Westminster Review* (30/7/65): “it is not easy to find writers who are

sufficiently familiar both with Plato and with philosophy, without being full of wrong ideas on the latter, if not on both” (*ibid.*, 1083-4).

[122] Letter to Bain (15/10/59), *LL, CW, XV*, 640.

[123] But see Mill’s letter to Bain (7/1/63): “We have just returned from a visit to Grote during which I had an opportunity of reading some of his MS. I chose the *Theætetus* as falling in with the subject of my present thoughts & I was delighted to find how good it is. He has triumphed wonderfully over the difficulty of rendering the thoughts or semi-thoughts of Plato & of those on whom Plato commented, with the language of modern philosophy; the view of Plato himself which goes through it will, I think, be recognized as original & striking; & his own thoughts on the matters discussed are good & well stated. I found however an oversight which you also must have perceived in reading it, viz. that his mode of defending the Protagorean maxim is very open to misconception.” (*LL, CW, XV*, 818.) As we shall see, in the matter of the Protagorean maxim Grote proved incorrigible.

[124] Mill refers (383) to the “perfect fidelity” of these abstracts—by which he means that Grote overlooked only what Mill overlooked; another difficulty in the way of a review!

[125] Mill was afraid it would be too long for the *Edinburgh* to print in full (*LL, CW, XVI*, 1145).

[126] Grote to Mill, December, 1862: “I am still working hard at Plato and the *viri Socratici* . . . . It will be an additional incentive to my industry now that I learn your obliging intention to review my book in ‘*Edinburgh Review*.’ That will be a genuine service to the work, as well as a compliment to myself.” (Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 263.)

[127] Grote to Mill, June, 1865: “Altogether, your impression about the book is as favourable as I could have ventured to hope; and I shall rejoice if the materials contained in it are found sufficient to supply you with a basis for ‘the intelligible outline of Plato’s intellectual figure,’ which you promise for your review.” Mill hastened to reply: “I hope to be able to make a useful article on the book: but when I spoke of giving an intellectual outline of Plato from your materials, I meant from your thoughts: not that I had attained any higher point of view than yours, but that I hoped to reproduce yours in a condensed form.” (Harriet Grote, *ibid.*, 274; *LL, CW, XVI*, 1068.) He returns to his inability to find a “higher point of view,” rather than in effect repeating what Grote had said, in a later letter (26/11/65, *LL, CW, XVI*, 1120).

[128] *LL, CW, XVII*, 1586 (letter to Lord Amberley, 9/4/69); cf. *LL, CW, XVI*, 1061, 1116.

[129] *LL, CW, XVI*, 1145 (4/2/66). That he thought of the review as a major project is further shown by the number of times he alludes to it in correspondence.

[130] Mill’s attitude to the Germans is expressed more strongly in his letter to Bain (4/11/67): “I found by actual experience of Hegel that conversancy with him tends to deprave one’s intellect. The attempt to unwind an apparently infinite series of self contradictions not disguised but openly faced & coined into [*illegible word*] science by being stamped with a set of big abstract terms, really if persisted in impairs the acquired delicacy of perception of false reasoning & false

thinking which has been gained by years of careful mental discipline with terms of real meaning. For some time after I had finished the book [Stirling's *Secret of Hegel*] all such words as *reflexion*, *development*, *evolution*, &c., gave me a sort of sickening feeling which I have not yet entirely got rid of." (*LL, CW, XVI*, 1324.) He had earlier written to Theodor Gomperz (19/8/54): "I consider that school of philosophy as the greatest speculative hindrance to the regeneration so urgently required, of man and society; which can never be effected under the influence of a philosophy which makes opinions their own proof, and feelings their own justification" (*LL, CW, XIV*, 239).

[131] By Lewis Campbell, in his edition of the *Sophist* and *Statesman* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1867). Since we know that the *Laws* is Plato's last work, we date other works by their approximation to it in certain mannerisms of style.

[132] This traditional interpretation of Plato rested not on Plato's own writings but on Aristotle's tendentious account in *Metaphysics A* and elsewhere.

[133] It is probably because he assumes that Plato is always looking for an indubitable intuition, and not for a method of verification, that he takes it for granted that the "unwritten opinions" of Plato's last years, in which he spoke of the "One" and the "Indeterminate Dyad," represent "a fog of mystical Pythagoreanism" (421). Perhaps they did, but since we do not know what he said we cannot tell what he meant, and one wonders why in dealing with sayings so imperfectly reported Mill did not observe that caution which he enjoins when discussing the presocratics. The allegation of mysticism comes from Grote, whose phrase "mystic and enigmatical" is an incautious gloss on Simplicius' term "enigmatic" (*Plato*, I, 217), which is not at all the same thing. These obscure doctrines are presumably deplored in contrast with the "positive dialectic" that Mill recognizes as a major contribution to the experience philosophy: a stabilization of terminology by the exhaustively systematic classification of phenomena. But it seems clear from the *Philebus*, a dialogue Mill confesses he can make little sense of, that Plato thought his discussions of unity and the like were not an alternative to such classifications but a necessary part of their methodology.

[134] "Diary," Elliot, Letters of John Stuart Mill, II, 380; my italics.

[135] Originally (as we see from the end of the first version of Mill's second *Edinburgh* review [336y]), Grote's discussions of Plato and Aristotle were to have formed part of the twelfth and last volume of his history. "It is impossible to predict," Mill had written earlier, "what number of further volumes will be necessary for the completion of Mr. Grote's design" (*Spectator*, 10 March, 1849, 228).

[136] Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 293. In fact, however, it confuses the subject by conflating materials from works (notably *De Anima* and *De Generatione Animalium*) written at different times, on different levels of sophistication, and with different theoretical intentions.

[137] In a letter to W. T. Thornton (5/10/72), he admits he has "hardly any knowledge of my own respecting those works of Aristotle to which it [G. H. Lewes's *Aristotle*] relates" (*LL, CW, XVII*, 1913)—i.e., all of the scientific works (II-VI in the Oxford Translation, pages 184-980 of-

Bekker's edition); and he confesses to John Elliot Cairnes that the "Physics, and for the most part the Metaphysics, I only know at second hand" (*LL, CW, XVII*, 1925).

[138] Mill of course sees clearly that Aristotle opposes Plato's making souls and forms into separate substances, but supposes that the point of Aristotle's analyses is to furnish alternative reifications.

[139] The implausibility of this contention appears when one reflects that simple induction is falsified every time anyone is surprised.

[140] *Posterior Analytics*, II.19, 100a3-b5.

[141] In this connection we may note Mill's strange assertion that Aristotle, like himself, held that the axioms of geometry "are all learnt from sense, . . . actually proved by sense" (481-2). He gives no reference, and I cannot guess what he had in mind; the alleged doctrine is incompatible with *Posterior Analytics*, I.2, and *Physics*, II.2.

[142] In his letter to Bain (7/1/63, *LL, CW, XV*, 818; see n123 above), Mill says of Herbert Spencer: "He expresses himself almost as if he thought that there is no objective standard of truth at all, which is in one sense true, but not in the obvious sense; inasmuch as each person's phenomenal experience is to him a standard relatively objective, & the correction of error consists to each mind in bringing its ideas & their relations into nearer accord with what are or would be in the given circumstances, its sensations or impressions & their relations. Of course Grote meant nothing at variance with this, but the omission to state it explicitly seems to me both an imperfection in the theory & a great stumbling block to its reception & on my pointing it out he at once said that he would supply the defect." Since the reference to Grote's Protagorean heresy, cited in n123, comes in the following paragraph, and there is no indication of what the present passage alludes to, it is not clear that Grote's concession related to the aspect of his relativism that Mill attributes to a merely verbal confusion; but of course one cannot discount any claim by Mill to know what his old friend really meant. Possibly, however, "Grote" is a *lapsus calami* for "Spencer."

[143] Mill to Henry Carleton (12/10/57; *LL, CW, XV*, 540): "when you say on page 130 that truth is to every man what it appears to him to be, I cannot suppose you to mean that if I think poison to be wholesome food, it really is so to me, but only that I cannot help viewing as truth what presents itself to my perceptions or judgment as such."

[144] *LL, CW, XVII*, 1872.

[145] In a contemporary letter to John Elliot Cairnes (20/9/71), he expressed himself more judiciously: ". . . I look upon Berkeley, notwithstanding some mistakes, as one of our greatest names in philosophy" (*LL, CW, XVII*, 1833).

[146] Samuel Bailey, *A Letter to a Philosopher in Reply to Some Recent Attempts to Vindicate Berkeley's Theory of Vision* (London: Ridgway, 1843), 20.

[147] Contrast the earlier remarks, "He has gone back to the primitive phraseology in which the theory was propounded by Berkeley and his immediate successors; men to whom the glory

belongs of originating many important discoveries, but who seldom added to this the easier, yet still rarer, merit, of expressing those discoveries in language logically unexceptionable” (250), and “Berkeley and Berkeley’s adherents have set him the example of this misleading phraseology” (253), with the later: “he was excelled by none who ever wrote on philosophy in the clear expression of his meaning, and discrimination of it from what he did not mean” (451).

[148] “I remember his saying that he went to the country, on one occasion, from Friday till Tuesday, and in the three days wrote this article” (Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 76).

[149] Samuel Bailey, born 1791, son of a Sheffield cutler, “a reserved boy, whose only recreation was riding upon a schoolfellow’s back,” took over his father’s business but retired from commercial activity after taking up a literary career; like Grote, stood for Parliament in the radical interest in 1832 but, unlike Grote, was not elected; Chairman of the Sheffield Banking Company; “died suddenly as he left his bath on 18 Jan. 1870, and left a sum of over 80,000*l.* to the town trust.”—Thus Leslie Stephen in *DNB*, who remarks: “Bailey had the faults and merits of a self-taught and recluse thinker”; but Bain thought that “after Bentham and the Mills, no man of their generation was better grounded in logical methods, or more thorough in his method of grappling with political and other questions, than Samuel Bailey” (*John Stuart Mill*, 47). For a dissenting opinion by Mill, see below, n177. His writings include *Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinions and Other Subjects*, 1821; *Critical Dissertation on the Nature, Measure, and Causes of Value*, 1825; *Essays on the Pursuit of Truth and on the Progress of Knowledge*, 1829; *Rationale of Political Representation*, 1835; *Review of Berkeley’s Theory of Vision*, 1842; *Theory of Reasoning*, 1851; *Letters on the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, 2 vols. 1855-63.

[150] Packe, *Life of John Stuart Mill*, 293, who adds injury to insult by calling Bailey “the Scottish philosopher.”

[151] Cf. Nicholas Pastore, *Selective History of Theories of Visual Perception: 1650-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 218: “When we consider the distinction between mental and physical events, the problems raised in respect to the formation of associations, and Mill’s neglect to respond to key issues, it would seem that Bailey has at least deprived the Berkeleyan theory of its alleged conclusiveness.” Chaps. xi and xiii of Pastore’s book (192-222, 247-67) give a detailed analysis of the controversy between Bailey and Mill, in a perspective other than that adopted here.

[152] Samuel Bailey, *A Review of Berkeley’s Theory of Vision, Designed to Show the Unsoundness of that Celebrated Speculation* (London: Ridgway, 1842), 31.

[153] *Ibid.*, 17-18. Bailey attributes to Dugald Stewart the thesis that sight directly conveys externality but not variation in distance, but the texts he cites seem inconclusive.

[154] *Ibid.*, 29. The inference seems tenuous, since even grown-up turtles are unlikely to have any very clear conception of the distinction between “inner” and “outer,” but the turtles’ response is certainly hard to accommodate to the “Berkeleyian” theory of learning.

[155] *Ibid.*, 28.



[156] *Ibid.*, 113. For Bain's pretence that this is not a serious objection, see n206 below.

[157] *Ibid.*, 64.

[158] William Cheselden, "An Account of Some Observations Made by a Young Gentleman, Who was Born Blind," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, XXXV (1728), 447-50, reprinted by Pastore, *Visual Perception*, 413-16. Pastore notes that none of the commentators on this celebrated case paid any attention to the fact that the patient was viewing with only one eye, and that with its lens missing.

[159] Bailey, *Letter*, 58-9.

[160] For the history of this image, see Colin Murray Turbayne, *The Myth of Metaphor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962). Thomas Reid saw through it, as through so much else: "Nor is there any probability, that the mind perceives the pictures upon the *retina*. These pictures are no more objects of our perception, than the brain is, or the optic nerve." (*Inquiry into the Human Mind*, Chap. vi, §12; in *The Works of Thomas Reid*, ed. William Hamilton [Edinburgh, 1895; reprinted, Hildesheim: Ohms, 1967], I, 156.) But note that Reid's words imply the mistaken belief that there *is* a clear "picture" on the retina.

[161] Berkeley's own use of this image is primarily negative, to refute inferences drawn by his predecessors from its geometric properties.

[162] Descartes had pointed out that the retinal image was shown by dissection not to be simultaneously clear all over, but after his time it became unfashionable to deal with the physiology of perception in any detail (Pastore, *Visual Perception*, 23, 56).

[163] This notion was originally put forward by William Molyneux: "For *distance* of it self, is not to be perceived; for 'tis a line (or a length) presented to our eye with its end toward us, which must therefore be only a *point*, and that is invisible" (*Dioptrica Nova*, 1692, proposition 31; quoted by Pastore, *Visual Perception*, 68).

[164] Bailey, *Letter*, 36.

[165] *Ibid.*, 36-7.

[166] Bailey, *Review*, 96; my italics.

[167] He says that, according to Berkeley, "We . . . see nothing but various coloured appearances which are felt as internal sensations; and we learn that they are external . . ." (*ibid.*, 13-14). But surely they are felt neither as external nor as internal, but just *felt* (if that is the right word).

[168] *Ibid.*, 45-9.

[169] *Ibid.*, 137.

[170] *Ibid.*, 52-5.

[171] According to Pastore (*Visual Perception*, 195), Condillac had already pointed out in 1746 that "Perfect harmonious cooperation of many muscles is essential for the formation of a distinct retinal image."

[172] Bailey points out that in using a foot-rule one measures by comparing visual data with other visual data (*Review*, 114); but, as the Berkeleians saw, the foot-rule must be manipulated before the comparison can be made. For Mill's insistence that the aim of measurement is to refer all experience to a tactile base, see xl above.

[173] According to Pastore, *Visual Perception*, 120, the distinction between sensation and perception, now a commonplace, was first made by Reid. See Reid, *Inquiry, Works*, I, 222, 310-12.

[174] Bailey, *Letter*, 24, quoting James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, 2 vols. (London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1829), I, 257. (James Mill has "this" before "distance.") The *ad hominem* retort is partly justified by Mill's false accusation (see n147 above) that Bailey's argument depended on the quirks of Berkeley's primitive diction; in fact, Bailey quotes copiously from Reid, Brown, Stewart, James Mill, and other more recent psychologists.

[175] Bailey, *Letter*, 44-5.

[176] Cf. *ibid.*, 61: "Each sense becomes more discriminating only as it is itself exercised."

[177] Compare Mill's letter to Bain (6/12/67): "I have however derived some benefit from reading again Bailey's four volumes; but how very, very shallow he is! He not only cannot seize any of the less obvious applications of the principle of association, but he is unfeignedly unable to make out what the writers who speak of such things can possibly mean. Yet at the same time, how plausible! He has scarcely his equal in skimming over the hollow places in philosophy, & putting a smooth face on unsolved difficulties. If he had been in the Forum at the time of Curtius he would not have leaped into the gulf, but would have thrown a platform over it, by which people might walk across without noticing it. When he attempts to confute those who are trying to resolve difficulties which he does not see, he usually does it by formally stating & developing at great length some elementary truth which he fancies to be all there is in the matter. As elementary truths are very often lost sight of, these elaborate enforcements of them are, in many cases, useful, but are seldom at all germane to the particular controversy." (*LL, CW, XVI*, 1333-4.) Mill might have reflected that it is, on the whole, more sensible to build a platform over a crevasse than to jump into it on horseback.

[178] James Mill, *Analysis*, I, 23, n5. Compare the curious (though natural) phrase used in the review of Bailey: "what the eye tells us" (251). But the eye *tells us* nothing. Again it is as if we were to imagine a little man sitting behind the retina and telephoning back along the optic nerve a report on what he sees there.

[179] Bailey, *Letter*, 24.

[180] Bailey, *Review*, 19.

[181] Bailey, *Letter*, 29-30. Here Bailey tries once more to terrorize Mill by raising the spectre of his formidable father, who said, "To have a sensation, and to believe that we have it, are not distinguishable things" (*Analysis*, I, 342). But Mill would reply that we are not mistaken in thinking we have a sensation, only in attributing to it a character that, *as a sensation*, it is logically impossible that it should have.

[182] Bailey, *Letter*, 31.

[183] *Ibid.*, 54-5.

[184] He summarizes and endorses Bailey's view of Berkeley's thesis by saying "Our ideas of tangible distance, form, and magnitude, instead of being peculiarly distinct, are peculiarly vague and shadowy" (258).

[185] The "sign" in this context is the supposed two-dimensional appearance from which the apparent three-dimensional percept is allegedly constructed.

[186] Mill's rebuttal is that "as the mind, without attending to the sign, runs on to the thing signified, so does it also, without attending to the thing signified, run on to whatever else that thing suggests"—in this case, the thing signified would be the suggested sensations of touch, and the thing suggested, which is what we *actually* think of, is "the measure by which . . . tangible distances are accustomed to be estimated" (259). It is just such arguments as these that Bailey's contentions about the visual element in measuring with a rule, and about the lack of necessary connection between locomotion and exertion, are designed to forestall. But in any case it seems excessively odd (and very close to the views Berkeley was originally attacking) to say that when we "see" things at a distance our purported visual experience is really a construct out of our system of measurement. As Bailey had said, "In looking along an avenue of trees we do not see the relative positions in which they would appear if they were projected on a plane surface, *nor do we see them standing at their actual distances*: we see something different from both," we see them "occupying space in all directions," an aspect of our visual experience that is not reducible to anything simpler than itself (*Review*, 116-17; my italics). Bailey's point is that if Mill's analysis were correct our visual experience would have a character other than that which it actually has. Mill's point is that this experience could not have the character Bailey ascribes to it unless Mill's analysis were correct.

[187] Bailey, *Letter*, 57.

[188] Compare Mill's letter to the secretary of the Neophyte Writers' Society (23/4/54): "I set no value whatever on writing for its own sake. . . . I have on most of the subjects interesting to mankind, opinions to which I attach importance & which I earnestly desire to diffuse; but I am not desirous of aiding the diffusion of opinions contrary to my own." (*LL, CW, XIV*, 205.)

[189] Alexander Bain, born 1818 in Aberdeen, entered Marischall College 1836, taught moral philosophy there 1841-43, Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in Glasgow 1845-46, worked under Chadwick at the Board of Health from 1848, Examiner for the University of London and the Indian Civil Service from 1857, Professor of Logic and English at Aberdeen from 1860, wrote voluminously, founded *Mind* 1876, died 1903. He met Mill in 1842; for his contributions to the *Logic*, see the Textual Introduction, *Logic, CW, VII*, lxxviii ff. My references to Bain are to the much-revised third editions, which are those most readily available: *The Senses and the Intellect* (London: Longmans, 1868), and *The Emotions and the Will* (London: Longmans, 1875); significant differences from the first editions (both published in London by Parker, in 1855 and 1859, respectively) will be noted.

[190] Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 170; “Mr. Alexander Bain (a young Scotch student of Aberdeen, introduced to Mr. Grote by J. S. Mill)” — though Mill himself, cut off from decent society by his liaison with Mrs. Taylor, was not among those present.

[191] *LL, CW*, XV, 529.

[192] Harriet Grote, *Life of George Grote*, 252.

[193] *LL, CW*, XIV, 244-5, XV, 582-3. See also Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 102-3: “In the beginning of 1859, I was preparing for publication my volume on *The Emotions and the Will*. I showed the MS. to Mill, and he revised it minutely, and jotted a great many suggestions. In two or three instances, his remarks bore the impress of his lacerated feelings.”

[194] “In the course of the same summer I fulfilled a duty particularly incumbent upon me, that of helping (by an article in the *Edinburgh Review*) to make known Mr. Bain’s profound treatise on the Mind” (*Autobiography*, 155).

[195] Bain praises Charles Darwin for “his candour and fairness in stating whatever facts have come to his knowledge, whether they agree or conflict with his general conclusions” (*Senses and Intellect*, 687; not in the 1st ed.), but himself cited facts only to support his doctrines, allowing the reader no sense of difficulties met and overcome. Incidentally, he draws heavily on data compiled by William Hamilton, named by Mill as bellwether of the apriorists.

[196] In the controversy between Bailey and Mill it is the former who appeals to evidence, the latter who relies on his theories.

[197] The vocabulary of “association” as the panacea of dogmatic empiricism has long been superseded by that of “stimulus and response,” with reinforcement of the organism (rather than of the response) playing the obfuscatory role that “chemical” associations played for Mill. Bain prepares the way for this transition when he insists on the continuity of the cortex with the rest of the nervous system, and accordingly denies that it makes sense to think of the brain as a storehouse of isolated images. In 1855 this is “an entire misconception” (*Senses and Intellect*, 1st ed., 61-2), though by 1868 it only “requires to be modified and corrected” (*Senses and Intellect*, 3rd ed., 53). The transition from the old rhetoric to the new is foreshadowed in Mill’s talk of inward and outward transmissions (353-4), which seems to bear the mark of Mill’s old admiration for Hobbes.

[198] The alleged process of thought commits the fallacy of “the inconceivability of the opposite,” with which Mill was to charge Taine, and the discussion of which was anachronistically imputed to the “Brangles” by Mrs. Grote (see notes 2, above, and 256, below). The fact that one cannot conceive what it would be like for a proposition to be false does not entail that it is true.

[199] Mill’s favourite example of chemical combination is that a multi-coloured wheel appears white when rapidly spun. But surely separate colour-impressions do not figure either as antecedents or as constituents of the experienced whiteness of such a wheel. Cf. Pastore, 158.

[200] Pastore, *Visual Perception*, 144-51.

[201] Bain consistently uses the term “perception” whose use by Bailey Mill had thought begged the question. Begging questions is only one of the purposes for which the word is indispensable.

[202] *Senses and Intellect*, 207 and 364. However in the latter passage the words “This is the effect specific to it *as a sense*” (my italics) may be intended to imply a restriction absent from the former context.

[203] *Senses and Intellect*, 372n; not in 1st ed. If visual form cannot be seen “optically,” the retinal image cannot be seen as flat, and the problem of “distance” as the problem of “seeing the third dimension” accordingly vanishes.

[204] *Ibid.*, 226; not in 1st ed.

[205] *Ibid.*, 180 and 234-5. The former passage is in the 1st ed., but the latter is extensively rewritten, and the corresponding passage in the 1st ed. (242-5) lacks the crucial clause, “These differences are, to a great degree, parallel to those described under Touch.”

[206] *Ibid.*, 368 (the version in the 1st ed. [367] is different, but equally strong). Bain here urges against Bailey that “The locomotion in the arms of the nurse, is a part of the experience of changing distance. The infant must have a muscular sensibility in being carried from place to place, as well as in walking on its own limbs.” (*Senses and Intellect*, 369.) But the feelings of being jogged cannot plausibly be equated with the muscular sensations of locomotion, as the argument demands.

[207] *Ibid.*, 371; verbatim from 1st ed. In a letter to Bain about Herbert Spencer (10/4/64) Mill shows more sensitivity to these issues than he usually does: “Still his argument against Hamilton does not thoroughly satisfy me. There seems to be an occult *petitio principii* in it. He argues that we cannot acquire the idea of extension from sight alone because that idea involves muscular feelings, which last is just the point to be proved. Of course the idea *such as we now have it* involves muscular feelings, & any idea we could have got from sight must have been very unlike our *present* notion of extension; but that distinction is perfectly well drawn by Reid, in his *Geometry of Visibles*. What I want to know is, exactly what idea of one thing as outside another we could have obtained by sight: whether merely the vague feeling of two simultaneous colours or what more than this.” (*LL, CW, XV*, 936.) What remains obscure here is what Mill means by “obtained by sight”: is it enough that the subject should never have had the use of his limbs, or is he to be confined to the use of a single fixed and paralyzed eye? I suspect the latter. (For the “geometry of visibles,” see Reid’s *Inquiry*, Chap. vi, §9, in *Works*, I, 147-52; but Reid’s point does not seem to me to be quite the same as Bain’s.)

[208] *Senses and Intellect*, 372.

[209] *Ibid.*, 235; not in 1st ed., but cf. 245 for an approximation.

[210] *Ibid.*, 1; not in 1st ed.

[211] “Whether the causes of appearances are external to our mind or not, we are at all events certain that they are external to our bodies; for between the world and each one’s corpo-

real presence a comparison is possible: while between the world and mind there is no comparison, the things not being homogeneous” (*ibid.*, 380).

[212] *Ibid.*, 376 ff. But this is only a contributing factor: to a social being, the “external” world is that which is common to himself and other observers. Bain admits that it follows that we can give no precise theoretical sense to the contention that the external world existed before there were any observers for it to be external to.

[213] *Emotions and Will*, 575; not in 1st ed. However, on 6 May, 1872, we find Mill writing to Thomas Squire Barrett: “I apprehend the real definition of matter to be that which resists” (*LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1890).

[214] It is unfortunate, incidentally, that in combating Bain’s claims for the priority of muscular sensation he slips into the strange assumption that representational paintings *usually* mislead us into mistaking them for the three-dimensional realities they portray (360).

[215] “Prof. Wm. James calls his work the ‘last word’ of the earlier stage of psychology, but he was in reality the pioneer of the new” (W. L. Davidson in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th ed., *s.v.* Bain).

[216] As this case suggests, the range of zoological data Bain refers to is rather narrow, even in relation to the knowledge then available, and even considering that the systematic investigation of such data only comes to seem worthwhile when one feels dissatisfied with such a general account as Bain essays. An idea of the range of material that needs to be coped with may be gleaned nowadays from such works as W. H. Thorpe’s *Learning and Instinct in Animals*, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen, 1964).

[217] The childless Bain refers more than once (e.g., *Emotions and Will*, 366) to the desirability of beating babies to stop them yelling—it will stop them doing anything, he points out, and if yelling is what they are doing, that is what it will stop.

[218] *Ibid.*, 292. In a note added to the third edition (294-6) he conducts an extended polemic against the hedonism of *Utilitarianism*, urging that men have genuinely disinterested impulses. Though conscience represents the internalization of an external authority that must at first have been established by physical pain, Bain will not admit that the “discomfort” of a bad conscience is what makes mature men do their duty. This refusal seriously modifies the effect of his statement, “I hold it as a rule, beyond all dispute, that there is at the bottom of every genuine voluntary impulse, some one variety of the many forms wherein pain or pleasure takes possession of the conscious mind” (*ibid.*, 355)—apparently the bottom may be a long way down. The transformation envisaged in admitting disinterested impulses almost amounts to one of those Hartleian chemical transformations he had eliminated from his theory of sensation. But I must admit that I find his argument incomprehensible here. (The dates of *Utilitarianism* and *Emotions and Will* are intertwined: the former was drafted in 1854, revised in 1860, appeared in *Fraser’s* in 1861, and as a book in 1863; the editions of *Emotions and Will* are 1859, 1865, and 1875, with the polemic against Mill only in the last.)

[219] *Senses and Intellect*, 8. In 1st ed., 5, a comparable statement appears, but only as one remark among others, not as a key pronouncement, so that Mill is not to blame for missing its significance. In a letter to Bain (18/3/64) Mill himself assumes the truth of the law, though the context makes it uncertain whether the assumption is not made for purposes of argument only (*LL*, *CW*, XV, 927).

[220] Bain's lengthy restatement of his position in the notes to James Mill's *Analysis* did, however, provoke Mill to a substantial rejoinder (*Analysis*, 2nd ed., ed. J. S. Mill [London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1869], I, 393-423, 433-9).

[221] *Emotions and Will*, vi.

[222] See *Logic*, *CW*, VIII, Appendix D, 1120-31, for passages bearing on the question, and an exchange between Mill and Bain. See also Mill's letter to J. Stuart Glennie (23/7/63), which shows that Mill realized how the replacement of matter by force in modern physics effected a fundamental change in cosmology (*LL*, *CW*, XV, 871-2).

[223] This psychophysical parallelism seems to require that a desire (for instance) should be correctly described as a form of discomfort, logically independent of any comforting object that might relieve it or comfortable state that might replace it; a desire is not intrinsically a desire *for* anything, because one cannot conceive what in a brain-state would be the analogue of such a directedness. Such ignoring of "intensions" was taken for granted by Bain and Mill and most of their contemporaries, but is nowadays rare.

[224] There is a more elaborate discussion of Ruskin in Mill's note to his father's *Analysis*, 2nd ed., II, 252-5.

[225] Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (London, 1725).

[226] About twenty-five pages in *Senses and Intellect* and forty in *Emotions and Will*; Bain reverts to the topic repeatedly throughout his work. By contrast he gives sex about five pages.

[227] In *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, *CW*, X, 234.

[228] "There can be no positive proof that oxygen, or any other body, is a simple substance. The sole proof that can be given is, that no one has hitherto succeeded in decomposing it. And nothing can positively prove that any particular one of the constituents of the mind is ultimate." (349.) A possible difference between the passages is that "positive" might here be contrasted with "negative" proof, but the wording does not on the whole support this.

[229] It is in fact probably *not logically* possible, since Mill would probably say of any proposed object of desire that the fact of its being desired sufficed to prove that it contributed to happiness; but Mill says nothing from which one could be certain that he would never admit a counterexample.

[230] This whole argument is taken over and expanded from the even less explicit version in Jeremy Bentham's *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (Oxford, 1789), Chaps. i-ii.

[231] Hippolyte Adolphe Taine, 1828-93. Principal works: *Les Philosophes français du XIXe siècle* (1857), which concluded with a programme for a scientific psychology in the manner of Mill: *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* (1863-64); *De l'Intelligence* (1870); *Philosophie de l'art* (1881); and above all *Les Origines de la France contemporaine* (1875 ff.; incomplete). Of all these works, only *De l'Intelligence* was not first issued piecemeal in the form of articles. The quoted phrase is from *H. Taine: sa vie et sa correspondance* (Paris: Hachette, 1902-07), II, 5.

[232] “Là est la racine de toutes mes idées historiques et morales” (*Vie*, II, 345).

[233] A letter to Mme Taine from Oxford (24/5/71) contains an amusing sketch of Mrs. Grote and continues: “Son mari ferait un beau portrait pour Van Dyck. Très grand, des traits fort marqués, 75 ans, un vrai gentleman, mais qui entend l’histoire à l’anglaise, seulement du côté politique; il a fait l’histoire de la Grèce, et n’est pas allé en Grèce; il ne se soucie pas de la figure des lieux, ni du climat.” (*Vie*, III, 127.)

[234] Letter dated 15 March, 1861 (*LL, CW, XV, 723*). Similarly, in a letter to Charles Dupont-White of October of that year, he finds it necessary to insist that utilitarianism, though widely believed in France to be the dominant philosophy in England, is in fact that of an unpopular and despised minority (*LL, CW, XV, 745*).

[235] *Vie*, II, 331.

[236] Letter to Édouard de Suckau (8/6/65): “Il y a toute une philosophie nouvelle qui pousse en Angleterre, avec Stuart Mill, James Mill son père, Herbert Spencer, Bain (*The emotions and the will; The senses and the intellect*).—En gros, ils refont Kant, en remplaçant les formes et catégories *a priori* de l’intelligence par des acquisitions et incrustations de l’expérience.” (*Vie*, II, 318-19.)

[237] Letter to de Suckau, 5 July, 1860 (dated from the Athenaeum Club, of which James Mill was a founder member) (*Vie*, II, 202).

[238] *Le Positivisme anglais, étude sur Stuart Mill* (Paris: Germer Baillière, 1864).

[239] *Vie*, II, 382.

[240] In the first letter cited in n234. The relevant extract was included in the preface to *Le Positivisme anglais*, and *La Vie* supplied the rest of the letter (*Vie*, II, 383). The compliment was no mere formality: the same high praise of Taine’s review appears in a letter written to Charles Dupont-White on the same day (*LL, CW, XV, 722*).

[241] Trans. H. van Laun (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1874), II, 357-426.

[242] *On Intelligence*, trans. T. D. Haye (London: Reeve, 1871), x-xi.

[243] H. Taine, *De l'Intelligence* (Paris: Hachette, n.d. [1948]), I, 5. Taine had meant to follow Bain’s example and write a second volume on the will, but after the Franco-Prussian war and the Commune he decided that patriotism required him to devote the rest of his life to *Les Origines de la France contemporaine* (*Vie*, III, 155-6).



[244] Letter to Th. Ribot, 11 January, 1873 (*Vie*, III, 216-17). In the same letter he says that he differs fundamentally from Bain in not regarding the perception of likeness and difference as the basic activity of mind—that is, in rejecting Bain’s “principle of relativity.”

[245] This is stated more bluntly in a letter to Alexis Muston (9/12/70): “J’ai très bonne opinion de l’ouvrage de M. Taine sur l’Intelligence, sauf les derniers chapitres où il me semble renier ses principes en croyant pouvoir étendre les généralisations de l’expérience humaine à des régions étrangères à cette expérience” (*LL, CW, XVII*, 1786).

[246] Letter to E. Renan, 9 September, 1872 (*Vie*, III, 206). The same letter claims originality on three other counts: the wealth of detailed evidence the book rests on, the rigorous exclusion of “faculties” as explanatory devices, and the novelty of the doctrine of axioms. Another letter insists more specifically that his work differs from Bain, Spencer, and Mill in its method, being made up entirely of “petits faits, cas significatifs, observations individuelles, descriptions de fonctions psychologiques, atrophiées ou hypertrophiées” (to Jules Soury, 13 August, 1873 [*Vie*, III, 253]).

[247] *History of English Literature*, trans. H. van Laun, IV, 405.

[248] Letter to H. Taine (22/7/70), *LL, CW, XVII*, 1752.

[249] *History of English Literature*, IV, 406; the doctrine is spelled out on 410-13.

[250] Mill omits to mention that the doctrine was worked out in conscious opposition to his own (*On Intelligence*, xi).

[251] A note on German thought dated 10 May, 1870, reads: “Le principe de leur logique et de leur métaphysique est depuis soixante ans ceci: Faire la science de la science, chercher comment doit être la nature pour que l’esprit puisse connaître.

Il vaut beaucoup mieux chercher avec Stuart Mill comment l’esprit humain connaît, prendre comme exemples telles sciences et portions de sciences faites et définitives, puis là-dessus généraliser.” (*Vie*, II, 373.)

[252] See Ernest Nagel, *The Structure of Science* (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1961).

[253] *On Intelligence*, 460-1. But virtually all philosophers, including Mill himself, are tarred with this brush: the conditions of identity (and the meaning of “identity”) for forms, ideas, words, thoughts, propositions, arguments, etc., are neither clearly worked out nor firmly established.

[254] “Les idées que nous construisons . . . sont des cadres préalables” (*De l’Intelligence*, 4th ed., II, 282; *On Intelligence*, 414). Mill’s letter (see n248) insists on the difference between an idealized concept, derived by some process of abstraction from experience, and a “conception composée.” He urges that it is only in the latter that we can find whatever we have put into the concept, instead of being restricted by experience, whereas Taine had argued that an idealized concept would have properties that could not be inferred from the experiences on which the idealization was based. We do not have the letter to which Mill was responding, but on the evidence of the book Taine would have agreed. Mill seems to be supposing that a *conception composée* must be

something like a Lockian “mixed mode”—reasonably enough, because the language Taine uses of his geometrical constructions is close to that used by Locke of mixed modes (*Essay Concerning the Human Understanding*, Bk. II, Chap. xxii), but very misleadingly.

[255] *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1752.

[256] In controverting Spencer’s doctrine in the 4th ed. (1856) of the *Logic*; see the Textual Introduction, *CW*, VII, lxxiv, and the passages there referred to. (Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 126, mistakenly assigns this discussion to the 6th ed. [1865].)

[257] In a letter to Max Müller (20/2/82) begging a copy of his translation of the First Critique (*Vie*, IV, 152-3). This restriction of anticipations to the status of inductive generalizations goes against the text discussed above, and is what Mill thought he should have said in the first place.

[258] See *Autobiography*, 150: “My great readiness and eagerness to learn from everybody, and to make room in my opinions for every new acquisition by adjusting the old and the new to one another. . . .” One suspects that this claim is meant to apply only to his early tempering of Bentham with Coleridge, and consequent disagreement with his father and with the more bigoted radicals; cf. *ibid.*, 130-1.

[259] “Mill stood very high on the point of receptiveness. He did not shut up his mind to new impressions at forty.” (Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 144.)

[260] For the menace of intuitionism, see *Autobiography*, 134-5, 162-3; and the passages cited in n130 above.

[261] Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 174. Surely only an Aberdonian professor could censure a man’s style in so vile a phrase.

[262] See *Autobiography*, 53.

[263] Alan Donagan, “Victorian Philosophical Prose: J. S. Mill and F. H. Bradley,” in *English Literature and British Philosophy*, ed. S. P. Rosenbaum (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 208-28.

## VOLUME XII - THE EARLIER LETTERS OF JOHN STUART MILL 1812-1848

### PART I. INTRODUCTION BY F.A. HAYEK

#### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XII - The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill 1812-1848 Part I*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, Introduction by F.A. Hayek (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/249/42424>>.

#### INTRODUCTION BY F. A. HAYEK

John Stuart Mill has not been altogether fortunate in the manner in which his memory was served by those most concerned and best authorized to honour it. It is true that his stepdaughter, heir, and literary executor, Helen Taylor, promptly published the *Autobiography*, which chiefly determined the picture posterity formed of Mill, and that the only other manuscript ready for publication was also rapidly printed. But during the next forty years, while Mill's fame persisted undiminished, little was done either to make his literary work more readily accessible or his other activities better known. There are few figures of comparable standing whose works have had to wait nearly a hundred years for a collected edition in English to be published. Nor, while his reputation was at its height, did any significant information become available that would have enabled another hand to round off the somewhat angular and fragmentary picture Mill had given of himself. He had been quite aware that his more public activities would be of interest to later generations and had begun to mark some of the copies of his letters which he had kept as suitable for publication. But Helen Taylor appears increasingly to have been more concerned to prevent others from encroaching upon her proprietary rights than to push on with her own plans for publication. It was only when the material so jealously guarded by her finally passed to one of Mrs. Mill's granddaughters, Mary Taylor, that an outsider was called in to publish some of the more readily accessible correspondence. Again, however, Mary Taylor reserved to herself part of the task which she was hardly qualified to carry out and in fact did not bring to completion. When at last after her death the papers in her possession became generally accessible, interest in Mill seems to have been at a low point and those papers were allowed to be widely dispersed. Nothing illustrates better the temporary eclipse of his fame than that some of the institutions which then acquired important parts of these papers did not trouble to catalogue them for another fifteen years.

It would seem that at least in his native country, during the period between the two great wars, Mill was regarded as one of those outmoded figures of the recent past whose ideas have

ceased to be interesting because they have become commonplace. Most of the battles he fought had been won and to many of those who knew his name he probably appeared as a somewhat dim figure whose *On Liberty* they had been made to read at school but whose “Victorian” outlook had lost most of its appeal. There was, perhaps, also some suspicion that his reputation had been somewhat exaggerated and that he had not been a great original genius but rather an honest, hardworking, and lucid expositor of ideas that other and greater minds had originated. He even came to be regarded, very unjustly, as the last of the “orthodox” tradition in economics and politics. In fact, however, few men have done more to create the intellectual climate in which most of what he stood for was finally taken for granted.

The gradual but steady revival of the interest in John Stuart Mill in the course of the last twenty years is based on a truer understanding of the significance of his work.<sup>1</sup> Though nothing could be more misleading than to represent him as a “typical” Victorian or a “typical” Englishman (he certainly was neither), he was one of the most representative figures of the changes of thought that were germinating during his lifetime. During the forty years after his death he governed liberal thought as did no other man, and as late as 1914 he was still the chief source of inspiration of the progressive part of the intellectuals of the West—of the men whose dream of an indefinitely peaceful progress and expansion of Western civilization was shattered by the cataclysms of war and revolution. But even to that development Mill had unquestionably contributed by his sympathies for the rising aspirations of national self-determination and of socialism. His reputation declined with the confidence in the steady advance of civilization in which he had believed, and for a time the kind of minds who had believed in him were attracted by more revolutionary thinkers.

It must probably still be admitted that it is not so much for the originality of his thinking as for its influence on a world now past that Mill is chiefly of importance today. We may still discover that he is a better guide to many of our present problems than is generally appreciated. But there can be no question that his influence is such that to the historian of thought all information we have about Mill’s activities, his contacts, and about the channels through which ideas reached him and through which he acted upon others is nearly as important as his published work. This is particularly true of a man like Mill who strove to keep his mind open to new ideas but upon whom accident and personal idiosyncrasies nevertheless acted to decide in some measure what would and what would not enter his system of thought.

The present volume contains some of the most important sources of information we have on all the different spheres of Mill’s activities. The work on the collection of these letters started about the same time as the new interest in Mill began to make itself felt but for reasons presently to be explained, publication has been long delayed. Some of the early results of these efforts have however already been used in various contributions to our knowledge of Mill which have appeared during this period, particularly in Mr. Michael Packe’s vivid *Life of John Stuart Mill* (1954). The following brief account of the circumstances which led to the present edition may be found useful.

Although more than fifty years ago there were published two volumes of *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, edited by Hugh S. R. Elliot, these were in the main confined to the last twenty-five years of Mill's life. Of the earlier and most productive period the edition contained only three series of letters which happened to have been returned to Mill or his heirs. Many more belonging to this period have been published in some thirty different places, while an even larger number of unpublished letters was found to be dispersed among many private and public collections.

This unsatisfactory state of affairs, of which every student of nineteenth-century ideas must soon become aware, induced me nearly twenty years ago to attempt to bring together the main body of Mill's early correspondence as a supplement to the existing collection. This soon proved a much bigger task than I had anticipated and a task, moreover, which in one sense I had started too late and in another sense too early. Eighteen or even thirteen years earlier I should still have found together all or at least part of Mill's own papers which in the meantime had been dispersed; and as it soon appeared, much important information had been destroyed by fire during the bombing of London only a few months before I started my work. On the other hand, war-time conditions in England made inaccessible for the next five years some of the material that had to be examined. In the circumstances I carried the task of collection as far as was then possible, but had in the late forties to postpone its completion, first temporarily and then, consequent upon my move from London to Chicago, indefinitely. By then I had completed the editing of one rather special set of Mill's letters which, for reasons explained in the Introduction to the edition published in 1951 (*John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor: Their Friendship and Subsequent Marriage* [London and Chicago, 1951]) seemed to demand separate treatment. That experience taught me that if I was not for years to abandon all my other work I could not adequately perform the same task for the complete collection. I was therefore only too grateful when not long after, an expert in the field, Professor Francis E. Mineka of Cornell University, agreed to assume responsibility for that arduous task. The editing of the present volume is entirely his and in the course of this work he has also been able to add to the collection of transcripts I had assembled over sixty additional hitherto unpublished letters by Mill.

It may be useful if, before commenting on the character of the present volumes, I give a brief account of the fate of the books and papers which were in Mill's possession at the time of his death, so far as this became known in the course of the search for his letters. Mill died on May 7, 1873, at Avignon, where for the preceding fifteen years he had spent much of his time in the house he had bought to be near his wife's grave.<sup>2</sup> His stepdaughter and sole heir, Helen Taylor, continued to live there most of the time for another thirty years, jealously guarding her exclusive rights to all of Mill's literary remains and steadfastly refusing requests for permission to publish any of his letters. The draft of a letter of hers written not long after Mill's death (on the back of a letter addressed to her, dated July 30, 1873) shows that she was then contemplating publication of some of his letters:

I have all my dear stepfather's letters, preserved, looked through from time to time by himself, arranged in order by myself, and left by him in my hands with directions, verbal and written, to deal with them according to my judgement. When the more

pressing task of the publication of his MSS. is completed, I shall, if I live, occupy myself with his correspondence, if I do not live it will be for my literary Executors to decide what to do with it.<sup>3</sup>

It seems that by “all [her] dear stepfather’s letters” she meant no more than the drafts he had begun to keep from about 1848 or 1849. But she did make some efforts to recover from the heirs of his correspondents sets of earlier letters in exchange for those written to him and it was probably in this manner that the letters to Sterling and Bulwer included in the Elliot edition came to be among the Mill papers.

Nothing came of Helen Taylor’s plans for publication and the Mill papers rested at the Avignon cottage until 1904, when Helen Taylor’s niece Mary Taylor (the younger daughter of Mrs. Mill’s son Algernon) succeeded in persuading the old lady, who at seventy-three appears to have been somewhat peculiar and senile, to return to England. Early in 1905 a friend of Mary Taylor’s (Mary Ann Trimble, who earlier had spent some time at Avignon with Mary Taylor) returned to Avignon and, with the assistance of a married couple who had accompanied her from England (according to a diary Mary Taylor kept at the time) did there “the work of three months in three weeks. Half a ton of letters to be sorted, all manner of rubbish to be separated from useful things, books to be dusted and selected from, arrangements to be made for sale, and 18 boxes to be packed.”<sup>4</sup>

A considerable part of Mill’s library and at least some of his papers were disposed of at a sale held at Avignon from May 21 to 28, 1905.<sup>5</sup> Some of the manuscripts were acquired by a local bookseller, Romanille, from whom at least one bound volume was bought by an American scholar,<sup>6</sup> while a London clergyman bought a manuscript entitled “On Social Freedom” which he published (reputedly with the consent of Helen Taylor, who had died a few months before it appeared) as a posthumous work of Mill in the *Oxford and Cambridge Review* of June, 1907, and which was republished in book form under Mill’s name as late as 1941, though it now appears that it was not a work by Mill but a manuscript sent to Mill for his opinion by one of his admirers.<sup>7</sup>

On their return to England Helen Taylor had been taken by her niece to Devon, where she died at Torquay on January 29, 1907. As she appears, in the words of the younger woman, long before that time to have “lost her memory to a great extent,” all business, even the signing of legal documents, was conducted on her behalf by Mary Taylor. One of the first steps taken by the latter soon after the return to England was, on the advice of John Morley, to give that part of Mill’s and Helen Taylor’s library which had been stored in London to Somerville College (one of the women’s colleges at Oxford). Miss Taylor retained a few books and Somerville College was to be entitled to dispose of what it did not want and in the course of 1906 actually sold some of the books.<sup>8</sup>

It seems that shortly after Helen Taylor’s death Mary Taylor placed the collection of Mill’s correspondence in the hand of Mr. Hugh S. R. Elliot. Little is known about him or the authority he was given and the fragments of information we have about the proceedings are somewhat puzzling. There is extant an account by Mr. Elliot of his relations to Mary Taylor<sup>9</sup> from which the following passages may be quoted:

As to the private letters of Mill to his wife & daughter, we hesitated for a very long time about them; but Miss Taylor, who is a lady of very peculiar ideas and habits, did not wish them to be published. She has it in her mind to bring out another volume in a few years' time, consisting exclusively of Mill's letters to his wife, daughter, and sisters; but wants to delay this until the last of Mill's sisters<sup>10</sup> is dead. Whether it will ever be done I cannot say. She guards the letters very jealously; and it was only after much pressure and persuasion that I was allowed to see them at all.

As to her published introduction, following mine in the book, it was entirely an afterthought. In the study of the private letters, I formed a very unfavourable opinion both of Mrs. Mill and of Miss Helen Taylor. It appeared to me that they were both selfish and somewhat conceited women, and that Mill (who must have been a very poor judge of character) was largely deceived with regard to them. Of course I could not state my views openly in a book which is published by Miss Mary Taylor at her own expense. But in my original introduction, I found it impossible to allude to the women without unconsciously conveying into my language some suggestion of what I thought. To this Miss Mary Taylor took the strongest possible exception. I reconsidered the whole matter, but found myself unable to speak any more favourably of them than I had done. For some days Miss Taylor declined even to see me, and we were completely at a deadlock; but at last it was agreed that I should omit all mention of Mill's private life and that Miss Taylor should herself write a second introduction (for which I took no responsibility) and say what she liked. I did not greatly care for her contribution, but it was a necessary compromise. Myself, however, I entertain no sort of doubt that Miss Taylor is right in her main belief that there was no "guilty" intrigue. . . .

There is, on the other hand, an account which the late Sir Frederick R. Chapman gave twenty-five years ago in a letter to an American scholar:

Miss Mary [Taylor] mentioned another fact that seemed very strange to me. She had placed the whole of the copies of Mr. Mill's correspondence at the disposal of Mr. Elliot when assisting him in the preparation of the published letters. When he had made his selection he induced her to destroy the rest save only what she termed the "intimate letters" which she intended to embody in another book. I understand that the book has never appeared.

Assuming that she has told me the actual facts I should say that her weakness is as remarkable as Mr. Elliot's meaningless advice or request to destroy the balance of the letters which must have been very numerous.<sup>11</sup>

Though Sir Frederick's recollection was no doubt correct, there is every reason to doubt Miss Taylor's account of the events and it is by no means certain that any destruction of letters did take place at that time (whatever may have happened at Avignon in 1905). Not only most of the letters which Mr. Elliot published but so many others are known to have been preserved that I am on the whole inclined to think that nothing was destroyed then.

Mary Taylor appears to have proceeded with her plan of preparing a further volume of family letters and it seems that by the beginning of 1918 she had, with the assistance of Miss Elizabeth Lee (sister of Sir Sidney Lee and author of the article on Helen Taylor in the *Dictionary of National Biography*), completed a typescript and was negotiating through a literary agent (Mr. A. P. Watts) with Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. concerning publication. Since the files of all parties involved (the literary agent, the publishers, Miss Mary Taylor's solicitors and, at least in part, her literary executors) were destroyed by fire during the London "Blitz" in December, 1940, it is now impossible to say with certainty why it was not published. But some letters of Mary Taylor together with the recollections of one of the partners of the literary agents (Mr. C. A. Watts, who in his old age still distinctly remembered the "irresponsible Miss Mary Taylor") show that after a period of irresolution Miss Taylor suffered a "nervous breakdown," accompanied by insomnia and illusions. After certification she was in March, 1918, taken to an institution in London where she died on November 6, 1918.

In her will Mary Taylor had left all copyrights and letters and correspondence referring to John Stuart Mill and Helen Taylor to the National Provincial Bank Ltd. as residuary legatees and literary executors who were to be free to use this material in any way they saw fit. An inventory of her possessions mentions among the contents of "a gunpowder proof safe," a collection of "Public Letters to and from J. S. Mill A to Z," and a packet of private letters. The former together with various other manuscript material the Bank decided, on the report of a Mr. P. W. Sergeant who had been asked to value them, to sell by auction, while it was thought that "the intimate letters relating to the family quarrel . . . could not be offered for sale publicly."

A first sale was accordingly held at Sotheby's of London on March 29, 1922, which produced a gross amount of £276.19.-. Of this, however, £200 were paid on behalf of the Trustees of the Carlyle House Memorial Trust for a set of seventy-seven letters by Thomas Carlyle to Mill (which in the following year were published by Mr. Alexander Carlyle in *Letters of Thomas Carlyle to John Stuart Mill, John Sterling and Robert Browning* [London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1923]). The twenty-one lots of Mill manuscripts proper seem all to have been bought by various London booksellers and altogether to have fetched no more than £76.19.-. They appear to have contained numerous notebooks, mostly botanical, and miscellaneous correspondence. Most of the Mill manuscripts now in various American libraries derive from this sale.<sup>12</sup> Quantitatively the largest part (although much of it of a kind not readily salable otherwise) was in 1926 sold by one of the booksellers to the Library of the London School of Economics, where it constitutes the nucleus of the Mill-Taylor Collection, since much enriched by many additions.

Because of the loss of part of the relevant files of the National Provincial Bank, we do not know why the sale of a large part of the papers was postponed for five years. But on June 27, 1927, Sotheby's sold another fourteen lots described as "The Property of Miss Mary Taylor, dec.," containing mostly letters to Mill, but also one lot containing "upwards of 132 autograph letters to his wife on literary work and travel." It seems that both the material now at Yale University Library and that acquired by Lord Keynes and now at King's College, Cambridge, derive from this sale. The National Provincial Bank apparently retained only the small collection of cor-



respondence exchanged between Mill and his brothers and sisters and a few family documents and portraits, all of which were in 1943 presented by the Bank to the London School of Economics for inclusion in the Mill-Taylor Collection.

Although it seemed appropriate to use this occasion to give an account of what happened to Mill's own books and papers, the material deriving from them could in fact make little contribution to the present edition. This is intended to cover the period up to 1849, which, because Mill did not then keep copies of his letters, is so little represented in Elliot's edition of his letters, which was based on his papers. In so far as the present collection was to go beyond bringing together the considerable number of earlier letters that had been published in a great variety of places and a few unpublished ones known to be preserved in libraries, the main effort had to be directed towards tracing descendants of Mill's correspondents in the hope that some of their papers might be preserved. This indeed absorbed the greater part of the time I was able to devote to the project, yet the results were not great. Even in England, where in general family papers are preserved perhaps longer than anywhere else, two wars have led to the destruction of much of the extraordinary quantity of manuscript material which had accumulated by 1914. It was not so much destruction by enemy action as the appeal for old paper for salvage and the insistence of air-raid wardens that lofts should be cleared of all inflammable matter which caused most of the loss. In more than one instance it seemed at least likely that what I was searching for had only a short while before left the place where it had rested undisturbed for two or three generations. I should add that wherever I succeeded in tracing descendants of Mill's correspondents, my inquiries were invariably met with the greatest courtesy and helpfulness. I can of course not claim that I have exhausted even all the likely leads and no doubt in the course of time further letters by Mill will turn up by accident. But while I do not feel that further systematic search in England would be likely to produce much, there may well be such opportunities on the Continent and particularly in France which, during the greater part of the time I was engaged on this work, was inaccessible to me. If, for instance, good fortune had somewhere preserved the letters which for some years after his visit to France as a boy Mill wrote to his "first friend" Antoine Jérôme Balard,<sup>13</sup> later a distinguished chemist, these would probably tell us more about his early development than any document which might still be found in England.

There are various obligations I have incurred in the work on the material now published in this volume and which I wish to acknowledge in this place. All the work I did on the collection was done while I held a professorship at the London School of Economics and Political Science and I have received all sorts of assistance from the Economic Research Division of that institution, including the provision of assistance and of some funds for various incidental expenditures. Dr. Ruth Borchardt and Miss Dorothy Salter (now Mrs. F. H. Hahn) in succession helped me for long periods of the work. I must also especially mention the Library of the London School of Economics, or the British Library of Political and Economic Science as it is officially called, which as custodian of the Mill-Taylor Collection not only has provided much of the material of

this book but also has often helped by buying at my suggestion documents to which I otherwise might not have obtained access. It was in these circumstances very generous of the authorities of the School to give first to me and then to Professor Mineka permission to use the material collected in any way we thought best. Of the many others who in various ways have helped I ought to single out the National Provincial Bank Ltd. which, after so many years conscientiously watching over the interests of Mill's heirs, finally decided to hand over to the uses of scholarship what the bombs had spared of the papers of the late Mary Taylor.

The chief credit for the appearance of this edition, however, belongs of course to the editor. Only those who have tried their hands at this kind of task at least on a small scale will appreciate the amount of painstaking care and ingenuity that has to be devoted to an edition of the size of the present one before the reader can use it with the implicit trust and ease which a good editor's work assures. I am the more indebted to Professor Mineka because he was prepared to take over the more burdensome part of the task I had half-playfully commenced. The tracing of unpublished manuscripts is the kind of detective work which most people will enjoy doing as a recreation in their spare time. But while the pleasure of the hunt was largely mine, the solid hard work to which the reader owes this edition is entirely Professor Mineka's.

F.A.H.

University of Chicago

January, 1962

## NOTES

[1.] This new interest is by no means confined to the Western world. A bibliography of John Stuart Mill, published in *Keizai Ronshu, The Economic Review of Kansai University* (Osaka), VI, no. 7 (Nov., 1956), lists, in addition to about 350 works about Mill in European languages, over 180 in the Japanese language alone!

[2.] As I am revising this Introduction for publication (January, 1962) I learn that last autumn this house, visited by so many admirers of John Stuart Mill, was torn down, the operations actually beginning while a committee formed to assure its preservation and conversion into a museum was holding its first meeting!

[3.] The Mill-Taylor Collection, British Library of Political and Economic Science (London School of Economics), vol. 53.

[4.] *Ibid.*, vol. 58.

[5.] The manuscripts mentioned in the two following notes which are known to derive from this sale bear a printed label inside the front cover which states "De la bibliothèque de / John Stuart Mill / Vendue à Avignon / les 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28 Mai 1905." Some at least of the books are reported to have been bought by the poet Paul Mariéton and to have been left by him

to the library at Avignon (see Jules Véran, “Le Souvenir de Stuart Mill à Avignon,” *Revue des deux mondes*, septembre 1937), but attempts by several persons to find them there have failed.

[6.] This volume of manuscripts of various minor published works by Mill was bought by Professor George Herbert Palmer of Harvard University and given by him to the library of his University where it is now preserved in the Houghton Library, classed as “MS Eng 1105.”

[7.] See the article by Jules Véran cited in note 5 above, and, for the evidence showing that the manuscript is not by Mill, J. C. Rees, *Mill and His Early Critics* (Leicester: University College, 1956).

[8.] There was also a story current in London twenty years ago that some of Mill’s books had been given at some time to Morley College (a workingmen’s college in the South of London); but though the library of that institution escaped when the main building was destroyed by bombs, no such books can be traced now, and unless they were among a quantity of books stored in the destroyed main building the story is probably incorrect. On the whole it seems that all the books, except “a box” returned to Mary Taylor, stored in the Pantechnicon in 1905, were given to Somerville College, which still has the original list.

[9.] In a letter by Hugh Elliot to Lord Courtney, dated May 8, 1910. MS at London School of Economics.

[10.] Mrs. Mary Colman, who died on January 15, 1913.

[11.] A letter by Sir Frederick R. Chapman to Professor J. M. McCrimmon, now of the University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, dated July 26, 1935. I wish to thank Professor McCrimmon for letting me have the text of this letter and permitting me to reprint it. The episode is briefly discussed on p. vi of Professor McCrimmon’s doctoral dissertation in Northwestern University Library.

[12.] See the annotated catalogues of this and the second sale in the British Museum Library.

[13.] Cf. the reference to Balard in Mill’s letter to Auguste Comte dated August 12, 1842—Letter 367 in the present collection.

## VOLUME XIV - THE LATER LETTERS OF JOHN STUART MILL 1849-1873 PART

### I. INTRODUCTION BY FRANCIS E. MINEKA AND DWIGHT N. LINDLEY

#### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XIV - The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill 1849-1873 Part I*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/251/43812>>.

#### INTRODUCTION

It seems to me that there is a very great significance in letter-writing, and that it differs from daily intercourse as the dramatic differs from the epic or the narrative. It is the life of man, and above all the chief part of his life, his inner life, not gradually unfolded without break or sudden transition, those changes which *take place* insensibly being also *manifested* insensibly; but exhibited in a series of detached scenes, taken at considerable intervals from one another, shewing the completed change of position or feeling, without the process by which it was effected; affording a glimpse or partial view of the mighty river of life at some few points, and leaving the imagination to trace to itself such figure or scheme as it can of the course of the stream in that far larger portion of space where it winds its way through thickets or impenetrable forests and is invisible: this alone being known to us, that whatever may have been its course through the wilderness, it has had *some* course, & that a continuous one, & which might by human opportunity have been watched and discovered, though to us, too probably, destined to be for ever unknown. . . .

Mill to John Sterling, May 24, 1832

The present four volumes and the two volumes of *Earlier Letters*, published in 1963, constitute a collected edition of all the letters of John Stuart Mill available at this time. The separate publication of earlier and later letters, instead of the more usual multi-volume single publication of a whole collection all in one sequence and provided with one index, was dictated more by circumstances than by any inherent distinction between Mill's earlier and later letters. The whole correspondence is the life of the man, "and above all the chief part of his life, his inner life."

When, thirty years ago, Professor Friedrich von Hayek first turned his attention to Mill's correspondence, however, a major reason for collecting and separately publishing his earlier letters

was the inadequate representation of them in the only collected edition of Mill's correspondence—the two volumes edited and published by Hugh S. R. Elliot in 1910. That collection of 368 letters contained only 52 for the years ending with 1848, somewhat less than one in ten of those it proved possible to assemble. It seemed reasonable to infer that Mill's later correspondence was much more adequately represented in the Elliot edition, but that inference has proved not wholly sound. It is true that Elliot includes a larger proportion of the extant later letters than of the earlier: about one in six of the more than 1800 post-1848 letters, as against one in ten of the earlier letters. That larger proportion turns out, however, to be misleading. Elliot's collection is no more fully representative of the substance of the later correspondence than it is of the earlier.

That this is so is not to be charged to Elliot's defects as an editor, but rather to be the circumstances under which he worked. Professor von Hayek in his Introduction to *Earlier Letters* has recounted in some detail the history of Mill's papers after 1873, and the story need not be repeated here. Suffice it to recall that Mill had evidently intended that a selection of his letters should eventually be published; at least as early as 1849 he preserved drafts of some of them and at some point, presumably late in his life, carefully labelled a good many, "For publication." His intention was long frustrated, not purposely it is clear, by his stepdaughter, Helen Taylor, who inherited his property, his copyrights, and his papers. She admired her stepfather deeply and sought to honour his name and extend his reputation; she promptly prepared for publication and edited his posthumously published books, the *Autobiography* (1873), *Three Essays on Religion* (1874), the fourth volume of *Dissertations and Discussions* (1875), and "Chapters on Socialism" (1879), and planned to edit his letters. Professor von Hayek (*Earlier Letters*, p. xviii) cites a passage written by Helen about three months after Mill's death:

I have all my dear stepfather's letters, preserved, looked through from time to time by himself, arranged in order by myself, and left by him in my hands with directions, verbal and written, to deal with them according to my judgement. When the more pressing task of the publication of his MSS. is completed, I shall, if I live, occupy myself with his correspondence, if I do not live it will be for my literary Executors to decide what to do with it.

The statement, as will presently be seen, contains at least one exaggeration: she did not have in her possession *all* Mill's letters. Those she did have she guarded jealously for over thirty years; she never got around to publishing them herself, and repeatedly refused to permit others to publish even excerpts from them. At her death in 1907, her niece, Mary Taylor, younger daughter of Helen's brother Algernon, inherited her property, including the Mill letters in her possession. Soon thereafter, Mary Taylor decided to execute the long-deferred project to publish them. She arranged for a little known writer, Hugh Elliot, to prepare the edition from the collection so long in the possession of Helen Taylor. He was not permitted to publish family papers, the most important of which were many letters to Harriet Mill and Helen Taylor; Mary Taylor proposed to publish separately a selection of these herself. Elliot apparently was under no obligation, and apparently felt none, to look farther afield for letters not in the collection turned over to him; after all, it contained some hundreds of letters, both to and by Mill. By the rather loose standards still

prevailing in 1910 for the editing of letters, Elliot prepared an adequate edition that was widely and favourably reviewed.

Only in recent years has it become evident how meagrely the edition represented the range and variety of Mill's correspondence. In selecting his letters for possible publication Mill had sought to advance the spread of his opinions on a number of subjects rather than to preserve details of his personal life in his later years; the selected letters were not to serve as an autobiography but as a kind of anthology of those of his opinions that he felt might be helpful to an audience wider than that to which they had been originally addressed. A kindred motivation is noticeable in the last chapter of his *Autobiography*, which opens with this statement: "From this time [about 1840], what is worth relating of my life will come into very small compass; for I have no further mental changes to tell of, but only, as I hope, a continued mental progress; which does not admit of a consecutive history, and the results of which, if real, will best be found in my writings. I shall, therefore, greatly abridge the chronicle of my subsequent years." As a result the final chapter, most readers seem to agree, is the least interesting part of the *Autobiography*, in that it is least self-revealing. The period of Mill's life covered by it is also the one that stands most in need of the supplementary detail, the glimpses into his personal life, his marriage, his friendships, his enthusiasms, and his disappointments, which now, nearly one hundred years after his death, only his letters can supply.

That kind of supplementary detail, Elliot, limited as he was by Mary Taylor's restrictions and by Mill's selection of his own correspondence, could hardly have been expected to provide. It is even a question, working when he did, whether he could have located many of the letters of which Mill had not kept copies. Elliot had access to seven of Mill's earlier correspondences, those with John Sterling, Thomas Carlyle, W. J. Fox, John Robertson, Gustave d'Eichthal, Robert Barclay Fox, and Auguste Comte (the latter four had each been separately published before 1910), but he presented only a small number of the letters to Sterling and Carlyle, accepting almost wholly the limits of Mill's selection. In all likelihood, Elliot probably did not even see the long sequences of letters Mill wrote to his closest friends during his later years. The past twenty-five or thirty years have brought to light a number of extensive series of Mill's letters that had been preserved by their recipients but either had not been written in draft or had not been kept in that form by Mill.

As a consequence, Elliot's edition gives neither a balanced conspectus of Mill's correspondence as a whole nor a lifelike portrait of the man. What the edition does give is a good sampling of what might be called his "public" or "non-personal" correspondence. Increasingly, after the success of his *Logic* (1843) and his *Political Economy* (1848), Mill received many letters, often from complete strangers, asking his opinion, or even advice, on a wide range of questions raised by his writings—among others, questions on religion, philosophy, ethics, logic, economics, political reform, labour relations, and women's rights. The letter writers included students, clergymen, working men as well as titled lords, aspiring writers, amateur political economists, would-be philosophers, and practising politicians. They were not all British; letters came with increasing frequency from Frenchmen, Italians, Germans, and Americans. As early as 1850 he wrote Frederick

J. Furnivall, “My whole time would hardly suffice to give satisfactory answers to all the questions I am asked by correspondents previously unknown to me” (p. 53). Nevertheless, Mill, always seeking to promote the improvement of mankind by doing what he could to advance sound thinking and opinion, felt an obligation to such earnest readers and correspondents and conscientiously tried to write them helpful answers. Of such letters he frequently kept MS drafts, but of letters to his friends and regular correspondents he seldom kept copies. As a consequence, Elliot’s edition, dependent almost wholly on Mill’s selection, has a higher proportion of such impersonal letters than is characteristic of the larger body of his correspondence. The present edition with its much larger number of personal letters should enable students of Mill to gain a clearer picture and a greater understanding of the man.

The following comparisons are not presented in a spirit of denigration; the Elliot edition has served a useful purpose for over sixty years, but in view of the increased interest in and knowledge of Mill it is no longer sufficient. The search begun by Professor von Hayek during World War II for a more adequate collection has been carried on by others and while it is likely, indeed certain, that more letters will come to light in the years that lie ahead, the present editors hope that this edition will meet the needs of students of Mill for some years to come.

To resort to a numerical comparison has its limitations but it can also be revealing. Of 124 letters located to Mill’s lifelong friend and fellow reformer, Edwin Chadwick, for instance, Elliot prints nine in whole or part. Of 92 extant letters to John Elliot Cairnes, Mill’s friend and disciple, Elliot has five. Of 60 to John Chapman, the publisher for many years of the *Westminster Review*, Elliot has two, and a like number to William E. Hickson, Mill’s successor as Editor of the *London and Westminster*, while we have been able to include 32. Elliot has five letters to Henry Fawcett, the blind politician and political economist—this edition, 43; Elliot, three to Thomas Hare, the advocate of proportional representation—this edition, 41; Elliot, five to George Grote, the historian of Greece and friend of Mill since his boyhood, and five to Sir Charles Dilke—this edition, 22 and 26, respectively. Elliot has one letter to Louis Blanc, out of 25 now available, and one to Gustave d’Eichthal (in a renewal of an earlier correspondence) as compared with 54. Elliot includes two letters to George Croom Robertson, this edition 29. Elliot has no letters to John Plummer, a working-class journalist; to George J. Holyoake, the radical secularist and proponent of co-operatives; to Augustus De Morgan, the mathematician; to Herbert Spencer, the philosopher; or to William Dougal Christie, an active opponent of electoral corruption, who after Mill’s death rose to the defence of his reputation against the slanderous attacks of Abraham Hayward; the letters to these men now published total 162. We have been unable to improve much on Elliot’s fifteen letters to Alexander Bain, the Scottish logician and psychologist, for we have failed to locate the autograph letters to him. We have, however, succeeded in locating more originals of the letters to the Italian historian Pasquale Villari than were available to Elliot in drafts, but there are undoubtedly more yet to be found. We have been able to add only two to Elliot’s ten to T. E. Cliffe Leslie, the political economist, and only six to Elliot’s nine to William Thomas Thornton, Mill’s friend and long-time colleague at the East India House.

These additional letters have been assembled from widely separated collections: the letters to Chadwick, De Morgan, and Robertson in the library of University College, London; to Cairnes and Fawcett at the London School of Economics, as the result of the efforts of Professor von Hayek when he was on the faculty there; to John Chapman, chiefly in the libraries of the National University of Australia at Canberra, of Indiana University, and the London School of Economics; to Hickson, at the Huntington Library in California; to Louis Blanc, at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris; both earlier and later letters to Gustave d'Eichthal at the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal, also in Paris; and to Charles Dupont-White, in the possession of M. Pierre Sadi-Carnot of Paris; to Hare, a private collection in the possession in 1943 of Mrs. K. E. Roberts of London, and in the British Museum; to Grote and Dilke in the British Museum; to Plummer at the University of Melbourne, Australia; to Holyoake at the Manchester Co-operative Union, Ltd.; to Spencer, at Northwestern University; to Christie, at Cornell University; and to Villari, in the library of the Vatican in Rome. Both earlier and later letters to Henry S. Chapman are in the possession of W. Rosenberg of the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, and all the letters to Thomas Carlyle are in the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. Of the series of letters to American correspondents, those to Charles Eliot Norton are at Harvard, those to Rowland G. Hazard at the Rhode Island Historical Society. Except for a small number at the London School of Economics, the many letters to Harriet are at Yale University. It should be noted that all these series, except the one to Spencer, are of the original autograph letters, not of MS drafts preserved by Mill.

Professor von Hayek, in his account of the first sale of 21 lots of Mill's papers at Sotheby's on March 29, 1922, notes that most of the miscellaneous letters now in various American libraries, notably those at the Johns Hopkins University (248 letters, mostly drafts), derive from that sale. A large part of the major collection at the London School of Economics derives from the same sale, as do the 61 letters at the Brotherton Library of the University of Leeds, and the 18 letters to John Sterling in the library of King's College, Cambridge. The 368 letters in the Elliot edition seem to have been drawn almost wholly from the collection eventually disposed of at this first sale in 1922. Elliot was denied the use of the 132 manuscript letters to Harriet included among the 14 lots disposed of at the second sale at Sotheby's on July 27, 1927; these letters form the largest part of the 230 letters now at Yale University, which also possesses a good many from the first sale. Family letters not included in either sale were eventually given to the London School of Economics by the National Provincial Bank, Ltd., the residuary legatees and literary executors of Mary Taylor.

Many important letters have been found in published versions for which no manuscripts have apparently survived. The most important of these are 31 letters in full or in part to Theodor Gomperz, a young German scholar who translated a number of Mill's works and edited the first collected edition of his writings. These letters were first published by Heinrich Gomperz in his biography of his father (Vienna, 1936) and then in part by Lord Stamp, who had purchased the MSS, in *The Times* on December 29, 1938. The manuscripts were destroyed by the bombing raid of April 16, 1941, in which Lord Stamp was killed. Other letters, usually in excerpted form, the MSS of which disappeared in less spectacular fashion, have been found in Bain's biography of



Mill and in various biographies of Mill's friends. Many have also been located in English and American newspapers, most of them published by the recipients without Mill's permission. His reputation and his influence in the later years of his life were so great that letters from him were rightly judged newsworthy. Mill was often annoyed by such unauthorized publication. As he explained to Duncan McLaren in a letter of January 3, 1869,

As a rule . . . I prefer that my letters should not be made public unless they were written with a view to the contingency of their being so, & I have seen with regret several recent instances in which publicity has been given to them without my consent; not that I shrink from exposure to criticism, which any public man, even any writer, ought to welcome, from however hostile a quarter; but because, when writing confidentially to friends who feel as one does oneself, one takes many things for granted which would require explanation to general readers, & one does not guard one's expressions as prudence & courtesy would require one to do in addressing oneself to those who differ with one.

We cannot approve of the discourtesy of correspondents who published personal letters, but, since the manuscripts of most of these have disappeared, students of Mill may feel some inclination to condone the discourtesy. On at least one occasion Mill granted permission to publish his letter, but requested the recipient to modify some of the wording (Letter 1258). Most of such letters, of course, were on topics of public interest at the time, and most of the correspondents who made them available for publication agreed with Mill's opinions as expressed in the letters and wished to gain for their own causes his prestigious support.

Such letters are largely impersonal in tone and provide few insights into the nature of the man who wrote them. For more such insights we are now fortunate in having available, in addition to the *Autobiography*, a series of letters to friends in both the earlier and the later periods of his life. Of the earlier letters, most revealing and most interesting are the series to John Sterling, Thomas Carlyle, William Johnson Fox, Robert Barclay Fox, and Gustave d'Eichthal, largely concentrated in the 1830's and early 1840's when Mill after his mental crisis was still in reaction against the emotionally sterile education and philosophic creed of his adolescence and was still reshaping his personal life. Most of the later series lack something of the inherent interest of letters written during a period of crucial intellectual and emotional change. The friendships of one's youth are likely to be the warmest of one's life and the least subject to reserve. The earlier years of most autobiographies have an appeal for many readers greater than that of the later years. Nevertheless the series of Mill's maturity have an attraction of their own, different in quality and intensity perhaps, but nonetheless interesting because of the revelations of the variety of his friendships, the breadth of his interests, the strength of his individuality, and the modernity of his approach to those problems of his age that continue into ours.

Did any Victorian have a wider range of more or less regular correspondents both at home and abroad? At home there were fellow economists like Cairnes and Leslie, the classical scholar George Grote, the philosopher Herbert Spencer, the logician and psychologist Alexander Bain, the writers John Sterling and Thomas Carlyle, the mathematician Augustus De Morgan, political

and administrative reformers like Chadwick, Charles Wentworth Dilke, and W. D. Christie, the editors John Chapman and John Morley, W. G. Ward the Roman Catholic convert and apologist, the Unitarian W. J. Fox, and the atheist G. J. Holyoake. Mill's foreign correspondence marks him as perhaps, in his generation of Englishmen, the most nearly a citizen of the world; it seems almost as though he had chosen correspondents in the United States, the antipodes, and the major European nations so that he might be kept informed of developments in their parts of the world. The writers included: in France, Gustave d'Eichthal, an early St. Simonian, later a classicist, ethnologist, and Biblical scholar, and Charles Dupont-White, political economist and translator of several of Mill's books; from France, though for most of the years of his friendship an exile in England, the historian, journalist, and radical politician, Louis Blanc; in Vienna, the young classical scholar and historian, Gomperz; in Germany, late in Mill's life, Franz Brentano, the philosopher; in Italy, Pasquale Villari, the historian; in New Zealand, his early friend Henry Chapman, who had emigrated and become an important officer of government; in America, John Lothrop Motley, historian and diplomatist, as well as Charles Eliot Norton, editor and biographer, later a Harvard professor, and Rowland G. Hazard, business man and philosopher. One notices that while Mill's regular correspondents shared his interests and in the main agreed with his views—most of them might have been labelled liberals or even radicals—by no means all of them came from levels of society that proper mid-Victorians would have labelled “polite”. G. J. Holyoake, ex-Chartist, radical freethinker, and publicist, when various of the journals he published fell into financial difficulties, was rescued by Mill. Louis Blanc, who according to Mill was “associated in the vulgar English mind with everything that can be made a bugbear of” (p. 999), was a frequent dinner guest at Blackheath, both before and after the death of Harriet. William Wood was a worker in the potteries of north England; and John Plummer was a factory worker turned journalist, who with his wife was invited from time to time by Mill to dinner at his home in Blackheath Park. (John Morley once remarked that working men found easier access to Mill than did royalty.) For Mill the crucial test in the choice of both friends and correspondents was whether they could contribute to the advancement of the ideas and causes in which he believed; he was always eager to learn from them and welcomed their opinions even when they differed from him in details.

Some of the correspondences, notably those with Bain, Cairnes, and Spencer, were essentially philosophic discourses conducted by mail, sifting difficult questions in logic, philosophy, science, and political economy, often with a view to the ever-continuing revision and improvement of such major works as the *Logic* (8 editions) and the *Political Economy* (7 editions). On one occasion, in thanking Cairnes for his extensive notes for the revision of the *Political Economy*, Mill remarked the similarity to “the philosophic correspondences in which the thinkers of the 16th and 17th centuries used to compare notes and discuss each other's opinions before or after publication—of which we have so many interesting specimens in the published works of Descartes” (p. 975). Such letters as that to Bain on the conservation of force (Letter 1554) probably have less interest for the modern reader than the letters that discuss practical questions of political and social reform and the strategies for the attainment of such reforms; still, they do contribute to our

understanding of the close reasoning and the constant striving for perfection that always characterized Mill's philosophic work.

In the letters dealing with reform, there is always a sense of rejoicing in the fellowship of allies, a feeling "of brotherhood in arms with those who are . . . fighting . . . the battles of advanced liberalism" (p. 1511).<sup>1</sup> Mill's need for fellowship was a long-standing one. As early as 1829 in his first extant letter to John Sterling, describing his sense of loneliness in the years following his mental crisis, Mill wrote: "By loneliness I mean the absence of that feeling which has accompanied me through the greater part of my life, that which one fellow traveller, or one fellow soldier has towards another—the feeling of being engaged in the pursuit of a common object, and of mutually cheering one another on, and helping one another in an arduous undertaking" (*Earlier Letters*, p. 30).

Mill's life-long need for emotional support is probably the explanation of the riddle of his relationship with Mrs. John Taylor, who after twenty years of close friendship became his wife. Now, with the full publication of all his known extant letters to her, by far the most voluminous of his correspondences, some further clues to the riddle may be discerned.<sup>2</sup> When his *Autobiography* was published within six months after his death, Mill's extravagant tributes to his wife's intellectual abilities and to her contributions to his thought and writing were greeted generally with amused scepticism.<sup>3</sup> The reviewer in the *British Quarterly Review* remarked dryly: "Mill had no great faith in a God. He had unbounded confidence in a goddess." Alexander Bain, reading the proofs of the *Autobiography* and fearful that Mill's reputation would suffer seriously if his most extreme claims for his wife were not deleted, wrote to Helen Taylor, Mill's literary executor, to urge that she should cancel "those sentences where he declares her to be a greater poet than Carlyle, and a greater thinker than himself—and again, a greater leader than his father (or at all events an equal)." Bain continued:

I venture to express the opinion that no such combination has ever been realised in the history of the human race, and I am sure that many will take the same view; and the whole of his statements will be treated as pure hyperbole, proving, indeed, the strength of his feelings, but not the reality of the case. I think that your mother, yourself, and Mr. Mill will all be placed in a false position before the world by such extreme statements. (Sept. 6, 1873, MS at LSE)

Helen, whether out of loyalty to her mother or unwillingness to distort by omission Mill's expression of his obsessive admiration of Harriet, refused to make the suggested deletions, though she did, with reluctance, remove praise of herself. Bain's fears proved to be exaggerated, and over the years most readers of the *Autobiography* have been inclined to view charitably the extravagant praise of Harriet as the harmless aberration of a love-blinded widower.

A somewhat different perspective on the question, however, is now necessary. Ever since the publication of Professor Jack Stillinger's edition of *The Early Draft of John Stuart Mill's Autobiography* (Urbana, Ill., 1961) it has been clear that most of the praise of Harriet in the *Autobiography* had been written, not after her death, but during their married life, and indeed had been submitted to her for her approval, which apparently was given without protest. From the letters in the present

volumes it is further evident that the defence and justification of Mill's and Harriet's unconventional friendship and eventual marriage constituted one of the main original purposes of writing the *Autobiography*. For Harriet, who participated actively in planning the book, it was probably the major purpose. Mill wrote to her on January 23, 1854, of the desirability of completing it as soon as possible:

What there is of it is in a perfectly publishable state . . . & it contains a full writing out as far as any thing can write out, what you are, as far as I am competent to describe you & what I owe to you—but, besides that until revised by you it is little better than unwritten, it contains nothing about our private circumstances, further than shewing that there was intimate friendship for many years, & you only can decide what more it is necessary or desirable to say in order to stop the mouths of enemies hereafter (pp. 137-38).

To his request of February 13 that she give him “a general notion of what we should say or imply respecting our private concerns” (p. 159), Harriet's reply of February 14-15 (one of the very few of her letters to him still extant) was quite explicit:

Should there not be a summary of our relationship from its commencement in 1830—I mean given in a dozen lines—so as to preclude other and different versions of our lives at Ki[ngston] and Wal[ton]—our summer excursions, etc. This ought to be done in its genuine simplicity & truth—strong affection, intimacy of friendship, and no impropriety. It seems to me an edifying picture for those poor wretches who cannot conceive friendship but in sex—nor believe that expediency and the consideration for feelings of others can conquer sensuality. But of course this is not my reason for wishing it done. *It is that every ground should be occupied by ourselves on our own subject* (p. 166 n.).

The early draft was written in 1853-54, at a time when the two were still smarting from the gossip that had pursued them for at least twenty years; it was also written at a time when Mill feared that his death was imminent. Evidently, his original intention was to divide the work into two parts, the pre- and the post-Harriet periods of his life. Such a division proved to be impracticable, partly because of the disproportionate lengths of the two periods, and a compromise revision was achieved which blurred the sharp distinction between the two sections. Nevertheless, if Mill had died in, say 1856, the work if published would have given the concluding emphasis to the justification and glorification of his wife. In that form it seems reasonable to doubt that it could have added as much to Mill's reputation as did the final version achieved by the revision and extension completed about 1870.

One can understand that in the months following Harriet's death on November 3, 1858, Mill in grief for his devastating loss should have eulogized her in his letters. The most extravagant evaluation occurs in a hitherto unpublished letter to Louis Blanc:

I do not speak from feeling but from long standing and sober conviction in saying that when she died this country lost the greatest mind it contained. You cannot know what she was privately, but you, more than most men, can sympathize in the noble-

ness of her public objects, which never stopped short of perfect distributive justice as the final aim, implying therefore a state of society entirely communist in practice and spirit, whether also in institutions or not. The entire faith in the ultimate possibilities of human nature was drawn from her own glorious character; while her keen perception of present difficulties and obstacles was derived from her wonderful practical discernment, and comprehension of life (p. 601).

Although the years after 1858 did not mitigate his extravagant estimate of Harriet, they did lead him to soften or omit a number of the asperities which had been clearly inspired by his relationship with her and which she had not sought to modify when she read the draft. It was not by her advice that he eliminated the severe criticism of his mother found in the early draft, or his belittling of his one-time friend John Roebuck, or his attack upon Sarah Austin, whom in earlier years he had addressed as “Dear Mutterlein” (see *Earlier Letters*).

Harriet’s grudge against the society that had excluded her from polite circles is understandable. As the pretty, striking young wife of a prosperous, not unintelligent though perhaps rather unimaginative, business man, John Taylor, her circle had been limited but not without interest. Although Unitarians may still have been “a sect every where spoken against,” they were intellectually, and to some extent socially, the aristocrats among the Dissenters. The Taylors entertained generously among those whom Carlyle scornfully labelled “friends of the species,” reformers, Benthamites, yet substantial citizens withal. But there was a flaw in the outwardly happy marriage. Mr. Taylor shared too little Harriet’s aesthetic and intellectual interests. Legend has it that she turned for advice to her pastor, the liberal Unitarian preacher and writer, the Reverend William Johnson Fox, and that he was responsible for calling to her attention the twenty-four-year-old John Stuart Mill, then unknown to the general public as a writer but regarded in liberal circles as a highly promising if somewhat manufactured genius. Mill and Mrs. Taylor first met in 1830 in the Taylor home at a dinner party also attended by Harriet Martineau and John Roebuck.

Just how rapidly the acquaintance ripened into love is not clear, but by the summer of 1832 Mill and Mrs. Taylor were exchanging agonized love letters, and by September, 1833, a crisis was reached in the Taylors’ marriage. She went off to Paris for a trial separation from her husband, and Mill soon followed. Members of her family intervened to patch up the threatened marriage and obviate scandal. Mrs. Taylor returned to her husband’s home and to a marriage henceforth only nominal. She had not, however, “renounced sight” of Mill, and their meetings were frequent, both at her home and elsewhere. From time to time they spent vacations together on the Continent, sometimes with her children and one or another of his younger brothers. Gossip thrived, of course, though the evidence seems fairly clear that there was no sexual relationship. Mrs. Taylor succeeded in holding both her husband and her lover at arm’s length. Some years after her marriage to Mill she told the young Gomperz that she was his *Seelenfreundin*.

Inevitably, Mill’s attachment to Mrs. Taylor restricted his contacts in English society, and for a time he worried that it would destroy his usefulness as a reformer. Some of his friends he cut because they had advised him against continuing the relationship or had participated in the gossip;

others he cut because she disliked them. She herself seems to have had little capacity for friendship, especially with members of her own sex. Her only close woman friend was the somewhat elfin Eliza Flower, who herself came under a cloud because of her relationship with the Reverend W. J. Fox. Mill's circle narrowed over the long years before the death of John Taylor in 1849 finally made possible the marriage with Harriet in 1851; thereafter the circle became even more circumscribed. He soon cut himself off from his sisters and preserved only a formal relationship with his mother, all because of fancied slights to his wife. An admittedly gauche letter by his brother George about the marriage provoked a savage, withering reply (pp. 73-75). Probably the greatest blot on Mill's character was his treatment, apparently with Harriet's encouragement, of his family after his marriage, as seen in other letters included in this edition. Even after his mother's death when he proposed to Harriet that he should give up his share of his mother's estate to his sisters, Harriet insisted that he should not yield to his generous impulse (see pp. 220 and 223). Only some years after her death did he begin to treat his sisters more kindly and even to provide financial assistance for at least one of them, Mary Colman.

As for society, Henry Reeve, acquainted with Mill since their boyhood, writer of the *Edinburgh's* hostile review of the *Autobiography* in 1874, spoke for Mrs. Grundy: "From the moment he devoted himself exclusively to what he calls 'the most valuable friendship of my life,' [his ties with talented women like Mrs. Buller, Mrs. Austin, and Mrs. Grote were broken.] Whatever may have been their regard for Mill, these ladies found it impossible to countenance or receive a woman who had placed herself in so equivocal a position." (*ER*, CXXXIX (Jan., 1874), 122.) Enough is known of Mrs. Austin and Mrs. Grote, as well as of Mrs. Carlyle, and of their tolerance for unconventionality, to make one suspect that it was not their concern for Mrs. Grundy, but their not wholly unjustified dislike for Harriet that led them to ostracize her. She, deeply resenting her exclusion, of course attributed it to her breaking of convention in her long association with Mill during her first husband's lifetime. And under her sway Mill made the justification of that association one of his major purposes in writing his autobiography.

Was he then simply deluded? Was he who was ordinarily so discerning in his analysis of men and motives blinded when it came to appraising her? There can be no question that from the first she filled an enormous need in his emotional life. Suffering from a too exclusively intellectual education that had starved the affections and led to his near nervous breakdown at twenty, he sought a friend with whom he could share his inmost thoughts and feelings and upon whom he could rely for comradeship in the causes he held most dear. For a time, as his letters reveal, it seemed that John Sterling might fulfil the role, and for a while, even after Mill had met Harriet, Carlyle appeared to be a possibility. But, for good or ill, the friend he found was Mrs. Taylor: for good, in that she provided a centre of stability for his emotional and, to some extent, his intellectual life; for ill, in that she fostered the isolation from his contemporaries that had characterized his earlier life. Loverlike, in his early relation with her, he engaged in lover's flattery of her, not of her beauty but of her intellectual abilities and interests, on which she prided herself. She was intelligent, she shared his passion for social reform, and she was at times even more direct and unwavering than he in going to the heart of a social or political problem. She also had a much better sense than he did of management of everyday, practical affairs, and after their marriage he

became dependent upon her judgment in such matters. She in turn seems to have become more and more dependent upon him in her need of praise. One can understand a woman's acceptance of even extravagant flattery in a lover's or even a husband's letters; one finds it more difficult to comprehend a wife's coolly approving for publication such extraordinary tributes as Mill paid Harriet in the *Autobiography*.

Although she seems not to have objected to overpraise of herself, on at least one occasion she objected to his too laudatory words in a review article. Mill acknowledged the fault: "I am always apt to get enthusiastic about those who do great things for progress & are immensely ahead of everybody else in their age . . . & I am not always sufficiently careful to explain that the praise is relative to the *then* state & not the *now* state of knowledge & of what ought to be improved feeling" (pp. 17-18). In this case his perhaps extravagant praise was for the ancient Athenians, but his reply gives a clue to his feelings about Harriet; in his view she was always for doing "great things for progress" and was "immensely ahead of everybody else in [her] age," in "what ought to be improved feeling."

In his marriage the sense of communion, of sharing in the advancement of common causes, gave Mill relief from his otherwise ever-present feeling of aloneness. Sympathizing with Frederick Denison Maurice's expression of "mental loneliness" in 1865, he wrote:

In our age & country, every person with any mental power at all, who both thinks for himself & has a conscience, must feel himself, to a very great degree, alone. I sh<sup>d</sup> think you have decidedly more people who are in real communion of thoughts, feelings & purposes with you than I have. I am in this supremely happy, that I have had, & even now have [with Helen Taylor], that communion in the fullest degree where it is most valuable, in my own home. But I have it nowhere else; & if people did but know how much more precious to me is the faintest approach to it, than all the noisy eulogiums in the world! (p. 1048.)

To the need for that continued communion through some long separations we owe the large number of Mill's letters to Harriet. Several years after their marriage both were afflicted with critical ill health. First, in the fall of 1853, on the advice of their physicians, Mill and Harriet, accompanied by Helen, sought to restore their health by a three-month residence in the more favourable climate of Nice. There Harriet suffered a severe haemorrhage and nearly died. Mill's own condition improved little if any, but after moving Harriet to Hyères, where she remained until spring, he returned to his work at the India House early in January. His 38 letters to her between December 28, 1853, and April 11, 1854, when she returned home, give the best picture available of their life at Blackheath Park, for in the two other series of his letters to her, he was travelling while she remained in England. Almost none of her letters to him during these separations survived, for he seems dutifully to have followed her instructions to destroy them (p. 146).

His letters to her are, of course, informal and miscellaneous, dealing more or less at random with matters of both private and public interest. The underlying concern in them all is the state of their health; he awaits eagerly her reports and gives her details of his visits to his physicians, describes sometimes almost clinically his symptoms, and specifies the medicines he is taking.

Linked with the matter of their health are the questions of when to retire from the East India Company and where they should live thereafter. The prospect of reduced income in retirement was perhaps responsible for Mill's concern about household expenses during his wife's absence, but more likely it was his ineptitude in dealing with practical details usually attended to by Harriet. The supply of potatoes and bread seemed to diminish too rapidly, the butcher's bills seemed too high, two tons of coals had lasted twelve weeks in the spring and summer of 1853 but a similar quantity had surprisingly lasted only nine weeks after November 12 (p. 136)! And then there were rats to be coped with; his neighbour at Blackheath had sent a note to the effect that rats dislodged from his own property had taken refuge in an outhouse on Mill's side. Mill could find no key to the outhouse. What to do? Write Harriet, of course, who from France soon supplied the solution to the problem (pp. 180, 182, 188).

Mill's dependence on her at this time extended well beyond the problems of domestic life. He seems seldom to have answered a letter without consulting her about the form of the reply. One can understand why he should have consulted her about replying to a complimentary note from Mrs. Grote about his review of her husband's book, for Mrs. Grote was one of those they thought had gossiped about them. Harriet evidently recommended a dignified silence. Mill thought it rather strange that Grote, with whom he had been on close terms for years, did not perceive that Mill was now addressing him as *Mr.* Grote (pp. 123 and 133). Other replies to letters hardly requiring such delicacy of decorum nevertheless were not sent until Harriet had been consulted. When the legislature of South Carolina sent him a presentation copy of a book by John C. Calhoun (pp. 142-43), when the Christian Socialist Frederick Furnivall wanted to reprint from the *Political Economy* the chapter on the future of the labouring classes (p. 149), and when Sir Charles Trevelyan requested an opinion on a plan for the reform of the Civil Service (pp. 175, 178, 184), the replies all required Harriet's advice and approval.

Harriet's role in the early version of the *Autobiography* has been described; she was also consulted at almost every turn in his writings of this period. She contributed three "beautiful" sentences to the essay on Nature (p. 144). When that was completed, he asked her to tell him what to attempt next:

I will just copy the list of subjects we made out in the confused order in which we put them down. Differences of character (nation, race, age, sex, temperament). Love. Education of tastes. Religion de l'Avenir. Plato. Slander. Foundation of morals. Utility of religion. Socialism. Liberty. Doctrine that causation is will. To these I have now added from your letter: Family, & Conventional (p. 152).

Harriet in reply recommended "The Utility of Religion" in a sentence that revealed that the subject was one close to her heart (p. 165, n. 3). He consulted her about revisions of the *Political Economy* for a new edition (pp. 185-87, 195). There is no evidence that he ever asked her help for more than verbal changes in revising the *Logic* (a very "dry" book, she wrote her brother Arthur, which to her surprise continued to sell well). Mill accepted readily her suggestion that he decline John Chapman's invitation to review Harriet Martineau's abridged translation of Comte's *Philosophie Positive*, for he had long disliked Miss Martineau (pp. 126 and 134). His wife's dominance



in the choice of topics to write upon in this period seems clear, and even after her death her influence continued to guide his choice of political and social subjects; only in his writings on philosophical and psychological questions does her influence as a motivating force seem to have been minimal.

Harriet was a rebel not without cause. In Mill she found a man whose extraordinary education had shaped him also for rebellion against the social, moral, and political conventions of his time. In him she found too a man almost desperately lonely, subject to recurring periods of depression. It is perhaps small wonder that in gratitude for her braving the censure of society, for her sharing in his devotion to liberal causes, and for her strengthening of his spiritual and emotional resources, he sought to induce the world to accept his estimate of her. Neither he nor some of his recent biographers have convinced us that she was the originating mind behind his work, but no one can doubt her importance in his inner life, the well-springs of which had been threatened by drought.

The other two series of Mill's letters to Harriet, because they are essentially travel letters, are less revealing. The travel on both trips was undertaken in the hope of recovering his health. In the last letter (Letter 154) of the earlier series to Harriet he had confessed that his doctor had at last told him that he had an advanced case of consumption. He was too ill to go to Paris to accompany Harriet and Helen when they returned to England about the middle of April, 1854. Thereafter, his health deteriorated rapidly and he lost weight at an alarming rate. Yielding to the advice of his physicians, he left England on June 9, 1854, for a trip to Brittany by way of the Channel Islands. Fifteen of his letters to Harriet during his six-week absence have survived. Although, as he admitted a year later, he thought his death was imminent, he kept up a brave front for Harriet. He focused attention upon plans for retirement to the Continent: "I suppose we shall never again live in England permanently" (p. 223). Everywhere he went he made inquiries about the cost of living and reported the prices of food in the various towns. He took his cod liver oil regularly, but his favourite remedy for his health was walking: "I am always out of doors, & walking when not travelling" (p. 218). A walk of twenty or more miles a day even in his weakened condition was not uncommon. Gradually he began to take on some weight and when he returned home in late July his condition seemed improved.

With the approach of winter, however, more travel seemed necessary. Leaving Harriet at Torquay with her mother and sister as guests, Mill left England on December 8 for a trip of over six months to southern France, Italy, Sicily, and Greece, not rejoining Harriet until he met her in Paris in mid-June. The 49 letters he wrote her during his travels can be read with interest in themselves, apart from their contributions to any further understanding of their relationship. They are the letters of a highly intelligent observer, and those written from Sicily and Greece in particular are valuable for their pictures of wild country not often visited in the mid-nineteenth century by Englishmen. The railroads had not yet reached those areas, and the difficulties of travel by the public diligences, by mule, and on foot were great enough to deter many a healthier traveller than Mill, who had been almost at the point of death only six months earlier. Since the letters are written to his wife, they of course recount in some detail the progress of his health, his

gains or losses in weight whenever he finds available scales, his persistent bouts with indigestion, and the gradually improving condition of his lungs. Addicted to long walks since boyhood, he now almost literally walked himself back to health, travelling often through wild country in Sicily and Greece, climbing mountains and fording streams, often in pelting rain, and always botanizing as he went along, collecting loads of specimens which he dried and sorted in the evenings. Many of the inns were primitive, and infested with fleas. Writing from Greece on May 26, he wryly described one of his bouts with the pests:

I never saw so many fleas in the whole of my precious life, as I found on my clothes & body on undressing last night. After chasing them one by one I laid the palm of my hand over six or seven at once. During the night they danced a saraband on my face, & I fancied I could hear the sounds of myriads of them jumping on the floor: but perhaps it was only the droppings of the swallows, for there are always swallows in these places; the people think them lucky; & they often fly about in the night, as these did. In the morning while I was sponging myself nearly a dozen of the enemy gathered on my legs & feet. What is worse, I have brought a colony of them with me to this comparatively clean place, & they are tormenting me worse than ever. One little rascal had the impudence to bite my hand to my very face (p. 463).

Away from the cities he recounts the breathtaking beauty of the natural scenery: near Vaucluse in Southern France (p. 267); near Chiaramonte in Sicily (pp. 381-82), where the view from the hills and mountains is such that “one feels lifted out of all the littleness of it & conscious of a beauty which seems lent to it by something grander”; near Mount Pentelicus in Greece, where “The more than earthly beauty of this country quite takes away from me all care or feeling about the historical associations, which I had so strongly in Syracuse. *That* I shall have when I read Greek history again after becoming acquainted with the localities” (p. 429). Despite this statement he is almost always eager to associate literature and history with the places he visits; in Bordeaux, in preparation for Italy, he buys a volume which contains the poetry of Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso (p. 251); in Sicily he reads the native poets Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus (p. 401), as well as Goethe’s Italian travels (p. 339), and he saves Sophocles for Greece (p. 401).

In Rome and the cities of northern Italy he performs zestfully “the first duty of man when in Italy, that of seeing pictures” (p. 270). He had never before been so “immersed in pictures” (p. 312). He is modest about his pretension in venturing to give his opinions on the paintings, sculpture, and architecture he sees, but “as all I say about them is the expression of real feelings which they give or which they fail to give me, what I say though superficial is genuine & may go for what it is worth—it does not come from books or from other people . . .” (p. 312). He protests against prudery: “the precious King of Naples has shut up the Venus Callipyge & the other Venuses on pretext of public decency—the Pope has done the same to the Venus of the Capitol. If these things are done in Italy what shall we come to next?” (p. 317). Although Mill’s education had been defective with respect to art (as had the education of most Englishmen of his time), he now began to gain confidence in his judgments. “I find the pleasure which pictures & statues give me increases with every new experience, & I am acquiring strong preferences & discriminations which *with me* I think is a sign of progress” (p. 295).

In the midst of his new-found pleasures in art and of the renewal of his joy in natural beauty, Mill nonetheless never strayed very far from the consciousness of his duty to write for the betterment of mankind. “We have got a power of which we must try to make a good use during the few years of life we have left” (p. 332). In Rome he was moved to recall a paper he had written for his volume of essays he had projected with Harriet:

I came back to an idea we have talked about & thought that the best thing to write & publish at present would be a volume on Liberty. So many things might be brought into it & nothing seems to me more needed—it is a growing need too, for opinion tends to encroach more & more on liberty, & almost all the projects of social reformers in these days are really *liberticide*—Comte, particularly so. I wish I had brought with me here the paper on liberty that I wrote for our volume of Essays—perhaps my dearest will kindly read it through & tell me whether it will do as the foundation of one part of the volume in question—If she thinks so I will try to write & publish it in 1856 if my health permits as I hope it will (p. 294).

He revived also a plan he had thought of as early as 1839 (see *Earlier Letters*, p. 411) to publish a collection of his periodical essays.

It seems desirable to do it in our lifetime, for I fancy we cannot prevent other people from doing it when we are dead . . . : now if *we* do it, we can exclude what we should not choose to republish, & nobody would think of reprinting what the writer had purposely rejected. Then the chance of the name selling them is as great as it is ever likely to be—the collection would probably be a good deal reviewed, for anybody thinks he can review a miscellaneous collection but few a treatise on logic or political economy. . . . I hope to publish some volume almost annually for the next few years if I live as long—& I should like to get this reprint, if it is to be done at all, off my hands during the next few months after I return in which India House business being in arrear will prevent me from settling properly to the new book. Will my dearest one think about this & tell me what her judgment & also what her feeling is (p. 348).

As it turned out, however, Mill did not publish another book until the year after Harriet’s death in November, 1858. It was not merely the arrears of India House business that delayed the fulfilment of his plans; on him was placed the burden of the defence of the Company against the takeover of the administration of India by the British government in 1858. After his retirement and the death of his wife, he published in close succession in 1859 the essay *On Liberty*, his pamphlet on Parliamentary Reform, and the first two volumes of his review articles, *Dissertations and Discussions*.

Again during his 1855 trip he was concerned about his approaching retirement. Almost every place he went he noted its cost of living and its suitability as a home for them. Corfu and the nearby islands, curiously enough, seemed most attractive, especially when the possibility developed that he might be able to secure an appointment as Resident of one of the Ionian islands then under British protection (p. 412).

I do not believe there is a more beautiful place in the world & few more agreeable—the burthen of it to us would be that we could not (with the Residentsip) have the perfectly quiet life, with ourselves & our own thoughts, which we prefer to any other; but if we have tolerable health there is not more of societyzing than would be endurable & if we have not, that would excuse us (p. 420).

Isolation from English society, so long as it was shared with Harriet, would be no deprivation for him. To lose her would be the unthinkable calamity. That he might do something that would alienate her from him seems to have been a deeply rooted fear, a fear that once near the end of his long absence from her gained expression in a letter.

. . . I had a horrible dream lately—I had come back to her & she was sweet & loving like herself at first, but presently she took a complete dislike to me saying that I was changed much for the worse—I am terribly afraid sometimes lest she should think so, not that I see any cause for it, but because I know how deficient I am in self consciousness & self observation, & how often when she sees me again after I have been even a short time absent she is disappointed—but she shall not be, she will not be so I think this time—bless my own darling, she has been all the while without intermission present to my thoughts & I have been all the while mentally talking with her when I have not been doing so on paper (p. 476).

The three years following Mill's return to Harriet in June, 1855, seem to have been happy. Their health was somewhat improved and no further prolonged separations occurred. As a result, of course, we have little record in letters of their life together for this period. Only occasionally in these years were letters necessary, ordinarily brief ones. In the summer of 1856, accompanied by Helen and Algernon Taylor, they spent much of July and August in Switzerland and were apart only for a week while Mill took a walking tour of the French Jura. In September, 1857, and July, 1858, he made several botanizing expeditions, each of about a week's duration. The longest separation during these years occurred in February, 1857, when Harriet went to Scotland to be near her daughter Helen, who in the preceding November had won her mother's very reluctant consent to her undertaking a career as an actress. She was permitted to do so only on the understanding that the Taylor name should be concealed; she billed herself as Miss Trevor. To conceal Helen's whereabouts, Harriet went to great pains; for all her protests against social convention, she wanted to avoid the stigma still attached to the theatrical profession and to preserve appearances for herself and her daughter.

The last years of Mill's marriage continued the isolation that had characterized his life with Harriet. One notices the paucity of his correspondence in these years as well as of publication. Old friends, like the Grotes, were still kept at a distance; there is no record of the Mills' entertaining any friends except Louis Blanc, who, as a radical French journalist, was outside the pale of respectable society. It seems more than likely that if Mill's and Harriet's plans for their retirement had been carried out, his isolation from English life would have continued. Not that he would have minded, for to the end Harriet was the all-sufficient centre of his existence. If Harriet could have lived, he would gladly have foregone the public fame he was later to achieve.

When she died in Avignon on November 3, 1858, the blow to him was all but overwhelming. To his friend and former colleague at the India House, W. T. Thornton, he wrote:

It is doubtful if I shall ever be fit for anything public or private, again. The spring of my life is broken. But I shall best fulfil her wishes by not giving up the attempt to do something useful, and I am not quite alone. I have with me her daughter, the one person besides myself who most loved her & whom she most loved, & we help each other to bear what is inevitable (p. 574).

By the end of the month, before he and Helen returned to England, he had purchased a cottage at St. Véran near the Avignon cemetery in which Harriet was buried. The cottage was henceforth to be his and Helen's real home, although they usually spent about half of each year in England in the house in Blackheath Park, which they retained until 1872. The tie that bound them to Avignon was, of course, the nearby grave of Harriet, which became virtually a shrine. For the rest of his life, whenever he was at Avignon, Mill visited the site for an hour each day.

The shared loss of Harriet brought Mill and Helen into an association that was to strengthen over the remaining years of his life. In many ways he became heavily dependent upon her. She seems to have accepted the burden willingly and without regret at giving up her hoped-for career in the theatre. From the first she devoted herself to Mill's comforts, interests, and causes.

He soon became as dependent upon her as he had been upon Harriet. This is best seen in the series of his letters to Helen of January and February, 1860, apparently his only extended separation from her in his last fifteen years, occasioned by his return to Blackheath to consult his physicians and settle some business affairs, while she remained in Avignon. As in his letters to Harriet, he keeps Helen informed about the medical advice he has received (p. 660). He forwards certain letters to her (as formerly to Harriet) to consult her on the replies to be made (p. 661). In practical matters—for instance, when the walls in their Blackheath house begin to threaten collapse—he still depends on the woman of the house for instructions (pp. 662, 666). It is Helen who is responsible for the home at Avignon, at one point supervising the building of an addition. Under her skilful ministrations, the cottage at Avignon became not only a comfortable refuge from the society in which he had been in the past seldom at ease but also the place where he was henceforth to carry on most of his study and his writing.

In November, 1861, he wrote his friend Thornton:

Life here is uneventful, and feels like a perpetual holiday. It is one of the great privileges of advanced civilization, that while keeping out of the turmoil and depressing wear of life, one can have brought to one's doors all that is agreeable or stimulating in the activities of the outward world, by newspapers, new books, periodicals, &c. It is, in truth, too self-indulgent a life for any one to allow himself whose duties lie among his fellow-beings, unless, as is fortunately the case with me, they are mostly such as can better be fulfilled at a distance from their society, than in the midst of it (p. 747).

Mill was aware of the dangers to Helen in his virtual monopoly of her attention. Once when she had evidently complained of being depressed by the company of some women at Avignon, he wrote her:

It is a great happiness to me to be a support to you under depression, but it would be very painful to me to think that I should always continue to be the only one, as I must necessarily fail you some day & I can never be at ease unless, either by means of persons or of pursuits you have some other resource besides me, and I am sure my own darling [Harriet] would feel as I do (p. 677).

Helen continued, however, to devote herself almost exclusively to Mill's interests. By 1865, as has been pointed out in the Preface, she became so identified with him as to be able to write a good many of his letters for him. Of a letter on women's suffrage to Mary Carpenter, he wrote:

. . . I should not like to be a party to its being printed with my name, because it was written (as is the case with no inconsiderable portion of my correspondence) by my step-daughter Miss Helen Taylor. Without this help it would be impossible for me to carry on so very voluminous a correspondence as I am at present able to do: and we are so completely one in our opinions and feelings, that it makes hardly any difference which of us puts them into words (p. 1359).

By her own admission, Helen was, like her mother before her, a severe critic of Mill's writing. In turn, she reproached him for not criticizing her own writing severely enough. Mill thought her a good editor and trusted her judgment in the revision of his work. She worked zealously, "putting in words here, stops there; scratching through whole paragraphs; asking him to write whole new pages in particular places" where she thought the meaning unclear.<sup>4</sup> Her relationship with Mill was such that there was "no *amour propre* to be hurt in his case or [hers]."

On at least one occasion she gave him a thorough dressing down for careless thinking and writing. When in a public letter to his election committee in the 1868 campaign for Parliament, Mill wrote effusively and somewhat evasively in defence of his support of the atheist Charles Bradlaugh, Helen, in a letter of November 12, 1868 (MS at LSE), sternly warned Mill that his "future power of usefulness on religious liberty" was being jeopardized by such letters, and that henceforth she would take charge of any correspondence about Bradlaugh: "Copy as literally as you can the letter I dictated (which I enclose) about Bradlaugh; and what you yourself said at the former election, about yourself."<sup>5</sup>

Helen's judgment in this instance was probably sound, but in other instances she seems to have brought Mill too much under her domination. When in 1869 the identity of the London Committee for Women's Suffrage (originally Helen's project) was threatened with a takeover by a Manchester group, Helen through Mill directed countermoves for the London Committee. In a series of letters to George Croom Robertson, Mill was led to advocate measures designed to eliminate dissident members from the Committee and to ensure that new members should be on the right side. This series of letters to Robertson is the only one in all his correspondence that reflects discredit upon Mill the advocate of freedom of opinion. Helen was so convinced of the rightness of her views that she became almost ruthless in her support of them.

Her evident domination of Mill in matters connected with the women's suffrage movement did not escape the observation of one of Mill's friends, Charles Eliot Norton, who wrote to Chauncey Wright on September 13, 1870:

I doubt whether Mill's interest in the cause of woman is serviceable to him as a thinker. It has a tendency to develop the sentimental part of his intelligence, which is of immense force, and has only been kept in due subjection by his respect for his own reason. This respect diminishes under the powerful influence of his daughter, Miss Taylor, who is an admirable person doubtless, but is what, were she of the sex that she regards as inferior, would be called decidedly priggish. Her self-confidence, which embraces her confidence in Mill, is tremendous, and Mill is overpowered by it. Her words have an oracular value to him—something more than their just weight; and her unconscious flattery, joined with the very direct flattery of many other prominent leaders of the great female army, have a not unnatural effect on his tender, susceptible and sympathetic nature. . . .6

However dominant Helen may have become over Mill in his last years, her help to him in restoring his will to live and in developing new interests in the years immediately after Harriet's death was of great importance. She encouraged him to make new friends, held frequent intimate dinner parties when they were at Blackheath, and shared his enthusiasm for new causes which he found he could advance better by ending the isolation he had enjoyed with Harriet. The first steps were taken somewhat reluctantly. He wrote to Helen in February, 1860, after meeting with Thomas Hare and Henry Fawcett:

The truth is that though I detest society for society's sake yet when I can do anything for the public objects I care about by seeing & talking with people I do not dislike it. At the moment of going to do it, I feel it a bore, just as I do taking a walk or anything else that I must & ought to do when not wishing to do it. But I believe the little additional activity & change of excitement does me good, & that it is better for me to try to serve my opinions in other ways as well as with a pen in my hand (p. 675).

The products of his pen, especially the shorter works published in 1859—*On Liberty*, *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform*, and the first two volumes of his *Dissertations and Discussions*—were beginning to have evident effect upon public opinion. He noted that an article in the conservative *Quarterly Review* had borrowed from his pamphlet on parliamentary reform (p. 667), and he wrote Helen in February, 1860, that his influence could be detected in the likewise conservative *Saturday Review*, “for besides that they are continually referring to me by name, I continually detect the influence of some idea that they have lately got from the *Dissertations*. They must also get me plenty of readers, for they are always treating me & my influence as something of very great importance” (pp. 673-74). Early in 1863 he corrected an American reviewer who thought that his shorter works had been neglected in England in comparison with his treatises. The more recent works “have been much more widely read than ever those were & have given me what I had not before, popular influence” (p. 843). That influence had also markedly increased in America and was reinforced by his wholehearted support of the Northern cause during the Civil War.

His active participation in political and social movements revived in the early 1860's and is reflected both in the addition of new friendships and correspondences and in the renewing of old. Only seven letters to Edwin Chadwick, his early friend, are extant for the years between 1849 and November, 1858; there are nearly a hundred in the years to 1873. The friendship with Grote, broken off during the years of Mill's marriage, was renewed, as well as their correspondence. The exchange of letters with Gustave d'Eichthal, interrupted in 1842, began again in 1863. Although evidence is incomplete, it seems likely that the correspondence with Alexander Bain had also been almost wholly suspended during Mill's marriage.

Among the new correspondents, John Elliot Cairnes became perhaps the one most highly valued by Mill. In the earlier years of their correspondence, they had little opportunity for personal contact, since Cairnes resided in Ireland until 1866, when he became Professor of Political Economy at University College, London; he eventually made his home in Blackheath. Reference has been made earlier here to Mill's awareness that their exchanges constituted a "philosophic correspondence" between two who shared a "brotherhood in arms." Cairnes is sometimes thought of as a disciple of Mill, but while he was in basic agreement with Mill on many of their doctrines in political economy, he often disagreed with the older man in details. His criticism was often of great help to Mill in the revision of his *Political Economy*, and on some questions, notably on those relating to Ireland, Cairnes supplied invaluable information. Mill, in turn, was often of similar assistance to Cairnes (see, for instance, his analytical letter on the French political economists, pp. 1664-65). It was Mill who first encouraged Cairnes to expand some lectures he had delivered in Dublin into his book *The Slave Power*, which became perhaps the most influential force in shaping British opinion in favour of the North in the American Civil War. The letters of the two men on the course of that war reveal their mutual concern for the antislavery cause; said Mill, "the battle against the devil could not be fought on a more advantageous field than that of slavery" (p. 835). Other interests the two shared were proportional representation, women's rights, and the reform of education and land tenure in Ireland. More than any other of Mill's correspondence, except perhaps that with Carlyle—the other side of which is largely available—both sides of the Cairnes-Mill series deserve publication together; for reasons of space, we have been able to publish only pertinent excerpts of Cairnes's letters in footnotes.

Of the other new friends, Thomas Hare supplied Mill with a new cause—the representation of minorities or, as we now phrase it, proportional representation. Mill responded enthusiastically when Hare sent him a copy of his book on the subject: "You appear to me to have exactly, and for the first time, solved the difficulty of popular representation; and by doing so, to have raised up the cloud of gloom and uncertainty which hung over the futurity of representative government and therefore of civilization" (pp. 598-99). Mill's long-standing fear of the tyranny of the majority in a democratic society was now allayed by the possibility of the representation of minorities set forth in Hare's plan. It became at once a favourite cause for Mill, since he regarded the plan "as the sheet anchor of the democracy of the future" (p. 765). Within a month after studying Hare's book he reviewed it enthusiastically in *Fraser's Magazine*, and he quickly revised his pamphlet on parliamentary reform to endorse the plan. Hare became one of Mill's valued friends and a dependable ally in another favourite cause, women's suffrage.



It was through Hare that Mill gained another friend, disciple, and correspondent—the blind political economist and politician Henry Fawcett, who was Mill’s junior by twenty-three years. He and Mill were united in their support of Hare’s plan, co-operation, conservation, women’s suffrage, and a number of other liberal causes. When Fawcett and Mill were both elected to Parliament in 1865, they continued their relationship as political allies. As a political economist, however, Fawcett remained more orthodox than Mill, who in his later years moved nearer to socialist views.

Less close was the relationship with Herbert Spencer, the extant correspondence with whom dates from November, 1858, after Spencer had written Mill for assistance in securing a position in the India civil service. Prior to that, the two had engaged in amicable controversy in their writings on the ultimate test of truth and Spencer’s “Universal Postulate.” Mill’s answers to Spencer were largely expressed in successive revisions of the *Logic*, beginning with the fourth edition. Mill wrote Spencer that his *First Principles* was “a striking exposition of a consistent and imposing system of thought; of which though I dissent from much, I agree in more” (p. 846). Mill at times expressed regret at having to criticize so often one whom he regarded as “a friend and ally” (p. 1061). To Bain he wrote, “He is a considerable thinker though anything but a safe one” (p. 901), certainly, in psychology, less sound than Bain (p. 540). Nevertheless Mill readily supported Spencer’s plans for a periodical, *The Reader* (pp. 974-75), and when Spencer announced that he was planning to suspend the publication of his *Principles of Biology*, Mill offered to guarantee a publisher against loss in carrying on with it (p. 1145). At first, they differed in degree rather than in principle on laissez-faire: Spencer opposed town ownership of public parks, but Mill thought they should be the property of the town (p. 609). Later, Mill’s increasing sympathy with socialism must have widened the differences between the two, but their extant correspondence supplies no evidence. Spencer, though early in favour of women’s rights, changed his mind and refused to join Mill’s campaign for women’s suffrage (p. 1299). Mill protested Spencer’s view that women often tyrannize over men by remarking that here as in a great many other cases “two negatives do not make an affirmative, or at all events two affirmatives do not make a negative and two contradictory tyrannies do not make liberty” (p. 1614). Despite their differences, however, the two philosophers remained on friendly terms, and Spencer was invited from time to time to Mill’s home for dinner. Spencer after Mill’s death wrote an appreciative memorial article for the *Examiner* (reprinted as an Appendix in Spencer’s *Autobiography*).

A rare difficulty with a friend, arising out of a misunderstanding, is illustrated in the letters to the young classical scholar Theodor Gomperz, who had corresponded with Mill since 1854 about translating his works into German. When Mill and Helen Taylor had visited Gomperz in Vienna in the summer of 1862, the young man had fallen in love with Helen. Mill’s friendly letters inviting him to visit them in England were encouraging; he came to London the following winter, intending to propose to Helen. She and Mill, apparently not aware of Gomperz’s intentions, returned to Avignon before Gomperz made his hopes clear to either one. His request to be allowed to visit them was answered by Mill, apparently unconscious of Gomperz’s real purpose, on April 26, 1863 (Letter 607), in a rather ambiguous, cool manner. Gomperz took the letter to be a rejection not only by Helen as a suitor but also by the two of them as friends. His despair set

off an incipient nervous breakdown, in which he conjured up enemies who must be maligning him. In succeeding letters Mill protested the sincerity of his great esteem and respect for Gomperz, and after returning with Helen to London early in June invited him to dinner. Mill was apparently slow to understand the real desire of Gomperz; in guarded but kindly terms (Letter 618), Mill advised him that he would “never willingly be the smallest obstacle” to his wishes but clearly doubted that there was any hope.

If you think fit to carry the matter farther, either by speech or writing,—even if only for the relief of your own feelings—, you will have my truest sympathy, as you have my sincere friendship and esteem.—We hope to see you and your friend tomorrow, and I hope, nothing that has passed will make any difference in your feelings towards us, who remain unchanged to you, and that you will not allow it to affect in any degree our future intercourse (p. 863).

Gomperz for some time after leaving England still suffered from delusions of persecution, which Mill tried to dispel (see Letter 633). By fall, Gomperz was calmer and he eventually recovered fully. The correspondence with Mill was renewed; it continued on a friendly basis until Mill's death.

In the 1860's with the growth of Mill's reputation came a marked increase in his influence among young men. His treatises on logic and political economy had become textbooks in the universities, helping to shape the thought as well as the methods of thinking of the younger generation. Among his shorter works, *On Liberty* became, as Frederic Harrison remarked, “a sort of gospel.” On perhaps none was his influence greater than on John Morley, whose acquaintance Mill first made in 1865, when Morley at the age of twenty-seven was a writer for various periodicals. An anonymous article of his entitled “New Ideas” in the October 21, 1865, number of the *Saturday Review* attracted Mill's attention, and when a friend identified the author of the piece, Mill wrote Morley: “Wherever I might have seen that article, I should have felt a strong wish to know who was its author, as it shows an unusual amount of qualities which go towards making the most valuable kind of writer for the general public” (p. 1113). Their friendship developed quickly and by the fall of 1867 when Morley travelled to America, Mill wrote to Emerson a letter of introduction for him (Letter 1137), praising his great capacity and promise as a writer. It is not possible to gauge from the letters to Morley here published the full extent of Mill's influence on him, for we have succeeded in locating only eleven, some of them brief extracts. Morley himself, however, in his memorial article, “The Death of Mr. Mill” (*FR*, June, 1873) and in his *Recollections* (2 vols., New York, 1917), has recorded in generous terms his indebtedness to Mill as his intellectual father. D. A. Hamer in his *John Morley* (Oxford, 1968, pp. 16-32) has delineated skilfully Mill's role in winning Morley over from Positivism. What we do have of Mill's letters to him show Mill as an adviser on questions of public policy, particularly with reference to the *Fortnightly Review*, of which Morley became the editor in 1867. At one point in 1870, fearful that Morley's health was in danger from overwork, Mill offered to take over temporarily the editorship of the *Review*. Their personal contacts were frequent: Morley was always welcomed to Blackheath. On March 5, 1873, Mill visited Morley for a day at his home, shortly before Mill was to leave England for the last time. Morley's description of that day, reprinted in his *Recollections* (I, 66-67) from his memo-

rial article of June, 1873, is the finest account available of Mill's wide-ranging, stimulating conversation.

Of his influence on another promising young man, Lord Amberley, son of Lord John Russell, we again have little evidence in Mill's letters. Only seven have been located for inclusion here. Fortunately, they can be supplemented by a number of Helen's letters to Lady Amberley, preserved at LSE and in the Russell Archive at McMaster University. Mill and Helen first met Amberley at a dinner party at the Grotes' on March 22, 1864, and Amberley called on them at Avignon the following June. The acquaintance ripened into friendship after Amberley's marriage to Kate Stanley in 1865. Helen and Kate Amberley became close friends. The young couple visited Mill and Helen at Avignon and at Blackheath, and they in turn visited the Amberleys at their home near Tintern Abbey in England. Mill even agreed to become godfather for their second son, Bertrand Russell. Mill served as an adviser to Amberley both on his writings and on his political activities. Amberley, who was frequently attacked in *The Times* and other newspapers for his extreme radical opinions, won Mill's sympathetic support, as is seen in his letter of November 30, 1868 (pp. 1494-95), discussing both his and Amberley's defeat in the 1868 elections for Parliament.

In those same elections, the third of the young men who became one of Mill's close friends, Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, won a seat for Chelsea. Mill was not then acquainted with Dilke. Their acquaintance began in 1869 with Mill's writing Dilke a friendly but detailed criticism of his new book, *Greater Britain*, based on travels in many parts of the Empire (Letter 1693). Years later, Dilke himself wrote an account of their subsequent friendship and published excerpts from Mill's letters to him.<sup>7</sup> In this instance we presumably have most if not all of Mill's letters, preserved in Dilke's papers at the British Museum. The letters reveal Mill after his defeat in 1868 quite as deeply interested in current political questions as when he was in the House. Still a public figure, he found that his widened knowledge of the working classes contributed to his understanding of their problems. In the last four years of his life he increasingly took positions farther to the left than those he had occupied in his Parliamentary years. Long interested in land reform, he now moved to organize the Land Tenure Reform Association. His sympathies with the trades unions deepened, and his confidence in their leaders increased. He met regularly in 1869 with a committee organized to promote working-class representation in Parliament. He became an ardent advocate of universal free education, despite his earlier fears about state-maintained education. At Dilke's invitation he and Helen became members of the Radical Club, a dining and discussion group started by Henry Fawcett, which met every other Sunday during the Parliamentary session. About half of the Club were radical or ultra-liberal members of Parliament. On occasion Mill advised Dilke on strategy to be followed in supporting the liberal causes they both advocated, including women's rights. The two entertained each other at dinner from time to time, and it was to this intimate friendship that we owe the existence of the Watts portrait of Mill (see Letter 1780). Dilke persuaded Mill to sit for the portrait, paid the artist, and eventually bequeathed it to the City of Westminster.

Although Mill in his last years added such young men as Morley, Amberley, and Dilke to the roster of his friends and correspondents, he still maintained his correspondence with a number of his longtime friends. The oldest of these friendships was with Edwin Chadwick, dating back to their Benthamite days. Mill's earliest extant letter to Chadwick is dated February 19, 1827; the last, December 27, 1872. Over those forty-five years the two were apparently in close touch, for many of the letters, especially in the earlier years, are brief notes concerning matters previously discussed in person. Chadwick relied upon Mill as a reader of his many reports as a reformer of the poor laws, sanitation, education—sometimes it seems as a reformer of almost everything. Mill always admired the matter of Chadwick's reports and usually supported the proposed reforms; the writing of the reports, however, Mill time after time found in need of reorganization and even of grammatical correction. In the 1860's when Chadwick published a cheap paper for the working classes, *The Penny Newsmen*, Mill and Helen Taylor contributed articles. The best testimony to Mill's admiration and respect for Chadwick's abilities is to be found in the unremitting efforts he made to fulfil Chadwick's ambition to be elected to Parliament. Mill thought him admirably equipped for service there. In 1868 he characterized Chadwick as

one of the organizing & contriving minds of the age; a class of minds of which there are very few, & still fewer who apply those qualities to the practical business of government. He is, moreover, one of the few persons who have a passion for the public good; and nearly the whole of his time is devoted to it, in one form or another (p. 1432).

When Mill himself was being considered for the representation of Westminster, he constantly put forth the case for Chadwick, in preference to himself, and later, when in Parliament, Mill was always looking for possible openings for him. What appeared to be the best chance for Chadwick came in the 1868 campaign when it appeared possible that he might unseat Edward Bouverie, an Adullamite Liberal who for twenty-five years had represented the Scottish constituency of Kilmarnock. Because Bouverie had openly attacked Gladstone and the Liberal party the preceding spring, Mill thought him not entitled to Liberal support and instead warmly endorsed Chadwick. Bouverie charged Mill with sowing dissension in the party, and turned over to *The Times* for publication his exchange of letters with Mill (see Letters 1299 and 1306). In the event, Chadwick, who had campaigned vigorously and at considerable expense to himself, lost badly to Bouverie. Mill had to answer a bitter letter from Mrs. Chadwick protesting his encouraging her husband to run (Letter 1335). Neither her protest nor his own defeat deterred Mill, as his later letters to Chadwick reveal, from continuing to support his friend.

We have dwelt at some length on the foregoing correspondences with both earlier and later friends because they are among the most revealing of Mill's character and personality. Other series, however, deserve at least brief mention here. Readers who wish to pursue any of the various series will find convenient the separate Index of Correspondents in Vol. XVII. Mill's continuing, widely ranging interest in developments outside England is demonstrated in such series as those to his friends Gustave d'Eichthal and Charles Dupont-White on developments in France, both before and after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870; to Pasquale Villari, on the long struggle for Italian independence; to Henry S. Chapman in New Zealand, on affairs in that remote portion of

the Empire; and to Charles Eliot Norton in America on post-Civil War problems. The two series of his letters to working-class correspondents, John Plummer and William Wood, reveal his essential kindness; without any trace of condescension he lent them books, gave them advice, and sought their support for his favourite causes, especially that of women's rights. The letters to Alexander Bain and to Rowland G. Hazard provide valuable supplements to Mill's philosophical and metaphysical writings. The letters to W. T. Thornton, his long-time colleague at the India House, display not only their warm friendship but also their continuing debates on such economic questions as the wage-fund doctrine and trades unions and such philosophic questions as utilitarianism. Letters to William E. Hickson and John Chapman, successively editors of the *Westminster Review*, reveal not only his continuing interest in the radical review with which he had been closely associated in its earlier years, but also his readiness to contribute to its financial support. Letters to his publishers, John W. Parker and his successor William Longman, show Mill the author fully aware of the value of his publications and determined to obtain a fair return for them, but also willing to sacrifice to the public good his own profits by making available inexpensive People's editions of his works.

We have chosen in this Introduction to emphasize the value of the many series of Mill's letters in gaining an understanding of his life and personality, rather than to attempt to provide an analysis of his views on the many questions he explored in both letters and published works. The latter have been subjected, and are still being subjected, to searching analysis in many books and articles, for Mill continues to be one of the most significant of Victorian writers for the twentieth century. Some of his letters express views not to be found in his published writings, views that often seem surprisingly modern. Well known, of course, is his dedicated support of women's rights. Less well known are his concern for the environment (see Letter 909), his eventual acceptance of universal education provided by the State (see Letter 1534), and his foresighted opinions on the Negro problem in America (see Letter 871). For the reader who wishes to pursue these and other topics in the letters, we have provided a detailed subject index. It is our hope that readers will share the pleasure that the editors have had not only in observing Mill engage with ideas but also in obtaining new insights into the nature of the man himself. The whole correspondence is the life of the man, "and above all the chief part of his life, his inner life."

## Endnotes

[1.] For a similar expression to Cairnes, cf. p. 785.

[2.] Professor von Hayek in his *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor* (Chicago and London, 1951) published much, but by no means all, of the correspondence.

[3.] In what follows the present writer has drawn freely on his own article, "The *Autobiography* and The Lady," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XXXII (April, 1963), 301-306.

[4.] Helen to Lady Amberley, Sept. 11, 1869, published in *The Amberley Papers*, ed. Bertrand and Patricia Russell (2 vols., London, 1937), II, 311-12.

[5.] Most of her letter is published in Packe, p. 474.

[6.] *Letters of Charles Eliot Norton*, ed. Sara Norton and M. A. DeWolfe Howe (2 vols., London, 1913), I, 400-401.

[7.] C. W. Dilke, "John Stuart Mill, 1869-1873," *Cosmopolis*, V (March, 1897), 629-41.

## VOLUME XVIII - ESSAYS ON POLITICS AND SOCIETY PART I. INTRODUCTION

BY ALEXANDER BRADY

### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XVIII - Essays on Politics and Society Part I*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by Alexander Brady (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/233/16503>>.

### INTRODUCTION BY ALEXANDER BRADY

John Stuart Mill's development as a political and social thinker may be divided into at least three periods, with the first two largely determining the course and character of the third. The first embraces his youthful apprenticeship in and passionate proselytizing for the utilitarianism in which from childhood he had been carefully nurtured by his father and Bentham. His career as a young and orthodox utilitarian extended to his mental crisis in 1826 at the age of twenty. The second period began with his recovery from the crisis (1826-30) and terminated with the dissolution of the Philosophic Radicals as a distinct party towards the end of the 1830s. In this crucial period of his life Mill refashioned his thinking under a variety of intellectual and emotional influences. The final period comprised the remaining thirty-three years of his career (1840-73), when he published his major works, including *A System of Logic*, *Principles of Political Economy*, *On Liberty*, and *Considerations on Representative Government*.

### THE YOUNG UTILITARIAN

Mill's own account of his extraordinary education is a classic in the intellectual history of the last century. This is not the place to describe the rigorous pedagogic experiment to which he was subjected, other than to note its apparent effectiveness in making him, as he admitted, a reasoning machine with impressive powers for analysis and a reverence for facts and principles. It was ostensibly designed by his father to enable him to think for himself, although independent thought was not its immediate result. The highly precocious boy who at sixteen (in 1822) founded the Utilitarian Society had already faithfully absorbed in his father's study and from the writings and tutelage of Bentham a philosophy of ethics and politics wherein utility was the supreme criterion. He related how he felt as a youth after reading Dumont's translation of Bentham's treatise on legislation: "When I laid down the last volume of the *Traité* I had become a different being. . . I now had opinions; a creed, a doctrine, a philosophy; in one among the best senses of the word,

a religion; the inculcation and diffusion of which could be made the principal outward purpose of a life.”<sup>1</sup>

With obvious zealotry Mill was now ambitious to reform the affairs of mankind to conform with utilitarian canons. Fired by the influence of his father and Bentham, he engaged in a crusade to carry the torch of rationalism and utilitarianism into every sector of British life. In devotion he no less than Karl Marx had a sense of historic mission. His obvious instrument was journalism, which in his opinion was to modern Europe what political oratory had been to Athens and Rome. At seventeen he began eagerly dashing off letters and articles to newspapers and periodicals, arguing for the specific changes that utilitarians then sought: civil and criminal law reform, population restriction, a free press, a free economy, destruction of monopoly wherever present, abolition of colonial slavery, parliamentary reform, and a redress of Irish grievances. From the outset he wrote less to earn a living than to fulfil a mission and convert a public. In 1823 his father had secured his appointment as a clerk in the East India Company, where in the next thirty-five years he rose to high office and enjoyed ample freedom and adequate income to study and champion those causes to which he was dedicated. His position in time gave him not merely an invaluable independence but a practical experience in coping with complex human situations in the sub-continent on the other side of the globe.

The empiricist here had a congenial opportunity to reinforce his theories with a special experience of public affairs. In later life he wrote:

the occupation accustomed me to see and hear the difficulties of every course, and the means of obviating them, stated and discussed deliberately, with a view to execution; it gave me opportunities of perceiving when public measures, and other political facts, did not produce the effects which had been expected of them, and from what causes; above all it was valuable to me by making me, in this portion of my activity, merely one wheel in a machine, the whole of which had to work together. . . . I became practically conversant with the difficulties of moving bodies of men, the necessities of compromise, the art of sacrificing the non-essential to preserve the essential. I learnt how to obtain the best I could, when I could not obtain everything. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Two years after Mill founded the Utilitarian Society, Bentham and a few friends launched the *Westminster Review* as an official organ for utilitarian ideas. In its first four years (1824-28) Mill, despite his youth, was a frequent contributor on a wide range of themes, which he treated in the spirit of utilitarian orthodoxy. He criticized the follies of aristocratic rule in Britain and Ireland, the illusions of chivalry formerly associated with aristocracy, the vested interests of great landowners in corn and game laws, and the ills of a faulty journalism. He strove to liberate the English press from the trammels of an abused and arbitrary law of libel and the burden of press duties.<sup>3</sup> Mill like his father and other contemporary Radicals saw in the freedom of the press the essential instrument for mobilizing opinion, breaking down resistance to reform, and creating that degree of popular discontent which would compel the aristocratic government to make substantial concessions. He was naturally inspired by his father’s famous essay on “Liberty of the Press,” first published in 1821 as a supplement to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. He accepted his par-



ent's uncompromising belief that no special laws should exist to hamper the freedom of newspapers to print facts and advance opinions to protect the people against the tyranny of a government.<sup>4</sup>

In 1826 when Mill was twenty he entered the shadows of a mental crisis, which lasted for months, and has been variously assessed and explained by biographers. It is easy to accept the traditional and simple view that it resulted from prolonged and excessive work. Mill had recently undertaken the prodigious task of editing the five volumes of Bentham's *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, contributed to newspapers and journals, debated in the societies with which he was associated, tutored his brothers and sisters at home, and dealt with official duties at India House. Yet there was more involved than heavy work and physical exhaustion. In the *Autobiography* he blames a faulty education which cultivated his intellect but starved his feelings and aesthetic yearnings. His faith in the efficacy of utilitarian thought was evidently shaken, and it is symptomatic that on this, unlike other occasions, he failed to seek from his father guidance, sympathy, or compassion. He had secretly begun to rebel against certain elements in the philosophy of James Mill and Jeremy Bentham and felt compelled to work out alone an intellectual accommodation with his inheritance. A. W. Levi has advanced a Freudian explanation of the mental crisis and its disappearance.<sup>5</sup> Whether we accept this view or not, Mill's illness marked a milestone in his intellectual development. He awoke to deficiencies in the eighteenth-century utilitarian thought in which he had been indoctrinated, and to repair them sought guidance from other and varied sources, including a constellation of new friends and new mentors. In the fourteen years after 1826 the orthodox utilitarian was transformed into an eclectic liberal who in no sense repudiated all his inheritance but modified and combined it with many fresh ideas and methods of thought demanded in a world gripped by change where truth, as he saw it, must be many-sided.

He found for depression an early antidote in Wordsworth's tranquil and contemplative poetry, which supplied something which had been lacking in his father's rigorous educational regime—a cultivation of feeling inspired by natural beauty. Yet the Wordsworthian culture of the feelings was at the time merely one of a medley of influences.<sup>6</sup> Even Macaulay's caustic criticism in the *Edinburgh Review* of his father's *Essay on Government* persuaded Mill that although Macaulay himself was faulty in philosophy, he scored valid points against the narrowness of his father's political thought and its neglect of significant springs in the conduct of modern man.<sup>7</sup>

The thinkers, very different from his father and Bentham, who gave him intellectual stimulus in the early 1830s were the Saint-Simonians, Comte, Coleridge, Carlyle, and Tocqueville. He appreciated the fact that these writers emphasized the significance of history and a philosophy of history, and endorsed the idea that each state of society and the human mind tended to produce that which succeeded it, with modifications dictated by circumstances. At the same time, the whirl of change in events and ideas impressed him with the relativity of political institutions; each different stage in human society must have different institutions. Further, as he put it, "government is always either in the hands, or passing into the hands, of whatever is the strongest power in society, and . . . what this power is, does not depend on institutions, but institutions on it. . . ."<sup>8</sup>

Not the least fascinating circumstance in the shaping of Mill's thought in the early 1830's was his coming under different streams of influence and endeavouring to reconcile them or to select from each some element or elements of significance. This process was admirably illustrated in the letter to John Sterling in October 1831.<sup>9</sup> He discussed here contemporary Toryism and Liberalism, and distinguished between the contrary types of speculative and practical Toryism, but oddly failed to recognize the significant reformism of men like Huskisson and Peel. "Practical Toryism," he said, "simply means, being *in*, and availing yourself of your comfortable position *inside* the vehicle without minding the poor devils who are freezing *outside*. . . . Such Toryism is essentially incompatible with any large and generous aspirations. . . ." Yet this is the Toryism that appealed to the privileged classes of his day, who had little faith in human improvement, unlike his friends the speculative Tories—Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. These wanted an ideal Toryism, an ideal King, Lords, and Commons, the old England as opposed to the new, an England as she might be, not as she is. They represented a reverence for government in the abstract,

sensible that it is good for man to be ruled; to submit both his body & mind to the guidance of a higher intelligence & virtue. It is therefore the direct antithesis of liberalism, which is for making every man his own guide & sovereign master, & letting him think for himself & do exactly as he judges best for himself, giving other men leave to persuade him if they can by evidence, but forbidding him to give way to authority; and still less allowing them to constrain him more than the existence & tolerable security of every man's person and property renders indispensably necessary. It is difficult to conceive a more thorough ignorance of man's nature, & of what is necessary for his happiness or what degree of happiness & virtue he is capable of attaining than this system implies.<sup>10</sup>

These sentiments may seem somewhat uncharacteristic of one renowned as spokesman of British nineteenth-century liberalism. They reflect his thinking at a critical period when he was striving to assess the changing winds of current opinion. At the same time they also reflect an enduring element: his doubts about the average man's capacity unaided to cope wisely with the complex problems of citizenship.

In combining his earlier utilitarian doctrines with those of new intellectual associates, Mill saw politics as an immensely important part of the structure of society, since only through political activity could men maximize their moral and social potentiality. The institutional contrivances of the state, being interwoven with the main facets of economic and social life, were comprehensible only in the context of the whole. Politics reflected the character of economic and social systems and the ethical values men held. Culture and politics were thus inseparable, political progress and social progress interdependent. Some years later, in a letter to John Chapman, Mill expressed in general terms a view that for him had become axiomatic:

I understand by Sociology not a particular *class* of subjects included *within* Politics, but a vast field *including* it—the whole field of enquiry & speculation respecting human society & its arrangements, of which the forms of government, & the principles of the conduct of governments are but a part. And it seems to me impossible that

even the politics of the day can be discussed on principle, or with a view to anything but the exigencies of the moment, unless by setting out from definite opinions respecting social questions more fundamental than what is commonly called politics.<sup>11</sup>

## IDEAS AND ACTIVITY, 1830-40

The varied intellectual stimuli that Mill experienced after his mental crisis helped to shape the mould of his political thought in that turbulent and confused era of the 1830s. However much he strayed from the strict path of his father's thought, he remained in agreement with the main legal and political reforms sought by James Mill and the Philosophic Radicals. In his journalism he still advocated extensive changes in the laws, the parliamentary system, and the whole system of government to reduce what, in his opinion, was the baneful influence of the aristocracy on the major aspects of British society. He endeavoured to arouse the Radicals in and out of parliament to form a powerful party that either alone or allied with progressive Whigs could shape public policies on reformist lines. In a letter to Edward Lytton Bulwer in March 1838 he summarized his political ambitions in the preceding years:

I have never had any other notion of practical policy, since the radicals were numerous enough to form a party, than that of resting on the *whole body* of radical opinion, from the whig-radicals at one extreme, to the more reasonable & practical of the working classes, & the Benthamites, on the other. I have been trying ever since the reform bill to stimulate, so far as I had an opportunity, all sections of the parliamentary radicals to organize such a union & such a system of policy. . . .<sup>12</sup>

Yet despite his genuine zeal, Mill found the task of trying to achieve unity among the Radicals frustrating. They were splintered into stubborn factions, and no parliamentary leader with the requisite qualities emerged to unite them. They constituted a party of many lieutenants without a general. For a short interval Mill pinned his hopes on Lord Durham, who left the Whig ministry, undertook the Canadian mission, surrounded himself with Radical advisers like Charles Buller and Gibbon Wakefield, and produced a report that was a Radical rather than a Whig or Tory document. But Mill's hopes and designs for Durham's leadership or indeed for the future of the party were soon shattered by adverse events, including the serious illness and death of Durham and Mill's own inability to sustain much longer the heavy financial and other burdens of the *London and Westminster Review*, the organ for radical causes. By 1840 he had virtually ceased to be a leading counsellor to Radical politicians, although his interest in utilitarian reform continued unabated.

Significantly, in the 1830s Mill was not absorbed exclusively in British political ideas and activities. In contrast with his father, who disliked France and the French, he was early influenced by French thinkers and fascinated by the dialectic of French politics. In 1829 he told a Parisian friend that he admired his countrymen because they were open to ideas and more ready than the English to act on them.<sup>13</sup> Never perhaps was his Francophile enthusiasm more pronounced than in 1830. On the collapse of the Bourbon monarchy he hurried to Paris, mixed freely with young

revolutionaries and Saint-Simonian leaders, shared the excitement and joy of his French friends in what they assumed was the triumph of revolution over aristocratic politics and ultramontane theology, and returned to England with a renewed zest for reforms.<sup>14</sup>

Mill's political hopes for France resembled those for Britain: a political regime on utilitarian lines, a widely representative assembly, a liberal franchise, a free press, free associations, popular education, and an enlightened public. However, the revolution of 1830 became a dismal disappointment. The monarchy of Louis Philippe, wedded to narrow commercial and financial groups, was unwilling to jeopardize for the sake of reform its powers and privileges, and at every step opposed major changes. From London Mill closely and anxiously followed events, and between 1830 and 1834 in successive articles in the *Examiner* poured out his bitterness.<sup>15</sup>

Mill's severe disenchantment left an imprint on his political thinking throughout the 1830s and even later. Although he did not lose liberal convictions or a belief in representative government, he now doubted that large electorates could make sound decisions without the positive leadership of enlightened minorities. An extended suffrage, however important in itself, alone could not prevent the continuance of self-interested oligarchies whether of the aristocracy or middle class. His doubts and fears at the time about representative institutions and democracy were evident in numerous articles. Seven of these are included in the present volume, beginning with the review articles on *The Use and Abuse of Some Political Terms* by George Cornwall Lewis and *Rationale of Political Representation* by Samuel Bailey.<sup>16</sup>

## LEWIS AND BAILEY

Lewis was a man of Mill's own age, equipped with similar precocious erudition, and of utilitarian sympathies. His book dealt with the relation of logic to politics, a topic in which Mill was then too deeply interested to treat casually. Two years later he confessed to Carlyle that his review was an outgrowth from his own mind and the truest he had ever written—that is, it was no mere product of an orthodox utilitarian schooling.<sup>17</sup> He commended Lewis's attempt to bring a lucid logic into the language of politics, since slovenly thinking and equivocal words were together the bane of political discussion. But he took strong exception to certain points, of which the most important concerned rights. Lewis, following his teacher John Austin, argued that all rights are creations of law and the will of the sovereign. To call anything a right which is not enforceable in the courts is an abuse of language. In contrast Mill emphasized the reality of moral rights. He contended that, in saying that no man has a moral right to think as he pleases, for he ought to inform himself and think justly, Dr. Johnson refers to a right Lewis evidently fails to comprehend. Yet for Mill a right in the Johnsonian sense is no abuse of terms; it is good logic and good English. Rights are the correlatives of obligations and duties, and moral as well as legal rights have a necessary and significant place in the contemporary state. It is a moral right of subjects to be well-governed and a moral duty of the sovereign to govern well. The focus of this criticism is the mischief inherent in unduly simplified and inflexible concepts. Mill reacts here against the rigidity of some utilitarian logicians. His further complaint concerned the apparent and unjustified

contempt with which Lewis disposed of Locke and Rousseau for assuming an unhistorical and fictitious state of nature and a social contract. Mill believed that it was inconsequential whether anything like a state of nature existed. The real issue was the extent to which as an hypothesis it shed light on the fact of a morality outside the law to which men could appeal. To Mill as to Locke such morality was important. Independent states in relations with one another remained in a state of nature, without a common superior, but responsive to moral obligations and duties. However unskillfully formulated, the old theories of the social contract and the inalienable rights of man in Mill's opinion had a rightful place in the evolution of political liberty and justice by indicating a pragmatic limit on the power of the sovereign. He concluded his review of Lewis's book by emphasizing the necessity of recognizing, despite all the linguistic differences, the close relationship between ideas of different political thinkers, and also the possibility of combining them into a whole.

In reviewing Samuel Bailey's *Rationale of Political Representation*, Mill in effect summarized his own ideas on the subject. Sharing the views of the Sheffield Radical, he employed the book to illustrate what for him were the requisites of sound representative government. In his argument he reverted to the cherished utilitarian dogma of his father that in politics it was essential to achieve the closest possible identification of interest between rulers and ruled. But this, he thought, was feasible only if decisions were made, not by the uninstructed multitude, but by a carefully selected body commanding special knowledge and techniques and accountable to the public. Strict accountability would help to ensure that rulers pursued the interests of the people rather than their own. Admittedly the task of overcoming the inbred chicanery and low cunning of politicians was difficult. It could not be accomplished simply by institutional machinery without a massive and prolonged public enlightenment. His fear of a sudden flood of new and ignorant voters made him cautious about any rapid extension of the franchise: "no one is disposed," he wrote, "to deny that we ought cautiously to feel our way, and watch well the consequences of each extension of the suffrage before venturing upon another" (32). (This and subsequent parenthetical references are to the text of the present edition.) This caution extended even to his favourite cause of women's enfranchisement. Despite a passionate belief in female suffrage, he thought in 1835 that its public advocacy would serve no practical purpose (29n).

Although wary about changes in the franchise, Mill supported many reforms in political machinery in harmony with orthodox Philosophic Radicalism: the secret ballot, triennial parliaments, publicity for parliamentary proceedings, payment of members and their professionalization, reduction in the size of the House of Commons to render it more efficient, and the creation of strong local government which he assumed would reduce the burdens of the national parliament. He also proposed a radical change in the House of Lords to destroy it as a rigid barrier to reforms fashioned in the Commons. He would abolish its hereditary principle and select its membership from the lower house. By such changes he hoped to transform Britain's government from an aristocracy into a special kind of democracy led by an enlightened few.<sup>18</sup>

He said little about the enlightened few beyond emphasizing that they consist of those specially endowed with public spirit and educated to conduct a thoughtful direction of national af-

fairs: the fittest persons whom the existing society could produce. He believed that since 1688 the landed aristocracy had governed England badly: it reflected the attitudes of unimaginative dilettantes incapable of the rigorous intellect that government needed, and it was fettered by its own enormous wealth and special privileges. Anxious to protect its own position, it could do little to bridge the chasm between the social classes, which increasingly endangered a Britain subject to the new powerful pressures of nineteenth-century industrialism. To Mill its strength and effectiveness seemed inferior to those of the aristocracy of Prussia (23-4).

Through his reform programme Mill hoped to create a new and independent ruling class of paid and professional parliamentarians freed from electoral pledges. He believed that unpaid legislators and magistrates sustained the monopoly power of the aristocracy because aristocrats could usually afford to serve without pay (35). Among the Radicals the issue of pledges provoked acrimonious debate. In 1832 Mill had irritated some in arguing that, although in cases of constitutional change pledges might sometimes be justified, they were in general bad. "The sovereignty of the people," he wrote, "is essentially a delegated sovereignty. Government must be performed by the few, for the benefit of the many. . . ."19 The same view he repeated in the "Rationale of Representation," contending that electors are obligated to select representatives fully qualified to form sound decisions on public matters. They must not expect that those they elect should act slavishly in parliament according to popular judgment any more than patients expect a physician to cure their ills according to their own chosen ideas of medicine (40). For Mill, pledges conflicted with the essence of representative government. Voters were free to reward or punish, by re-election or rejection, a representative at the end of his term, but to shackle him from the outset with inflexible instructions would cripple his powers of initiative and responsibility.

## AMERICA, TOCQUEVILLE, AND DEMOCRACY

As a British radical, Mill from youth was profoundly interested in the United States. For him and most of his fellow utilitarians the republic was a unique experiment of a democracy in action, and hence important for all European liberals. Unlike the Tory writers of the *Quarterly Review*, they looked to America to demonstrate the virtues of democracy, and abundant praise of the United States became their orthodox practice. They admired it for experimenting with new social ideas, rejecting an established church, extending franchise laws, promoting popular education, recognizing a free press, and believing in a free economy. Such was Jeremy Bentham's enthusiasm for America that to Andrew Jackson he described himself as "more of a United Statesman than an Englishman." For him and his disciples the republic seemed to apply the principle of utility more assiduously than did Britain.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that between 1835 and 1840 Mill wrote three leading articles on America: two lengthy reviews in 1835 and 1840 on the separate parts of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* and in 1836 an essay on the state of American society as depicted in five contemporary volumes. In these essays he endeavoured not merely to illustrate the work of a new and major political thinker, but also to portray the democratic society of the United States compared

with the aristocratic regimes of Europe. In doing this under the weighty influence of Tocqueville, he clarified and matured his own thought on the merits and faults of democracy. Hence his two essays on Tocqueville are highly significant in the evolution of his thinking.

Almost the same age, although of different social backgrounds, the two men had much in common. Both were convinced that the new industrial age was destined to affect profoundly society and politics. Both were interested in the shape of things to come, in the trend to equality, and in democracy as almost an inevitable force of nature that must be adjusted to human circumstances and needs. Both believed that it alone could diffuse the spirit of a vigorous citizenship and sense of community throughout the whole national state. Yet they were also deeply concerned about its inherent defects and anxious to remedy them. "Man cannot turn back the rivers to their source," wrote Mill, "but it rests with himself whether they shall fertilize or lay waste his fields" (158).

Tocqueville's idea of democracy was more loosely defined than Mill's. He referred to it less often as a particular form of government than as an equality of social conditions, without elements of aristocracy and privilege, the kind of equality which was best exemplified in the United States. Equality of conditions might exist under an absolute ruler, and Tocqueville feared that in some countries, including his own France, it might emerge solely in that form. Mill, on the other hand, applied the term democracy more consistently to a form of government in which the people constitutionally exercised a dominant sway. He was fully aware, however, that democratic government had wide social implications, and a large measure of social equality was a natural accompaniment.

In his two reviews Mill welcomed Tocqueville's book as a landmark in the literature of politics, hailing the first part as among "the most remarkable productions of our time" (57). He saw its author, in his wide-ranging thought, as comparable to Montesquieu. His praise for the second part was equally enthusiastic. It was "the first philosophical book ever written on Democracy, as it manifests itself in modern society."<sup>20</sup> The reasons for this laudation are found in the grand sweep of Tocqueville's sociological description and perception and his penetrating comments on democracy, its mixed properties and tendencies, the dangers it confronted, and the different demands it made on mankind. For Mill method was hardly less important than content. In Tocqueville he saw the new kind of political scientist he was ambitious to be himself, quick to probe the varied social forces that mould man's political conduct, skilful in combining deduction and induction, and adept in applying comparative methods to the facts of society and government.

In his first essay, especially, Mill employed long quotations to illustrate Tocqueville's views on American democracy and society and on the operation of its institutions. He acted like a modest chairman, briefly introducing a speaker and giving him abundant time to elaborate his theme, confident in the speaker's mastery of the subject. But his quotations in both essays indicate his deep interest in certain aspects of Tocqueville's account, especially the role of a numerical majority and its influences on individual and national life. Anxiously he scrutinized how far in practice Americans respected the principle of true democracy as defined in "The Rationale of Representation." He was hardly encouraged by his findings. The people often directly governed rather

than merely exerting an ultimate control over government. He learned from Tocqueville how widely delegation had replaced representation (74). Electors, however poorly informed, often laid down conditions that their representatives were compelled to respect. The majority was unmistakably dominant, constantly and aggressively asserted its will, shaped the character of opinion, and lived in perpetual adoration of itself. It was little comfort for Mill to read Tocqueville's verdict that he knew of no country with less independence of mind and less real freedom of discussion than the United States (81). No monarch had such power over opinion as the popular majority. Tocqueville admitted that the majority refrained from attacking the property and material interests of the rich minority, but it otherwise imposed a despotic yoke on public opinion, on independent thought, and hence on individuality of character.

In view of his previous generous admiration for America, Mill doubtless wished that the evidence was different, but could not escape the compelling force of Tocqueville's critical picture. Yet, although he accepted most of Tocqueville's strictures on American institutions, he sometimes tried to moderate and excuse them. In the first part of his work Tocqueville concluded that the American electors were disposed to choose mediocrities rather than able candidates, owing partly to their own limited education and understanding and partly to the insatiable envy that most men had for their superiors. Mill feared that this charge, if true, meant that his own belief in a talented élite to guide and instruct the democracy was unlikely to be justified. He thought he found, however, in the facts furnished by Tocqueville a situation less discouraging than had at first appeared. In critical times able Americans assumed a positive leadership. In ordinary times, unfortunately, the range of public activity was too restricted to attract men of ambition and talent. Mill believed that this situation would eventually improve with the advance of education, general enlightenment, and the social needs of America.<sup>21</sup> He was much less pessimistic than Tocqueville about democracy's falling under the control of the mediocre.

In his first review Mill also questioned Tocqueville's assertion that aristocracy had qualities of prudence and steadiness absent in democracy. The steadiness of an aristocracy, he said, was commonly expressed in a tenacious grip on its own cherished privileges. Its strength of will, as English history illustrated, was shaped by its class interests, and its opinions tended to fluctuate with its immediate impulses and needs (77-9).

Mill's main criticism in his second essay was well taken: Tocqueville, in failing to define democracy with precision, sometimes confused its effects with those of a commercial civilization in general. As a nation progresses in industry and wealth, its manufactures expand, its capital grows, its class structure changes, and the intermediate group between poor and rich, comprised of artisans and middle class, multiplies. This may seem to make, as Tocqueville believed, a trend to equalization, but it could be merely one of many consequences from augmented industry and wealth, which created a highly complex society without necessarily furthering political freedom and democratic equality. Mill doubted whether in itself a commercial civilization, aside from other influences, necessarily equalized conditions among men. At any rate it failed to do so in Britain. There, he wrote, "The extremes of wealth and poverty are wider apart, and there is a more numerous body of persons at each extreme, than in any other commercial community"



(193). Owing to their abundant children, the poor remained poor, while the laws tended to keep large concentrations of capital together, and hence the rich remained rich. Great fortunes were accumulated and seldom distributed. In this respect, Mill thought, Britain stood in contrast to the United States, although in commercial prosperity and industrial growth she was similar.

However ready to accept Tocqueville's belief in the passion for equality as a dynamic factor in modern industrial nations, Mill in comparing Britain and the United States saw and illustrated other influences. He agreed with Tocqueville that in the two countries the middle classes were remarkably alike in structure and aspirations. Both experienced social instability, the restless drive of individuals to improve their lot, the ceaseless pursuit of wealth, and the enlargement of the middle class through constant recruitment from below. But in one respect they differed. Britain, unlike America, had a governing and landed aristocracy, and also a leisured class and a learned class, larger and more significant in influence than their counterparts in the republic. Such class features produced between the two countries differences in the quality of political life. Mill admitted that in Britain profound changes then occurring narrowed the divergences. The strongholds of aristocratic powers were weakening. The House of Lords, for all its pretensions and authority, failed to defeat the Reform Bill. Peers were now influenced by bourgeois opinion and even taste. The edifice of government might still rest on an impressive aristocratic base, but its transformation had begun, and Mill and the Philosophic Radicals were determined that it must be carried to ultimate success.

It is needless to dwell on differences in opinion between Mill and Tocqueville, since the dissimilarities are less important than what the men shared in common, Mill saw Tocqueville as he saw himself—a leader in the great transition of thought between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and a contributor of social insights and ideas to those who desired for Europe a new liberal age. In his *Autobiography* he described how Tocqueville more effectively than any other contemporary depicted the virtues of democracy as well as its perils. He admitted that his French friend reinforced his own fears about the political tyranny of popular opinion and influenced him in shifting his ideal from that of pure democracy to its modified form later presented in *Considerations on Representative Government*.<sup>22</sup> Both men observed in America harsh forms of popular tyranny, not in laws, but in what Mill called the dispensing power over all law. “The people of Massachusetts,” he remarked, “passed no law prohibiting Roman Catholic schools, or exempting Protestants from the penalties of incendiarism; they contented themselves with burning the Ursuline convent to the ground, aware that no jury would be found to redress the injury” (177). In these cases popular tyranny was expressed not merely in the action of mobs, incited by the passions of religion, party, or race, but by the inability of the administrative and judicial organs to work effectively owing to their direct dependence on popular opinion.

Mill, like Tocqueville, saw in the democratic majority perennial threats to what for both were supreme values: individuality, intellectual variety, effective minority opinions, and the spontaneous initiatives derived from individuals and groups. For Mill these values remained an enduring element in his liberal philosophy and pervaded *On Liberty*. Their implications for national development were manifest. But no single rule or set of concepts could determine the same develop-

ment for all nations. Each nation must pursue a course appropriate to the varied interests, circumstances, and temperament of its citizens. Years before Mill had criticized Comte's folly in assuming a single law of evolution for all nations, a criticism he never retracted.<sup>23</sup>

Mill no less than Tocqueville was eager to recognize the main political corollaries of these liberal ideas. He emphasized the importance for individuals of fostering and preserving combinations or associations to promote mutual protection and common causes, such as political unions, antislavery societies, and the like. He saw the freedom of combination as intimately joined to that of the press. "The real Political Unions of England," he wrote, "are the Newspapers. It is these which tell every person what all other persons are feeling, and in what manner they are ready to act." (165.) He evidently did not foresee that sometimes newspapers might also become the instruments of a democratic despotism.

He likewise agreed with Tocqueville in extolling the value of local government as a means for extending among the people the management of public business, training them in self-rule, and enlarging their scope for political freedom. He here reflected his faith that under democracy politics becomes a form of adult education. He was hardly less confident than Tocqueville that the spirit and habit of local autonomy was a primary source of American freedom and would no less promote freedom in other democracies.

Finally, in his second article on Tocqueville he also expressed the conviction that in a mass democracy, whether in Europe or America, it was essential to bolster influences that counter-vailed those of the mass. For him the evil was not the preponderance of a democratic class in itself, but of any class, especially when it lacked intellectual cultivation (196). He believed with Tocqueville that the overwhelming dominance of a single class would always predispose it to establish a deadening uniformity in the style and texture of life for the whole society. This would mean an intellectually static community resembling that of China as understood in Europe at the time.

Mill, like Tocqueville, remained apprehensive that in an industrial and commercial age democracy would impoverish the national culture by imposing on it a single and inflexible set of mass values. Although he admitted that public opinion must rule, he speculated that to form

the best public opinion, there should exist somewhere a great social support for opinions and sentiments different from those of the mass. The shape which that support may best assume is a question of time, place, and circumstance; but (in a commercial country, and in an age when, happily for mankind, the military spirit is gone by) there can be no doubt about the elements which must compose it: they are, an agricultural class, a leisured class, and a learned class. (199.)

These sentiments, tinged with Coleridgean conservatism, may have seemed strange and unwelcome to some fellow Philosophic Radicals, but by 1840 his associates in the movement had learned that his Benthamite orthodoxy had long since disappeared.

It may be added that Mill did not remain convinced that the existence of a leisured class was of pre-eminent importance. In 1847 he wrote to John Austin:

I have even ceased to think that a leisured class, in the ordinary sense of the term, is an essential constituent of the best form of society. What does seem to me essential is that society at large should not be overworked, nor over-anxious about the means of subsistence, for which we must look to the grand source of improvement, repression of population, combined with laws or customs of inheritance which shall favour the diffusion of property instead of its accumulation in masses.<sup>24</sup>

At this time Mill was working on his *Principles of Political Economy*, and the healing virtues of the stationary state were fresh and vivid in his mind.

In his essay on the “State of Society in America” Mill expressed not merely some additional reflections on the American experiment, but also briefly raised questions on how environment determines a nation’s politics, how nations could benefit from one another’s experience through a science of comparative institutions, and how American society was judged by European observers in the doubtful light of their own prejudices, especially hostility to popular rule. He was strongly convinced that the American form of democracy must be directly related to the special character of American society, moulded by a wide variety of forces: abundant natural wealth, a fast growing population, a remarkable opportunity for all classes to raise their standards of living, the absence of aggressive neighbours, the lack of a leisured class except in the southern states, and the inheritance of a language and culture from a parent nation three thousand miles away. Its experiment in politics was scarcely comprehensible apart from the interplay of these numerous influences, all of which, although seldom the product of government, impinged directly on government. They were not all favourable to the success of democracy. To Mill the United States was a classic demonstration of the intimate bonds between social circumstances and political forms.

Characteristic is the sentence: “High wages and universal reading are the two elements of democracy; where they co-exist, all government, except the government of public opinion, is impossible” (99). Mill held that the high premium on labour in North America meant that the common man was not merely well remunerated but also had to be consulted about his government. Likewise the general literacy of the Puritans, originally cherished as a means for reading Holy Writ, had become the invaluable medium for political and forensic debates whereby the Americans established and sustained their freedoms. Thus with the strokes of a broad brush Mill explained to readers in the *London Review* American democracy in terms of environment, history, and social conditions. He may have provided an unduly simplified version of reality, but it was well calculated to correct the partisan bias of the many itinerant writers who came and went across the Atlantic.

## “CIVILIZATION”

Mill’s long essay, “Civilization,” is closely related to those on America and the ideas of Tocqueville. It reflects the same concern over certain profound changes then occurring or about to occur in society and their significance for the individual and his government.

Alexander Bain thought Mill's definition of civilization inadequate and much of his article merely a Philosophic Radical's criticism of contemporary British society.<sup>25</sup> Mill explicitly restricted use of the term to institutions and practices different from those of the savage. "Whatever be the characteristics of what we call savage life," he wrote, "the contrary of these, or the qualities which society puts on as it throws off these, constitute civilization" (120). A modern anthropologist may be even less likely than Bain to feel satisfied with this definition. Yet whatever its deficiency it in no way hampered Mill in discussing that in which he was principally interested—certain aspects of contemporary Britain on which he had strong opinions. He advocated reform in many established institutions, ideas, and prejudices. He recognized that in every country civilization exhibits ill as well as salutary traits, and both he scrutinized.

Civilized men, unlike savages, have clustered in great and fixed concentrations, acted together in large bodies for common purposes, and proceeded from one material achievement to another. They have created populous cities, developed specialized industries, accepted fully the division of labour, expanded channels of trade, improvised techniques of production, and applied science to the cultivation of the soil. Thus they have augmented their material comforts and satisfactions as well as their pleasures in social intercourse. Mill welcomed the general results of this onward thrust of civilization, but was disturbed by some of its features, and especially by the passing of power increasingly from individuals and small groups of individuals to the masses, whose importance grew while that of individuals shrank. The characteristic product of modern material civilization has been a mass society, which Mill no less than Tocqueville feared. "When the masses become powerful," he wrote, "an individual, or a small band of individuals, can accomplish nothing considerable except by influencing the masses; and to do this becomes daily more difficult, from the constantly increasing number of those who are vying with one another to attract public attention" (126).

Not the least interesting part of his essay is a sketch of the possible strategy whereby the literate and educated elements of the population might guide the masses or create a rival power to them. He believed that an effective civilization is possible only through the capacity of individuals to combine for common ends. Combination, as in trade unions and benefit societies, had already made the workers more powerful. Combination and compromise also could enlarge the influence of the literate middle class, demolish old barriers between all classes, and extend the range of law and justice. English educational institutions were imperfectly organized for their task, and he feared the advent of democracy before the people were sufficiently educated and ready to shoulder their responsibilities. He censured the ancient English universities for failing to make the present rulers grasp what had to be done in reform to avoid the worst features of mass domination. In pursuing narrow sectarian ends, as in the exclusion of Dissenters, the universities were ignoring political realities.<sup>26</sup> They must moreover extend their scope to serve a larger proportion of the population, and at the same time sponsor more through research in the manner of the German universities.

In his targets for criticism Mill included the Established Church. For this ancient instrument of national religion and culture he had little reverence, partly because he was not a believer, and

partly because its intimate alliance with the aristocracy had bolstered conservative forces hostile to reform. Evident throughout his essay is what Matthew Arnold called Mill's insensitivity to religion, especially dogmatic religion. On this subject he was explicit: "The principle itself of dogmatic religion, dogmatic morality, dogmatic philosophy, is what requires to be rooted out" (144). For him the Establishment in particular was too sectarian, too protective of its own institutional monopoly, and too much a prop of the existing social order. With satisfaction he witnessed the shrinkage of its power as other religious bodies secured a greater public freedom. In 1829 he described to Gustave d'Eichthal the immense significance of Catholic emancipation. "It forms an era in civilization. It is one of those great events, which periodically occur, by which the institutions of a country are brought into harmony with the better part of the mind of that country. . . ."27 He was gratified that the Established Church and its ally the aristocracy had suffered a defeat, for he felt the emancipation had dealt a fatal blow in general to exclusion from political rights on grounds of religion. As a sequel to this event, Mill was inclined in the early 1830s to predict an imminent collapse of the power of the Church. Here his perception failed him. He greatly underestimated the Church's resilience, vitality, and capacity for change and survival, as he also misunderstood the human feelings that helped to sustain it.

In turning from the general aspects of contemporary civilization to its moral effects. Mill generalized freely about the imponderables in individual conduct. He thought that civilization relaxed individual energy and tended to focus it within the narrow sphere of the individual's money-getting pursuits. He believed that in the civilized milieu the individual received so many elements of security and protection for himself, family, and property, that he depended less on his own unaided initiatives and exertions. This profound change in man's spirit and temper was illustrated in all phases of society, including literature and the arts, which now tended to lose their older distinct and enduring standards. As literacy spread, good literature diminished. The influence of superior minds over the multitude weakened. "The individual," wrote Mill, "becomes so lost in the crowd, that though he depends more and more upon opinion, he is apt to depend less and less upon well-grounded opinion; upon the opinion of those who know him. An established character becomes at once more difficult to gain, and more easily to be dispensed with" (132). In Mill's view it was now only in small communities that the valuable influence of public opinion could be demonstrated.

In discussing the advance of civilization Mill attempted no confident and systematic balance-sheet of gains and losses for mankind. In his own age of transition he evidently felt that his chief task as a utilitarian reformer was to concentrate on augmenting the gains and minimizing the losses in the best way possible. To this end his reformist recommendations were directed.

#### "ESSAYS ON GOVERNMENT"

The one remaining selection in this volume illustrative of Mill's political ideas in the decade 1830-40 is a brief review of *Essays on Government* (1840). The author of this slender volume was an anonymous radical who believed in republican government, universal suffrage, the ballot, and

rule by a natural aristocracy composed of those with wisdom and virtue whom the community selected in contrast to the existing aristocracy of birth and wealth. Mill found in the book no deep or original thought, but simply some rather naïve current thinking about democracy. The machinery constituted for choosing a natural aristocracy does not necessarily secure one. Unlike the author, Mill was not confident that the people would either know where to find natural aristocrats or select them as rulers when they found them.

Further he saw in the book contradictions between the principal prerequisites for good government. It insisted that the government must conform to the opinion of the governed, and also that the rulers must be the wisest and best persons in the community. Would the wise ones consent to rule in conformity with the opinions of the less wise? Dissatisfied with the book's ambiguities, Mill summed up his own position:

WE THINK THAT DEMOCRACY *CAN* GOVERN: IT CAN MAKE ITS LEGISLATORS ITS MERE DELEGATES, TO CARRY INTO EFFECT *ITS* PRECONCEIVED OPINIONS. WE DO NOT SAY THAT IT *WILL* DO SO. WHETHER IT WILL, APPEARS TO US THE GREAT QUESTION WHICH FUTURITY HAS TO RESOLVE; AND ON THE SOLUTION OF WHICH IT DEPENDS WHETHER DEMOCRACY WILL BE THAT SOCIAL REGENERATION WHICH ITS PARTISANS EXPECT, OR MERELY A NEW FORM OF BAD GOVERNMENT, PERHAPS SOMEWHAT BETTER, PERHAPS SOMEWHAT WORSE, THAN THOSE WHICH PRECEDED IT. (152.)

## MATURE VIEWS, 1840-73

Two related themes dominated Mill's political thought from 1840 to his death: the invention and maintenance of institutions that would efficiently express the sanction of citizens for what rulers did in their name; and the appropriate role of the state in furthering human betterment in a Britain hurrying deeper into the industrial age. On the first theme his *Considerations on Representative Government* summarized most of his thinking over many years and became his chief classic in political science, providing a practical and liberal guide to nineteenth-century man searching for stable and competent government. On his second theme, however, Mill produced no equivalent single volume, although of cardinal importance were his *On Liberty* and his *Principles of Political Economy* in its successive editions. Illuminating also on this subject are his occasional writings and speeches, especially those on Ireland. In the last century some Englishmen viewed Ireland as a social laboratory where it was necessary to try special experiments not tolerable at home. Mill in particular was ready to enlarge greatly the agenda of government to combat Ireland's indigenous and lingering poverty.

## CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

In the seven years before *Considerations on Representative Government* appeared, Mill produced some papers that foreshadowed the arguments in his major essay. First in time was the submission, requested by Sir Charles Trevelyan, then Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, which strongly

commended the Northcote-Trevelyan Report for advocating the recruitment of civil servants, not by the casual methods of political patronage, but by open competitive examinations. For Mill this genuine reform harmonized with his long-held conviction that representative government could be efficient only if conducted by the country's best-educated and orderly minds. On reading the report he quickly dispatched a characteristic comment to Harriet: "it is as direct, uncompromising, & to the point, without reservation, as if we had written it."<sup>28</sup> Apart from placing administration under the control of competent and professional officials, he hoped that the new mode of recruitment would strengthen existing political institutions by opening public positions to the competition of all classes and persons, thus diminishing the traditional sway of the aristocracy and privileged classes. This in turn, he thought, would extend intellectual cultivation and encourage talented individuals.

Sir Charles Trevelyan, an unshakably determined man, was not content simply to submit a report. To overcome troublesome opposition he carefully primed the press, solicited the opinions of influential individuals likely to support it (Mill being one), and printed them in a special blue book, *Papers on the Reorganisation of the Civil Service*. Yet his effort won little immediate success. The proposals were bitterly resisted, and their supporters had to be content with piecemeal reforms until their final triumph under Gladstone in 1870.<sup>29</sup>

## PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

It is evident from Mill's correspondence that throughout the 1850s he thought frequently about the contentious issue of parliamentary reform. The outcome was a pamphlet and a major article, both published in 1859: *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform* and "Recent Writers on Reform." The first of these was largely written in 1853 with subsequent revisions and additions. In it he argued that since the Reform Bill British opinion had profoundly changed. A new and restless public came to believe that a further improvement in parliamentary representation was a national necessity. An unremitting trial of strength between the progressive and stationary forces confronted all party leaders, who were compelled to recognize that out of the ceaseless dialectic of debate change must come. For them the main issue was its extent and timing.

In the light of this situation, Mill in his pamphlet attempted to formulate his own electoral programme in seven main proposals: grouping of small boroughs into districts, gradual steps to universal male and female suffrage, electioneering reform to free candidates from expenses amounting to a burdensome property qualification, a minimal educational requirement for the franchise, plural voting based on educational attainments, representation of minorities through the cumulative vote, and rejection of the ballot, which had not yet become a part of British electoral law.

Some of these topics naturally figured more prominently in public discussion than others, and it is needless here to examine Mill's arguments on all of them. His proposal to protect the views of minorities through the cumulative vote became obsolete a month after the publication of

*Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform*, with the appearance of Thomas Hare's *Election of Representatives*. Hare's book, discussed below, promptly convinced Mill. In March 1859 he enthusiastically wrote to its author: "You appear to me to have exactly, and for the first time, solved the difficulty of popular representation; and by doing so, to have raised up the cloud of gloom and uncertainty which hung over the futurity of representative government and therefore of civilization."<sup>30</sup> Henceforth he was committed to Hare's scheme of electoral reform, with its preferential and transferable vote, calculated quota, and transformation of the country into a single constituency. To him it seemed the best protection for minorities that parliament could provide.

Mill's proposals in *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform* had in the preceding years evolved through prolonged discussions with his wife, who then greatly influenced his thinking. His suggested educational qualification for the franchise, and his rejection of the secret ballot provoked much controversy. On the first of these, he argued that a minimal education test must accompany a universal franchise. In view of the high value he consistently placed on a trained intelligence, he found it impossible to accept the equality of educated and uneducated electors.

If it is asserted that all persons ought to be equal in every description of right recognized by society, I answer, not until all are equal in worth as human beings. It is the fact, that one person is *not* as good as another; and it is reversing all the rules of rational conduct, to attempt to raise a political fabric on a supposition which is at variance with fact. Putting aside for the present the consideration of moral worth, . . . a person who cannot read, is not as good, for the purpose of human life, as one who can. (323.)

Taking off from a premise that rejected the old radical dogma of "one man one vote," Mill argued that all adult men and women who passed an education test should be enfranchised, but those with superior training should receive plural or extra voting power, even to the extent of some individuals having three or more votes. In this Mill's logic may have been impeccable, but the political practicability of his proposal was a different matter. The passion for equality that Tocqueville saw as part and parcel of the democratic movement was unlikely to render possible the kind of voting that Mill described. He himself appeared to have doubts. In the same year he admitted to John Elliot Cairnes that his proposal for plural voting on the basis of intellectual qualification was intended "not as an immediately practical measure but as a standard of theoretical excellence."<sup>31</sup> Yet on the same matter he commented to Alexander Bain: "One must never suppose what is good in itself to be visionary because it may be far off. . . . We must remember too that the numerical majority are not the politically strongest force yet. The point to be decided is, how much power is to be yielded to them; & justice always affords the best basis for a compromise, which even if only temporary may be eminently useful."<sup>32</sup>

On the issue of the ballot, Mill in *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform* publicly expressed for the first time his volte-face from a position stoutly held in the 1830s. In the earlier period, he, like other Philosophic Radicals, had extolled the ballot as scarcely less important than an extended franchise in overthrowing the ruling oligarchy in Britain. Without it the franchise might mean little. For him and his associates it became virtually a symbol of their radicalism. Secret voting,



once established, was expected to demolish the political power of the aristocracy and privileged classes, and hence open the road for the march of the Radical party. It would protect tenants from coercion by landlords, customers from coercion by shopkeepers and vice versa, employees from coercion by employers, and the general public from coercion by miscellaneous and often sinister interests of every kind. It would benefit the people in that comprehensive way so dear to the Radicals. In 1837 Mill told Tocqueville with simplistic assurance that with the ballot “reform will have finally triumphed: the aristocratical principle will be completely annihilated, & we shall enter into a new era of government.”<sup>33</sup> He then believed that in the country there was a deep radicalism which without the ballot was repressed. Two years later, in a letter to John M. Kemble, he wrote in more moderate terms, but still considered the ballot essential for the success of the radical cause.<sup>34</sup>

In defending his change of mind in the 1850s, Mill argued that when earlier he and the Philosophic Radicals had first advocated the ballot they were justified by the circumstances of the time. Many voters were then artfully manipulated by landlords and employers, and unable to declare their real convictions in an open election. Twenty-five years later, however, the conditions were different. No longer were the rich the masters of the country. The middle classes and workers were less subservient to those above them, felt their own strength, and resented attempts by others to coerce them. In the larger electorates the real evil now lay in the selfish partialities of the voter himself, which reduced his concern for the general interest. Open voting, Mill thought, might best correct this egocentric attitude, foster a wholesome sense of public responsibility, and emphasize the vote as a trust for which the voter was accountable to the community.

Social circumstances had unquestionably changed, but for most Liberals the changes had failed to diminish the practical advantages of the ballot as a means for moderating the influences of wealth and power. Mill and his wife thus fell singularly out of step with the main army of reformers, who persistently advocated this change until its final triumph under Gladstone in 1872. Competent studies of the electoral system in this period seem to support the practical utility of the ballot.<sup>35</sup>

The few remaining active Philosophic Radicals, like George Grote and Francis Place, deplored Mill’s change of view. Place, often critical of Mill, was specially irritated by his pronounced shift of opinion on the ballot. “If James Mill,” he wrote bitterly, “could have anticipated that his son John Stuart should preach so abominable a heresy . . . he would have cracked his skull.”<sup>36</sup> Place charged Mill with a shocking inconsistency, but on his part Mill thought mere consistency a minor virtue. Where circumstances change a situation, he would argue, then it is only common sense to alter one’s view of it.

In “Recent Writers on Reform” Mill examined the ideas of three contemporary writers on parliamentary institutions in the 1850s, selected for their distinction and the importance of their ideas: John Austin, James Lorimer, and Thomas Hare. Austin had been one of Mill’s oldest friends, under whom as a youth he had studied law, and whose ability he greatly admired. Yet Austin, although a disciple of Bentham, had in later years become conservative and estranged from Mill, who in particular was disturbed by his vehement criticism of the French revolutionary

government of 1848. In his *Plea for the Constitution* Austin displayed a hostility to further parliamentary reform in the conviction that it was likely to destroy the delicate balance of the existing constitution and the appropriate attitudes of mind which facilitated its operation. The constitution, he believed, combined democratic and aristocratic elements. The electors were a democratic body, while the elected in the main constituted a remarkably skilled, devoted, and aristocratic governing class, who throughout a long span of time had acquired and were still able to apply the arts of ruling a country they understood.

This version of the British system combined with a laudation of the governing aristocracy was something that since the 1820s Mill had consistently condemned. On finding it in the pages of Austin he criticized it afresh, although, evidently out of respect for his old friend, his condemnation was moderate. He was content to show that the aristocratic classes, who had an opportunity to become instructed and trained statesmen, had frittered away their opportunities. Historically, they were less effective than the open aristocracy of Rome or the closed aristocracy of Venice. He noted Austin's point that parliamentary reform was needless because the existing elected members of the lower house were already fully alert to the requirements of sound legislation and able to draft it. But Mill replied that, aside from law-making, parliament had another role. The House of Commons as the grand council of the entire nation must contain spokesmen to discuss the critical issues that divide the community and reflect the diverse shades of opinion in all classes. The most numerous class in the kingdom, that of the workers, had a moral right to representation to avoid having its affairs disposed of in its absence. He did not believe that recognizing this right of the workers and shopkeepers would produce all the disastrous social consequences that Austin took for granted.

By contrast, Mill had some reason for satisfaction with James Lorimer's *Political Progress Not Necessarily Democratic*, for Lorimer was hardly less hostile than himself to the domination of the majority, accepted universal suffrage, but also favoured plural votes for certain citizens, although his criterion for them differed from Mill's. He thought that a man's social status, whether that of a peer or a labourer, should determine his voting power. This thesis Mill rejected as a dangerous sophistry, since it assumed that society must bend to forces created by itself, whereas he was convinced that men must intelligently try to mould society into something better, and his proposal for plural votes was intended to help the educated in doing so. In Lorimer's work he was specially gratified with one feature: the rejection of current demands for the representation of interests. Mill expressed his own characteristic view that whenever interests are not identical with the general interest, the less they are represented the better. "What is wanted is a representation, not of men's differences of interest, but of the differences in their intellectual points of view. Shipowners are to be desired in Parliament, because they can instruct us about ships, not because they are interested in having protecting duties." (358.) Mill had no intention of suggesting that ideas can always be divorced from interests. As a reformer of society he knew better. He was trying to emphasize, as he did frequently, the necessity for cultivating an overriding and dispassionate sense of a public interest, which in his opinion was the prime purpose of a representative government.

The most important part of Mill's article dealt with Thomas Hare's book and the electoral mechanism it recommended to ensure for minorities a parliamentary voice equal to their strength. Hare appeared to solve a problem in representation that had worried Mill for a quarter of a century: how the domination by an electoral majority could be mitigated and a real image of the nation's varied groups be expressed. It was only by solving this problem that true rather than false democracy could be achieved. He unhesitatingly welcomed Hare's departure from the principle of strict territorial representation, hitherto dominant in the constitution of the Commons. No longer would it be necessary for a candidate to gain or keep his seat by those "time-serving arts, and sacrifices of his convictions to the local or class prejudices and interests of any given set of electors" (366). Through the transferable vote he could appeal to a wider electorate, while on their part electors could enjoy a larger range in the choice of candidates, and thus achieve, as Mill said, a more personal rather than local representation. He expected that the quality of candidates would greatly improve, the tone of public debate rise, and the inducements of a parliamentary career for talented men increase. He enthusiastically wrote to Hare in December, 1859: "If the Americans would but adopt your plan (which I fear they never will) the bad side of their government and institutions, namely the practical exclusion of all the best minds from political influence, would soon cease. Let us hope that in the old country (thanks to you) democracy will come in this better form."<sup>37</sup>

Mill was confident that with the implementation of Hare's proposals any ill consequences of universal suffrage would be greatly diminished and even the plural voting he had recommended might become unnecessary. He hoped that the system could be accepted without prolonged delay, for reasons he confided to Henry Fawcett in February 1860: "It is an uphill race, and a race against time, for if the American form of democracy overtakes us first, the majority will no more relax their despotism than a single despot would."<sup>38</sup>

Mill's hopes for an early acceptance of the new principles were singularly unrealistic. Yet for the remainder of his life he continued to be an undaunted advocate of the single transferable vote and constantly encouraged and helped his friends like Hare and Fawcett in their efforts. Although women's suffrage and the Hare system of electoral reform were not the sole practical causes that occupied him in the 1860s, they were pre-eminent in appeal, and when in the House of Commons he strove to further both. Despite his efforts parliament never took the action he wanted, and the reasons are not far to seek. At the time when Mill was advocating a new electoral system, party managers gradually began to remould the organization of the two major parties to render them more disciplined and effective instruments for shaping policies and winning elections. For them the Hare-Mill electoral ideas seemed too revolutionary, too complicated, and their effects on party fortunes too uncertain to be acceptable. Hence, except for some of their members, they showed little interest in proportional representation of the type that Mill supported and were unwilling to incorporate it as an essential element in their political plans. Gladstone, for example, although in some reforms he was evidently influenced by Mill, rejected proportional representation when he considered electoral changes. This is not to say, however, that Mill's ideas lacked influence. Even into the twentieth century, his basic idea, as stated in *Representative Government*, continued to incite the interest of many: in a democracy, any and every section

must be represented, not disproportionately, but proportionately. A majority of the electors should always have a majority of the representatives; a minority of electors should always have a minority of representatives.

## “CONSIDERATIONS ON REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT”

*Considerations on Representative Government* brings together many of Mill’s views expressed in earlier writings, especially those on the domination of majorities, the proposals of Thomas Hare, the folly of extracting pledges from parliamentarians, the superiority of public voting, the equity of female suffrage, and the desirability of plural votes for the educated.<sup>39</sup> But the book is more than a résumé of previous opinions. It contains some of the author’s most effective arguments on political liberalism and it assesses the liabilities no less than the assets of what for Mill was the best form of government. It has usually been rated as one of the most influential appraisals of the subject written in Victorian England, though to a modern political analyst it has some deficiencies. It says little about the social and economic environment in which the institutions are expected to operate, although Mill was well aware of social forces and class struggles. Another work of the same decade, the *English Constitution* by Walter Bagehot, has perhaps since received more profuse acclaim, especially for elegance of style, but, except on the subject of Crown and parliament, Bagehot’s range was narrower and his probing of problems less profound and original.<sup>40</sup>

It is not proposed here to examine and evaluate in detail the contents of its eighteen chapters, but merely to comment on salient features. At the outset Mill attempts to distinguish the two contemporary forms of political speculation. The first postulated politics as a practical art, the product of invention and contrivance, concerned with means and ends and the devices for persuading citizens to accept them. It considered government a machine and a matter of rational choice, an opinion congenial to many British utilitarians. The second viewed government as less a machine than a living social organism, evolving like organisms in natural history. Emerging from simple situations, it grows spontaneously under the shaping influences of environment and the habits, instincts, and unconscious wants and desires of mankind. This theory was much cherished by Conservatives in Britain.

Mill believes that neither theory alone explains the nature of politics. Each has elements of truth; each in itself can mislead. But both together help to further political comprehension. For him the essential fact is that political institutions, as the work of men, depend on will and thought, and are subject to the errors as well as the wisdom of human judgment. Unlike trees, which once planted grow while men sleep, they are controlled by the constant decisions and participation of individuals, exposed to a host of influences. “It is what men think, that determines how they act” (382). He rejects the idea that any people is capable of operating any type of political system. A bewildering medley of circumstances usually determines the nature and outlook of a country’s government. For a system to be successful, the people must be willing to accept it, do whatever ensures its survival, and strive to fulfil its purposes. Representative government makes heavy demands on the energy and initiative of citizens, requiring in particular self-

discipline, moderation, and a spirit of compromise. It can succeed only when, in a favourable environment, the citizens have the qualities requisite to operate it. Mill admits that until relatively recent times a free and popular government was rarely possible outside a city community because physical conditions failed to permit the emergence and propagation of a cohesive public opinion. These views were not new to him in the 1860s. In his *Autobiography* he relates that some thirty years earlier he had seen representative democracy as a question of time, place, and circumstance.<sup>41</sup>

Mill viewed government as primarily an instrument to further the improvement of mankind, and to this end representative institutions are ideally the best, although hitherto human progress has often been served by efficient regimes that did not represent the people. An autocracy which successfully curbs a lawless and turbulent populace may for an interval provide an essential prerequisite for the order and progress of civilization: the ingrained habits and spirit of obedience to law. At critical times enlightened despots can achieve concrete social advances that may be less feasible under representative institutions, which permit powerful vested interests to block reform.

Nevertheless, for Mill the most desirable form of government, provided the people are willing and able to fulfil its conditions, is representative, because it offers the maximum opportunity for fostering men's intelligence, virtue, and happiness. But at the same time he admits that where the people are morally and mentally unfit for this demanding form of rule, it may become an instrument of tyranny, and popular elections less a security against misgovernment than an additional wheel in its machinery (378). Even in the progressive democracies many men are content to be passive in public affairs. Absorbed in private cares and satisfactions, they patiently endure social evils and surrender to the pressure of circumstances. Usually present, however, are an energetic and active few who express thought, advocate innovations, and encourage provocative debate, thus making progress possible. Representative institutions enable these few to thrash out differences and reach workable agreements for the common good. With characteristic sober optimism Mill describes the competitive and restless spirit of liberal society as he perceives it in the nineteenth century: "All intellectual superiority is the fruit of active effort. Enterprise, the desire to keep moving, to be trying and accomplishing new things for our own benefit or that of others, is the parent even of speculative, and much more of practical, talent. . . . The character which improves human life is that which struggles with natural powers and tendencies, not that which gives way to them." (407.)

#### *Electoral Machinery, Responsibility, and Expertise*

In *Representative Government*, Mill is principally concerned with three institutional features: the electoral machinery, the structure of a responsible national government, and the paramount role of a professional and expert class in administration and law-making.

The first of these themes, which he had earlier explored in articles, emphasizes his distinction between true and false democracy. True democracy represents all, and not merely the majority. In it the different interests, opinions, and grades of intellect are heard, and by weight of charac-

ter and strength of argument influence the rest.<sup>42</sup> This democracy is achieved by reforming the electoral system according to the proposals of Thomas Hare, by ensuring that everyone, male and female alike, has a voice (although not an equal voice) in the voting process, and by fostering education from infancy through life. Mill believes that the expansion of democratic rights in itself exerts a pervasive educational influence. He accepts Tocqueville's belief that American democracy fostered both a robust patriotism and an active intelligence. "No such wide diffusion of the ideas, tastes, and sentiments of educated minds," he writes, "has ever been seen elsewhere, or even conceived as attainable" (468). He strongly holds this view, although in earlier essays on the United States he also acknowledged in the American electorate a narrow and intolerant mentality. Although Mill at times fluctuates between trust and distrust of democracy, he always believes in its potentiality to improve men. Active citizenship can usually nourish the qualities that good citizenship demands, draw out human resources otherwise dormant, and advance the lot of mankind.

In discussing the executive in the representative system, Mill is the empiricist and Benthamite, who is eager to accept innovations but clearly places a high value on what has been tested by experience. He sanctions the parliamentary executive, which the British developed through common sense and the accidents of a long history. Indeed, he gives scant attention to any other system except the American, which affords him merely a basis for contrasts. With brevity and acumen he discusses precepts that must govern a responsible and effective executive. "It should be apparent to all the world, who did everything, and through whose default anything was left undone. Responsibility is null when nobody knows who is responsible," (520.) But it is equally true that in many counsellors there is wisdom. A single individual even in his own business seldom judges right, and still less in that of the public. These and related points, he thinks, are woven into the fabric of British parliamentary practice.

Distinguishing between policy and administration, he is anxious that in the latter highly trained minds should save democracy from errors. He fears that the popular tolerance of mediocrity impairs the competence and quality of the state. In defending the Northcote-Trevelyan Report on the civil service he had advocated the recruitment of officials through competitive examinations from the ablest brains in the country, irrespective of social class. This case he confidently argues afresh in *Representative Government* (529-33) and defends it for every democratic state. In 1869 he writes to an American correspondent that "the appointments to office, without regard to qualifications, are the worst side of American institutions: the main cause of what is justly complained of in their practical operation, and the principal hindrance to the correction of what is amiss; as well as a cause of ill-repute to democratic institutions all over the world."<sup>43</sup>

Even in Britain he saw a too common inclination to ignore in officials the need for special qualifications: "Unless a man is fit for the gallows, he is thought to be about as fit as other people for almost anything" (427). Critical of British complacency and aristocratic casualness, he constantly extols the professional and the expert above the amateur and the dilettante.

His zeal for professional skills extends from administration to lawmaking. In his opinion a large and unwieldy parliament can no more legislate than administer. His Benthamite conscience

was hurt by the haphazard and often dilatory manner in which British laws were made, with little concern for whether they fitted logically into the existing legal structure. His remedy was a legislative commission, composed of those who from assiduous study and long experience acquired an expertise in drafting bills which parliament could pass, reject, or return for further consideration (430-2). A legislature in Mill's opinion should not itself draft law, but merely ensure its competent drafting. He suggests that on their appointment members of the commission should become life peers and thus enlarge the element of expertise in the House of Lords. In his chapter on second chambers, however, he emphasizes that the House of Lords should not be considered the main instrument for tempering the ascendancy of the majority in the lower house, a task better achieved through the electoral reforms that he and Thomas Hare advocated. As a drafting body, Mill's legislative commission resembled the Parliamentary Counsel to the Treasury established by Gladstone in 1869, but Mill would have given to permanent experts more power than any House of Commons was ever likely to concede. His sympathy always seemed stronger for the men in Whitehall than for those in Westminster, for the officials rather than the politicians.

More than a quarter of *Representative Government* is devoted to four topics that may seem somewhat marginal to the main subject of the book. But because for Mill they are important and illustrate cardinal features of his liberalism they merit separate discussion.

#### *Local Government*

In both *On Liberty* and *Representative Government* Mill extols local institutions as essential for the welfare and education of the people. They permit citizens to acquire invaluable experience in working for common ends, introduce them to the skills and ethics of collaboration, and are an indispensable preparatory school for the democratic state. In Britain, moreover, such institutions are a necessary auxiliary to the national parliament itself, which otherwise would become harassed and strained by tasks better left to local bodies, visible and sensitive to local electorates and directly accountable to them. A robust municipal system, Mill believed, would nourish a responsible public spirit and foster among the citizenry the political enlightenment essential for an extended franchise and a viable democracy.

In these views Mill was faithful to the utilitarian and radical tradition, drawing inspiration from Bentham who had emphasized the inherent value of local government and the necessity for its overhaul in England. He shared an early and lifelong friendship with Edwin Chadwick, a zealous and energetic Benthamite and the chief architect of municipal reform in the 1830s and 1840s. In 1833 he saw Chadwick as "one of the most remarkable men of our time in the practical art of Government. . . ."44 He had ample reasons for praising his friend, although Chadwick incurred much unpopularity for an apparently uncompassionate attitude towards the administration of the Poor Law and for centralist prejudices. The two men freely consulted, exchanged general ideas, and usually agreed on policy. Mill supported the major innovations that were deeply indebted to Chadwick's utilitarian thought and ingenuity; in particular the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, the Corporations Act of 1835, and the Public Health Act of 1848, each of

which was a conspicuous landmark in the evolution of new forms of local administration and service.

When in 1861 Mill came to write his chapter on local government he surveyed a scene of increasing complexity and baffling confusion. The rapid growth of industry and population had created massive urban concentrations of people clamouring for new and varied services. The different municipal bodies launched in the 1830s and 1840s were busily trying to cope with the problems of a social cauldron. The Boards of Poor Law Guardians, the borough councils, and the numerous *ad hoc* boards and commissions responsible for specific services all attempted to give a new meaning to municipal rule in a changing society. But in the counties the ancient system of appointed justices of the peace meeting in Quarter Sessions still survived. On this institution Mill as a faithful Radical is caustic:

The mode of formation of these bodies is most anomalous, they being neither elected, nor, in any proper sense of the term, nominated, but holding their important functions, like the feudal lords to whom they succeeded, virtually by right of their acres. . . . The institution is the most aristocratic in principle which now remains in England: far more so than the House of Lords, for it grants public money and disposes of important public interests, not in conjunction with a popular assembly, but alone. (537.)

He would correct the deficiencies of county government through elected county councils to replace the Quarter Sessions, a reform not achieved until 1888.

Mill also attacks the cluttering proliferation of boards and commissions which needlessly fragmented and confused English civic life. He anticipates the Royal Sanitary Commission's Report of 1871 and the critical verdict that England suffered from a chaos of local authorities and a chaos of local rates.<sup>45</sup> He advocates consolidation of the existing services (such as paving, lighting, water supply, and drainage) under a single elected council rather than leaving them under separate *ad hoc* commissions. In brief, he recommends for all the local business of a town one body, whose members should be chosen only by ratepayers. He criticizes the subdivision of London into several independent units, each jealously clinging to responsibility for providing the same services, and thus preventing co-operation. Like other of Mill's ideas in *Representative Government*, this one played a practical part in his parliamentary career when, a few years later, he introduced the first proposal for a London Corporation.<sup>46</sup>

Mill had pronounced convictions on the relations of central and local governments, believing that the central authority's principal task was to give instructions and that of the local authority to apply them. Action must be localized, though knowledge, to be useful to all citizens in the kingdom, should be centralized. In the public interest a close partnership between the two levels of government is imperative. The central government should designate a specific department to act as a responsible guardian, adviser, and critic, scrutinizing everything done in local areas and making its fund of special knowledge available to those who need it. It should in particular supervise those matters of national interest left to local administration, but its power should be limited



to compelling local officers to obey the laws enacted for their guidance. His chief example for this type of supervision is that of the Poor Law Board over the Local Guardians.

In their standard work on local government, Josef Redlich and Francis Hirst remark that Bentham's "idea of centralisation was interpreted, modified, and adapted to English needs by Mill and not till it was adapted by Mill was it fully adopted by England."<sup>47</sup> His influence on local government clearly asserted itself in the years after 1871 with the organization of an efficient central authority for doing what he had long advocated, supervising municipal rule. In these ideas he demonstrates his type of utilitarian thought at its best, especially in taking traditional English institutions and adapting them to the necessities of a new industrial age.

### *Nationality*

Mill's discussion of nationality, unlike his discussion of local government, might at the time have seemed of little relevance to Britain's domestic politics. But in the wider perspective of her relations with continental Europe it was important. The idea of a self-conscious nationality emerged as a revolutionary force in transforming European politics after the French Revolution, and in Mill's opinion Britain could not elude its wide-ranging effects.

His chapter on the subject is brief, little more than half the length of that on local government, perhaps too brief for him to render full justice to the magnitude and complexity of the theme. In "Coleridge" and *A System of Logic* he had viewed nationality as an essential condition for a stable political society, but emphasized that he did not mean nationality in the vulgar sense.<sup>48</sup> In the interval between these writings and the appearance of *Representative Government* Mill saw nationality in Europe grow stronger in influence, more militant, and more uncompromising. It was manifested in a people through a powerful sense of community and an anxiety to live under one government. It was fostered by a variety of influences, such as identity of race, a common homeland, common language, common religion, and a common sense of history. "But the strongest of all is identity of political antecedents: the possession of a national history, and consequent community of recollections; collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, connected with the same incidents in the past" (546). This passage has been quoted and requoted. Yet in his brief sketch Mill does not explain precisely how, why, and when the actual unifying sense of a common national history arises, especially in cases like Germany and Italy, where for generations deep political divergences expressed in a plethora of small states seemed more conspicuous than unity.<sup>49</sup>

Mill took a definite position on the relations of nationality to democracy. "Where the sentiment of nationality exists in any force, there is a *primâ facie* case for uniting all the members of the nationality under the same government, and a government to themselves apart. This is merely saying that the question of government ought to be decided by the governed." To this remark he adds another no less revealing: "Free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities" (547). In brief, democracy works best in a uni-national state of like-minded people. He contends that different nationalities, speaking different languages, would

hamper the crystallizing of public opinion on which successful representative institutions depend. Social fragmentation and divisiveness would result from the presence of separate leaders of different nationalities. The same books, newspapers, pamphlets, and speeches would fail to circulate throughout all sectors of the society. Each nationality would thus differently assess facts and differently express opinions. Such differences, when sharp enough, would favour despotism rather than freedom. Politicians for their own advantage and power would exploit mutual antipathies.

Mill makes two far-reaching qualifications to his principle that the boundaries of state and nation should coincide. First, circumstances may sometimes render it difficult or impossible to implement: for example, in parts of Europe, notably the Austrian Empire, nationalities were so intricately intermingled as to make separate national states impracticable. In such cases the people affected must make a virtue of necessity and tolerantly accept life together under regimes of equal rights and equal laws. Second, it is often socially advantageous for a small nationality, rather than pursuing political independence, to merge in a larger one. He thinks it preferable for a Breton or Basque to become a part of the richly-endowed French nation than “to sulk on his own rocks, the half-savage relic of past times, revolving in his own little mental orbit, without participation or interest in the general movement of the world” (549). He believes that this also applies to the Welshman and the Scottish Highlander. Whatever his sympathy for such small nations, he is confident that their members would reap cultural benefits from close association with the larger nation, and in return confer benefits. In this type of situation it is essential for the weaker to receive not only equal justice but equal consideration, and thus help to blend qualities inherent in the different nationalities to the advantage of mankind.

Mill’s qualifications to his main thesis on state and nation are often forgotten while his general thesis is remembered. They are manifest in his treatment of the contentious national problem of Ireland. This Mill discussed in a sparse single paragraph in *Representative Government*, but in subsequent writings he said much on the subject, and notably in his pamphlet *England and Ireland*.<sup>50</sup>

Mill recognizes that the nationality of the Irish had never been absorbed in the larger nationality of Britain, as Bretons and Alsatians had been absorbed in that of France. For this result he gives two reasons: the Irish are numerous enough to constitute in themselves a respectable nationality and had for generations nursed a deep enduring enmity towards England because of its harsh methods of rule. His comments in *Representative Government* suggest that Mill believed that recent improvements in British policy had reduced Irish hostility, and in the future even more harmonious relations between the two countries might be expected. Hence he omits discussion of whether Ireland’s distinct nationality requires a separate statehood, as his general principle would imply. Seven years later, however, in *England and Ireland*, he is more pessimistic. In the interval a severe agrarian depression and Irish agitations for land reform had failed to win an adequate response from the British parliament. The consequent rise of a revolutionary Fenian movement committed to tactics of violence to achieve independence worsened and embittered relations between the two countries. Mill now wrote a sombre criticism of British rulers: “What seems to them the causelessness of the Irish repugnance to our rule, is the proof that they have almost let pass the last opportunity they are ever likely to have of setting it right. They have allowed what

once was indignation against particular wrongs, to harden into a passionate determination to be no longer ruled on any terms by those to whom they ascribe all their evils. Rebellions are never really unconquerable until they have become rebellions for an idea.”<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, despite the inflamed sense of Irish nationality, Mill desires that the two countries should remain united. Their affairs are intimately intertwined in trade, population movements, and international security. Geography makes it easier for them to exist within one state rather than two. But the imperative condition for doing so successfully is that English rulers radically change their attitude towards Ireland. In making laws for that island they must resolve to recognize Irish circumstances and satisfy Irish interests no less than their own.

In particular, Mill argues, they should introduce sweeping agrarian reforms, leaving Irish peasants in permanent possession of their land, subject to fixed charges. In 1867, he told a correspondent that his guiding principle was: “To declare openly on all suitable occasions that England is bound either to govern Ireland so that Ireland shall be satisfied with her government, or to set Ireland free to govern herself.”<sup>52</sup> He still hoped that it would be unnecessary to apply to Ireland the principle of one state for one nation, but, if English rulers failed in their duty, this would be inescapable.

Mill’s association of nationality with the idea of democratic and free government has held a prominent place in the literature of modern nationalism. Koppel S. Pinson asserts that *Representative Government*, translated into the language of subject nationalities, “had a tremendous influence on the shaping of nationalist ideology.”<sup>53</sup> Mill seems to have less fear than Lord Acton that a sense of nationality fosters political forces hostile to democracy, although he did see the danger in multi-national states where anti-liberal governments may play off one nationality against another. In such a state, Mill believes, an army composed of different nationalities could readily be the executioner of liberty (548). For this reason he prefers whenever feasible the uni-national state, confident that it gives richer promise for free government.

Even in a uni-national state, however, a spirit of aggressive nationality may destroy democratic liberties whenever the power and prestige of the nation are threatened. A nationalist is not necessarily a liberal or a democrat. He may support any form of government that satisfies the ambition and interests of his nation. On this matter Mill attempts no direct argument, but from the nature of his general philosophy we can deduce his views. Primarily concerned as he is with individual liberty and human progress, he nowhere suggests that the claims of nationality are superior to those of liberalism.

### *Federalism*

Mill’s chapter on federal government has been less influential and significant than that on nationality. Federalism he extols as an invaluable instrument to achieve a larger and more fruitful collaboration in defence and social development between communities endowed with many mutual interests, but separately weak and often absorbed in petty rivalries. He discusses with acumen the conditions necessary to render a federation acceptable and feasible, the different modes of

organizing it, the institutions such as a supreme court essential to fulfil its purposes, and the broad beneficial consequences flowing from its success. In federal states he sees decisive advantages similar to those conferred by other practical modes of co-operation wherein persuasion replaces command and for certain purposes the weak meet on equal terms with the strong. For him in some degree the federal principle is implicit in every truly free state.

Although most of Mill's remarks are hardly less relevant today than when he wrote, he was clearly handicapped by the paucity of existing federations from which to draw illustrations, the only two of importance being the United States and Switzerland. This fact partly explains his conclusion that a federal government had inadequate authority to conduct effectively any war except one in self-defence. In the American case he had some evidence to support this opinion, but scarcely sufficient on which to rest a firm and enduring generalisation. Hence, although his principal remarks on federalism reflect shrewd intuitions, he lacked adequate data for the full play of his characteristically empirical thinking. He made no attempt to probe the history of federal ideas in such thinkers as Jean Bodin and the German jurists. His chief inspiration and guidance came directly from the American Federalist Papers and the wealth of American practical experience. He looked to concrete political experiments as a guide. Writing on the eve of the Civil War he thought that American federalism had already achieved something valuable in limiting the tyranny of majorities, protecting territorial groups, and creating a judicial arbiter supreme over all the governments, both state and federal, and able to declare invalid any law made by them in violation of the constitution.

### *The Government of Dependencies*

Mill's chapter on the rule of dependencies draws on his life-long interest in colonies and empire. As a servant of the East India Company for thirty-five years, he was constantly preoccupied with imperial issues. He also became closely associated with those Philosophic Radicals who in the 1830s advocated colonial reform in general and systematic colonization in particular: notably Charles Buller, William Molesworth, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, and the enigmatic Lord Durham. Wakefield's seminal if erratic mind fed the group with ideas on the economics of colonial development. Mill freely admitted his debt to Wakefield.<sup>54</sup> He turned aside from the anti-imperial concepts of his father and Bentham, expressed in Bentham's pamphlet *Emancipate Your Colonies*. For him the old mercantilist empire was near death, and not to be mourned, but a renovated and vigorous empire could be established on the mutual interests of self-governing colonies and the metropolis. This cause made him actively interested in the National Colonization Society, launched by Wakefield and his associates to create a new colonial society on liberal principles, built on British capital and British labour. The new empire was expected to ensure markets and sources of supply for Britain and relieve her population pressures, economic stagnation, and the miseries of an industrial society.<sup>55</sup>

Mill's enduring interest in the dependencies, evident in *Representative Government*, was heavily indebted to his earlier absorption in the imperial issues of the 1830s and especially his part in the discussions provoked by the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38. He was elated in January 1838 by

the appointment of Lord Durham as High Commissioner and Governor General of British North America, because this event provided an unparalleled opportunity for the Philosophic Radicals to prescribe for a critical colonial situation. If Durham succeeded, the Radical party no less than the Empire would immediately benefit. Durham took with him to Canada Buller and Wakefield, both of whom substantially contributed to the contents and character of the famous report, including its recommendation for colonial autonomy. Mill for his part promptly employed the *London and Westminster Review* to defend Durham and his mission.<sup>56</sup> From this action he derived unusual satisfaction, telling a friend in 1840 “that, as far as such things can ever be said, I saved Lord Durham—as he himself, with much feeling, acknowledged to me. . . .”<sup>57</sup>

In 1861 his praise of Durham’s Report remained confident and forcible. It began, he wrote, “A new era in the colonial policy of nations” and remained an imperishable memorial to its author’s courage, patriotism, and liberality, as well as to the intellect and sagacity of his associates Wakefield and Buller (563). Such a generous assessment was far from acceptable to all the contemporary Radicals, Roebuck in particular was forthright in criticizing Durham, especially for his contemptuous attitude to the French Canadians and their nationality. Although Mill praised Durham’s Report for advocating the general principle of colonial autonomy, he nowhere subjects it to a detailed and public analysis or meets the legitimate criticisms lodged against it at the time, especially those directed against the apparent impracticability of the formal terms for colonial autonomy.<sup>58</sup>

In the wake of triumphant free trade in Britain and responsible government in Canada certain members in the Liberal camp were openly hostile to colonies and empire. Spokesmen for the Manchester School and a few veteran Benthamites, like Place, wrote of colonies as expensive and needless encumbrances. Since trade was everywhere free or becoming so, the burdens and perils of a permanent colonial connection were unacceptable. The most polished and influential exponent of this view was Goldwin Smith, Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, who in *The Empire* argues that the self-governing colonies contribute nothing to Britain, and threaten to involve her in conflicts with other major powers.<sup>59</sup> Mill rejects Smith’s thesis. In *Representative Government* he contends that Britain and her colonies had so many interests in common that a severance of formal ties would be a mistake (565-6). The empire could survive by consent. For him colonization, despite its numerous problems, is justified by its ultimate and enduring benefits. The imperial society preserves peace among its scattered territories, pursues a civilizing mission, furnishes an opportunity for invaluable co-operation between young communities and the mature metropolis, and helps to keep their markets open to one another, immune from exclusion by hostile tariffs. On the last point Mill reflects a sanguine belief, then current among British Liberals, but soon shattered by events, that the free trade so recently introduced must naturally appeal to the overseas segments of empire.

Mill moreover considered that a continuance of imperial ties augmented the moral stature and influence of Britain in the councils of the world. In a special expression of national pride he lauds Britain as the power that best understands liberty, and that in dealings with foreigners is more responsive to conscience and moral principle than any other great nation (565). Such quali-

ties were consonant with his deep respect for the imperial links. In 1862 he wrote to his friend, John E. Cairnes:

. . . I think it very undesirable that anything should be done which would hasten the separation of our colonies. I believe the preservation of as much connexion as now exists to be a great good to them; and though the direct benefit to England is extremely small, beyond what would exist after a friendly separation, any separation would greatly diminish the prestige of England, which prestige I believe to be, in the present state of the world, a very great advantage to mankind.<sup>60</sup>

Although he favoured the maintenance of the colonial connection, Mill rejected as unrealistic the idea of a federation of Britain and its colonies, which was then occasionally mooted, especially in the form of direct colonial representation in the parliament at Westminster:

Countries separated by half the globe do not present the natural conditions for being under one government, or even members of one federation. If they had sufficiently the same interests, they have not, and never can have, a sufficient habit of taking counsel together. They are not part of the same public: they do not discuss and deliberate in the same arena, but apart, and have only a most imperfect knowledge of what passes in the minds of one another. They neither know each other's objects, nor have confidence in each other's principles of conduct. (564.)

The conditions essential for a genuine federation did not exist, and to assume otherwise would be folly. As late as January, 1870, Mill expressed similar views to a friend in New Zealand.<sup>61</sup>

Mill advocated, however, one proposal designed to consolidate the sense of imperial unity. He would open the public service in all departments and in every part of the empire on equal terms to the inhabitants of the colonies. He commended his old radical friend Sir William Molesworth for setting an excellent example in appointing Francis Hincks, a Canadian politician, to the governorship of a West Indian Island (566).

In the concluding pages of his chapter on dependencies Mill presents his mature opinions on governing India. In his last years as a high official of the East India Company he had taken a significant part in the struggle against the company's extinction by the British parliament, and in the preparation of several papers, two being of major importance: *Report on the Two Bills now Before Parliament Relating to the Government of India* and *Memorandum on the Improvements in the Administration of India during the Last Thirty Years*.<sup>62</sup> He saw India as an immense tradition-bound land with many and vast disparities, acute problems, widely conflicting cultures and religions, and hence as unfit for immediate self-rule.<sup>63</sup> Nowhere does he suggest a willingness to apply the full teachings of *Liberty* and *Representative Government* to the India of his day. Instead he believed that it needed for a prolonged period enlightened governance by those with high administrative competence and a profound grasp of its special difficulties. In his opinion the best available vehicle under the Crown for applying sound utilitarian principles was the East India Company, with its large and unique stock of knowledge and experience. More effectively than any other institution the Company could act as a trustee and guardian for the Indian people.

In 1834 the Company had concluded its role as trader. Henceforth the welfare of subjects, rather than the dividends of shareholders, was its paramount concern. In 1858, however, parliament transferred the Company's ruling authority directly to the Crown, to be exercised by a Secretary of State, responsible to parliament and advised by a Council of India sitting in London. In *Representative Government* Mill criticized this fundamental change on the ground that a British politician would usually be ignorant of the country, seldom hold office long enough to acquire an intelligent grasp of the subject, and naturally be more responsive to considerations of party advantage in Britain than of social progress in India (573). Since a Secretary of State must constantly be answerable to the British people, his authority could hardly serve the best interests of Indians, whom he was unable to see, hear, or know, and whose votes he had no need to solicit. The parliament and public to which he was accountable were even less likely than himself to understand Indian affairs. In its ignorance it would be unable to judge whether and to what extent he abused his powers.

Mill admits that any system whereby one people attempts to rule another is defective, for alien rulers usually misjudge and despise subject populations; they do not and cannot feel with the people. But political systems differ in the amount of wrong they commit. He feared that in 1858 Britain had selected the worst possible system (573). So intense were his convictions that he twice refused an invitation to serve on the new Council of India.

A major issue confronting the British in India was to formulate proper policies for education, language, and culture, and at the India House Mill had to deal with these. He witnessed with disapproval the attempt of Lord Bentinck and Thomas Macaulay to downgrade the study of Oriental languages and philosophy and exalt that of English literature, thought, and science. Bentinck and Macaulay desired to impose on India an unmistakable English image, and in particular emphasized the necessity of useful knowledge. On these matters Mill followed a moderate course, free from much of the dogmatism of his father and utilitarian friends. He thought that education for Indians as for Englishmen should foster the self-development and social progress integral to his concept of liberty. Since the state must play a positive part in promoting the country's material advances, an educated Indian élite must be developed, who would help the English to govern India, interpret western ideas to its many millions, create equality under the law, eradicate racial discrimination, and establish a foundation for the society's material and intellectual progress. In principle Mill opposed any aggressive cultural imperialism, such as attempts to discard India's scholarship and ignore its learned class.<sup>64</sup> He saw no reason for Indians to jettison their entire cultural tradition and inheritance and doubted that they could be induced to do so. Their vernacular languages must be respected and cultivated as the indispensable means whereby the bulk of the people could assimilate useful ideas from Britain and Europe. He had little sympathy for missionaries who wanted to proselytize India or impose practices repugnant to the religious feelings of its people (570).

Mill was confident that Britain had conferred on India solid benefits, including greater peace, order, and unity under law than the country had ever enjoyed before and than any native despot seemed able to ensure. It had introduced the vitalizing influence of highly trained and competent

administrators who furthered social progress and prepared for the time, however remote, when India would rule itself. Although Mill accepted the superiority of British culture, he denied that cultural differences were due to racial differences. A variety of influences, such as education, state enactments, and special social and historical circumstances were more important than race. Nowhere is he more explicit on this subject than in his *Principles of Political Economy*: “Of all vulgar modes of escaping from the consideration of the effect of social and moral influences on the human mind, the most vulgar is that of attributing the diversities of conduct and character to inherent natural differences.”<sup>65</sup> Donald Winch reminds us that Mill shared this view with other members of the liberal and classical school of political economy, who derived it from eighteenth-century thinkers.<sup>66</sup> They assumed that human nature was the same wherever found and that it could always be elevated in the scale of civilization by effective government and assiduous education. They also assumed that it was Britain’s inescapable obligation to accomplish this goal in India.

#### “ON LIBERTY”: INDIVIDUAL, SOCIETY, AND STATE

The relations between individual, society, and state is a theme constantly pursued throughout Mill’s writings, a theme which achieves a special and impressive focus in *On Liberty*, a classic much misunderstood and the most controversial of all his works.<sup>67</sup> Mill’s broad aim is to establish the primacy of the individual and the freedom essential for the abundant growth of his inherent powers. This task, as he conceived it, was compelling because of the circumstances in a critical age of transition, which witnessed the emergence of democracy, improved and enlarged media for expressing opinions, the threatened tyranny of the majority, and the active presence of reformers like Auguste Comte hostile to the principle of individual liberty.

In no sense is *On Liberty* isolated from Mill’s other writings. It selects, refines, and develops certain elements from earlier essays that advocated religious tolerance, free discussion for testing ideas and sifting truth from error, and a free press to promote public enlightenment and responsible government. Early friendships and associations, especially those with Thomas Carlyle, Alexis de Tocqueville, the Saint-Simonians, and notably Harriet Taylor, influenced his conceptions of freedom.<sup>68</sup> So pervasive indeed in his own opinion was the intellectual assistance and guidance of his wife that he regarded her as virtually a joint author. Some commentators, most notably Gertrude Himmelfarb, attribute to Harriet’s persuasion certain divergences in Mill’s ideas from those he earlier expressed. In addition, the social environment, Britain’s flexible constitution, and the general moods and attitudes of the country in the middle of the last century exerted on this book a subtle and profound influence. It is easy to agree with Noel Annan that Mill’s *On Liberty* rests on the unconscious assumption that the British Navy ruled the seas and no fifth column could take root in England, the only major power in Europe where pacifism was then able to flourish.<sup>69</sup> It rests also on Mill’s supremely confident faith in man’s rationality.

In the introduction Mill remarks that his object



is to assert one simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used be physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, indirectly or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. (223.)

This general formula is supplemented by an argument that the independence of an individual in whatever concerns merely himself should be absolute. From the outset the broadness of this formula made it subject to varied interpretations. For Mill it implies an individual utility, since liberty is an unfailing source of personal development, and also a social utility, since ultimately society must benefit from whatever sustains a diverse and rich individual life. Progress for all depends on liberty for each.

The chief terms of Mill's liberty are inapplicable either to children or to undeveloped societies where free and equal discussion is not feasible. His liberal principle is thus not an absolute ethic, irrespective of time or place, but related to changing circumstances affecting the conduct of man as a progressive being (224). Despotism rather than liberty is a legitimate rule for primitive societies, provided it aids their development to the ultimate stage where they can benefit from liberty. The appropriate domain of liberty comprises that of conscience, thought, opinion, and all the tastes and pursuits of an individual pursuing his own good in his own way and at his own risks. Included also are voluntary combinations of individuals for purposes involving no harm to others.

In Mill's argument for liberty certain elements merit special emphasis. His initial and main interpretation of the concept is in the British empirical tradition, which equates liberty with an absence of external coercion over an individual's thought and activity. Men are free when they can act according to their desires (294). Their liberty consists in expressing views they want to express and doing what they want to do without injuring others. To such liberty the principal threat has hitherto come from irresponsible and despotic governments, which to satisfy their own ambitions and interests encroached on the customary areas of individual liberty. Hence the early liberal movement sought to resolve the conflict between authority and liberty by making rulers accountable to the people through constitutions and bills of rights. These endeavours brought to Western Europe a major era of political liberalism and democracy, which people hoped would foster their interests and protect their liberties. At the outset Mill shared their hopes, but, influenced partly by Tocqueville and American experience, he soon perceived in democracy an implicit element of tyranny—that of the majority, or those who accepted themselves as the majority threatening the liberties of individuals and minorities (218-19).

He also saw that increasingly in the democratic age the chief menace to liberty is derived, not from public officials and the penalties of law, but from society itself through the inescapable pressures of social usage, popular prejudice, and public opinion. Society, in exercising power, executes

its own mandates and over the individual asserts a pervasive compulsion hardly less relentless and even more capricious than that of law. “In our times.” Mill writes in his third chapter, “from the highest class of society down to the lowest, every one lives as under the eye of a hostile and dreaded censorship” (264). Under such strict public surveillance individuals and families shape their conduct less by what they think it ought to be than by what the circumstances of the society seem to demand. Their inclination is to conform with custom, public opinion, and established norms. They become lost in the crowd: “by dint of not following their own nature, they have no nature to follow” (265). In the modern state mass emotions have a larger opportunity for expression and dominance. To Mill this fact undermines the opportunity for variety in man’s nature and originality in his thinking.<sup>70</sup> Hitherto the human race had benefitted immensely from men of genius who had rendered progress possible. He feared, however, that the emergence of mass domination would destroy the atmosphere of freedom and tolerance necessary for a lonely genius to develop and exert influence.

The ultimate phase of social tyranny occurs when the majority desert or renounce liberty by failing to make judgments and choices. They thus frankly “do not desire liberty, and would not avail themselves of it” (267). As individuals they lose the capacity to determine their own fate. In his *Autobiography* Mill saw this as a degeneration of society “into the only despotism of which in the modern world there is real danger—the absolute rule of the head of the executive over a congregation of isolated individuals, all equals but all slaves.”<sup>71</sup>

Fears about current social tendencies explain the fervour with which Mill formulated a plan to protect men from what seemed to him a dismal fate. Rules of conduct must encourage the individual to explore abundantly the ends and qualities of life to his own advantage and that of mankind. In Chapter ii he extols liberty to exchange ideas as cardinal to other liberal values. It enables a society to know and to reform itself. “Wrong opinions and practices gradually yield to fact and argument” (231). Mill rejects out of hand the claim made in some nations that a government is entitled to interfere with a free press when the public so demands (229). The best government is no more entitled than the worst either to dictate or silence opinion. Although for him freedom of discussion is not a natural right, it is a supreme priority in the life of a progressive society.

This freedom provides, not merely protection against tyrannical and corrupt rulers, but helps also to foster understanding among citizens about themselves and their society, to resolve social conflicts, and to establish truth as the ideal if elusive aim of human inquiry. Mill assumes that the collision of adverse opinions is an instrument of enlightenment. Truth may suffer from silencing a single dissenter. “Complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion, is the very condition which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right” (231). This hopeful view was not supported by all his contemporary adherents. Leonard Courtney doubted that truth was to be found half-way between two anti-thetical theories. Such a doctrine might be a plausible weapon in combatting dogmatism, but “its value ceases when from a sword of offence and controversy it is beaten into a ploughshare of peace and domestic economy.”<sup>72</sup>

The opinions Mill confidently expressed on the virtues of free discussion were not those he had hitherto invariably approved. Nor did they contain reservations one might expect him to make. In the 1830s in “The Spirit of the Age,” in “Civilization,” and in “Coleridge,” he confessed fears about unlimited free debate.<sup>73</sup> He then doubted that magnifying discussion would necessarily magnify political wisdom or strengthen public judgment, especially when it affected the fundamental principles underlying the authority of the national state. He believed that it was the quality, rather than the quantity, of discussion that counted. In 1833 he told Carlyle: “I have not any great notion of the advantage of what the ‘free discussion’ men, call the ‘collision of opinions,’ it being my creed that Truth is *sown* and germinates in the mind itself, and is not to be struck *out* suddenly like fire from a flint by knocking another hard body against it. . . .”<sup>74</sup>

These reservations are explained by differences in time and circumstances. Mill’s ruling ambition was to be a philosopher-teacher for the British public. Under different circumstances and in different periods he frankly bared his mind on important matters, but what he wrote sometimes failed to coincide with what he said when circumstances and his own thinking were different. This variance is particularly evident in his treatment of free discussion in relation to authority, where he leaves many questions unanswered. Yet there is no ignoring the firmness of his convictions and assurance of his language in Chapter ii of *On Liberty*. However inconsistent with earlier writings, it clearly reads as his genuine and unamended testament.

In the third chapter Mill argues on lines parallel to those in the second. In one he contends for freedom of discussion to discover social truth and in the other for liberty of action to achieve a vital individuality. In some respects this is the most distinctive part of his essay, because the concept of individuality contributes to his liberalism a more original and more contentious element than the older and long-extolled liberty of speech. His great liberal forbears, like Milton and Locke, never attempted to annex so large and uncertain a territory for the free and autonomous self. Mill’s argument adds a dimension to his view of an open society, and reflects his debt to the German, Wilhelm von Humboldt, whose words form the epigraph to this essay.<sup>75</sup> From Humboldt Mill takes the precept that men must direct their efforts to the “individuality of power and development,” including a necessary scope for freedom and variety in human life (261).

When he describes human development as strictly synonymous with the cultivation of individuality he reflects Humboldt’s spirit. The potential aggregate of qualities in the individual must be fostered as an antidote to the ills of a drab social uniformity, whereby people are cast in the same mould. As an innovative force individuality is assumed to express itself in a ready originality, in differences of conduct and practice, in diverse displays of spontaneity and energy, and in distinct styles of living. Indeed, Mill believes that eccentricity in itself is significant in helping to destroy the yoke of mass attitudes and opinions. He assumes that “Eccentricity has always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigour, and moral courage which it contained” (269). The inventor and innovator, he thinks, are likely to be regarded by others as eccentric. In all this Mill fails to admit what Leslie Stephen later recognized, that eccentricity is not invariably a virtue: it may be positively bad when it wastes individual en-

ergy and expends itself on trifles.<sup>76</sup> A modern critic remarks that Mill “looked to liberty as a means of achieving the highest reaches of the human spirit; he did not take seriously enough the possibility that men would also be free to explore the depths of depravity. He saw individuality as a welcome release of energy and ingenuity, as if individuals cannot be as energetic and ingenious in pursuing ignoble ends as noble ones.”<sup>77</sup>

Mill, however, makes the reservation that men must never undervalue human tradition and experience: “it would be absurd to pretend that people ought to live as if nothing whatever had been known in the world before they came into it; as if experience had as yet done nothing towards showing that one mode of existence, or of conduct, is preferable to another” (262). Yet it was imperative that they should be free to interpret experience in their own way and according to their own circumstances.

In supporting his plea for individuality Mill deplors any set of beliefs, like that of Calvinism, which in his opinion views human nature as corrupt and self-will as a source of evil. Strict Calvinism, by inculcating rigid submission to the will of God, thereby numbs the independence of the individual (265). Mill does not extol obedience over will and self-denial over self-assertion. He finds more attractive the Greek ideal of self-development, which recognizes human nature as suitable for purposes other than merely abnegation. He is particularly disturbed by the tendency of modern creeds to consolidate into a massive uniformity all that is distinctly individual instead of fostering it within bounds set by the rights and interests of others.

For the remainder of this chapter Mill continues to praise the merits of the distinct individual, whose development confers immeasurable benefits on the human race: “whatever crushes individuality is despotism, by whatever name it may be called, and whether it professes to be enforcing the will of God or the injunctions of men” (266). He fears that to its own loss society is getting the better of individuality. More active life in individuals would mean more real life in the mass. Those endowed with originality and genius can help their fellows to reduce the deadening ascendancy of mediocrity. Mill evidently here, in contrast to what he says elsewhere, trusts the capacity of the average man to recognize and accept the initiative of the gifted (267).

In the last two chapters of his essay he examines how his libertarian principle may be reasonably interpreted and applied. In limited space he tried to explore a vast subject with wide moral and social ramifications. To make this endeavour manageable he attempts to assign one part of life to individuality and another to society, a venture in logic that creates difficulties and confusions which critics have long stressed. It is not feasible in this introduction to traverse the wide range of the argument. But it may be useful to note some instances where he applies his principle to concrete human situations: to the indulgence of an individual in alcohol, drugs, and gambling; to the provision of education; to economic life; and to the governance of the state.

Mill’s preference is to leave the individual free to exercise autonomy in all matters concerning his personal life, since presumably he knows better than anyone else his own wants and needs. But he admits that to do so poses difficult problems, because no man is isolated from society. An individual, for example, should be free to consume alcoholic beverages according to his inclination, even though he becomes drunk. He should not be punished by society for intoxication in

itself, but only if it has ill consequences for others. A soldier or a policeman must certainly be punished for drunkenness on duty, for thus he commits an other-regarding act of positive or potential peril to his fellow citizens. Where others drink to excess and harm themselves and their families, they should at least be subject to moral disapprobation, and in some circumstances to legal penalties. In general, whenever personal vices lead to acts injurious to others, these must be taken from the realm of liberty and made subject either to morality or to law.

Mill comments on the gravity of the issues:

If protection against themselves is confessedly due to children and persons under age, is not society equally bound to afford it to persons of mature years who are equally incapable of self-government? If gambling, or drunkenness, or incontinence, or idleness, or uncleanness, are as injurious to happiness, and as great a hindrance to improvement, as many or most of the acts prohibited by law, why (it may be asked) should not law, so far as is consistent with practicability and social convenience, endeavour to repress these also? And as a supplement to the unavoidable imperfections of law, ought not opinion at least to organize a powerful police against these vices, and visit rigidly with social penalties those who are known to practise them? (280-1.)

Such measures in no way prevent the flowering of individuality or cramp new and venturesome experiments in personal living. They merely deal with practices long condemned by the judgment of the world. Alcohol also affects another issue on which Mill has strong views: temperance societies sought to reduce the consumption of liquor by prohibiting its sale. Drinking is mainly a private matter, whereas selling is a social act. Any interference with sales would, in Mill's opinion, violate the liberty of prospective buyers and consumers. But the campaign for prohibition was supported by those who alleged that their social rights were violated by merchants who trafficked in liquor. In the transient victories of American temperance societies Mill, with much indignation, finds a classic example of pressure groups which ignore the liberty of others in using the machinery of democracy to achieve their own ends (287-8). He likewise rejects sabbatarian legislation, which also reflects the religious prejudices of a part of the population who coerce the remainder into its acceptance.

Liberty, Mill remarks, is often granted where it should be withheld, and withheld where it should be granted (301). Education is an example. When he wrote it was still common, in the name of liberty, for a father to have exclusive power to determine the instruction of his children, a practice Mill criticises as unjust. For him it is self-evident that a nation has a major stake in the welfare of its children, whether rich or poor. It must, in particular, ensure that they are all educated up to a prescribed standard, that parents guarantee they reach this, and that the costs for educating the poor are publicly defrayed.

Mill, because of his rationalism, has an extravagant confidence in education as a meliorative force, including it with population control as one of two major remedies for existing social ills. Yet he repudiates the idea that the state should provide instruction. Here he apparently makes a concession to parents who for many reasons, usually religious, hold diverse views on the substance of education and the values it should inculcate. In any case, however, he has his own pronounced

reason for rejecting state instruction. He fears it as a ready instrument for moulding citizens to be exactly alike, thus shattering his ambition for the proper cultivation of individuality. A common mould would be created for the convenience and advantage of the dominant power, whether an absolute monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or a majority in a democracy. "An education established and controlled by the State," he writes, "should only exist, if it exists at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence" (302). To this rule he makes one exception: if the society is so backward and impoverished that citizens cannot afford a proper education, then the government must provide it.

In *On Liberty* Mill attempts no extensive discussion of liberty in economic life, for he had already treated it at length in his *Principles of Political Economy*, first published in 1848 and revised four times before 1859, when *On Liberty* appeared. But he makes clear his attachment to the concept of a free market. It was once, Mill observes, the responsibility of governments to fix market prices and regulate manufacturing processes (293). But long experience has demonstrated that the quality, quantity, and cheapness of goods are best achieved by a free market of buyers and sellers, from which society in general benefits even though some individuals suffer. This basic concept of the market as an instrument of liberty he tries to preserve, even in such commodities as alcohol and poisons which can be abused or put to destructive purposes.

He recognizes, however, that no less firmly rooted in experience is the need for the state at times to interfere in the market process to secure among other things a balance of public and private interests, prevention of fraud, exposure of adulteration in food, and protection of workers in dangerous occupations. Mill adheres to the idea of the free market except when the results are obviously bad; then he approves of intervention, permitting expediency to replace liberty. For him it is usually better to leave people alone than to control them, but at times it is imperative to control them in the general interest.

From the late 1840s Mill's interest in state intervention was greatly strengthened by the compelling influence of events, the impoverished plight of Ireland in the famine years, its continuing and baffling land problem, the critical social issues of industrial Britain, the explosion of Chartism, and above all the French Revolution of 1848 and the emergence of the socialists with proposals for profound changes. The revolution in Paris struck Mill with the same forcible effect as the earlier events of 1830. Less than a week after the proclamation of the French Republic in February 1848 he writes to Henry S. Chapman: "I am hardly yet out of breath from reading and thinking about it. Nothing can possibly exceed the importance of it to the world or the immensity of the interests which are at stake on its success."<sup>78</sup>

What most impressed Mill in the revolution was the effectiveness of the socialists in raising the issue of a government's role in economic and social life, especially in reducing economic inequalities which breed bitter dissension and undermine the stability and security of the state. He was convinced that in both England and France private property was so seriously threatened that ways had to be found to remedy existing abuses. This aspect of his reformist ideas is reflected in successive editions of his *Principles of Political Economy*, notably the third in 1852. Although he re-

jects certain elements in the socialist argument he has more sympathy for it than hitherto. In November, 1848, he writes to an American correspondent, John Jay: "I have expressed temperately and argumentatively my objections to the particular plans proposed by Socialists for dispensing with private property, but on many other important points I agree with them, and on none do I feel towards them anything but respect, thinking, on the contrary, that they are the greatest element of improvement in the present state of mankind."<sup>79</sup>

Lord Robbins believes that in a part of his mind Mill had sympathy for socialism, and in another part was critical. He concludes that Mill was "unsettled about the fundamental basis of society; in spite of his belief in progress, he was afraid of the future; he did not feel confident that he knew where we were going; what is more he did not feel quite confident that he knew where he wanted us to go."<sup>80</sup> Some may question whether Mill is as uncertain and negative as Lord Robbins suggests but, at any rate, his thinking on the issue of socialism remained in a state of flux. In 1849 he had written that "Socialism is the modern form of the protest, which has been raised, more or less, in all ages of any mental activity, against the unjust distribution of social advantages."<sup>81</sup> He continues to consider it an invaluable movement of protest, but doubts that conditions in society are yet suitable to make it an acceptable substitute for a system of private property. Considerable moral and educational progress is essential before socialism is practicable. To a German professor in 1852 he complains of "the unprepared state of the labouring classes & their extreme moral unfitness at present for the rights which Socialism would confer & the duties it would impose."<sup>82</sup>

Mill's increased sympathy for socialism is not evident in *On Liberty*. Since this work is strongly intended to foster individuality, it is perhaps hardly to be expected that it would pay tribute to the collectivist idea. In the last part of the essay he summarizes his principal objections to government intervention, apart from cases where it is intended to protect the liberty of individuals (305-10). He opposes it in matters which can be managed more effectively by private individuals than by the government, because they have a deeper interest in the outcome. He also opposes it when individuals may be less competent than public servants, but can acquire an invaluable public education in providing the service. Thus they strengthen their faculties, their judgment, and their grasp of joint and diverse interests that deeply concern themselves and society. He finds examples of these in jury service, participation in local administration, and conduct of voluntary philanthropic or industrial activities. Without such practical experience and education, no people can be adequately equipped for success in political freedom. It is the role of the central government, not to engage directly in these activities, but to act for them as a central depository, diffusing the diverse experience gathered in the many experiments of civic activity.

For Mill not the least important reason for opposing the undue intervention of the central government is to avoid the evil of excessively augmenting its power. The greater this power, the less scope remains for independent initiative by individuals and groups.

If the roads, the railways, the banks, the insurance offices, the great joint-stock companies, the universities, and the public charities, were all of them branches of the government; if, in addition, the municipal corporations and local boards, with all that

now devolves on them, became departments of the central administration, if the employés of all these different enterprises were appointed and paid by the government, and looked to the government for every rise in life; not all the freedom of the press and popular constitution of the legislature would make this or any other country free otherwise than in name (306).

Here certainly is no advocate of a centralized state socialism.

Among the many themes discussed in the final chapter of *On Liberty*, the last is bureaucracy. As noted earlier, Mill was a devoted advocate of recruiting brilliant talent to the British civil service. Although on this matter he does not alter his views, he argues that in the interest of political liberty no civil service must monopolize all the distinguished brains and skills of the nation. He thinks it essential to ensure outside the service a countervailing intellectual influence, in no degree inferior to that within, in order to prevent bureaucracy from dominating the government and stifling intelligent criticism. He fears for political freedom if the multitude looks exclusively to the bureaucracy for direction and dictation, or if the able and ambitious mainly depend on it for personal advancement. Indeed, its own competence is likely to be undermined unless it is kept, in Mill's words, under "the watchful criticism of equal ability outside the body" (308). Otherwise it will fall victim to its traditional failings: a slavish attachment to rigid rules and a ready acquiescence in indolent routine. It may also commit errors of a different kind. Leaders of the corps may pursue half-examined and over-sanguine ventures of policy that political chiefs too easily accept and an innocent public too patiently tolerates.

Mill's argument throughout is shrewd, but couched in general terms. His dicta on bureaucratic traits appear to have been derived mainly from what he had learned from the history and experience of European states. He attributes no specific abuses to the bureaucratic power in either the United States or Britain. Indeed, his lavish praise for the New England system of local government and his glowing admiration for American civic capacity suggest that he is not complaining of bureaucratic ills in the republic. His obvious intention is to offer a solemn warning that bureaucracy can imperil the liberty of individuals whenever two necessary safeguards are absent or neglected: the presence of an alert and critical public that keeps it under a constant and intelligent scrutiny; and a wide diffusion of political power throughout the nation, which enables individuals and groups to be effective elements in the body politic. For Mill the ills of bureaucracy and centralism are intertwined and inseparable. The best protection against both is to ensure the maximum amount of local government consistent with national unity.

#### "CENTRALISATION"

Mill carries the themes of centralisation and bureaucracy from *On Liberty* into his essay on centralisation which, under the guise of reviewing the ideas of two French writers, presents an acute comparison of French and English political thought and institutions. The first of the authors, M. Odilon Barrot, has opinions readily defined and in harmony with Mill's own. A severe critic of the current centralism of France under Napoleon III, he condemns its confusion of



spiritual and temporal powers, its petty interferences with the privacy of individuals, and its restrictions on the rights of communes to manage their local affairs and appoint their local officials. He complains that the central authority, with an insatiable appetite for power, forbids the communes to convene their councils without its permission, prescribes their annual estimates, and compels them at their expense to employ its own engineers and architects.

Mill readily accepts Odilon Barrot's criticism of despotic structures and policies in the Second Empire. To him the elaborate citadel of centralized power in Paris is repellant. In his review, however, he deals principally with the wide-ranging discussions of Dupont-White on individual, state, and centralism.

Writing in a France torn by class warfare and ideological conflict, Dupont-White assumes that with the evolution of society the selfishness of individuals and classes becomes sharper and more pervasive, and that a powerful centralized government is needed to control the manifestations of friction and conflict. Without it, society is likely to be dismembered by bitter hatreds. The state, as the chief instrument of stability and progress, is obligated to protect the weak from the strong, a task that grows ever larger and more complex with an expanding industrial society. State interference in economic life, far from being an evil, is an unavoidable result of social progress and a requisite for continued progress.

These speculations greatly interest Mill, and with many of the conclusions he has sympathy. But, as might be expected, he rejects Dupont-White's pronounced bias for centralism and his easy faith that it can always accomplish great things, including a reduction in the natural inequalities among men. For him the French writer's convictions serve to illustrate a sharp contrast between France's political culture and that of England and the United States. Frenchmen cling to centralism as a splendid achievement of the Revolution and a continuing necessity for the greatness of their country. Those in active politics invariably have a vested interest in the centralist regime, even when critical of it. Tocqueville once remarked: "Most of those people in France who speak against centralisation do not really wish to see it abolished, some because they hold power, others because they expect to hold it."<sup>83</sup> They ignore Tocqueville's testimony, based on studies of England and America, that decentralized government is an invaluable school of freedom.

Mill's view of what centralism means for France is clear: it fails to give adequate scope to the practical enterprise and public spirit of individuals and groups throughout the nation (582, 601). Private initiative, compared with that in England, is shackled and weakened by the excessive interference of government. Mill says of Dupont-White.

Our author, having pointed out many needful things which would never be done by the mere self-interest of individuals, does not seem to be aware that anything can be expected from their public spirit: apparently because public spirit in this form is almost entirely stifled in the countries with which he is most familiar, by the centralisation which he applauds. But in our uncentralised country, even such a public want as that of life-boats is supplied by private liberality, through the agency of a voluntary association. (603.)

Among the principal faults of the centralist system in Mill's opinion is the massive patronage it creates and the major power that the bureaucracy constantly exercises at the expense of popular liberty. A centralized executive, equipped to give or withhold many favours, dominates the elections and controls the legislature. It turns the electorate into a vast tribe of place hunters (608-9). Hence its management of public affairs is difficult to challenge successfully, except in times of crisis, and then, as in 1830 and 1848, the result is likely to be revolutionary violence. Indeed, an overcentralized regime may be amenable to no effective check short of revolution.

Disturbing to Mill is the manner whereby the system fosters a supine attitude towards officials. French citizens almost universally appear to tremble before every petty bureaucrat, a circumstance which Mill thinks makes them incapable of much liberty. "How should they not be slavish, when everyone wearing a Government uniform . . . can domineer at will over all the rest . . . ?" (587.) To him it seems evident that hitherto no French government, whatever its liberal professions, has been able to divest itself of the exclusive right to be a judge in its own cause.

In drawing a contrast with French practice Mill comments on the greater degree of genuine decentralization in the institutions and procedures of the English state, beginning with the parish vestries at the bottom. Not merely have the local authorities in England provided a training ground for political skill and initiative, they have also tempered any tendencies to despotism at either level of government. Local bodies have considerable independence, but can operate only within the areas prescribed for them by parliament. Through experience they have generally learned to conduct themselves with reasonable competence. Their vitality adds to that of the state in general, whereas in France the local units are too numerous and too weak to contribute a valuable balance.

Mill is provoked to discuss the special character of British empirical collectivism by Dupont-White's confident case for state interventionism in France. Englishmen, he asserts, naturally distrust government and any extension of its powers (609). They employ it only when other means, especially the free market, fail to achieve what in general the community wants. National grants for education were adopted only after private associations for many years had tried their hand and demonstrated how little they could accomplish. Government regulation of emigrant ships came only when its absence had created sordid conditions that became a public scandal. In this instance the free market had allowed the shipowners to profit from the poverty, ignorance, and recklessness of emigrants (592). The Poor Law Board was established after the old laws created a situation no longer tolerable to the public.

In citing these and other cases Mill on the whole defends the English conservative temper and attitudes of mind that they reflect. He appears to believe that a voluntary instrument should usually be tried before government action is attempted. Yet he also agrees with Dupont-White that the state is obligated to regulate or supervise whenever large and complicated enterprises are run by individuals or private corporations. Railways can be built and operated by private companies, but the state may usefully limit fares, impose safety rules, protect commercial interests, and insure shareholders against reckless or fraudulent managers (593). The steady growth of business di-

rected by individuals and corporations must necessarily enlarge rather than diminish the regulating activity of modern government.

Mill shares with Dupont-White the conviction that a growing social conscience, responding to the ethical requirements of mankind, significantly augments the activity of government, making it at times the unpaid agent of the poor and underprivileged. Partly under this influence the British parliament had regulated the hours of labour, prohibited the employment of children under a certain age, prevented employment of women and children in mines, and compelled manufacturers to maintain in factories those conditions that reduce accidents and lessen hazards to health. Thus in England a network of practical arrangements and compromises were fashioned between state and individual, between state and corporation, and between central and local authority, with what Mill regarded as salutary consequences for the body politic and for the kind of liberty he extolled.

It is conspicuous how little formal ideology, least of all an egalitarian ideology, figured in these developments of the Victorian age. A year before the publication of *On Liberty* Mill gave to Giuseppe Mazzini impressions of his countrymen:

The English, of all ranks and classes, are at bottom, in all their feelings, aristocrats. They have some conception of liberty, & set some value on it, but the very idea of equality is strange & offensive to them. They do not dislike to have many people above them as long as they have some below them. And therefore they have never sympathized & in their present state of mind never will sympathize with any really democratic or republican party in other countries. They keep what sympathy they have for those whom they look upon as imitators of English institutions—Continental Whigs who desire to introduce constitutional forms & some securities against personal oppression—leaving in other respects the old order of things with all its inequalities & social injustices and any people who are not willing to content themselves with this, are thought unfit for liberty.<sup>84</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Mill's writings in the present volume illustrate the wide range of his political thoughts and insights. He touched on most aspects of political speculation important in his age, although his principal interest was the emergence of representative and democratic government and its implications for the individual. Never simply a dispassionate analyst, he was constantly engaged in a reform polemic in harmony with the liberalism that he himself fashioned out of the ideas of Bentham and his father. His reform proposals were mainly a concrete product of a conscious effort to revise and interpret Benthamism in the interests of a broader humanity.

From the perspective of a century it is not difficult to cite the more salient ideas of Mill's political thinking. Along with his theory of liberty he is deeply anxious to elicit and develop in every phase of government man's rational faculty. This endeavour is a consistent strand in his discus-

sions on representative institutions. He wants to see men governed by reasoned purpose to a far greater extent than they have ever been in the past, and to this end institutions must be designed. The paradox in Mill's position is clear enough. He believes that a majority should rule, but thinks that only a minority is likely to have the requisite wisdom. As a reluctant democrat he seeks to select for public service those few with a cultivated and eminent intelligence. All his discussions on representation and the franchise are intended to protect individual and minority interests and ensure the maximum recognition for educated minds. He assumes that respect for intellectual distinction is unnatural to the democratic spirit, but in the interest of democracy everything possible must quickly be done to cultivate it. The act of voting should be emphasized as a rational decision made by people determined that reason has to prevail.

No less cardinal in his thought is a related concern for achieving a balance amongst the powerful and contending interests in the modern state. To him industrial society appears to be a fierce struggle of classes and groups for diverse ends. In view of this struggle, democracy can only provide the best form of government when it is "so organized that no class, not even the most numerous, shall be able to reduce all but itself to political insignificance . . ." (467). It must operate in such a way as to sustain a workable plurality of interests that prevent the domination of any one over all the others. Much of what he says about political machinery concerns instruments, often complicated, that are intended to protect society from the monopoly of power by a single interest. To the end of his days he remained convinced that the presence of countervailing interests is essential for the survival of political liberty.

Less precise and much harder to summarize is Mill's view of the economic roles of the contemporary state. On this theme his thinking after 1848 underwent pronounced changes in response to transformations in society and the currents of European opinion. It was the ethos of his philosophy to further the full and free development of every human individual. He doubted, however, whether the existing industrial society offered the best environment for such development, since sometimes it failed to permit even the most harsh and exhausting labour to earn the bare necessities of life. It fostered inequalities between groups, gave advantages to some, and imposed impediments on others. He believed that in existing society remedies for man's plight must be sought through a variety of institutions: co-operative industrial associations might replace the wage system, reformed proprietorship might replace land monopoly, and restrictions on the right of inheritance might reduce the general extent of inequality. Many new and untried instruments of economic control are possible and must be employed under the direct or indirect initiative of the state.

These and other related ideas put Mill on the road leading to a liberal and co-operative form of socialism like that championed by the early Fabians, who indeed built on his thought and were glad to admit their indebtedness.<sup>85</sup> Like him they saw in socialism the economic side of the democratic ideal and justified it only if it remained democratic. Yet the extent to which Mill travelled or hoped to travel the road of socialism remains wrapped in some doubt because he still continued to believe that in contemporary society private property and the competitive principle were necessary for effective production and indispensable for material progress.

It is more accurate to think of him as an empirical collectivist rather than a socialist, and as such he moved in harmony with the currents of the time and his own country. For him the new industrial society demanded extensions in the agenda of government. But he never ceased to emphasize that in any country the role of government must depend on the peculiar necessities of its economy and society. Some countries require more government than others, especially when poor, underdeveloped, and lacking in the special attitudes and institutions that nourish private enterprise. Mill abundantly illustrated this point in his discussions on Ireland and India. The major problem of Ireland, for example, was poverty, the result of bad government over generations, harsh class domination, and the gross mismanagement of its land. The remedy must be drastic action by the government to ensure a peasant proprietorship, which in Mill's opinion was best able to protect the soil and foster in the cultivators forethought, frugality, self-restraint, and the other solid qualities needed for their material progress and welfare. There was no other stimulus comparable to the ownership of the land by those who tilled it. The necessary steps proposed by Mill to ensure this end startled and annoyed the contemporary upholders of the rights of property because they involved something alien to English custom, the control of rents by law rather than by market forces. But for Mill Ireland was not England, and a free market was not an inflexible dogma. He rejected the idea that English practice should be a norm for Irish policy. Irish circumstances and the land situation were such that only state action could remedy them, and bring to the country order and prosperity.

Mill's continuing interest in future social change made him aware of the continental exponents of revolutionary socialism, who dramatically appeared in 1848 and became enemies of both capitalism and liberalism. He did not sympathize with either their theories or their methods. The concept of a dictatorship of the proletariat with the physical force to assert its claims would obviously conflict with all his long-cherished principles. He told William R. Cremer, a trade unionist and a one-time secretary of the British section of the International Working Men's Association, that only two situations justified violent revolution: acute personal oppression and suffering; and a system of government which does not permit the redress of grievances by peaceful and legal means. In his opinion neither existed in England,<sup>86</sup> nor, we may infer, in other European countries under genuine constitutional regimes. On this aspect of his thought there is no equivocation and no uncertainty.

Five years after his comment to Cremer, Mill told Thomas Smith, Secretary of the International Working Men's Association of Nottingham, how much he welcomed the general principles of the Association, especially its acceptance of goals that he himself had long sought, such as equal rights for women and protection of minorities.<sup>87</sup> But he strongly cautioned against use of the term "Revolution" in the French style. For him revolution meant solely a change of government effected by force. He regretted that the Association relied on the vague French political language that dealt in abstractions. "It proceeds from an infirmity of the French mind which has been one main cause of the miscarriages of the French nation in its pursuit of liberty & progress; that of being led away by phrases & treating abstractions as if they were realities. . . ." He feared that these verbal practices and French ideas would have adverse effects: confuse issues, foster misunderstanding, and range men under different banners as friends or enemies of "the Revolu-

tion,” without reference to the real worth of specific measures advantageous to all and accepted by all. In these views Mill was the liberal empiricist, protesting against an attempt to establish a revolutionary ideology among British workers. His appeal at the time would doubtless command a ready response from the bulk of British labour leaders.<sup>88</sup> The political ferment and social convulsions of the 1830s and 1840s were past. By 1867 the British skilled craftsmen had acquired the franchise and at the same time were busily engaged in the sober task of creating trade unions to become powerful pressure groups, furthering the material interests of their members. They also helped to build and sustain in the Liberal party a political bridge between the workers and the middle class. During the remainder of the century the Liberal-labour alliance, deeply influenced by evangelical religion, was to dominate union spokesmen, and to them Mill’s form of utilitarianism was unquestionably more appealing than the revolutionary rhetoric and intricate strategies of class warfare sponsored by Marx and Engels.

Mill’s ideas in time won an impressive position. It is a common and acceptable verdict that in Victorian England his was the most influential voice of liberalism. No one else produced so many substantial and readable texts, running through successive editions, and supplemented by scores of articles in periodicals and newspapers setting forth the proper principles of economics and politics in harmony with liberal philosophy. By the 1860s his authority reached its peak.<sup>89</sup> His writings then appealed to a wide range of readers’ parliamentarians, a new and growing generation of students in the universities, middle-class elements in the towns interested in practical reform, and leaders and spokesmen among the workers. He was not the sole liberal prophet, and many who read him disagreed with him. *On Liberty*, for example, produced a chorus of criticism as well as of praise. Yet for all its controversial features, it reformulated boldly the problem of freedom in the environment of the nineteenth century and thus contributed richly to the contemporary ferment of liberal thinking. It was a distinguished liberal of the period who wrote that *On Liberty* “belongs to the rare books that after hostile criticism has done its best are still found to have somehow added a cubit to man’s stature.”<sup>90</sup>

This was the tribute of a devoted disciple, whose thinking was shaped by Mill. Yet many twentieth-century readers would still endorse it. They have continued to find enduring value in the tenets of *On Liberty*. They cherish almost as much as did John Morley a book that protests against the infallibility of public opinion and the arrogance of majorities. They accept Mill’s distrust of centralised power and admire his ideals of individual liberty and a free state, although they may admit the increased difficulties in achieving them. They welcome his admonition that liberty and intellectual progress, insecure and fragile things, demand constant cultivation. But they would also emphasize that Mill had other valuable thoughts to express outside the pages of *On Liberty*. His writings and discussions as a whole must be considered in any genuine assessment of his worth as a social thinker. In them one view was conspicuous. He believed that political ideas and structures must change with a changing society. For him all institutional arrangements are provisional. If we imagined him living into the present century, we can conceive him still busily engaged in revising his liberal thought, in response to altered circumstances and fresh currents of opinion. He would still be feverishly absorbed in trying to reach the most reliable balance between his individualist and collectivist convictions. He would of course remain the rationalist,

confident that social change could be effected by the art of persuasion and by the simple fact that men would learn from bitter experiences.

## Endnotes

[1] *Autobiography*, ed. Jack Stillinger (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), 42.

[2] *Ibid.*, 52-3.

[3] See for his characteristic ideas at the time: “The Game Laws,” *Westminster Review*, V (Jan., 1826), 1-22; “Law of Libel and Liberty of the Press,” *Westminster Review*, III (April, 1825), 285-381.

[4] Joseph Hamburger in *James Mill and the Art of Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 27-33, discusses James Mill’s ideas on the necessity of a free press to effect reform.

[5] A. W. Levi, “The Mental Crisis of John Stuart Mill,” *The Psychoanalytic Review*, XXXII (1946), 84-101.

[6] See his long letter to John Sterling, 20-22 October, 1831, in *Earlier Letters*, ed. F. E. Mineka, *Collected Works*, XII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 74-88 (hereafter cited as *EL*, *CW*, with volume and page numbers).

[7] See Textual Introduction, *System of Logic*, *CW*, VII, liv-lv.

[8] *Autobiography*, 97.

[9] *EL*, *CW*, XII, 74-88.

[10] *Ibid.*, 84.

[11] *Later Letters*, ed. F. E. Mineka and D. N. Lindley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XIV, 68 (hereafter cited as *LL*, *CW*, with volume and page numbers).

[12] *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 380. Much information on this theme is contained in Joseph Hamburger, *Intellectual in Politics John Stuart Mill and the Philosophic Radicals* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

[13] *EL*, *CW*, XII, 32.

[14] See letters to his father from Paris, *ibid.*, 54-67.

[15] Iris W. Mueller examines the content of these articles in *John Stuart Mill and French Thought* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), Chapter ii.

[16] Three other notable writings of this decade, not included in the present volume, also shed illuminating light on his political ideas: “The Spirit of the Age” (1831), “Bentham” (1838), and “Coleridge” (1840).

[17] *EL*, *CW*, XII, 205.

[18] See J. S. Mill, "The House of Lords," *Globe*, 16 October, 1836, 2; and "The Close of the Session," *London Review*, II (October, 1835), 271-2.

[19] *Examiner*, 1 July, 1832, 417. See also a similar argument two years earlier in "Prospects of France," *Examiner*, 10 October, 1830, 642.

[20] De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [II]," 156. See also Mill's laudatory remarks in a letter to the author after he had read the second part, *EL, CW, XIII*, 433-5 (referred to in the Textual Introduction, lxxvi-lxxvii below).

[21] "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [I]," 76-7. In 1840 he told Macvey Napier that he did not differ strongly from Tocqueville on this issue (*EL, CW, XIII*, 444).

[22] Autobiography, 115-16.

[23] Letter to Gustave d'Eichthal, *EL, CW, XII*, 37 (8/10/29).

[24] *EL, CW, XIII*, 713.

[25] Alexander Bain, *John Stuart Mill A Criticism with Personal Recollections* (London: Longmans, 1882), 48.

[26] In 1859 Mill added a footnote to his original article admitting that his criticisms were now less justified because of recent university reforms.

[27] *EL, CW, XII*, 27.

[28] *LL, CW, XIV*, 175.

[29] See Edward Hughes. "Sir Charles Trevelyan and Civil Service Reform 1853-55." *English Historical Review*, LXIV (1949), 64 A comprehensive and lucid review of the controversy concerning the Northcote-Trevelyan Report is contained in J. B. Conachet. *The Aberdeen Coalition, 1852-1855* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 312-32.

[30] *LL, CW, XV*, 598-9.

[31] *Ibid.*, 596.

[32] *Ibid.*, 606.

[33] *EL, CW, XII*, 317.

[34] *EL, CW, XIII*, 410.

[35] See H. J. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (London: Longmans, 1959); Charles Seymour, *Electoral Reform in England and Wales: The Development and Operation of the Parliamentary Franchise, 1832-1885* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915), 432. In Ireland the ballot had its greatest effect, because intimidation was more common there.

[36] Quoted from the Chadwick Papers by Hamburger, *Intellectuals in Politics*, 274.

[37] *LL, CW, XV*, 654.

[38] *Ibid.*, 672.



[39] Though *On Liberty* was written and published before *Considerations on Representative Government*, the latter is here discussed first, because it provides a fuller treatment of the views of Mill just outlined.

[40] For an argument that Bagehot was heavily indebted to Mill, see T. H. Ford, "Bagehot and Mill as Theorists of Comparative Politics," *Comparative Politics*, II (January, 1970), 309-24. A. H. Birch lauds *Considerations on Representative Government* as "the most systematic attempt ever made in Britain to set out a theory of the purpose and proper organization of representative institutions" (*Representative and Responsible Government* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964], 57).

[41] Autobiography, 102.

[42] P. 467. In the year after publishing *Considerations on Representative Government* Mill wrote to Henry S. Chapman that Australian democracy, as described by Chapman, confirmed his fears about false democracy (*LL, CW, XV*, 764-5). See also R. S. Neale, "John Stuart Mill on Australia: A Note," *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, XIII (April, 1968), 242-4.

[43] *LL, CW, XVII*, 1572.

[44] *EL, CW, XII*, 211. See also *LL, CW, XVI*, 1431-2. For an account of the abilities and weaknesses of this exceptional man, see S. F. Finer. *The Life and Times of Sir Edwin Chadwick* (London: Methuen, 1952).

[45] Harold J. Laski, et al., *A Century of Municipal Progress, 1835-1935* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1935), 48.

[46] *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*. 3rd ser., CXCI, cols. 1859-63 (5 May, 1868). See also *LL, CW, XVI*, 1501-2, and *XVII*, 1555-6.

[47] Josef Redlich and Francis Hirst. *Local Government in England* (London: Macmillan, 1903), I, 180.

[48] "Coleridge," *Collected Works*, X (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 135-6, 504-8 (henceforth cited as *CW, X*): and *A System of Logic, Collected Works*, VIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 923 (henceforth cited as *CW, VII* or *VIII* as appropriate).

[49] See a criticism of Mill's view in Boyd C. Shafer, *Nationalism: Myth and Reality* (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1955), 53.

[50] John Stuart Mill, *England and Ireland* (London: Longmans, 1868). See also his *Chapters and Speeches on the Irish Land Question* (London: Longmans, 1870).

[51] *England and Ireland*, 7.

[52] *LL, CW, XVI*, 1328.

[53] Koppel S. Pinson, *Bibliographical Introduction to Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935), 13.

[54] See, e.g., *EL, CW, XIII*, 642, 660, 687, and 737.

[55] The founding of South Australia benefited from the zealous efforts of the National Colonization Society and other groups which received Mill's blessing. See Douglas Pike, *The Paradise of Dissent* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1957), and Donald Winch, *Classical Political Economy and Colonies* (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1965), especially Chapter vi. Mill extolled the plans for establishing South Australia in *Examiner*, 20 July, 1834, 453-4.

[56] Consult in particular *London and Westminster Review*, XXVIII (January, 1838), 502-33; *ibid.*, XXIV (August, 1838), 507-12 (2nd ed., only), and *ibid.*, XXXII (December, 1838), 241-60.

[57] *EL, CW*, XIII, 426.

[58] The issues involved here have been critically examined by Ged Martin, *The Durham Report and British Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 42-74.

[59] Goldwin Smith, *The Empire* (Oxford and London: Parker, 1863). Consult also R. S. Neale, "Roebuck's Constitution and the Durham Proposals," *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, XV (1971), 579-90.

[60] *LL, CW*, XV, 784; cf. 965.

[61] *LL, CW*, XVII, 1685.

[62] These papers were published for the East India Company by Cox and Wyman, London, 1858.

[63] See George D. Bearce, "John Stuart Mill and India," *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XXVII (December, 1954), 67-80. A useful general study is Eric Stokes. *The English Utilitarians and India* (Oxford, 1959).

[64] Abram L. Harris, "John Stuart Mill: Servant of the East India Company," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XXX (May, 1964), 196. See also Gerald Sirkin and Natalie Robinson Sirkin, "Mill in India House, A Little Bureaucratic Tale in Two Letters," *Mill News Letter*, IX (Summer, 1974), 3-7. This article contains references to other relevant articles by Gerald Sirkin and Natalie Robinson Sirkin.

[65] *Principles of Political Economy Collected Works*, II (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 319.

[66] Donald Winch. *Classical Political Economy and Colonies*, 168.

[67] From the outset the book provoked controversy. J. S. Rees, *Mill and His Early Critics* (Leicester: Leicester University College, 1956), discusses certain reviews of it between 1859 and Mill's death in 1873 which were critical, among other things, of its individualistic assumptions and concept of liberty. A modern writer, Gertrude Himmelfarb, examines Mill's main argument in *On Liberty and Liberalism: The Case of John Stuart Mill* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974) and contends that it runs counter to his position in other writings Carl J. Friedrich, ed., *Nomos IV Liberty* (New York: Atherton Press, 1966), collects a series of reflective studies commemorating the centennial of Mill's work, and useful in this connection is one by David Spitz. "Freedom and Individuality: Mill's Liberty in Retrospect." Richard B. Friedman examines Mill's argument afresh

in “A New Exploration of Mill’s Essay on Liberty,” *Political Studies*, XIV (October, 1966), 281-304. Maurice Cowling in *Mill and Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963) presents a novel and relentless criticism of Mill as an authoritarian bent on establishing a new religion of humanity on the basis of social science. The book and the reaction to it among scholars illustrate the wide range of controversial opinion that *On Liberty* can still provoke. For a selection of other interesting commentaries see Peter Radcliff ed. *Limits of Liberty: Studies of Mill’s On Liberty* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1966). A British jurist’s views on Mill and morals are reflected in Patrick Devlin. *The Enforcement of Morals* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), Chap. vi.

[68] J. C. Rees attempts to assess these influences in “A Phase in the Development of Mill’s Ideas on Liberty,” *Political Studies*, VI (February, 1958), 33-44.

[69] Noel Annan, *The Curious Strength of Positivism in English Political Thought* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 16.

[70] David Riesman, Reuel Denney, and Nathan Glazer in *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven Yale University Press, 1950), 301, pay tribute to Mill for foreshadowing the arguments of modern sociologists on social conformity and the subtle effects of public opinion in a democracy. See also Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision* (Boston Little: Brown and Company, 1960), 349-50.

[71] Autobiography, 116.

[72] W. L. Courtney, *Life and Writings of John Stuart Mill* (London: Walter Scott Publishing Co., 1889), 126-7. Courtney also quotes Caroline Fox on “that terrible book of John Mill’s on Liberty, clear and calm and cold, he lays it on as a tremendous duty to get oneself well contradicted and admit always a devils advocate into the presence of your dearest most sacred truths” (*ibid.*, 125).

[73] Gertrude Himmelfarb in *On Liberty and Liberalism*, 36-56, discusses some of Mill’s contradictions.

[74] *EL, CW*, XII, 153.

[75] Mill read von Humboldt’s work. *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, after its appearance in an English translation in 1854.

[76] Leslie Stephen, *The English Utilitarians* (London: Duckworth and Co., 1900), III, 269.

[77] Himmelfarb, *On Liberty and Liberalism*, 321.

[78] *EL, CW*, XIII, 731. See Mill’s extensive defence of the revolution in the *Westminster Review*, LI (April, 1849), republished in *Dissertations and Discussions*, II, 335-410.

[79] *EL, CW*, XIII, 740-1.

[80] Lionel Robbins, *The Theory of Economic Policy in English Classical Political Economy* (London: Macmillan, 1952), 143.

[81] *Dissertations and Discussions*, II, 388.

[82] *LL, CW*, XIV, 85. See also his views in another letter of the same year, *ibid.*, 87.

[83] Quoted in J. P. Mayer, *Prophet of the Mass Age* (London: Dent, 1939), 20.

[84] *LL, CW*, XV, 553.

[85] There are many references to Mill in Bernard Shaw, ed., *Fabian Essays in Socialism* (London: Walter Scott, 1899). In this book Sidney Webb pays a special tribute to Mill (on page 58). There are also many references to Mill in Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, 2nd ed (London: Longmans, 1898).

[86] *LL, CW*, XVI, 1248. See also a letter to Georg Brandes on 4 March, 1872, in *LL, CW*, XVII, 1874-5, which discusses the First International.

[87] *LL, CW*, XVII, 1910-12 (4/10/72).

[88] Henry Collins and Chimen Abramsky. *Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement Years of the First International* (London: Macmillan, 1965), 269 cite references on the response to Mill's letter. See also Lewis S. Feuer "John Stuart Mill and Marxian Socialism," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, X (1949), 297-303.

[89] A modern assessment is that by John Vincent, *The Formation of the Liberal Party, 1857-1868* (London: Constable, 1966). For the marked influence of Mill on John Morley and other leading liberals of the time see Frances Wentworth Knickerbocker. *Free Minds, John Morley and His Friends* (Cambridge: Harvard Press, 1943).

[90] John Morley, *Recollections* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971), I, 61.

**VOLUME XX - ESSAYS ON FRENCH HISTORY AND HISTORIANS. INTRODU-  
TION BY JOHN C. CAIRNS**

SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XX - Essays on French History and Historians*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by John C. Cairns (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985). Chapter: Introduction. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/235/21552>>.

INTRODUCTION BY JOHN C. CAIRNS

John Mill's interest in French public life between the two empires is somewhat flatly proposed in his *Autobiography*. The casual reader of the few and sober pages alluding to his lifelong acquaintance with the land, the people, and the history might not readily grasp what France had been to him: not merely a window on the wider cultural world, but a laboratory of intellectual exploration and political experimentation, and a mirror, the clearest he knew, in which to see what preoccupied him in England. There were times when he thought they did "order this matter better in France," times when he did not; times even when his criticisms of the faults he perceived in the French character approached in severity his denunciations of faults in the English. But sympathetic or censorious, and preoccupied with responsibilities and problems in England, he followed French thought and French public life more closely perhaps than any other Englishman of his time. France offered not only the most exciting intellectual and political spectacle in Europe, but an instructive angle of vision from which to perceive England. France's history, its men of thought and action were as integral a part of Mill's education as the famous tutorship of his father and Bentham had been. Like the early philosophes, he eagerly sought out the stimulating relativity of another society.

The essays in this volume, mostly occasional pieces on revolution and history, span the two decades from youth to middle age, from the embattled liberalism of the opposition under the rule of Charles X (set against the Tory administrations of Canning and Wellington) almost to the eve of the Second Empire. At their centre is the Revolution of 1789, cataclysmic, still mysterious, the ultimate implications of which were far from clear, and about which Mill grew increasingly uncertain. He followed the revived debate of this great affair with intense interest. By no means uncommitted among its protagonists, he tried to weigh the evidence and extract the lessons. Avid for fresh insights, scornful of uncongenial interpretations, he came to see that 1789 could not by itself provide what he wanted. He cast about more broadly for the grand hypothesis that would situate the age of revolution through which he was living and illuminate the whole course of

European civilization. Finally he searched for a philosophy and a science of history. Following at the same time the progress of the struggle for liberty and order in France, he commented and judged and published his opinions until the aftermath of the Revolution of 1848 betrayed the high liberal hopes of February. When for the second time he witnessed the collapse of liberalism, Mill fell silent. He had found and absorbed what he sought from French thought; he did not believe that for the foreseeable future French public life had instruction to offer; his radical and democratic enthusiasms were muted. Thereafter he continued to observe; he continued to travel in France; he was led by the accident of his wife's death there to take up his last residence in France. But he did not write publicly about it. Writing publicly about it belonged to an earlier and more hopeful time.

### MILL'S EXPERIENCE OF FRANCE AND THE FRENCH

The French education of John Mill was, like its English counterpart, precocious, thanks not only to his father's ambition but also to the hospitality of General Sir Samuel Bentham and his wife. Lady Bentham particularly had a clear notion of what was good for her young charge; the boy was willing and the father acquiescent. The long summer season of 1820 in southwest France turned into a year, in which the agreeable pleasure of swimming in the shadow of the Pont du Gard was mixed with attention to serious studies and precise accounts of things seen, done, and learned from Toulouse and Montpellier to Paris and Caen.

John Mill would recollect that he had returned home in July 1821 with "many advantages." He singled out three: "a familiar knowledge of the French language, and acquaintance with the ordinary French literature," the advantage of "having breathed for a whole year the free and genial atmosphere of Continental life," and "a strong and permanent interest in Continental liberalism, of which [he] ever afterwards kept [himself] *au courant*, as much as of English politics."<sup>1</sup> He had arrived observing, comparing, judging; he left doing much the same, but with less concern to memorize the Departmental "chefs lieux by heart so as to be able to repeat them without hesitation," and a superior capacity to comment on the struggle among liberals, conservatives, and reactionaries around Louis XVIII.<sup>2</sup> He said that France had taught him a relativity of values which thereafter kept him "free from the error always prevalent in England, and from which even [his] father with all his superiority to prejudice was not exempt, of judging universal questions by a merely English standard."<sup>3</sup> He had certainly discovered people different from those James Mill had perceived coming up in post-war France ("very quiet & contented slaves" under "a quiet, gentle despotism"),<sup>4</sup> and he took the trouble to jot down his independent view.<sup>5</sup> When fourteen, he had met "many of the chiefs of the Liberal party" at J.B. Say's house in Paris. Afterwards, he recalled having encountered Henri Saint-Simon there, "not yet the founder either of a philosophy or a religion, and considered only as a clever *original*."<sup>6</sup> Considering the fuss Saint-Simon had provoked by the spring of 1820 with his celebrated parable, contrasting two hypothetical losses to France (all its creative and industrious *élite*, or all its 30,000 dignitaries and high functionaries), which led to his unsuccessful prosecutions and trial on various charges—a scandal compounded

by the outrage and uproar over Louvel's almost simultaneous assassination of the duc de Berry—this was the least one could say.<sup>7</sup>

John Mill was addicted to recording facts and figures. Yet it is clear from the reports he shaped to his father's expectation that he was not indifferent to the land. He saw much of it then; later he tramped over large stretches of it, seeking a return to health. His letters reveal the profound impact on him of the magnificent French countryside: "I never saw anything more lovely than the Peyrou & its view this evening just after sunset," he wrote Harriet from Montpellier in December 1854; "everything was pure & the *tone* that of the finest Poussin."<sup>8</sup>

Following his year among the French, Mill's attentions were again absorbed by his father's curriculum and his own "self-education." This included Condillac and a first appreciation of the French Revolution, but it seems to have left no room for broader pursuit of his continental interests. France had stimulated his desire to travel, but, still a lad, he spent holidays with his family in the country, later in the 1820s, with no more than a month off from his responsibility at India House, he settled for walking tours with friends in the English counties. Ten years passed before his return to France. But he constantly followed its public life; as early as April 1824 he sprang to the defence of French liberalism under attack in the *Edinburgh Review*, protesting the "torrent of mere abuse . . . poured out against the French, for the sole purpose of gratifying [English] national antipathy," and extolling French science and letters.<sup>9</sup> His commitment to France was made long before the first of the intellectual encounters (if we except the brief friendship with the future chemist Antoine Jérôme Balard during his year with the Benthames) that accompanied his reading of the political scene.

Gustave d'Eichthal, a recruit to the rising Saint-Simonian school, first saw Mill at the London Debating Society in May 1828; he was to correspond with him on and off for more than forty years. "Dans une mesure," d'Eichthal recalled, "c'est lui qui m'a ouvert l'Angleterre comme je lui ai ouvert la France. Ce qui nous rapprochait ce n'étaient point des idées abstraites. C'était notre nature et nos désirs d'apôtre."<sup>10</sup> Though he did not convert Mill to the faith in its brief but curious heyday under Prosper Enfantin, directly and indirectly d'Eichthal planted the seeds of alternative visions in Mill's mind shortly after the apparent collapse of the world Mill had made for himself at the *Westminster Review*. Afterwards, Mill said that he and his friends had "really hoped and aspired" to be the new philosophes, and that "No one of the set went to so great excesses in this boyish ambition as I did. . . ." In 1826 he "awakened from this as from a dream."<sup>11</sup> As he arranged all this in retrospect, Weber and Wordsworth then offered the consolations and stimulus of contemplation and inner happiness. But it was the Saint-Simonians who proposed a view of history and human development that plausibly situated the times. It was they who, for Mill, best explained the century's collisions and angularities as characteristic of the transition from an "organic period" of faith to a "critical period" of disputes and uncertainties, the resolution of which, he hoped, would bring a new era of liberty informed by education and "the true exigencies of life."<sup>12</sup>

It is doubtful that Mill in the late 1820s shared such an understanding. And though he may well have read Saint-Simon and Augustin Thierry's address "To the Parliaments of France and

England” of 1814, with its appeal for a Franco-British union that could “change the state of Europe” and bring true peace,<sup>13</sup> it is more likely to have been after July 1830 than before. D’Eichthal pressed him in the autumn of 1829 for a statement; Mill was reserved. Sympathetic to his correspondent’s exposition of the doctrine, he condemned the Saint-Simonian books he had read (one such seemed “the production of men who had neither read nor thought, but hastily put down the first crudities that would occur to a boy who had just left school”). Auguste Comte’s early outline of a *Système de politique positive* (1824), sent by d’Eichthal the previous year, he found at least plausible, clear, and methodical, but ultimately a clever exercise. Its conception of the ends of government and the constitution of a new ruling class Mill rejected completely.<sup>14</sup> A month after this cold douche, he made amends by saying something favourable about the Saint-Simonians, but it was little enough. He discouraged d’Eichthal from coming to England “with a view to my complete initiation in the St Simonian doctrine.” Doubting its applicability in France, he was sure it was unacceptable and undesirable in England.<sup>15</sup> Given the report he had of a meeting, Mill wondered “how you have hitherto escaped the jokers and epigrammatists of the Parisian salons.”<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, the Saint-Simonians had something he wanted. The celebrated “crisis” in his “mental history” was on him. He had come through “the dry heavy dejection of the melancholy winter of 1826-27,” was questioning and doubting Bentham and his father, discovering the weak places of his philosophy. He had “only a conviction, that the true system was something much more complex and many sided” than he had imagined. He discovered from acquaintance with European, especially French, thought the logic of the mind’s “possible progress,” the relativity of historical institutions, and the truth that “any general theory or philosophy of politics supposes a previous theory of human progress, and that this is the same thing with a philosophy of history.”<sup>17</sup> On the eve of the July Revolution, he was apparently feeling his way. Closer contact with the Saint-Simonian school in Paris during the summer of 1830 eventuated in the *Examiner* articles, “The Spirit of the Age,” which revealed that while he was no convert, as he put it, “*je tiens bureau de St Simonisme chez moi.*”<sup>18</sup>

More sympathetic, he remained unconvinced. If in the aftermath of 1830 he placed the Saint-Simonians “decidedly *à la tête de la civilisation*” and imagined their prescription as “likely to be the final and permanent condition of the human race,” he guessed mankind would not be ready for it for “many, or at least several, ages.”<sup>19</sup> He assisted d’Eichthal and Charles Duveyrier before and during their mission to England, publicly (though also anonymously) criticized the French government for prosecuting the Saint-Simonians, but concluded that that phase of their work, which had transformed political discourse in France, was almost done.<sup>20</sup> His private remarks about the communal life reported from Ménilmontant where, following schism, most of the sect had followed Père Enfantin (“the best man they know, but I wish they had a better still”) were cool.<sup>21</sup> After the sensational trial of Enfantin and his disciples on 27-28 August, 1832, resulting in fines, imprisonments and dissolution of the school, Mill remarked to Carlyle that “There was much in the conduct of them all, which really one cannot help suspecting of quackery.” In the *Examiner*, however, he condemned the government’s heavy hand.<sup>22</sup> The subsequent scattering of the disciples, the notorious journey to Constantinople in search of *la femme libre, la Mère su-*



*prême*,<sup>23</sup> left him melancholy that so much creativeness should have succumbed to such madness. Uncharacteristically patronizing, he noted that “St Simon really for a Frenchman was a great man,” and the society bearing his name had been “the only spiritual fruit of the Revolution of 1830.”<sup>24</sup> He defended it against the ridicule of *The Times*, however, concluding it had had a “highly beneficial influence over the public mind of France.”<sup>25</sup> Years later, he still referred to “my friends the St. Simonians.”<sup>26</sup> He could scarcely have imagined the immense influence some of them were to have in the engineering, railway, and banking enterprises of France after 1840.<sup>27</sup>

The Saint-Simonians reinforced Mill’s intense interest in the affairs of France; stimulated by them, he developed a progressive view of history working itself out through organic and critical periods. He said they had “much changed” him.<sup>28</sup> Whatever their absurdities, their bold vision of the ideal society, ostensibly democratic and led by an intellectual élite, must help others to move the world toward it. But unlike Saint-Simon, Mill did not think the times were ripe. Hence his own rather Saint-Simonian conclusion that “the mental regeneration of Europe must precede its social regeneration,” for all the dogmas, from religion to rationalism, had proved inadequate.<sup>29</sup>

For several years it seemed to Mill that Auguste Comte might prove to be the prophet of this “mental regeneration.” Comte had broken with the Saint-Simonians in 1828. Mill’s first impression of the short work d’Eichthal sent him, however, was unfavourable. Despite its arresting aspects, he then thought the view of history “warped & distorted by the necessity of proving that civilisation has but one law, & that a law of progressive advancement.”<sup>30</sup> Yet it was to this conclusion that the liberal school of French historians, to which Mill soon subscribed, was attached. Moreover, after 1830 he became increasingly sympathetic to the Saint-Simonian world-view. When therefore he read the first two volumes of Comte’s *Cours de philosophie positive* in 1837, he was more impressed: “one of the most profound books ever written on the philosophy of the sciences.”<sup>31</sup> Further volumes sustained his enthusiasm: “He makes some mistakes, but on the whole, I think it very nearly the grandest work of this age.”<sup>32</sup> No one before Comte, Mill was to say thirty years later, “had penetrated to the philosophy of the matter, and placed the necessity of historical studies as the foundation of sociological speculation on the true footing.”<sup>33</sup> In the course of the decade, from about 1828, Mill had been influenced to rethink fundamentally his conception of history and its function. To Comte more than to any other he was indebted for his new insight. The sectarianism, however, to which he had objected earlier, became clearer as Comte’s work advanced and even less acceptable to Mill as he came under the influence of the liberal journalists and Tocqueville.

Encouraged by Armand Marrast, former editor of the liberal *Tribune*, who had fled Sainte-Pélagie prison in July 1835 to find refuge in England, Mill wrote Comte directly in 1841. The correspondence flourished, Mill keeping his distance, minimizing their differences, Comte explaining but giving no ground. Comte paraded his persecution by the government; Mill sought to assuage his bitterness, passing on the favourable remarks by Guizot (who had been Ambassador in London, February-October 1840), juggling with the confidences about Comte’s marital problems, promising (rashly) that he should not worry about material matters “aussi longtemps que je vivrai et que j’aurai un sou à partager avec vous.”<sup>34</sup> Comte’s final importunings and intransi-

gences wore the friendship down. The financial generosity Mill had arranged from George Grote, William Molesworth, and Raikes Currie ran out. Grote broke with Comte in 1848. Mill professed a high opinion for “la théorie de la méthode positive,” but made clear his disapproval of the manner in which Comte applied it to social questions. Comte put his complaints in print; this did not affect the even estimate Mill gave of him in the *Autobiography*.<sup>35</sup> On the question of equality of women, on the ultimate immovability of Comte regarding his own *pouvoir spirituel*, they parted company. “He is a man,” Mill remarked, “one can serve only in his own way.”<sup>36</sup>

For all the angular behaviour, Mill had nevertheless remained sympathetic to Comte’s distress. Harriet Taylor’s tart strictures (Mill had shown her some of the correspondence) on “This dry sort of man” as being “not a worthy coadjutor & scarcely a worthy opponent” he did not share.<sup>37</sup> Year after year he had been responsive, protective, patient. But by 1844 Mill’s concern with liberty was so marked that, much as he appreciated Comte’s “admirable historical views,” “I think and have always thought him in a radically wrong road, and likely to go farther and farther wrong. . . .”<sup>38</sup> The prediction was accurate. Sectarianism was the problem. The final statement in the *Système de politique positive* meant that free thought would be coerced by the tyranny of public opinion sanctioned by moral authority.<sup>39</sup> In the guise of a “plan for the regeneration of human society,” Comte’s imagination had conceived a humourless, ludicrously detailed, anti-intellectual “absolute monarchy.” After Comte’s death, Mill attributed the work to the “melancholy decadence of a great intellect.”<sup>40</sup> The result of such a system would be “a despotism of society over the individual, surpassing anything contemplated in the political ideal of the most rigid disciplinarian among the ancient philosophers.”<sup>41</sup> With Comte, as with the Saint-Simonians, however, Mill had undertaken “the task of sifting what is good from what is bad.” In neither case had he been able to accept the whole, to join without reservation the “active and enthusiastic adherents, some of them of no inconsiderable personal merit, in England, France, and other countries.”<sup>42</sup> Reading a French obituary notice of Comte’s death in 1857, he noted ironically, “It seems as if there would be no thinkers left in the world.”<sup>43</sup>

By then he had been acquainted with Alexis de Tocqueville for more than two decades. For while Mill was assiduously, even deferentially, corresponding with Comte, he deepened his knowledge of Tocqueville’s views, following his early acquaintance with *De la démocratie en Amérique*. The style of his exchange with Tocqueville differed greatly from that of his relations with Comte or the Saint-Simonians. With the last he had been the pursued, the reserved commentator, to some extent the receptive pupil, the distressed friend and even-handed defender. With Comte, after an initially negative reaction, he had been the admiring convert and interlocutor, the helpful friend, and finally the disenchanting critic, convinced that, though Comte’s insight into the nature of the historical process was profound and true, the ultimate meaning of his system was abhorrent. With Tocqueville there were reservations, question marks, but the meeting of minds at first seemed close. If the Saint-Simonians raised doubts about the steadiness of brilliant French thinkers, and Comte illustrated the limitation of the doctrinaire mentality, Tocqueville confirmed that impression of liberality in the “continental” mind Mill said he had taken back to England from his boyhood visit to France. In each case, what first attracted Mill was the broad historical conception they all advanced.

“I have begun to read Tocqueville,” he noted in April 1835. “It seems an excellent book: uniting considerable graphic power, with the capacity of generalizing on the history of society, which distinguishes the best French philosophers of the present day. . . .”<sup>44</sup> On Tocqueville’s second visit to England in May 1835, Mill’s direct overture to him as a possible correspondent for the *London Review* brought the warmest response, and flattery that “peu de Français savent manier leur langue comme vous maniez la nôtre.”<sup>45</sup> Their differences about democracy were in the open from the beginning, even if Mill underplayed beforehand his published criticism of the first two volumes of the *Démocratie* (“a shade more favourable to democracy than your book, although in the main I agree, so far as I am competent to judge, in the unfavourable part of your remarks, but without carrying them quite so far”). The review was handsome enough: he pronounced the book to be a work “such as Montesquieu might have written, if to his genius he had superadded good sense.”<sup>46</sup> This broad proclamation that the “insular” crowd of English politicians should take it from a Frenchman, “whose impartiality as between aristocracy and democracy is unparalleled in our time,” that “the progress of democracy neither can nor ought to be stopped”<sup>47</sup> was the vigorous beginning of his reflection on and dialogue with Tocqueville. Tocqueville reshaped Mill’s approach to, acceptance of, and effort to resolve the difficulties and dangers of democracy. Of all his reviewers, he said, Mill was “le seul qui m’ait *entièrement* compris, qui ait su saisir d’une vue générale l’ensemble de mes idées, la tendance finale de mon esprit.”<sup>48</sup>

As it turned out, Tocqueville contributed only once to Mill’s journal; Mill ventured to convey that “people here” found the article “a little *abstract*.”<sup>49</sup> But their relations were good: he once told Tocqueville that he and Armand Carrel (an odd couple) were the only Frenchmen for whom he had “une véritable admiration.”<sup>50</sup> Yet Tocqueville was the more solicitous of their friendship, Mill more elusive than Tocqueville’s other English friends and correspondents. Again Mill’s notice of the third and fourth volumes of *Démocratie*, though it appeared in October 1840 at a moment when Anglo-French relations were strained almost to the point of rupture, was graciously received, and the remark of Royer-Collard next year that it was “un ouvrage original” passed on to the reviewer.<sup>51</sup> But Mill told Tocqueville, “you have so far outrun me that I am lost in the distance,” and that it would take him time to sort out what he could accept from what would require further explanation. “In any case you have accomplished a great achievement: you have changed the face of political philosophy. . . . I do not think that anything more important than the publication of your book has happened even in this great age of events. . . .” It would be read even “in this stupid island.”<sup>52</sup> To others, however, he remarked that French philosophers had created “almost a new French language,” that Tocqueville was “really abstruse,” and that he found it “tough work reviewing him, much tougher than I expected.”<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, looking back, he decided that his own thought had “moved more and more in the same channel” as Tocqueville’s, and that his “practical political creed” over the quarter century had been modified as a result.<sup>54</sup>

In the case of the Saint-Simonians and Comte, Mill had been led through study of their works to reflect more fully on French public policy and the fate of opposition opinion. The correspondence with Tocqueville concentrated on the uncertain Franco-British relationship. In the vanguard of “insular” and “ignorant” English journalism, Mill early distinguished the *Edinburgh Review*, as he later insisted upon *The Times*. He said one could almost count the Englishmen who

were “aware that France has produced any great names in prose literature since Voltaire and Rousseau.”<sup>55</sup> Seeking his collaboration with the *London Review*, he told Tocqueville that politicians, publicists, and people “know about as much of France as they do of Timbuctoo.”<sup>56</sup> The severity of his comparisons of the two nations was sometimes exaggerated. Even as a boy, he claimed, he had felt “the contrast between the frank sociability and amiability of French personal intercourse, and the English mode of existence in which everybody acts as if everybody else (with few, or no, exceptions) was either an enemy or a bore.”<sup>57</sup> But this judgment, set down later in life, was much affected by his peculiar situation; close friends had been few and, as in J.A. Roebuck’s case, Mill’s feeling toward them had been at risk when they presumed to speak of his deepest attachment. Alexander Bain remarked that Mill himself did not show a “boundless capability of fellowship,” and it is clear that Tocqueville, sensitive in his own approaches, registered this reserve. Bain thought Mill dealt partially with France and the French, however, by comparison with England and the English.<sup>58</sup> But if this bias did exist, it did not carry over into all matters; certainly not into foreign affairs. In private he was quite capable of turning the comparison to the advantage of his own people. Of Aristide Guilbert’s offer of an article for the *London and Westminster Review*, Mill commented that it “promises fair, but I have never found that a Frenchman’s promise to do anything punctually could be depended upon. They promise everything and do nothing. They are not men of business. Guilbert is better, being half an Englishman.”<sup>59</sup> Public disputes between the two countries were not so lightly laughed off.

Mill himself was alive to the danger of too great a concentration of interest in another society. “I sometimes think,” he observed in his diary, “that those who, like us, keep up with the European movement, are by that very circumstance thrown out of the stream of English opinion and have some chance of mistaking and misjudging it.”<sup>60</sup> The intense diplomatic crisis of 1839-41<sup>61</sup> revealed clearly that he had by no means lost his native bearings. It marked the beginning of a profound difference between himself and Tocqueville which never was resolved; it showed a very real limitation to Mill’s capacity for evaluating the rights and wrongs of the old Anglo-French antagonism. He said he understood the sense of humiliation that created the noisy popular demand for fortification of Paris: “This is foolish, but who can wonder at it in a people whose country has within this generation been twice occupied by foreign armies? If that were our case we should have plenty of the same feeling.”<sup>62</sup> He bracketed Adolphe Thiers with Lord Palmerston as “the two most lightheaded men in Europe,” who had done “incalculable” evil and “rekindled” the old national antipathies.<sup>63</sup> He was inclined to think that “that shallow & senseless coxcomb Palmerston” had unnecessarily challenged Thiers, that “no harm whatever to Europe would have resulted from French influence with Mehemet Ali, & it would have been easy to *bind* France against any future occupation of [Egypt] for herself.” However, the deed was done, and “this mischievous spirit in France” had been raised.<sup>64</sup> And when Tocqueville put it to him that Thiers had had no alternative save to take a high line, and that the British government’s actions in isolating France and forcing her to accept war or humiliating retreat had been inexcusable, Mill stood firm. Culpable as the British government had been, he replied, it would not have acted so badly save for “such a lamentable want both of dignity & of common sense on the part of the journalists & public speakers in France,” “the signs of rabid eagerness for war, the reckless hurl-

ing down of the gauntlet to all Europe, the explosion of Napoleonism and of hatred to England, together with the confession of Thiers & his party that they were playing a double game, a thing which no English statesman could have avowed without entire loss of caste as a politician.” Still it was true, too, that he would “walk twenty miles to see [Palmerston] hanged, especially if Thiers were to be strung up with him.”<sup>65</sup>

This was not Tocqueville’s style. The disagreement here never was resolved. France, he said, was saddened and humiliated. He explained that the worst danger for any nation came when its moral fibre was weakened. After Thiers’ defiance, Guizot had been called in to give way, a large part of the middle class cravenly opted for peace and its own selfish interest. The result had been a *sauve qui peut*, peace at any price. “Il faut,” he told Mill, “que ceux qui marchent à la tête d’une pareille nation y gardent toujours une attitude fière s’ils ne veulent laisser tomber très bas le niveau des mœurs nationales.” No nation could surrender its pride.<sup>66</sup> Mill granted that, but delivered a lecture, too:

The desire to shine in the eyes of foreigners & to be highly esteemed by them must be cultivated and encouraged in France, at all costs. But, in the name of France & civilization, posterity have a right to expect from such men as you, from the nobler & more enlightened spirits of the time, that you should teach to your countrymen better ideas of what it is which constitutes national glory & national importance, than the low & grovelling ones which they seem to have at present—lower & more grovelling than I believe exist in any country in Europe at present except perhaps Spain.

In England, by contrast, “the most stupid & ignorant person” knew that national prestige followed from industry, good government, education, morality. The implication, of course, was that in France they did not. Mill’s countrymen, he added, saw French conduct as “simple puerility,” judging the French “a nation of sulky schoolboys.”

Considering what had happened in the eastern Mediterranean crisis, the sentiment is remarkable. Evidently he permitted himself to deliver this scolding because he prefaced it with a renewed declaration of sympathy for France, a country “to which by tastes & predilections I am more attached than to my own, & on which the civilization of Continental Europe in so great a degree depends.”<sup>67</sup> Tocqueville absorbed it quietly. However, his public statement in the Chamber of Deputies, some months later, was no less firm. This in turn brought Lord Brougham to attack him in the House of Lords, and Mill, saddened to see Tocqueville included in the French “war party,” defended him in the *Morning Chronicle*.<sup>68</sup> All the same, he thought fit to say to Tocqueville privately, “voyez ce qui est advenu de ce que nous avons eu, un seul instant, un homme à caractère français à notre Foreign Office.”<sup>69</sup> Clearly Mill never understood Tocqueville’s concept of national prestige, or his fears for the health of the French national spirit; across more than a century thereafter, few Englishmen did: it remained an impenetrable mystery for most of them, and Mill, for all his francophilism, appeared scarcely better equipped to penetrate it. In the autumn of 1843, Tocqueville made one last reference to the continuing Franco-British tension in Europe and around the world, uncompromising but optimistic: “La trace des fautes commises par votre gouvernement en 1840 s’efface assez sensiblement.” He thought both the government

and the people of the United Kingdom were seeking to draw closer to France and were having “une heureuse influence sur l’esprit public en France.” Mill having sent him his *Logic*, Tocqueville thanked him warmly, asking again whether Mill could not come to visit them. Mill made no further mention of the Mediterranean affair, thanked him, and asked whether Tocqueville would not come to England.<sup>70</sup>

Four years passed before they made contact briefly in 1847. They perceived the Revolution of 1848 very differently. Tocqueville had set his face against social revolution; February brought misgivings, and the insurrection in June seemed to him inevitable. Mill could never have used the words Tocqueville chose to characterize the desperate challenge from the streets flung at the government and the National Assembly.<sup>71</sup> In the parliamentary debate on a constitution for the new Republic, Tocqueville argued for a second chamber. Mill took a contrary view of the matter. Moreover, he favoured inclusion of the *droit au travail* in the constitution, and to this Tocqueville was opposed. Between them still was their disagreement on foreign policy: on 30 November, 1848, Tocqueville indicted Great Britain and Russia for conspiring to bar France from the eastern Mediterranean, saying he preferred war to humiliation.<sup>72</sup> What Mill thought of Tocqueville’s brief but pacific tenure as Foreign Minister, June–October 1849, one must guess.

When their nine years’ silence was broken by Tocqueville in June 1856, he was graceful, slightly formal: “Voilà bien longtemps, mon cher Monsieur Mill, que nous avons perdu la bonne habitude de correspondre.” He reiterated his compliments and his “sentiments de vieille amitié.” Mill replied six months later (though he had been on holiday for no more than three months following arrival of the letter), thanking “cher Monsieur de Tocqueville” for sending his *L’ancien régime et la révolution*, praising it (“Envisagé seulement comme un chapitre d’histoire universelle, il me paraît un des plus beaux qu’on ait jamais fait . . .”), saying he had not wished to write until he had read it through twice. Of public affairs Mill noted only that the book’s “noble amour de la liberté” was a permanent reproach to “le triste régime que votre grande patrie, l’œil droit du monde, est réduite à subir dans ce moment.” By return of post, Tocqueville replied, barely revealing his slight hurt: “J’avais été un peu chagriné de votre silence, avant que ses causes ne m’eussent été expliquées,” adding that no one else’s opinion was more precious. He would gladly write of politics, but he feared his letter would be seized. “Ne m’oubliez pas entièrement,” he concluded, “c’est tout ce que je réclame de vous en ce moment.”<sup>73</sup> Mill appears to have been silent. Two years later, he sent Tocqueville his *On Liberty*. Tocqueville replied at once, warmly addressing him again as “Mon cher Mill,” as he had used to do years before.<sup>74</sup> There seems to have been no reply.

Critical as Mill was of the English ruling class, he laid the principal blame for Anglo-French misunderstandings at the French doorstep. The French “character”, he told Robert Fox, was “excitable,” unstable, “& accordingly alternates between resentment against England and Anglomania.” Palmerston might make the occasion, but the underlying cause was the “mischievous spirit in France.” D’Eichthal was treated to some home truths: “It is impossible not to love the French people & at the same time not to admit that they are children—whereas with us even children are care-hardened men of fifty. It is as I have long thought a clear case for the *croisement des races*.” If

the two nations avoided war, it was thanks to English indifference. “Heureusement,” he told Tocqueville in 1843, “notre public ne s’occupe jamais d’affaires étrangères. Sans cela l’Europe serait toujours en feu. . . .”<sup>75</sup> However much Mill was drawn to the culture of France, he reacted to collisions of national sentiment as an Englishman. Nevertheless, if inevitably he was an outsider, he was also a deeply informed and committed observer, looking for fresh signs and portents. France remained a mirror, in it he continued to see much of what he thought best in European civilization.

This was true even during “le triste régime” of Napoleon III. In the summer of 1857, long before the substantial dismantling of the authoritarian Empire began, Mill discerned stirrings in the general elections that returned eight independents and five republicans, despite the fact that 84.6% of the vote went to official government candidates.<sup>76</sup> Over-optimistic after 1860, he exaggerated signs of the devolution of authority and felt consoled by “the wonderful resurrection of the spirit of liberty in France, combined with a love of peace which even sympathy with Poland does not prevail over.”<sup>77</sup> He was not entirely wrong in this, but he mistook a particular for the general phenomenon. Like most observers, he did not sense on the tranquil eve of the Imperial catastrophe that the republican party, which he favoured, was potentially a great force.<sup>78</sup> The war of 1870 was a surprise.

Believing that Prussia was fighting for her own liberty and for Europe’s. Mill called for “many” demonstrations against Bonaparte and advocated preparations for war since England’s “turn must come” if the Prussians were defeated. For the French people he expressed sorrow; it was Napoleon’s war. All the same, it was time that France drew the consequences of her situation: “elle devra se contenter d’être l’une des grandes puissances de l’Europe, sans prétendre à être la seule, ou même la première. . . .”<sup>79</sup> Like others, he thought Gladstone could have prevented one “of the wickedest acts of aggression in history,”<sup>80</sup> but the specific guilt was clear. If the “ignorant” French people were to be pitied, the “whole writing, thinking, & talking portion of the people” was not.<sup>81</sup> It was of this élite that he thought when he said France had deliberately sought war because “she could not bear to see Germany made powerful by union” and that she should therefore be punished. Admitting after the military disaster that no one had anticipated so swift a collapse, he still insisted that “to those who knew France there was nothing surprising in it when it came. I hope it will tend to dispel the still common delusion that despotism is a vigorous government. There never was a greater mistake.”<sup>82</sup> A certain hardness of tone had crept in.

In the aftermath of the Commune, Mill denounced Thiers’s savage treatment of Paris: “The crimes of the *parti de l’ordre* are atrocious, even supposing that they are in revenge for those generally attributed to the Commune.” He feared repression would produce still another explosion, whereas France needed a policy of limited social experimentation.<sup>83</sup> But seeing the strong republican tide coming in from the summer of 1871 on, hoping for a federalist government, he took heart. With his new friend, Louis Blanc, still embittered over the outcome of 1848, Mill disagreed about the new republicanism; he did not think (as Thornton had reported Blanc did) that the peasantry were contributing to it “in the same un-intelligent way in which they were lately imperialists.” Rather, he accepted the judgment of his stepdaughter that the key to this phenomenon

of growing republican strength was the lay schoolmaster.<sup>84</sup> As for the then fashionable talk about France's decadence, Mill did not venture to pronounce on the matter. He thought moral decadence the only real form. It was true that "le caractère français a de très grands défauts, qui ne [se] sont jamais plus montrés que dans l'année malheureuse qui vient de s'écouler;" but he supposed it had been much the same in what were called "les plus beaux jours de la France." What worried him was that the quality of discourse seemed defective; he detected "l'insuffisance intellectuelle de la génération présente pour faire face aux difficiles et redoutables problèmes d'un avenir qui a l'air d'être très prochain."<sup>85</sup>

By then his virtually lifelong French education was drawing to a close. It had accounted for three or four shifts of direction in his intellectual journey. It made him both an enthusiast and a severe critic. Though he knew very well the land he found so dramatic and so consolatory, lived there a fair portion of his life, and chose to lie there forever, he remained what he had always been since the age of fourteen, an observer with his French notebook open, but with a primarily English agenda. It pained him, as it had Saint-Simon long before, that the two peoples should get along so poorly. "There is something exceedingly strange & lamentable," he remarked to his most enduring French friend, "in the utter incapacity of our two nations to understand or believe the real character & springs of action of each other."<sup>86</sup>

## MILL AND HISTORY

Mill's life coincided with the rise of the modern historical profession. The origins of the new history lie in the eighteenth century, in the work of both the "philosophical" historians who sought pattern and meaning, and the "critical" historians who began the search for sources and their collection and evaluation. At Mill's birth, the state of history was far from brilliant. The archives were neglected and disarranged, the libraries were unwelcoming.<sup>87</sup> In 1800, Madame de Staël had noted "la médiocrité des Français comme historiens." On the eve of the Imperial defeat, Chateaubriand remarked how strange it was "comme cette histoire de France est tout à faire, et comme on s'en est jamais douté."<sup>88</sup> Napoleon, of course, had done little to encourage serious historical studies. The Revolution before him had set about the organization of its archives under the direction of the Jansenist politician Armand Camus; Bonaparte in turn appointed the professor, politician, and former cleric Pierre Daunou to continue the work at the national and departmental levels, and although Daunou was no special friend of the Empire, he lent his scholarly abilities to the defence of the régime when Napoleon's purposes and prejudices coincided with his own. The Emperor conceived of written history as a political and social instrument: Pierre Edouard Lemontey was directed to write a history of France from the death of Louis XIV to demonstrate the decadence of the Bourbon monarchy. Historians had to be "trustworthy men who will present the facts in their true light and offer healthy instruction by leading the reader up to the year 8." Those who conceived the task differently would not be "encouraged by the police."<sup>89</sup> The immediate inheritance of the Bourbon Restoration was meagre.



In England the situation, though different, was no better. Mill's reiterated complaints were justified. The universities were, and were to remain until after the mid-century, largely uninterested in modern history. In the uncatalogued depositories, whether Westminster Abbey's chapter-house or the Tower of London, rats and mice went about their casual destruction. Foreign scholars who came calling were appalled. The Society of Antiquaries, founded in 1751, was unconcerned. The Record Commission Gibbon had asked for, established in 1800, was largely made up of Anglican divines and politicians, uninterested, incompetent. Sir James Mackintosh, appointed to it in 1825, was its first historians. Not until Sir Harris Nicolas, a former naval officer and barrister turned antiquarian, revealed the research conditions he had experienced in editing Nelson's letters did anyone pay attention. In 1830, addressing himself to the Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne, Nicolas declared the existing history of England "not merely imperfect and erroneous but a discredit to the country, for almost every new document proves the current histories false. Scarcely a statement will bear the test of truth."<sup>90</sup> His evidence in 1836 before the Select Committee, chaired by Mill's friend Charles Buller, was instrumental in bringing about the replacement of the indolent Record Commission. Then, with the establishment of the Public Record Office in 1838, the work of collecting and preserving the nation's archives seriously began. But the mid-century passed before the kind of collection and publication of sources Guizot directed under the July Monarchy was started in England.

History, often the mere servant of philosophy and policy, was the concern of the very few. All the same, a profound change had set in, outgrowth of the Enlightenment, consequence of the Revolution.<sup>91</sup> A new desire to know the past was abroad, to find a legitimating past to sanction the present. By the time John Mill was choosing his own reading, the French and German historical fields were alive with *érudits* and writers. He classified history as part of his "private reading." He said it had been his "strongest predilection, and most of all ancient history." His father having alerted him to the problem of bias in history, he had read critically from the first. Naturally he had also written histories—of India, of the ancient world, of Holland. At ten he began what he hoped would be a publishable history of Roman government, but he abandoned the project and destroyed the manuscript.<sup>92</sup>

If history had been his strongest "predilection" as a child, its attractions for him weakened. It was never at the centre of his adult activity. Whether it was a hobby<sup>93</sup> is debatable; the evidence is not strong. But Mill read history, reflected on history, principally the history of Europe. History in general he defined as "the record of all great things which have been achieved by mankind."<sup>94</sup> The history of Europe was peculiarly instructive because "among the inhabitants of our earth, the European family of nations is the only one which has ever yet shown any capability of spontaneous improvement, beyond a certain low level."<sup>95</sup> After 1826 his interest shifted steadily toward the philosophy of history and discovery of the laws governing human progress. Still severe in criticism of those whose scholarly standards failed his test, he became bent on the subordination of history to philosophy, seeking principles from historical facts, interpreting facts in the light of principles. He was sure all history was in its "infancy." What passed for history "till near the present time," he said in 1836, was "almost entirely useless in fact." But a great change had set in:

“intelligent investigation into past ages, and intelligent study of foreign countries” had begun. Almost two decades later, he again remarked on

how new an art that of writing history is, how very recently it is that we possess histories, of events not contemporary with the writer; which, apart from literary merit, have any value otherwise than as materials; how utterly uncritical, until lately, were all historians, even as to the most important facts of history, and how much, even after criticisms had commenced, the later writers merely continued to repeat after the earlier.<sup>96</sup>

The convention that history should be in the narrative form he dismissed with the observation that “it is as much the historian’s duty to judge as to narrate, to prove as to assert.” Moreover, where the requisite materials were missing, “a continuous stream of narrative” was impossible. Showing some inclination to dismiss narrative as “an amusing story,”<sup>97</sup> he nevertheless remarked of Grote’s *History of Greece*, “Wherever the facts, authentically known, allow a consecutive stream of narrative to be kept up, the story is told in a more interesting manner than it has anywhere been told before, except in the finest passages of Thucydides. We are indeed disposed to assign to this history almost as high a rank in narrative as in thought.”<sup>98</sup> But it was “thought,” not narrative, that concerned Mill. In a system of education, history, “when philosophically studied,” would offer “a certain largeness of conception,” permitting the student to realize completely “the great principles by which the progress of man and the condition of society are governed.”<sup>99</sup> Mill did not unduly prize historiography; at best, for him, it was the first step toward a proper understanding of the past. Niebuhr may have effected “a radical revolution” in Roman history, and Grote may have rescued Greek history from hitherto superficial examination, but Mill’s object in studying the past was less historiographical than sociological.<sup>100</sup> The past existed to be made use of. It was the present that concerned him, or the present *in history*, what he called “the most important part of history, and the only part which a man may know and understand, with absolute certainty, by using the proper means.” The past itself was no guide to the present: “the present alone affords a fund of materials for judging, richer than the whole stores of the past, and far more accessible.”<sup>101</sup> At best, then, history, like travel, was “useful *in aid* of a more searching and accurate experience, not *in lieu* of it. No one learns any thing very valuable from history or from travelling, who does not come prepared with much that history and travelling can never teach.” History’s value “even to a philosopher” is “not so much positive as negative”: it teaches “little” but is “a protection against much error.” Conversely, since one could not know other people and other ages as well as one knows one’s own, knowledge of the present age could help in interpreting the past and in making “a faithful picture” of earlier people and modes of existence, and in assigning “effects to their right causes.”<sup>102</sup>

Mill was concerned with the present in historical context, hence his immediate attraction to the historical periodizations of the Saint-Simonians and Comte. They persuaded him that the early nineteenth century was “an age of transition.”<sup>103</sup> In such an age, the old doctrines and institutions no longer responded to current needs; contradictory voices spoke; the old authorities clung to power; the new men struggled to take over in “a moral and social revolution.” This process had “been going on for a considerable length of time in modern Europe,” but the present

moment was crucial. The authority, the legitimacy of the old institutions, lay and religious, had vanished. Change, the “progress” of “civilization,” could be resisted temporarily—Bonaparte had done that—but the process was ultimately irresistible: “The revolution which had already taken place in the human mind, is rapidly shaping external things to its own forms and proportions.”<sup>104</sup>

As a social scientist, Mill found the intelligible historical unit in the “State of Society,” which he defined as “the simultaneous state of all the greater social facts or phenomena.” He concluded that such states, or ages, were linked causally. The task was “to find the laws according to which any state of society produces the state which succeeds it and takes its place.” He thought the evidence proved that this succession took place not, as Vico had proposed, in “an orbit or cycle,” but in “a trajectory or progress.” Progress did not necessarily imply “improvement,” but the “general tendency” was and would continue to be “towards a better and happier state.” French thinkers, he remarked, hoped from mere historical analysis to discover “the law of progress” which would permit prediction of the future. But by such means they could at best discover some rough “empirical law,” not “a law of nature.” Comte had shown that the principal social phenomena changed from age to age, particularly from generation to generation. He alone had seen that man’s condition and actions were increasingly the result of “the qualities produced in [him] by the whole previous history of humanity.” Only when generalizations from history were properly linked with “the laws of human nature” would historical study reveal “Empirical Laws of Society.”<sup>105</sup>

The key to unlocking the secret of progress was intellect, “the state of the speculative faculties of mankind; including the nature of the beliefs which by any means they have arrived at, concerning themselves and the world by which they are surrounded.” Intellect and knowledge made possible both material advances and social unity; each new mode of social thought was the primary agent in shaping the society where it appeared (society itself created that thought only in a secondary manner). Hence Mill’s conclusion that human progress depended mainly on “the law of the successive transformation of human opinions.” Comte alone had tried to determine that law. Whatever the results to date, Mill believed that historical enquiry covering “the whole of past time, from the first recorded condition of the human race, to the memorable phenomena of the last and present generations” was the method “by which the derivative laws of social order and of social progress must be sought.” With this instrument, men could see “far forward into the future history of the human race,” determine how and how much “to accelerate the natural progress in so far as it is beneficial,” and to fend off those perils that even genuine progress entailed. So history was to serve “the highest branch of speculative sociology” and “the noblest and most beneficial portion of the Political Art.” A glittering vista of science and art stretched ahead, united to complete “the circle of human knowledge.”<sup>106</sup>

Some twenty years after he had formally stated this view of things (1843), Mill denied the charge that his doctrine implied “overruling fatality.” He said that “universal experience” showed that human conduct could be accounted for not only by “general laws” but by “circumstances” and “particular characters” also. The will of “exceptional persons” might be “indispensable links

in the chain of causation by which even the general causes produce their effects.” Taking issue with Macaulay on the role of the great man, somewhat relaxing his claim for the predictive capability announced in 1843, he proposed in 1862:

The order of human progress . . . may to a certain extent have definite laws assigned to it, while as to its celerity, or even as to its taking place at all, no generalization, extending to the human species generally, can possibly be made; but only some very precarious approximate generalizations, confined to the small portion of mankind in whom there has been anything like consecutive progress within the historical period, and deduced from their special position, or collected from their particular history.

To an extreme degree, ancient Greece showed the extraordinary influence of a single city-state and a few exceptional individuals. The experience would not be repeated. Mill stood by his view, derived from Comte, that with the progress of civilization the influence of chance and character must decline: “the increasing preponderance of the collective agency of the species over all minor causes is constantly bringing the general evolution of the race into something which deviates less from a certain and pre-appointed track.”<sup>107</sup> Comte had been “free from the error of those who ascribe all to general causes, and imagine that neither casual circumstances, nor governments by their actions, nor individuals of genius by their thoughts, materially accelerate or retard human progress,” but neither he nor Mill committed “the vulgar mistake” of imagining that men of action or of thought could “do with society what they please.”<sup>108</sup>

Mill was interested in history for what it could do rather than for what it might be. And what he called “historical science” was becoming more tractable, not only because historians were more inquiring, or more skilful, but because “historical science” itself was changing: “in every generation, it becomes better adapted for study.”<sup>109</sup> The past properly understood, as the raw material for the science of society, was taking shape. Helped by “the historical school of politicians” in France (and, he said, in Germany),<sup>110</sup> Mill had moved on to Comte and a serviceable philosophy of history. More than thirty years later he would still say, “We find no fundamental errors in M. Comte’s general conception of history.”<sup>111</sup>

Mill seems not to have had the temperament to be an historian. After 1830, especially, his interests drew him along another path. John Carlyle rated him “a strange enthusiast with many capabilities but without much constancy of purpose.” Thomas Carlyle was breezily patronizing: “a fine clear Enthusiast, who will one day come to something. Yet to nothing Poetical, I think, his fancy is not rich; furthermore he cannot *laugh* with any compass.”<sup>112</sup> The estimate appears to cut across his own proposal two years later that Mill should write a history of the French Revolution. This had certainly seemed to be Mill’s intention. He had collected materials, made himself expert. He told Carlyle that he had “many times” thought of writing such a history, “it is highly probable that I shall do it sometime if you do not,” but he saw two obstacles:

the difficulty of doing so tolerably . . . [and the] far greater difficulty of doing it so as to be read in England, until the time comes when one can speak of Christianity as it may be spoken of in France; as by far the greatest and best thing which has existed

on this globe, but which is gone, never to return, only what was best in it to reappear in another and still higher form, some time (heaven knows when). One could not, *now*, say this openly in England, and be read—at least by the many; yet it is perhaps worth trying. Without *saying out* one's whole belief on that point, it is impossible to write about the French Revolution in any way professing to tell the whole truth.<sup>113</sup>

The two comments were apposite: Carlyle judged Mill incapable of an empathetic reading of the evidence and an imaginative reconstruction of the explosive and deeply mysterious episode he conceived the Revolution to have been;<sup>114</sup> Mill's own interest in the Revolution had altered: it was no longer the storehouse of wisdom for the radical reform movement, but an integral part of, a critical episode in, the development of civilization toward the understanding of which he and others were only beginning to move. His preoccupation was to say "one's whole belief," "to tell the *whole* truth." The remark that it was "perhaps worth trying" revealed his diminishing purpose to write history.

Mill wanted to write about history, to philosophize about it, to subordinate the facts of history to "principles," to extract instruction from history. Drawn naturally to France from his boyhood experience, he saw clearly that French history offered a potentially rich field for the exploration of the interplay of character, circumstance, thought, and great impersonal forces and tendencies. He would echo Guizot in saying, "A person must need instruction in history very much, who does not know that the history of civilization in France *is* that of civilization in Europe" (230 below).<sup>115</sup> Reading the young French liberal historians, he was impelled not to write like them but to write about them, to make use of them, to extract the moral from them. He would like, as he told Macvey Napier, "to write occasionally on modern French history & historical literature, with which from peculiar causes I am more extensively acquainted than Englishmen usually are."<sup>116</sup> He prided himself on his broad reading in the subject as forthrightly as he disapproved of his fellow countrymen who knew nothing of it. He believed it a scandal that "while modern history has been receiving a new aspect from the labours of men who are not only among the profoundest thinkers, . . . the clearest and most popular writers of their age, even those of their works which are expressly dedicated to the history of our own country remain mostly untranslated and in almost all cases unread."<sup>117</sup> Unlike the productions of narrative historians,<sup>118</sup> their histories of revolution, whether of France in 1789 or of England in 1688, were a significant part of the literature of political and social commitment under the Bourbons. Mill had seen this before 1830, and he was as clear about it after. The history of France, he remarked about the mid-century, was "perhaps the most [interesting] & certainly the most instructive in so far as history is ever so."<sup>119</sup>

By then, Mill had long since abandoned whatever intention he had formerly had of contributing to the history of the Revolution. His task was not historiography but commentary and historical speculation: the search for a science of history. The European tendency, he wrote in 1836, "towards the philosophic study of the past and of foreign civilizations, is one of the encouraging features of the present time." A similar tendency was perceptible even in England, "the most insular of all the provinces of the republic of letters."<sup>120</sup>

## DULAURE AND SISMONDI

With Dulaure and Sismondi Mill was reaching back into the pre-Revolutionary generations where the origins of the liberal historical interpretation lay. In 1826, Jacques Antoine Dulaure was seventy-one years old. After 1789, he had quickly turned his pen against the old régime with a volume detailing the crimes and follies of the aristocracy.<sup>121</sup> A sometime member of the Cordelier and Jacobin clubs, he had sat in the Convention with the Girondins, though he was an independent deputy from Puy-de-Dôme. He voted for the death penalty for Louis XVI and defended Madame Roland before fleeing to asylum in Switzerland. Returning in 1795, he became an agent of the Directory in Corrèze and the Dordogne until his opposition to Bonaparte on 18 Brumaire ended his political career. During the Hundred Days, he used his pen against the Emperor. He was thus congenial to Mill as an early member of “the historical school of politicians.”

By contrast, Charles Simonde (who assumed the additional Italian form de Sismondi), fifty-three years old in 1826, a Protestant pastor’s son and a citizen of Geneva, had a more unhappy experience of the Revolution. Apprenticed in Lyon in 1792, he returned home almost immediately, only to be driven to England by the Revolutionary *coup* at the end of the year. Returning home again in 1794, he and his family soon fled to a farm near Lucca. But the ebb and flow of revolution and reaction there put him in prison three times before 1800, when he went back to Geneva.<sup>122</sup> He wrote an *Histoire des républiques italiennes du moyen âge* before determining in May 1818 to write the history of France, an immense enterprise of twenty-nine volumes that occupied him to the eve of his death in 1841. Like Dulaure, Sismondi had not been sorry to see Napoleon humbled in 1814, but his loyalties were confused in the *chassé-croisé* of that uncertain moment (he had been on the government’s books in 1810 for a 2000 franc subvention).<sup>123</sup> Nor was he favourable to the Bourbons. But he had returned to Paris in 1813, and had made the acquaintance of the liberal politician Benjamin Constant. An intimate friend of Germaine de Staël, Constant had bitterly attacked the Emperor. Yet on Bonaparte’s return from Elba, Constant permitted the infinitely resourceful Fouché to persuade him to take a seat on the Conseil d’état and to produce the *Acte additionnel* of 22 April, 1815, a liberal supplement to and modification of the Imperial system, which pleased few and was accepted by Napoleon (who would have abandoned it had the decision at Waterloo not gone against him) as an exercise in public relations. Sismondi’s relations with Constant must explain his defence of the document, for which the Emperor rewarded him with a long interview. Not unreasonably, therefore, the news from Belgium after 18 June led Sismondi to return to Geneva. Madame de Staël remained friendly, but other friends were cool.<sup>124</sup> Mill seems not to have held this Bonapartist flirtation, supposing he knew of it, against Sismondi. The main thing was that the preface of his *Histoire* showed an earnest commitment to social progress: “En rassemblant les souvenirs nationaux, c’est moins à la réputation des morts qu’au salut des vivans que nous devons songer.”<sup>125</sup> Liberty was his passion. Perhaps less awkwardly than Dulaure, Sismondi could be made to fit the conception of “philosophical historian” Mill came to hold.

Mill’s review of the works of these two men was a vehicle for taking aim at aristocracy, church, monarchy, and the conservative historiography perpetuating the myth of chivalry. Characteristically, he began with an ironical cut at the *Quarterly Review* and his fellow countrymen who

had yet to discover the superiority of other nations in certain matters, specifically literature and history. The starkest contrast was drawn between pre- and post-Revolutionary studies: mere ornament and frivolousness, the mark of literature in “every country where there is an aristocracy,” having yielded to earnest regard for truth in the flood of important histories since 1821. A cascade of generalized scorn for previous historians of France set off the merits of Dulaure and Sismondi with their scrupulous regard for “facts” (17). Like most historians then and later, Mill did not trouble to consider seriously what a historical fact might be. The unquestioned assumptions of the critical method in historiography are apparent in his magisterial commentaries.

Lest readers mistake his purpose, he laid bare the object and conclusion of his examination at the outset, namely, proof that “the *spirit of chivalry*” was almost unknown in the Middle Ages (20). Rather, it was a set of ideals in the rough and tumble of a time, marked by depravity and misery, whose noble class was the antithesis of civilization. His allusion to the persistence of the knightly state of mind in the nineteenth century was not subtle. Though claiming high regard for objective fact, Mill fell back upon the “hue and cry” of Dulaure’s French conservative critics as proof of Dulaure’s reliability (21). Almost simultaneously, he attacked defenders of the English status quo. In short, it was quickly apparent that Mill had some trouble keeping his mind on the remote past. He confined himself principally to France, he explained, because “the feudal system never existed in its original purity, in England” and because no English historian had yet, like Dulaure, undertaken “the toilsome and thankless service of dragging into light the vices and crimes of former days” (26). His description of feudal society emphasized the “perpetual civil war,” the cruelties visited by kings and aristocrats on the people (28). He noted that in England “it has been the interest of the powerful, that the abominations of the clergy in the middle ages should be known” (32), but also that in reality they had been less heinous than those of the barons. With the aid of Dulaure’s and Sismondi’s narratives, he challenged the latter-day descendants of what he took to be a barbarous aristocracy *and* the new “romantic” historians. Vigilant against the conservative implications of sentimentalizing the Middle Ages, he hailed the enthusiasm for history of which romanticism was nevertheless a powerful component. He distinguished, in short, between “*nostalgic* historiography and historiography which *restored*,”<sup>126</sup> chiding those who could not or would not do so—“Even Mr. Hallam does not believe in the reality of knights-errant . . .” (34).

Mill’s Middle Ages were nearly an unrelieved catalogue of aristocratic and monarchical wrongdoing. The most glamorous actors, such as Richard Coeur de Lion, were brought to book in light of the misdeeds chronicled by Dulaure and Sismondi (34). Only with the appearance of “a sort of *public opinion*” once the national power came into being, he argued, was there any improvement of noble conduct (42). Urban privileges had to be wrung from a perfidious feudal class. The only luminous figure Mill perceived in a dark landscape was Saint Louis, “a perfect specimen of a mind governed by conviction; a mind which has imperfect and wrong ideas of morality, but which adheres to them with a constancy and firmness of principle, in its highest degree perhaps the rarest of all human qualities” (44).

Approaching the subject that subsequently became important to him, he considered the question of gallantry to which he attributed “nine-tenths of the admiration of chivalry” (45). It

amounted to mere male vanity; the idolatry of women marked a “low state of civilization” (46). If the few were set on pedestals, the many were disregarded in a world of mistreatment and rape. In time, the aristocracy gave up its independent power, but not its masculine conceits and illusions; it never reformed itself. Thanks to works like Dulaure’s and Sismondi’s, the French at least would be disabused about the romanticized past. Unhappily, there were no English equivalents. Hallam was granted some measure of “liberality” in his discussion of the Middle Ages (52), but he had been taken in by legend and was without philosophy; if he knew the sources and had something to say about English constitutional history, his work was judged “a sketch of one of the most remarkable states of society ever known, at once uninformative and tiresome.” His volumes were “an utter failure” (52).<sup>127</sup>

The breathtaking judgments the young Mill handed out, founded more on a philosophy of history than on close acquaintance with research, may not seem entirely off the mark. But that his reading was openly inquisitive might be difficult to show. François Mignet, whom he much admired, would, like historians since, point to Sismondi’s attention to the effect of economic change in history,<sup>128</sup> an emphasis Mill appears not to have noticed. Nor did he comment on the inflexibility of the moral code Sismondi applied to his thirteen centuries, possibly because he then still shared the assumption. It was revealing that only at the end of his review did Mill draw attention to the lack in Dulaure of a generalizing, that is, of a philosophical mind: he states the facts as he finds them, praises and censures where he sees reason, but does not look out for causes and effects, or parallel instances, or apply the general principles of human nature to the state of society he is describing, to show from what circumstances it became what it is. It is true he does not profess to be a historian, but only to sketch a *tableau moral* (51). Reading this from another pen, Mill might have said, “On croit rêver!” By nearly every test he would normally apply, Dulaure should have failed almost as absolutely as Henry Hallam. The secret, however, was in the point of view.

Sismondi offered more generalizations, if not more philosophical reflection, and sustained the underlying assumption of Mill’s review. Showing movement if little colour, his long narrative continued to appear for years after the first volumes Mill surveyed. Its principal value lay in the sources brought together. But the verdict was to be that the first three volumes, the historical event of 1821, Camille Jullian said, were the best of it. They were received by both the philosophic and the romantic schools, welcomed by Augustin Thierry and Guizot. Even Michelet was said to have remarked of Sismondi, “notre père à tous.”<sup>129</sup> Mill was not wrong to single him out.

## MILL AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1789

Mill encountered the French Revolution shortly after his return from France in 1821. He learned that “the principle of democracy” had triumphed a generation earlier to become “the creed of a nation.” This revelation made sense of fragmented melodramatic events, all he had known of the matter, and sustained all his “juvenile aspirations to the character of a democratic champion.” He imagined himself caught up in a similar revolution, “a Girondist in an English



Convention.”<sup>130</sup> If the recollection across three decades was accurate, it might seem unexceptional, were it not that Mill’s identification with the Girondins was an assertion of independence from his father, who dismissed the Revolution as “some kind of ruffians in the metropolis [being] allowed to give laws to the whole nation.”<sup>131</sup> Lamartine was to colour the confused tragedy of the Girondins in 1847, but their drama was known long before. Their neo-classical poses and search for glory may well have appealed to John Mill. He would have met them in François Toulon-geon’s *Histoire de France depuis la révolution de 1789*,<sup>132</sup> and learned that they supported a republic only after the abolition of the monarchy. In Madame de Staël’s *Considérations sur les principaux événements de la révolution française*, he would have seen them less heroically.<sup>133</sup> What is sure is that the liberal historians of the 1820s took them as champions; the sympathetic treatment by Thiers and Mignet may have confirmed in the mind of the memorialist the germ of the thought held by the boy of fifteen.

There is no evidence that Mill thought before the second half of the 1820s of writing a history of the Revolution. In his review of Mignet in April 1826, he alluded to documentary materials accessible in England, adding, “We purpose to lay some of them before our readers ere long” (5). Almost two years later he protested that “on est ici dans une si crasse ignorance sur la révolution, et tous, jusqu’aux individus les plus instruits, ont des idées tellement ridicules sur la nature de cette crise politique, qu’avec mon peu de lumières et de connaissance des faits j’ai crû pouvoir faire quelque chose pour dessiller les yeux de mes compatriotes.” Claiming to know almost everything from the standard histories and the published memoirs, he asked Charles Comte to recommend further materials on royalist intentions before the flight to Varennes. But beyond “quelques articles,” he mentioned no larger project, although, he added, “je ne vois guère que moi en angleterre qui rendent justice à la révolution.”<sup>134</sup> The collection of books and materials he had, however, suggests that such was his intention. The years immediately preceding the collapse of the Bourbon monarchy showed no progress toward realizing this project, despite his detailed attack on Sir Walter Scott’s version of the Revolution. And it may be supposed that his “half formed intention of writing a History of the French Revolution”<sup>135</sup> was steadily weakening as he was drawn toward the broad historical perspectives of the Saint-Simonians. His own explanation was that he was then digesting and maturing his thoughts “without any immediate call for giving them out in print,” and that had he “gone on writing” he “would have much disturbed the important transformation in [his] opinions and character, which took place in those years.”<sup>136</sup> Perhaps the initial great enthusiasm he felt over the events of July 1830 stimulated his earlier ambitions to write a history, but the increasing disappointment he experienced in closely following the course of the new régime may well have confirmed his growing interest in a much larger view of the historical past, convinced him that the Saint-Simonians had properly seen beneath the surface events of political revolutions, and led once more to his letting 1789 slip away. Moreover, his encounter with Carlyle, whom he first met in September 1831, may also have affected his intent as it became clearer that Carlyle was becoming set on writing a history himself.

To Carlyle’s statement that, despite the difficulty of writing, it was one of his “superstitions never to turn back,” and that thus one must “*march on, & complain* no more about it,” Mill responded in a minor key: he had the same thought. If he was to attempt “a *general* view of any

great subject” he wished to say not merely “*something* true, but to omit nothing which is material to the truth.” The sole encouragement to undertake such a task was that “imperfect and dim light” was still better than “total darkness.” His long rumination betrayed serious doubts about so immense a subject. He spoke of returning to work after a brief holiday, when he hoped to “produce something worthy of the title you give me,” but thought he was “rather fitted to be a logical expounder than an artist.” Still, there was work to be done in exposing the logical side of “Truth” before the poetic, and that he hoped to do.<sup>137</sup>

He was proposing Carlyle would do the great artistic history, while he could do only the analytical. Despite reservations about Mill’s literary capacity, Carlyle nevertheless urged him to set forth his “ideas and acquisitions” about the Revolution at greater length, for “It is properly the grand *work* of our era. . . .”<sup>138</sup> But Carlyle was already moving toward his own *French Revolution*. Mill continued to remark, as he did to Tocqueville, “We have not so much as one readable history of the Revolution. . . .”<sup>139</sup> but himself made no move to supply it. He may well not have had the time for it. Moreover, his growing attraction to French historical speculation was leading him steadily away from any such specific task. From the summer of 1832, he steadily despatched books from his own library and procured fresh materials for Carlyle. And, although he continued to reflect and comment on the Revolution from time to time, it was clear, long before Carlyle was in print, that Mill had abandoned even the glimmering of his former project.

## MIGNET

However halting Mill’s resolve to write an analytical history became, he had been sufficiently motivated for the better part of a decade, and sufficiently convinced that such a study could be a vehicle by which to forward his argument in England, that he followed the literature and published four essays on as many of the Revolution’s historians. In this connection, Dulaure had been a transitional figure, useful to Mill (like Sismondi) principally for furnishing materials with which to challenge the romanticized version of the past. Not only were the Middle Ages brutal and strife-ridden, Mill concluded, but their feudal survivals in the eighteenth century were preposterous. In the young historians Adolphe Thiers and François Mignet he found the support he was looking for. They could help him make his case against the *ancien régime*, broadly conceived, and on behalf of the liberal reformers of the Revolution’s early phase. Unencumbered by personal experience and memory, they did not linger over the reservations and dilemmas of the earlier liberal champions like Madame de Staël. They observed but were not embarrassed by the break between the liberal phase of the Revolution and the Terror. They accepted the challenge of the counter-revolution head-on. “Ecrivez, Messieurs, faites des livres,” Royer-Collard, leader of the *doctrinaires*, remarked when the liberal Decazes ministry fell following the duc de Berry’s assassination; “il n’y a pas autre chose à faire en ce moment.”<sup>140</sup>

In 1821 Thiers and Mignet appeared in Paris from the south. They were just twenty-four; the liberal opposition was warming up. With letters of introduction to Jacques Antoine Manuel, leader of the Chamber opposition, they made the acquaintance of this group, including Tal-

leyrand, and established themselves in the opposition salons and press, Thiers at the *Constitutionnel*, Mignet at the *Courrier Français*. They were lawyers from the Faculté at Aix, attracted by history, Thiers the more politically ambitious, Mignet the more scholarly. Mignet had already obtained the *couronne* of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres for his memoir, *Les institutions de saint Louis*. Established as a lecturer at the Athénée, 1822-24, he discussed the Reformation and the English revolutions of the seventeenth century in such a way as left no doubt that he was attacking the Bourbon monarchy. Guizot had been silenced at the Sorbonne in 1822 for just this *lèse-majesté*; Mignet fell under no ban. But reaching for a wider audience, he, like Thiers,<sup>141</sup> determined to write the history of the Revolution.

His two volumes were published in May 1824, offering in a single instalment the whole of the version Thiers served up at greater length over five years. It was less narrative than exposition, an analysis of a great event that worked itself out as it had to. After collecting materials for two years, Mignet had written his book rapidly in November-December 1823. Jules Simon proposed that Mignet might have said “ma révolution” (a boutade concerning 1830 incorrectly ascribed to Thiers). Louis Halphen remarked that Mignet, like Thiers and (as would be said later on) Guizot, gave the impression “of having known from the beginning of time what [he] had just learned that morning.”<sup>142</sup> The work was marked by the *fatalisme historique* distinguishing the liberal counter-offensive against the Ultra-royalist reaction, almost in response to Sismondi’s dictum that “l’étude des faits sans philosophie ne seroit pas moins décevante que celle de la philosophie sans faits.”<sup>143</sup> It echoed, as Sainte-Beuve pointed out, Joseph de Maistre’s view of the Revolution as a great irresistible force.<sup>144</sup> Accusing the aristocracy of the whole responsibility for the outbreak of the Revolution and all the ensuing violence, Mignet challenged not merely the régime and its supporters but also the old liberals who had agreed with Benjamin Constant that one must distinguish “those measures which [the government] had the right to take, from those crimes which they committed and which they did not have the right to commit.”<sup>145</sup> It was the first complete history, “un tableau d’ensemble vivant et rapide, un résumé frappant, théorique, commode.” It had a huge success, with translations into five other languages.<sup>146</sup>

Mill’s review distinguished a greater degree of popular narrative in Mignet than some were inclined to, while underlining his subordination of history to “philosophy,” a characteristic of the “modern” style of historiography. Like Carlyle, he proclaimed Mignet “the highest specimen” of the new school, stated his agreement with the account, and once more berated the old narrative historians in England (4). In contrast to what Carlyle would later say, however, he approved Mignet’s skill in the selection and marshalling of details (4). Mill gave so much space to illustrative extracts that one has the feeling he had little to say. He made no comment on the uncritical handling of sources; or upon the use Mignet made of oral evidence; or upon the role of individuals within the controlling conditions of *fatalisme historique*. And he did not mention the conception of class struggle as a motor force.<sup>147</sup> But, anticipating Carlyle, Mill was critical of the reflections which principally established the work in Revolutionary historiography and which made it, as Thiers is said to have thought of his own book, “*une arme de guerre*” against the Bourbons.<sup>148</sup> If he was not affronted, as Constant was, by the global explanation of the whole Revolutionary experience, he was unimpressed by Mignet’s talent for generalization, an aptitude with which he

considered Madame de Staël firmly endowed, even though her taste for dubious epigrams was still more marked (13). The result was a short, schoolmasterly reprimand, separating the *faux brillants* from the *vrais*. An entertaining story well told, the book would reveal to the English “what intelligent Frenchmen think and say on the subject of the French Revolution” (13-14). But this remark did not quite catch the controversial, essentially political nature of Mignet’s work.

Years later, in December 1861, Taine, who was no friend of “la vulgate de Thiers et de Mignet,”<sup>149</sup> chanced to have a chat with Mignet whom he had not previously met. “Il y a un fonds de stérilité; on voit qu’il n’a pas vécu dans les idées générales, qu’il y est impropre,” he noted. “Il n’est pas artiste non plus, voyez son histoire de Marie Stuart, sa Révolution française; c’est glacé. Il est propre à digérer des matériaux indigestes, à exposer clairement, en bel ordre. Il a le talent français de la classification parfaite et de l’élégance noble académique,” but about *les forces profondes*, “il a l’air encore dépaysé.”<sup>150</sup> By then, of course, Mignet had long since abandoned the political scene, having settled for the archives of the Foreign Ministry under the July Monarchy, and become *secrétaire perpétuel* of the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques. Philosophical history as practised by the opposition literati under the Bourbon monarchy had become an historiographical artifact. But perhaps Mill had caught something of the limitation Taine perceived thirty-five years later.

Still it is true that Mignet’s *Revolution* was a youthful tour de force, part of a general movement that finally toppled the Bourbon monarchy. Whatever his criticisms, Mill had recognized its significance as a *pièce d’occasion*; by praising Mignet’s skill and achievement, he had early singled out an historian whose total work, some twenty volumes, would win the approval of scholars at home and abroad.<sup>151</sup>

## SCOTT

When Mignet arrived in Paris, the battle over romanticism was at its height, with Walter Scott at its centre. Mignet waited a year before making a statement, but the popular verdict was in: the reading public was entranced. The novels were translated into French beginning in 1816, and 200,000 copies were sold during Louis XVIII’s reign, 1.5 million by the end of Charles X’s. If Chateaubriand and others had pointed the way,<sup>152</sup> Scott’s pre-eminence was established so rapidly that historians (whose audience in those days was the literate general public) greeted this voice with some approval. The earliest was Augustin Thierry, former secretary to Saint-Simon, a journalist, not yet the historian of the Norman Conquest, not quite so cautious as he would be later on. Of Scott’s books he said there was more true history in them than in “les compilations philosophiquement fausses” claiming the name of history. He discerned in Scott’s reading of the past “cette *seconde vue* que, dans les temps d’ignorance, certains hommes s’attribuent pour l’avenir.”<sup>153</sup> He named it “divination historique.” Experience and time brought Thierry justifiably to rate his own historical gifts superior to Scott’s, but he conceived them as complementary spirits, and years after he was sufficiently secure to admit the fact.<sup>154</sup>

Mignet was initially spellbound: “Il faut le dire, Walter Scott est un des quatre premiers génies anglais; il se montre l'égal de Richardson, de Milton, de Shakespeare,” a man who knew how to infuse history with movement and vitality, how to identify the essential characteristics of an epoch. Reflection brought reserve. Scott, he concluded a little later, was more familiar with Scottish chronicles than with French: “Où sont nos villes, leurs corporations, leurs bourgeois, leurs quarteniers, leurs échevins? Où sont nos parlements . . . nos paysans? On connaît la cour de Louis XI, on ne connaît pas son siècle.”<sup>155</sup> As the new historians made their way. Scott's reputation with the French historians was qualified but not extinguished. He had shown them something essential; his reputation and influence remained greater with them than with English historians.<sup>156</sup>

Mill was familiar with the French reception of Scott. His own experience did not predispose him to share it. As a child he had known “the metrical romances” his father recommended to him and been “intensely delighted” with their “animated narrative.” But when still in his teens, he had scathingly criticized Hume's *History* as “really a romance,” bearing “nearly the same degree of resemblance to any thing which really happened, as *Old Mortality*, or *Ivanhoe*. . . Romance is always dangerous, but when romance assumes the garb of history, it is doubly pernicious.”<sup>157</sup> He continued to judge the novels harshly, for offering mere amusement. Scott, he declared later, had “no object but to please.” He nevertheless granted that “at the height of his popularity” Scott “was breathing the breath of life into the historical literature of France, and, through France, of all Europe.”<sup>158</sup> During the 1820s, however, he was not greatly impressed. The publication in June 1827 of Scott's *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte* decided him to make a prolonged statement. His review, the last article he wrote for the *Westminster Review* in the 1820s, cost him “more labour than any previous; but it was a labour of love, being a defence of the early French Revolutionists against the Tory misrepresentations of Sir Walter Scott.” He even bought many books “for this purpose,” in numbers that “far exceeded the worth of the immediate object”; but, as we have seen, he “had at that time a half formed intention of writing a History of the French Revolution.”<sup>159</sup>

The review constitutes the nearest thing to a fully developed statement about the Revolution Mill ever set down. It was also a blistering attack on Scott. After a preliminary bow to his literary talent, Mill said the book “would be admirable as a romance” but was not history (55). Bonaparte's life would require other talents. Mill's subject, of course, was not Napoleon, but rather the nature of history, the distortions of Tory history, and a defence of the Girondins. Whatever his subject, however, a true historian must be “a *philosopher*,” able to render the facts of history *useful* by adducing principles from them and applying principles to explain them, a man of broad views and experience, able to weigh and link evidence, “a consummate *judge*” (56). In a word, “the historian” resembled considerably the continental philosophical historian and no other. Scott did not measure up: bland and aristocratic, hard-working, wishing to please all, he was finally judged to be a not entirely illiberal or disingenuous “advocate of the aristocracy against the people” (57). His social and political philosophy was summarized as “whatever is English is best; best, not for England only, but for every country in Christendom, or probably the world” (60). There followed a catalogue of his sins and errors: ignorant of the facts about France and the French, he had read few authorities, failed to understand circumstances, and was “not to be trusted” (63). At best,

Scott saw “a *part* of the truth” but was “far too slightly acquainted with the monuments of the times, to have the faintest or most distant perception of it as a *whole*” (65). His pre-Revolutionary chapters were prejudiced and misleading; what followed was worse. His skilfully told story, doubtless sincerely intended, manipulated the facts in the cause of a theory that was not true. Still, Mill gave him this: the work was “less malignant” than most other Tory studies of the Revolution (110).

Mill’s view of the early Revolution, what he would call its “true history,” was in stark contrast to Scott’s. The Bonapartist episode he quickly dismissed as a vulgar coda, a familiar exercise of power by an adventurer moved by “the lowest impulses of the lowest description of human beings” (58). The Revolution was something else: a “vast convulsion,” originated, heroically defended, and at last ended by “the people” when they awoke from “the frenzy” into which the privileged orders had driven them by opposing “representative government” (58). As an unprecedented manifestation of popular will, it could not be judged by ordinary rules. Where Scott saw ambitious men seeking office, Mill saw patriots seeking liberty. Where Scott proposed the perverse nature of the lower orders running amok, Mill saw ordinary men driven to excess by injustice and oppression. Scott was granted the perceptiveness of glimpsing some part of the truth (for instance, about peasant-landlord ties in the Vendée), but accused of general failure to comprehend social relations under the *ancien régime*. Where Scott saw vicious, irreligious philosophes undermining society, Mill saw benefactors of mankind. Scott’s court was weak and ineffectual. Mill’s wicked and tyrannical. Mill was amused by the suggestion that the royal government might have forced the election results it needed, a course “so perfectly according to the English model” (72). Against Scott’s “conjuring up a republican party” (79), Mill argued there had been no such party, only varieties of constitutional monarchists in the Legislative Assembly until such time as both “the nullity of the Duke of Orleans as a politician” (81) and the perfidy of the King forced them to become republicans. Mill ridiculed Scott’s suggestion that the Revolution ought to have adopted something like the British constitution in the circumstances following the States General, when “the struggle was not *for* a revolution, but *against* a counter-revolution” (86). To Scott the Girondins were “philosophical rhapsodists” willing to use force to establish “a pure republic”; Mill exalted them as “the purest and most disinterested body of men, considered as a party, who ever figured in history,” statesmen who had war thrust on them, who laboured vainly to save the crown, and who were left with no alternative save a republic (98).

All this was put with passion (Scott was called “childish,” accused of “effrontery,” supposed to be suffering “mental hallucination” [68n, 69n, 79n]), buttressed by appeal to authorities of all persuasions. It was the liberal version of the early Revolution, stopping short of the Jacobin period that Mill found distasteful. If he had a clear overview, it was close to Mignet’s. But it was significant that he did not push on beyond the early years. What concerned him was defence of the liberal champions of constitutional monarchy against an unscrupulous aristocracy, that is, defence of “the honest part of the revolutionists” against “the general opinion” in England that had done them (and, it went without saying, those in England who thought like them) more harm even than Scott (110). If Scott had a didactic purpose, Mill had nothing less. But he must be read in the context of an entrenched conservative historiography, deep-seated national prejudice

against the French, and of course the struggle for reform of the House of Commons. He admitted that the *Life* contained “juster views” than those he particularly took issue with (110), though how they appeared in a writer so roundly declared unfit for the historian’s task he did not venture to explain.

Notoriously, Scott’s book was put together under great pressure, nine volumes in a year, amid many anxieties. He himself acknowledged some part of its limitation.<sup>160</sup> Carlyle’s famous tribute was that Scott “taught all men this truth, which looks like a truism, and yet was as good as unknown to writers of history and others, till so taught: that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled with living men, not by protocols, state-papers, controversies and abstractions of men.” No doubt this was less true of the *Life of Napoleon* than of the historical novels. Perhaps Mill would, some years after he wrote his devastating review, have been more inclined to grant as much. His own views about the depths and poetry of history were changing. But he never found the words. Whether he could have accepted Carlyle’s posthumous verdict that Scott “understood what *history* meant; this was his chief intellectual merit,” one must guess.<sup>161</sup>

## ALISON

Mill believed that the huge sales Scott enjoyed had a harmful effect on the public mind. But he also knew that Scott had made an important contribution to the revival of written history, that he was dealing with not merely a pillar of the Tory establishment but a formidable man of letters. In taking on the work of Alison, however, he was jousting with a writer of more ordinary talents, if also of great industry, whose account of the Revolution was also Tory propaganda. What ultimately justified taking notice of such a study was, again, the immense sales Alison had both at home and, in translation, abroad. Of the whole multi-volume *History of Europe from the Commencement of the French Revolution to the Restoration of the Bourbons*, more than half a million copies were sold before his death, though at the time Mill could hardly have foreseen it would have such success.

A native of Shropshire who had early moved to Edinburgh where he took up the law, Alison became an advocate-deputy for Scotland, wrote books on the criminal law, and was eventually appointed sheriff of Lanarkshire. By the time he visited France in 1814-15, his conservative views were fixed. Leslie Stephen’s judgment that he was “intelligent and hard-working, if not brilliant,” is borne out by his numerous publications. He had defeated Macaulay in election as Lord Rector of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and Palmerston as Lord Rector of Glasgow. He was a believer in the institution of slavery, and later a strong supporter of the American Confederacy. His literary taste ran to “elevating” romances and against the Dickensian preoccupation with the manners of the middle and lower classes. He refused to “worship the Dagon of Liberalism.”<sup>162</sup> He was very nearly everything Mill was not, their views could hardly have been more different, whether of the French Revolution or, late in life, the American Civil War: Alison supported the Confederacy, while Mill, “very retiring and embarrassed in his manner,” as Henry Adams noted, was “a mighty weapon of defence for our cause in this country.”<sup>163</sup>

Alison began his *History* on New Year's Day 1829, intending to illustrate the corruption of human nature and the divine hand in events; his work was induced, he said, "by the clear perception that affairs were hurrying on to some great social and political convulsion in this country. The passion for innovation which had for many years overspread the nation, the vague ideas afloat in the public mind, the facility with which Government entered into these views—all these had awakened gloomy presentiments in my mind."<sup>164</sup> His first two volumes were published in April 1833.

As Alison had published a year-long series of articles in *Blackwood's* on the French Revolution and the English reform issue in 1831-32. Mill knew what to expect. But he inquired of Carlyle whether the book "is worth reading, or reviewing—I suppose it is wrong, when one has taken the trouble to accumulate knowledge on a subject, not to work it up if one can into some shape useful to others—and if I am to write about the F.R. it may as well be while my recollections of the original authorities are fresh." Clearly Mill, though now far from sure that he wished to pursue his former intention to write a history and evidently yielding the ground to and actively assisting Carlyle, still wished to make a statement. He wished to pillory the errors, bias, and flaccid lack of philosophy he found in Alison. He wished also to discuss his own conception of history. Alison's work was both an affront to scholarship and an occasion for Mill to reveal something of his recent historical reflection. Carlyle was encouraging: "by all means *review him*, and in the widest vehicle you can get. It is a thing utterly unknown to the English and ought to be known. Speak of it what *you* know. If Alison prove stupid dismiss *him* the sooner, but tell your own story freely without fear or favour."<sup>165</sup>

Mill was eager to take on both Whig and Tory. Having read Alison, he wrote again:

the man is quite inconceivably stupid and twaddling. I think beyond anybody who has attempted to write elaborately on the subject. He has no research; the references with which he loads his margin are chiefly to compilations. I could write something about him or rather about his subject; but I could employ myself better unless there were some widely-circulated periodical that would publish it, the *Edinburgh Review* perhaps would, were it not that I should wish to shew up Macaulay's ignorance of the subject and assumption of knowledge, as shewn in that very review.<sup>166</sup>

Simultaneously, however, he offered to the *Monthly Repository* "a few pages on a stupid book lately published by a man named Alison, and pretending to be a history of the French Revolution." He then followed this proposal with the tired and dutiful statement, "I am sick of that subject, but I could write something on it which perhaps would be of more use to the M.R. than something better would be. . . ."<sup>167</sup>

Mill could not see how to strike the larger target behind Alison. When done, he called his review "a poor, flimsy, short paper on that book of Alison's, which I undertook in an evil hour, when the subject was as remote as possible from those which were occupying my thoughts and feelings at the time; and which I accordingly performed exceedingly ill, and was obliged to cancel the part which had cost me most labour." What this part was he did not reveal; why he abandoned it is unknown. He told Carlyle the review was "not worth *your* perusal."<sup>168</sup> Mill seems to



have believed that the book was not worth his critique, was too slight to bear the weight of the crushing rejoinder he had in him. Five years earlier, when he had still thought seriously of doing a history, he had dissected Scott's work, using detailed references to the memoirs and histories. Now he was no longer interested in doing that. Neither Alison nor his work justified presentation of what Mill had once thought he had to say about the Revolution as a result of his exacting scrutiny of the published sources, and in the light of his Radical beliefs.

Alison's qualifications were quickly discarded: it was not even a question of measuring him against an ideal historian's talent to create character, summon up the historical setting, establish the play between personality and circumstance. As a Tory, Mill noted, Alison might be expected to disapprove of his actors; instead he offered only indiscriminately charitable judgments. Rather than "that highest impartiality which proceeds from philosophic insight," there was "abundance of that lower kind which flows from milkiness of disposition." Free of cant, he was devoid of originality. If he followed Thiers and Mignet, he rendered the drama of events "flat, cold, and spiritless" (116). If he honestly revealed his sources, their poverty betrayed his slight reading.<sup>169</sup> His memory was defective, his knowledge of the French language flawed. He knew enough about neither the Revolution nor "the universal subject, the nature of man" (122). His reflective capacity was barren, his generalizations were either truisms or "such as a country-gentleman, accustomed to being king of his company, talks after dinner" (116). Alison's "insignificant book" was judged to be empty of knowledge, thought, and philosophy (122). But, as Mill pointed out, if that were all he himself had to say, his article might end.

He had two things to say, the first of which had been slipped in earlier, in praising this not very exceptional writer, Mill had noted that Alison at least "does not join in the ill-informed and rash assertion of the *Edinburgh Review*, reechoed by the *Quarterly*, that the first authors of the French Revolution were mediocre men" (115). This was as close as he got, on this occasion, to assailing Macaulay directly. The second, more important thing he wished to repeat was that the Revolution could never be understood unless as "one turbulent passage in a progressive revolution embracing the whole human race." There was an immense "moral revolution" under way, in which the events in France were "a mere *incident* in a great change in man himself, in his belief, in his principles of conduct, and therefore in the outward arrangements of society; a change which is but half completed, and which is now in a state of more rapid progress here in England, than any where else." All this, which Mill believed to be part of "the *scientific* aspect" of history, escaped Alison (118). Mill's position was that the Revolution had produced "substantial good . . . at the cost of immediate evil of the most tremendous kind." No one could ever know whether more could have been obtained for less, or whether averting revolution (how this might have been achieved he did not explain) would not have halted all progress and reduced the French to "the condition of Russian boors." The Tories had reduced revolution to "a bagatelle," the work of a handful of wilful bloody-minded men; they refused to understand that "rapid progress" and "practical good" might not be achieved by peaceful means. They would not see that it was the French crown and its advisers that had abandoned peaceful means. Crimes were committed, some by "bad men," but all with a single object: to save the Revolution, whatever the cost (120, 121).

When he read the first volume, Mill may have underestimated Alison's work as popular history and propaganda. In reply to Carlyle's note of approval of the review,<sup>170</sup> Mill remarked somewhat evenly, "I also am conscious that I write with a greater appearance of *sureness* and strong belief than I did for a year or two before, in that period of *recovery* after the petrification of a narrow philosophy. . . ." This rather mixed and invertebrate review, however, does not make a strong impression. It is uncertainly dependent on three disparate intentions: to rekindle, if only momentarily, the fire of Mill's earlier defence of the Revolution; to strike out at political opponents; to say something about his currently developing philosophy of history. Naturally it did nothing to give Alison pause: if it led him to fatten up his bibliographical prefaces, it by no means discouraged him from pursuing his narrative. He continued to revise his work, which had an immense success as a detailed history of the Revolution in its wider setting. It was translated into many languages and became the best-selling such work for much of the century in England and North America.<sup>171</sup> Mill was unrepentant. Nine years after his review, when Alison had completed the final volume, he told Napier, "You have touched up Alison very well & it was time. My fingers have often itched to be at him. The undeserved reputation into which that book is getting, merely because it is Tory history, & the only connected one of that important time, is very provoking."<sup>172</sup>

## CARLYLE

When Mill first mentioned Alison to him, Carlyle already had a copy "lying on a Table." Having "glanced" at it, he was both impressed and dismissive. His reaction told something about his own scholarship. "He is an Ultra Tory," he told Mill, "and therefore cannot understand the French Revolution; otherwise, they say, a man of considerable ability; his Margin bears marks of great inquiry (*Thiers* and the like I saw quoted almost every page), the man too was in France and published *Travels*. . . ."<sup>173</sup> That Carlyle should have been impressed by Alison's first citation of his references, where Mill was so scathing, illustrated a gap between their conceptions of research that one might not infer from Mill's appreciation of Carlyle's *History* in 1837. At the time of his review of Alison, Mill had of course revised his early estimate of Carlyle's writing as "consummate nonsense."<sup>174</sup> On Carlyle's initiative they had met in September 1831 and begun a correspondence almost at once, and by the next summer Mill was evidently handing over the Revolution: ". . . I am rather fitted to be a logical expounder than an artist. You I look upon as an artist, and perhaps the only genuine one now living in this country: the highest destiny of all, lies in that direction; for it is the artist alone in whose hands Truth becomes impressive, and a living principle of action."<sup>175</sup> With the same forthrightness with which he approved Mill's high opinion of and attachment to him, Carlyle took full advantage of Mill's generosity in sending him books for the history he now thought of writing.<sup>176</sup> In a way, Mill was a collaborator from the outset.

For more than four years they discussed the work, Mill advising and then responding to the steady importuning, Carlyle communicating something of the gestation throes foretelling the strange and awful work he found welling up in him. "What it is to be I cannot yet tell: my doors of utterance are so wonderful, one knows not how to shape thoughts such as to pass thro'." His

head “buzzing,” he read on and speculated about the literary event “the right *History* (that impossible thing I mean by History) of the French Revolution” would prove to be. Whoever should write “the *truth*” about this “grand Poem of our Time” would be “worth all other writers and singers.” Hence the conclusion: “If I were spared alive myself, and had means, why might not I too prepare the way for such a thing?”<sup>177</sup> So Mill continued to oblige with books, Carlyle proclaimed his gratitude, the work took shape. “The French business grows darker and darker upon me: dark as chaos. Ach Gott!”<sup>178</sup> Above all, it should not be like other histories, “which are so many ‘dead thistles for Pedant chaffinches to peck at and fill their crops with.’”<sup>179</sup> By February 1835 the first volume was written and Mill was given it to read. On March 6 Mill brought the terrible news of its accidental burning. Carlyle’s reaction was superb, his consideration of the distracted Mill paternal, his acceptance of the offer of financial compensation spontaneous.<sup>180</sup>

One must imagine the intensity of Mill’s commitment to the work after what Carlyle called this “miserablest accident (as we name such things) of my whole life.” Seeing it as “purely the hand of Providence,” he admitted that the manuscript had “pleased me better than anything I had ever done,” acknowledged that “*That* first volume” could not be reproduced, and bravely hoped to produce another that would be “if not better or equal, *all* that I can.”<sup>181</sup> But to Mill he wrote courageously: “The thing must be made *better* than it was, or we shall never be able, not to forget it, but to laugh victorious in remembering it.” He refused the £200 Mill pressed on him, accepting only £100, the amount he said he had spent, and continued to ask and to receive from Mill “brave cargoes of Books.”<sup>182</sup> His recovery was swift, his optimism marked: “I do really believe the Book will be the better for it, and we shall all be the better.”<sup>183</sup> If the labour was heavy, the composition was rapid, though by the spring of 1836 the mere thought of the day when “this fatal History” would no longer weigh on him was like “a prophecy of resurrection.”<sup>184</sup> Mill again read the manuscript and sent off his annotations and suggestions, removing “anything *merely* quaint in the mode of expression,” and saying, “The only general remark I have to make on stile is that I think it would often *tell* better on the reader if what is said in an abrupt, exclamatory & interjectional manner were said in the ordinary grammatical mode of nominative & verb. . . .” Mill’s manner was tentative and deferential, Carlyle’s response appreciative and slightly mocking: “No Surgeon can touch sore places with a softer hand than you do.” His “quarrel with the Nominative-and-verb” caused him “great sorrow,” but it was “not a quarrel of my seeking. I mean, that the common English mode of writing has to do with what I call *hearsays* of things; and the great business for me, in which alone I feel any comfort, is recording the *presence*, bodily concrete coloured presence of things;—for which the Nominative-and-verb, as I find it Here and Now, refuses to stand me in due stead.” But he would comply “more and more as I grow wiser.”<sup>185</sup>

Mill was anxious to publish a review before the book appeared. He had discovered from responses to Carlyle’s article on Mirabeau in the *Westminster Review* for January 1837 that some of his friends did not care for the style. Sarah Austin reported that her husband and George Lewis were “clamorous against poor Carlyle’s article & say you will ruin the review if you admit any more. I am afraid this is a very general opinion, though I grieve it should be so.” Mill told her the Mirabeau had been “the most popular article we ever had in the review,” that the only people he

met who disliked it were John Arthur Roebuck, George Grote, and William Nassau Senior, “& those three dislike everything, the *style* of which is not humdrum.” As for Carlyle’s “usual peculiarities,” they had in that case fallen “greatly short of the average degree of them.”<sup>186</sup> Thus riding the criticism off, he took the warning and determined to pre-empt opinion on the *History*. The book and the review appeared in July 1837.<sup>187</sup>

He took the offensive from high ground: the book was unprecedented and must be judged accordingly. Both history and poetry, with a “peculiar” style “unlike the jog-trot characterless uniformity which distinguishes the English style,” it had, he admitted, some “mere mannerisms,” German “transcendentalisms” that obscured meaning, but as literature was surpassed “only by the great masters of epic poetry.” The narrative was “strictly true”; based on “irrefragable authority,” it presented “human beings,” rather than the “stuffed figures” other historians served up (134, 135). Hume and Gibbon compared unfavourably with Carlyle in this regard. Mill quoted large extracts to illustrate the poetry and power of the narrative. He judged the theory informing the *History* sound: crown, aristocracy, and clergy had failed in their commissions and so were “hurled . . . into chaos.” As for the Revolution’s “melancholy turn,” “the horrors,” “the iron despotism by which it was forced to wind itself up” and the comparative “smallness of its positive results,” Mill endorsed Carlyle’s opinion that “the French people” were unprepared for the event, did not know what they wished, how they should be governed, in whom they should have faith (159, 160).

His criticisms were gently put: Carlyle was too light on theory. “Without a hypothesis to commence with, we do not even know what end to begin at, what points to enquire into.” Mill “fancied” Carlyle undervalued “general principles” and “set too low a value on what constitutions and forms of government can do” (162). But more he did not challenge in this “perfectly true picture of a great historical event, as it actually happened” (158). Aware of the problem of access, he did not fault Carlyle for failing to push his research into Croker’s large collection of contemporary pamphlets;<sup>188</sup> but neither did he fault him for the relatively slight bibliography he had worked from, for accepting legends, for being apparently fixated on the surface drama and neglecting the context, for failing to discuss the origins (Mill said only that the introductory chapters were “the least interesting part of the book” [139]) and the outcome of the Revolution. Indeed, beyond the fundamental agreement between them on the decrepitude of the old order and the virtue of the early Revolutionaries, it is difficult to see what Mill and Carlyle had in common.

Mill, of course, had been fully warned of what Carlyle had had in mind, and had wholeheartedly abetted the enterprise. If the Girondins were less than favourably treated, there was enough philosophy rumbling beneath the vibrant surface of events to redeem such a lapse. Carlyle had broken the political mould completely, “delivered,” as Acton was to say, “our fathers from thralldom to Burke.”<sup>189</sup> He had asked new questions, written a new history. Moreover, he had done what Mill was convinced he himself could not do: he had created a work of art. Still, a reader may come away from Mill’s review, with its curious Carlylean capitalizations, believing that the most rigorous standards he had applied to Scott, and to some extent to Alison, if not Mignet, are absent there. Partly, it is that by 1837 Mill’s conception of history and his interest in

the Revolution had changed; partly that Mill was now receptive to the imaginative attempt Carlyle had made to portray and understand the Revolution from within, to see it, as historians in the twentieth century would say, from below.

Afterwards, Mill prided himself on three reviewing achievements in the *London and Westminster*: preparing the way for acceptance of Lord Durham's Report, accelerating the success of Carlyle's *French Revolution*, and establishing in England Guizot's reputation as an historian. In the *Autobiography* he spoke of pre-empting "the commonplace critics" by hailing Carlyle's book as "one of those productions of genius which are above all rules, and are a law to themselves." He did not think his review had been well executed, but looked on it as "an honest attempt to do immediate service" to a deserving man and his work. He had said much the same thing in a more aggressive manner to R.B. Fox: the article had "greatly accelerated" Carlyle's success, for whether "so strange & incomprehensible" a book would "succeed or fail seemed to depend upon the turn of a die—but I got the first word, blew the trumpet before it at its first coming out & by claiming for it the honours of the highest genius frightened the small fry of critics from pronouncing a hasty condemnation, got fair play for it & then its success was sure."<sup>190</sup> At the time, he had told Carlyle that the review was having "a good effect," though the oral and written opinions on the article itself were "mostly unfavourable."<sup>191</sup> This was not mysterious: whatever the personal commitments that made him champion Carlyle's *Revolution*, he had not applied to it the standards of criticism by which he judged other works. Three years later, alluding to the period of "my Carlylism, a vice of style which I have since carefully striven to correct," he told a correspondent whom he was admonishing for the same affectation, "I think Carlyle's costume should be left to Carlyle whom alone it becomes & in whom it would soon become unpleasant if it were made common. . . ."<sup>192</sup>

## MILL AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1830

Carlyle's *French Revolution* and Mill's review of it were written in the wake of another Revolution that, from Mill's point of view, had burst gloriously on the scene and subsided ingloriously within a matter of weeks or months. The political void Carlyle envisioned at the centre of the 1789 experience Mill detected in the July Days, as the aftermath revealed the incapacity or self-interest of those who superseded the Bourbon monarchy. He had been excited by the lively press wars of the late 1820s. If the duc de Berry's murder in February 1820 brought a temporary crack-down on the press, the running battle of the opposition parties with the governments of Louis XVIII and Charles X saw at least as many victories as defeats for the liberal press, its proprietors, and its journalists. Neither direct censorship nor regulatory measures weakened its independence. French journals were numerous, variegated, and vigorous. Under the moderate ministry of the vicomte de Martignac in 1828-29, the press régime was relaxed, and although he was replaced by the ultra-royalist prince de Polignac in August 1829 it was the latitude of the laws Martignac had permitted that goaded the government into its final assault on the press in July 1830, and so precipitated the Revolution.<sup>193</sup>

How much Mill knew of the close manoeuvring in this long contest that had gone on from the time of his first visit to France can only be surmised. But with the installation of Polignac, both King and minister were daily vilified in the opposition sheets. Mill, who followed the press, was approving. "In France," he wrote d'Eichthal, "the best thinkers & writers of the nation, write in the journals & direct public opinion: but our daily & weekly writers are the lowest hacks of literature. . . ." <sup>194</sup> On the eve of the outbreak, he condemned *The Times* for siding with Polignac, reeled off the despotic acts of Charles X's reign (the notorious Law of Sacrilege, 1826, "worthy of the days of Calas and La Barre," had "persuaded the civilized world that the reign of despotism was assured for another century, and that France was relapsing into the servitude and superstition of the middle ages"), and proposed that in the "most unlikely" event the government did suppress demonstrations, a calamity would ensue for France and Europe. <sup>195</sup> He did not apprehend imminent revolt. One week later the five July Ordinances were published, the journalists reacted fiercely, and the confused and complex politics and violence began which sent the King on his journey into exile and some days later installed Louis Philippe d'Orléans on the throne as King of the French. <sup>196</sup>

Early in August, Mill, with his friends George Graham and John Arthur Roebuck, went off to Paris. <sup>197</sup> He stayed a month. For him it was both a fulfilment and the beginning of a long disenchantment. Years later, Charles Eliot Norton noticed "the sentimental part of [Mill's] intelligence, which is of immense force, and has only been kept in due subjection by his respect for his own reason." <sup>198</sup> It was on view in 1830. Mill expected too much. He carried with him an idealized vision of revolution founded on his reading of 1789, too limited a knowledge of the persons and forces in play in France, and a strong sense of his personal goals at the time. He was unprepared for the sharp political game that replaced one monarch with another and brought about a large-scale administrative shuffle, but produced no serious social change. By the laws of March and April 1831, power remained securely with the landowning and professional class, a small *pays légal* attached to the state through the offices it offered them. <sup>199</sup> If the ultra-royalists went home to their estates, the popular element brought into the streets to make the revolution also subsided. The new régime was defensive from the start.

At the time, Mill barely sensed what was happening. Though "the cowardice and imbecility of the existing generation of public men, with scarcely a single exception," promised little, he took hope from "the spirit and intelligence of the young men and of the people, the immense influence of the journals, and the strength of the public voice." Believing, mistakenly, that "there has been an excellent revolution without leaders," he hoped naively that "leaders will not be required in order to establish a good government." <sup>200</sup> Roebuck's story was that he, Mill, and their friends had almost forced the audience at the Opéra (including Louis Philippe) by their shouts of "Debout! debout!" to stand for the Marseillaise. <sup>201</sup> If so, they were only playing games while the tough-minded men who had engineered the new monarchy were establishing themselves in power. Mill's remarks on the goodness of "the common people" were romantic and sentimental: "The inconceivable purity and singleness of purpose, almost amounting to *naïveté*, which they all shew in speaking of these events, has given me a greater love for them than I thought myself capable of feeling for so large a collection of human beings, and the more exhilarating views which

it opens of human nature will have a beneficial effect on the whole of my future life.”<sup>202</sup> From the beginning, he pictured a Manichean situation: the good people versus the wicked monied classes, the virtuous poor versus the scoundrel placehunters. Such a reading could have no happy confirmation.

Until 1834 he contributed observations on the French scene to the *Examiner*, arguing his expertise from “a tolerably familiar acquaintance with the history of France for the last forty years” and his experience in Paris in August-September 1830. Of the revolution outside the capital, of ongoing disturbances among the peasantry, of the struggle for traditional rights in the collision between rural capitalism and the community, Mill made almost no mention. His angle of vision remained political. Early on, he began to see that France had exchanged “a feeble despotism for a strong and durable oligarchy,” that the parallel drawn with 1688 was too close. At least the Bourbons (that “stupid race”) had been denied the cunning to ally themselves with “the monied class.” England showed how the monied aristocracy worked: 150 years after the Glorious Revolution, Englishmen were still fruitlessly demanding parliamentary reform.<sup>203</sup> He expressed hope nevertheless that “the young men who now head the popular party” and “the patriots of more established character and more mature years” would create a liberal régime against the “jobbing oligarchy”; he continued to believe that “the educated classes in France, on all questions of social improvement to which their attention has been directed, are in advance of the majority of the same classes in England”; he attacked the British press, particularly *The Times*, for its “crazy outcries” and the “fund of stupidity and vulgar prejudice in our principal journalists” on the subject of France; he greeted the modest extension of the suffrage as “poor enough” and criticized “M. Guizot and his friends” for their “bigotted and coxcombical devotion to their own ways and their own disciples.” He watched, in short, as his romantic enthusiasm for a popular revolution ostensibly led by an intellectual élite of historian journalists (in so far as it had any leaders) was dissipated by the realities of the *situations acquises* and everyday politics.<sup>204</sup> By February 1831, he openly hoped for the fall of Louis Philippe. The Revolution, he said that spring, had “brought forth none but bitter fruits”: unemployment, fear of war, political dissension, and oppression.<sup>205</sup>

Mill’s intermittent chronicle did not much depart from its constant themes of jobbery, persecution of the press, and the hollowness of the parliamentary process. When the Lyon silkweavers rose in revolt on 21-22 November, 1831, however, he was sympathetic. “It is melancholy,” he noted, “to see, that an event so pregnant with meaning as the late insurrection of Lyon, should have made no deeper impression upon the men by whom France is now governed, than is indicated by all they do, and by all they fail to do, day after day, and month after month.”<sup>206</sup> He accurately assessed the importance of an event that would one day be seen to mark the origin of the modern labour movement. But it was the struggle for free speech that most concerned him, and he was optimistic on grounds that thus far the press had been “more than a match for every government which has defied it to a contest.”<sup>207</sup> Parliament gave him less hope, pained as he was to see former liberals, like Casimir Périer who had helped to overthrow the Villèle ministry in 1828, becoming agents of repression.<sup>208</sup> A bloody clash on 5-6 June, 1832, occurred between the army and opponents of the régime on the occasion of the funeral of the opposition deputy. General Lamarque, a Bonapartist and friend of La Fayette, the capital was placed in a state of siege. “The

government of the barricades,” Mill commented, “has done what Charles X was not permitted to do. It has assumed the power of dispensing with the laws and the courts of justice.” What he called “the forty years war” that momentarily had seemed to end in 1830 had now “broken out afresh.”<sup>209</sup> Optimism gave way to Cassandra-like intimations of disaster. Of Marshal Soult’s ministry of all talents (October 1832-July 1834), Mill remarked that with such men as Thiers, Guizot, and the duc de Broglie, no other government had had such brilliance, “yet none ever was more certain of mis-governing France, and coming to a speedy and disgraceful end.” Though Louis Philippe was undeniably the target for repeated attempts on his life, Mill judged the one of 19 November, 1832, likely to be “one of the low tricks with which the French police has long familiarised us.”<sup>210</sup>

French events were “paltry,” the Revolution of 1830 had turned sour; Mill grew tired: “. . . I am so thoroughly *sick* of the wretched aspect of affairs [in France],” he commented in March 1833, “that I have written little about them in the Examiner for a long time.” Only the Saint-Simonians had made good the promise of 1830, and they had “run wild.” Apart from them, he told Carlyle, “the excessive avidity & barrenness of the French mind has never been so strikingly displayed: there are such numbers of talkers & writers so full of noise and fury, keeping it up for years and years, and not one new thought, new to *them* I mean, has been struck out by all the collisions since I first began attending to these matters.”<sup>211</sup> Guizot’s legislation on primary education caught his interest.<sup>212</sup> He thought the question of the unrepresentative character of the Chamber of Deputies was beginning to interest the nation.<sup>213</sup> But the savage crushing of renewed strike activity and the ensuing insurrection in Lyon, followed by the notorious massacre of April 1834 in Paris, led him to conclude that the ministerial record was poor save in the field of repression.<sup>214</sup>

## THE MONSTER TRIAL

Mill’s autumnal note was struck in the aftermath of strong blows to the opposition. The most formidable force Louis Philippe had to face was the amorphous republican movement, a bewildering variety of men and ideas, each with historical antecedents, loosely grouped around the notion of popular sovereignty and universal suffrage, but divided on means. Legislation against unauthorized associations struck at their organizations, but they grouped and regrouped to escape its severities. The sympathetic press and its journalists endured incessant prosecutions for their attacks on the ministry and vilification of the crown.<sup>215</sup> In the spring of 1834 matters came to a head with the government’s decision to strike at the newly formed republican Société des Droits de l’Homme which aimed at political and social revolution. When juries failed to uphold the state in eighty percent of the cases brought against a single newspaper, the *Tribune* of Armand Marrast, the chambers voted for a law that would bring such prosecutions before correctional tribunals.<sup>216</sup>

The Lyon silk workers had struck in February; on 9-12 April there took place the terrible street battle between them and the army for control of the city, in which some three hundred soldiers and workers were killed. This gave the signal to the republicans of the Société des Droits de



l'Homme to raise barricades in the Marais district of Paris on 13 April. Though the arrest of 150 leaders led to attempts to abort the rising, a clash took place and the insurgents were crushed by the army in a barbarous exercise of brutality and mutilation, the most celebrated episode of which was the horrifying slaughter of the inhabitants of a house at 12 rue Transnonain.<sup>217</sup> The deputies quickly agreed to increase the size of the army, some 2000 suspects were rounded up, and an ordinance provided for bringing insurgents from both cities to trial before the Chamber of Peers. This was the *procès monstre*, staged at the Luxembourg Palace, May 1835-January 1836, with hundreds of witnesses called, thousands of pages of documents in submission, and 164 leaders on trial. It was designed to destroy the republican and insurrectional movements, and its size underlined the apparent magnitude of the opposition from the left. Its proceedings were marked by tumult, citation of some of the defence lawyers for contempt of court, and the escape of twenty-eight of the principal accused.<sup>218</sup>

Mill's article appeared while the trial was still in progress. It was a frank defence of the Société des Droits de l'Homme, particularly against the charge that it was hostile to private property. He seized the occasion to deliver still another lesson to Whigs and Tories on the meaning of the great events from 1789 to the fall of Robespierre, and to clear the Revolution (save for the Babeuf episode) of this same charge. The trial itself he saw as an attempt to create panic and strike at the opposition, to confuse matters by trying both "the pretended authors of the pretended republican conspiracy of Paris" and "the presumed authors of the real trades' union revolt at Lyon" before the tame placemen in the Chamber of Peers. Full of contempt for this upper chamber, for "the imbecility" of its composition, he predicted that the trial would be "its last throw for political importance" (129).

In fact the prison break-out and flight to England of such important leaders among the accused as Godefroy Cavaignac and Armand Marrast demoralized those remaining in Sainte-Pélagie prison. Moreover, the failed assassination attempt on the King on 22 July by Giuseppe Fieschi, a self-proclaimed republican with two accomplices from the Société des Droits de l'Homme, damaged their cause still more. Public sympathy fell away. By the time the Cour des Pairs pronounced its last sentence of deportation or imprisonment in January 1836, the internal prospects of the régime were much improved. The Société was destroyed, the opposition had divided into a small underground revolutionary movement and a weakened republican group seeking now to elect deputies to the Chamber of Deputies and to survive the new press laws. Mill was appalled by the legislation, which seemed likely to touch even English newspapers critical of the régime. Six years before he had remarked that the Houses of Parliament could not show a single member "who approaches within twenty degrees of M. de Broglie."<sup>219</sup> The duc de Broglie now presided over the government that had brought these things about. "I should much like to know," Mill wrote to Carlyle, "what old Sieyes thinks of the present state of France. . . . What a curious page all this is in the history of the French revolution. France seems to be *désenchanté* for a long time to come—& as the natural consequence of political disenchantment—profoundly demoralized. All the educated youth are becoming mere venal commodities."<sup>220</sup>

Some months later, in January 1837, Mill remarked to Tocqueville that French politics appeared to be “in the same torpid state.” Tocqueville said he did not know anyone who could grasp French affairs: “Nous sommes dans cet état douteux de demi-sommeil et de demi-réveil qui échappe à l’analyse.” But he thought the nation had survived the threat of revolutionary violence and anarchy, and was returning to its liberal and democratic instincts: “mais que Dieu nous garde des émeutes! elles semblent menacer le gouvernement et par le fait elles ne nuisent qu’à la liberté.”<sup>221</sup> Mill would have accepted the conclusion, but not the presumption on which it was based.<sup>222</sup> He abhorred violence, too, but his sympathies were with those who had challenged the small *pays légal* and their “shop-keeper king,” and who seemed to have failed.

## CARREL

Soon after the great trial, Mill’s despondency deepened with the sudden death of the journalist he admired more than any other. Armand Carrel, with Thiers and Mignet, had founded the *National* in January 1830, intending to destroy not only the Polignac ministry but the Bourbon monarchy as well. Being historians, they developed the parallel between their France and England on the eve of 1688. Sovereignty was located in the people, and they called in the final crisis for the “république, déguisée sous la monarchie, au moyen du gouvernement représentatif.”<sup>223</sup> In some sense the July Monarchy was their creation. Thiers had promptly moved into politics; Mignet retired to scholarship and the archives, leaving Carrel, the most effervescent and brilliant of them, at the *National*.

Carrel had given proof of unorthodoxy in 1821 when, though an army officer, he had rashly associated with Carbonari conspirators. He had resigned his commission in 1823 to join a foreign legion helping the Spanish rebels against Ferdinand VII, and thus soon found himself in a war on the opposite side from the French army that had been sent down to put the King back on his throne. For this he was three times court-martialled, escaping with his life only on a legal technicality.<sup>224</sup> A student of history, he thereafter helped Augustin Thierry assemble the materials for his history of the Norman Conquest and began the work which led to his own *Histoire de la contre-révolution en Angleterre*. He was, however, a political journalist, and he was independent. He refused a *préfecture* under the July régime; he joked about what he might have done had he been offered an army division. And he served notice that he was still a democrat.<sup>225</sup> By early 1832, Carrel was moving toward the republican position, though he did not overtly ally himself with the Société des Droits de l’Homme. He attacked the authorities and was repeatedly prosecuted. Juries would not convict him. The government was determined to drive the opposition press out of existence by police harassment, arrests, trials, imprisonments, and fines.<sup>226</sup> Concentrating on Marrast’s *Tribune*, they brought it to collapse in May 1835, but Carrel, more *nuancé*, they did not bring down.

Mill was aware of Carrel’s intensely nationalist stance in the diplomatic crisis of 1830-31, of his certain Bonapartist sympathy, and of his contempt for Louis Philippe’s refusal to launch French forces on the road to the liberation of the Poles and the Belgians. (Scornful of a policy of

“la paix à tout prix,” Carrel said, “Il y avait plus de fierté sous le jupon de la Pompadour.”<sup>227</sup> It seemed not to disturb him. He was quick to notice Carrel’s toast to the Reform Bill at a patriotic banquet, offering France’s sympathy and congratulations, despite lingering anti-English feeling in the *National*.<sup>228</sup> When the newspaper attacked English journals for their treatment of France, Mill agreed, saying Carrel should know that “the popular party” thought as ill of Marshal Soult’s government as Carrel did himself.<sup>229</sup> Despite Carrel’s somewhat turbulent disposition, or perhaps because of it, he had appeal for Mill, who believed he was a wise man, just the same. Carrel could be cautious; he showed this after the disastrous rioting attending Lamarque’s funeral.<sup>230</sup> And in the autumn of 1833, on a visit to France, Mill was introduced to Carrel. He communicated the immensely favourable impression he got to Carlyle, and was to incorporate his immediate reactions in his article four years later (201). Carrel’s mind struck him as much more refined than that of Godefroy Cavaignac, President of the Société des Droits de l’Homme. He was heartened by the meeting and by the prospect of correspondence: “with Carrel I am to establish an exchange of articles; Carrel is to send some to the Examiner and I am to send some to the National, with liberty to publish them here.”<sup>231</sup>

Mill followed the running battle with the régime, in which Carrel, sustaining prosecutions and fines, sought to evade the Cour Royale de Paris and the Cour de Cassation, tirelessly printed court proceedings, hounded the King mercilessly, and predicted “un gouvernement sans rois et sans nobles.”<sup>232</sup> He was delighted when Carrel was acquitted by a jury in the Cour d’Assises de la Seine-Inférieure, having argued that if Louis Philippe wished to be his own minister he must expect to be treated like other ministers.<sup>233</sup> But the net tightened. After Fieschi’s attempt, the press law of September 1835 limited room for manoeuvre.<sup>234</sup> With the *Tribune* already closed down, and François Raspail’s *Réformateur* fallen victim to the new law, the *National* was the last important defender of republicanism. Carrel had accepted republicanism, but he was a moderate, no revolutionist; he had no use for utopian activists. “Des fous! des brouillons! des envieux! des impuissants!” he had said in 1831. “Que de temps il faudra avant que le pays soit mûr pour la République!”<sup>235</sup> Though he had moved to republicanism, he still favoured manoeuvre. Entering Sainte-Pélagie prison, he had written Chateaubriand, wondering how long it would be before men would sensibly work out their “inévitables transactions” by negotiation rather than death and exhaustion. The prison experience was sinister and embittering, he was personally threatened, and he had no affinity for the rough sort of man. All the same, he recognized the demands of the working class: one must “posséder assez d’intelligence pour le comprendre, assez de coeur pour ne pas s’en effrayer.”<sup>236</sup> Sainte-Beuve reckoned him too sensitive, too obstinate, too little able to strike the popular note, though a great and principled journalist. What attracted Mill to Carrel is easy to see.

Carrel was cut off early by misadventure in a duel. The journalist Emile de Girardin brought out a cheap daily, *La Presse*, which he hoped to sustain by advertising on English lines. Carrel, welcoming the possibility of lower cost to the public through increased circulation, doubted Girardin’s democratic motives. Saying so, he brought upon himself the riposte that republican editors afforded their comfortable situation at the expense of their readers. When Girardin threatened to back this up with proofs. Carrel believed he was being threatened with revelations about

his private life. The quarrel could not be resolved and Carrel issued his challenge, which led to a fatal encounter in the Bois de Vincennes on 22 July, 1836.<sup>237</sup>

Mill took the news hard and sent word to Carlyle, who replied that Godefroy Cavaignac had told him of “*la mort funeste de Carrel.*” He supposed that “such as he was, there is not his like left in France. And to die as a fool dieth!—It seems to me, as I tell you always, that France has pitiful destinies lying before it. . . .”<sup>238</sup> Mill expressed his sense of loss to Tocqueville when he told him that though he had many friends in France, he and Carrel were the two for whom he felt “une véritable admiration.”<sup>239</sup> It was a curious confession; it is unlikely that Tocqueville could have appreciated Carrel in the same way. Mill had not known Carrel well, but he had made him a symbol of democratic uprightness and tenacity in the face of oligarchical evil—“the unapproachable Armand Carrel,” as he would say, a man with neither legislative nor any other public office, merely the editorship of a newspaper, who had made himself “the most powerful political leader of his age and country.”<sup>240</sup> In this there was some extravagance; it showed that, at thirty, Mill was still capable of responding to the romantic excitement that had taken him to Paris in August 1830 and which had been rekindled in Carrel’s presence three years later.

The long commemorative article appeared fifteen months after Carrel’s death, drawing on studies by Désiré Nisard and Emile Littré. Mill’s interpretation continued to be heightened: “The man whom not only his friends but his enemies, and all France, would have proclaimed President or Prime Minister with one voice. . . . Ripened by years and favoured by opportunity, he might have been the Mirabeau or the Washington of his age, or both in one.” (169, 170.) For this there really was no evidence, and others saw him more clearly.<sup>241</sup> Carrel seemed to Mill unusually practical for a Frenchman. His history of the English counter-revolution was judged superior to the works of Guizot and François Mazure. Again, in this article, Mill castigated the betrayers of 1830, the oligarchy who had fallen on public office “like tigers upon their prey” (192), against whom Carrel showed so well. Possessing the gifts of Mirabeau, “he could make men of all sorts, even foreigners, feel that they could have been loyal to him—that they could have served and followed him in life and death” (203). Mill pictured him as a moderate, pacific, single-minded republican who toward the end of his life sensibly came round to “demanding an extension of the suffrage; that vital point, the all-importance of which France has been so slow to recognise, and which it is so much to be regretted that he had not chosen from the first, instead of republicanism, to be the immediate aim of his political life” (209). Thus he was “a martyr to the morality and dignity of public discussion,” and a victim of “that low state of our civilisation” that makes a man defend his reputation “sword in hand, as in the barbarous ages” (212-13). His memory, Mill said, would live on with that of the events of 1830, but “the star of hope for France in any new convulsions, was extinguished when Carrel died” (211).

As review and commentary, the article was unusually emotional and lyrical. Mill told Molesworth: “I have written *con amore* & those who have seen it think it the best thing I have yet done. I never admired any man as I did Carrel; he was to my mind the type of a philosophic radical *man of action* in this epoch.”<sup>242</sup> The intense personal reaction he had to Carrel enabled him to set aside or rationalize much in his nature and his life that he might well have disapproved in another

man. He made of Carrel everything that a young liberal should be, even to coming round at the end to reflect a touch of the English radical. He had almost produced an example of that *croisement des races* he believed would be to the benefit of both peoples.

## TWO “GREAT HISTORICAL MINDS”

### MICHELET

Carrel had been secretary to Augustin Thierry in the mid-1820s, and it was Thierry who had called for a “historiography of French liberty,” documenting the thesis that liberty was old and that the middle class had been the bearer of the nation’s interest.<sup>243</sup> What Carrel might have done as historian of this theme, had he returned to his studies as he sometimes suggested he might, remains an open question. Another historian, for whom Thierry also paved the way, showed how uncertainly focused this romantic impulse was. Like Thierry, Jules Michelet wrote history to shape the present and future. As Thierry put it in 1817, “We are constantly being told to model ourselves on our forefathers. Why don’t we follow this advice! Our forefathers were the artisans who established the communes of the Middle Ages and who first conceived freedom as we understand it today.”<sup>244</sup> For Thierry and Carrel, writing history was a political act. But it is not sure that this was so for Michelet. If he shared Thierry’s passion for erudition and critical imagination, Michelet developed a history that was far more personal than the history of his contemporaries. He was to become the greatest of the philosophical and romantic historians. His origins and his trajectory were almost entirely different from theirs.

He had read enormously in literature and philosophy, the classics and contemporary authors, French, English, and German. He read Herder, he ever after claimed Vico as his master. Like the Saint-Simonians, he was in search of a system that would explain the meaning of human experience, and his chosen field finally was history. Between 1825 and 1831, he published three short summaries of European history for secondary instruction, an abridged translation of Vico’s *Scienza nuova* with his own commentary, an introduction to “universal history,” and a history of the Roman Republic. He was a professor at the Collège Sainte-Barbe from 1822 to 1827, a *maître de conférences* at the Ecole Normale from 1827 to 1837. Indeed, he had taught his budding *normaliens* at 6:30 in the mornings in order to be at the Tuileries by 8 o’clock to instruct the princesse Louise, daughter of the duchesse de Berry, in history. After the July Days he was similarly chosen to tutor Louis Philippe’s fifth child, the princesse Clémentine. A rising star after 1831, he lectured for Guizot (Minister of Public Education) at the Sorbonne from 1834 to 1836, and took up the *chaire d’histoire et de morale* at the Collège de France on 23 April, 1837. The most important post he held was as *chef de la section historique* in the Archives du Royaume (later Archives Nationales) from the autumn of 1830 until 1852. Though he had also written earlier on the history of France, from then on his broad concerns in history were narrowed down to the history of his own country. The result was the first six volumes of his *Histoire de France*, from the beginnings to the end of the Middle Ages, published between 1833 and 1844. He believed that a great age of historiogra-

phy was opening up; he was at the very centre of the collective historical enterprise sponsored by Guizot and supported by the state. Increasingly he came to regard France as the heart of the European experience and himself as the chosen historian of her past.<sup>245</sup>

Unlike his contemporaries, Michelet could not have claimed 1830 as his Revolution. While they were helping to topple the Bourbon monarchy, he was giving his courses. But reflection on the July Days led him to accept the legend of a spontaneous uprising with only one collective, nameless hero: the people. The theme of his *Introduction à l'histoire universelle*, published the following year, was the history of the world as the struggle and triumph of liberty. If the *Trois Glorieuses* later assumed in his mind an importance and an impact they had not had at the time, still reflection on them helped him to see the underlying theme of the national history he determined to write, the materials for which surrounded him at the Archives. In all this, he was initially the admirer and the protégé of Guizot. But he grew increasingly outspoken and radical, attacking the Church and the Jesuit Order, celebrating *le peuple* and eventually the French Revolution in a way that was uncongenial to the régime. Thus it was not surprising that, in the growing tension of the winter of 1847-48, Michelet should have been seen as a prophet of some great popular disturbance. In January 1848, his lectures at the Collège de France were suspended.

Mill was well aware of him. Had the *London and Westminster Review* continued, he said, he would have written “more than one article on Michelet, a writer of great & original views, very little known among us.”<sup>246</sup> Through d'Eichthal he received a letter from Michelet in April 1840, accompanied by two volumes of the *Histoire de France*, and he thanked him by the same route for his “admirable” work, with which he was “intimately acquainted” and for which he had “long felt the warmest admiration.” He hoped to review both these volumes and the earlier *Histoire de la république romaine*.<sup>247</sup> He then received the message that as Volume V of the *Histoire de France* was “si peu favorable aux Anglais,” Michelet was hoping that “la haute impartialité” of Mill would assure the volume a good reception in England. To this end he wished Mill to know that (a) where Joan of Arc and other matters were concerned, he had rigorously rejected the chronicles and based himself on the documents, and (b) though reputed to be “un homme d'imagination,” he was in fact “dominé par la passion de la vérité.”<sup>248</sup> How well Mill was acquainted with Michelet's personal opinions of England, save as they appeared in his work, and whether he knew Michelet had visited England in the summer of 1834 and found it as little attractive as he might have expected from his studies,<sup>249</sup> one may wonder. But he noted ironically of a letter from Michelet that it “proves to me by the extravagance of its compliments upon the letter I wrote to him, that if one gives a man exactly the sort of praise he wants to receive, one is sure of getting into his good graces.”<sup>250</sup> All the same, Michelet judged well in approaching Mill for an impartial review of a work that showed little appreciation of England other than as the anti-France that galvanized the disunited French into closing ranks and becoming one people.<sup>251</sup>

Mill was about to do four things: to make a familiar declaration about “the French school” of history; to proclaim a new star in the field of history; to emphasize again the shared French and English past of the Middle Ages; and to make a personal statement about his view of the past. He promised that his review would cause some of Napier's readers to “stare,”<sup>252</sup> but there was

little to surprise them. His opening salvo against the stagnation of historical studies in England (Carlyle's "signal example" apart) was familiar (219). Distinguishing the French as superior even to the Germans, Mill named Thierry, Guizot, and Michelet as "the three great historical minds of France, in our time" (221). All of them avoided "the first stage" of historical inquiry, i.e., judging the past by the standards of the present (222). All of them met the criteria of poetry and imagination characterizing "the second stage," i.e., producing a true "historical romance." Indeed, only the French "school of writers" (Carlyle and Niebuhr apart) passed this test (224, 225). And only Guizot had made "frequent and long incursions" into the "third, and the highest stage of historical investigation," i.e., the construction of "a science of history" to determine the fundamental law of cause and effect (228, 225). What little had been done toward "this greatest achievement" was mostly his contribution (225). Michelet's distinction, then, was something else: he was "the poet" of the "internal life" of the French people. He knew how to reveal "the spirit of an age," distilling it from the documents "by the chemistry of the writer's own mind" (233). He had done this for Rome, where Niebuhr had been silent. He did it for the Middle Ages, not without committing errors, but safeguarded by his "deep erudition, and extensive research" (233).<sup>253</sup> Entranced by his emphasis on geography and his sketches of the French provinces, Mill criticized Michelet only for taking Thierry's rediscovery of the "race of Gaels" and carrying the influence of race in history too far (235, 236).

Mill admitted that he was more concerned to publicize Michelet than to criticize him (254). Anthony Panizzi had given him a critical review the previous year. Mill had written Michelet to ask whether there was anything he would care to have communicated to the British public,<sup>254</sup> but there appears to have been no reply. The object was to have him read in England, to warn readers of the difficulties he presented and the unfamiliar conceits, "the personification of abstractions, to an almost startling extent" (255). Mill saw his great strengths and at least suspected his weakness.

After this review in 1844, Mill wrote nothing further of Michelet. On the later volumes of the *Histoire de France* he made no comment, and of the *Histoire de la révolution française*, written 1846-53, he said nothing. With its extreme nationalist fervour, almost religious celebration of "the people," and personification of revolution, it could hardly have appealed to him. By then, Michelet had left "the second stage" for some subjective realm of history outside Mill's scheme of things.<sup>255</sup> Mill was by no means unique in not foreseeing the direction Michelet's history was to take. Sponsored by Guizot, approved by Carrel, Michelet had seemed early on to be in sympathy with their views. His purposes, however, became increasingly nationalist, his vision narrowed, his mystic sense of himself embodying the past dithyrambic. What preoccupied him had little to do with the progress of civilization that concerned Mill.

Toward the end of his life, Mill noted that the French made too free with the phrase "the principles of the Revolution." It was the result of "an infirmity of the French mind which has been one main cause of the miscarriage of the French nation in its pursuit of liberty & progress, that of being led by phrases & treating abstractions as if they were realities which have a will & exert active power."<sup>256</sup> Almost certainly he thought Michelet a casualty of this defect. The origi-

nality and talent that he had recognized thirty years before in this review were clear. But there was in Michelet and his work a cast of mind profoundly antipathetical to Mill.<sup>257</sup>

## GUIZOT

Michelet owed much to Guizot: his position as royal tutor, his post at the Archives, his early opportunities at the Sorbonne, if not at the Collège de France. It was Guizot who suspended Michelet's lectures in 1847. Not remarkably, the protégé's estimate of his benefactor varied from one period to another: he both admired Guizot's work and dismissed it as grey. They could hardly have been more different. Though they had in common their commitment to written history as having a social purpose, their purposes were diametrically opposed.<sup>258</sup> Despite his clear reservations about the later work, Mill placed Michelet in the triumvirate with Augustin Thierry and Guizot, but he was clear that Guizot was the great historian of the age, "the one best adapted to this country." What raised him to the summit was the grasp he showed for "the main outline of history" (227, 228). Mill thought the framework he had established, showing the interplay of ideas and institutions, weighing the influence of Roman, Germanic, and Christian factors in European civilization, would endure. If history still had no Newton, Guizot was its "Kepler, and something more" (228). He accounted it one of his successes to "have dinned into people's ears that Guizot is a great thinker & writer," and so have been responsible for having him read in England.<sup>259</sup> Mill had not quite taken his measure at first. He seems to have discovered the historian, as distinct from the politician, about 1832. The first discussion of him was so infused with political comment that the exceptional historian Mill was shortly to proclaim was not easily recognized. Granting him "no ordinary knowledge of history" and "no ordinary powers of philosophizing" to analyse and explain, Mill criticized his understanding of the English constitution as "deficient." He had not even troubled to cross the Channel to inform himself. He was bracketed with the *doctrinaire* "speculators" who made 1688 their "*beau idéal*," purporting "to found their political wisdom principally on history, instead of looking to history merely for *suggestions*, to be brought to the test of a larger and surer experience."<sup>260</sup>

Guizot's political reputation with Mill rose and fell several times. Perceived on the eve of 1830 as a champion of liberty, he fell from grace in the first weeks of the new régime. In Mill's view, the brave workmen of Paris had driven Charles X out, only to see him replaced by the jobbers, including Guizot, "a favourer of the new Aristocracy."<sup>261</sup> Among the new men providing for themselves and their friends was the Minister of the Interior; none "had so numerous a *coterie* as Monsieur and Madame Guizot."<sup>262</sup> Out of office for two years after 2 November, Guizot and his friends were denounced as trimmers, seeking a middle way between reaction and progress.<sup>263</sup> As Minister of Public Education in Soult's cabinet, Guizot struck Mill as dogmatic, offensive, professorial, and "probably at the moment the most unpopular man in France."<sup>264</sup> Mill did not comment on his education law, but he was aware of the important historical and archival work he had set afoot. His politics then appeared to be less of an issue. Through the later 1830s Mill



transferred much of his former disapproval of Guizot to his fellow historian and political rival, Thiers.<sup>265</sup>

When Guizot left Paris to become Ambassador in London in February 1840 (and bide his time until Louis Philippe should summon him back to replace Thiers as Prime Minister), Mill was delighted. If Guizot knew of his caustic commentaries, he chose to overlook them. Visiting him, Mill found his conversation rewarding, up to his expectations, and his being in London “a real *événement*, for it makes our stupid incurious people read his books.” He thought one could see the difference between France and England by comparing their respective. “Conservative party” leaders, Guizot and Peel.<sup>266</sup> Mill’s direct contact was short-lived. The diplomatic crisis with Great Britain that was to destroy Thiers’s government ended Guizot’s embassy in October 1840; he soon became the dominant figure in Soult’s second cabinet until in 1847 he formed his own government that lasted until the Revolution of February 1848. Mill became deeply impressed, judging Guizot to be “the greatest public man living,” and he recanted his past opinions. “I cannot think without humiliation,” he wrote in 1840,

of some things I have written years ago of such a man as this, when I thought him a dishonest politician. I confounded the prudence of a wise man who lets some of his maxims go to sleep while the time is unpropitious for asserting them, with the laxity of principle which resigns them for personal advancement. Thank God I did not wait to know him personally in order to do him justice, for in 1838 & 1839 I saw that he had reasserted all his old principles at the first time at which he could do so with success & without compromising what in his view were more important principles still, I ought to have known better than to have imputed dishonourable inconsistency to a man whom I now see to have been consistent beyond any statesman of our time & altogether a model of the consistency of a statesman as distinguished from that of a fanatic.<sup>267</sup>

This extraordinary disavowal of his previous observations was not to be the last word. Even under the spell of immediate contact, Mill said, that though he honoured and venerated him above all contemporary statesmen, “I differ from many of his opinions.”<sup>268</sup> Some time later when Comte registered his complaints of mistreatment at the minister’s hands, Mill expressed his “impression pénible” that a great scholar should show “l’esprit de secte” toward a blameless philosopher.<sup>269</sup> A renewed reserve showed, whether because of the Comte affair or the unyielding domestic policies of the Soult-Guizot government. Explaining his inability to provide an introduction to Guizot for John Austin, he said his acquaintance with the minister was “so very slight,” and received Sarah Austin’s report of his “elevated moral character” coolly. Four years after the enthusiastic recognition of Guizot’s true distinction, Mill remarked evenly, “A man in such a position as his, acts under so many difficulties, and is mixed up in so many questionable transactions that one’s favourable opinion is continually liable to receive shocks, and I have for many years been oscillating in Guizot’s case between great esteem and considerable misgivings.” Still, he was ready to take the largest view, admitting, “If he was an angel he would be sure to be misunderstood in the place he is in. I do not know whether to wish or to deprecate [the possibility of] his being thrown out of it. . . .”<sup>270</sup>

That same year, 1845, Mill published his lengthy review of Guizot's essays and lectures. Ten years before he had commissioned the Rev. Joseph Blanco White to review the lectures. He had found White's paper "still wanting to give a complete notion of the nature & value of Guizot's historical speculations," and had himself added several pages at the beginning and the end.<sup>271</sup> In these pages Mill had condemned "the profoundly immoral, as well as despotic *régime* which France is now enduring." Calling the July Monarchy "an imitation" of the Empire, he had accused it of seducing France's distinguished men by office. He had had harsh words for Guizot:

In the capacity of a tool of this system, though we believe him to be greatly more sincere than most of the other tools, we have nothing to say for M. Guizot. But in the more honourable character which he had earned for himself as a professor and as a literary man, before practical politics assailed him with their temptations and their corrupting influences, he deserves to be regarded with very different feelings. (370.)

The puzzle was that, though deeply attached to his principles, he supported institutions that repressed them; he knew the dangers of power, but did nothing to save himself from them. "Alas! we must say of M. Guizot, what he so feelingly and truly has declared of Italy—'*Il lui manque la foi, la foi dans la vérité!*'" (392.)

Such had been Mill's sentiment at the beginning of 1836. Not quite a decade later, his long essay was free of censure of the politician. Rather, he cleared away the past with a reference to Guizot's work as Foreign Minister in resolving the Anglo-French crisis after 1840: the statesman "to whom perhaps more than to any other it is owing that Europe is now at peace" (259). Mill could then get on with the business of publicizing Guizot as the most significant historian of the age. It was high time: the printed lectures being discussed were first delivered almost a generation before.

After the ritual comparison of the state of historical studies in France, Germany, and England (even "insular England" was, thanks to Coleridge and "the Oxford school of theologians," stirring in the right direction [261]), Mill proposed that Guizot's chief quality was that he asked the right questions. Thus he had been able in the early essays to tell more about the fall of Rome than had Gibbon. The laws, not the chronicles, contained the clue, when despotism destroyed the middle-class *curiales*, it extinguished the Empire's vitality. Seeking the dynamic of civilization, Guizot found it in the "systematic antagonism" of ideas and institutions (269). The mark of Europe had always been complexity and competition. The spirit of liberty emerged not from the ancient world but from the barbarian invaders and was borne through the centuries by the struggles of the middle class. Mill accepted Guizot's organization of European history into "the period of confusion, the feudal period, and the modern period" (274), which became a received view in the nineteenth century. He followed his argument without serious disagreement, save for the explanation of feudalism's fall. This he thought unconvincing; he probably disliked its political implications. The feudal system succumbed, in Mill's view, not because unequal claims and unequal power led to unequal rights and so to the acceptance of royal authority, but because pressure was exerted from the monarch above and the freemen below, and because feudalism "contained within itself a sufficient mixture of authority and liberty, afforded sufficient protection to industry,

and encouragement and scope to the development of the human faculties, to enable the natural causes of social improvement to resume their course” (289).

“Writing the history of France,” Fustel de Coulanges was to say, “was a way of working for a party and fighting an adversary.”<sup>272</sup> If Mill observed as much, he did not comment on it. He could not know that Guizot told Charles de Rémusat that his lectures at the Sorbonne (in 1820) were designed to “multiply ‘doctrinaires’ under the very fire of the enemy.”<sup>273</sup> “On vient de suspendre mon cours,” Guizot wrote Barante, after the axe fell two years later. “Je regrette un peu cette petite tribune d’où j’exerçais encore quelque action directe sur des hommes qui se mêleront de l’avenir.”<sup>274</sup> Mill appears not to have discerned any narrow political or social purpose in Guizot’s interpretation of the contradictions of the past working themselves out: national reconciliation on the terms of those who had borne liberty through the centuries and were best qualified to assure it.<sup>275</sup> Guizot had affected an impartiality of tone unknown in Thierry, let alone Michelet. The essays and lectures appeared to be dispassionate, founded on immense reading, an explanation to a middle-class generation asking in the aftermath of an unprecedented cultural and political upheaval who they were and where they came from. Guizot saw himself engaged in the task of philosophical history, investigating not its “anatomy,” or its “physiognomy,” but its “physiology.” He was showing the interrelatedness of the events that made up the history of civilization. “Au commencement de ce cours,” he told the audience that attended his lectures on Saturday mornings, 1828-30:

je n’ai cherché que les résultats généraux, l’enchaînement des causes et des effets, le progrès de la civilisation, caché sous les scènes extérieures de l’histoire; quant aux scènes mêmes, j’ai supposé que vous les connaissiez. . . . L’histoire proprement dite enveloppe et couvre l’histoire de la civilisation. Celle-ci ne vous sera pas claire si l’autre ne vous est pas présente; je ne puis vous raconter les événemens et vous avez besoin de les savoir. . . .<sup>276</sup>

Mill noted certain exaggerations; he put them down to the necessities of the lecture. The breadth of Guizot’s generalizations seemed to place them above particular pleading. With Guizot’s argument that French civilization exemplified better than any other the very essence of civilization (“C’est la plus complète, la plus vraie, la plus civilisée, pour ainsi dire”)<sup>277</sup> Mill was in agreement. He did not so much question Guizot’s assumptions as share them. He, too, believed that history had a rational structure and so would yield to rational inquiry. He, too, believed that the history of Europe was the history of universal principles working their way through a variety of circumstances. Both of them believed in the phenomenon of the great man who affects the course of history in the service of the tendency of his time, who embodies the dominant principles of the age.

Guizot, however, was a Calvinist: he assumed the existence of God without claiming to know his motives or his precise effect on men’s actions. In opposition, deprived of his teaching post by the University, he had been inclined to minimize the latitude left to individuals. No other time, he said somewhat extravagantly, had been so marked by “l’empreinte de la fatalité.” Events seemed to happen by themselves: “jamais la conduite des choses humaines n’a plus complètement

échappé aux hommes. . . . Ils ne sont aujourd'hui que de vieilles marionnettes effacées, absolument étrangères aux scènes que la Providence leur fait jouer."<sup>278</sup> In office, however, the specific purposes of the Almighty appeared rather more clear. "La mission des gouvernements," Guizot told the Chamber on 3 May, 1837, "n'est pas laissée à leur choix, elle est réglée en haut. C'est la Providence qui détermine dans quelle étendue se passent les affaires d'un grand peuple."<sup>279</sup> And on the eve of assuming the powers of Prime Minister, in the eastern crisis of 1840, with war and peace in the balance, he reflected: "Nous sommes des instruments entre les mains d'une Puissance supérieure qui nous emploie, selon ou contre notre goût, à l'usage pour lequel elle nous a faits. . . ."<sup>280</sup> But Providence was remote, men were responsible, they made their own history. All they had to bear in mind were the natural limits to their presumptions: "La bonne politique consiste à reconnaître d'avance ces nécessités naturelles qui, méconnues, deviendraient plus tard des leçons divines, et à y conformer de bonne grâce sa conduite."<sup>281</sup> Mill would not have put it that way, of course, but Guizot's faith did not obviously intrude on his history. Despite the philosophy informing his conception of the past, he wrote something approaching what in the next century would be called "technical history."<sup>282</sup>

Mill's disappointment with Guizot's intransigent conservatism may have followed from unwillingness to recognize the implication of the historian's philosophy of history. The Germans, it has been said, conceived of history as "une lutte entre des principes opposées" without necessarily leading to the impasse of the July Monarchy.<sup>283</sup> That may be so, but undeniably there was a spaciousness and a cosmopolitanism in Guizot, an austere parade of certainty and equanimity in this early work that appealed to Mill.<sup>284</sup> He discerned consistency, comprehensiveness, maturity, the "entire absence of haste or crudity" as the hallmark of "a connected body of thought, speculations which, even in their unfinished state, may be ranked with the most valuable contributions yet made to universal history" (259). Possibly the fact that the lectures were incomplete, that the treacherous passages of modern history were not negotiated, averted more serious disagreement between Mill and Guizot. "The rapid sketch which occupies the concluding lectures of the first volume," Mill noted, "does little towards resolving any of the problems in which there is real difficulty" (290).

The "manière 'fataliste' d'envisager l'histoire"<sup>285</sup> that the pre-1830 liberals shared exercised an immense attraction for Mill partly because, to a point, he and they were bound on the same road, partly because they spoke so well and with such assurance. Guizot, as Sainte-Beuve said, put himself "insensiblement en lieu et place de la Providence."<sup>286</sup> A moralist, like Mill, he also saw the social destination in terms of political and constitutional arrangements. What Mill was evidently reluctant to concede—and how could it be proved true?—was the possibility that, in Emile Faguet's formula,

Il est bien rare que pour un homme politique l'histoire soit autre chose que de la politique rétrospective. Elle lui sert d'argument, de point de départ pour sa déduction, et de preuve à l'appui de ce qu'il veut lui faire dire. Elle est, à ses yeux, destinée à le justifier, à l'expliquer et à le préparer. Il est bien difficile que pour M. Guizot l'his-

toire universelle, ou au moins l'histoire moderne, ne soit pas une introduction au gouvernement de M. Guizot.<sup>287</sup>

In Mill, the reformer and the amateur of history were sometimes at odds. Guizot felt no such tension: the nineteenth century was the heir of a long struggle; the *juste milieu* must hold firm against careless new men and upstart ideologies. "L'histoire," he remarked, "abât les prétentions impatientes et soutient les longues espérances."<sup>288</sup> This appeal to something like a *moyenne* if not a *longue durée* was Guizot's principal attraction for Mill.<sup>289</sup> The immediate political and social implications of it for his own time posed a problem. Thus Mill wished always to separate the politician from the historian, save for the moment around 1840 when, suppressing his previous criticisms, he achieved an unstable rationalization of his doubts about the man. In this way he kept his clear and generous view of the historian.<sup>290</sup> Comparing him with Thierry, Mignet, Thiers, even with Vico, Herder and Condorcet, he considered Guizot to be "a man of a greater range of ideas and greater historical impartiality than most of these." For his "immortal Essays and Lectures" posterity would "forgive him the grave faults of his political career" (185, 186). Mill had many contradictory thoughts about Guizot, but there is no reason to think he ever went back on that.

## MILL AND THE END OF THE JULY MONARCHY

Coming to terms with Guizot, as he seemed to do from the late 1830s, Mill was trying to come to terms with the July Monarchy. As the years passed and his health became indifferent, it was more difficult to sustain the same concern. The young liberals of the Bourbon restoration had dispersed variously to university chairs, archives, the ministerial bench. Saint-Simonism, imaginative and farsighted, so clear about what had actually happened in 1830, had quickly burnt itself out in sectarianism and scattered, part of it to pursue bizarre eccentricities, part of it powerfully to influence the national economy. Comte, like the Saint-Simonians, had revealed a strong anti-libertarian streak and been dropped. Carrel was dead. With Tocqueville relations were more distant. The press remained vigorous and combative. Though Marrast had grown more moderate after his period of exile in England, new opposition papers sprang up. The King and his ministers were harried without cease.<sup>291</sup> Still, history was not repeating itself. Mill observed the scene more remotely. He maintained contact with a few friends in France, but he had little to say.

## DUVEYRIER

Three years older than Mill, Duveyrier had come into his life with Gustave d'Eichthal as co-leader of the first mission sent by Père Enfantin to bring about the conversion of England. The Saint-Simonians believed that amidst the Reform Bill agitation England was about to pull down the last bastions of feudal power and so offer herself to the new teaching. Without having encouraged their embassy, Mill had been helpful once they arrived and handed them on to people

he supposed might hear them out. He had made it plain he was unlikely to become a convert, though he read *Le Globe*, considered them “decidedly *à la tête de la civilisation*,” and thought their organization would one day be “the final and permanent condition of the human race.” He admired them and wished them well, but he kept his distance; their doctrine was “only *one* among a variety of interesting and important features in the time we live in.”<sup>292</sup> Their optimistic reports to *Enfantin* were belied; England was not ripe. Mill did not make good his promise of articles on them for the *Morning Chronicle*. In the scandal of their prosecution, Duveyrier was specifically charged with outrage for the article “De la femme” he published in *Le Globe* in 1832 shortly before it ceased publication. Mill was cool, perhaps sensing the oddly regimented and ritualistic social arrangements in the barracks at Ménilmontant (lights out at 9:30 p.m., reveille at 4:30 a.m.).<sup>293</sup> Nearly everything about the dispensation at Ménilmontant must have seemed alien to Mill, not merely the flamboyant dress and liturgy of the sect, but also the untoward scenes its exercises provoked when thousands of Parisians flocked out to observe the public rites of its priesthood.

In the trial, which took place on 27 and 28 August, 1832, Duveyrier had a prominent role. The son of the *premier président* of the Cour Royale at Montpellier, he had studied the Christian mystics and, in observance of the Saint-Simonian rule that each member proclaim his acceptance of responsibility before God and man by bearing his name on his breast, had affected the inscription “Charles, poète de Dieu.” At one moment during the proceedings, he caused a sensation by pointing to a group of lawyers in the visitors’ section of the courtroom and shouting, “I told them when I came in that I am being charged with saying that everyone was living in a state of prostitution and adultery, but you are in fact all living in that state. Well, have the courage to say so out loud. That is the only way you can defend us.”<sup>294</sup> Like *Enfantin* and Michel Chevalier, Duveyrier was sentenced to a year in prison and a fine of 1000 francs. The organization was ordered dissolved. Duveyrier, however, obtained a pardon through his family, probably, as Mill supposed, by renouncing allegiance to *Enfantin*.<sup>295</sup> With d’Eichthal, he went off to Naples for a time before returning to Paris and a career in journalism and writing for the theatre. He assured Mill that although he had not changed “a single opinion,” he had changed “his whole line of conduct.”<sup>296</sup> Mill, however, appeared to be more surprised than pleased by the news of Duveyrier’s apparent defection. The report that some of the faithful had set out for the Bosphorus “*pour chercher la femme libre* suggested greater madness than I had imputed to them.”<sup>297</sup>

Mill’s correspondence contains no further reference to him, but he evidently kept up with Duveyrier’s activity. Two books appeared, the first in 1842 and the second in 1843. In the spring of 1844, Mill began his article on the second of them, *Lettres politiques*, a collection of Duveyrier’s pamphlets. He told Napier, “It is the last I mean to write, for the present on any French topic—& its subject is, not French history or literature, but present French politics, introducing, however, remarks & speculations of a more general character.”<sup>298</sup> This was one more mirror held up to view the reflection of representative government and its dilemmas in the aftermath of the Revolution and in the presence of democracy.

France remained instructive because it had swept away all the institutions other nations were then only dismantling and had a “passion for equality almost as strong” as that of the United States (297). Disapproving Duveyrier’s flattery of the crown and the government, Mill was more open to his acceptance of the existing constitution and his insistence that the question was how to make the system work efficiently, how to free electors, ministers, and people from the burden of corruption. Everywhere, including England, “Sincere Democrats are beginning to doubt whether the *desideratum* is so much an increased influence of popular opinion, as a more enlightened use of the power which it already possesses.” But he condemned the narrow suffrage in France, the repressive legislation, “the disgraceful manner” in which the system worked (300). He was receptive to Duveyrier’s suggestion that the landed proprietors should be encouraged back into public life alongside the bourgeoisie; that trained functionaries be guaranteed “fixity,” responsibility, and adequate salaries; and that the electoral process be permitted to operate absolutely without official meddling. He remarked that this vision of a society presided over by a neo-Saint-Simonian élite was “a favourable specimen” of French thought applied to the practical problems of government (313).

To Duveyrier’s parallel argument that, since the old foreign policies were as defunct as the old régimes, France must abandon territorial ambitions and the revanchism dating from 1815 and join with the other great powers to bring about political and economic peace through arbitration and mediation, Mill was not receptive. He thought such interventionism unwise, though superior to war. He gave no hint of anticipating the trend of international co-operation that was to gather strength through the second half of the century.<sup>299</sup> Nor did he show confidence in Duveyrier’s suggestions that government arbitrate labour-management disputes, though he approved the programme of “*justice and compromise*.” The tone here was quiet, interested, but faintly disabused. Mill neither accepted the political quiescence of Duveyrier nor suggested the need for drastic change. He believed that the problems of representation were similar in England and France, but more sharply defined and more clearly observed in the French context. Neither Duveyrier nor Mill gave the least hint of an upheaval soon to come. Duveyrier argued specifically against the utility of another such event. It would be more than a dozen years before Mill conceded, not just for England with its tradition of compromise and its history of successful opposition to monarchical absolutism, but for every nation, the rightness of working for improvement within the prevailing arrangements.<sup>300</sup> But it was less Charles Duveyrier, or John Austin, than the events of 1848 that convinced him.

## MILL AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1848

Ten months before Louis Philippe was forced to abdicate, Mill remarked to Austin that while doubtless he, living in France, was “much impressed with the unfavourable side” of France after a number of revolutions, with vulgar lower-class ambition and other “disgusting” manners, he (Mill) often thought England’s “torpid mind” would profit from “the general shake-up” of revolution. He gave no hint of thinking that France would profit from a renewal of the experience. In

April 1847, the overall prospect there struck him as fair: the people were generally free of tyranny, justice was “easily accessible,” and there were “the strongest inducements to personal prudence & forethought.” Not even a well-intentioned government, but only revolution (that is, 1830) could have achieved as much.<sup>301</sup> He seemed to be reassessing the July Monarchy again. The remarks were puzzling. Mill made no allusion to the serious depression of 1845-47: an immense fall in French production, large-scale unemployment, a substantial part of the swollen population in the capital on relief, great rural distress and unrest. In three months the first of the electoral reform banquets, devised to circumvent the restrictive law on political associations, was held on 9 July at the Château-Rouge, the famous dancehall in Montmartre, with 1200 constituents and eighty-five deputies in attendance; almost seventy banquets took place outside Paris before the end of the year. Mill of course was by no means exceptional in apprehending no general crisis; others closer to the scene than he were hardly less unaware.<sup>302</sup> But his observations were indicative of the concentration of his thought on the political process. He had never looked very far past the political scene in the capital. Thus he missed the profound movement that was taking place in the country. He followed the press to some extent, a steady diet of scandal and complaint, an endless skirmishing between the government and the opposition. There is no evidence that he noted the near-unity of the varieties of opposition in the banquet campaign as a possible signal that a trial of strength was at hand.

The explosion took him by surprise. Guizot was dismissed on 23 February; the King abdicated next day. “I am hardly yet out of breath from reading and thinking about it,” Mill reported on 29 February. “Nothing can possibly exceed the importance of it to the world or the immensity of the interests which are at stake on its success.” He saw the Revolution in political terms: the King and his ministers had provoked “the people” by forbidding the Paris banquet; the republicans had triumphed “because *at last* they had the good sense to raise the standard not of a republic but of something in which the middle classes could join, viz., electoral reform.” Should they succeed in creating “reasonable republican government, all the rest of Europe, except England and Russia, will be republicanised in ten years, and England itself probably before we die.” But he saw three problems ahead: the possibility of war, the matter of socialism, the question of leadership. First, Lamartine might be propelled into war with Austria as the result of popular pressure to help the Milanese expel the Habsburg occupant from Lombardy. Second, “Communism,” by which he evidently meant everything from Fourierism to Proudhonism,<sup>303</sup> had taken “deep root” in the country and in the republican ranks. How, despite the vague announcement that the Provisional Government would establish *ateliers nationaux*, would the new men make good their promise to provide “work and good wages to the whole labouring class”? Third, Marrast and even the former Orleanist Lamartine (“who would ever have thought it—Lamartine!”) were well enough as ministers, but something was missing: “In my meditations and feelings on the whole matter, every second thought has been of Carrel—he who perhaps alone in Europe was qualified to direct such a movement. . . . Without Carrel, or, I fear, any one comparable to him, the futurity of France and of Europe is most doubtful.” His words suggested again the excitement of 1830, but muted, infused with only a limited awareness of the enormous social problems, quali-



fied by doubt about the middle-aged men of the Provisional Government. “There never was a time,” Mill thought, “when so great a drama was being played out in one generation.”<sup>304</sup>

After Lamartine had moved to assure Europe that France would not abet a war of Italian liberation,<sup>305</sup> Mill was satisfied the government would act wisely. If there was to be “a good deal of experimental legislation, some of it not very prudent,” he noted unenthusiastically, “there cannot be a better place to try such experiments in than France.” He was sure that the “regulation of industry in behalf of the labourers” would fail as it had “in behalf of the capitalist,” or at least be trimmed to “its proper limits.” But he was greatly confident that what would be tried “relating to labour & wages” would “end in good.”<sup>306</sup> In early March he made a public defence of the government’s action in the *Spectator*.<sup>307</sup> But through the stormy spring of demonstrations, attempted coups, intense debate on the social question, national elections with universal male suffrage, and rising discontent among the swiftly growing army of the urban unemployed, he made no further comment.

As it happened, the drama of the Revolution was reaching its climax with the elections to a National Assembly. The broad tide of rural conservatism that came in was in protest against neglect of the interests of the countryside by an urban leadership. Mill’s reaction is not recorded.<sup>308</sup> To judge from Harriet Taylor’s remarks, however,<sup>309</sup> he may well have approved of, first, the moderate course pursued against radical opinion, and, second, the conservative Executive Commission selected by the Assembly to replace the Provisional Government. In his view, Lamartine, now out of office, had done no more than repeat the Girondist strategy of calling in provincial France to hold the line against the revolutionary political clubs of Paris. In fact, the Revolution was now bound on a course leading to destruction of the Republic.

Mill followed events distantly. He knew that Marrast was no longer at the *National*, had left the Government, and was Mayor of Paris (he was also the real leader of the majority in the Executive Commission). Mill nevertheless sent him a copy of his *Principles of Political Economy*, published on 25 April, saying he knew Marrast might not have time to read it but might perhaps have others do so, and asked if he could use his influence to have the *National* take his articles, as “lettres d’un Anglais,” which would be done in the newspaper’s style. The moment was as ill-chosen as Mill’s expression of his “sympathie profonde” for “l’oeuvre de régénération sociale qui se poursuit maintenant en France” was inappropriate to the reaction then under way in the country, the Assembly, and the Government, and to which Marrast was no stranger.<sup>310</sup> The Mayor was up to his neck in politics and the situation in Paris was extremely volatile. Within a few days, on 15 May, an abortive left-wing *coup d’état* occurred: the Assembly was invaded by a mob and some of the crowd went on to the Hôtel de Ville. There the security chief, an old friend of one of the leaders, Armand Barbès, admitted this rag-tag band. Marrast was evidently not very upset; he temporized, summoned military assistance, and at length sent word through his secretary that the invaders should leave: “Que Barbès fasse au plus tôt cesser cette comédie, il va être arrêté d’un moment à l’autre.”<sup>311</sup> It was farce, but it was indicative of what was on Marrast’s mind.

Mill could have no knowledge of the extraordinary political manoeuvres in Paris. When he assured Marrast of his “sympathie profonde,” he could not have understood that the tide had

turned. Alarmed by the numbers of unemployed men in the city, the government announced its intention of closing the *ateliers nationaux*. With that, a spontaneous working-class insurrection was mounted against it, on 23-26 June. The pitched battles that took place made it the bloodiest fratricidal rising the capital had known. The government was legitimately defending itself, but the repression was severe and the social fears unleashed were exaggerated. A confusion of motives and hostilities were at the origin of this disastrous collision, in the course of which the Executive Commission retired, leaving General Eugène Cavaignac chief of the executive power, for all practical purposes dictator, with a new ministry round him.<sup>312</sup> Mill made no comment, but in August he lashed out publicly against the English enemies of the Republic and the misrepresentation of events. Alluding to the régime's "first difficulties" and the dangers of "an indefinite succession of disorders, repressed only by a succession of illegal violences on the part of the government," he denied (mistakenly) tales of "horrible barbarity" having taken place in the June Days. He had confidence in the "mildness and moderation of the sincere republican party," and in Cavaignac.<sup>313</sup> But he saw the possibility that such troubles would result in the French permitting their Republic "to be filched from them by artifice . . . under the ascendancy of some popular chief, or under the panic caused by insurrection."<sup>314</sup>

Within days, this rough prophecy began to be borne out. Mill was particularly sensitive to the attack on the press, asking whether in such circumstances Socialists and Monarchists could "be reproached for using their arms."<sup>315</sup> His sympathies lay with Lamartine (whose *Histoire des Girondins* he had been reading with approval), the former Provisional Government, "and many of the party who adhere to them." He was favourable also to the Jacobin-Socialist Louis Blanc,<sup>316</sup> a member of the February ministry, author of the *droit au travail* decree ("Le Gouvernement provisoire de la République française s'engage à garantir l'existence de l'ouvrier par le travail . . .") that had been forced on the moderate ministers on 25 February by fear of the street crowds to whom Blanc owed his ministerial post. As President of the ill-starred Commission du Luxembourg that sought unsuccessfully to grapple with unemployment and the whole range of industrial relations until it and the *ateliers nationaux* (more akin, in the event, to *ateliers de charité*) could be shut down in June, Blanc found himself falsely accused of aiding and abetting Armand Barbès and those on the extreme left who had staged the futile *coup d'état manqué* of 15 May. In the immediate aftermath of the June Days, Marrast led the attack on him: he was indicted in the prevailing reaction that had developed steadily following the conservative results of the general election for a Constituent Assembly on 23 April. On 26 August, the Assembly voted to lift Blanc's parliamentary immunity so that he could be tried on charges of having conspired with the crowd that invaded the Assembly on 15 May. Whether or not the confused events of that day were a trap sprung by the right (among the noisy demonstrators was the police-spy Aloysius Huber), Blanc, despite the appeals made to him to join the *émeutiers*, neither instigated nor encouraged the invasion of the Palais Bourbon and was not even present at the Hôtel de Ville. Rather than stand trial in the unpromising climate of opinion, he slipped away and was permitted to take the train to Ghent; he was arrested there briefly, and then at once crossed over to England.<sup>317</sup>

Blanc's was a singular case: since the publication of his *L'organisation du travail* (1840), he had been peculiarly marked out for retribution by those who feared and hated his proposals for social

reform, the popular forces that put him into the Provisional Government in February, and the implications, at least, of the Luxembourg Commission and the workshops. Mill, without the possibility of knowing in detail what had happened during the months since February, considered Blanc and the other former ministers to be exemplary tribunes. But it was too late for them. In the election for the presidency of the Republic that December, Lamartine was swept aside, the radical candidates trailed distantly, and even Cavaignac was handily defeated by Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. The great mass of the electorate, peasants, voted against the republicans they blamed for disregarding their grievances and increasing their taxes; they voted for a legendary name, as did much of the urban population and a majority of the political *notables*. “It is a great deal,” Guizot observed, “to be simultaneously a national glory, a revolutionary guarantee, and a principle of authority.”<sup>318</sup>

In this situation, Mill’s energies were given to defending the defunct February régime against its Tory critics; it was one more skirmish on behalf of reform. Outdistanced by events in France, won over by what he called the “*legitimate* Socialism” of Louis Blanc,<sup>319</sup> he attacked Brougham’s version of the Revolution: Brougham’s assessment of the Provisional Government was a caricature, and his estimate of Guizot’s ministry exaggeratedly favourable; and thus the outbreak of revolution in his account was virtually inexplicable. In Mill’s view, the spirit of compromise and justice Duveyrier had proposed France must accept had not been realized; the Republic had come too soon, preceded by too little education for it and too great a fear of 1793. The Lamartine government had done the best they could in the situation with which they had been confronted. His analysis was political; he showed no strong sense of the social dimensions of the upheaval. “Their great task,” he said, “was to republicanize the public mind” (335). If there were errors, they were committed less by the government than by the political clubs. If Lamartine had served notice that the treaties of 1814-15 must be revised and that suppressed nationalities had the right to seek military assistance for their liberation, still the government’s foreign policy had been peaceful.

Mill met criticism of the *droit au travail* decree by arguing that such a right was absolute, though practicable only where men gave up the other right “of propagating the species at their own discretion” (350). He asserted the justice of socialism and the need for the state to create “industrial communities on the Socialist principle” (352), if only as an educational experience. Mill knew little of the intrigues about the *ateliers nationaux*, which he defended, as he cleared Blanc of responsibility for their closing. Once again, his point was that the experiment had been made before adequate preparation could take place.<sup>320</sup> It had divided republicans and terrified the bourgeoisie: “These things are lamentable; but the fatality of circumstances, more than the misconduct of individuals is responsible for them” (354). Finally, he took issue with Brougham’s insular view that sound political institutions cannot be legislated into existence. His answer was that, ready or not for the Republic, France had to attempt the experiment. He did not regret the Assembly’s decision to abandon a second chamber in the new constitution adopted in November 1848. He thought universal suffrage had, if anything, returned too conservative a majority. Far from blindly following Paris, the provinces had too much curbed the city, “almost the sole element of progress which exists, politically speaking, in France” (360). Though he accepted

Brougham's view that no legislature should try to exercise executive power, he opposed popular election of the chief of government as being unlikely to select an eminent politician. This, of course, Louis Napoleon had not been. And he predicted accurately that "the appointment of a President by the direct suffrages of the community, will prove to be the most serious mistake which the framers of the French Constitution have made" (362).

Within the limits of what could then be known, Mill's discussion was fair enough. But he perceived the great rural and urban problems dimly; his concern was with representative government. Continental socialism had thrust itself on his attention late in the day: he had been ambivalent about Fourier and hostile to Proudhon, he knew little of Cabet and Blanc until 1848.<sup>321</sup> His vision of the Provisional Government was simplistic; he saw Lamartine somewhat through the haze of his highly coloured *Histoire des Girondins*; he made no comment on Marrast's evolution from radical journalism to the defence of law and order at the Hôtel de Ville.<sup>322</sup> His implied point of reference seemed to be 1789-91, modified by the appearance of "legitimate Socialism." Disappointment was inevitable. He nonetheless discerned warning signs, and was confirmed sooner than he anticipated by Louis Napoleon's progress to dictatorship. Carrel had been tempted by Bonapartism; Mill never was. Louis Napoleon he branded "a stupid, ignorant adventurer who has thrown himself entirely into the hands of the reactionary party, &, but that he is too great a fool, would have some chance by these means of making himself emperor."<sup>323</sup> There, of course, he was wrong. He did not guess that this man could calmly, with little artifice and no panic, "filch" the Republic.<sup>324</sup> He was wrong in imagining that Victor Considérant and the Fourierists (among socialists "much the most sensible and enlightened both in the destructive, & in the constructive parts of their system")<sup>325</sup> could seriously weigh upon the proceedings in the Assembly.

Not least, Mill did not see that the tremendous power of the liberal press, durable and resilient, had almost come to an end. He did not understand what it meant that the *National* had become the unofficial newspaper of the Provisional Government: that men like Marrast had become part of the new establishment. He was disturbed by the repression of the opposition journals, but did not fully grasp that universal suffrage had swept the *petite* and *moyenne* bourgeoisies aside. He did not see what it meant that Bonaparte had been elected President against the majority of the press, that the extraordinary force it had been ever since 1814 was finished.<sup>326</sup> Perhaps the surface indications were misleading. The constitution of 4 November, 1848, was the most democratic France had ever had, with universal manhood suffrage, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of petition. Even the *droit au travail* was alluded to in the preamble.<sup>327</sup> A revolution had taken place. But Cavaignac, for one, doubted that the country was republican, and the election of Louis Napoleon suggested he was right. Pressed to pre-empt the election results by *coup d'état*, Cavaignac refused: the Republic might succumb, he said, but it would rise again, "whereas the republic would be lost forever if the one who represented it should give the example of revolt against the will of the country."<sup>328</sup> It was left to Mill's friend, Marrast, President of the Assembly, to proclaim Bonaparte President of the Republic. "Tocqueville," the British Ambassador, Lord Normanby, noted in his diary the next day, "rather quaintly, said to me yesterday, 'There only remains now one question, whether it is the Republicans or the Republic itself which the country cannot abide.'"<sup>329</sup>

By the summer of 1851, Mill was “for the first time downhearted about French affairs.”<sup>330</sup> When, some time later, Louis Napoleon made himself dictator, then Emperor, and finally the ally of England, he was pained. The Revolution of 1848 faded into the past. The only point of its being recalled in Normanby’s memoirs, with their “calomnies ridicules et atroces,” Mill wrote, was that they offered Louis Blanc an opportunity to set the record straight.<sup>331</sup> The new Girondins, Lamartine and his colleagues, had tried the experiment; France had not been ready for it. So tyranny once more settled on the country. And if the government of England had progressed so little as barely to restrain itself from co-operating in running Napoleon’s enemies to the ground, “such is the state of the world ten years after 1848 that even this must be felt as a great victory.”<sup>332</sup>

For more than twenty years, Mill had observed and commented on the politics of contemporary France, had studied and sought to explain to Englishmen the constructive nature of the great Revolution in whose name much of the social and political struggle of the nineteenth century was taking place. The young French historians who boldly celebrated the Revolution as prologue to the apparent triumph of liberalism forty or so years later, or who explained the present as the outcome of the liberal impulse working its way through the centuries, he acclaimed as the best of the time. The French scene was animated, creative, disputatious, sometimes explosive, but always instructive. It was his self-imposed task to try to make Englishmen see through the haze of their insularities and prejudices the essential lessons that France offered to all who shared in the common civilization. Some part of his special certainty about the relevance of France to English society flowed from his own peculiar acquaintance with the land and the people and their thought; some part was surely no more than the intelligent appraisal of intrinsic fact. But time carried away both the observer and the observed. As the mid-century approached, it was apparent to him that the Revolution was more complex and its meaning more ambiguous than he had thought; it was clear that the young philosophical historians had begun to take their place in the historiographical museum, that their works were after all *pièces d’occasion*; it was evident that the imminent triumph of liberalism had again been delayed and that other struggles must one day be fought; it was obvious that Mill’s own interest in history had shifted onto quite another plane of regularities and laws and predictive capacity, leaving the Revolution and its portents not so much diminished as more spaciously situated in a vast ongoing historical process.

Despite his didactic purpose and immediate political and social concerns, Mill was too good a student of the past to permit disappointments and setbacks to break his commitment to France as the touchstone of Europe. He was far from being uncritical, he was by no means unprejudiced, he had his blind-spots. But he never went back on his conviction that, whatever the aberration of the moment, France and its destiny were central to civilization. By 1849, many hopes had foundered, and he felt it keenly that men had failed or been removed prematurely from the scene. He knew that the immense expectations of 1830 would never come again, that the social and political process was infinitely more complex and its desired outcome infinitely less assured in the foreseeable future than he and his young friends had imagined in the excitements of Paris that summer nearly twenty years before. He remained watchful but publicly silent, his former impulse to

interpret the news from France now quite gone. For Mill at the mid-century, great swings of hopefulness and despair concerning France and democracy lay ahead, but for the moment that was all.

## Endnotes

[1] John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*, in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill [CW]*, I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 59, 63. On the year in France, see *John Mill's Boyhood Visit to France*, ed. Anna J. Mill (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), and Iris Wessel Mueller, *John Stuart Mill and French Thought* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), 2-10.

[2] Journal, 22 June, and Notebook, 27 May, 1820, in *John Mill's Boyhood Visit to France*, 22, 105-6.

[3] *Autobiography*, CW, I, 63.

[4] Letter of James Mill to Francis Place of 6 Sept., 1815, Place Collection, BL Add. MSS. 35152 ff60r.

[5] "It is commonly said that the French are an idle people, this I do not think true. . . ." (Notebook, 27 May, 1820, in *John Mill's Boyhood Visit to France*, 105).

[6] *Autobiography*, CW, I, 63.

[7] Mueller states that Mill was evidently "unaware of the lasting influence this early experience was to have on him" (*Mill and French Thought*, 8), but it is not clear that merely meeting Saint-Simon had any influence on him at all.

[8] Letter to Harriet Mill, in *The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill [LL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, *CW*, XIV-XVII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XIV, 263 (22 Dec., 1854).

[9] "Periodical Literature. Edinburgh Review" (1824), *CW*, I, 301-2, 304-5, 307-11.

[10] D'Eichthal to Dr. Henry (26 Nov., 1873), quoted in Gustave d'Eichthal, *A French Sociologist Looks at Britain Gustave d'Eichthal and British Society in 1828*, trans. and ed. Barrie M. Ratcliffe and W.H. Chaloner (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), 3n. On d'Eichthal, see the editors' "Gustave d'Eichthal (1802-1886). An Intellectual Portrait," *ibid.*, 109-61.

[11] *Autobiography*, CW, I, 111, 137.

[12] *Ibid.*, 171, 173.

[13] "The Reorganisation of the European Community; or, The Necessity and the Means of Uniting the Peoples of Europe in a Single Body While Preserving for Each of Them Their Inde-

pendence, by the comte de St. Simon and A. Thierry, His Pupil, Oct. 1814,” in Henri de Saint-Simon, *Selected Writings*, ed. and trans. F.M.H. Markham (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952), 30-1, 50-1.

[14] This was the revised edition of the essay Comte had first published in 1822, and which contained the germ of his philosophical and historical thought, to which Mill would be infinitely more receptive after 1830. It is reprinted in *Système de politique positive, ou Traité de sociologie, instituant la religion de l'humanité*, 4 vols. (Paris: Carilian-Goeury and Dalmont, *et al.*, 1851-54), IV, Appendice générale, 47-136. Letter to d'Eichthal, in *The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill [EL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, *CW*, XII-XIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), XII, 34-8 (8 Oct., 1829). On Mill and the Saint-Simonians, see Mueller, *Mill and French Thought*, 48-91, and Richard K.P. Pankhurst, *The Saint-Simonians, Mill and Carlyle: A Preface to Modern Thought* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1957), *passim*. There is no direct evidence, but one may suspect that he found the opening passages of the public lectures unsettling. “C'est au milieu de ces deux armées que nous venons apporter la paix, en annonçant une doctrine qui ne prêche pas *seulement l'horreur du sang*, mais l'horreur de la lutte, sous quelque nom qu'elle se déguise. *Antagonisme*, entre un pouvoir spirituel et un pouvoir temporel, *opposition*, en l'honneur de la liberté, *concurrence*, pour le plus grand bien de tous, nous ne croyons à la nécessité éternelle d'aucune de ces machines de guerre . . .” (*Doctrine de Saint-Simon Exposition, Première année, 1829*, new ed., intro. and notes by C. Bouglé and Elie Halévy [Paris: Rivière, 1924], 122.) Cf. Frank E. Manuel. *The Prophets of Paris* (Cambridge: Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 158-9. D.G. Charlton, *Secular Religions in France, 1815-1870* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 65-79, and Georg G. Iggers, *The Cult of Authority, The Political Philosophy of the Saint-Simonians: A Chapter in the History of Totalitarianism* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1958), *passim*.

[15] Letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW*, XII, 45-9 (9 Feb., 1830).

[16] Letter to d'Eichthal, *ibid.*, 49-50 (6 Mar., 1830).

[17] *Autobiography, CW*, I, 137, 143, 169.

[18] Letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW*, XII, 71 (1 Mar., 1831), Mill, “The Spirit of the Age,” *Examiner*, 9 Jan.-29 May, 1831, 20-1, 50-2, 82-4, 162-3, 210-11, 307, 339-41.

[19] Letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW*, XII, 88-9 (30 Nov., 1831).

[20] Summary of French news, *Examiner*, 29 Jan., 1832, 72-3.

[21] Letter to Thomas Carlyle, *EL, CW*, XII, 106 (29 May, 1832), letter to d'Eichthal and Duveyrier, *ibid.*, 107-9 (30 May, 1832). On life at Ménilmontant, see Sébastien Charléty, *Histoire du Saint-Simonisme (1825-1864)* (Paris: Hartmann, 1931), 161-75.

[22] Letter to Carlyle, *EL, CW*, XII, 120 (17 Sept., 1832); summary of French news, *Examiner*, 9 Sept., 1832, 585. On the trial, see Charléty, *Histoire du Saint-Simonisme*, 175-85, and Louis Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans, 1830-1840*, 12th ed., 5 vols. (Paris: Baillièrre, 1877), III, 319-38.

[23] The empty chair beside Infantin's, reserved for the *Mère-Messie*, seems to have been offered to George Sand, but, sympathetic as she was to the movement, she had doubts about the place of women in it: “Je n'ai pas encore trouvé une solution aux doutes de tout genre qui rem-

plissent mon esprit, et je ne saurais en accepter aucune que je n'eusse bien examinée" (letter to Marie Talon of 10 Nov., 1834, in George Sand, *Correspondance*, 17 vols. [Paris: Garnier, 1964-83], II, 739-40).

[24] Letter to Carlyle, *EL, CW, XII*, 150-1 (11-12 Apr., 1833).

[25] Review of St. Simonism in London, *Examiner*, 2 Feb., 1834, 68; Mueller, Mill and French Thought, 48-91; cf. John M. Robson, *The Improvement of Mankind. The Social and Political Thought of John Stuart Mill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), 76-80.

[26] Letter to Robert Barclay Fox, *EL, CW, XIII*, 473 (6 May, 1841).

[27] "It is not enough," Emile Péreire, the future banker and railway magnate, is said to have told Armand Carrel when he left the *National* in 1835, "to outline gigantic programs on paper, I must write my idea on the earth" (Rondo E. Cameron, *France and the Economic Development of Europe, 1800-1914. Conquest of Peace and Seeds of War* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961], 134, see Charléty, *Histoire du Saint-Simonisme*, 205-63).

[28] Letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW, XII*, 45 (9 Feb., 1830), *Autobiography, CW, I*, 171.

[29] Letter to R.B. Fox, *EL, CW, XIII*, 563-4 (19 Dec., 1842).

[30] Letters to d'Eichthal, *ibid.*, XII, 34, 35-8 (15 May, 8 Oct., 1829), on Comte and Mill, see Walter M. Simon, *European Positivism in the Nineteenth Century: An Essay in Intellectual History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), 172-201. Bruce Mazlish, *James and John Stuart Mill Father and Son in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), 255-62.

[31] Letter to John Pringle Nichol, *CW, XII*, 363 (2 Dec., 1837).

[32] Letter to Alexander Bain, *ibid.*, XIII, 487 (Autumn 1841), he read Comte's work, he recalled, "with avidity" (*Autobiography, CW, I*, 217).

[33] "Auguste Comte and Positivism" (1865), *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society, CW, X* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 308.

[34] Letter to Auguste Comte., *CW, XIII*, 585 (15 June, 1843). Mill did not then send him any money; see letter to John Austin, *ibid.*, 714 (13 Apr., 1847). In December, 1848, however, he made a single contribution; see letter to Emile Littré, *ibid.*, 741 (22 Dec., 1848).

[35] *Ibid.*, 742, Simon, European Positivism, 186-90, *Autobiography, CW, I*, 173, 271-2.

[36] Letter to Sarah Austin, *EL, CW, XIII*, 654 (18 Jan., 1845), Simon, *European Positivism*, 186-91.

[37] Harriet Taylor to Mill (c. 1844), in Friedrich A. Hayek, *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor. Their Friendship and Subsequent Marriage* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), 114.

[38] Letter to Nichol, *EL, CW, XIII*, 739 (30 Sept., 1844). Cf. David H. Lewisohn, "Mill and Comte on the Methods of Social Science," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXXIII (1972), 315-24.



[39] Letter to Célestin de Blignières, *LL, CW, XV*, 768-9 (22 Jan., 1862).

[40] "Auguste Comte and Positivism," *CW, X*, 358, 343, 367.

[41] *On Liberty*, in *Essays on Politics and Society, CW, XVIII-XIX* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), XVIII, 227. See also Mueller, *Mill and French Thought*, 92-133, and cf. Robson. *The Improvement of Mankind*, 95-105, who stresses Mill's slowness, by comparison with Grote, to see the direction Comte had taken.

[42] Autobiography, *CW, I*, 271. See also Pankhurst, *The Saint-Simonians: Mill and Carlyle*, passim.

[43] Letter to Harriet Mill, *LL, CW, XV*, 537 (16 Sept., 1857). Mill himself has been accused of showing "more than a touch of something resembling moral totalitarianism," aggressively proselytizing to his own "religion of humanity" (Maurice Cowling, *Mill and Liberalism* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963], xii, 77-93), and exonerated as forthrightly as "an unqualified liberal" (John Gray, *Mill on Liberty A Defence* [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983], 119).

[44] Letter to Joseph Blanco White, *EL, CW, XII*, 259 (15 Apr., 1835).

[45] Tocqueville to Mill, in *Oeuvres, papiers, et correspondances d'Alexis de Tocqueville*, ed. J.P. Mayer, et al. (Paris: Gallimard, 1951- ), VI, 293 (June 1835). "I learnt the language in the country itself, and acquired the colloquial part of it in greater perfection than most English do . . ." (letter to Carlyle, *EL, CW, XII*, 180 [5 Oct., 1833]).

[46] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW, XII*, 272 (Sept., 1835), cf. Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 295-7 (12 Sept., 1835); Mill, "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [I]" (1835), *CW, XVIII*, 57.

[47] "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [I]," *CW, XVIII*, 50.

[48] Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 302 (3 Dec., 1835).

[49] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW, XII*, 304 (27 Apr., 1836), cf. J.P. Mayer's remarks in Tocqueville, *Oeuvres*, VI, 16.

[50] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW, XII*, 309 (9 Nov., 1836).

[51] Mill to Tocqueville, *ibid.*, 316 (7 Jan., 1837), Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 327, 329-30, 334 (3 May, 18 Oct., 1840, 18 Mar., 1841), Mill to Tocqueville, *EL, CW, XIII*, 457 (30 Dec., 1840).

[52] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW, XIII*, 434 (11 May, 1840).

[53] Letter to R.B. Fox, *ibid.*, 441 (3 Aug., 1840).

[54] *Autobiography, CW, I*, 199-201, Mueller, *Mill and French Thought*, 134-69 and the critical discussion of her interpretation in H.O. Pappé, "Mill and Tocqueville," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXV (1964), 217-34; Robson, *Improvement of Mankind*, 105-14.

[55] “Periodical Literature, Edinburgh Review,” *CW*, I, 307-11. “De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [II]” (1840), *CW*, XVIII, 155.

[56] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 271 (Sept. 1835).

[57] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 59-61.

[58] “He always dealt gently with her faults, and liberally with her virtues.” Bain said, adding that “his habitual way of speaking of England, the English people, English society, as compared with other nations, was positively unjust, and served no good end” (Alexander Bain, *John Stuart Mill: A Criticism with Personal Recollections* [London: Longmans, Green, 1882], 150, 78, 161). Cf. Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 291 (June 1835).

[59] Letter to John Robertson, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 343 (28 July, 1837).

[60] Diary, 14 Jan., 1854, in *The Letters of John Stuart Mill*, ed. Hugh S.R. Elliot, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1910), II, 359.

[61] A long struggle and eventual war occurred between Turkey and its Albanian vassal in Egypt, the Pasha Mohammed Ali. France favoured his ambitions in large parts of the Ottoman Empire. Finally, Britain and Russia, backed by Austria and Prussia, concluded the Treaty of London (15 July, 1840), agreeing to force him to disgorge all but southern Syria in return for hereditary possession of Egypt. This convention effectively isolated France and led Mohammed Ali to appeal to the French Prime Minister, Adolphe Thiers. The Foreign Secretary, Palmerston, arranged for the Sultan to depose the Pasha, while Thiers was backed by a violent press outcry in Paris that he support him and France’s interests in Egypt by war, if necessary. By autumn, the situation turned against Mohammed Ali. Louis Philippe chose the path of negotiation, François Guizot returned to Paris from the Embassy in London, bent upon a peaceful resolution of the crisis with England, Thiers was isolated, and replaced by Marshal Soult with Guizot as Foreign Minister. But Anglo-French disputes continued on through the decade, with intense anti-English feeling on all sides in France. See Douglas Johnson, *Guizot Aspects of French History, 1787-1874* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 263-85, R.W. Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe, 1789-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937), 192-222; Charles K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston, 1830-1841, Britain, the Liberal Movement and the Eastern Question*, 2 vols. (London: Bell, 1951), *passim*; Kenneth Bourne, *Palmerston, the Early Years, 1784-1841* (London: Lane, 1982), 550-620, Pierre Renouvin, *Histoire des relations internationales, V: Le XIXe siècle. Première partie de 1815 à 1871* (Paris: Hachette, 1954), 114-26; André Jardin and André Jean Tudesq, *La France des notables*, 2 vols. (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1973), I, 184-90.

[62] Letter to John Sterling, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 446 (1 Oct., 1840).

[63] Letter to R.B. Fox, *ibid.*, 448 (25 Nov., 1840).

[64] Letters to d’Eichthal, *ibid.*, 456 (25 Dec., 1840), and to Sterling, *ibid.*, 451-2 (19 Dec., 1840). The “mischievous spirit” was more intense on the left than on the right Louis Blanc, the Jacobin-Socialist with whom Mill would strike up a friendship years later, was embittered by what seemed to him the ignoble attitude of the ruling class toward the bullying anti-French policies of

England. “Mais dans la politique étrangère comme dans la politique intérieure, la bourgeoisie n’a eu ni prudence voire ni coup d’œil. Voulant la paix d’une ardeur violente, elle a eu l’étourderie de ne s’en point cacher. Elle a mis à s’humilier une affectation folle. Aussi, les occasions de guerre se sont-elles multipliées à l’excès. Que de provocations, que de mépris . . . Voire que la France ne peut plus sortir de chez elle sans être exposée à l’outrage. . . . Ce silence est fatal, ce repos est sinistre. . . . Dix ans de paix nous ont plus brisés que n’eût fait un demi-siècle de guerres, et nous ne nous en apercevons seulement pas” (*Histoire de dix ans*, V, 457-60.) Blanc was to continue preaching this message. See Leo A. Loubère, *Louis Blanc. His Life and Contribution to the Rise of Jacobin Socialism* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1961), 51-3.

[65] Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 330-1 (18 Dec., 1840), Mill to Tocqueville, *EL, CW*, XIII, 459-60 (30 Dec., 1840).

[66] Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 335 (18 Mar., 1841). On the repudiation of war by the *haute bourgeoisie*, see Adeline Daumard, *La bourgeoisie parisienne de 1815 à 1848* (Paris: SEVPEN, 1963), 633-41.

[67] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW*, XIII, 536 (9 Aug., 1842).

[68] “Lord Brougham and M. de Tocqueville,” *Morning Chronicle*, 20 Feb., 1843, 3.

[69] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW*, XIII, 571 (20 Feb., 1843). Tocqueville’s reply to Brougham is included in Tocqueville, *Oeuvres*, VI, 341-2, Tocqueville to Mill, *ibid.*, 339-40, 343-4 (9 Feb., 12 Mar., 1843), cf. Seymour Drescher, *Tocqueville and England* (Cambridge: Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964), 159-61.

[70] Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 345 (27 Oct., 1843). Mill to Tocqueville, *EL, CW*, XIII, 612-13 (3 Nov., 1843).

[71] “Elle ne fut pas, à vrai dire, une lutte politique (dans le sens que nous avons donné jusque-là à ce mot) mais un combat de classe, une sorte de guerre servile. Elle caractérisa la révolution de Février, quant aux faits, de même que les théories socialistes avaient caractérisé celle-ci, quant aux idées, ou plutôt elle sortit naturellement de ces idées, comme le fils de la mère, et on ne doit y voir qu’un effort brutal et aveugle, mais puissant des ouvriers pour échapper aux nécessités de leur condition qu’on leur avait dépeinte comme une oppression illégitime et pour s’ouvrir par le fer un chemin vers le bien-être imaginaire qu’on leur avait montré de loin comme un droit.” (*Souvenirs*, *Oeuvres*, XII, 151.) The aftermath left him sorrowful and apprehensive. If the June insurrectionaries had risen against “des droits les plus sacrés,” not all were “le rebut de l’humanité”, many were merely misled, believing society to be founded on injustice, wishing to give it “une autre base. C’est cette sorte de religion révolutionnaire que nos baïonnettes et nos canons ne détruiront pas.” (Letter from Tocqueville to Eugène Stoeffels of 21 July, 1848, *Oeuvres complètes d’Alexis de Tocqueville*, ed. Mme de Tocqueville [and Gustave de Beaumont], 9 vols. [Paris: Levy Frères, 1864-66], V, 458-9.)

[72] Drescher, *Tocqueville and England*, 152, 159-61.

[73] Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 348-9, 350-1 (22 June, 19 Dec., 1856), Mill to Tocqueville, *LL*, *CW*, XV, 517-18 (15 Dec., 1856).

[74] Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 351-2 (9 Feb., 1859).

[75] Letters to R.B. Fox, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 448 (21 Nov., 1840), to Sterling, *ibid.*, 451-2 (19 Dec., 1840); to d'Eichthal, *ibid.*, 457 (25 Dec., 1840), and to Tocqueville, *ibid.*, 571 (20 Feb., 1843).

[76] Letter to Pasquale Villari, *LL*, *CW*, XV, 534 (30 June, 1857), cf. Theodore Zeldin, *The Political System of Napoleon III* (London: Macmillan, 1958), 66-7.

[77] "Centralisation" (1862), *CW*, XIX, 579-613, letter to John Elliot Cairnes, *LL*, *CW*, XV, 917 (24 Jan., 1864). On public opinion and the differences between it and press opinion, see Lynn M. Case, *French Public Opinion on War and Diplomacy during the Second Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954), 178-86.

[78] See letter to d'Eichthal, *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1718 (10 May, 1870).

[79] Letters to Henry Fawcett, *ibid.*, 1753-4 (26 July, 1870), and to d'Eichthal, *ibid.*, 1762 (27 Apr., 1870).

[80] Letters to Charles Wentworth Dilke, *ibid.*, 1766-7 (30 Sept., 1870), and to Fawcett, *ibid.*, 1777 (18 Nov., 1870).

[81] "Stern justice is on the side of the Germans, & it is in the best interests of France itself that a bitter lesson shd now be inflicted upon it, such as it can neither deny nor forget in the future. The whole writing, thinking, & talking portion of the people undoubtedly share the guilt of L. Napoleon, the moral guilt of the war, & feel neither shame nor contrition at anything but the unlucky result to themselves. Undoubtedly the real nation, the whole mass of the people, are perfectly guiltless of it, but then they are so ignorant that they will allow the talkers & writers to lead them into just such corners again if they do not learn by bitter experience what will be the practical consequences of their political indifference. The peasantry of France like the women of England have still to learn that politics concern themselves. The loss of Alsace & Lorraine will perhaps be about as painless a way of learning this lesson as could possibly be devised." (Letter to John Morley, *ibid.*, 1774-5 [16 Nov., 1870].) In all, a rather cold and extraordinary outburst of embitterment and suppressed hostility.

[82] Letter to Charles Loring Brace, *ibid.*, 1799-1800 (19 Jan., 1871).

[83] Letter to Frederic Harrison, *ibid.*, 1816 (May? 1871), see also letter to Charles Dupont-White, *ibid.*, 1863-5 (6 Dec., 1871).

[84] Letter to William Thomas Thornton, *ibid.*, 1913 (5 Oct., 1872), and Thornton's report of Blanc's view, 1913n. On the incoming republican tide, see Jacques Gouault, *Comment la France est devenue républicaine: Les élections générales et partielles de l'assemblée nationale, 1870-1875* (Paris: Colin, 1954). Concerning the lay schoolteacher, to whom Helen Taylor apparently pointed, see Katherine Auspitz, *The Radical Bourgeoisie. The Ligue de l'enseignement and the Origins of the Third Republic, 1866-1885* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), especially 123-60. Eugen J. Weber,

*Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), 303-38, and Barnett Singer, *Village Notables in Nineteenth-Century France: Priests, Mayors, Schoolmasters* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), 108-46.

[85] Letter to Dupont-White, *LL, CW, XVII*, 1864-5 (6 Dec., 1871).

[86] Letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW, XIII*, 465 (23 Feb., 1841).

[87] Louis Halphen, *L'histoire en France depuis cent ans* (Paris: Colin, 1914), 6-7, Camille Jullian. Introduction, *Extraits des historiens français du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1904), iii-vii. George Peabody Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green, 1952), 151-6.

[88] Anne Louise de Stael-Holstein, *De la littérature considérée dans ses rapports avec les institutions sociales* (1800), in *Oeuvres complètes*, 3 vols. (Paris: Didot, 1871), I, 232 (Chap. vi). François René de Chateaubriand, Letter to the duchesse de Dura (1813), in *Correspondance générale de Chateaubriand*, 5 vols., ed. Louis Thomas (Paris: Champion, 1912), I, 278.

[89] Memorandum of 1808, quoted in Gooch, *History and Historians*, 153-4. Jacques Godechot, *Les institutions de la France sous la révolution et l'empire*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), 756. Ranke said that historical studies in his time had developed "in opposition to the tyranny of Napoleonic ideas" (quoted in H.R. Trevor-Roper, *The Romantic Movement and the Study of History* [London: Athlone Press, 1969], 2).

[90] Quoted in Gooch, *History and Historians* 267-8, cf. Ernest Llewellyn Woodward, *The Age of Reform, 1815-1870* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), 531-2.

[91] Herbert Butterfield, *Man on His Past. The Study of the History of Historical Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 1-61, Hedva Ben-Israel, *English Historians on the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 3-62.

[92] *Autobiography, CW, I*, 15-17; see also Appendix C, *CW, I*, 582-4.

[93] This is the view of Michael St. John Packe, *The Life of John Stuart Mill* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1954), 293. "Nothing," Mill once noted, "impresses one with a more vivid feeling of the shortness of life than reading history" (Diary, 1 Feb., 1854, *Letters of John Stuart Mill*, ed. Elliot, II, 365).

[94] "Civilization" (1836), *CW, XVIII*, 145.

[95] "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [II]," *ibid.*, 197. Mill's view that the history of England was "one of the least interesting" (letter to Harriet Taylor, *LL, CW, XIV*, 6 [27 June, 1849]) anticipated the opinion of a twentieth-century English historian who also concerned himself with pattern in history "a stuffy little closet that had not had an airing for years" (Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, 12 vols. [London: Oxford University Press, 1934-61], XII, 630).

[96] "State of Society in America," *CW, XVIII*, 93, "Grote's History of Greece [II]," *Essays on Philosophy and the Classics, CW, XI* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 328.

[97] "Grote's History of Greece [I]," *CW, XI*, 303-4.

[98] “Grote’s History of Greece [II],” *ibid.*, 330.

[99] “Civilization,” *CW*, XVIII, 145.

[100] “Grote’s History of Greece [II],” *CW*, XI, 328. Mill was not more concerned about fundamental historical research than were some of the historians whose work he commented on. Notoriously the Sorbonne offered no leadership in this field. Ernest Lavisse was to say that its chairs were looked on “comme un lieu de repos pour les professeurs fatigués de l’enseignement secondaire” (quoted in Pierre Leguay, *La Sorbonne* [Paris: Grasset, 1910], 11). The small, rather isolated world of the *érudits* in the Ecole des Chartes (perhaps conceived in Napoleon’s mind in 1807, but founded by royal ordinance in February 1821), whose *archivistes* were the continuators of the Benedictine tradition, was outside Mill’s province of observation. It was this Cinderella of French intellectual life—it is Gabriel Hanotaux’s phrase—together with the young men returning from study in German seminars, who would in the second half of the century rescue historical studies from the spent philosophical school and the eloquent orators of the Collège de France and the Faculté. If Guizot was responsible for the pursuit of documents (“des faits, rien que des faits, dûment établis, tel est désormais le mot d’ordre” [Halphen, *L’histoire en France depuis cent ans*, 76]), it was only after 1865 that serious emulation of the German historical method began in France. (See Halphen, 57-9, 118, 143-5, Gabriel Hanotaux, *Sur les chemins de l’histoire*, 2 vols. [Paris: Librairie Ancienne Edouard Champion, 1924], I, 1-18, William R. Keylor, *Academy and Community: The Foundation of the French Historical Profession* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975], 19-89, Guy Bourdè and Hervé Martin, *Les écoles historiques* [Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1983], 83-111, 137-70.)

[101] Mill, “The Spirit of the Age,” *Examiner*, 9 and 23 Jan., 1831, 20, 50-2. The view was close to that of Tocqueville: “c’est l’homme politique qu’il faut faire en nous. Et. pour cela, c’est l’histoire des hommes et surtout de ceux qui nous ont précédés le plus immédiatement dans ce monde qu’il faut étudier. L’autre histoire n’est bonne qu’en ce qu’elle donne quelques notions générales sur l’humanité tout entière et en ce qu’elle prépare à celle-là.” (Letter to Gustave de Beaumont of 25 Oct., 1829, *Oeuvres*, VIII, 1, 93.)

[102] “State of Society in America,” *CW*, XVIII, 93.

[103] “The Spirit of the Age,” *Examiner*, 9 and 23 Jan., 1831, 20, 50.

[104] *Ibid.*, 6 Feb., 15 and 29 May, 1831, 82, 83, 84, 307, 340.

[105] *A System of Logic Ratiocinative and Inductive*, *CW*, VII-VIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), VIII, 911-17 (Bk. VI, Chap. x).

[106] *Ibid.*, 926-30.

[107] *Ibid.*, 932-42 (Bk. VI, Chap. xi).

[108] “Auguste Comte and Positivism” (1865), *CW*, X, 322. On Dilthey’s critique of Mill concerning the role of the great man, see Jacques Kornberg, “John Stuart Mill. A View from the Bismarckian Reich,” *Mill News Letter*, XII, no. 1 (Winter, 1977), 10-16.

[109] *System of Logic*, *CW*, VIII, 942 (Bk. VI, Chap. xi). The classic critique of Mill and Comte in this matter is in K.R. Popper. *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945), 2 vols., 4th rev. ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962) and the same author's *The Poverty of Historicism* (1957), rev. ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961). (On Mill's Benthamite eclecticism, however, see Lewisohn, "Mill and Comte on the Methods of Social Science," 315-24.) Popper holds that the "doctrine of historical laws of succession is . . . little better than a collection of misapplied metaphors" (*Poverty of Historicism*, 119), sees a "close similarity between the historicism of Marx and that of J.S. Mill" (*Open Society*, II, 87), and concludes that all such historicist philosophies, like philosophies from Heraclitus and Plato down through Lamarck and Darwin, "are characteristic products of their time—a time of social change," giving witness to "the tremendous and undoubtedly somewhat terrifying impression made by a changing social environment on the minds of those who live in this environment" (*ibid.*, 212). "It almost looks," he says, "as if historicists were trying to compensate themselves for the loss of an unchanging world by clinging to the faith that change can be foreseen because it is ruled by an unchanging law" (*Poverty of Historicism*, 161).

[110] "Spirit of the Age," *Examiner*, 6 Feb., 1831, 83.

[111] "Auguste Comte and Positivism" (1865), *CW*, X, 322.

[112] John Carlyle to Thomas Carlyle (12 Feb., 1831), in *The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle*, ed. Charles Richard Sanders, *et al.* (Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1970-). V, 235n, Thomas Carlyle to Jane Carlyle, *ibid.*, 428 (14 Sept., 1831).

[113] Letter to Carlyle, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 182 (5 Oct., 1833).

[114] Presumably Carlyle meant such a response to the past as even Guizot, a "philosophical historian" whom Mill thought the greatest of the time, showed in a relaxed moment. "J'aime l'histoire. C'est la vie humaine sans fatigue, comme spectacle et non comme affaire. Je m'y intéressé et n'y suis pas intéressé. C'est une émotion mêlée de mouvement et de repos. . . . En tout le passé me plaît et m'attache infiniment. Je le contemple avec respect et compassion. Ils ont fait tout cela, ils ont senti tout cela, et ils sont morts! Ce contraste si frappant, ou plutôt cette union si intense de la vie et de la mort, de l'activité et de l'immobilité, du bruit et du silence, ce sceau irrévocable pose sur ces êtres jusque-là si animés et si mobiles, et l'impénétrable mystère de leur destinée actuelle et définitive, cela m'émeut et m'attendrit jusqu'au fond de l'âme." (Letter to the princesse de Lieven of 4 Sept., 1838, *Lettres de François Guizot et de la princesse de Lieven*, ed. Jacques Naville, 3 vols. [Paris: Mercure de France, 1963-64], I, 186.) Carlyle had given voice to much the same romantic fascination half a dozen years before. "Rough Samuel and sleek wheedling James were, and are not. . . . Gone! Gone!! . . . The mysterious River of Existence rushes on. . . ." ("Boswell's Life of Johnson," *Fraser's Magazine*, V [Apr., 1832], 387.) If it was not an essential response on the part of an historian, it was nonetheless widely shared, then and later, but it does not appear to have been Mill's.

[115] Page references to material printed in this volume are given in the text.

[116] Letter to Macvey Napier, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 431 (27 Apr., 1840).

[117] Mill, "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [II]," *CW*, XVIII, 155.

[118] Macaulay was, of course, his exemplar. “He is very characteristic & so is his book, of the English people & of his time.” The *History of England* was readable, it would sell, but it was “without genius,” and he found it “exactly au niveau of the ideal of shallow people with a touch of the new ideas.” Even as “a work of art” it was wanting. (Letters to Harriet Taylor, *LL*, *CW*, XIV, 6 [27 Jan., 1849], to William George Ward, *ibid.*, 29 [Spring 1849], and to Arthur Hardy, *ibid.*, XV, 511 [29 Sept., 1856].)

[119] Letter to Harriet Taylor, *ibid.*, XIV, 6 (27 Jan., 1849).

[120] “State of Society in America” (1836), *CW*, XVIII, 94.

[121] Jacques Antoine Dulaure, *Histoire critique de la noblesse depuis le commencement de la monarchie jusqu’à nos jours* (Paris: Guillot, 1790), cited in Stanley Mellon. *The Political Uses of History: A Study of French Historians in the French Restoration* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), 19-20.

[122] Jean Rodolphe de Salis, *Sismondi, 1773-1842 La vie et l’oeuvre d’un cosmopolite philosophe* (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Henri Champion, 1932), 1-41.

[123] Godechot, *Les institutions de la France*, 756.

[124] Salis, *Sismondi*, 1-41, François Mignet, “The Life and Opinions of Sismondi,” *North American Review*, LXVI (Jan., 1848), 32-72.

[125] Sismondi, *Histoire des Français*, 31 vols. (Paris: Treuttel and Würtz, 1821-44), I, xv. From a letter of 1835: “I have not given up any of my youthful enthusiasm; I feel, perhaps, more strongly than ever the desire for nations to become free, for the reform of governments, for the progress of morality and happiness in human society” (quoted by Mignet, “The Life and Opinions of Sismondi,” 69).

[126] Benedetto Croce, *History Its Theory and Practice*, trans. Douglas Ainslie (London: Harrap, 1921), 264.

[127] In this, Mill was much more severe than Guizot, who translated and admired Hallam, although he was critical of his lack of historicist empathy for the plight of Strafford (see Stanley Mellon, Editor’s Introduction, in François Guizot, *Historical Essays and Lectures* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972], xxx).

[128] Mignet, “The Life and Opinions of Sismondi,” 56, Salis, *Sismondi*, 435-6.

[129] Jullian, *Extraits des historiens français*, xxiv, Michelet’s remark is quoted in Pierre Moreau. *L’histoire en France au XIXe siècle Etat présent des travaux et esquisse d’un plan d’études* (Paris: Les belles lettres, [1935]), 35.

[130] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 65-7, see John Coleman, “John Stuart Mill on the French Revolution,” *History of Political Thought*, IV (Spring, 1983), 89-110.

[131] Joseph Hamburger, *James Mill and the Art of Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 21.



[132] The indirect evidence is in a letter from Mill to Charles Comte, *EL, CW, XII*, 22 (25 Jan., 1828). On this “calm philosophic” historian, see Agnes M. Smith, “François Emmanuel Toulangeon. Contemporaneous Historian of the French Revolution,” in *Bourgeois, Sans-Culottes, and Other Frenchmen Essays on the French Revolution in Honour of John Hall Stewart*, ed. Morris Slavin and Agnes M. Smith (Waterloo, Ont., Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981), 97-111.

[133] See Michael J. Sydenham, *The Girondins* (London: Athlone Press, 1961), 1-16.

[134] Letters to Charles Comte, *EL, CW, XII*, 21-2, 25 (25 Jan., and 27 June, 1828). “He is very well informed on the history of the French Revolution,” d’Eichthal noted, “and we talked at length about recent events in France whose importance for their own cause the English liberals are well aware of” (d’Eichthal, *A French Sociologist*, 61 [Journal, 21 July, 1828]).

[135] Autobiography, *CW, I*, 135.

[136] *Ibid.*, 137.

[137] Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, VI, 174 (16 June, 1832). Mill to Carlyle, *EL, CW, XII*, 110-11, 113 (17 July, 1832). See Ben-Israel, *English Historians on the French Revolution*, 58-9.

[138] Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, VI, 446 (24 Sept., 1833).

[139] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW, XII*, 271 (Sept., 1835).

[140] Pierre Paul Royer-Collard, letter to Amable Guillaume Prosper de Barante of 1 Aug., 1822, in *Souvenirs du baron de Barante*, ed. Claude de Barante, 8 vols. (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1890-1901), III, 29.

[141] Yvonne Knibiehler, *Naissance des sciences humaines. Mignet et l'histoire philosophique au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973), 130-1, Paul de Rémusat, *A. Thiers* (Paris: Hachette, 1889), 34. The later volumes of Thiers’ *Histoire de la révolution française*, judged superior to the early ones, owed much to Mignet’s shorter work. Carlyle’s estimate was unfriendly: “Thiers’s *History* in ten volumes foolscap-octavo, contains, if we remember rightly, one reference. . . . A superficial air of order, of clearness, calm candour, is spread over the work, but inwardly it is waste, inorganic, no human head that honestly tries can conceive the French Revolution *so*.” (“Parliamentary History of the Revolution,” *London and Westminster Review*, V & XXVII [Apr., 1837], 234.) Mill was evidently much less critical, since he passed on to Sarah Austin his father’s suggestion that she should translate it, and noted that it “would be sure to sell” (*EL, CW, XII*, 292 [9 Jan., 1836]). He had of course sent it up to Carlyle in the first place, and he recommended it to various people. Thiers, the politician, he despised.

[142] Jules Simon, *Mignet, Michelet, Henri Martin* (Paris: Calman Lévy, 1890), 92. Halphen, *L'histoire en France de puis cent ans*, 38-9.

[143] Sismondi, *Histoire des Français*, IX, 2.

[144] Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, “M. Mignet,” *Revue des Deux Mondes*, n.s. XIII (15 Mar., 1846), 1097.

[145] In the 1829 revision of his pamphlet of 1797, Constant remarked that “To justify the reign of ’93, to picture its crimes and frenzies as a necessity that weighs inevitably upon peoples when they seek freedom, is to harm a sacred cause, to do it more damage than its most avowed enemies” (Benjamin Henri Constant de Rebecque, *Des effets du régime que l’on a nommé révolutionnaire relativement au salut et à la liberté de la France* [1797, as revised in 1829], quoted in Mellon, *Political Uses of History*, 22-3).

[146] Sainte-Beuve, “M. Mignet,” 1096. Carlyle granted Mignet’s history was more honest and thorough than Thiers’s, but derided its “philosophical reflections” as “a quantity of mere abstractions and dead logical formulas” which passed for “Thinking.” In one of his mixed verdicts, he proclaimed that Mignet had produced an “eminently unsatisfactory” book, without “life, without colour or verdure.” The “little book, though abounding too in errors of detail, better deserves what place it has than any other of recent date.” Mignet thus “takes his place at the head of that brotherhood of his,” since he was “not a *quack* as well!” (“Parliamentary History of the French Revolution,” 235-6.)

[147] See Knibiehler, *Naissance des sciences humaines*, 118-65.

[148] Quoted in James Westfall Thompson, *et al.*, *A History of Historical Writing*, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1942), II, 247.

[149] The expression is Alice Gérard’s, *La révolution française, mythes et interprétations, 1789-1870* (Paris: Flammarion, 1970), 34.

[150] Hippolyte Taine, *H. Taine, sa vie et sa correspondance*, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (Paris: Hachette, 1902-07), II, 223-4.

[151] Knibiehler, *Naissance des sciences humaines, passim*. “He is the Ranke of France, and he disputes with Guizot the title of the greatest French historian of the first half of the nineteenth century. . . . No historian has done more to apply the methods and spirit of scientific research to the life of states.” (Gooch, *History and Historians*, 188.) Cf. Ben-Israel, *English Historians on the French Revolution*, 59-62.

[152] Halphen, *L’histoire en France depuis cent ans*, 9-10, 17-18, Knibiehler, *Naissance des sciences humaines*, 104.

[153] Quoted in Rulon Nephi Smithson, *Augustin Thierry Social and Political Consciousness in the Evolution of a Historical Method* (Geneva Droz, 1973), 81, 297, from Thierry’s review of Ivanhoe in the *Censeur Européen* of 29 May, 1820.

[154] Smithson, *Augustin Thierry*, 99n, from the Preface to *Dix ans d’études historiques* (1835) Louis Maigrion, *Le roman historique à l’époque romantique Essai sur l’influence de Walter Scott*, new ed. (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Henri Champion, 1912), 213-18. Thierry later transferred some of the admiration he had for Scott to Armand Carrel, his protégé, for whose *Resume de l’histoire de l’Ecosse* (Paris: Lecoq and Durey, 1825) he provided an introduction.

[155] Quoted in Knibiehler, *Naissance des sciences humaines*, 104-5.

[156] “Ce fut plus d’un succès; ce fut un engouement. Une génération tout entière en demeura éblouie et séduite.” (Maignon, *Le roman historique*, 51.)

[157] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 19; Mill, “Brodie’s History of the British Empire” (1824), in *Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire*, *CW*, VI (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 3.

[158] “Periodical Literature: Edinburgh Review,” *CW*, I, 320; “Writings of Alfred de Vigny” (1838), *CW*, I, 481, 472.

[159] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 135.

[160] Leslie Stephen, “Sir Walter Scott,” *Dictionary of National Biography*, XVII. 1038, cf. Edgar Johnson, *Sir Walter Scott*, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1970), II, 1064-6; Ben-Israel, *English Historians and the French Revolution*, 56-9 “Superficial it must be,” Scott said, “but I do not care for the charge. Better a superficial book which brings well and strikingly together the known and acknowledged facts, than a dull boring narrative pausing to see farther into a mill-stone at every moment than the nature of the mill-stone admits.” (Quoted from Scott’s Diary, 22 Dec., 1825, in Thomas Preston Peardon, *The Transition in English Historical Writing, 1760-1830* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1933], 216.) But scholars one hundred and fifty years later, however sympathetic and measured in their expression, have echoed something of Mill’s severity “Allowing for the license of the romantic biographer or historian, we are still justified in observing with surprise how Scott tampers with his evidence, distorts his sources, in effect turns perjurer on behalf of some of the wildest forces in Europe” (R. C. Gordon, “Scott Among the Partisans. A Significant Bias in his *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*,” in *Scott Bicentenary Essays Selected Papers Read at the Sir Walter Scott Bicentenary Conference*, ed. Alan Bell [Edinburgh and London: Scottish Academic Press, 1973], 129).

[161] Carlyle, “Memoirs of the Life of Scott,” *London and Westminster Review*, VI & XXVIII (Jan. 1838), 337, Carlyle’s Journal, quoted in James Anthony Froude, *Thomas Carlyle: A History of the First Forty Years of His Life, 1795-1835*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, et al., 1882), II, 310.

[162] Quoted in Leslie Stephen, “Sir Archibald Alison,” *Dictionary of National Biography*, I, 287-90.

[163] Henry Adams to Charles Francis Adams, Jr., in *The Letters of Henry Adams*, ed. Jacob Clavner Levenson, et al. (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982- ), I, 330.

[164] Quoted in Gooch, *History and Historians*, 304.

[165] Letter to Carlyle, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 152 (11-12 Apr., 1833), Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, VI, 373 (18 Apr., 1833).

[166] Letter to Carlyle, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 155 (18 May, 1833). The reference is to Macaulay’s review of Dumont’s *Recollections of Mirabeau*, *Edinburgh Review*, LV (July, 1832), 552-76. (By compilations Mill means not collections but what are now called secondary sources.)

[167] Letter to W.J. Fox, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 157 (18 May, 1833).

[168] Letters to W.J. Fox, *ibid.*, 159 [June, 1833], and to Carlyle, *ibid.*, 162 (5 July, 1833).

[169] It may well have been Mill's criticism in the review that caused Alison to include a substantial list of his sources as a preface to the 2nd ed. (1835), and to subsequent editions. Ben-Israel judges that "Alison knew the sources but not how to use them. His bibliographical prefaces . . . are now the best part of the book." (*English Historians and the French Revolution*, 150.)

[170] "There is not a word in it that I do not subscribe to: it is really a *decided* little utterance, with a quiet emphasis, a conscious incontrovertibility, which (heretic that I am) I rejoice to see growing in you" (Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, VI, 445 [24 Sept., 1833]).

[171] Ben-Israel, *English Historians and the French Revolution*, 152-3.

[172] Letters to Carlyle, *EL, CW*, XII, 181 (5 Oct., 1833), and to M. Napier, *ibid.*, XIII, 551-2 (15 Oct., 1842).

[173] Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, VI, 373 (18 Apr., 1833).

[174] Letter to Sterling, *EL, CW*, XII, 85 (20-22 Oct., 1831).

[175] Letter to Carlyle, *ibid.*, 113 (17 July, 1832). In general, on Carlyle's *History*, see Ben-Israel. *English Historians and the French Revolution*, 127-47. Alfred Cobban, *Aspects of the French Revolution* (New York: Braziller, 1968), 243-55.

[176] Carlyle to J.A. Carlyle, *Collected Letters*, VI, 196 (31 July, 1832), Mill to Carlyle, *EL, CW*, XII, 116-21, 125-30, 132-5 (17 Sept., 22 Oct., 27 Dec., 1832).

[177] Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, VI, 303, 446 (12 Jan., 24 Sept., 1833).

[178] *Ibid.*, VII, 276 (28 Aug., 1834). The sly complexity of Carlyle's reaction to Mill shows in a letter to his mother of 30 May, 1834. "By far the sensiblest man I see is Mill, who seems almost fonder of me than ever. The class he belongs to has the farther merit of being genuine and honest so far as they go. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 196.) And again to his mother, 25 Oct., 1834 "indeed nothing can exceed the obligingness of Mill . . ." (*ibid.*, 320).

[179] Carlyle to J.A. Carlyle, *ibid.*, 325 (28 Oct., 1834).

[180] Letters to Carlyle, *EL, CW*, XII, 252-7 (7, 10, 23 Mar., 1835), Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, VIII, 70-2 (7, 9 Mar., 1835).

[181] Carlyle to James Fraser, *Collected Letters*, VIII, 66-9 (7 Mar., 1835).

[182] Carlyle to Mill, *ibid.*, 72-4 (9, 13, 17 Mar., 1835).

[183] Carlyle to Margaret A. Carlyle, *ibid.*, 84 (25 Mar., 1835).

[184] Carlyle to Mill, *ibid.*, 350 ([late May?], 1836).

[185] Letter to Carlyle, *EL, CW*, XII, 307 (20 July?, 1836); Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, IX, 14-15 (22 July, 1836).

[186] S. Austin to Mill, quoted in *EL, CW*, XII, 334n (n.d.), Mill to S. Austin, *ibid.*, 333-4 (26 Apr., 1837).

[187] Carlyle, his book delayed, had asked whether a later review might not be better, “to have a friend lying back a little, to silence marauders?” (Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, IX, 129 [28 Jan., 1837].) Obviously Mill thought rather that he could turn the enemy back, and he always believed he had routed them.

[188] Carlyle had done his best to gain access to the first two instalments of J.W. Croker’s large collection of printed materials then still uncatalogued in the British Museum. As a consequence of this situation and of his unsatisfactory relations with Anthony Panizzi (“the respectable sublibrarian,” in Carlyle’s cutting phrase, then working on the collection), he was able to consult only a few items in a cursory manner (see Ben-Israel, *English Historians and the French Revolution*, 138-9, 198-201). From Panizzi’s point of view, however, Carlyle was overbearing and unreasonable. “For all practical purposes,” Carlyle was to complain years later to the Royal Commission investigating the Museum’s library problems, “this collection of ours might as well have been locked up in water-tight chests and sunk on the Dogger Bank as put in the British Museum” (quoted in Edward Miller, *Prince of Librarians: The Life and Times of Antonio Panizzi of the British Museum* [London: Deutsch, 1967], 178-9, 183), Michelet, from the security of his former privileged access to the Archives Nationales, did not rate Carlyle’s loss highly. Criticizing Louis Blanc’s history of the Revolution, written in exile in London, he asked. “‘Peut-on à Londres écrire l’histoire du Paris révolutionnaire?’ Cela ne se peut qu’à Paris. A Londres, il est vrai, il y a une jolie collection de pieces françaises, imprimés, brochures et journaux qu’un amateur, M. Croker, vendait 12,000 francs au musée Britannique, et qu’on étend un peu depuis Mais une collection d’amateur, des curiosités détachées ne remplacent nullement les grands dépôts officiels où tout se suit, où l’on trouve et les faits et leur liaison, où souvent un événement représenté vingt, trente, quarante fois, en ses versions différentes, peut être étudié, jugé et contrôlé C’est ce que nous permettent les trois grands corps d’archives révolutionnaires à Paris.” (*Histoire de la révolution française* [Paris: Gallimard, 1952], Préface de 1868, 17.) Naturally, the Archives in which Michelet had spent his days thirty years before were not open to Carlyle or anyone else at the time.

[189] John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, *Lectures on the French Revolution*, ed. John Neville Figgis and Reginald Vere Laurence (London: Macmillan, 1910), 358-9.

[190] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 225; Mill to R.B. Fox, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 427 (16 Apr., 1840).

[191] Letter to Carlyle, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 339 (30 June, 1837).

[192] Letter to George Henry Lewes, *ibid.*, XIII, 449 (probably late 1840).

[193] Irene Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press in France, 1814-1881* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 1-59, Charles Ledré, *La presse à l’assaut de la monarchie, 1815-1848* (Paris: Colin, 1960), 5-122, Daniel L. Rader, *The Journalists and the July Revolution in France: The Role of the Political Press in the Overthrow of the Bourbon Restoration, 1827-1830* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), *passim*. On Mill and the July Revolution, see Mueller, *Mill and French Thought*, 17-47.

[194] Letter to d’Eichthal, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 38-9 (7 Nov., 1829).

[195] Mill, “The French Elections,” *Examiner*, 18 July, 1830, 450.

[196] David H. Pinkney, *The French Revolution of 1830* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 73-195, Ledré, *La presse à l'assaut de la monarchie*, 105-23; Rader, *The Journalists and the July Revolution*, 208-59.

[197] In Macaulay's dismissive phrase, "on a mission to preach up the Republic and the physical check, I suppose." But Macaulay was bent on a mission similar to Mill's "I have a plan of which I wish to know your opinion. In ten days or thereabouts I set off for France where I hope to pass six weeks. I shall be in the best society, that of the Duc de Broglie, Guizot, and so on. I think of writing an article on the politics of France since the Restoration, with characters of the principal public men, and a parallel between the present state of France and that of England." (Letter to M. Napier of 19 Aug., 1830, *The Letters of Thomas Babington Macaulay*, ed. Thomas Pinkney, 6 vols. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974-81], I, 281-2.)

[198] Letter from Norton to Chauncey Wright of 13 Sept., 1870, *Letters of Charles Eliot Norton*, ed. Sarah Norton and M.A. De Wolfe Howe, 2 vols. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1913), I, 400.

[199] Jean Lhomme, *La grande bourgeoisie au pouvoir, 1830-1880* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1960), 13-123. Jardin and Tudesq, *La France des notables*, I, 122-72, Pinkney, *The Revolution of 1830*, 274-95.

[200] Letter to James Mill, *EL, CW, XII*, 54 (13 Aug., 1830).

[201] *Life and Letters of John Arthur Roebuck*, ed. Robert E. Leader (London: Arnold, 1897), 30.

[202] Letters to James Mill of 13, 20, and 21 Aug., 1830, *EL, CW, XII*, 54-63 (the latter two also published in *Examiner*, 29 Aug., 1830, 547-8). "Never since the beginning of the world was there seen in a people such a heroic, such an unconquerable attachment to justice. The poorest of the populace, with arms in their hands, were absolutely masters of Paris and all that it contains, not a man went richer to his home that night." (Mill, "Attempt to Save the Ex-Ministers," *Examiner*, 24 Oct., 1830, 674.) Cf. Edgar L. Newman, "What the Crowd Wanted in the French Revolution of 1830," in *1830 in France*, ed. John M. Merriman (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975), 17-40.

[203] Mill, "Prospects of France, No. I," *Examiner*, 19 Sept., 1830, 594-5. See Pamela Pilbeam, "The 'Three Glorious Days', The Revolution of 1830 in Provincial France," *The Historical Journal*, XXVI (Dec., 1983), 831-44.

[204] "Prospects of France, No. IV," "Prospects of France, No. V," "Attempt to Save the Ex-Ministers," "Ignorance of French Affairs by the English Press," *Examiner*, 10, 17, 24 Oct., 14 Nov., 1830, 642-4, 660-1, 673-4, 723-4, summaries of French news, 2 and 9 Jan., 1831, *ibid.*, 8, 24-5.

[205] Summaries of French news, *ibid.*, 13 and 27 Feb., 1831, 105-6, 136, "The Prospects of France," *ibid.*, 10 Apr., 1831, 225-6.

[206] Summaries of French news, *ibid.*, 4, 11, 18, 25, Dec., 1831, 776-7, 793, 808-9, 825, summaries of French news, *ibid.*, 1, 8, 29 Jan., 12 Feb., 1832, 9-11, 24-5, 72-3, 104-5. On the

revolt, see Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, III, 45-80, Fernand Rude, *L'insurrection bonnaise de novembre 1831. Le mouvement ouvrier de 1827-1832* (Paris: Editions Anthropos, 1969), esp. 233ff., Robert Bezucha, *The Lyon Uprising of 1834. Social and Political Conflict in the Early July Monarchy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974), 48-72, Maurice Moissonnier, *La révolte des canuts: Lyon, novembre 1831*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1975), passim.

[207] Summary of French news, *Examiner*, 12 Feb., 1832, 104.

[208] Summary of French news, *ibid.*, 29 Apr., 1832, 280. "The Close of the Session in France," *ibid.*, 6 May, 1832, 291-2, summary of French news, *ibid.*, 20 May, 1832, 329-30.

[209] Summaries of French news, *ibid.*, 10, 17, 24 June, 1832, 377, 392-4, 408, cf. Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, III, 265-315.

[210] Summaries of French news, *Examiner*, 21 Oct., 25 Nov., 2, 9 Dec., 1832, 680-1, 760, 777, 792, a young man named Bergeron was tried and acquitted for lack of proof.

[211] Summary of French news, *Examiner*, 31 Mar., 1833, 201, letters to William Tait, *EL, CW, XII*, 148 (30 Mar., 1833), and to Carlyle, *ibid.*, 150 (11-12 Apr., 1833).

[212] Summaries of French news, *Examiner*, 5, 19 May, 21 July, 1833, 282, 313, 457.

[213] Summary of French news, *ibid.*, 12 Jan., 1834, 23, "State of Opinion in France," *ibid.*, 30 Mar., 1834, 195-6.

[214] Summaries of French news, *ibid.*, 20, 27 Apr., 11 May, 1 June, 1834, 250, 265, 297-8, 345.

[215] J. Tchneroff, *Le parti républicain sous la monarchie de juillet*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Pedone, 1905), 34ff.; Georges Weill, *Histoire du parti républicain en France de 1814 à 1870*, new ed. (Paris: Alcan, 1928), 53ff.; Ledré, *La presse à l'assaut de la monarchie*, 125ff.

[216] The *Tribune* succumbed on 11 May, 1835, after 111 prosecutions and 20 convictions: see Weill, *Histoire du parti républicain*, 115; Ledré, *La presse à l'assaut de la monarchie*, 161-2.

[217] On the Lyon and Paris risings, see Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, IV, 223-85, Edouard Dolléans, *Histoire du mouvement ouvrier*, 3 vols. (Paris: Colin. 1936-53), I, 93-107. Weill, *Histoire du parti républicain*, 101; and the comprehensive study by Bezucha, who presents the confrontation as the *canuts'* (male weavers') attempt "to establish a claim to control over their work in the future" (*The Lyon Uprising of 1834*, ix; see especially, 96-133, 149-74).

[218] On the trial, see Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, IV, 355-423. Weill, *Histoire du parti républicain*, 104-8, Bezucha, *The Lyon Uprising of 1834*, 175-92. Armand Carrel was chosen as one counsel for the defence, but the Cour des Pairs refused to recognize such outsiders.

[219] Letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW, XII*, 33 (15 May, 1829).

[220] Letter to Carlyle, *ibid.*, 278-9 (17 Oct., 1835). Sieyès, who was in his eighty-eighth year, evidently thought only that the parliamentarians "talk too much, and don't act enough" (quoted in Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *Sieyes. His Life and His Nationalism* [New York: Columbia University

Press, 1932], 142). For the rest, he would say, “Je ne vois plus, je n’entends plus, je ne me souviens plus, je ne parle plus, je suis devenu entièrement négatif” (quoted in Paul Bastid, *Sieyès et sa pensée* [Paris: Hachette, 1970], 284). He died the following June.

[221] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW, XII*, 317 (7 Jan., 1837), Tocqueville to Mill, *Oeuvres*, VI, 325-6 (24 June, 1837).

[222] The previous year, Mill noted his reservations about Tocqueville’s estimate of democracy and aristocracy, but it may be queried that he discerned in Tocqueville’s “historiography which addresses the ‘whole future’ ” an “essentially antilibertarian” bias (Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973], 205).

[223] National, 31 July, 1830, quoted in Ledré, *La presse à l’assaut de la monarchie*, 117.

[224] On Carrel, see R.G. Nobécourt, *La vie d’Armand Carrel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1930), for the early adventures characteristic of his impulsive, changeable nature, see *ibid.*, 23-60.

[225] *Ibid.*, 61-126. “Je ne voulais pas d’un gouvernement,” he told Jules Simon, “qui prétendait être un minimum de république, et n’était qu’un minimum de royauté” (Simon, *Mignet, Michelet, Henri Martin*, 94). “Le balancement de sa démarche,” Louis Blanc noted of him at the height of his powers, “son geste bref, ses habitudes d’élégance virile, son goût pour les exercices du corps, et aussi une certaine âpreté qu’accusaient les lignes heurtées de son visage et l’énergie de son regard, tout cela était plus militaire que de l’écrivain” (*Histoire de dix ans*, III, 128).

[226] Nobécourt, *La vie d’Armand Carrel*, 126-75, Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 60-81, Mill, summaries of French news, *Examiner*, 25 Mar., 9 Sept., 1832, 200-1, 585.

[227] Quoted in Ledré, *La presse à l’assaut de la monarchie*, 132. War was the solution for all problems. “Quand la confiance publique est perdue, quand il n’y a plus ni crédit ni commerce possible, quand la détresse, le désespoir, la passion ont mis les armes à la main de la classe qui vit de son travail, il faut la guerre” (quoted in Tchneroff, *Le parti républicain*, 135). On Carrel’s strongly nationalist views, see the selections from his articles in R.G. Nobécourt, *Armand Carrel, journaliste, Documents inédits et textes oubliés* (Rouen: Defontaine, [1935]), esp. 93-115, 153-5, and Nobécourt, *La vie d’Armand Carrel*, 126-9, 277-8.

[228] Summary of French news, *Examiner*, 3 June, 1832, 361.

[229] “French and English Journals,” *ibid.*, 2 Dec., 1832, 772-3.

[230] “Nous avons une monarchie à renverser,” he wrote to a friend in September 1833; “nous la renverserons, et puis il faudra lutter contre d’autres ennemis” (letter of Carrel to Anselme Petetin of 5 Sept., 1833, quoted in Weill, *Histoire du parti républicain*, 95). See also Nobécourt, *La vie d’Armand Carrel*, 174-5.

[231] Letter to Carlyle, *EL, CW, XII*, 197 (25 Nov., 1833).

[232] Summaries of French news, *Examiner*, 19 Jan., 13 Apr., 31 Aug., 1834, 40-1, 232, 552 Carrel’s editorial of 15 June, 1834, is quoted in Ledré, *La presse à l’assaut de la monarchie*, 156.



[233] He was prosecuted and acquitted for “Ouverture de la session de 1834,” *Le National de 1834*, 1 Aug., 1834, 1. On Carrel’s battles with the regime, 1833-34, see Nobécourt, *La vie d’Armand Carrel*, 155-95. Of 520 press prosecutions in Paris, 1830-34, only 188 resulted in condemnations (Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 79). Carrel, however, was condemned and sent to Sainte-Pélagie prison later in the year. He remained there from 5 Oct., 1834, to 2 Apr., 1835, in the rather relaxed conditions of access to visitors and journalistic activity which were permitted to him. From there he launched further thunderbolts against the Cour des Pairs, which was about to stage *le procès monstre* (Ledré, *La presse à l’assaut de la monarchie*, 158, n94). He appeared before the Cour on 15 December, 1834, to argue the case of the *National’s* chief editor, creating a sensation (Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, IV, 327-34, Nobécourt, *La vie d’Armand Carrel*, 195-216).

[234] The legislation of September 1835 was so repressive that both opposition and some majority deputies opposed it. Tocqueville believed the full rigour of the law was not applied, but those who tested it could be driven out of business; a new tone of moderation was prudent. See Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 82-99, Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, IV, 445-8.

[235] Quoted in Weill, *Histoire du parti républicain*, 116n. See Nobécourt. *La vie d’Armand Carrel* 135-54, 269-77.

[236] Letter from Carrel to Chateaubriand of 4 Oct., 1834, in *Memoires d’outre-tombe*, 4 vols. (Paris: Flammarion, 1964), IV, 536. Chateaubriand’s description of Carrel’s life in prison is *ibid.*, 537-8. See also Weill, *Histoire du parti républicain*, 116-17, Nobécourt. *La vie d’Armand Carrel*, 195-202, 215-16.

[237] Sainte-Beuve, “Armand Carrel” (17 May, 1852), *Causeries du lundi*, 15 vols. (Paris: Garnier, 1851-62), VI, 144-5, Chateaubriand, *Memoires*, IV, 538-9, Blanc, *Histoire de dix ans*, V, 54-63. Nobécourt, *La vie d’Armand Carrel*, 282-304, Collins. *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 88-9.

[238] Carlyle to Mill, *Collected Letters*, IX, 28 (28 July, 1836).

[239] Letter to Tocqueville, *EL, CW*, XII, 309 (9 Nov., 1836).

[240] Mill, “Fonblanque’s England under Seven Administrations” (1837), *CW*, VI, 380. Carrel had visited England from 30 August to early October, 1834, and again from the middle of May to mid-June, 1836, when (according to his biographer), “il est très recherché par la société et les honorables gentlemen le reçoivent somptueusement,” and saw Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, but there is no record of his meeting on either occasion with Mill (Nobécourt, *La vie d’Armand Carrel*, 197-9, 238).

[241] Again, Blanc’s sketch contains more light and shade. “Quoique plein de douceur et d’abandon dans l’intimité, il apparaissait, dans la vie publique, dominateur et absolu. . . . Il était né chef de parti, chef d’école, il n’aurait pu l’être. Il manquait de ce fanatisme froid qui naît des études opiniâtres et fait les novateurs. Voltairien avant tout, il ne paraissait pas avoir souci de marquer sa place dans l’histoire par l’initiative de la pensée. . . . Il possédait au plus haut point le commandement; il passionnait ses amis, c’était du caractère. . . . Il fut longtemps girondin par sentiment; et il lui en coûta beaucoup pour s’incliner devant la majesté de cette dictature révolutionnaire, l’effroi, la gloire, le désespoir et le salut de la France. . . . Forcé souvent d’éteindre dans

ses amis le feu dont il était lui-même consumé, il s'exaltait et se décourageait tour à tour dans cette lutte intérieure. . . ." (*Histoire de dix ans*, III, 128-30.) "Un trouble invincible l'agitait Car, tout en le saluant chef de parti, l'opinion ne lui fournissait aucun point d'appui sérieux, et il le sentait amèrement. . . . Il s'affligeait aussi du perpétuel refoulement de ses désirs. Il lui aurait fallu les tourments de la gloire, la vie des camps, et il n'avait, pour en employer son énergie, que le journalisme. . . ." (*Ibid.*, V, 56-7.) It was Carrel's ambivalence concerning the state, his hesitation as between Gallo-Roman decentralization and Bonapartist centralization, that struck a twentieth-century commentator. "At the time of his death," Jacques Barzun remarked, "Carrel must be called a harbinger at once of the Second Republic and of the Second Empire. To which would he have remained faithful in the end? Mill thought, to the Republic, an acute French critic [Jules Amédée Barbey d'Aureville] thought, to Bonaparte. The speculation is instructive, for it leads us into the heart of the intellectual *malaise* of the forties, and thence to the final phase of Romantic historiography." (Jacques Barzun, "Romantic Historiography as a Political Force in France." *Journal of the History of Ideas*, II [June, 1941], 325.)

[242] Letter to William Molesworth, *LL, CW*, XVII, 1978 (22 Sept., 1837). Twenty-two years later, Mill refused to permit a translation of *On Liberty* to appear with notes and preface by Emile de Girardin because "il me répugne d'être associé de quelque manière que ce soit, avec l'homme qui a tué Carrel" (letter to Dupont-White, *LL, CW*, XV, 642 [29 Oct., 1859]).

[243] Mellon, *Political Uses of History*, 8-12; Gossman, "Augustin Thierry," 6-19.

[244] Quoted by Gossman, "Augustin Thierry," 8.

[245] "Vivant esprit de la France, où te saisis-je, si ce n'est en moi?" (*Histoire de la révolution française*, Préface de 1847, 1). Paul Viallaneix, *La voie royale. Essai sur l'idée de peuple dans l'oeuvre de Michelet* (Paris: Delagrave [1959]), 91ff, Stephen A. Kippur, *Jules Michelet: A Study of Mind and Sensibility* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), 26ff.

[246] Letter to M. Napier, *EL, CW*, XIII, 431 (27 Apr., 1840).

[247] Letter to d'Eichthal, *ibid.*, 432 (7 May, 1840).

[248] Quoted *ibid.*, 432n. Michelet's letter appears in his *Journal*, ed. Paul Viallaneix and Claude Digeon, 4 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1959-76), I, 814, where it is dated 24 Sept., 1841, i.e., some sixteen months after the letter from Mill to Gustave d'Eichthal, to which Eugène d'Eichthal appended the quotation.

[249] Michelet's chief complaint was of course the patent miseries of the industrial revolution with which he here first became acquainted. Travelling for a month, 5 August to 3 September, in England, Ireland, and Scotland, he was disturbed by the "nouvelle féodalité" with its enslavement of children in the factories: "C'est encore un spectacle de voir au milieu de cette haute civilisation et chez le peuple où l'instruction est le plus répandue, ces pieds nus, ces jambes sans bas. L'aisance a augmenté, la simplicité, la dureté, la patience n'ont pas diminué." (Michelet, *Journal*, I, 145 [22 Aug., 1834].) See also Viallaneix, *La voie royale*, 40-1. Kippur, *Jules Michelet*, 74-6.

[250] Letter to R.B. Fox, *EL, CW, XIII*, 442 (3 Aug., 1840).

[251] This was a stock idea, Michelet firmly lodged it in French historiography. After the *coup d'état* in December 1851, someone close to Louis Napoleon told Harriet Grote that the recipe for securing popular support was simple. "Two passions are predominant in the mass of the people to which a ruler of France can always have recourse, the love of glory and the hatred of England. On these foundations we can build securely." (Quoted in Nassau William Senior, *Journals Kept in France and Italy from 1848 to 1852, with A Sketch of the Revolution of 1848*, ed. M.C.M. Simpson, 2 vols. [London: King, 1871], II, 289-90.)

[252] Letter to Bain, *EL, CW, XIII*, 612 (3 Nov., 1843).

[253] Taine asked the question: "Devons-nous croire M. Michelet? Pour ma part, après expérience faite, je réponds oui: car, lorsqu'on étudie les documents d'une époque qu'il a étudiée, on éprouve une sensation semblable à la sienne. . . ." ("M. Michelet" [1855], *Essais de critique et d'histoire*, 6th ed. [Paris: Hachette, 1892], 107.)

[254] Letter to Michelet, *EL, CW, XIII*, 596 (12 Sept., 1842). Michelet's *Journal* contains only a single reference to Mill by name, at I, 814 (24 Sept., 1841).

[255] Identifying himself with his historical actors in a manner not entirely different from the style affected by Carlyle two decades earlier, Michelet reported his own harrowing revolutionary experiences to correspondents. Hence his celebrated wish that he be remembered for having discerned the goal of history: "Thierry l'appelait *narration*, et M. Guizot, *analyse*. Je l'ai nommé *résurrection*, et ce nom lui restera." ("A.M. Edgar Quinet," *Le Peuple* [Paris: Didier, 1946], 25.)

[256] Letter to Thomas Smith, *LL, CW, XVII*, 1911 (4 Oct., 1872).

[257] After the shattering of his hopes for the February Revolution, Michelet was still more radicalized. He told his students in 1850 that his chair at the College de France was "not only a magistrature but a pontificate." His classroom was the scene of demonstrations, his lectures, reported a colleague, were "deplorable rhapsodies, mostly sheer nonsense . . . attaining a sort of fantastic madness." The faculty and administration wanted him disciplined, the government harassed him, the police attended his course. He was suspended in March 1851, dismissed in April 1852, and deprived of his post at the Archives Nationales in June. (Kippur, *Jules Michelet*, 116-37, esp. 131, 133.) On his general development away from his earlier views, see Oscar H. Haac, *Les principes inspireurs de Michelet* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1951). On other aspects of his broad intellectual activity, see Linda Orr, *Jules Michelet: Nature, History, and Language* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976).

[258] Johnson, *Guizot*, 370-4, Mellon, Editor's Introduction to Guizot, *Historical Essays and Lectures*, xxxix-xliv.

[259] Letter to R.B. Fox, *EL, CW, XIII*, 427 (16 Apr., 1840).

[260] Summary of French news, *Examiner*, 21 Oct., 1832, 680.

[261] Letter to James Mill, *EL, CW, XII*, 60-1 (21 Aug., 1830).

[262] "Prospects of France," *Examiner*, 17 Oct., 1830, 660-1.

[263] Summary of French news, *ibid.*, 9 Jan., 1831, 25.

[264] Summary of French news, *ibid.*, 21 Oct., 1832, 680.

[265] "Thiers completely verifies the impression his history makes. Even among French ministers he *stands out*, conspicuously unprincipled." (Letter to Carlyle, *EL, CW, XII*, 220 [2 Mar., 1834].) All the same, Mill was of two minds about the historian. "We dislike M. Thiers' politics much, and his unbounded *suffisance* still more, but nobody [i.e., *The Times*] is entitled to speak scornfully of the author of the best history in the French language, and the best specimen of historical narrative, of any length, perhaps in all modern literature" (summary of French news, *Examiner*, 21 Oct., 1832, 680). Then, twelve years later. "Thiers is inaccurate, but less so than Sir Walter Scott" (221). Of the parliamentary events that brought Thiers and his followers into office in March 1840, he wrote "It is a great event, & makes me recur to what I have so often thought, *les choses marchent vite en France* (& in this age, altogether one may add)" (letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW, XIII*, 433 [7 May, 1840]). His attacks on "ce petit fripon" (letter to Adolphe Narcisse Thiбаudeau, *ibid.*, XII, 291 [1836?]) were to grow again during the eastern crisis that summer of 1840.

[266] Letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW, XIII*, 438-9 (17 June, 1840).

[267] Letter to R.B. Fox, *ibid.*, 454-5 (23 Dec., 1840). Mill was not alone in succumbing. Jules Simon would say: "On était tout surpris et charmé, quand on pénétrait dans son intimité, de le trouver simple, gai, bienveillant, et même caressant" (Simon, *Thiers, Guizot, Rémusat*, 2nd ed. [Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1855], 20). This was not Daumier's view.

[268] Letter to d'Eichthal, *EL, CW, XIII*, 457 (25 Dec., 1840).

[269] Letter to A. Comte, *ibid.*, 518-19 (6 May, 1842).

[270] Letter to S. Austin, *ibid.*, 653-4 (18 Jan., 1845).

[271] Letters to J.B. White, *ibid.*, XII, 259, 264, 280, 285 (15 Apr., 19 May, 21 Oct., 24 Nov., 1835).

[272] Translated by Johnson, *Guizot*, 322, from Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, "Chronique," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, CI (1 Sept., 1872), 243. On Guizot as historian, see Johnson's balanced appraisal, *Guizot*, 320-76, and the comments in Leonard Krieger's Preface and Mellon's Editor's Introduction to Guizot, *Historical Essays and Lectures*, ix-xlv. On Guizot's historiographical inheritance at the moment of his dismissal from the Conseil d'Etat in 1820, see Shirley M. Gruner, "Political Historiography in Restoration France," *History and Theory*, VIII (1969), 346-65.

[273] Quoted in E.L. Woodward, *Three Studies in European Conservatism Metternich, Guizot, the Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Constable, 1929), 133, from a letter to Charles de Rémusat (1820).

[274] Letter to Prosper de Barante of 22 Oct., 1822, *Souvenirs du baron de Barante*, III, 50.

[275] Guizot was adamant: “Je n’ai, de ma vie, prostitué l’histoire au service de la politique. Mais quand l’histoire parle, il est bon que la politique écoute.” (Quoted in Rut Keiser, *Guizot als Historiker* [n.p.: Saint-Louis, 1925], 38n.) In the 1857 preface to his lectures, Guizot wrote “C’est la rivalité aveugle des hautes classes sociales qui a fait échouer parmi nous les essais de gouvernement libre. . . . Pour le vulgaire plaisir de rester, les uns impertinents, les autres envieux, nobles et bourgeois ont été infiniment moins libres, moins grands, moins assurés dans leurs biens sociaux qu’ils n’auraient pu l’être avec un peu plus de justice, de prévoyance et de soumission aux lois divines des sociétés humaines. Ils n’ont pas su agir de concert pour être libres et puissants ensemble, ils se sont livrés et ils ont livré la France aux révolutions.” (*Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de mon temps*, 8 vols. in 4 [Paris: Michel Lévy, 1858-70]. I, 294-6.) “Guizot,” Faguet remarked, “est un penseur réprimé par un homme d’Etat” (Emile Faguet, *Politiques et moralistes du dix-neuvième siècle*, 1st ser [Paris: Société française d’imprimerie et de librairie, 1901], 367).

[276] François Guizot, *Cours d’histoire moderne. Histoire de la civilisation en France depuis la chute de l’empire romain jusqu’en 1789*, 5 vols. (Paris: Pichon and Didier, 1829-32), II, 267-8.

[277] *Ibid.*, I, 26.

[278] Letter to Barante of 20 Oct., 1822, *Souvenirs du baron de Barante*, III, 49.

[279] Quoted in Agénor Bardoux, *Guizot* (Paris: Hachette, 1894), 180.

[280] Letter to the princesse de Lieven (1 Oct., 1833), *Lettres de François Guizot*, II, 240.

[281] François Guizot, *Monk, Chute de la république et rétablissement de la monarchie en Angleterre en 1660* (Paris: Didier, 1851), ix-xi.

[282] Herbert Butterfield, *Christianity and History* (London: Bell, 1949), 19-25.

[283] Edouard Fueter, *Histoire de l’historiographie moderne* (Paris: Alcan, 1914), 634. Cf. “L’idéal orléaniste tend à stériliser la curiosité historique, 1830 a donné la solution définitive des conflits séculaires entre les Français et leur dynastie, démontrent A. Thierry et Guizot: une sorte de fin de l’histoire, compensée par l’autosatisfaction et les honneurs officiels. Le finalisme bourgeois, après 1830, prend un caractère tout rétrospectif.” (Gérard, *La révolution française*, 38.) Guizot put it more personally and succinctly. “Je suis de ceux que l’élan de 1789 a élevés et qui ne consentiront point à descendre” (*Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de mon temps*, I, 27).

[284] “Il comprend beaucoup de choses,” Charles de Rémusat said, “et se pique de comprendre tout.

Il a l’air de tout dominer, d’avoir vu le terme et le faible de tout, approfondi toutes les questions et pris sur toutes des conclusions; mais on voit bientôt ses limites.” (*Mémoires de ma vie*, 5 vols. [Paris: Plon, 1958-67], I, 440, 446.)

[285] Halphen, *L’histoire en France depuis cent ans*, 34-5. He adds, “jamais sans doute l’histoire n’a été à un pareil degré infestée de maximes politiques ou de généralités philosophiques. . . . Philosopher était devenu une mode à laquelle presque aucun historien ne croyait pouvoir se soustraire.” (*Ibid.*, 38-9.)

[286] Sainte-Beuve, “Discours sur l’histoire de la révolution d’Angleterre par M. Guizot” (4 Feb., 1850), *Causeries du lundi*, I, 317.

[287] Faguet, *Politiques et moralistes*, 328.

[288] Quoted in Bardoux, *Guizot*, 124.

[289] Fernand Braudel, “Histoire et sciences sociales la longue durée,” in his *Ecruts sur l’histoire* (Paris: Flammarion, 1969), 41-83.

[290] He did so even when blaming him for the intrigue surrounding the Spanish marriages in 1846. With Sir Robert Peel as Prime Minister and Lord Aberdeen at the Foreign Office, Guizot had achieved relatively good relations with England. The return of Palmerston in June 1846 altered affairs. For years, Britain and France had jockeyed in Madrid to assert their control and influence the marriage of the Queen Guizot had backed the suit of the duc de Montpensier, Louis Philippe’s son, Aberdeen supported a Coburg prince. Amidst a welter of intrigue, the French ambassador proposed that Isabella marry an effeminate relative and, simultaneously, her sister Luisa marry Montpensier Isabella would have no children, and the throne would then pass to Louis Philippe’s grandson. By late 1845, both Victoria and Louis Philippe and their governments had thought neither the Coburg nor the Orleanist suitors of Isabella would be put forward, but when Palmerston returned to office and clumsily reintroduced Leopold of Coburg’s name, Louis Philippe and Guizot concluded they had been duped, the Madrid scheme was approved, and the marriages took place on 10 October, 1846. Naturally, the English also believed they had been duped. Mill judged unfairly that Guizot “is evidently not above low tricks & equivocations, which seem to be quite excused to every Frenchman by their being for the supposed honour & glory of France Guizot I wished to think better of, but after all this only brings me back, and that not altogether, to my first opinion of him, which some parts of his public conduct from 1839 downwards had modified.” (Letter to J. Austin, *EL, CW*, XIII, 714 [13 Apr., 1847].) See Johnson, *Guizot*, 300-9, Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe*, 242-8, Muriel E. Chamberlain, *Lord Aberdeen. A Political Biography* (London: Longman, 1983), 343-89, Jasper Ridley, *Lord Palmerston* (London: Constable, 1970), 303-20.

[291] Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 82-99; Ledré, *La presse à l’assaut de la monarchie*, 125-95.

[292] Letter to d’Eichthal, *EL, CW*, XII, 88-9 (30 Nov., 1831), letter to d’Eichthal and Duveyrier, *ibid.*, 108 (30 May, 1832).

[293] Letter to Carlyle, *ibid.*, 105-6 (29 May, 1832). “The poor Saint-Simonians,” Carlyle wrote. “Figure Duveyrier, with waiter’s apron, emptying slop pails,—for the salvation of a world” (letter to Mill, *Collected Letters*, VI, 174-5 [16 June, 1832]). See also Manuel, *Prophets of Paris*, 308-9.

[294] Manuel, *Prophets of Paris*, 186, citing Procès en la cour d’assises de la Seine, les 27 et 28 août (Paris, 1832), 194. See Pankhurst, *The Saint-Simonians, Mill and Carlyle*, 84-100, Mill to Carlyle, *EL, CW*, XII, 119-20 (17 Sept., 1832).

[295] Letter to Carlyle, *EL, CW*, XII, 150 (11-12 Apr., 1833).

[296] Letters to Carlyle, *ibid.*, 133, 139-40, 150 (27 Dec., 1832, 2 Feb., 11-12 Apr., 1833).

[297] Letter to Carlyle, *ibid.*, 150 (11-12 Apr., 1833).

[298] Letter to M. Napier, *ibid.*, XIII, 684 (27 Oct., 1845).

[299] Mill had a “passage controverting the warlike propensity of the French” that Napier removed. He did not complain, but defended his point of view (“avery old & firm one with me”) that the French did not necessarily seek prestige through war, saying he thought the *Edinburgh Review* had recently been “very unjust” (letter to M. Napier, *ibid.*, 701 [1 May, 1846]). On Mill’s “realistic” views on international relations, see Kenneth E. Miller, “John Stuart Mill’s Theory of International Relations,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXII, no. 4 (1961), 493-514.

[300] Mill, “Recent Writers on Reform” (1859), *CW*, XIX, 352.

[301] Letter to J. Austin, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 713-14 (13 Apr., 1847).

[302] Benjamin Rush, United States Minister in France, wrote in December 1847. “If I looked to the country, instead of the newspapers or speeches at political banquets. I should have thought I had come to a country abounding in prosperity of every kind and full of contentment” (quoted by Priscilla Robertson, *Revolutions of 1848. A Social History* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952], 13).

[303] Fourierism, like Saint-Simonism, he found “totally free from the objections usually urged against Communism.” He admired its “great intellectual power” and its “large and philosophic treatment of some of the fundamental problems of society and morality.” It was not in contradiction with “any of the general laws by which human action, even in the present imperfect state of moral and intellectual cultivation, is influenced,” and needed “opportunity of trial.” (*Principles of Political Economy*, *CW*, II-III [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965], II, 210, 213.) He thought, however, that “many of the details *are*, & all *appear*, passablement ridicules,” and he had doubts about the missing element of “*moral sense*” (“Nobody is ever to be made to do anything but act just as they like. . . .”) Not fancifully, therefore, he asked whether it was “a foundation on which people would be able to live & act together” (letter to Harriet Taylor, *CW*, XIV, 21-2 [c. 31 Mar., 1849]). In the same consideration, however, Mill made short shrift of Proudhon: “I heartily wish Proudhon dead . . . there are few men whose state of mind, taken as a whole, inspires me with so much aversion, & all his influence seems to me mischievous except as a potent *dissolvent* which is good so far, but every single thing which he would substitute seems to me the worst possible in practice & mostly in principle” (*ibid.*, 21).

[304] Letter to Henry S. Chapman, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 731-2 (29 Feb., 1848).

[305] See Lawrence C. Jennings, *France and Europe in 1848. A Study of French Foreign Affairs in Time of Crisis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 1-23.

[306] Letters to S. Austin, *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 733-4 (7 and 2 Mar., 1848).

[307] Letter to the editor of the *Spectator*, XXI, 18 Mar., 1848, 273.

[308] Even professional revolution-watchers could miss the significance, thus Friedrich Engels “In the National Assembly only one new element is to be added—peasants, who constitute five-sevenths of the French nation and are for the petty-bourgeois party of the *National*” (letter to Emil Blank of 28 Mar., 1848, in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Correspondence* [Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, n.d.], 55).

[309] The labour question “has been so well placed on the tapis by the noble spectacle of France (’spite of Poll Ecoy blunders) that there is no doubt of its continuing *the* great question until the hydra-headed selfishness of the idle classes is crushed by the demands of the lower” (letter from Harriet Taylor to W.J. Fox of 12 May, 1848, in Hayek, *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor*, 123-4).

[310] Letter to Marrast, *EL, CW, XIII*, 735-6 (May, 1848). President of the Assembly from June on, Marrast appeared to enjoy his arrival in power Tocqueville, who saw him in the constitutional committee that autumn, dismissed him as “un républicain à la façon de Barras et qui a toujours préféré le luxe, la table et les femmes à la démocratie en guenilles.” As Secretary of the committee, Marrast “mit fort à découvert la paresse, l’étourderie et l’impudence qui faisaient le fond de son caractère.” (Tocqueville, *Souvenirs, Oeuvres*, XII, 184, 192.)

[311] Georges Duvau, *1848* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 136-7. Such was the confusion and oddity of events this day that Armand Barbès was received in a polite manner and shown by Marrast’s secretary to a room on the same floor of the Hôtel de Ville as the mayor himself occupied. Before the guard arrived to take him away, he set to work, drawing up a hypothetical new provisional government “Tout cela,” he said later of the questions and counter-questions, declarations and threats exchanged with the officer who at length burst in on him, “est assez étrange et même un peu burlesque, mais j’affirme que ce fut ainsi” (Henri Guillemin, *La tragédie de quarante-huit* [Geneva: Editions du Milieu du Monde, 1948], 254).

[312] See Frederick A. De Luna, *The French Republic under Cavaignac, 1848* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 128-73.

[313] Mill’s confidence was by no means entirely mistaken, despite the bloody repression of the insurrection. Cavaignac failed to prevent or punish the subsequent *fusillades* that horrified and enraged Herzen and others, but he was not, as Maurice Agulhon said, “une sorte de brute guerrière ou—comme on dira cruellement dans les faubourgs—un ‘prince du sang.’ Ce militaire était le plus authentique et le plus fidèle des républicains de la veille.” (*1848, ou L’apprentissage de la république, 1848-1852* [Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1973], 74.) Cf. De Luna’s careful appraisal in *The French Republic under Cavaignac*, 161-73.

[314] French Affairs, *Daily News*, 9 Aug., 1848, 3.

[315] The French Law against the Press, *Spectator*, XXI, 19 Aug., 1848, 800, Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 104-7.

[316] Letter to Nichol, *EL, CW, XIII*, 739-40 (30 Sept., 1848).



[317] See Loubère, *Louis Blanc*, 74-142; Donald Cope McKay, *The National Workshops: A Study in the French Revolution of 1848* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1933), *passim*, for the view that the whole 15 May affair was “une opération de police bien menée” and “une manoeuvre politique aussi, fort intelligente, et signée Marrast,” see Guillemin, *La tragédie de quarante-huit*, 231-57. Of Blanc’s own account (*Histoire de la révolution de 1848*, 2 vols. [Paris: Librairie Internationale, 1870], II, 66-97, 184-211), which combines his earlier recollections, McKay notes that it is “often inaccurate and occasionally thoroughly unreliable” (*National Workshops*, 177).

[318] De Luna, *The French Republic under Cavaignac*, 395. Mill said it was “one of the most striking instances in history of the power of a name” (letter to H.S. Chapman, *LL, CW*, XIV, 32 [28 May, 1849]).

[319] Letter to Nichol, *EL, CW*, XIII, 739 (30 Sept., 1848).

[320] Blanc was vague when testifying before the parliamentary *commission d’enquête* after the events, prior to his flight into exile, saying rightly that nothing was “ready for the *immediate solution* of the problem of poverty!” (McKay, *National Workshops*, 150.)

[321] See his defence of Cabet in his letter in the *Daily News*, 30 Oct., 1849, 3. He did not readily see the importance of Proudhon, “a firebrand,” “the most mischievous man in Europe, & who has *nothing* whatever of all that I like & respect in the Socialists to whom he in no way belongs” (letter to H.S. Chapman, *LL, CW*, XIV, 34 [28 May, 1849]).

[322] Cf. Tocqueville’s harsh view. “Quant à Marrast, il appartenait à la race ordinaire des révolutionnaires français qui, par liberté du peuple, ont toujours entendu le despotisme exerce au nom du peuple” (*Souvenirs, Oeuvres*, XII, 182).

[323] Letter to H.S. Chapman, *LL, CW*, XIV, 33 (28 May, 1849).

[324] Mill was not alone in mistaking him. Tocqueville said. “Il était très supérieur à ce que sa vie antérieure et ses folles entreprises avaient pu faire penser à bon droit de lui. Ce fut ma première impression en le pratiquant. Il déçut sur ce point ses adversaires et peut-être plus encore ses amis, si l’on peut donner ce nom aux hommes politiques qui patronnèrent sa candidature.” (*Souvenirs, Oeuvres*, XII, 211.)

[325] Letter to H.S. Chapman, *LL, CW*, XIV, 34 (28 May, 1849). Tocqueville saw Considérant in the constitutional committee, judging him one of the “rêveurs chimériques . . . qui aurait mérité d’être placé aux petites maisons s’il eût été sincère, mais je crains qu’il ne méritât mieux” (*Souvenirs, Oeuvres*, XII, 180).

[326] See André Jean Tudesq, *L’élection présidentielle de Louis Napoléon Bonaparte*, 10 décembre 1848 (Paris: Colin, 1965), *passim*; Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 100-35.

[327] See the debate in Paul Bastid, *Doctrines et institutions politiques de la seconde république*, 2 vols. (Paris: Hachette, 1945), II, 79-85. On the constitution in general, see *ibid.*, 70-149, and the summary account in De Luna, *The French Republic under Cavaignac*, 329-35.

[328] De Luna, *The French Republic under Cavaignac*, 395.

[329] Constantine Henry Phipps, Marquis of Normanby, *A Year of Revolution, from a Journal Kept in Paris in 1848*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, et al., 1857), II, 375.

[330] Letter to Bain, *LL, CW*, XIV, 76 (Summer 1851).

[331] Letter to Louis Blanc, *ibid.*, XV, 562 (9 July, 1858), Louis Blanc, *1848 Historical Revelations Inscribed to Lord Normanby* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1858), subsequently published as *Révélation historiques en réponse au livre de lord Normanby* (Brussels Meline, Cans, 1859). Cf. cx n below.

[332] Mill to Giuseppe Mazzini, *LL, CW*, XV, 548 (21 Feb., 1858). Palmerston's government was defeated in February 1858 over the Conspiracy to Murder Bill that would have permitted handing over political refugees to the French authorities, closing off "the only impregnable asylum, in Europe," as Louis Blanc put it (*1848 Historical Revelations*, v). Mill saw it as a failed attempt, in the aftermath of French pressure on London following Orsini's bomb attack against Napoleon III, to drag England "dans la boue, en faisant d'elle une succursale de la police française" (letter to Pasquale Villari, *LL, CW*, XV, 550 [9 Mar., 1858]).

## VOLUME XXI - ESSAYS ON EQUALITY, LAW, AND EDUCATION. INTRODUCTION

BY STEFAN COLLINI

### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXI - Essays on Equality, Law, and Education*, ed. John M. Robson, Introduction by Stefan Collini (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/255/21629>>.

### INTRODUCTION BY STEFAN COLLINI

Any volume of occasional writings, especially those of an author who, according to his own unapologetic testimony, had, and never hesitated to express, strong views on “most of the subjects interesting to mankind,”<sup>1</sup> is bound to appear diverse in character, and no attempt will here be made to hide or apologize for this diversity. Indeed, part of the value of a collected edition lies precisely in the reminder it provides to later and more specialized ages of the range and interconnectedness of a major writer’s concerns. But in the present case the appearance of the contents-page may actually exaggerate the heterogeneity of the material in this volume. One way to counteract this judgment is to observe the thematic overlapping of the subject-matter. Even with an author whose intellectual ambitions were less systematic than Mill’s, writings on the topics of equality and law could hardly be remote from each other, and in Mill’s case, furthermore, his whole theory of social and moral improvement was in one obvious sense educational, so that his views on particular educational ideals and institutions can, without strain, be seen as further corollaries of those same basic principles which underlie his other writings, including those on equality and law. But even if one considers the categories in isolation for a moment, the list of contents may still convey a misleading impression of how the items are distributed among them, considered purely quantitatively, more than half the volume falls primarily under the heading of “equality”; “law” accounts for just over one quarter, and “education” for a little under a fifth. The most important concentration of all, however, is chronological, despite the fact that the earliest piece reproduced here was published forty-six years before the last. For in fact, about three-quarters of the volume is occupied by material published in the thirteen years between 1859 and 1871. This period, of course, marked the very peak of Mill’s reputation and influence as a public figure, and he very deliberately set about exploiting his recently established authority to promote his particular social and political views as they related to the leading public issues of the day, utilizing all those means of addressing the relevant audiences which become available to an established public figure—pamphlets and manifestos as well as books, formal lectures as well as testimony to Royal Commissions, and, above all, articles, reviews, and letters in the periodical press. The essays in this volume are largely the fruit of this activity.

Readers of this edition need hardly be told that some phases of Mill's career and aspects of his writing have been subjected to intensive, or at least repeated, study and are now comparatively familiar. Works expounding and criticizing his major theoretical writings in philosophy, politics, and economics exist in industrial quantities, and of course the earlier stages of his intellectual development have come to constitute one of the best-known identity crises in history. But neither his less extended mature writings nor the final, and in some ways quite distinct, phase of his career have received anything like such close attention; therefore, as a preliminary to a more detailed discussion of the individual pieces reprinted in this volume, it may be helpful to consider in a fairly general way Mill's performance in the role of public moralist, and to try to place him in that world of High-Victorian polemical and periodical writing to which he was such a notable contributor. This is not simply a question of the set of doctrines which could be extracted from these essays. As a practitioner of the higher moralizing, Mill established a particular tone and level of discussion and employed certain characteristic modes of argument and other means of persuasion that together account for many of the features, often the most interesting features, common to the following pieces.

#### MILL AS PUBLIC MORALIST

With his reputation will stand or fall the intellectual repute of a whole generation of his countrymen. . . . If they did not accept his method of thinking, at least he determined the questions they should think about. . . . The better sort of journalists educated themselves on his books, and even the baser sort acquired a habit of quoting from them. He is the only writer in the world whose treatises on highly abstract subjects have been printed during his lifetime in editions for the people, and sold at the price of railway novels. Foreigners from all countries read his books as attentively as his most eager English disciples, and sought his opinions as to their own questions with as much reverence as if he had been a native oracle.<sup>2</sup>

It is, no doubt, difficult to write the obituary of an oracle, and John Morley's prose here betrays the strain. Yet his studied hyperbole, or at least his apparent need to resort to it even when writing for a sympathetic audience, suitably indicates the quite extraordinary public standing that Mill achieved in the last decade or so of his life. We must be careful not to let the development of his reputation during the earlier stages of his career be obscured by or assimilated to its final remarkable apotheosis: in the 1830s he was best known as a leading representative of an extreme and unpopular sect; in the 1840s and into the 1850s his double-decker treatises on logic and political economy won him a reputation that was formidable but restricted in scope and limited in extent. After all, up until 1859 these were the only books he had published (apart from the rather technical and commercially never very successful *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy*), and although his articles and reviews continued to appear during these decades, he did not, before his retirement from the East India Company and his wife's death in 1858, deliberately and consistently seek the limelight by publication or any other means. It is interesting to reflect how

different the obituaries would have been had Mill died in the mid-1850s, as seemed to him very likely at the time. Not only would his place in the history of political thought, for example, be comparatively negligible, but he would be seen as one of those distinguished figures in the history of thought who never achieved full recognition in their lifetimes, and whose subsequent reputation partly derived from incomplete or posthumous works, with the result that they stood in a quite different relation to their contemporary audiences. Nor, of course, would he have served his term in Parliament, the extraordinary manner of his election to which was both a symptom of his peculiar standing and a cause of its further growth.

Mill himself was well aware of the influence this lately acquired reputation gave him. Of his spate of publications after 1859, he says to an American correspondent in 1863, "They have been much more widely read than ever [my longer treatises] were, & have given me what I had not before, popular influence. I was regarded till then as a writer on special scientific subjects & had been little heard of by the miscellaneous public," and, he adds with evident satisfaction, "I am in a very different position now."<sup>3</sup> The triumphant note of realized ambition is even clearer in his reflection recorded during his Westminster candidacy of 1865. "I am getting the ear of England."<sup>4</sup> He did not hesitate to bend that ear, and although he did not exactly pour honey into it, he was well aware of the persuasive arts needed to hold its attention. There may well be figures who conform to the stereotype of the theorist, working out ideas on abstract subjects heedless of the world's response, but Mill cannot be numbered among them. Nor should his justly celebrated defence of the ideals of toleration and many-sidedness obscure the fact that on nearly all the issues of his time, intellectual as well as practical, he was rabidly partisan; as "a private in the army of Truth"<sup>5</sup> he frequently engaged in hand-to-hand combat, offering little quarter to the unhesitatingly identified forces of Error.

A revealing statement of Mill's own conception of his role as a public moralist is seen in his reply in 1854 to the secretary of the charmingly named Neophyte Writers' Society, which had invited him to become a member of its council:

So far as I am able to collect the objects of the Society from the somewhat vague description given of them in the Prospectus, I am led to believe that it is not established to promote any opinions in particular; that its members are bound together only by the fact of being writers, not by the purposes for which they write; that their publications will admit conflicting opinions with equal readiness, & that the mutual criticism which is invited will have for its object the improvement of the writers merely as writers, & not the promotion, by means of writing, of any valuable object.

Now I set no value whatever on writing for its own sake & have much less respect for the literary craftsman than for the manual labourer except so far as he uses his powers in promoting what I consider true & just. I have on most of the subjects interesting to mankind, opinions to which I attach importance & which I earnestly desire to diffuse; but I am not desirous of aiding the diffusion of opinions contrary to my own, & with respect to the mere faculty of expression independently of what is to be expressed, it does not appear to me to require any encouragement. There is already

an abundance, not to say superabundance, of writers who are able to express in an effective manner the mischievous commonplaces which they have got to say. I would gladly give any aid in my power towards improving their opinions; but I have no fear that any opinions they have will not be sufficiently well expressed, not in any way would I be disposed to give any assistance in sharpening weapons when I know not in what cause they will be used.

For these reasons I cannot consent that my name should be added to the list of writers you send me.<sup>6</sup>

It could be argued that almost his entire mature career is a gloss on this letter; with an eye to the contents of the present volume, let us concentrate on just three aspects of it.

First of all, Mill was no tyro as far as the means for diffusing his opinions were concerned. Morley called him the best-informed man of his day: certainly he was one of the most attentive readers of the great reviews, then in their heyday. His correspondence is studded with references to the latest issue of this or that journal, the political and intellectual character of each being duly noted; a more than casual interest in the medium is revealed when a man spends several weeks systematically catching up on back issues of a periodical, as Mill did in 1860 with the *Saturday Review*, despite the fact that it was largely a journal of comment on the ephemeral topics of the day.<sup>7</sup> He was always alive to the nature of the different audiences he could reach through these journals. He cultivated his connection with the *Edinburgh Review*, for example, despite the defects of its increasingly hide-bound Whiggism, because appearing in its pages conferred greater authority and respectability than any of its lesser rivals could offer; on the other hand, particularly contentious or merely slight pieces were seen as needing more congenial company. Thus, to do justice to Austin's reputation nothing less than the *Edinburgh* would do (and the subject was anyway a "safe" one), but the *Westminster* was a better platform from which to issue a timely puff in favour of Cairnes' controversial *The Slave Power*. As Bain tersely put it: "He chose the *Westminster* when he wanted free room for his elbow."<sup>8</sup> The importance Mill attached to the maintenance of "an organ of really free opinions," shows clearly his belief, whether justified or not, that it would otherwise be difficult to get a hearing for "advanced" opinions.<sup>9</sup> When coaching the young Lord Amberley on how best to put a shoulder behind the wheel of Progress, he remarks: "The greatest utility of the *Westminster Review* is that it is willing to print bolder opinions on all subjects than the other periodicals: and when you feel moved to write anything that is too strong for other Reviews, you will generally be able to get it into the *Westminster*."<sup>10</sup> For this reason Mill remained willing, long after he had relinquished ownership of the paper, to sink money in its never very promising battle against low circulation figures, and in this he was only one among several contemporary public men to whom the prestige or accessibility of a review of a congenial temper justified often quite substantial subsidies.<sup>11</sup> When in the last decade of his life the *Fortnightly Review* got under way, it fulfilled this role more successfully, especially while edited by his self-proclaimed disciple, John Morley, and several of Mill's later pieces, including the last article reprinted here, were written for it. Testimony of a different kind about the importance Mill attached to such a review is provided by the fact that he should have offered, at the age of sixty-four and with nu-

merous other claims on his time, to occupy the editor's chair during Morley's threatened absence rather than have the *Fortnightly* fall into the wrong hands or suffer a break in publication.<sup>12</sup>

Although he was predictably censorious of "professional excitement-makers,"<sup>13</sup> Mill's mastery of his role also extended to that other important requirement, a sense of timing. In writing to the editor of the *Westminster* about a proposed article by another contributor, Mill reported; "he does not like the idea of its not appearing till April, and I should certainly think January would be a better time, as giving it a chance of helping to shape the speeches in Parliament or at public meetings, and the newspaper articles, by which alone any impression can be made upon unwilling Finance Ministers."<sup>14</sup> In issuing his own work, Mill calculated the moment for making the maximum "impression"; he delayed full expression of his unpopular views on the American Civil War until there was a "chance of getting a hearing for the Northern side of the question," and later congratulated himself that "The Contest in America" had appeared at just the right moment to influence opinion.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, he delayed publication of *The Subjection of Women* (which was written in 1861) until the campaign for the suffrage, which he helped to orchestrate, had created a more receptive audience.<sup>16</sup> Judicious distribution of off-prints of his articles was intended to increase this impact, just as the pamphlet form of both his "Remarks on Mr. Fitzroy's Bill" and his evidence to the Royal Commission on the Contagious Diseases Acts gave his views on these subjects a wider currency. And of course he was no less careful in judging the occasion for publishing further Library editions of his earlier works, as well as the cheap People's Editions that, beginning in 1865, gave wide circulation to his major works.<sup>17</sup> Having got "the ear of England," Mill did not intend to let it go.

The second aspect of Mill's performance in the role of public moralist that concerns us here is the fact that his views were always likely to be unpopular with the majority of the educated classes, or at least—what may be rather more interesting—Mill always thought of himself as the holder of unpopular views, despite the success of his writings. In very general terms it is true that Mill's beliefs on "most of the subjects interesting to mankind" were those of an advanced Radical—secular, democratic, egalitarian, actively sympathetic to Socialism and the emancipation of women, yet more actively hostile to privilege and injustice and to the moral callousness he took to underlie these evils—and these views hardly commanded immediate assent in the smoking-rooms of mid-Victorian England. But it may have become important to Mill to exaggerate the extent to which he was a lonely crusader, lacking a supporting army (a few white knights aside), sustained only by the righteousness of the cause and the kinship of a scattering of rare spirits in other countries. Certainly, it is an identity which a self-described "radical" thinker is always likely to find comforting, since it simultaneously flatters the intellect, provides a sense of purpose, and explains away failure. Occasionally there is an almost paranoid note in Mill's writing—it is part of what gives *On Liberty* its somewhat shrill tone—and although it is true that Mill was frequently reminded of the unpopularity of many of his causes, it is also true that magnifying the strength of the Forces of Darkness in his typically Manichaean vision of the world was essential to his polemical strategy. There are numerous instances of this in the present volume: to take but one, consider how often in the opening paragraphs of *The Subjection of Women* he depicts his task as "arduous," emphasizing the great "difficulty" of "contend[ing] against . . . a mass of feeling,"

and leading up to the subtly self-flattering self-excusing statement: “In every respect the burthen is hard on those who attack an almost universal opinion. They must be very fortunate as well as unusually capable if they obtain a hearing at all.” (261.) The first two editions of the book, it should be noted, sold out within a few months.

As the metaphor of “advanced” or “progressive” opinion suggests, Mill projected his differences with the majority of his contemporaries into a reassuring historical dimension. Mankind were strung out in an enormous caravan, slowly and often unwillingly trudging across the sands of time, with the English governing classes, in particular, reluctant to move on from their uniquely favoured oasis. Mill, some way in advance of the main party, could see distant vistas hidden from their view: the task was to convince the more susceptible among them to move in the right direction, and crucial to this task was showing that the recommended route was but an extension of the path successfully followed so far. Mill, unlike several of the most prominent nineteenth-century social thinkers, did not elaborate a fully teleological account of history, but the frequently resorted to the claim that there had been a discernible line of moral improvement, not dissimilar to what T.H. Green was to call “the extension of the area of the common good,”<sup>18</sup> whereby the circle of full moral recognition was gradually being extended to all those hitherto neglected or excluded, whether they were English labourers or negro slaves or—the argument is used to particularly good effect here—women. It is always an advantage to portray one’s opponents as committed to defending a quite arbitrary stopping-place along the route of progress, and the argument had a particular resonance when addressed to an audience of mid-nineteenth-century English liberals who regarded such moral improvement as the chief among the glories of their age.

As this account reveals, Mill did not in fact stand in such a purely adversary relation to his culture as he sometimes liked to suggest, since he was constantly appealing to certain shared values when berating his contemporaries for failing either to draw the right inferences from their professed moral principles in theory or to live up to their agreed standards in practice. Mill—it is one of the few things about him one can assert with reasonable security against contradiction—was not Nietzsche. He was not, that is, attempting fundamentally to subvert or reverse his society’s moral sensibilities, but rather to refine them and call them more effectively into play on public issues (examples will be noted below). In these circumstances, the moralist runs the risk of priggishness, as he contrasts the consistency of his own position and the purity of his own motives with the logical confusions and self-interested prejudices that he must impute to those who, sharing the same premises, fail to draw the same conclusions.

This consideration brings us to the third aspect of Mill’s performance as public moralist to be discussed here, his characteristic style and manner of argument. Coleridge’s dictum, “*Analogies* are used in aid of *Conviction: Metaphors* as means of *Illustration*,”<sup>19</sup> catches and at the same time explains one of the most characteristic features of Mill’s style. His prose, typically, is didactic and forensic, conducting the reader through the logical deficiencies of arguments like a severe, slightly sarcastic, and not altogether patient tutor dissecting a pupil’s essay. He wrote to convince, and where he could not convince, to convict. No one has ever doubted the power of sustained analy-



sis that he could command, but the pieces in this volume also display his mastery of the blunter weapons of controversy. One would be wise to respect an opponent who could begin a paragraph with a bland enquiry into the nature of Confederate society and then move smoothly to the conclusion: “The South are in rebellion not for simple slavery; they are in rebellion for the right of burning human creatures alive” (136). The invention of imaginary opponents underlined the gladiatorial nature of Mill’s dialectic, and he could be as unfair to them as Plato often is to Socrates’ stooges (who provide Mill’s model), as when in *The Subjection of Women* we are told what a “pertinacious adversary, pushed to extremities, may say,” only to discover a few lines later that this “will be said by no one now who is worth replying to” (292; cf. 310-11). But perhaps his most common rhetorical strategy is the *reductio ad absurdum*—and this observation underlines the earlier point about Mill’s reliance on a certain community of values between himself and his readers, without which the reductions would seem either not absurd or else simply irrelevant. Similarly, the use of analogy requires that the characterization of one term of the analogy be beyond dispute: if it is not, the alleged extension will have no persuasive force. Arguments about equality are particularly likely to involve appeals to analogy; indeed, the whole of *The Subjection of Women* could be regarded as one long elaboration of the basic analogy between the historical position of slaves and the present position of women. And finally, the gap between profession and practice, to which Mill was constantly calling attention, invites the use of irony, though it must be said that his efforts at irony often sailed close to mere sarcasm and ridicule; his own highly developed sense of being, and having to be seen to be, “a man of principle” did not, perhaps, leave much room for that more generous and tolerant perception of human limitation which sustains the best forms of irony.

As a medium for addressing the reader of the periodicals of general culture, Mill’s prose was certainly not without its drawbacks Carlyle’s ungenerous description of Mill’s conversation as “sawdustish”<sup>20</sup> could also be applied to some of his writing. He was aware, Bain tells us, that he lacked that facility of illustration which would have mitigated the overly abstract texture which characterizes almost all his work, and a compendium of Mill’s wit would be a slim volume indeed. His scorn for the mere “literary craftsman” quoted above was of a piece with his own avoidance of those arts common among the more winning essayists and reviewers in the nineteenth century. He never quite hits off the ideal tone for such writing in the way in which, say, Bagehot or Leslie Stephen did: he never manages to create that sense of intimacy between reader and author, that warming feeling of sharing a sensible view of a mad world. But in some ways the achievement of this effect would have been foreign to Mill’s purpose, for the sense of complicity it nurtured was to him only a subtler form of that complacency which he saw as the chief danger of modern society, the *fons malorum* that, above all else, required constant criticism: and here we come to the heart of his role as a public moralist.

Behind the particular issues to which the topical pieces in this volume were addressed there runs a common theme: the moral health of society is the highest good, calling, as the metaphor suggests, for constant care and sustenance if decay is not to set in.<sup>21</sup> Mill is here acting as moral coach, keeping the national conscience in trim, shaming it out of flabbiness, urging it on to yet more strenuous efforts. In some ways this is an ancient role, and he sometimes hits a surprisingly

traditional note: when, in defending the military action of the Northern states, he declared that “war, in a good cause, is not the greatest evil which a nation can suffer. . . . [T]he decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks nothing *worth* a war, is worse” (141), we are reminded more of the language of Machiavelli and civic *virtù* than that of Cobden and Bright and the age of pacific commercialism. But for the most part the conception of morality to which Mill appeals appears unambiguously Victorian, both in its emphasis upon the active shaping of “character,” that constantly self-renewing disposition to form virtuous habits of conduct, and in its focus on the welfare of others as the object of moral action, and even, indeed, on the duty of altruism. What Mill is trying to do, beyond keeping this conception in good repair, is to mobilize its power in areas outside those over which it was conventionally granted sovereignty. In assessing England’s foreign policy he makes questions of moral example paramount; in discussing attitudes towards the American Civil War the moral tone of opinion in England is his chief concern; in opposing the Contagious Diseases Acts it is their public endorsement of vice he most objects to.

As prompter of the national conscience, Mill derived certain advantages from his deliberately nurtured position as an outsider among the English governing classes. Where the aim is to make one’s readers morally uncomfortable, too great an intimacy can be an obstacle; Mill seems to have felt that his avoidance of Society helped to provide the requisite distance as well as to preserve a kind of uncorrupted purity of feeling (he, though not he alone, attributed the allegedly superior moral insight of the labouring classes to the same cause). More obviously, he claimed a special authority on account of his familiarity (his unique familiarity, he sometimes seems to imply) with the main currents of Continental, and especially French, thought. Reproaches to his countrymen for their insular prejudice and ignorance are a staple ingredient in Mill’s writing, whether he is castigating them for their aversion to theories of history or upbraiding them for their unresponsiveness to the beauties of art. This is a further aspect of the didactic voice; tutor and pupil are not equals. An interesting complication emerges, however, where the comparative moral achievements of the English are concerned, for he repeatedly asserts that England is the superior of other nations in its “greater tenderness of conscience” (though characteristically he cannot resist the censorious warning, “I am not sure that we are not losing” the advantage [253]). As far as individual conduct was concerned, he could still maintain that its tendency to harden into a narrow “Hebraizing” called for correction from larger views of life that needed, on the whole, to be imported. But where national policy was at issue. Mill conceded England’s superior reputation, only to treat it as the source of an enlarged duty: as “incomparably the most conscientious of all nations” in its “national acts” (115), England had a special responsibility for maintaining and improving standards of international morality. In either case there was no rest for the virtuous. Since the English, according to Mill, were perpetually liable to complacency, a critic who could keep a more strenuous ideal before their minds would never want for employment.

It may help us to place that role as Mill’s practice defined it if we contrast it with two others, which were certainly no less available in mid-Victorian England, and which may, for convenience, simply be labelled those of the Sage and the Man of Letters.<sup>22</sup> Claims to both these titles could be made on Mill’s behalf, yet their ultimate inappropriateness as descriptions of the author

of the pieces in this volume (and, I think, of most of Mill's mature *oeuvre*) is revealing of his position in the intellectual life of his time. The Sage (to construct a highly simplified ideal-type) trades in wisdom and new visions of experience as a whole. Typically, he is not so much attempting to *argue* his readers out of false beliefs as to reveal to them—or, better still, to put them in the way of discovering for themselves—the limitations of that perception of the world upon which they purport to base all their beliefs. The ineffable constantly looms, and he frequently employs a highly idiosyncratic vocabulary in an effort to disclose those dimensions of experience which the conventional categories are said to distort or obscure. Coleridge; Carlyle, and Newman might be taken as obvious nineteenth-century examples of this type, their very heterogeneity ensuring that it will not be understood to imply a set of common doctrines. Now, for all his Coleridgean and Carlylean flirtations in the late 1820s and early 1830s, I think it is clear that Mill does not belong in this *galere*. The *Logic* is hardly attempting to awaken in us a sense of the mysteries of the universe, and none of the essays in the volumes of *Dissertations and Discussions* leaves us feeling that we now possess our experience in a quite new way. Nothing in Mill's philosophy strains at the limits of the plainly expressible, and if this restriction gives his prose a rather pedestrian quality by comparison with that of the Sages, we should remember that it is part of the definition of the pedestrian that he has his feet on the ground. After all, when Mill clashes directly with Carlyle over "the Negro Question" (89-95), it is not obvious that the latter's esoteric vision yields the more appealing view, still less that it provides the more persuasive basis for action.

As one who wrote so extensively for the great Victorian reviews and on such a diverse range of subjects, Mill might seem to have a better claim to be included in the more capacious category of Man of Letters. His literary essays of the 1830s could be cited as one qualification for membership, his later reviews on historical and classical subjects, more dubiously, as another, and in any inclusive survey of the type Mill ought arguably to find a place. But even then he seems to be at most a kind of honorary member, too important to be left out, too individual to be conscripted, and his reply to the Neophyte Writers' Society again provides the clue which helps us to pin down his distinctiveness. It is not only that Mill aimed to instruct rather than to delight, though it is worth recalling the disdain he entertained for what he dismissively termed "the mere faculty of expression", he could never have subscribed to the view expressed in Francis Jeffrey's defence of the lively style of the early *Edinburgh Review*: "To be learned and right is no doubt the first requisite, but to be ingenious and original and discursive is perhaps more than the second in a publication which can only do good by remaining popular."<sup>23</sup> But Mill is not divided from the best practitioners of literary journalism in his day only by a difference of tactics; there is the far deeper difference that he was not sufficiently interested in the variousness of literary achievement, not drawn to those exercises in appreciation, discrimination, and evocation that bulked so large in the reviews of the day. Where others collected their essays under such titles as "Hours in a Library," "Literary Studies," or simply "Miscellanies," Mill quite accurately called his "Dissertations and Discussions." Interestingly, he never wrote that kind of extended meditation on and appreciation of the work of a single figure which is among the chief essayistic glories of, say, Macaulay or Bagehot or Stephen, or even, more revealingly, of Morley, more revealingly because Morley was close to Mill in both doctrine and temperament. It is hard to imagine Mill, had he

lived another ten years, contributing to Morley's English Men of Letters series. Of the two books which Mill did devote to individual figures, that on Hamilton is a massive display of destructive criticism and dialectical overkill, while even the briefer and more general assessment of Comte remains firmly tied to an analytical discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of Comte's *theory*. The nearest Mill had earlier come to this genre was in his famous essays on Bentham and Coleridge, yet even these were thinly disguised instalments in Mill's own philosophical progress, less essays in appreciation than occasions for further synthesis. Similarly, his pieces on the French historians were intended to be contributions towards the development of a general historical theory, just as his reviews of Grote's history were in effect manifestos for democracy, and so on. "I have on most of the subjects interesting to mankind, opinions to which I attach importance & which I earnestly desire to diffuse." In pursuing this goal, the mature Mill husbanded his energies with principled care; perhaps he could not afford to explore other voices. At all events, as a moralist he never missed a chance to instruct, reproach, and exhort.

Such a figure is bound to excite strong feelings of one kind or another. In the pieces collected here, Mill, as a contemporary comment on his writings on the American Civil War put it, "ceases to be a philosopher and becomes the partisan,"<sup>24</sup> and they are for that reason an excellent corrective to caricatures of Mill as the irenic spokesman for some factitious "Victorian orthodoxy." It was because of such writings, above all, that he was regarded in many respectable circles as incorrigibly "extreme," a zealous root-and-branch man; even many of those who had been enthusiastic admirers of his earlier works in philosophy and political economy found these later writings too "doctrinaire."<sup>25</sup> Others regarded them as among his best works.<sup>26</sup> It may be appropriate, therefore, to conclude this general discussion with two contemporary judgments which are both, it will be seen, essentially responses to those features of Mill the moralist we have been dealing with. A reviewer of *The Subjection of Women*, irked by Mill's "assumption of especial enlightenment—of a philosophic vantage-ground from which he is justified in despising the wisdom of mankind from the beginning of things," saw in this the source of his considerable unpopularity: "His intense arrogance, his incapacity to do justice to the feelings or motives of all from whom he differs, his intolerance of all but his own disciples, and lastly, in natural consequence of these qualities, his want of playfulness in himself and repugnance to it in others, all combine to create something like antipathy."<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, John Morley, commending Mill's "moral thoroughness," concluded. "The too common tendency in us all to moral slovenliness, and a lazy contentment with a little flaccid protest against evil, finds a constant rebuke in his career. . . . The value of this wise and virtuous mixture of boldness with tolerance, of courageous speech with courageous reserve, has been enormous."<sup>28</sup>

## EQUALITY

Mill's writings on equality included in this volume fall into two main groups, which it will be convenient to discuss separately, they are those that deal with what might be loosely termed "the negro question," including, in addition to the piece of that name, his essays on the American

Civil War and the papers of the Jamaica Committee; and those that deal with women, including, as well as the obvious items, his evidence on the Contagious Diseases Acts. (The two complementary pieces on foreign affairs—"A Few Words on Non-Intervention" and "Treaty Obligations"—will be discussed with the first group since they directly bear on the related question of the moral considerations that ought to govern England's international conduct.) But, as the earlier remarks about analogy suggest, the arguments deployed in the two groups were very closely connected in Mill's mind, and so it may be helpful to make a preliminary point about the chief feature they have in common.

Alexander Bain, increasingly sceptical of Mill's later political enthusiasms, considered the "doctrine of the natural equality of men" to be his master's greatest error as a "scientific thinker."<sup>29</sup> Mill certainly presented the issue as essentially a matter of scientific method, making his opponents' belief in natural inequalities seem a corollary of their defective grasp of the nature of induction. He constantly maintained that no reliable inference about what men and, more particularly, women would be like under a quite different set of circumstances could be made on the basis of our knowledge of their behaviour under the circumstances of systematic inequality which, he alleged in a rather brisk characterization of human history, had shaped that behaviour up to the present. His belief in the indefinite malleability of human nature provided one crucial ingredient of this claim, though here as elsewhere he was hampered (as he at times acknowledged) by his failure with his pet project of an "Ethology," the scientific demonstration of the ways in which character is formed by circumstances.<sup>30</sup> But in a way his view reflects the larger problem of negative evidence, a recurring motif in radical arguments against the existing order of things. That is to say, to the premise that individuals should be treated equally unless good cause can be shown to do otherwise, Mill wants to attach the rider that history could not *in principle* furnish the evidence needed to show such cause in the case of traditionally subordinate groups such as "the lower races," the lower classes, or women. Actually, of course, Mill does wish to appeal to history in one way, namely (as suggested in general terms above), to present it as exhibiting a broad movement towards equality, but he is not, strictly speaking, attempting to have it both ways: the historical and epistemological claims are logically independent of each other. After all, it would be possible to uphold a belief in equality as in some sense "natural" whilst acknowledging that the march of history seemed to be in the direction of ever greater inequality, though unless buttressed by some ingenious supporting arguments this position might make the initial claim less plausible as well as, and perhaps more consequentially, less inspiring. In practice, needless to say, Mill combined the two claims to good polemical effect: "the course of history, and the tendencies of progressive human society, afford not only no presumption in favour of this system of inequality of rights, but a strong one against it; and . . . so far as the whole course of human improvement up to this time, the whole stream of modern tendencies, warrants any inference on the subject, it is, that this relic of the past is discordant with the future, and must necessarily disappear" (272). He did not, in fact, always press the second, quasi-historicist, claim quite so hard; but he squeezed the first, negative, point very hard indeed, and it is this, above all, that imparts such a strongly destructive flavour to some of these pieces.

“The Negro Question” (1850), the earliest of the first group, was published in the form of a letter to the editor of *Fraser’s* replying to Carlyle’s “Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question” published in the preceding number.<sup>31</sup> Mill’s friendship with Carlyle had cooled—indeed, all but lapsed—since the days of Mill’s heady, discipular enthusiasm in the early 1830s,<sup>32</sup> and Carlyle’s ever more vehement denunciations of the sentimental cant of humanitarian reformers placed a very large obstacle in the way of any genuine intellectual rapprochement. This and other uncongenial themes, including the Divine sanction to the rule of the strongest, and the heroic, Promethean conception of work, were all rehearsed in this latest intemperate satire on the misguided world of Exeter Hall and “The Universal Abolition of Pain Association,” so that Mill’s reply involved a repudiation of the whole Carlylean vision. The exchange also prefigured the far more significant confrontations over the Governor Eyre controversy sixteen years later, when Mill and Carlyle were to emerge as leaders of the rival public committees, and when the lines of division were very much those canvassed in the earlier exchange.

The bare structure of Mill’s argument follows the basic pattern referred to above: what Carlyle takes as the distinctive and self-evidently inferior “nature” of the negro is in fact the result of the historical circumstances of subjection under which that character has been formed, and it is the distinctive mark of the modern age to be bent on mitigating or abolishing such subjection. Both science and history, therefore, tell against the view that the negro—“Quashee,” to use Carlyle’s mischievously provocative term—must perpetually work under the lash of a white master. But though Mill’s reply is, as ever, analytically sharp, it may seem to leave untouched the deeper sources of Carlyle’s rhetorical power. For example, in replying that the abolition of slavery “triumphed because it was the cause of justice,” not because the age itself was enslaved to a “rose-pink sentimentalism” (88), Mill does not really engage with that transvaluation of all values that lay at the root of Carlyle’s particular gibes (the appropriateness of the Nietzschean phrase is itself an indication of the systematically subversive nature of Carlyle’s assault on the moral truisms of his day). Mill’s criticisms are decisive in their own terms, but they bounce like small-arms fire off Carlyle’s armour-plated vision of the enthusiasm for human justice as itself part of that weak-kneed, self-deluded evasion of the facts of a power-governed universe. Carlyle, hardly surprisingly, thought Mill’s reply “most shrill, thin, poor, and insignificant.”<sup>33</sup>

One significant feature of Mill’s attack was his prescient concentration on the prospects for slavery in the United States, and on the support given to “the owners of human flesh” by Carlyle’s flinging “this missile, loaded with the weight of his reputation, into the abolitionist camp” (95). Mill always followed American developments very closely, convinced that they would eventually prove decisive for several of the causes he cared most about:<sup>34</sup> the fate of popular government, in particular, seemed to Mill and many others in England to be bound up with the successes and failures of “the great democratic experiment” of the United States.<sup>35</sup> Although Mill shared many of Tocqueville’s misgivings about the pressures making for mediocrity and conformity in American society, he did not let these misgivings override his principled optimism about the future of democracy, and he was always alert to the ways in which anti-democratic opinion in England, with *The Times* in the van, tried to exploit the acknowledged weaknesses of American political life and constitutional arrangements to discredit all popular causes at home. The Civil

War, therefore, touched several nerves in Mill's moral physiology; not only did it involve the most blatant case of institutionalized inequality in the civilized world and the whole question of popular government's ability to combine freedom with stability, but, always powerfully active in determining Mill's interest in public issues, it provided a thermometer with which to take the moral temperature of English society as a whole.

The question of British attitudes towards the American Civil War is a notoriously complex and disputed one,<sup>36</sup> but it is uncontentious to say that in the early stages of the war a very large majority among the articulate was hostile to the North, and that within that majority there was an influential body actively sympathetic to the Confederate cause. It was not simply that the upper classes largely sided with what was perceived as the aristocratic or gentlemanly character of plantation society, nor even that for many in all classes commercial self-interest seemed to dictate a prudent regard for the prosperity and independence of the cotton-exporting states. It was also that the Confederate cause was widely represented as the cause of freedom, that in defending their "right to secede" in the face of the superior force of an essentially alien power, the Southern states were acting analogously to those peoples "rightly struggling to be free" who had aroused such enthusiasm in Britain in the preceding decade: Jefferson Davis was elevated to stand alongside Kossuth and Garibaldi. The issue was thus not one on which opinion divided (in so far as it very unequally did divide) along party lines: Gladstone and Russell were among those who considered the Federal attempt to "coerce the South" to be unwarranted, while Radicals were told by some of their spokesmen that "the first doctrine of Radicalism . . . was the right of a people to self-government."<sup>37</sup>

Mill, to whom the real issue at stake in the war had from the outset been the continued existence of slavery, considered that much of this sympathy for the South rested on ignorance or, even more culpably, moral insensibility, and "The Contest in America" (1862) was his attempt to educate English opinion on both counts. He expected it, Bain recorded, "to give great offence, and to be the most hazardous thing for his influence that he had yet done."<sup>38</sup> He made this judgment not simply because he found himself on the side of the minority, and a pretty small one at that; this he had taken to be the more or less constant character of his intellectual life from his earliest Benthamite propaganda onwards. Bain's phrase suggests, rather, that Mill was now the self-conscious possessor of a "reputation" which he was about to deploy in an outspoken condemnation of the moral myopia of the reputation-making classes. For, "the tone of the press & of English opinion," as he confided to Thornton, "has caused me more disgust than anything has done for a long time";<sup>39</sup> he regarded the "moral attitude" displayed by "some of our leading journals" (*The Times* and the *Saturday Review* particularly galled him) as betraying an unavowed partiality for slavery. In some cases, he sneered, this arose from "the influence, more or less direct, of West Indian opinions and interests," but in others—and here he warms to a favourite theme—it arose

from inbred Toryism, which, even when compelled by reason to hold opinions favourable to liberty, is always adverse to it in feeling, which likes the spectacle of irresponsible power exercised by one person over others; which has no moral repugnance

to the thought of human beings born to the penal servitude for life, to which for the term of a few years we sentence our most hardened criminals, but keeps its indignation to be expended on “rabid and fanatical abolitionists” across the Atlantic, and on those writers in England who attach a sufficiently serious meaning to their Christian professions, to consider a fight against slavery as a fight for God (129)

Slavery is thus treated by Mill as the extreme form of undemocracy, a kind of Toryism of race to match the “Toryism of sex” that he saw in women’s exclusion from the franchise.<sup>40</sup> The “warmth of his feelings” on the issue was remarked by friends and opponents alike: he was, Grote recorded, “violent against the South . . . ; embracing heartily the extreme Abolitionist views, and thinking about little else in regard to the general question.”<sup>41</sup> It was the outspoken public expression of this passion which, more than anything else, gave Mill that identity as a “partisan” controversialist which was such a marked feature of his reputation in the last decade of his life.

Mill was adamant that even if secession were the main issue at stake, this would still not automatically entitle the South to the support of those who thought of themselves as ranged on the side of freedom. Brandishing his own radical credentials, he announced, “I have sympathized more or less ardently with most of the rebellions, successful and unsuccessful, which have taken place in my time,” but emphasized that it was not simply their being rebellions that had determined their moral status: “those who rebel for the power of oppressing others” were not to be seen as exercising “as sacred a right as those who do the same thing to resist oppression practised upon themselves” (137). The nature and aims of Southern society were the decisive test, and in educating English opinion on this matter Mill found his chief ally in the Irish economist John Elliot Cairnes. The younger man had already won his senior’s approval with his very Millian statement of the method of classical political economy,<sup>42</sup> and when in the summer of 1861 he sent Mill the manuscript of a course of lectures that he had just delivered on the nature of American slavery, Mill immediately recognized their polemical value and urged their publication.<sup>43</sup> The resulting book, accurately entitled *The Slave Power: Its Character, Career, and Probable Designs: Being an Attempt to Explain the Real Issues Involved in the American Contest*,<sup>44</sup> fully satisfied Mill’s expectations, and led to the growth between the two men of what Mill, in a revealing phrase, referred to as “the agreeable feeling of a brotherhood in arms.”<sup>45</sup>

The chief contentions of Cairnes’ book were that the nature of Southern society was determined by its basis in the economy of slavery, that such a system of production needed, under American conditions, continually to expand the territory cultivated by slave labour, and that this inherent dynamic accounted for the expansionist activities of the Southern states which, when the action of the Federal government threatened to curb them, naturally led to war. Secession was not, therefore, a demand of an oppressed people to be left alone: it was the inevitable outcome of an insatiably aggressive policy, which could only be halted by the destruction of slavery itself.

Mill was obviously right about the topical resonance of the work, which received considerable critical attention and was republished in a second, enlarged edition in 1863. But it is worth noting



that Cairnes himself recorded that his purpose had initially been of “a purely speculative kind—my object being to show that the course of history is largely determined by the action of economic causes.”<sup>46</sup> Now, in one sense, Cairnes’ procedure was naturally likely to be to Mill’s methodological taste: the argument of the book relies, to a quite surprising degree, on deduction from its small set of basic premises.<sup>47</sup> Cairnes remarks at one point how the “political economist, by reasoning on the economic character of slavery and its peculiar connection with the soil, [may] deduce its leading social and political attributes, and almost construct, by way of a priori argument, the entire system of the society of which it forms the foundation,” and later he says that he has been examining “the direction in which, under ordinary circumstances, and in the absence of intervention from without, the development of such a system proceeds”;<sup>48</sup> or, in other words, that he was employing the kind of hypothetical reasoning, setting aside “disturbing causes,” which Mill had long ago insisted was the proper procedure for political economy, and which Cairnes had elaborated, with Mill’s enthusiastic endorsement, in his first book. That Mill should here welcome the use of this method in treating a type of subject that, in his canonical statement of the method of the moral sciences in Book VI of his *Logic*, he had assigned to the province of sociology may simply be one among many indications of the extent to which in practice he ignored the grand design for a science of society that he had laid out in 1843 and fell back upon more traditional enterprises like political economy.<sup>49</sup> But it is perhaps more surprising that he should let Cairnes’ historical materialism pass without comment, since Mill was in general so concerned to insist that moral and intellectual rather than economic causes are the motor of history. He presumably felt that this was no time to be parading differences over the finer points of method; brothers-in-arms have more important things to do than criticizing the cut of each other’s armour.

The review of Cairnes, the first half of which is a faithful paraphrase of the original in both tone and content, provided Mill with another opportunity to read a lesson on the debased state of “public morality” in England, “this sad aberration of English feeling at this momentous crisis,” which he contrasted unfavourably with the right-mindedness of liberal feeling in France.<sup>50</sup> As he recognized, opinion in England was at first very much affected by estimates of the likely outcome of the military struggle—in 1861 and early 1862 many people were not convinced that the North would win—and throughout the war there was hostility to the North on the grounds that even if it did win it could not permanently govern the South in a state of subjection. Indeed, the one point on which Mill and Cairnes initially differed was that the latter thought that the best outcome would be an independent South confined, fatally for its slave economy, to the existing slave states, whereas the former looked for nothing short of complete surrender and re-incorporation in the Union on the North’s terms, a view with which Cairnes seems to have come to agree by 1865.<sup>51</sup> It is indicative of Mill’s passion on the subject that he immediately fastened on a potentially valuable aspect of Lincoln’s assassination: “I do not believe the cause will suffer,” he wrote to one correspondent. “It may even gain, by the indignation excited.”<sup>52</sup> Keeping the indignation-level well topped-up in such cases Mill seems to have regarded as one of the routine tasks of the public moralist, and he hoped that one consequence of the feelings aroused by the assassination

would be to “prevent a great deal of weak indulgence to the slaveholding class, whose power it is necessary should be completely and permanently broken at all costs.”<sup>53</sup>

This disposition to fight *à l’outrance* manifested itself even more strikingly in Mill’s contribution to the Governor Eyre controversy, which flared up later in 1865. This was one of those great moral earthquakes of Victorian public life whose fault lines are so revealing of the subterranean affinities and antipathies of the educated classes which the historian’s normal aerial survey of the surface cannot detect. Faced with a native insurrection of uncertain proportions in October, 1865, the English Governor of Jamaica had declared martial law, under which justification he apparently condoned several brutal acts of suppression carried out by his subordinates, some of them after the danger was, arguably, past, and including the summary execution of the leader of the native opposition party in the local assembly.<sup>54</sup> Considerable uncertainty at first surrounded many of the facts of the case, but opinion in England immediately divided: on the one side were those who thought that, though the reported brutality was no doubt regrettable, Eyre’s unorthodox and vigorous action in a situation of great danger had saved the population, especially the white population, from far worse evils (the Indian Mutiny, after all, was still fresh in the memory); on the other side were those, including Mill, who regarded Eyre’s actions as both morally unpardonable and flagrantly illegal, and who thought it their duty to see that he was brought to justice, and the moral stain on the character of English rule thereby removed. The intensity of Mill’s commitment to this view is strikingly illustrated by his comment in December, 1865, on the next session’s business in Parliament: “There is no part of it all, not even the Reform Bill, more important than the duty of dealing justly with the abominations committed in Jamaica.”<sup>55</sup> He immediately joined the Jamaica Committee, which was founded in the same month to ensure that Eyre and his subordinates were brought to justice, and when its first Chairman, Charles Buxton, thinking it sufficient simply to secure Eyre’s dismissal and disgrace without also having him prosecuted for murder, resigned in June, 1866, Mill, then in Parliament and sternly resisting further calls on his time even for causes to which he was sympathetic, took over the chairmanship and retained it until the Committee was wound up in May, 1869.<sup>56</sup>

The three aims of the Committee were summarized in the progress report which Mill, together with the Treasurer and the Secretary, issued to members in July, 1868 (and which is reproduced as part of Appendix E below): “to obtain a judicial inquiry into the conduct of Mr. Eyre and his subordinates; to settle the law in the interest of justice, liberty and humanity; and to arouse public morality against oppression generally, and particularly against the oppression of subject and dependent races” (433). On the first point they had to acknowledge defeat: despite repeated efforts, which had earned for Mill, in particular, a reputation as the vindictive persecutor of the unfortunate Eyre, no court had proved willing to put him on trial. The second aim had met with some success as far as the status of martial law within the English legal system was concerned, though whether the inconclusive outcome of the whole affair vindicated the principle of “government by law,” which Mill had always insisted was at stake in the matter, is open to question.<sup>57</sup> Quite what counted as success on the third point was obviously harder to say. “A great amount of sound public opinion has been called forth” (434), the statement reported, and for Mill this effect was something of an end in itself, though it is not obvious that the campaign exer-

cised that morally educative influence which he always looked for in such cases. T.H. Huxley, predictably a member of the Jamaica Committee, may have been nearer the mark when he wrote to Charles Kingsley that “men take sides on this question, not so much by looking at the mere facts of the case, but rather as their deepest political convictions lead them.”<sup>58</sup> Certainly, attitudes towards the working class and democracy at home played a large part in the controversy; Eyre’s supporters were not slow to suggest, for example, that the Hyde Park riots of 1866 called for a similarly vigorous use of force by the authorities. Conversely, as far as Mill was concerned, right feeling on the matter transcended more pragmatic party loyalties: when in 1871 the Liberal government decided to honour a previous Tory promise to pay Eyre’s legal expenses, Mill, deeply disgusted, announced: “After this, I shall henceforth wish for a Tory Government.”<sup>59</sup> Such issues of public righteousness provide surer touchstones by which to understand Mill’s later career than do any of the conventional political labels; it will always be difficult to say with certainty which of those liberal and reforming measures enacted in the decades after his death he would have approved of, but there can surely be no doubt that had he lived he would have been among the leaders of the agitation against the Bulgarian atrocities in 1876.<sup>60</sup>

The question of the proper conduct of nations towards each other, particularly the appropriate English role in international affairs, was one which exercised Mill throughout the latter part of his life. Although observations on it can be found in several of his other writings, most notably in *Considerations on Representative Government*, only two essays, both reprinted here, were devoted exclusively to it. The first, “A Few Words on Non-Intervention” (1859), was occasioned by Palmerston’s reported attempt to defeat an international project to build a Suez canal, on the grounds of the harm it might do to England’s commercial and strategic position in the East. Mill’s particular concern here was with England’s moral reputation, and with the harm done to that reputation by statements which seemed to confine English policy to the pursuit of purely selfish aims.<sup>61</sup> But, as he says in the *Autobiography*: “. . . I took the opportunity of expressing ideas which had long been in my mind (some of them generated by my Indian experience and others by the international questions which then greatly occupied the European public) respecting the true principles of international morality and the legitimate modifications made in it by difference of times and circumstances. . . .”<sup>62</sup> His premise was that nations, like individuals, “have duties . . . towards the weal of the human race,” and that the whole issue must accordingly be considered “as a really moral question” (116, 118), a phrase that always signals a change of key in Mill’s compositions. Viewing the question from this higher ground, he showed himself to have little sympathy with a policy of strict and complete “non-intervention,” a policy much canvassed in England in the 1850s and often popularly, if not altogether justifiably, associated with the names of Cobden and Bright. Mill disavowed slavish adherence to this (or any other) maxim in foreign affairs, just as he did to that of *laissez-faire* in domestic policy; the decisive test was rather whether intervention might promote the good of enabling a people with legitimate aspirations to independence to render themselves fit to exercise genuine self-government, a view with special resonance in the period of liberal nationalist uprisings in Europe. The stage of civilization reached by the society in question was a crucial consideration here; as he demonstrated in his better-known works on liberty and representative government, Mill thought a civilized power might have a duty *not* to leave

a backward people stagnating in a freedom they could make no profitable use of. Where, on the other hand, a foreign despotism had been enlisted to suppress a genuine popular movement in another country, a liberal power had a duty to intervene, and it is an illustration of the seriousness with which Mill regarded this duty that he even maintained that England should have acted to prevent the Austrian suppression, with Russian aid, of the Hungarian uprising of 1849 (124). One of the things that drew Mill to Gladstone in the 1860s, however much they differed on specific policies, was the latter's professed commitment to determining England's international role by such moral principles.<sup>63</sup>

That this idealism was at the same time tempered by a kind of realism is suggested by the second piece reprinted here, the brief article on "Treaty Obligations" (1870), which was written in response to a different kind of crisis. On 31 October, 1870, Russia declared its intention of repudiating the clause in the Treaty of Paris—the peace forced on Russia by the victorious Anglo-French alliance at the conclusion of the Crimean War in 1856—whereby the Black Sea was to remain neutral waters. This declaration produced an ill-considered cry in England for war against Russia to force her to honour the agreement, during which agitation the principle of the indefinite inviolability of treaty obligations was frequently invoked. Mill regarded the whole agitation as resting on this mistaken notion that treaties forced upon defeated powers ought to be regarded as binding in perpetuity: "Were they terminable, as they ought to be, those who object to them would have a rational hope of escape in some more moral way than an appeal to the same brute force which imposed them."<sup>64</sup> But as ever, he was also addressing himself to the state of mind—or, more accurately, the state of character—of which such misguided public responses were symptomatic. In both cases, it was "that laxity of principle which has almost always prevailed in public matters" which he denounced with especial warmth, moved yet again by the conviction that the unrebuked expression of such views was "injurious to public morality" (343, 345).

In turning to Mill's writings on women, one approaches an area where the interplay between his private convictions and his public statements as well as between his biography and his reputation is particularly complex and controversial. It is deeply ironical that the interpretation of so much of the work of a man who reckoned the sexual urge to be a grossly overrated and ultimately insignificant part of human life should have come to be so completely entangled with, even determined by, competing assessments of the influence exercised over him by the woman he loved. Needless to say, this irony applies with especial force to his writings on women, so much so that we could reverse his dictum that "one can, to an almost laughable degree, infer what a man's wife is like, from his opinions about women in general" (278). Even at the time, critics, especially once primed by the revelations of the *Autobiography*, were not slow to turn this remark against Mill, while even his admirers deplored the turn which Harriet was taken to have given to his thought on this and other questions. Any complete account of Mill's thinking on the subject of women would have to come to terms with the role of this very clever, imaginative, passionate, intense, imperious, paranoid, unpleasant woman. Here, fortunately, it is appropriate to offer only a few prolegomena to *The Subjection of Women*, the last book published by Mill in his lifetime and the most substantial of the works included in the present volume.

It is at least clear, where so much is unclear, that Mill's belief in the equality of the sexes was well established before he met Harriet. When at the opening of *The Subjection of Women* he refers to it as "an opinion I have held from the very earliest period when I had formed any opinions at all on social and political matters" (261), he seems, as far as the evidence allows us to judge, to be stating a literal truth. It occasioned, for example, his one point of dissent from his father's *Essay on Government* at the time when he was in all other ways the most faithful and zealous expounder of the latter's views, and even as a matter of tactics in the unpromising political climate of England in the 1820s he considered his father's acceptance of women's temporary exclusion from the suffrage to be "as great an error as any of those against which the Essay was directed."<sup>65</sup> Indeed, this ardent and uncompromising advocacy may have been one of the things that first attracted Harriet's favourable attention. Their oddly formal exchange of statements, some two years after they met in 1830, about the position of women in relation to marriage was by then the rehearsal of shared views, and may be seen in Mill's case as the bizarre courting behaviour of an over-intellectualized man. Not that this was not the way to Harriet's heart: Mill could bask in the implied praise of her complaint that "it seems now that all men, with the exception of a few lofty-minded, are sensualists more or less," to which she firmly added, "Women on the contrary are quite exempt from this trait, however it may appear otherwise in the cases of some" (375). Understandably, this exchange between an unhappily married woman and her yearning admirer revolves around the question of the dissolubility of the marriage tie. Harriet's soaring idealism is evident in her greater readiness to do "away with all laws whatever relating to marriage" (376). Mill, characteristically, subjects the arguments to careful analysis before concluding in favour of "leaving this like the other relations voluntarily contracted by human beings, to depend for its continuance upon the wishes of the contracting parties" (49). Clearly, though he may have sighed like a lover, he could still write like the son of James Mill. This expression of his view in a purely private form has a particular interest in that his avoidance of a clear recommendation about divorce in *The Subjection of Women* was to be a major point of criticism.<sup>66</sup>

It is worth remarking that even in this unconstrained expression of belief in the natural equality of the sexes, he still adhered to some rather more traditional notions about their distinctive roles. "In a healthy state of things," he maintained, "the husband would be able by his single exertions to earn all that is necessary for both; and there would be no need that the wife should take part in the mere providing of what is required to *support* life: it will be for the happiness of both that her occupation should rather be to adorn and beautify it" (43). In a phrase which should remind us, if we need reminding, that Mill is not an unproblematic recruit to the ranks of late-twentieth-century feminism, he blandly laid down that a woman's task in life is "accomplished rather by *being* than by *doing*" (43). While he always strenuously disputed, on essentially epistemological grounds, all assertions about "natural" differences between the sexes, this is an early indication—there are several later ones—that he was in practice willing to endorse certain conventional assumptions about the most "appropriate" sphere for women's activity.

Despite the importance he attached to the subject—he later remarked that the "emancipation of women, & cooperative production, are . . . the two great changes that will regenerate society"<sup>67</sup>—Mill published nothing substantial on it until 1869. In part this was a matter of waiting for a

less hostile phase of public opinion. (Mill, surely influenced here by Harriet's paranoid attitude to society in general, was particularly pessimistic about the state of opinion in England in the 1850s.) As he explained to the editor of the *Westminster* in 1850: "My opinions on the whole subject are so totally opposed to the reigning notions that it would probably be inexpedient to express all of them."<sup>68</sup> In 1854 he and Harriet included it among the subjects on which they hoped to leave some record of their thoughts, but it was not until some two years after Harriet's death that Mill wrote *The Subjection of Women*, and only nine years later still that he considered the world ready to receive it. It may also have been the case that Mill's failure to make any progress with the Ethology deterred him from attempting a systematic exploration of an issue which, as suggested above, was so closely dependent on that project as he conceived it. The extent to which his dispute with Comte over the alleged differences between the sexes turned on what Mill regarded as the questions to be settled by Ethology is very suggestive here.<sup>69</sup> In complaining to Harriet in 1849 about the prevalence of false assumptions about woman's "nature" ("on which the whole of the present bad constitution of the relation rests"), he declared: "I am convinced however that there are only two things which tend at all to shake this nonsensical prejudice: a better psychology & theory of human nature, for the few, & for the many, more & greater proofs by example of what women can do."<sup>70</sup>

Most of all, he may have considered that his views on sexual equality had been given adequate public expression for the present—by Harriet. "I do not think that anything that could be written would do nearly so much good on that subject the most important of all, as the finishing your pamphlet. . . ." <sup>71</sup> Quite how much Mill contributed to the writing of "The Enfranchisement of Women," published in the *Westminster* in 1851, remains unclear, but there seems little doubt that it is substantially Harriet's work, though Mill seems to have thought it prudent to let the editor assume it was by him (see the Textual Introduction, lxxv-lxxvii below). Mill certainly held a correspondingly inflated view of it: when asked by later correspondents to recommend reading on this subject he always put his wife's article at the head of the list, and there is no doubt that he whole-heartedly subscribed to its contents, though his own expression of essentially the same views in *The Subjection of Women* is occasionally somewhat more circumspect. A list of the more obvious similarities between the two works could begin with the analogy with "the kindred cause of negro emancipation," and go on to include the identification of custom as the great enemy, the interpretation of history as the prolonged repeal of the law of the strongest, the assertion that free competition will assign each to his or her appropriate role, and the appeal to the demonstrated practical ability of famous queens (401-2). After Harriet's death, Mill included the article in his *Dissertations and Discussions* in 1859, with an embarrassing eulogy of its author (see 393-4), though he emphasized that it was far from being a complete statement of the case.

When Mill did decide that the time was ripe to issue a systematic statement of his views it was a ripeness he had played an important role in bringing on by his activities in Parliament. In particular, his presentation in June, 1866, of a petition for the extension of the suffrage to women, and his proposal during the debates of May, 1867, to amend the Reform Bill then before the House by omitting reference to the gender of householders entitled to the vote, had aroused a great deal of attention, not all of it hostile.<sup>72</sup> That his amendment received the support of over

seventy M.P.s, including John Bright, Mill found “most encouraging,” and in the wake of this triumph the National Society for Women’s Suffrage was formed, actively prompted by Mill and Helen Taylor.<sup>73</sup> When *The Subjection of Women* was published, therefore, Mill was unusually optimistic about the progress the cause was likely to make in the immediate future.<sup>74</sup>

This short book, little more than an extended pamphlet as the nineteenth century knew that genre, offers the whole world of Mill’s characteristic political and moral arguments in microcosm, themes whose best known *loci* are in the *Principles*, *On Liberty*, or *Representative Government* are here drawn together and focussed on a single issue. This is true of such questions as the role of an élite who have the feelings of the future, the indispensability of liberty to individual happiness, the educative as well as defensive importance of participation in public affairs, and much more. At the same time, the work is a deliberately provocative and splendidly sustained polemic, one of the peaks of Mill’s rhetorical achievement as a public moralist. Considered in this light, two features of the book call for comment.

First there is the general question of argumentative strategy mentioned above Mill attempts systematically to undermine the standing of *any* evidence about the “natural subordination” of women drawn from past experience, just as in his claims about Socialism elsewhere he sometimes rules out of court all objections based on the selfishness of human nature as manifested in the past under non-socialist arrangements.<sup>75</sup> In both cases, the move is one of considerable high-handedness, and not all readers have been disposed to go along with this dismissal of mankind’s accumulated experience. In fact, as we saw, Mill’s ban on evidence drawn from history is only partial: where that evidence may seem to suggest a positive conclusion about women’s capacities, as in the case of notable female monarchs,<sup>76</sup> its doubtful epistemological credentials are treated more leniently, just as he considered examples of successful cooperative production to be admissible evidence in the parallel case. But, further, as in his early essay on marriage, Mill does not in fact exclude all current assumptions about distinctively feminine qualities or spheres of activity; for example, he holds that “the common arrangement, by which the man earns the income and the wife superintends the domestic expenditure, seems to me in general the most suitable division of labour between the two persons,” and “in an otherwise just state of things, it is not, therefore, I think, a desirable custom, that the wife should contribute by her labour to the income of the family” (297-8). Complaints about his “failure to question the social institutions of his time” (and about his “taking the bourgeois family as his model”)<sup>77</sup> will recommend themselves to those who are irritated by the “failure” of historical figures to express approved modern views, but they miss the main point. It is not that Mill should be expected to have transcended the categories embodied in the common experience of his time—that is always a surprising achievement—it is rather that he takes some of these categories for granted when it suits his argument, after having had the methodological hubris to claim that all such experience was necessarily beside the point.

The other feature of the book calling for comment here is its concern with moral education. The forensic centrepiece of the work is its condemnation of existing marriage arrangements: as he pungently put it, “There remain no legal slaves except the mistress of every house” (323). He was, of course, arguing for far more than the removal of the legal disabilities of married women,

important though he always considered the law as a means of wider improvement. He was also proposing a different conception of marriage, in which the couple, meeting as equals, are held together by the bonds of affection and mutual respect. But his concern in doing so goes beyond that of improving woman's lot: he constantly treats marriage as "a school of genuine moral sentiment" (293), demonstrating once again his intense preoccupation with the consequences institutions have on the character and moral habits of those whose lives they structure. "Any society [in the sense of social contact] which is not improving, is deteriorating, and the more so, the closer and more familiar it is" (335). This, Mill argued (it was another point that had been made in Harriet's article of 1851), was why "young men of the greatest promise generally cease to improve as soon as they marry, and, not improving, inevitably degenerate" (335). Marriage for a man whose closest daily contact is with someone whom he regards as his inferior, and who herself acts as his inferior, becomes "a school of wilfulness, over-bearingness, unbounded self-indulgence, and a double-dyed and idealized selfishness" (289). Mill's argument here can be represented as a localized variant of Hegel's famous parable of the need to recognize another's autonomy and worth before that person's response could provide any worthwhile confirmation of one's own identity and value. "The relation of superiors to dependents is the nursery of these vices of character" (288).

Mill's critics found his ideal of marriage a little too much like a two-member Mutual Improvement Society. "To him marriage was a union of two philosophers in the pursuit of truth," was how Goldwin Smith unkindly but not altogether unfairly put it, adding "not only does he scarcely think of children, but sex and its influences seem hardly to be present to his mind."<sup>78</sup> Certainly his prim dismissal of the role of the "animal instinct" might well be seen as something of a handicap for anyone wishing to alter the relations between the sexes. Bain, who thought Mill deficient in "sensuality" ("he made light of the difficulty of controlling the sexual appetite"), presented this criticism in the cautious form of reported speech: "It was the opinion of many, that while his estimate of pure sentimental affection was more than enough, his estimate of the sexual passion was too low."<sup>79</sup> Mill's own professed view was that "the force of the natural passions" has been "exaggerated". "I think it most probable that this particular passion will become with men, as it already is with a large number of women, completely under the control of the reason," which surprising proposition he sought to buttress with a somewhat feeble appeal to authority—"I have known eminent medical men, and lawyers of logical mind, of the same opinion."<sup>80</sup>

Faced with Mill's call for a radical alteration in the nature of marriage as commonly understood, an alteration which women did not by and large seem to be demanding for themselves, contemporary critics were inclined to ask *Cui bono?*<sup>81</sup> But for Mill this was not a matter of sectional interests. It was not just that wives were denied opportunities for self-fulfilment, he saw the existing pattern of marriage as systematically warping the moral sensibilities of men as well, and thus inhibiting the moral growth of society as a whole. "The moral regeneration of mankind will only really commence, when the most fundamental of the social relations is placed under the rule of equal justice, and when human beings learn to cultivate their strongest sympathy with an equal in rights and in cultivation" (336). The emphatic, insistent note here—"only," "really," "most fundamental," "strongest," and so on—is a sign of Mill's anxiety that in these matters



those who listen do not hear, while “moral regeneration” (the implication of the peculiarly de-based state of the present is the cultural critic’s occupational failing) shows what high stakes are being played for.

In more immediate terms, the three legal issues with which the whole question was inseparably connected were property rights, divorce, and the suffrage. The first issue is fully and vigorously explored in *The Subjection of Women*,<sup>82</sup> but the second, which had been central to the early essays, is deliberately avoided. As Mill explained to a correspondent in the following year:

The purpose of that book was to maintain the claim of women, whether in marriage or out of it, to perfect equality in all rights with the male sex. The relaxation or alteration of the marriage laws . . . is a question quite distinct from the object to which the book is devoted, and one which, in my own opinion, cannot be properly decided until that object has been attained. It is impossible, in my opinion, that a right marriage law can be made by men alone, or until women have an equal voice in making it.<sup>83</sup>

But this conviction only made the third issue, the suffrage, all the more crucial, and here the book was unequivocal: “Under whatever conditions, and within whatever limits, men are admitted to the suffrage, there is not a shadow of justification for not admitting women under the same” (301). Bain’s comment that *The Subjection of Women* constituted “the most sustained exposition of Mill’s life-long theme—the abuses of power”<sup>84</sup> is apposite here, for in writing on the one subject on which he had from the outset criticized his father’s essay. “Government,” he echoed that work’s arguments throughout. Though his mind brooded on the prospects for moral progress in the long term, he never doubted that the key to the immediate relief of woman’s estate was her possession of the vote. In a letter to Florence Nightingale two years before, he had expressed this belief in a way that made its Philosophical Radical pedigree particularly clear. Nightingale had affirmed her preference for concentrating on other improvements in women’s position, expressing the hope that enlightened governments could be persuaded to bring about such improvements without women themselves having the vote. In reply, Mill gave her a brisk tutorial on the fundamentals of democratic political theory. He granted that “a ruling power” *might* be moved to alleviate the disabilities of the ruled: “The question is, has it ever seemed to them urgent to sweep away these disabilities, until there was a prospect of the ruled getting political power?” Even under an enlightened government, the interests of the ruled were constantly at risk, “for no earthly power can ever prevent the constant unceasing unsleeping elastic pressure of human egotism from weighing down and thrusting aside those who have not the power to resist it.” Ultimately, it was the primacy of the political that Mill was trying, unsuccessfully, to bring Nightingale to recognize: “political power is the only security against every form of oppression.”<sup>85</sup> So much did this issue dominate the last years of Mill’s life—Helen Taylor showed some of her mother’s skill here—that Mill could announce in 1872: “The time, moreover, is, I think now come when, at parliamentary elections, a Conservative who will vote for women’s suffrage should be, in general, preferred to a professed Liberal who will not. . . . [T]he bare fact of supporting Mr Gladstone in office, certainly does not now give a man a claim to preference over one who will vote for the most important of all political improvements now under discussion.”<sup>86</sup>

Mill's concern not just with the rights of women but with the moral sensibility exhibited in publicly condoned attitudes towards them came strongly to the fore in the agitation against the Contagious Diseases Acts from which the last of the items here reprinted takes its origin. These Acts, passed between 1864 and 1869, provided for the compulsory medical inspection and, if necessary, treatment of women suspected of being prostitutes in certain specified garrison towns, in an attempt to control the incidence of venereal disease among the troops stationed there. The Acts raised several questions of principle in relation to police powers and the treatment of women, as well as provoking a variety of less rational responses, and in 1869 a public campaign for the repeal of the Acts was launched with Josephine Butler at its head.<sup>87</sup> Mill supported the campaign—"Of course one need scarcely say that to any man who looks upon political institutions & legislation from the point of view of principle the idea of keeping a large army in idleness & vice & then keeping a large army of prostitutes to pander to their vices is too monstrous to admit of a moment's consideration"—though he was anxious lest the peculiarly emotional controversy that it aroused should injure the campaign for the suffrage.<sup>88</sup> The agitation led to the setting up of a Royal Commission on the Acts in 1870; by Easter, 1871, it had heard forty-eight witnesses in favour of the maintenance or extension of the Acts and only twelve in favour of their repeal. The National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts argued that it should hear more witnesses known to favour repeal, and Mill was among those called as a result.<sup>89</sup> It is worth observing in passing that Mill was called as a witness despite having no official standing in any of the organizations or professions involved, having no expert knowledge of the subjects at issue, and having, on his own admission, made no special study of the working of the Acts; as with the Westminster candidacy in 1865, his being John Stuart Mill was sufficient recommendation. In fact he proved to be a model witness as, under hostile and unfair questioning from some members of the Commission, he maintained a calm and lucid hold on the essential questions of principle.<sup>90</sup>

What is striking about Mill's evidence, particularly when read in conjunction with his discussion of related issues in *On Liberty*, is the extent to which he makes the question of the Acts' official endorsement of vice the chief ground of his objection to them. This is not to say that he scouts objections based on the Acts' potential invasion of individual liberty or the inequity of their effectively penalizing women but not men, for he puts both very forcibly. But when the hypothetical case is put to him of women voluntarily submitting to the examination and treatment, he replies: "I still think it objectionable because I do not think it is part of the business of the Government to provide securities beforehand against the consequences of immoralities of any kind" (353). Similarly, his primary objection to any system of licensing prostitutes is that licences "have still more the character of toleration of that kind of vicious indulgence" (356). And although he would not be opposed in principle to state provision of hospitals for the treatment of all contagious diseases, he insists that it would be improper to provide treatment for this class of disease alone, as again condoning publicly the sexual activity that led to it. As things stand, he fears that the troops themselves infer from the very existence of the Acts "that Parliament does not entertain any serious disapprobation of immoral conduct of that kind" (360), and he concludes his testimony by reiterating that the tendency of such Acts is "to do moral injury" (371).

Furthermore, he places great weight on the distinction between the provision of assistance for those whose conduct has left them unable to provide it for themselves (essentially the principle of the Poor Law), and the provision, before the event, of securities against the natural consequences of immoral or imprudent conduct (the principle, as Mill sees it, of the Contagious Diseases Acts). Not only may the latter provision be taken as encouraging or endorsing the behaviour in question, but the crucial unstated premise of Mill's objection to such provisions is that they interfere with the proper operation of the calculation of consequences upon the formation of the will. Ultimately, this moral psychology lies at the heart of all Mill's reflections on the shaping of character by institutions, whether the character in question is that of a selfish voter at the polls, or of a feckless peasant on his smallholding, or of a randy young trooper in Aldershot.

## LAW

Had the young John Stuart Mill not entered the service of the East India Company in 1823, he might have had a very distinguished legal career. His father at first intended him for the Bar,<sup>91</sup> that great avenue of advancement for ambitious but impecunious young men, and although his extreme radical views would have made him an unlikely candidate for the Bench, it is not hard to imagine the brilliant, analytical, outspoken young barrister commanding the intricacies of the English law as well as cutting a considerable figure in public life. But this reflection only reminds us how surprisingly slight was Mill's actual involvement with the law in his mature years. He had, after all, been brought up in a milieu suffused with legal categories and with a sense of the importance of the law; the whole fabric of Bentham's theory, to take the central intellectual component in that milieu, had grown out of a concern with legal reform and was primarily constituted by the project of a science of legislation, imparting an emphasis that endured into early Philosophic Radical thought. Moreover, the young Mill's most extensive literary work was the editing of the five volumes of Bentham's *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, and not only did this work contain "the most elaborate exposure of the vices and defects of English law, as it then was," but in preparation for its editing Mill read "the most authoritative treatises on the English Law of Evidence, and commented on a few of the objectionable points of English rules, which had escaped Bentham's notice."<sup>92</sup>

Certainly, several of Mill's later writings on politics, both at the topical and systematic levels, were concerned in a general sense with questions of legislation, and even at the height of his preoccupation with the power of sociological and moral forces he retained the conviction that the law was the most important instrument a government could exercise directly for influencing both the actions and the character of its citizens. But this is obviously still some distance either from a sustained concentration on jurisprudential issues, or even from the working-out of a political and social theory pervaded by legal categories. There is no need to exaggerate this perception into a paradox the trajectory of Mill's actual intellectual development sufficiently accounts for his not having followed either of these courses. Still, even if we merely remark the fact that jurisprudence found no place in his map of the moral sciences in Book VI of the *Logic*, or that, in striking con-

trast to his wide-ranging work in several branches of philosophy, logic, politics, and political economy, he made no original contribution to legal thought, we thereby register how comparatively slight was the residue from his early exposure to the law.

At a less elevated level, a large part of the political activity of the circle of young Radicals that formed around Bentham and James Mill in the 1820s was addressed to legal issues.<sup>93</sup> Naturally, any proposals for change grounded in Benthamite political theory were likely to treat the law as the chief means by which self-interested individuals could be prompted to contribute to the general happiness. But such Radical critics went further, identifying the existing state of English law as an elaborate protective screen to disguise the oppressive reality of aristocratic privilege. Laws restricting freedom of expression, in particular, were regarded as the chief obstacle to any fundamental political improvement, since in the years immediately following the Napoleonic wars an anxious and twitchy government readily resorted to them as a way of suppressing any expression of views that could be construed as seditious. The close connection in this period between certain kinds of political radicalism and blasphemous or obscene literature facilitated the use of the very wide-ranging laws of libel to silence all kinds of critics of the established order, and some of the young Mill's earliest publications were outspoken denunciations of such religious and political censorship.<sup>94</sup>

The first of the pieces included in this volume is a good example of this vein of criticism. Ostensibly a review-article on two works on the law of libel, it is essentially a rehearsal of some of the central tenets of the radical political theory developed by James Mill out of Bentham's Utilitarianism. Written when the younger Mill was eighteen, it is a product of that phase of his life when, on his own later admission, he was little more than the mouthpiece of his father's views on politics as on so much else.<sup>95</sup> These views had attained their greatest circulation in the series of articles James Mill contributed to the *Supplement to the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica*, where the basic tenets of Philosophic Radical thought were insinuated through respectable encyclopaedia entries. On the subject of liberty of expression, his celebrated article on "Liberty of the Press," written in 1821, provided the classic statement of the Radical case, and it is the immediate source for several of the arguments in his son's article.<sup>96</sup> Partly for this reason, the younger Mill's article is itself of no great theoretical or literary interest; like several of his other early contributions to the *Westminster*, it is repetitive, somewhat crude, and at times simply boring. Its simplistic deductive logic is the hallmark of this early propagandistic phase, in fact the first and more general part of the article is an attempt to deduce the necessity for complete freedom of the press from "the great principles of human nature" (19). The premise, most famously expressed in his father's essay "Government," is that rulers will, unless checked, necessarily abuse their power to further their own self interest.<sup>97</sup> Criticism by their subjects is the essential check, but since the rulers cannot be allowed to determine *which* criticism may be expressed, there is no logical stopping-place short of complete freedom of expression. In practice, it could not be denied, a more limited form of freedom did exist, but this, too, was testimony to the power of opinion that, even in post-Waterloo England, would not tolerate complete suppression.<sup>98</sup> It was characteristic of Philosophic Radical political criticism to reduce to such elemental forces the traditional claims about the ways in which the glorious constitution protected the historic rights of

Englishmen. From the first page of this article, where he seeks to show that “the Law of England is as unfavourable to the liberty of the press, as that of the most despotic government which ever existed,” Mill indulges this iconoclastic hostility to invocations of the virtues of the constitution, all of which he treats as mystifications designed to protect the privileges of the established classes.

To this political antagonism towards the law-making class was added an intellectual impatience with the sheer muddle of English law at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This had been the spur which, half a century earlier, had stirred Bentham to pursue what became his life-long project, and the hope of bringing some order to the ancient intricacies of English legal practice continued to animate the analytical jurisprudence of his successors. Radical critics complained that in many cases there existed no definitive statement of the law, that the latitude allowed judicial interpretation was practically limitless. Mill here traces the extraordinary variations in the existing libel laws to this source, “it is an evil inseparable from a system of common law” (20). His later support for measures for the limited codification of English law had its roots in this distrust, at once political and intellectual, of a legal system that was, in the dismissively pejorative sense of the term, merely “empirical.” Any move towards a more rational treatment of legal problems met with Mill’s approval, as witnessed by the two short pieces reprinted here, “On Punishment” and “Smith on Law Reform,” the first recommending a Utilitarian justification of punishment, the second displaying his hostility to the antiquarian character of so much English legal discussion.

Preceding those just mentioned is another short piece, his 1832 review of Austin’s *Province of Jurisprudence Determined*, discussion of which naturally leads on to the most substantial of his jurisprudential writings, his well-known essay of 1863 on Austin’s *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, consideration of which introduces a relationship requiring somewhat fuller discussion. That the significance of Mill’s connection with Austin should be tantalisingly elusive is appropriate, for Austin is one of the great shadowy figures of English nineteenth-century intellectual history. After his death he came to occupy a commanding place in the legal thought of the second half of the century, and no small proportion of the political theory of that period was devoted to discussion, usually critical, of his classic analyses of the central concepts of law and morality.<sup>99</sup> The attention paid to his rather slight legacy of published work chiefly resulted, by an obvious paradox, from the very swing in intellectual fashion away from the kind of deductive method he was taken to have employed and towards more historical and evolutionary approaches. Austin was treated, especially and most influentially by Sir Henry Maine, as the chief exemplar of this outmoded method, and he, together with Ricardo, became a largely symbolic representative of the alleged methodological weaknesses of the moral sciences in the first half of the century.<sup>100</sup> Changes in legal education, also, particularly following the recommendations of the Committee on Legal Education of 1846, meant that the second half of the century saw a new demand for a systematic textbook of jurisprudence, and Austin’s work thus had classic status thrust upon it.<sup>101</sup> The fact that this celebrity was almost entirely posthumous only adds to the elusiveness of the man himself, who, however, we know played an important part in Mill’s early development.

Called to the bar in 1818, at the age of twenty-eight, after having abandoned a military career. Austin conducted a somewhat desultory practice in Lincoln's Inn for seven years, in the first of several unsatisfactory attempts to find a suitable setting for his talents.<sup>102</sup> He became a close associate of Bentham during this period, but, though a convinced Utilitarian, he maintained a characteristic distance from the extreme political radicalism of the circle gathered around the sage of Queen Square. He was nonetheless held in high esteem by those few who knew him well, and when James Mill thought of preparing his eldest son for the Bar, it was natural to send him to be coached by Austin, under whose supervision the young Mill read Roman Law and the works of Blackstone and Bentham in 1821 and 1822.<sup>103</sup> Mill's most sustained exposure to Austin's own legal thought came after the latter was appointed to the Chair of Jurisprudence at the newly founded University College, London. Having first spent two years in Germany to prepare himself, Austin began lecturing in the autumn of 1828, and continued, with some intermissions, until the spring of 1833. After a promising start, the lectures quickly dwindled in popularity, but Mill remained one of the faithful to the end: in his correspondence in 1832 and 1833 he recorded that Austin was lecturing to "a very small but really select class," only six or seven students "but those of a *kind* he likes" (his audience included several others who were to attain distinction, including G.C. Lewis, John Romilly, and Charles Buller).<sup>104</sup> Austin clearly had all the qualities that make for a really unsuccessful lecturer—he was painstakingly thorough, unrelievedly dry, remorselessly analytical. "He never had the slightest idea of rendering his subject popular or easy," his formidable wife, Sarah, later recalled with loyal respect, but also, perhaps, with a hint of exasperation (her own energies were of a more practical and direct kind).<sup>105</sup> As Leslie Stephen coolly observed: ". . . Austin thought it a duty to be as dry as Bentham, and discharged that duty scrupulously."<sup>106</sup> When his introductory lectures were published in 1832 these same qualities were much in evidence. "It must be admitted that the reception given to his book at first was not encouraging," his wife reported, and the major reviews ignored it.<sup>107</sup> But "some eulogistic articles appeared in journals of less general currency," the chief of these being the brief notice by Mill in the short-lived *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, which, its author confided to Carlyle, "was chiefly intended as a recommendation of that work."<sup>108</sup> Most of the points made in this review, and even some of the phrasing, recur in the larger essay thirty years later, though it is noticeable how Mill, in his high Carlylean phase, recruits Austin to his own campaign against the debased tastes of an increasingly democratic culture (54).

Austin, as we have already remarked, never shared the ardent democratic enthusiasms of James Mill and his immediate circle,<sup>109</sup> and there is some reason to think that his reservations about such matters, especially his ideas about the proper authority of the more enlightened elements in society, played an important part in fostering the young Mill's reaction against this inherited creed.<sup>110</sup> In the later 1830s and 1840s, however, Austin's apprehensive political sensibilities led him to develop an increasingly conservative line of thought, opposing all further reform, in which Mill was unwilling to follow him. This difference of view reached its peak in a strong disagreement over the French Revolution of 1848 (Mill was a warm advocate of the popular cause), and some real or imagined slights by Sarah Austin to Harriet over her relations with Mill brought about a complete estrangement between the two couples, marked by that unyielding bitterness

which characterized all Harriet's social antagonisms.<sup>111</sup> On John Austin's death Mill could at first bring himself to write only a stiff, brief note to the Austins' granddaughter, later checking with Helen Taylor to ensure that any further communication with Sarah Austin was consistent with what her mother would have wished.<sup>112</sup> Despite these differences, Mill always retained his regard for Austin's intellect and character, and when in 1863 Sarah Austin published her edition of her husband's full lecture notes under the title of *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, Mill took the opportunity publicly to pay his respects to his former tutor and, in passing, to display his own command of the subject.

Bain, always relieved when the later Mill followed his analytical rather than his polemical inclinations, ranked the essay on Austin as "among the best of his minor compositions," adding. "It does not seem to contain much originality, but it is a logical treat."<sup>113</sup> Mill would no doubt have acknowledged the justice of both parts of this judgment. He had himself described Austin's project as an enquiry into "the logic of law," and his review made clear that he extended full and sympathetic approval to this project, dissenting from Austin's analysis only on one point of substance (see his discussion of Austin's definition of a "right," 178-81). Later commentators have not always found it so easy to characterize the nature of the project of analytical jurisprudence practised by Austin and endorsed by Mill. The chief difficulty seems to lie in determining what relation the apparently *a priori* analysis of the essence of law has to the variety of actual historical legal systems, especially when Austin's subject-matter is defined, as it is by Mill at one point below, as "positive law—the legal institutions which exist, or have existed, among mankind, considered as actual facts" (169). The way both Austin and Mill seem to contrast the philosophy of law with the history of law only makes the difficulty more acute: as Mill puts it in a revealing phrase, existing bodies of law "having grown by mere aggregation," they are subject to "no authoritative arrangement but the chronological one," and therefore do not furnish the student with any general principles of classification. The task of the philosopher of law is thus that of "stripping off what belongs to the accidental or historical peculiarities" of any given system in order to identify the "universal" elements (171, 173).

In this last phrase the suggestion of the ancient ambition to distinguish essences from accidents points in the right direction, and one may recall one of Austin's few self-revealing remarks here: "I was born out of time and place. I ought to have been a schoolman of the twelfth century—or a German professor."<sup>114</sup> The primary task of jurisprudence as Austin conceived it was essentially classificatory. It involved "clearing up and defining the notions which the human mind is compelled to form, and the distinctions which it is necessitated to make, by the mere existence of a body of law of any kind. . . ." It is true that to this statement Mill appended the potentially relativizing rider, "or of a body of law taking cognizance of the concerns of a civilized and complicated state of society" (168-9); but in practice neither he nor Austin allowed this consideration to limit the effectively universalist ambitions of analytical jurisprudence. These ambitions rested on the confidence that all legal systems in fact have certain features in common, since they are "designed . . . for the same world, and for the same human nature" (170). These similarities are not merely contingent. "There are certain combinations of facts and of ideas which every system of law *must* recognise . . ." (170), and the analyst must "free from confusion and set in a clear light

those *necessary* resemblances and differences, which, if not brought into distinct apprehension by all systems of law, are latent in all, and do not depend on the accidental history of any” (172; my emphases). But in Mill’s view, developed in general terms in his *System of Logic*, establishing such connections was not a purely *a priori* procedure. As one commentator has aptly summarized the procedure in the present case: “Through factual investigations of the objects which possess the combination of attributes specified in the definition, one can discover (by various methods which Mill outlines) that these attributes cause other attributes to be present along with themselves; in other words, a necessary connection exists between the attributes specified in the definition and those discovered by an investigation of the objects possessing them.”<sup>115</sup> Hence Mill’s confidence that the resulting system of classification would have a general purchase on all legal systems. “The same terminology, nomenclature, and principle of arrangement, which would render one system of law definite, clear, and (in Bentham’s language) cognoscible, would serve, with additions and variations in minor details, to render the same office for another” (171). Indeed, rather than creating a system of classification of his own, Austin took that displayed in Roman law (albeit Roman law as systematized and abstracted by the Pandectists) as his basis, a decision that Mill warmly defended: “the legal system which has been moulded into the shape it possesses by the greatest number of exact and logical minds, will necessarily be the best adapted for the purpose; for, though the elements sought exist in all systems, this is the one in which the greatest number of them are likely to have been brought out into distinct expression, and the fewest to remain latent” (173). Though the goal is recognizably Benthamite, the route may seem curiously roundabout: English lawyers (but not lawyers alone) of the 1860s are being urged to think about the nature of law in terms of a set of principles developed in the 1820s out of Austin’s encounter with the German Pandectist rationalization of the legal system of the Roman Empire. Of course, the hostility to the common law which Austin and Mill shared came into play here: “Turning from the study of the English, to the study of the Roman Law,” Austin declared, “you escape from the empire of chaos and darkness, to a world which seems by comparison, the region of order and light.”<sup>116</sup> It is noticeable how by far the longest extract from Austin’s work Mill permits himself to reproduce is that wherein Austin demolishes the common arguments against codification. The argument is conducted in general terms, but there is no doubting the moral Mill intended his contemporaries to draw from it.

This underlying preoccupation with reform also explains why Mill can so unequivocally commend the work of Henry Maine, who drew very different conclusions from the study, in his case the historical and comparative study, of Roman law. Some explanation is called for, since Maine’s *Ancient Law*, published in 1861, posed a fundamental methodological challenge to Austin’s work (and hence to Mill’s endorsement of it), and called into doubt some of its most central elements, such as the definitions of law and sovereignty.<sup>117</sup> Nonetheless, Mill had been among the earliest admirers of the book, and his reference to it in the 1862 edition of his *Principles* as a “profound work” set the tone for all his future citations, of which there were several in the next decade, culminating in a glowing review in 1871 of Maine’s second book, *Village-Communities in the East and West*.<sup>118</sup> In the present essay he treats Maine’s work as complementary to Austin’s without really drawing attention to the differences of approach and sensibility that informed them. But



the terms of the commendation reveal that the focus of Mill's attention is elsewhere: "the historical value" of such studies as Maine's, he announces, "is the smallest part of their utility. They teach us the highly practical lesson, that institutions which, with more or less of modification, still exist, originated in ideas now universally exploded; and conversely, that ideas and modes of thought which have not lost their hold even on our own time, are often the artificial, and in some sort accidental product of laws and institutions which exist no longer, and of which no one would now approve the revival." (170.) Similarly, his use of *Ancient Law* in his *Principles* is to buttress his claim that existing property arrangements cannot be taken as natural or unalterable; Maine's book is cited to demonstrate that no "presumption in favour of existing ideas on this subject is to be derived from their antiquity."<sup>119</sup> As so often, the heat of Mill's enthusiasms is sufficient to melt the awkwardly hard edges of the authors whom he discusses: in his account, Maine and Austin stand side by side as contributors to "the improvement of law" (170).

"Austin on Jurisprudence" offers one of the best examples of Mill's use of an extended essay in one of the great reviews to instruct the relevant section of the reading public on abstract subjects. The value of Austin's rigorous analysis, he asserts, transcended its contribution to the special science of jurisprudence: it functioned "as a training school for the higher class of intellects" (167), and Mill's own essay was intended as a small instalment of this training. It proceeds on the assumption that the readers of the *Edinburgh Review*—a class which even the critics of that journal could not by this date suggest was confined to Scotch lawyers—would be willing as part of their general self-culture to apply themselves to such subjects as the classification of public and private wrongs in the *corpus juris*. Mill's prose betrays none of that defensiveness of the teacher who needs to justify his subject, on the contrary, the voice expresses confidence in an advanced community of interest: "We would particularly direct attention to the treatment of *Dominium* or Property, in its various senses, with the contrasted conception of *servitus* or easement" (198). How far his audience in fact met these expectations it is impossible to say; certainly Mill's later correspondence suggests there were always some readers who received, and sometimes challenged, instruction at the appropriate level. But it is Mill's own untroubled self-assurance as he moves across the details of yet another field of knowledge which is most remarkable. To have been able to give such a clear and forceful précis of the agonizingly involuted contents of Austin's three volumes, and to have been able to take him on as an equal on disputed points, is some indication that Mill's early immersion in the law was not, after all, without its effect, and a reminder that once he had mastered a subject he could always thereafter lay out its structure with impressive authority. For several generations of jurisprudence students Mill's essay was required reading, and it is striking testimony to the qualities of his mind displayed in what is, after all, in the corpus of his work as a whole, a relatively minor, occasional composition, that almost a century later the leading scholarly authority on Austin should still rank Mill's essay as one of "the best comprehensive accounts" of its subject.<sup>120</sup>

## EDUCATION

With a writer who says that by education he means “whatever helps to shape the human being; to make the individual what he is or hinder him from being what he is not” (217), it hardly seems appropriate to group so few of his writings together as representing his views on the subject. While he endorsed Helvétius’ dictum, “l’éducation peut tout,”<sup>121</sup> we might, conversely, say that for Mill everything can be education. In one sense, no doubt, something similar could be said of any major social theorist: all is *Bildung*. But even by these standards, Mill’s conception of society is an exceptionally and pervasively educative one. We have already seen some instances of how he makes their effect on the shaping of character the ultimate test of all institutions and policies, and one could without strain regard his whole notion of political activity itself as an extended and strenuous adult-education course. Thus, the whole of this collected edition of his works, and not just part of one volume within it, might not improperly be subtitled “Essays on Education.” Even if we confine ourselves to education in the narrower sense of the business carried on in schools and universities, still the one major and two minor pieces included here could be augmented by essays in other volumes. For example, the general basis of the views on educational endowments expounded below (209-14) receives fuller treatment in his later article on “Endowments” in *Essays on Economics and Society* (Vol. V of the *Collected Works*), just as his account of the ideal university syllabus in his *Inaugural Address* (217-57) can be compared with his discussion of the same subject in his “Sedgwick’s Discourse” and “Civilization” (in Vol. X, *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, and Vol. XVIII, *Essays on Politics and Society*, respectively), the appearance of these three pieces in three *different* volumes of this edition is itself an indication of the artificiality, albeit inescapable, of appearing to imply that the pieces included here are an exhaustive representation of Mill on education.<sup>122</sup>

Mill was, of course, in no position to minimize the influence of education. His own extraordinary upbringing, while it might leave him with a dismissive scorn for what mere schooling usually accomplished, was hardly calculated to make him sceptical of the formative power of a properly conceived and rigorously administered education. Indeed, one of his professed reasons for writing the *Autobiography* was precisely to demonstrate “how much more than is commonly supposed”<sup>123</sup> might be achieved if schoolmasters generally approximated more closely to the model of James Mill, which is one reason why that work reads more like Rousseau’s *Emile* than like his *Confessions*. For the younger Mill was, as he acknowledged only half regretfully, a guinea-pig upon whom his father tried out his educational theories, and so it was by both precept and experience that he absorbed the latter’s “fundamental doctrine . . . the formation of all human character by circumstances, through the universal Principle of Association, and the consequent unlimited possibility of improving the moral and intellectual condition of mankind by education.”<sup>124</sup> Whatever other aspects of his intellectual inheritance Mill may have rejected or modified, on this count he was James Mill’s eldest boy to the last.

This optimistic doctrine formed one of the cornerstones of Philosophic Radical political theory in the 1820s and 1830s, and there were few existing practices dealt with more severely by those critics of all things established than what they regarded as the feeble provision for education in England, especially as contrasted with what was increasingly being provided under the auspices of the state in France and Prussia. The latter, in particular, was frequently cited as an ex-

ample of what enlightened and efficient administration could achieve, and the architect of the Prussian education system, Wilhelm von Humboldt (from whom Mill was later to take the epigraph for *On Liberty*), ranked only below “the god-like Turgot” as a recent example of a statesman with genuinely philosophic vision.<sup>125</sup> A report on Prussian education by another eminent philosopher and educational reformer, Victor Cousin, was, therefore, a naturally congenial document to the Philosophic Radical circle, one that could serve as a useful weapon with which to beat a government then showing some disposition to take up the question of national education, which had been pressed upon it very forcibly in the debates of 1833 by Molesworth and, above all, Roebuck. It seemed, as Mill says below, “an auspicious moment for inviting the attention of the English public to that highest and most important of all the objects which a government can place before itself” (63), and he took the opportunity to press the case in a favourable notice of Sarah Austin’s translation of Cousin’s book.

Although Mill had reported to Carlyle that Mrs. Austin’s preface was “the truest & best piece of printed writing I have read for many months,”<sup>126</sup> his review was, even by early-nineteenth-century standards in these matters, a mere pretext for a bit of propagandizing about the deplorable state of English schools. There is practically no reference to Cousin’s work itself, and only one substantial quotation from the translator’s preface; instead the article is fleshed out with several lengthy extracts from an unflattering contemporary account of Church of England elementary schools, references to congenial speeches in Parliament, and, under the cover of anonymity, a long quotation from his own article on the abuses of church and corporation property published in the previous year. The article makes no constructive proposals, Mill contenting himself with exhorting the House of Commons committee on education to pursue “the reform of such abominations” (73). It is noticeable how slight and mechanical such early polemical pieces seem when juxtaposed to some of Mill’s later performances as a public moralist.

If the elementary education of the many had been culpably neglected, the ancient public schools and universities, on which the privileged classes were wont to congratulate themselves, Mill always regarded as grossly overvalued. The inefficient cramming of the rudiments of Latin and Greek carried on at many of the former was invariably referred to sarcastically, and even the better of them were berated for concentrating on what always seemed to Mill the least valuable part of such an education, the imitation of classical verse models. These sentiments can be found in works published in the 1860s as well as the 1830s, and his correspondence abounds with remarks about the “miserable pretence of education, which those classes now receive,” and especially about the “disgraceful” failure even to teach the ancient languages properly.<sup>127</sup> In the 1830s Oxford and Cambridge, too, came in for some very sharp criticism, the great flaw and foundation of all other vices in these institutions being their position as virtual seminaries for the Established Church: “While their sectarian character, while the exclusion of all who will not sign away their freedom of thought, is contended for as if life depended on it, there is hardly a trace in the system of the Universities that any other object whatever is seriously cared for.”<sup>128</sup> Education was naturally one of Mill’s favoured examples of the cramping effect of religion on English life, whether in the form of the conformity-exacting complacency of Anglicanism or the bigoted sectarianism of the Dissenters, and his repeated pleas for freedom of thought in education have to

be seen in this context. His having neither received a religious education nor attended a school or university of any kind constituted an important element in his identity as an outsider, and meant that he never displayed that indulgent, forgiving piety towards the ancient educational foundations which marked the attitudes of the vast majority of the governing class who had passed through them.

If in the earlier part of the century the schoolmaster was abroad in the land, by the 1860s it was the school inspector, backed by the power of several Royal Commissions, who represented the essence of recent developments. The spirit of administrative reform was now breathing down the necks of lowly ushers in dames' schools and of great pashas in public schools alike. Royal Commissions on the two extremities of the system, the leading public schools and "popular education," were succeeded at the end of 1864 by a long-lived Commission with the self-consciously miscellaneous title of an enquiry into those schools "not comprised within Her Majesty's two recent Commissions," soon casually identified as "middle-class schools." The Commission, usually referred to as the Taunton Commission after its Chairman Henry Labouchere, Baron Taunton, sent sets of questions to various possible witnesses, including Mill, who was at the time in Parliament and in fairly close contact with some members of the Commission.<sup>129</sup> On matters of this type Mill often sought, and even more often received, coaching from Edwin Chadwick, whose tactlessness was always liable to obstruct the proper deployment of his expertise. In this case, Mill asked Chadwick to "cram" him on the subject, and submitted a draft of his replies for the latter's approval.<sup>130</sup> These comparatively slight replies (Chadwick had favoured the earlier Commission on popular education with 160 pages of information and advice) constitute a typically Chadwickian plea for administrative efficiency based on the recognizably Benthamite "conjunction of duty-and-interest" principle alluded to at their opening as the "fundamental" maxim governing "the conduct of business of any kind by a delegated agent" (209).

If one is not to exaggerate considerations of this sort in Mill's thinking about education, however, these replies need to be read in conjunction with his article on "Endowments" published three years later (which includes several commendations of the Commission's eventual report), wherein he considers the value of educational endowments from the wider perspective of his general social thought. In the later piece he makes clear, for example, that however much he might have been in favour of "payment by results" (the slogan made popular a few years earlier by Robert Lowe) as the foundation of efficient teaching in state schools, he did not regard education generally as a commodity that the operation of market forces could be expected to provide satisfactorily. Thus, endowments are assigned a crucial role in making available secondary education for those who would profit from it but would not otherwise be able to afford it (a meritocracy in which women are emphatically included), and the larger principle which this satisfies is that of preserving, and where necessary providing, variety. "It is desirable that every particular enterprise for education or other public objects should be organized, that is, its conductors should act together for a known object, on a definite plan, without waste of strength or resources." This is the typically Benthamite-Chadwickian note. "But it is far from desirable that all such enterprises should be organized exactly alike. . . . [W]hat the improvement of mankind and of all their works most imperatively demands is variety, not uniformity."<sup>131</sup> This is the distinctively Millian voice.

Although he came to regard it as part of the duty of the state to see that all children received a certain level of education, he always thought it positively dangerous for the state to provide all the schools to which those children were to be sent.

By the 1860s Mill also recognized that the English universities, goaded by yet more Royal Commissions, fed by rejuvenated public schools, and prompted by reformers from within, were responding to the spirit of improvement.<sup>132</sup> The beginnings of an expansion of the traditional classics- and mathematics-based curriculum formed part of a larger national debate on the proper role of the universities, which revived once again the challenge, endlessly offered and almost as endlessly refused in English educational history, of science to the dominant position held by the humanities. Mill's own influence at Oxford and Cambridge was at its peak in this decade, an influence which was seen to tell on the side of "modern" studies. In accepting the invitation of the St. Andrews students to deliver a Rectorial address, Mill clearly saw an opportunity to deploy his influence in this debate, as well, perhaps, as to do a little homage to the Scottish university tradition, respect for which had been bred into him by his Edinburgh-educated father.

Mill's Address, which took three hours to deliver ("a very lengthened performance," Bain grumbled), does not rank with the speeches of Gladstone or Macaulay among the masterpieces of Victorian oratory, but it has some of the same monumental quality. Having taken as his theme "every essential department of general culture . . . considered in its relation to human cultivation at large . . . [and] the nature of the claims which each has to a place in liberal education" (220). Mill was in no position to be brief, though it must be said that the Address concludes with those headmasterly platitudes whose natural home is the school prize-giving: "what we achieve depends less on the amount of time we possess, than on the use we make of our time. You and your like are the hope and resource of your country in the coming generation" (257), and so on. Bain, a Professor at a Scottish university, thought the Address a "mistake" in its setting because Mill "had no conception of the limits of a University curriculum."<sup>133</sup> Certainly Mill was describing a course of study for which a couple of decades would not have been too generous a provision of time. He professed himself "amazed at the limited conception which many educational reformers have formed to themselves of a human being's power of acquisition" (221), but if his Address was intended as a practical proposal then it was one of those occasions when Mill was afflicted with a kind of solipsism in his judgment of human capacities (we have already seen something similar at work in his view of sex). And past experience is again denied authority as a guide, with all the optimism of one who had never taught in a university, Mill insists, "let us try what conscientious and intelligent teaching can do, before we presume to decide what cannot be done" (221). In fact the Address is not best read as a constructive proposal for reform of the syllabus, but rather as a statement of the values Mill wished to see fostered in higher education, and of his own distinctive conception of the contributions the various branches of knowledge could make to this goal. It thus serves as a good sketch-map of the geography of Mill's mature thought on abstract subjects, embracing in its way a wider territory even than that mapped out in the *Logic*.

Although Mill affected to regard the dispute between the claims of classics and the claims of science as needless, in that any worthwhile education should include both, the stand he actually

took on this issue was bound to appear a conservative one. For he pressed the case for the classics in the strongest possible terms. “The only languages . . . and the only literature, to which I would allow a place in the ordinary curriculum, are those of the Greeks and Romans, and to these I would preserve the position in it which they at present occupy” (225). It may be said that Mill slightly mis-states the import of his argument here, since the position these studies then occupied was confined by the traditional philological and textual preoccupations of English classical scholarship, whereas Mill was pressing for a much broader study of the ancient world (his tastes and loyalties were in fact always far more Greek than Roman) in which history and, above all, philosophy would predominate. He certainly did not see himself as endorsing the empty versifying of the English classical schools. But he was bound to appear to be upholding the traditional primacy of the classics: Huxley, for example, on a celebrated parallel occasion, responded in this way in contrasting his own call for the teaching of science at universities with Mill’s eulogy of the classics.<sup>134</sup> Moreover, at a time when there was something of a crisis of confidence about just what constituted the distinctive merits of a classical education, and when the discrepancies and contradictions between the various justifications were occasioning some embarrassment,<sup>135</sup> Mill’s brisk amalgamation of the various arguments hit a particularly confident and unyielding note; the classics display the most polished examples of literary form, *and* they contain unrivalled wisdom and truth in their content; the grammatical structures of the ancient languages uniquely fit them to provide mental training, *and* exposure to the operation of minds so unlike our own is itself a most valuable discipline, and so on.

Mill had presented a brief defence of a classical education in slightly different and rather more revealing terms twenty-seven years earlier when he endorsed Tocqueville’s view of the importance to be attached to the ancient literatures “not as being without faults, but as having the contrary faults to those of our own day.” There, in more sociological vein, he suggested that these literatures, produced in “the military and agricultural commonwealths of Antiquity,” exhibit “precisely that order of virtues in which a commercial society is apt to be deficient.” The justification is unequivocally a moral one. And on these grounds he was, in 1840, already worried about the future of the classics: “If, as everyone may see, the want of affinity of these studies to the modern mind is gradually lowering them in popular estimation, this is but a confirmation of the need of them, and renders it more incumbent upon those who have the power, to do their utmost towards preventing their decline.”<sup>136</sup> Here surely is the key to his decision to devote almost half his Address to a defence of that feature of university education which the existing system already fostered beyond all others. (For once, Bain failed to see that Mill was talking about a tendency, not a realized fact, commenting with some exasperation: “Mill had taken it into his head that the Greek and Roman classics had been too hardly pressed by the votaries of science, and were in some danger of being excluded from the higher teaching. . . .”)<sup>137</sup> A glance at the development of the university syllabus in the last third of the nineteenth century hardly vindicates Mill’s anxiety that the study of the classics was on the point of extinction. But just as his ideal of what such a study should consist in and produce was far removed from the actual practice of the day which he seemed to be defending, so his anxiety about the fate of that study was not a realistic assessment of purely educational changes, but an example of his familiar and more personal

anxiety about the need for countervailing forces to the increasingly conformist pressure of modern society.

Another way of indicating how far removed Mill was from those pressing the claims of scientific and technological education is to point to the fact that his case for science is almost entirely couched in terms of its value as a training in method. Science provides, above all, “models of the art of estimating evidence” (235), and the term “models” naturally suggests that the particular content is of secondary importance. What Mill chiefly offers his audience here is a brisk summary of the *Logic*, taking the opportunity to press the *correct* method in circles all too prone to various forms of Intuitionism. Comte’s classification of the sciences is followed from mathematics up to physiology, but at that point Mill reverts to the older British tradition of “the science of mind,” referred to indifferently as psychology or philosophy (Comte had moved directly from physiology, the study of man’s physical constitution, including phrenology, to sociology, the study of the laws governing man’s action in society). Thus, that part of Mill’s Address which lays down “the outline of a complete scientific education” concludes, revealingly, by prescribing the works of Hobbes, Locke, Reid, Stewart, Hume, Hartley, and Brown. To this he appends a brief section on those sciences that deal with “the great interests of mankind as moral and social beings” (243-4), brief because so few of the attempts at systematic study of these topics are considered to have attained the rank of sciences. Political economy and jurisprudence are treated as the only secure possessors of that status, and the account of jurisprudence is only one of several ways in which this section differs interestingly from the parallel discussion in Book VI of the *Logic*.

Only after having devoted three-quarters of his Address to what he called “intellectual education” did Mill move onto moral and aesthetic education: but these proportions are misleading if they suggest that his audience had not been kept constantly aware of the moral purposes all education was meant to serve. For example, in introducing the student to the philosophic view of history as the development of stages of civilization (a view with appropriately strong Scottish connections), the university would thereby—Mill seems to regard the connection as too obvious to need spelling out—be cultivating a conception of life as “an unremitting conflict between good and evil powers, of which every act done by any of us, insignificant as we are, forms one of the incidents, a conflict in which even the smallest of us cannot escape from taking part, in which whoever does not help the right side is helping the wrong, and for our share in which, whether it be greater or smaller, and let its actual consequences be visible or in the main invisible, no one of us can escape the responsibility” (244). The Headmaster has clearly moved over from the lectern to the pulpit, whatever a university teaches, “it should teach as penetrated by a sense of duty; it should present all knowledge as chiefly a means to worthiness of life, given for the double purpose of making each of us practically useful to his fellow-creatures, and of elevating the character of the species itself” (248).

The voice of the moralist sounds out equally clearly in Mill’s discussion of the value of art. Considered at this level of abstraction, this is one of those quicksand-like questions whose chief role seems to be to reveal the blind spots in any philosopher’s sensibilities. For Mill, step-child of English Romanticism, the cultivation of the feelings is the core of the aesthetic experience, but

only a certain, rather narrow, selection of feelings seems to be involved. His residual Wordsworthianism surfaces here: natural beauty, for example, is said to make us “feel the puerility of the petty objects which set men’s interests at variance, contrasted with the nobler pleasures which all might share” (255). Mill’s aesthetic does not easily accommodate the tragic; where values appear to clash, there is a presumption that selfishness is at work somewhere. Indeed, not only does art not create a potential rival realm of value for Mill: beauty is not even allowed to be morally indifferent. “There is . . . a natural affinity between goodness and the cultivation of the Beautiful, when it is real cultivation, and not a mere unguided instinct. He who has learnt what beauty is, if he be of virtuous character, will desire to realize it in his own life—will keep before himself a type of perfect beauty in human character, to light his attempts at self-culture.” (255.) The rider “if he be of virtuous character” threatens to reduce the proposition to a tautology, a process which is assisted by his sliding from “beauty” in general to “beauty in human character.” It is a tension which, in other forms, appears elsewhere in Mill’s thought, most notably in *On Liberty*: the goal of self-development rests on a restricted notion of the self, a self whose development not only does not impede, but positively fosters, the moral interests of others. Once again, the dim outline of the idea of a common good is discernible in Mill’s thinking here. It is, in fact, the obverse of his Manichaeism, which is itself another strategy for simplifying the disorderly actualities of moral experience. Launched into his peroration, Mill quite naturally makes “the ultimate end” from which his prescribed course of studies takes its “chief value” that of “making you more effective combatants in the great fight which never ceases to rage between Good and Evil” (256). Inaugural Addresses form an inescapably programmatic genre, and for that reason Mill’s displays several of his chief intellectual virtues to good effect: the magisterial survey is his natural medium, all of human knowledge his familiar bailiwick. His occasional tendency to a narrow and hectoring moralism finds only a subdued expression here, while the awesome range and dazzling lucidity of his mind are exhibited at their formidable, impressive best.

## Endnotes

[1] *The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill [LL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill [CW]*, XIV-XVII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XIV, 205.

[2] John Morley, “The Death of Mr. Mill,” *Fortnightly Review*, n.s. XIII (June, 1873), 670.

[3] Letter to Charles A. Cummings, *LL*, *CW*, XV, 843 (23 Feb., 1862). Cf., for further “proof of the influence of my writings,” Mill’s letter to Helen Taylor, *ibid.*, 673 (7 Feb., 1860).

[4] Letter to Max Kyllmann, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1063n (30 May, 1865). Mill may have felt uneasy with the tone of this passage since he cancelled it from his draft.

[5] The phrase is John Sterling’s, recorded by Caroline Fox in her *Memories of Old Friends*, ed. Horace N. Pym, 2 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, 1882), II, 8.



[6] Letter to the Secretary of the Neophyte Writers' Society, *LL, CW*, XIV, 205 (23 Apr., 1854).

[7] See his letters to Helen Taylor for January and February, 1860, *LL, CW*, XV, 660-87. The exercise was no labour of love, he observed at the end, after grudgingly conceding the quality of much of its writing, that the review "is among the greatest enemies to our *principles* that there now are" (687).

[8] Alexander Bain, *John Stuart Mill a Criticism With Personal Recollections* (London: Longmans, 1882), 118. For an interesting example of Mill's wishing to use the *Edinburgh* in this way and agreeing to "put what I have to say in a form somewhat different from that in which I should write for another publication," see his correspondence in 1869 with its editor, Henry Reeve, about a proposed review of his friend W.T. Thornton's *On Labour*, eventually. Mill was unwilling to meet Reeve's stipulations, and his review of Thornton, which contained his famous recantation of the wages-fund doctrine appeared in the *Fortnightly* instead See *LL, CW*, XVII, 1574-82.

[9] See, for examples, *ibid.*, XIV, 62, 72.

[10] Letter to Lord Amberley, *ibid.*, XVI, 1007 (8 Mar., 1865).

[11] See the essays in *The Victorian Periodical Press, Samplings and Soundings*, ed. Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff (Leicester: Leicester University Press, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), especially the essay by Sheila Rosenberg on John Chapman's proprietorship of the *Westminster*.

[12] Letter to John Morley, *LL, CW*, XVII, 1785 (28 Nov., 1870). Cf. his letter to Morley of 11 May, 1872, hoping that the latter will not stand for the Chair of Political Economy at University College London "lest the undertaking of additional work might possibly affect either your health or the time you can give to the *Fortnightly*. I am very desirous that the F. shd continue, & increase rather than diminish in importance & I think you exercise a wider influence through it than you could do through the Professorship" (*ibid.*, 1892).

[13] Letter to John Elliot Cairnes, *ibid.*, XVI, 1003 (5 May, 1865).

[14] Letter to John Chapman, *ibid.*, XV, 733 (12 July, 1861).

[15] Letter to Cairnes, *ibid.*, 767 (20 Jan., 1862), *Autobiography and Literary Essays*, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger, *CW*, I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 268.

[16] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 265. Cf. letter to Alexander Bain, *LL, CW*, XVII, 1623 (14 July, 1869), on how the strategy of *The Subjection of Women* was now appropriate in a way it would not have been "ten years ago."

[17] In fact, 1865 marked an extraordinary peak of simultaneity in the publication of Mill's work "In addition to the two editions of *Representative Government*, the fifth editions of both the *Logic* and the *Principles*, the People's Editions of *On Liberty* and the *Principles*, the periodical and first book editions of *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, and the first and second editions of the *Examination of*

*Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*" all appeared in that year (Textual Introduction, *Essays on Politics and Society*, *CW*, XVIII-XIX [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977], XVIII, lxxxix).

[18] See Thomas Hill Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, ed. Andrew Cecil Bradley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883), 217.

[19] Quoted in John Holloway, *The Victorian Sage: Studies in Argument* (London: Macmillan, 1953), 13-14, from Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* (London: Taylor and Hessey, 1825), 198 (Aph. 104 in other eds.).

[20] Quoted in Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 190.

[21] Cf. his reply of 6 Dec., 1871, to a correspondent who had asked him if he thought France was "en décadence". "A mon sens, la décadence morale est toujours la seule réelle" (*LL*, *CW*, XVIII, 1864).

[22] For suggestive uses of these terms, which I have drawn upon but not strictly followed, see Holloway, *Victorian Sage*, and John Gross, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters, Aspects of English Literary Life since 1800* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969).

[23] Quoted in William Thomas, *The Philosophic Radicals: Nine Studies in Theory and Practice, 1817-1841* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 160.

[24] "J.S. Mill on the American Contest," *The Economist*, XX (8 Feb., 1862), 144.

[25] For examples of this response see Christopher Harvie, *The Lights of Liberalism: University Liberals and the Challenge of Democracy, 1860-86* (London: Lane, 1976), 152-3, cf. John Vincent, *The Formation of the British Liberal Party, 1857-1868* (London: Constable, 1966), 190. It is a view which pervades Bain's account see, for example, *John Stuart Mill*, 91.

[26] For John Morley, for example, they represented "the notable result of this ripest, loftiest, and most inspiring part of his life," and he regarded *The Subjection of Women*, in particular, as "probably the best illustration of all the best and richest qualities of its author's mind" ("Mr. Mill's Autobiography," *Fortnightly Review*, n.s. XV [Jan., 1874], 15, 12).

[27] Anne Mozley, "Mr. Mill *On the Subjection of Women*," *Blackwood's Magazine*, CVI (Sept., 1869), 320-1.

[28] Morley, "Death of Mr. Mill," 673, 672.

[29] Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 146.

[30] For his conception of Ethology, see *A System of Logic. Ratiocinative and Inductive*, *CW*, VII-VIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), VIII, 861-74 (Bk. VI, Chap. v). For his "failure" with it, see Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 78-9. His correspondence reveals that he continued to entertain hopes of returning to the project e.g., letter to Alexander Bain of 14 Nov., 1859, where he referred to it as "a subject I have long wished to take up, at least in the form of Essays, but have never yet felt myself sufficiently prepared" (*LL*, *CW*, XV, 645). For an example of his acknowledgment that "there is hardly any subject which, in proportion to its importance, has been so little studied," see 277 below.

[31] For more detailed comments on the publishing history of each of the items reprinted here, see the Textual Introduction below.

[32] See especially Mill's letters to Carlyle for the years 1832-35, in *The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill [EL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, *CW*, XII-XIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963).

[33] See Carlyle's journal for 7 Feb., 1850, quoted in Emery Neft, *Carlyle and Mill: An Introduction to Victorian Thought*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1926), 43.

[34] It is even possible that in this respect America was coming to replace France in Mill's thinking, especially once France was saddled with the despotism of Napoleon III, which he so abhorred. In 1849 he could still write. "The whole problem of modern society however will be worked out, as I have long thought it would, in France & nowhere else" (letter to Henry Samuel Chapman, *LL*, *CW*, XIV, 32 [28 May, 1849]); but for later remarks which seem to assign at least equal importance to the United States see *ibid.*, 1307 and 1880; see also *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 266-8.

[35] There is a useful survey in D.P. Crook, *American Democracy in English Politics, 1815-1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

[36] The standard account was for long Ephraim Douglass Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, 1925); a strongly revisionist attack on the view that the cotton workers of Lancashire had, against their economic interest, supported the North is provided in the controversial study by Mary Ellison, *Support for Secession Lancashire and the American Civil War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972); there is a judicious synthesis in D.P. Crook, *The North, the South and the Powers, 1861-1865* (New York: Wiley, 1974).

[37] Quoted in Ellison, *Support for Secession*, 9.

[38] Bain, John Stuart Mill, 119.

[39] Letter to William Thomas Thornton of 28 Jan., 1862, where he also places his characteristic two-way bet that his article "if noticed at all is likely to be much attacked" (*LL*, *CW*, XV, 774).

[40] He used this phrase in a reference to the exclusion of women from the suffrage in the otherwise unusually democratic Australian colonies (letter to Henry Samuel Chapman, *LL*, *CW*, XV, 557 [8 July, 1858]).

[41] Harriet Grote. *The Personal Life of George Grote* (London: Murray, 1873), 264. Recommending Mill's article to Gladstone, the Duke of Argyll particularly emphasized how "the cold-blooded philosopher comes out with much warmth" (quoted in Adelaide Weinberg, *John Elliot Cairnes and the American Civil War. A Study in Anglo-American Relations* [London: Kingswood Press, 1969], 22) See also *The Economist's* suggestion that on this issue Mill was carried away "by the very warmth of his own feelings" ("Mill on the American Contest," 171).

[42] *The Character and Logical Method of Political Economy* (London: Longman, *et al.*, 1857). For Mill's favourable view, see letter to Cairnes, *LL*, *CW*, XV, 554 (22 Apr., 1858).

[43] Letter to Cairnes, *ibid.*, 738 (18 Aug., 1861), cf. 750.

[44] London: Parker, 1862, 2nd ed., London: Macmillan, 1863. For details, see Weinberg, *Cairnes and the American Civil War*, esp. Chap. ii.

[45] Letter to Cairnes, *LL*, *CW*, XV, 785 (24 June, 1862).

[46] *Slave Power*, vii.

[47] For Mill's classic statement, see his "On the Definition of Political Economy, and on the Method of Investigation Proper to It." in *Essays on Economics and Society*, *CW*, IV-V (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), IV, 309-39, as well as his treatment in Book VI of the *Logic*.

[48] *Slave Power*, 69, 171.

[49] This is argued more fully in Stefan Collini, Donald Winch, and John Burrow, *That Noble Science of Politics. A Study in Nineteenth-Century Intellectual History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 127-59.

[50] Letter to Cairnes, *LL*, *CW*, XV, 750 (25 Nov., 1861), cf. Cairnes, *Slave Power*, 16.

[51] See below (162-4) for the point of difference, and Weinberg, *Cairnes and the American Civil War*, 42, 42n, for Cairnes' later agreement.

[52] Letter to John Plummer, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1042 (1 May, 1865).

[53] Letter to William E. Hickson, *ibid.*, 1044 (3 May, 1865).

[54] For an account of this episode which pays considerable attention to Mill's role, see Bernard Semmel, *The Governor Eyre Controversy* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1962).

[55] Letter to William Fraser Rae, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1126 (14 Dec., 1865).

[56] He considered his contribution to the debate on this issue in July, 1866, as the best of his speeches in Parliament (*Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 281-2). For an indication of the importance Mill attached to making a stand on this issue whether or not the prosecution proceedings were successful, see letter to Lindsey Middleton Aspland, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1365 (23 Feb., 1868).

[57] In his speech in Parliament Mill had insisted that if Eyre were not brought to justice "we are giving up altogether the principle of government by law, and resigning ourselves to arbitrary power", and he defended his speech as "not on this occasion standing up for negroes, or for liberty, deeply as both are interested in the subject—but for the first necessity of human society, law" (speech of 31 July, 1866, *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 184, col. 1800, and letter to David Urquhart, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1205 [4 Oct., 1866]).

[58] Quoted in Semmel, *Governor Eyre*, 122.

[59] Letter to Cairnes, *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1828-9 (21 Aug., 1871).

[60] Cf., in what is still the best study of one of the issues, R.T. Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation, 1876* (London: Nelson, 1963), 208.

[61] See letter to Bain, *LL, CW, XV*, 646 (14 Nov., 1859), for the view that the “affair is damaging the character of England on the Continent more than most people are aware of” (a remark in which his sense of his special intimacy with Continental opinion is again evident).

[62] *Autobiography, CW, I*, 263-4.

[63] For Mill’s enthusiasm for Gladstone at this point, see Vincent, *Formation of the Liberal Party*, 160-1.

[64] Letter to Morley, *LL, CW, XVII*, 1778 (18 Nov., 1870). See also Mill’s letters to *The Times*, 19 Nov., 1870, 5, and 24 Nov., 1870, 3.

[65] *Autobiography, CW, I*, 107 (it should not be inferred, nor does Mill’s account strictly imply, that his father was in principle opposed to the enfranchisement of women). For an early example of his public criticism of prevailing attitudes towards women, see his “Periodical Literature: Edinburgh Review” (1824), in *CW, I*, 311-12.

[66] Note also his statement in a letter to an unidentified correspondent in 1855. “My opinion on Divorce is that though any relaxation of the irrevocability of marriage would be an improvement, nothing ought to be ultimately rested in, short of entire freedom on both sides to dissolve this like any other partnership” (*LL, CW, XIV*, 500). Compare this with the view referred to at xxxvi below.

[67] Letter to Parke Godwin, *LL, CW, XVII*, 1535 (1 Jan., 1869).

[68] Letter to William Hickson, *ibid.*, *XIV*, 48 (19 Mar., 1850).

[69] See *EL, CW, XIII*, 604-11, 616-17, 696-8.

[70] *LL, CW, XIV*, 12-13.

[71] *Ibid.*, 13.

[72] Mill considered his proposal of this amendment as “by far the most important, perhaps the only really important public service [he] performed in the capacity of a Member of Parliament” (*Autobiography, CW, I*, 285).

[73] Letter to Cairnes, *LL, CW, XVI*, 1272 (26 May, 1867). See Ann P. Robson, “The Founding of the National Society for Women’s Suffrage,” *Canadian Journal of History*, VIII (Mar., 1973), 1-22 and for women’s suffrage organizations in general, see Constance Rover *Women’s Suffrage and Party Politics in Britain, 1866-1914* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967).

[74] For an example of this optimism, see Mill’s letter to Charles Eliot Norton, *LL, CW, XVII*, 1618 (23 June, 1869). The optimism was, of course, misplaced in that no women received the vote in national elections until 1918. Consider here Bain’s judgment “His most sanguine hopes were of a very slow progress in all things, with the sole exception, perhaps, of the equality-of-women question or which his feelings went farther than on any other” (*John Stuart Mill*, 132).

[75] E.g., in his “Chapters on Socialism,” in *Essays on Economics and Society*, *CW*, V, 736.

[76] For an indication of the weight Mill attached to these cases, see how eagerly he seizes upon the “new evidence” of the practical capacities of Elizabeth I provided by Froude (letter to John Nichol, *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1632-4 [18 Aug., 1869]).

[77] See, for example, Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 229, 226.

[78] Goldwin Smith. “Female Suffrage,” *Macmillan’s Magazine*, XXX (June, 1874) 140 see also Brian Harrison, *Separate Spheres. The Opposition to Women’s Suffrage in Britain* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), 62.

[79] Bain, John Stuart Mill, 149, 89-90.

[80] Letter to Lord Amberley, *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1693 (2 Feb., 1870).

[81] The most persistent criticism of the feminist position was to be found in the *Saturday Review*, for Mill’s hostility to which see x and xxiii. Harrison, *Separate Spheres*, 104 and Metle Mowbray Bevington. *The Saturday Review, 1855-1868* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), 114-18.

[82] For an account, with ample reference to Mill, see Lee Holcombe, *Wives and Property. Reform of the Married Women’s Property Law in Nineteenth-Century England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983).

[83] Letter to Henry Keylock Rusden, *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1751 (22 July, 1870).

[84] Bain, John Stuart Mill, 130.

[85] Letter to Florence Nightingale, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1343-4 (31 Dec., 1867). In drawing up his condemnation of the frustrations of the life of the typical woman of the prosperous classes. Mill had already made use of Nightingale’s *Suggestions for Thought*, 3 vols. (London: privately published, 1860) (see Francis Barrymore Smith, *Florence Nightingale. Reputation and Power* [London: Croom Helm, 1982], 187).

[86] Letter to George Croom Robertson, *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1917 (5 Nov., 1872), it should be remembered that Mill was already disillusioned with the Gladstone ministry by this point—see above, xxviii. For a sharp assessment of Helen Taylor’s influence over Mill on this subject see the editor’s introduction in *LL*, *CW*, XIV, xxxvi-xxxvii.

[87] For details of the campaign and the issues it raised see Francis Barrymore Smith, “Ethics and Disease in the Later-Nineteenth Century. The Contagious Diseases Acts,” *Historical Studies* (Melbourne), XV, (1971), 118-35, and Paul McHugh. *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform* (London: Croom Helm, 1980).

[88] Letter to William T. Malleson, *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1688 (18 Jan., 1870). For the anxiety that to “the mass of the English people, as well as to large numbers already well disposed towards some little improvement in women’s condition, the union of the C.D.A. agitation with that for

the suffrage, condemns the latter utterly, because they look upon it as indelicate and unfeminine,” see Mill’s letter to Robertson, *LL, CW, XVII*, 1854 (15 Nov., 1871).

[89] McHugh, Prostitution and Social Reform, 61.

[90] Cf. *ibid.*, 63. “The most impressive witness of all was John Stuart Mill.”

[91] Autobiography, *CW, I*, 67.

[92] *Ibid.*, 119, 117. See also Mill’s Preface to Jeremy Bentham, *Rationale of Judicial Evidence Specially Applied to English Practice*, 5 vols. (London: Hunt and Clarke, 1827), I, v-xvi.

[93] See *Autobiography, CW, I*, 91, for some remarks on their criticism of “that most peccant part of English institutions and of their administration.”

[94] See the pieces collected in *Prefaces to Liberty*, ed. Bernard Wishy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959).

[95] *Autobiography, CW, I*, Chap. iv, 89-135.

[96] James Mill, “Liberty of the Press” (1821) in the Supplement to the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Constable, 1824), V, 2, 258-72, rpt. *Essays* (London: Innes, [1825]).

[97] James Mill, “Government” (1820), in *Essays*, 5.

[98] Mill’s argument here—“Even a Turkish Sultan is restrained by the fear of exciting insurrection” (7)—echoes David Hume’s famous dictum. “It is . . . on opinion only that government is founded,” and so even “the soldan of Egypt” must cultivate the opinion of his mamalukes (“Of the First Principles of Government,” *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, in *Philosophical Works* [1882], ed. Thomas Hill Green and Thomas Hodge Grose, 4 vols. [Aalen Scientia, 1964], III, 110).

[99] See Frederick Pollock, *An Introduction to the History of the Science of Politics* (1890), new ed. (London: Macmillan, 1911), 109-11.

[100] Maine’s criticisms of Austin were most explicitly set out in his *Lectures on the Early History of Institutions* (London: Murray, 1875), Chaps. xii and xiii, where the parallel with political economy is also developed. Austin and Ricardo were bracketed together in this way in Fitzjames Stephen’s article of 1861 cited by Mill at 169 below.

[101] For the Committee on Legal Education see the references given in Peter Stein, *Legal Evolution. The Story of an Idea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 78-9. For Austin’s position in the syllabus (his work “is the staple of jurisprudence in all our system of legal education”), see Edwin Charles Clark, *Practical Jurisprudence. A Comment on Austin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1883). See also Sarah Austin’s letter to Guizot of 2 Mar., 1863, quoted in Janet Ross, *Three Generations of Englishwomen*, 2 vols. (London: Murray, 1888), II, 138. “. . . I must tell you that his book is daily rising into fame and authority to a degree which I never hoped to live to witness, and which he would never have believed. It is become an examination book at both Oxford and Cambridge, and I am assured by barristers that there is a perfect enthusiasm

about it among *young* lawyers—men among whom it was unknown till since [*sic*] I published the second edition.”

[102] For information about Austin’s life, see Sarah Austin’s “Preface” to the 2nd ed. of the *Lectures*, 3 vols. (London: Murray, 1861-63), I, iii-xxxvi, and Ross, *Three Generations*, *passim*.

[103] Autobiography, CW, I, 67, EL, CW, XII, 13.

[104] *EL*, CW, XII, 51, 107, 134, 141.

[105] Austin, “Preface,” xxxii.

[106] Leslie Stephen, *The English Utilitarians*, 3 vols. (London: Duckworth, 1900), III, 318.

[107] Austin, “Preface,” xv.

[108] *EL*, CW, XII, 117.

[109] Cf. Sarah Austin’s recollection of her husband’s relations with Bentham on this score. “My husband used vainly to represent to him that the ignorance and wrong-headedness of the people were fully as dangerous to good government as the ‘sinister interests’ of the governing classes. Upon this point they were always at issue.” (Letter to Guizot of 18 Dec., 1861, in Ross, *Three Generations*, II, 114.)

[110] See especially the excellent discussion by Richard B. Friedman, “An Introduction to Mill’s Theory of Authority,” in *Mill: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. J.B. Schneewind (Garden City, N.Y. Doubleday, 1968), 379-425.

[111] *EL*, CW, XIII, 734. Under Harriet’s influence, Mill penned a very harsh portrait of Sarah Austin in the early draft of the *Autobiography*, which he later omitted from the published version (see *Autobiography*, CW, I, 186).

[112] *LL*, CW, XV, 658, 671. Cf. the Textual Introduction, lxv below.

[113] Bain, John Stuart Mill, 124.

[114] Quoted in Austin, “Preface,” xviii.

[115] W.L. Morison, “Some Myth about Positivism,” *Yale Law Journal*, LXVIII (Dec., 1958), 226-7.

[116] Austin, *Lectures*, I, xciv.

[117] For a discussion of Maine’s work in these terms, see J.W. Burrow, *Evolution and Society. A Study in Victorian Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), Chap. v, and Stein, *Legal Evolution*, Chaps. iv and v.

[118] *Principles of Political Economy*, CW, II-III (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), II, 219; “Maine on Village-Communities,” *Fortnightly Review*, n.s. IX (May, 1871), 543-56.

[119] *Principles*, CW, II, 218-19. This passage dated from the first edition, the reference to *Ancient Law* was simply appended to it in 1862.



[120] H.L.A. Hart, "Introduction" to Austin, *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), xx.

[121] Claude Adrien Helvétius, *De l'homme, de ses facultés intellectuelles, et de son éducation* (1772), in *Oeuvres complètes d'Helvétius*, 10 vols. in 5 (Paris: Garnery, and Dugour, 1793-97), IX, 191.

[122] "Endowments" (1869), in *Essays on Economics and Society*, V, 613-29, "Sedgwick's Discourse" (1835), in *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, *CW*, X (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 31-74, "Civilization" (1836), *CW*, XVIII, 117-47.

[123] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 5.

[124] *Ibid.*, 111.

[125] For von Humboldt and Mill's relation to him, see the editor's introduction to Wilhelm von Humboldt, *The Limits of State Action*, ed. J.W. Burrow (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969). "The godlike Turgot" is a phrase of John Austin's quoted not only by Mill (204), but by (among others) Morley in his "Death of Mr. Mill," 671.

[126] Letter to Carlyle, *EL*, *CW*, XII, 225 (28 Apr., 1834).

[127] Letter to Henry William Carr, *LL*, *CW*, XIV, 80 (7 Jan., 1852), letter to T.H. Huxley, *ibid.*, XVI, 1092 (18 Aug., 1865). Cf. "Civilization," *CW*, XVIII, 138-9, and 221-2 below.

[128] "Civilization," *CW*, XVIII, 142.

[129] For the Taunton Commission see H.C. Barnard, *A History of English Education from 1760*, 2nd ed. (London: University of London Press, 1961), 128-34, see also Mill's letter to Edwin Chadwick, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1168 (21 May, 1866).

[130] Letters to Edwin Chadwick, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1168, 1172, and 1190 (21 May, 31 May, and 9 Aug., 1866).

[131] "Endowments," *CW*, V, 617. See also Mill's article of 1833 on "Corporation and Church Property," *CW*, IV, 193-222, where he had had to insist more strenuously on the right of the state to interfere with such endowments at all, by 1869 he felt that the contrary case most needed to be stated.

[132] In reprinting "Civilization" in 1859, for example. Mill added a footnote conceding that "much of what is here said of the Universities has, in a great measure ceased to be true" (*CW*, XVIII, 143n). Cf. Mill's letter to Mrs. Henry Huth of 7 Jan., 1863. "Twenty years ago [Oxford and Cambridge] were about the last places which I should have recommended in any parallel case, but they are now very much changed, and free enquiry and speculation on the deepest and highest questions, instead of being crushed or deadened, are now more rife there than almost anywhere else in England" (*LL*, *CW*, XV, 819). For the whole question of the revival of the universities, see Sheldon Rothblatt, *The Revolution of the Dons. Cambridge and Society in Victorian England* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968). Rothblatt, *Tradition and Change in English Liberal Education. An Essay in History and Culture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), and Harvie, *Lights of Liberalism*.

[133] Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 127, cf. Bain's remark on Mill's strictures on universities in his "Sedgwick" article "Such a view of the functions of a University would not be put forth by any man that had ever resided in a University: and this is not the only occasion when Mill dogmatized on Universities in total ignorance of their working" (46).

[134] In his Rectorial Address at Aberdeen in 1874. Huxley explicitly challenged the pre-eminence which he took Mill to be assigning to the classics, see "Universities Actual and Ideal," in Thomas Henry Huxley, *Science and Education* (New York: Collier, 1902), 183-4.

[135] For a good example of contemporary soul-searching on this topic, see the collection of essays edited by Frederic William Farrar, *Essays on a Liberal Education* (London: Macmillan, 1867). For discussion, see Rothblatt, *Liberal Education*, Chap. v, Harvie, *Lights of Liberalism*, Chap. vii, and, for the corresponding but distinctive Scottish debate, George Davie, *The Democratic Intellect Scotland and Her Universities in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1961).

[136] "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America [II]," *CW*, XVIII, 195. Cf. Mill's letter to Herbert Spencer of 9 Feb., 1867, replying to Spencer's comment on the *Address*. "In regard to classical instruction, I do not altogether agree with you that the side favourable to it is too strong, for I think there is a growing reaction to the opposite extreme, producing a danger on that side which being the side most in harmony with modern tendencies has the best chance of being ultimately the stronger" (*LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1237).

[137] Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 126.

## VOLUME XXII - NEWSPAPER WRITINGS DECEMBER 1822 - JULY 1831 PART I.

### INTRODUCTION BY ANN P. ROBSON AND JOHN M. ROBSON

#### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXII - Newspaper Writings December 1822 - July 1831 Part I*, ed. Ann P. Robson and John M. Robson, Introduction by Ann P. Robson and John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/256/50637>>.

#### INTRODUCTION BY ANN P. ROBSON

This introduction does not attempt to analyze the thought of John Stuart Mill; it attempts to provide the context of his contribution to newspapers. The limited task is quite sufficient. Mill wrote in the papers for more than fifty of his sixty-seven years, twice on a sustained basis, in the 1830s on France and in 1846 on Ireland. From the chaotic early years of the nineteenth century to the more organized life of Victoria's heyday, he contributed practical and theoretical advice, sometimes hopefully, sometimes irately, frequently despairingly, to his stolid countrymen.

Newspapers were not his major medium—periodicals and books were the media he chose for his important writings—but he knew their impact and their value. Their impact was immediate and widespread. The *Morning Chronicle* under John Black in his prime was read over more cups of coffee than *The Times*. Albany Fonblanque's *Examiner* informed radical opinion. There was no other forum but the press influencing the minds of the politically important men and women with an immediacy made all the more potent because in Mill's youth the numbers who proposed and disposed were so small. As the years went by and as numbers grew, individual influence lessened, Mill's not so much as others, but the influence of the press, still unchallenged, increased with its readership.

Influence upon policy was not the most that Mill obtained by his journalism. Of more value to him was the necessity, forced upon him by the political involvement his journalism entailed, of bringing his hypotheses to the bar of actual events. Perhaps opportunity would be the better word because Mill was aware of, and took advantage of, the laboratory provided by “common experience respecting human nature.”<sup>1</sup> It is the testing of his theories concerning human behaviour and the progress of human civilization which gives his newspaper writings weight in the development of his thought and interest to its students.

The London into which John Stuart Mill was born had a population of under one million; by the time he was twenty-five, it had doubled; when he died there were over three million. The changes taking place in England had produced by the beginning of the nineteenth century a tur-

bulence in society rarely experienced before and a radical political press unique in English history. James Mill may have protected his son from the rough and tumble of boys his own age but he brought him up in the centre of the riots, assassinations, treasonous plots, and mass meetings that were the political manifestation of the social upheaval of early industrial England. The world around the young boy—and he lived his boyhood in London in its very vortex, precocious, his father’s intellectual shadow, listening to radical arguments and plans—was violent, brutal, anarchic, insecure, filthy, and noisy. His youthful mind was shaped in this environment—he always stressed the influence of circumstances—as was also his vision as a mature Radical.

Mill was born on 20 May, 1806, in a small house in Pentonville. His father was establishing himself amongst the Radicals of London. The times were desperate for radicalism and yet equally desperate for the condition of England; there was little time for reform but never greater need. Insecurity and violence, and the repression and hatred they bred, were everywhere. The rapidly changing basis of wealth brought increased insecurity for rich and poor. It would be fifty years before the technological and administrative knowledge would be developed to make town life secure, and the same was true for the new financial world. Insecurity haunted all levels of society. Consequently, while Mill was growing up, riots were a way of life, in peace or in war.

There were nearly always riots of more or less seriousness at elections; there were food riots; there were riots amongst the prisoners in Dartmoor and Porchester Castle in 1810; there were riots among the theatre-goers, not only the Old Price riots at Drury Lane in 1809, but at Plymouth in 1810 and Peterborough and Liverpool in 1811; that year the East India College students rioted in Hertford and the next year rioters wrecked the newsroom at the Manchester Exchange; there were riots against high food prices, in favour of a minimum wage, against press gangs; handloom weavers, Tyneside keelmen, Suffolk labourers, Bilston colliers, London shipwrights, all rioted in 1814. From 1811 to 1816 the Luddites broke machinery throughout Yorkshire and the Midlands; in Nottinghamshire in 1812 to make their feelings perfectly clear they rioted in celebration of the assassination of Lord Perceval. The Prime Minister was shot, the King was insane, a profligate Prince was regent, and the country was at war. There was reason for violent dissatisfaction and fear, and both continued to increase. The outbreaks fed into the post-war violence.

In 1815 James Mill moved his family to 1 Queen Square Place, to live beside Bentham. A stone’s throw from the Houses of Parliament, this was the very heart of political London, so the young Mill was right in the thick of things, not only for the splendid celebrations as the Prince Regent fêted European royalty at the marriage of Princess Charlotte, but also for the activity leading up to the Spa Fields meeting when the Spenceans, led by the two Watsons and joined by some sailors, broke into several gunsmiths’ shops, killing one gunsmith, and attempted to seize the Tower and the Bank of England. Unrest is the word most frequently used to describe the outbreaks from 1815 to 1820, but the word does not indicate the tension or explain Government response. In the atmosphere of the times, any outbreak seemed a possible revolutionary spark to both participants and observers. The year 1817 saw the Manchester Blanketeers, the activities of Oliver the Spy, and the Derbyshire insurrection, for which three were executed and many trans-

ported. The popularity of the monarchy reached new depths as public sorrow over the death of Princess Charlotte in childbirth turned to anger over the spectacle of the unprepossessing children of George III without a legitimate heir among them. No one was surprised when a missile was hurled at the Prince's carriage along with the boos and jeers. Rumours of an assassination attempt were readily believed. The years 1819 and 1820—the years of John Stuart's thirteenth and fourteenth birthdays—saw Peterloo, the Six Acts, the death of the beloved old mad king, the Cato Street conspiracy, and Queen Caroline's trial. These events may be played down with hindsight, but at the time rumour fed violence and no one was sure when the revolution might ignite. The year 1789, seen through the glare of 1792, was in everyone's mind. How far could repression and prosecution go? Might the suspension of habeas corpus lead a mob to storm the Tower?

No child living in the heart of Westminster in a house that was the centre of a passionately radical group could be unaware of the violence out of doors. So much has been made of the seclusion and concentration of Mill's upbringing and education that it is necessary to give some emphasis to the other side. The image of the child prodigy screened from friends of his own age is dear to a society which holds the untrained mind to be proof of a happy childhood and which delights in the crisis of the trained mind. But Mill's childhood was not unhappy—he is to be believed on this point, his *Autobiography* being painfully honest and happiness being estimable only by the possessor—nor did his crisis necessarily come from the concentration of the education. Indeed a more likely cause is the gap between his father's solutions and the coarse world he grew up in.

James Mill's house was not a place of total seclusion except from children not of his own making; and of those who were, it should be remembered, there were nine. The young boy also had the society of his father's friends.

During this first period of my life [up to the age of fourteen], the habitual frequenters of my father's house were limited to a very few persons, most of them little known to the world, but whom personal worth, and more or less of congeniality with at least his political opinions (not so frequently to be met with then as since) inclined him to cultivate; and his conversations with them I listened to with interest and instruction.

He also mentions being “disputatious” “from having been encouraged in an unusual degree to talk on matters beyond [his] age, and with grown persons.”<sup>2</sup> Mill mentions only David Ricardo, Joseph Hume, and Jeremy Bentham (4, 55), but there were others.

And if the number who came to the house was small, the much larger world of violent political activity entered with them. The turmoil of England, its causes and its remedies, was the urgent question during John Stuart Mill's formative years and it was the paramount, if not the only topic of conversation amongst his father's friends. They were an extraordinary group of men. They argued the facts and the principles passionately. It was not the talk of abstract philosophers but of men committed to the society, a society on the brink of revolution or dissolution, of which they felt themselves the proper leaders.<sup>3</sup> The young Mill's world was exciting; all about him was radicalism verging on revolution, not necessarily violent but violent if necessary. He dreamt of

being a Girondist.<sup>4</sup> The impression Mill gives in the *Autobiography* that life in Queen Square Place was regulated and commonplace is frequently accepted without question because the work is so obviously intellectually honest. But what was commonplace to the young Mill would have been commonplace to few others. (It is doubtful if Mill ever had much idea how uncommonplace he was.) All around him were unconforming, if not eccentric.

The central figure was Jeremy Bentham who, however much his eccentricity stemmed from his rationality, was also a passionate, at times incoherent, denouncer of abuses. History has often made him quaint, concentrating on his foibles and universal constitutions and prisons, giving others the credit for realizing his law reforms in particular and his social reforms in general. History has made Francis Place respectable, but he had at one time been a co-worker of Colonel Despard, hanged for treason in 1803. And it was he who, through his writings on birth control, was, if indirectly, responsible for the young Mill's being arrested for distributing "anti-social" pamphlets. Frequently on Sundays, John Black, a man who as editor of the *Morning Chronicle* was to be long an associate of John Mill's, visited James Mill. They talked politics, but some of the flavour of Black's unconventional personality must have been noticed by the listening and disputatious son. Black's quarrelsome nature had led to twelve challenges to duels before he was thirty. Having failed to win a divorce suit, he was now living with his housekeeper and being blackmailed by his wife. Brougham, Ricardo, Romilly, and Hume, each of marked character and ability, also provided contrast and interest. And of equal interest but possibly more charm, after 1819 there were the neighbours Sarah and John Austin with, two years later, their lovely baby daughter Lucie. Despite the long hours of study, life could not have been dull for the young boy and, even without the rough-and-tumble of his peers (siblings are never peers), he was better fitted than most to go at age fourteen to stay for a week with J.B. Say in Paris, meeting many of the French liberal circle, on his way for an extended visit in the south of France with the eccentric Samuel Bentham, where, however, the turmoil and chaos were domestic.

It may have been somewhat of a relief to leave London in the spring of 1820. Within a week of the death of the Duke of Kent, the old King had died. Arthur Thistlewood, a long-time friend of the Watsons of Spa Fields, advanced his plans and was surprised in Cato Street on the night of 23 February. The opening scenes of the drama of Queen Caroline, an emotional extravaganza orchestrated by Brougham, were drawing large London audiences.<sup>5</sup> But France was in truth not much calmer, although less noisy and, for the moment, seemingly less volatile. The Duke of Berry had been assassinated the week before the Cato Street conspiracy (the Cato Street conspirators now seem farcically inept; but so would Louvel had he missed), and the royalist reaction was benefiting. Under the Ministry of Villèle, Louis XVIII was following his autocratic inclinations fully supported by the old aristocracy. The law of the double vote passed, increasing the influence of the small rich minority which had already seemed impregnable. The talk at the home of J.B. Say would have been of the kind the boy was used to, only in French. Say's household was radical; he was a political economist—in 1822 he became an honorary member of the Political Economy Club in London—a long-time friend of Lafayette's and a befriender of the Carbonari. Mill met many of the leaders of the French left, "among whom [he had] pleasure in the recollection of having once seen Saint-Simon, not yet the founder either of a philosophy or a religion,

and considered only as a clever *original*' (A, 63). He also recorded that he benefited little; this is hardly surprising since he was only fourteen and spoke only English. But although he may have benefited little immediately, the friendship with that family and the acquaintance of the political group to which it belonged were of immense importance to both his thinking and his actions a decade later. And Mill would have benefited more than any other lad his age.

His radical training also stood him in good stead as he started off on his own to the Garonne to join the Samuel Bentham's. As a true Radical and a disputatious youngster he knew his rights, and asserted them against a female claimant to an inside seat that was his by seniority in the coach if not in the world.<sup>6</sup> He arrived without mishap and spent an exceedingly happy year in a household that was normal only by Benthamite standards. The success of this year was of immense importance in Mill's intellectual growth; he developed an enduring affection for France and an unwavering belief that she was in the van of European civilization and that all, including England, must follow the path she took. These thoughts were not matured in 1821, but the ground had been prepared and sown. The influence on his political thought was to be crucial. He later said: "the greatest, perhaps, of the many advantages which I owed to this episode in my education, was that of having breathed for a whole year the free and genial atmosphere of Continental life." In England it is taken for granted "that conduct is of course always directed towards low and petty objects" (James Mill's teaching can be heard here); amongst the French elevated sentiments are "the current coin of human intercourse" (A, 59-61). That Mill could feel these sentiments unchanged after the French events of 1851 and 1870 shows how powerful were his early impressions. One may also see here feelings which would contribute to the promptings of the "irrepressible self-consciousness" to answer "No!" and trigger his depression in 1826 (A, 139). Certainly one can see here the seeds of his later emphasis on the possibility of the improvement of mankind through the cultivation of their higher natures. The method of his thinking was to be altered in another direction also—one which was to be crucial to his youthful journalism. Mill concluded the account of his sojourn in France:

The chief fruit which I carried away from the society I saw, was a strong and permanent interest in Continental Liberalism, of which I ever afterwards kept myself *au courant*, as much as of English politics: a thing not at all usual in those days with Englishmen, and which had a very salutary influence on my development, keeping me free from the error always prevalent in England, and from which even my father with all his superiority to prejudice was not exempt, of judging universal questions by a merely English standard (A, 63).

The England to which the fifteen-year-old Mill returned in June 1821 was a little calmer than the one he had left. Queen Caroline's trial was over and the illuminations extinguished. The royal Dukes' hasty marriages had produced more than one promising successor to the throne. It was hoped that, God and the Duke of Clarence willing, a regency could be avoided; George IV was unlikely to last long enough—certainly everybody hoped that too. England had largely separated herself from the repressive ideas of the great Continental powers and was associating herself with the liberal aspirations asserting themselves in Europe. There were many insurrections, the precise aims of which were not always clear, but it was clear that Europe was far from calm.

Greece, Spain, the Spanish colonies, the Two Sicilies, Northern Italy, Portugal, all were providing alternating hope and despair for the Radicals. At home the mood was easier. The pitch of excitement reached by the summer of 1820 could not be maintained, partly because Burdett, Cochrane, and Cobbett had all in their several ways pulled back from the monster demonstrations in London. A brief period of prosperity in both town and country had lowered tempers and reduced the mob.

John Stuart Mill spent two busy years after his return from France, enjoying a wider acquaintance, including many much nearer his own age with whom to match wits. His father's plans for him at that time included as a distinct possibility a career at the bar. Consequently Mill read law to his great benefit with John Austin, a man whose incisive understanding of the subject was best communicated by tutoring, not lecturing. Mill gained more than legal knowledge from the Austin connection. He went to stay with Sarah Austin's family, the Taylors of Norwich. There he met John Austin's brother Charles, a brilliant Cambridge undergraduate, who, Mill says, "attached me among others to his car. Through him I became acquainted with Macaulay, Hyde and Charles Villiers, Strutt (now Lord Belper), Romilly (now Lord Romilly and Master of the Rolls), and various others. . . . It was through him that I first felt myself, not a pupil under teachers, but a man among men." (A, 79.) It is small wonder that Mill's writing shows an unusual blend of modesty, certainty, and arrogance when one looks at the contemporaries against whom he measured himself. And they all assumed it their right and their duty to point England the way.

Mill received another benefit from his father's arranging for him to read under Austin. As part of his preparation for law, Mill was given Bentham's principal speculations, as interpreted to the Continent, and indeed to all the world, by Pierre Etienne Louis Dumont, in the *Traité de législation* (1802).

The reading of this book was an epoch in my life; one of the turning points in my mental history. . . . The feeling rushed upon me, that all previous moralists were superseded, and that here indeed was the commencement of a new era in thought. . . . As I proceeded farther, there seemed to be added to this intellectual clearness, the most inspiring prospects of practical improvement in human affairs. . . . Bentham's subject was Legislation . . . and at every page he seemed to open a clearer and broader conception of what human opinions and institutions ought to be, how they might be made what they ought to be, and how far removed from it they now are. When I laid down the last volume of the *Traité* I had become a different being. . . . I now had opinions; a creed, a doctrine, a philosophy; in one among the best senses of the word, a religion; the inculcation and diffusion of which could be made the principal outward purpose of a life. And I had a grand conception laid before me of changes to be effected in the condition of mankind through that doctrine. The *Traité de Législation* wound up with what was to me a most impressive picture of human life as it would be made by such opinions and such laws as were recommended in the treatise. . . . And the vista of improvement which he did open was sufficiently large



and brilliant to light up my life, as well as to give a definite shape to my aspirations.  
(*A*, 67-71.)

The euphoria of the moment of grace shines through the calculated wording of thirty years later. Not the least of the emotions was relief at now at last understanding what his father had been teaching him. But the paramount effect was the vision; for the young lad of fifteen the feelings he had experienced in his Girondist dreams were now his in reality. For the rest of his life Mill was to be a visionary, at times a very depressed visionary when the future became blurred or the present seemingly regressing, but always beneath the calm, measured analytical philosopher or economist or political scientist, the saint of rationalism would be following the yellow brick road.

The immediate effects of the vision were to inspire Mill to write his first “argumentative essay” (*A*, 73) and to form debating clubs and discussion societies in order to prove and spread the gospel. He was also ready to take his message to the wider public; he was finally confident of what he had been taught and, truly comprehending it for the first time, was not only able “to converse, on general subjects, with the instructed men with whom [he] came in contact” (*A*, 75) but also desirous of instructing the uninstructed. In December of 1822 appeared the first of his newspaper writings.<sup>7</sup>

Journalism was never intended by James Mill to be his son’s career. Some time during the winter of 1822-23, he decided that the India House was a more utilitarian career for his son than the bar. Certainly in retrospect John Mill expressed few regrets about the bar and an acute awareness of the drawbacks of journalism, especially when contrasted with the advantages of following in his father’s footsteps.

I do not know any one of the occupations by which a subsistence can now be gained, more suitable than such as this to any one who, not being in independent circumstances, desires to devote a part of the twenty-four hours to private intellectual pursuits. Writing for the press, cannot be recommended as a permanent resource to any one qualified to accomplish anything in the higher departments of literature or thought. . . . Those who have to support themselves by their pen must depend on literary drudgery . . . and can employ in the pursuits of their own choice . . . less than the leisure allowed by office occupations, while the effect on the mind is far more enervating and fatiguing. (*A*, 85.)

So John Mill started work, the day after his seventeenth birthday, 21 May, 1823, in the Examiner’s Office of the East India Company, and the newspaper was to become for him throughout his life a means of putting his solutions for immediate problems before the public and of educating that public on the broader philosophical and political issues that lay behind the great events of the day.<sup>8</sup>

Journalism also educated Mill; it played an important part in his development by keeping his feet firmly on the ground. He himself was not unaware of the importance of active involvement to prove philosophical speculation. “But the man to lead his age is he who has been familiar with thought directed to the accomplishment of immediate objects, and who has been accustomed to

see his theories brought early and promptly to the test of experiment . . . and to make an estimate of means and of obstacles habitually a part of all his theories that have for their object practice, either at the present or at a more distant period.”<sup>9</sup> In his newspaper writings, Mill can be watched applying the principles he had acquired to the practical problems of everyday administration and politics: “My practice (learnt from Hobbes and my father) [was] to study abstract principles by means of the best concrete instances I could find . . .” (A, 167). The political scientist needed, like every other scientist, to see if the laws or the hypotheses were verified by the facts.<sup>10</sup> Especially in his earlier years the world was Mill’s laboratory and the newspapers his daily notebook. There are interesting times in his journalism, in the early 1820s, the early 1830s, the late 1840s, and the early 1850s, when Mill is quite evidently applying a strongly held belief, quite recently worked out, to contemporary events: in the ’20s, Bentham’s laws; in the ’30s, the laws of historical development and social progress; in the ’40s, the consequences of systems of land tenure; and in the ’50s, the social consequences of sexual inequality. It is his observation of the actual instances around him (and here his work in the India Office greatly added to his journalist’s experience) that lies behind his conviction, so often expressed, that all reforms must be chosen for their present practicality, as well as their furthering of the eventual goal. It was not only his early mental training that led him, in spite of his great sympathy, to reject Saint-Simonism in his time.

The radical world of journalism that he now entered was a small world, peopled by figures long familiar to the sixteen-year-old Mill.<sup>11</sup> Radical politics were led by a select, dedicated few, all of whom turned their hands to whatever task needed doing. The persecution of the press had strengthened the bonds of brotherhood, and freedom of the press became a *sine qua non*, if not the *sine qua non*, of the intellectual radical movement. Between 1808 and 1821, there had been 101 prosecutions for seditious libel, many of them unsuccessful thanks to Charles James Fox’s amendment of the law in 1792, which gave juries the power to decide if the words in question were libellous. That amendment itself may have spared England revolution. As it was, the trials provided soapboxes, and if sometimes imprisonment followed, Lord Ellenborough found himself thwarted as often as not. But the continuing struggle against repression, the shared prison experiences, the rallying point provided by people like the Carliles, all created an exciting world, not less so for its danger, which the young boy was now to share. His father and his father’s allies welcomed the new torch bearer, but journalism was more a rite of passage than a new land.

Small though the world of journalism was, it had a power quite out of proportion to its size. A great deal of influence was wielded by those whose reasoned argument or memorable invective was read over breakfast or coffee. Westminster with its eleven thousand voters could be swayed by a Black or a Barnes, and most constituencies had less than a tenth that number. But even more important, if also more intangible, was the amount of pressure that could be exerted on the Government by the political temperature in London. Certainly a succession of ministries thought it worth the risk of increasing their unpopularity by attempting to silence, or keep within bounds, a Leigh Hunt or a Cobbett. It was said that “an epigram in the *Examiner* went off like a great gun, echoing all over the country.”<sup>12</sup> In 1835, when the *Chronicle*, which had fallen behind *The Times*, suddenly acquired many readers lost by its rival through a change in policy, Black exclaimed,

“Now our readers will follow me anywhere I like to lead them!”<sup>13</sup> A government that ruled in the final analysis by the tolerance of the people could be forced to alter its course by the strong expression of feeling out of doors. Lord Brougham’s triumph in the withdrawal of the Bill relating to Queen Caroline was a triumph of the press and the people, certainly not of justice.

John Mill was fully aware of the power of the press. When he pours scorn on the state of the press in England (No. 57) it is just because he was aware of how much good journalists could do and how much evil in his eyes many of them—*The Times* was often in his mind—were doing. Mill’s diatribes against the press must be seen in the context of his frustration with England and Englishmen for their “low moral tone” and “absence of high feelings” (A, 61). Certainly only a handful of men in England, including himself, employed daily or weekly journalism with the honesty, respect, knowledge, and integrity that would make it an instrument for the advancement of mankind. To Mill’s mind one of that handful was John Black, his father’s old friend and, to a certain extent, disciple; when considering Mill’s own journalism his estimate of Black should be set beside his condemnations of the press.

I have always considered Black as the first journalist who carried criticism & the spirit of reform into the details of English institutions. . . . [He] introduced Bentham’s opinions on legal & judicial reform into newspaper discussion. And by doing this he broke the spell. Very early in his editorship he fought a great battle for the freedom of reporting the preliminary investigations in the Police Courts in which Fonblanque . . . occasionally helped him, but he had little other help. . . . Another subject on which his writings were of the greatest service was the freedom of the press in matters of religion. His first years as editor of the *Chronicle* coincided with the prosecutions of Carlile & his shopmen & Black kept up the fight against those prosecutions with great spirit & power. All these subjects were Black’s own. Parl. Reform, Catholic emancipation, free trade, &c, were the liberal topics of the day & on all of these he wrote frequently, as you will see by any file of the *Chronicle*.<sup>14</sup>

The Mills’ only worry was that Black might not maintain his influence over the regular purchasers of his paper:<sup>15</sup> “in their weekly talks with their editor, both the Mills insisted as a concession necessary to the temper of the time” on a lightness of touch. It was feared “that Black and his contributors were habitually writing above the heads of the public.”<sup>16</sup>

The readers, it must be kept in mind, were in the dining room or the coffee house at the beginning or end of a busy day. They had the normal physical disadvantages to contend with: dull weather, smoke, poor window glass, flickering candlelight, more-or-less helpful spectacles, and small bad print on fawn paper. To modern eyes it appears (somewhat dimly) strange that so little effort was made to ease the task of the reader. In the first half of the century the leading dailies usually had only four pages of small print in six columns, the first and fourth pages being devoted to advertisements. (Advertisements were integral to a newspaper then as now, bringing in the crucial portion of their revenue; indeed most, like the *Morning Chronicle*, were originally established as advertising media for a trade.) The second page would contain extracts from foreign papers in two columns, with the other four columns containing theatre and current happenings, chiefly

domestic politics. A leading article, if there was one, would usually be on page two. Foreign news, society news, sporting news, and the ever-popular detailed description of the seamy side of life from the law courts filled page three. The *Examiner* was a weekly, with more pages but smaller format than the dailies, and appeared every Sunday; it had sixteen pages with only two columns but of equally miserable type-face.

The reader the Mills had in mind, though interested in politics, had other activities to occupy the greater part of his day. He would have intellectual pretensions but not necessarily a profession; most probably he would be to a large extent self-educated after the age of fourteen. He would like to consider himself an independent thinker, keeping abreast of what went on at home and abroad, especially the former and especially politically, standing on his own intellectual feet, and voicing opinions which he could support on intelligible principles. He would consider himself anti-Tory and, although certainly not of the labouring classes himself, was frequently sympathetic to their plight. But he was not a deep thinker and he was a busy man; his attention must be caught and held and his opinion influenced by blunt arguments. For the most part, John Mill keeps the temporary nature of his reader's attention in mind; the largest exception would be the series of articles on the "Spirit of the Age," their length being unusual even for the *Examiner*—but on Sunday perhaps the reader could be expected to sit somewhat longer over his coffee. (I say "his" coffee, because it is my impression—and I have no hard facts—that newspapers then for the most part addressed themselves consciously or unconsciously to a male audience.)<sup>17</sup>

There are advantages to the student of Mill's thought in the demands that this audience made on him. In a newspaper, the ideas cannot be hedged around with qualifications and elaborations. What a journalist feels, he must say in a limited number of words, in a straightforward manner immediately intelligible to a man of intelligence but lacking learning and sophistication. For the most part, Mill was very successful (although he thought he lacked the light touch [4, 181]) in adapting his writing to this level. In addition, journalism most frequently demands hasty execution and topicality. The hasty execution was not a problem for Mill; from the beginning of his career, he wrote enviably well under pressure. The topicality can occasionally be a barrier for the reader many generations later, because the ambience of an incident is very difficult, if not impossible, to recapture; one cannot live in the past. But this difficulty is more than compensated for by the opportunity to watch Mill's ideas, unequivocally expressed, shape and reshape themselves as they are proved against the facts and the events.

#### DECEMBER 1822 TO DECEMBER 1824

John Stuart Mill began to write for the press in December of 1822. It was not a propitious time, or not seemingly so. The European powers generally were looking for a return to the *status quo ante*; the experience of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars with their economic and political turbulence was much too recent to admit of broad proposals for change. But the time had rays of hope. Although France had invaded Spain to re-establish the autocratic rule of

Ferdinand VII, the Spanish constitutionalists were showing considerable strength. The Greeks had risen against Turkey and liberal fervour was wholly on their side. At home, Lord Liverpool was still stolidly sitting in the saddle, but the worst of the post-war economic disruption was over. Prosperity was returning and tension was lessening. The Cabinet now contained considerable liberal talent: Castlereagh's suicide and Liverpool's resistance to the King had brought Canning back to the Foreign Office; Peel, who had endorsed in 1819 a return to cash payments, had replaced Sidmouth at the Home Office; Huskisson was supporting freer trade at the Board of Trade; and Lord John Russell had been successful in disenfranchising the quite rotten borough of Grampound, thus setting the precedent of eliminating a parliamentary borough. But at the end of 1822 these were little more than straws in the wind; Peterloo and the Six Acts, Cato Street, and Queen Caroline were only yesterday and still fresh in the mind. The unpopularity of George IV, which was if possible increasing with his girth, assured popular dislike of his Ministry. Peel might contemplate reforms in the Home Office but they would have to be accompanied by a watchful eye and a firm hand, especially on the radical press. The stamp duty had been extended after Peterloo and there were continual prosecutions as the war of the unstamped press raged. For most Radicals a cheap press and a free one continued to be the rallying ground in the defence of Englishmen's liberties, for it was still a radicalism largely in the eighteenth-century tradition of John Wilkes. Radicals stood against encroachment by the King and his Ministers upon the constitutional rights of free men; and generally speaking the reforms they proposed were within the system rather than of the system.

Mill was sixteen and a half, a brilliant, gauche, likely lad, the product of one of the best-known educations of any nineteenth-century figure. He was ready to write, having found a message, and his father was nothing loath, perhaps wanting his son to have experience before Bentham's projected radical periodical was started.<sup>18</sup> During the next fifteen months, until the plans for the *Westminster Review* were realized, the young boy wrote thirty-two newspaper pieces, some quite short, but some more than a full column in length. His taking up his post in the East India Office caused only a slight and momentary lessening of his output; the pattern of life that was to prevail until his retirement in 1858 was set in the first months. The pattern of thought was not.

These early attempts are what might be expected, even from a prodigy, of a youth in his seventeenth and eighteenth years. They are clever but not profound or original, giving ample proof of his own assessment:

The first intellectual operation in which I arrived at any proficiency, was dissecting a bad argument, and finding in what part the fallacy lay. . . . It is also a study peculiarly adapted to an early stage in the education of philosophical students, since it does not presuppose the slow process of acquiring, by experience and reflection, valuable thoughts of their own. (A, 23.)

Mill's youthful journalism shows as much the thought of the Queen Square Place circle as of the youngest member of it. In these years the young Mill accepted his mentors' view of a mechanistic world whose parts could not be redesigned, but could be realigned by the adjusting of a legal problem here and the promoting of a political economy reform there. The first principle on

which their reforms were based was that men, because they put their own interests before the public's, abuse a public trust if left unchecked. Mill's articles all assume a dog-eat-dog world wherein every top dog must be prevented from dining off those lower in the hierarchy. The nature of the beast could not be much improved, but the beast's behaviour could be bettered through the judicious provision of punishments and rewards. A second principle was that there are laws of political economy, the correct understanding of which would vastly improve the lot of the greatest number. It was appropriate that Mill, whose name has become inseparable from his *Principles of Political Economy*, should have written publicly first in that field.

The first writings of mine which got into print were two letters published towards the end of 1822, in the *Traveller* evening newspaper. The *Traveller* (which afterwards grew into the *Globe and Traveller* by the purchase and incorporation of the *Globe*) was then the property of the well known political economist Colonel Torrens. Under the editorship of an able man, Mr. Walter Coulson (who after being an amanuensis of Mr. Bentham, became a reporter, then an editor . . .), it had become one of the most important newspaper organs of liberal politics. Col. Torrens wrote much of the political economy of his paper; and had at this time made an attack upon some opinion of Ricardo and my father, to which at my father's instigation I attempted an answer, and Coulson out of consideration for my father and good will to me, inserted it. There was a reply by Torrens, to which I again rejoined. (*A*, 89.)

Thus his career started off on ground he knew well; he had been educated on and by Ricardo, and was well aware of the controversy over the theory of value which had frequently exercised them all. It is twentieth-century opinion expressed by Lord Robbins that in these first two essays in public controversy, the newcomer received a "thorough trouncing from Torrens, evoked by . . . [the] effort to sustain his father's preposterous view that differences in the period of investment might all be reduced to labour."<sup>19</sup>

The controversy over the causes of price fluctuations—related to that over value—was equally undecided. This controversy had been stimulated rather than settled by the passing of the Corn Law of 1815 and Peel's Currency Act of 1819. Mill's favourable reviews of Thomas Tooke's *Thoughts on High and Low Prices* (Nos. 8 and 12) consist largely of expository, approving synopses of Tooke's influential book. (He was to use Tooke's arguments again in the following year in his *Westminster Review* article, "War Expenditure.")<sup>20</sup> Young Mill next took on the Rev. Thomas Malthus in a review (No. 18) of *The Measure of Value*, which demonstrated the adolescent neophyte's proficiency at dissecting bad logic. Having dismissed one of the established economist's arguments "as a specimen of the obscure and disjointed mode of reasoning which Mr. Malthus has adopted," and referring to "two or three other paragraphs of too little importance to require a refutation," the youngster concludes with a triumphant reassertion of the orthodox position on the currency question.<sup>21</sup>

Another economic piece, written in June 1823, "The Debate on East and West Indian Sugars" (No. 10), has additional interest as an example of the way Mill's daily articles not infrequently originated. James Mill was Zachary Macaulay's ally in the anti-slavery movement (Ma-

caulay had supported James Mill for the position in the Examiner's Office of the East India Company); in December of 1821 he had been applied to as the natural authority by Macaulay, who was seeking help in the preparation for a debate, scheduled for May 1822, on the West Indian Monopoly.<sup>22</sup> Macaulay then contributed to the pamphlet war,<sup>23</sup> showing a detailed knowledge of India, its manufactures, and its trade. At this distance we cannot know whether John worked to gather information for his father and Macaulay, but certainly James Mill and his radical allies with their constant discussion and planning provided the motivation and put the needed knowledge at John Mill's fingertips for an article on the parliamentary debate in 1823.

Another example is Mill's article on Spanish affairs (No. 13). His easy familiarity with the recent very complicated events came quite naturally. Radical eyes had been watching the revolutionary events in Spain since 1820. Jeremy Bentham had written a pamphlet to impress upon the Cortes the importance of a free press.<sup>24</sup> In April 1823 the French invasion of Spain had outraged radical opinion; Major Cartwright "entreats" (in Alexander Bain's words) James Mill's "intervention," and a meeting was held on 13 June at the London Tavern "for aiding the Spaniards to maintain their independence against France."<sup>25</sup> Consequently, when on 4 August the news came of the capitulation of the constitutionalist general, Ballasteros, heralding the restoration of Ferdinand, the young boy could write a remarkably sure and percipient article without delay.

The young Mill's main interest in 1823, however, was not political economy or foreign affairs but the issues that Bentham's *Traité*s had inspired him to fight for. In Mill's account of the thought of the radical writers—he included himself—associated with the *Westminster Review* founded in 1824 he says, "Their mode of thinking was not characterized by Benthamism in any sense which has relation to Bentham as a chief or guide . . ." (A, 107), but his own journalism of 1823 would lead to a qualification of this estimate. Recollecting thirty years later his "considerably more ambitious" articles in the *Morning Chronicle* on freedom of the press, prompted by the prosecution of the Carliles, Mill dismisses his other contributions: "during the whole of this year, 1823, a considerable number of my contributions were printed in the *Chronicle* and *Traveller*: sometimes notices of books, but oftener letters, commenting on some nonsense talked in Parliament, or some defect of the law, or misdoings of the magistracy or the courts of justice" (A, 91); however, it is these writings, especially those on "some defect or misdoings" that show the strength of Bentham's influence, be it from his writings or his lips.

A far greater number than Mill implies of his early articles appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* exposing the "defects of the law, and of the administration of justice." "I do not go beyond the mark in saying," Mill comments, "that after Bentham, who supplied the principal materials, the greatest share of the merit of breaking down this wretched superstition belongs to Black, as editor of the *Morning Chronicle*" (A, 91).<sup>26</sup> In 1823 seventeen of his twenty-five contributions, at a conservative estimate, are applications of principles enunciated by Bentham, and by James Mill in his articles in Napier's *Supplement to the Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

In his castigation of religious persecution in January of 1823 (No. 3), Mill applied the fundamental lesson learnt from the *Traité*s: "What thus impressed me was the chapter in which Bentham passed judgment on the common modes of reasoning in morals and legislation, deduced

from phrases like ‘law of nature,’ ‘right reason,’ ‘the moral sense,’ ‘natural rectitude,’ and the like, and characterized them as dogmatism in disguise . . .” (A, 67). The exposure of such fallacious language had become the trademark of a true practising Benthamite.<sup>27</sup> Such a maxim as “Christianity is part and parcel of the law of England,” declares Mill to the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, is “utterly unmeaning and absurd,” and no grounds for religious persecution.<sup>28</sup>

As he pursued the argument in the “Letters on Free Discussion” (Nos. 5, 6, and 7) the young disciple laid about him with his master’s sword. Bentham’s arguments on efficacious causes and truthfulness in witnesses,<sup>29</sup> Quaker honesty,<sup>30</sup> atheists’ reliability,<sup>31</sup> and foresworn jurymen when the punishment is too large for the crime,<sup>32</sup> all appear quite recognizably in these letters to the editor. The argument that Christianity is not needed for the basis of a good judicature, since non-Christians keep their word and many Christians ignore their oaths, bolstered by examples of custom-house oaths and university students’ oaths, can be found repeatedly in Bentham.<sup>33</sup> Perhaps even in his reusing of examples, Bentham’s influence can be seen. When the evidence of a Quaker is refused in July 1823, custom-house oaths and university regulations are called into service again (No. 11). Mill in August applies Bentham’s expostulations on the perniciousness of oath-taking as weakening the sin of lying in “The Mischievousness of an Oath” (No. 14). And the following week in yet another letter on oath-taking (No. 16), custom houses and universities bear witness one more time.<sup>34</sup>

The move from oaths to judges (No. 15) gives the young Benthamite many texts to choose from, all vituperative and all based on the axiom so movingly put by George Grote in his letter to Fanny Lewin on her discovery of the true faith, “I truly rejoice that you have satisfied yourself as to the fact of *amour de soi* being the universal mover, variously modified, of the human race. There is no possibility of correctly appreciating men or motives until this has become a faultless truth.”<sup>35</sup> Mill argues, “A Judge must always have much to gain by injustice: and if due securities are not provided, he will do injustice” (No. 15). Bentham said the same thing at greater length in the *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, especially in Vol. IV, Book viii, culminating in Chapter xxix, “Apology for the Above Exposure,” which for sheer spluttering indignant abuse cannot be outdone. Mill’s solution is Bentham’s—publicity.<sup>36</sup> Mill goes so far as to propose “giving to the people, either immediately or through their representatives, the power of removing judges of all descriptions from their offices” (No. 20)—a position he later qualifies.

When Mill objects to the use of the treadmill (No. 26) and reviews a book by Hippisley deploring its use (No. 22), it is Bentham’s views of punishment, found also in James Mill’s “Prison and Prison Discipline,” that he puts forward. The son includes a puff for his father’s work, and well he might, since his piece is little more than a rewording of his father’s argument that “People of industry, people who love labour, seldom become the criminal inmates of a prison,”<sup>37</sup> and, therefore, to use labour of any kind, even the treadmill, as an instrument of punishment is exceptionable. But he might equally well have acknowledged his erstwhile guardian in whose *Rationale of Punishment* the distinction between reformation and punishment was argued: reformation would be achieved by bringing the slothful to an appreciation of labour.<sup>38</sup>



In September of 1823 (No. 19) Mill took as his text Bentham's expostulation that it is hardly conceivable that a people could be found so stupid as to be persuaded that to serve justice "Nothing more was in any case necessary, than to pronounce one or other of three or four words, such as *null, void, bad, quash, irregularity*";<sup>39</sup> the legal student holds up two cases, one dismissed for the misspelling of a magistrate's name and the other for using "after-forenoon" for "afternoon."

In January of 1824 two more articles (Nos. 29 and 30) echo Bentham. In his review of Francis Place's pamphlet on special juries, which was itself largely based on Bentham,<sup>40</sup> Mill paraphrases Bentham's defence of his personal criticism of judges, that he meant no slur on any individual. Bentham wrote: "The fault lies not in the individual, not in any particular taint of improbity seated in the bosom of the individual, but in the system itself";<sup>41</sup> Mill writes: "We cannot sufficiently reprobate the principle itself, of endeavouring to deter men from exposing a bad system, lest their strictures should be construed into imputations upon the character of individuals" (No. 29). Mill pointed out "the absurdity of a system of law which forces the Grand Jury to say one thing when they mean another; and not only to say it, but to swear it. This is innocent perjury, but it is perjury, and though the Jurors do not deserve blame, the law evidently does," and signed himself, "An Enemy to Legal Fictions" (No. 30): in doing so, he must have had Bentham's voice in his ear, the voice that had filled vitriolic pages on "Legal Mendacity" in the *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*.<sup>42</sup>

The echoes of James Mill's voice in these articles, though not as resonant as those of Bentham's, are better known, so a few examples will make the point. There is no embarrassment, indeed there is pride, at being the son of his father when Mill writes that this "subject is developed in the most satisfactory manner in Mr. Mill's invaluable Essay on the Liberty of the Press, forming an article in Napier's Supplement to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*" (No. 5). No thought then of renouncing "sectarian follies" (A, 117). The father's essays and the son's articles show a remarkable similarity in word and idea. James Mill: "As the surface of history affords, therefore, no certain principle of decision, we must go beyond the surface, and penetrate to the springs within."<sup>43</sup> John Mill: "Against theories founded upon universal experience, the enemies of improvement hold out—what? Theories founded upon history; that is, upon partial and incomplete experience." (No. 13.) James Mill: "Government is founded upon this, as a law of human nature, that a man, if able, will take from others any thing which they have and he desires. . . ." <sup>44</sup> John Mill: "unless securities are provided, men will neglect the public interest, whenever it interferes with their own" (No. 13). These were the commonplaces of the Philosophic Radicals at the time, be they seventeen-year-old boys or nineteen-year-old girls or fifty-year-old mentors.

Mill's article on parliamentary reform (No. 21) relies heavily on his father's essay on "Government" but with an interesting twist, one of the early examples of the rhetoric that John Mill was frequently to use against wrong thinkers. James Mill dismissed the argument that a king or aristocracy is ever satiated as "an opinion founded upon a partial and incomplete view of the laws of human nature."<sup>45</sup> The son, more subtle than the father, did not use his father's hatred of the aristocracy. He preferred to defeat his opponents by allowing their original premise: that a people would infallibly make so bad a choice "as to render the attainment of good government in

this mode utterly hopeless” (No. 21), and to prove that the logical alternative is not an aristocratic government but an absolute monarchy. Mill’s consciousness of his potential opponents, undoubtedly heightened by his debating experience, typifies his lifelong rhetorical style. But the clever scoring of points, though undoubtedly a rewarding game, with a serious purpose for the recently unleashed reformer, was still a game, still “dissecting a bad argument, and finding in what part the fallacy lay,” rather than examining the principles of good government and “acquiring, by experience and reflection, valuable thoughts” of one’s own. In a short while, this game was to prove unsatisfactory, and the young man would be seeking the principles upon which to base the refutation of his opponents’ argument.

There may even be an early warning sign of this dissatisfaction in “Old and New Institutions” (No. 24). Mill attacks an innocent Colonel Hughes who, although advocating reform, does so on the grounds of restoring the old, not introducing the new. Mill’s views are quite orthodox, but there is rather an abundance of fervour in his Benthamite deluging of “the wisdom of our ancestors” with scorn. “Happily we are much wiser than our ancestors; it were a shame if we were not, seeing that we have all their experience, and much more in addition to it” (No. 24). The words of a cocky young whippersnapper. Does half a century between birth dates make one an ancestor and another an heir? Bentham and his father were essentially improving the springs of the stagecoach rather than designing the steam engine.

Another element in the philosophical radical synthesis, Hartleian metaphysics, lies behind the curious piece that Mill wrote for the newly founded *Lancet*; the uncompromising nature of his assertion is quite startling:

as it is generally admitted that circumstances often overcome the effect of natural predisposition, while no proof has ever been given that natural disposition can overcome external circumstances: we are at liberty to conclude, that in ascribing to any person a natural and original disposition to vice, men are following the very common practice of representing as *natural* that which is only *habitual*, merely because they do not recollect its beginning, and will not take the trouble to inquire into its cause (No. 26).

Although both Bentham and James Mill were Hartleians, John Mill’s analysis in this article on the making of a murderer is more than a derivative attempt to argue a problem. This question of human nature bothered him all his life (in the *Subjection of Women* he skirted around it),<sup>46</sup> though he was to find a position he could live with: “I saw that though our character is formed by circumstances, our own desires can do much to shape those circumstances . . .” (A, 177). Interwoven with his argument was the depressing prospect of reforming a world for people who are of clay, not only their feet but their souls, clay that must be shaped in Benthamite moulds for every generation. No wonder the promptings of the small voice that wanted to believe in the improvement of mankind, not just circumstances, were gathering force.

The teen-age Mill’s regular writing for the newspapers ended with the unfurling of the Malthusian banner in combat against the *Black Dwarf* (Nos. 27, 28, 31, and 32). It is still clever debating: Wooler has only to be forced to concede one point—“such matters will always regulate them-

selves”—and Mill exults in triumph: “This, Sir, is all that I want” (No. 31). But the central issue of the article is powerfully felt and continues to be felt throughout his life; diminution of family size would bring about other and permanent improvement. Many of the principles learnt from Bentham and James Mill are mustered for this debate, and it is fitting that their influence on him should be so clearly illustrated as the first phase of Mill’s journalism draws to a close. What makes a government bad is the amount of discomfort it produces. “Until they [the people] are well fed, they cannot be well instructed: and until they are well instructed, they cannot emancipate themselves from the double yoke of priestcraft and of reverence for superiors” (No. 27). Overpopulation, he argues, is in the interest of landowner and manufacturer who will, therefore, oppose any remedy. To the argument that the plan was against the law of nature, Mill rejoined, “To check population is not more unnatural than to make use of an umbrella” (No. 27), an analogy perhaps prompted by Joseph Hanway’s being the introducer into London of both brollies and foundling hospitals. And there is a happy echo of Bentham’s style in the concluding sentence of his next article, where he protests the application of the word “heartless” to the promoters of limitation, “unless, indeed, the word heartless, be one of the engines of a sentimental cant, invented to discourage all steady pursuit of the general happiness of mankind” (No. 28).

His technique of argument has developed over the last twelve months; he has become cleverer in ticking off one by one the possible objections of probable opponents; he turns their arguments upon them. Neat turns of invective come from his pen (“you have made a much more free use, in this paper, of that easy figure of speech called assertion, than of that more intractable one called proof” [No. 31]—a use at this age he was well qualified to recognize); but some techniques seem to have been instilled with his training. For example, he sets the onus of an argument upon his opponents (“it is incumbent upon those who declare against toleration to point out some reason which prevents the general rule from being applicable to this particular case” [No. 5])—he uses nearly the same words forty years later when writing *The Subjection of Women*.<sup>47</sup> But the great value of these early writings is their unique witness to the mind created by James Mill’s education. It is almost uncomfortably apposite that this period of his apprenticeship should conclude with two letters to the editor, one (No. 33) defending his father’s views, and one which reads:

The accompanying paragraphs are destined for insertion in your *Dwarf*. They are extracted from the article “Colonies,” in the supplement to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; a discourse composed by an eminent friend of the people. They contain, I think, a most conclusive answer to your last article on population; and if you insert them, you will be very well able to dispense with the reply which you would otherwise have received from Sir, your most obedient Servant. (No. 32.)

## SEPTEMBER 1825 TO OCTOBER 1828

Parliamentary events were the centre of interest in England in the latter half of the decade. The rioting common after the Napoleonic Wars was less so now, though not unknown. There were strikes in 1824 and after the repeal of the Combination Acts that year, engineered by Place

and executed by Hume, there were even more strikes in 1825. The middle classes, too, had their griefs. That year saw wild speculation in “bubble” companies, and county banks joined the Bank of England in over-issuing paper money to fuel the dreams. In December the end came; Pole and Company failed and between sixty and seventy banks were sucked under with it. The Bank Act of 1826 authorizing joint-stock banks and providing controls for currency issue was Peel’s response. There followed coincidentally a period of prosperity, quickly terminated by a poor harvest. Corn Law agitation revived amongst the manufacturing classes, and the labouring classes again vented their despair by attacks on mills, especially those with power looms. To the economic uncertainty and discontent at all levels was suddenly added political uncertainty and discontent. On 18 February, 1827, Lord Liverpool had a stroke; the hand that had for fifteen years provided a semblance of stability was gone. The Whigs raised their hopes. After six weeks, Canning formed a Government including some Whigs and thus embittered both Tories and the Whigs who were not included. In August he died. For five months the ship of state was guided by Viscount Goderich, “as firm as a bullrush.” He was succeeded in January of 1828 by the Duke of Wellington, with the support, until May, of William Huskisson and other Canningites, to whom Canning’s widow referred publicly as her husband’s murderers. It was in this spirit of public animosity that Parliament and the country debated the Corn Law, Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, Catholic Emancipation, and electoral reform.

During all the uproar, Mill contributed only a few pieces to the daily press. His newspaper career was in virtual abeyance between 1824 and 1828; during those five years he wrote mostly for the *Westminster Review*, thirteen articles in all, with another four in the *Parliamentary Review*. He also edited the *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, a formidable task despite his demonstrated familiarity with Bentham’s ideas, and contributed to McCulloch’s edition of the *Wealth of Nations* an appendix on Adam Smith’s views on rent, territory also familiar to him. There is little new in the topics of Mill’s articles in the *Westminster* on free trade and the laws of libel,<sup>48</sup> but, significantly, there were three on France, its great revolution, and its historians.<sup>49</sup> And Mill felt that those written in the *Parliamentary History and Review*<sup>50</sup> were also markedly different: “These writings were no longer mere reproductions and applications of the doctrines I had been taught; they were original thinking, as far as that name can be applied to old ideas in new forms and connexions” (A, 121-3). Although this impressive output, especially in the light of his other activities, would easily explain the paucity of his newspaper contributions, inclination undoubtedly played a role. He was depressed during 1826; duty occasionally led him to contribute though he was not inspirited—except in his political satire on Wellington’s Ministry—but by 1828 the gloom was lifting.

After his hasty closing of the debate with Thomas Wooler over population, he wrote nothing more until the end of 1824, when he wrote one piece (No. 33) correcting Black’s misinterpretation in the *Morning Chronicle* of what James Mill had said in the *Westminster Review*. He wrote another piece in September 1825; two others in June and December 1827; and six in 1828. In themselves they are of only minor significance. His defence of McCulloch’s views (No. 34) was off the top of a well-stocked head; he had been writing in the *Westminster* on both economics and Ireland, and showed once again that warmed-up leftovers make a palatable enough snack. Ireland was also the topic of “The Brunswick Clubs” (No. 42). He contributed to the *New Times* (No.

35), probably because he could score off *The Times* and help Eugenius Roche, an editor known to his father from the earlier days of persecution of the press, who had just become its editor (again). Both the inhabitants of Queenborough (No. 36) and the shopkeepers on the approaches to London Bridge (No. 41) were small people being hurt by sinister interests, but there seems to be no special motivation for the articles. These are desultory pieces. More interesting are the satirical political squibs in 1828 prompted by the resignation of the Canningite faction from Wellington's cabinet (Nos. 37, 38, 39, and 40); perhaps he was cheering up, for they exhibit publicly the clever wit for which John Mill was enjoyed by his intimates but which, one must regret, appeared in his writings usually only as a very neat, sharp turn of phrase.

Gaiety had been certainly missing from the adolescent mind. There have been many analyses of the mental crisis since 1873; the light thrown on it by his early journalism (and vice versa) is all that need be seen here. John Stuart Mill, the teen-age romantic dreaming of the French Revolution (A, 65-7), himself playing the lead as the noblest of the Girondists, had spent his days writing letters and leaders. In them he applied the sectarian doctrines of the Utilitarians to a creaking eighteenth-century mechanical model in an attempt to make it run smoothly in the nineteenth. The world of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill was by definition made up of eternally self-seeking, pre-programmed abusers of power, all carefully set to watch over each other so that their selfish desires were controlled and directed towards the greatest happiness of the greatest number, who "will always prefer themselves to their neighbours . . . will indulge their indolence and satiate their rapacity whenever they can do it without fear of detection" (No. 15). Bentham said, "Amend the system, you amend the man." The idealistic teenager wanted more than to prevent a man from abusing his power; he wanted to reform the man and the system would take care of itself. It is no wonder that the small voice of his self-consciousness whispered "No" clearly, distinctly, and brooking no argument. It is no wonder that the brilliance of "the vista of improvement" that Bentham's *Traité*s opened, originally sufficient "to light up my life, as well as to give a definite shape to my aspirations" (A, 71), began to dim after several years of applying principles to actual cases and evaluating the effects.

From the end of 1828 until the middle of 1830 he wrote very little (both John and James Mill withdrew from the *Westminster Review*) and nothing in the papers, "and great were the advantages which I derived from the intermission. It was of no common importance to me, at this period, to be able to digest and mature my thoughts. . . ." (A, 137.) The ideas which he needed to digest had come from a bewildering number of sources, all tending to loosen the moorings of the basically stationary world his father had explained to him. In England, many other influences came upon him: the ideas of people as different as Robert Owen, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Thomas Carlyle, Thomas Macaulay, John Sterling, William Thompson. Most important were the young men with whom he associated. Change was in the atmosphere for the young—and for some not so young. For there was not one of Mill's thoughtful cotemporaries (as he would say) who did not acknowledge that some change must come. There was vast disagreement about the route to be taken and how far should be travelled, but there was no disagreement that travel one must. There is an enormous sense of the temporary in the first half of the century, especially after about 1820. Mill may have taken up from the French the phrase "age of transition" in his "Spirit of the Age," but

it labelled what many in England felt. Everybody was passing through. Be they currency reformers or Corn Law repealers, Cambridge apostles or utilitarians, ten-hours men or socialists, Chartists or trade unionists, muscular Christians or Popish ones, Poor Law bashaws or angels of charity, conservatives or radicals, they were all working for a better tomorrow. One person's tomorrow might look like another person's yesterday, but they would both agree that today could not be the pattern for the future.

The young men who had developed this sense of change into a philosophy were French youths who breathed "the free and genial atmosphere of Continental life" (A, 59) so much admired by Mill. He read Auguste Comte's early *Système de politique positive* (1824) and learnt the stages of historical development, the characteristics of an age of transition, and, most importantly, the significance in historical progress of the French Revolution (A, 173); he started his life-long friendship with Gustave d'Eichthal. The Saint-Simonians had a fundamental influence on him. Through their eyes, Mill had seen the promised land, and that vision, indeed obsession (but perhaps all visions are obsessions), he never lost.<sup>51</sup> The writings of the mature man were sustained by the passionate vision vouchsafed to the young man in his late teens. Not the less passionate by its expression being moderate,<sup>52</sup> this vision was dramatically given immediate reality by the French Revolution of 1830. Experience was to make the expected realization of the vision fade into the future, but the vision itself did not fade. The cards of history revealed movement. Mankind would improve; infinite improvement was possible.

## JULY 1830 TO JULY 1831

If life in London had been less violent for the last decade than in the 1810s, violence was about to threaten once again. In the summer of 1830 the elections in England on the death of George IV were fought on reform and under the excitement of the July Revolution in France. It was thought the Tories had lost, and in November, when Parliament resumed, the issues became absolutely clear. Earl Grey raised the question of reform; the Duke of Wellington replied that England was perfect. London was so roused that King William's safety was feared for were he to attend the Lord Mayor's dinner accompanied by the Duke. The Duke resigned. Earl Grey formed a government and everybody went home for Christmas and the foxhunting. When Parliament resumed, Lord John Russell introduced the Reform Bill on 1 March, 1831. On 23 March, it passed its second reading by one vote, with the support of the Irish members. In April the Tories defeated the Government. A general election returned a majority for Grey and reform, and in June a second version of the Reform Bill was introduced into the Commons. Throughout the spring and summer of 1831, tension in England mounted. Crowds gathered in the streets; guns were being bought; political unions were formed and their members attended military drills. All watched as the Reform Bill, carried along by the parliamentary process, moved slowly and inexorably towards the House of Lords.

The tension was heightened by events in France.<sup>53</sup> The Polignac Ministry, with Charles X's full encouragement, had attempted to tamper with the elections in July of 1830. When, neverthe-

less, it became clear that the tiny electorate had defied their King and returned a majority opposed to the present Government, including the 221 recalcitrant Deputies who had signed a protest to the King against Polignac, Charles X issued the fatal ordinances, annulling the elections, constricting the electorate even more, and gagging the press. Paris rose, and for three glorious days, 27, 28, and 29 July, manned the barricades. During an exhilarating, frenetic week, those who had opposed Charles gathered and argued under a Provisional Government. Charles X abdicated, and Lafayette, the republican idol of France, embraced the Duke of Orleans before an immense crowd saying, “Voilà ce que nous avons pu faire de plus républicain.”<sup>54</sup> The Duke, son of Philippe Egalité, became Louis Philippe I on 9 August; Lafayette’s embrace had established “un trône populaire entouré d’institutions tout à fait républicaines.”<sup>55</sup> From that day began the struggle between, as Mill saw it, the party of movement, led in the National Assembly by the old revolutionists and outside it by the young republicans especially the journalists, and the stationary party, led in the Assembly by Guizot and the Doctrinaires—broadly speaking the 221 Deputies who had been the phalanx of the opposition to Charles X—and outside it by Louis Philippe, his Ministry, and the thousands of government place-men throughout the bureaucracy of France. By the summer of 1831, Louis Philippe and the Ministry under Casimir Périer, through relentless persecution of the republican press and brutal repression of insurrections, had established the bourgeois monarchy modelled, to Mill’s infinite disgust, on the Whig example in England.

In the spring of 1830 Mill was well on the way to recovery of his equilibrium, although periods of depression would return. The frame of mind in which the French Revolution of July found him (*A*, 163ff.) still showed many of the effects of his depression, but three things elated him: his introduction to Harriet Taylor, whose effect on him, whatever one may think of her, cannot be overestimated; the prorogation of the French Parliament; and the death of George IV, which effectually prorogued the English Parliament. All three events portended for the young man a much brighter future. The *mouvement* of history that he had learnt from his French acquaintances to hold as a faith was clearly about to advance noticeably.

Mill was quite confident that the death of George IV would mean reform in England. He himself took little part directly in advancing the movement of history in England, not even with his pen. But indirectly he did. His articles on France, contributed to the *Examiner* regularly after August 1830, are written with an acute awareness of the happenings and the attitudes around him. Here Mill’s new ideas can be seen being put to the test. “The only actual revolution which has ever taken place in my modes of thinking, was already complete. My new tendencies had to be confirmed in some respects, moderated in others: but the only substantial changes of opinion that were yet to come, related to politics. . . .” (*A*, 199.)

Mill’s return to journalism (No. 43) was fired by his desire to ensure that the English public were correctly informed about the issues involved in the French elections; misunderstanding of France must not lead to a weakening of resolve at home. Ignorance could mean destruction and bloodshed in England.<sup>56</sup> It is noteworthy that Mill wrote his articles on France for Fonblanque’s *Examiner*.<sup>57</sup> The *Examiner* was a weekly and therefore occasionally allowed longer articles while demanding a summary of the week’s news rather than daily reports. Fonblanque’s ardour was

more suitable in spirit than Black's heavier touch for the new (born again?) Mill, and his father's shadow over his shoulder was less sensed.

When the French elections turned into confrontation which developed into revolution, "it roused [his] utmost enthusiasm, and gave [him], as it were, a new existence" (4, 179). Mill ecstatically travelled to Paris for two weeks, to the very heart of the intellectual excitement he so much admired. He wrote a hagiographic description of the popular uprising to his father in three letters, two of which were printed in the *Examiner*.<sup>58</sup> When Mill returned to London, he was on tenterhooks as France established herself after the Glorious Days. He at first took advantage of the greater space allowed to discuss the Prospects of France, in a series of articles which he wrote from September to November 1830 (Nos. 44, 45, 48, 50, 51, 57, and 61). His philosophy of history, with its belief in progress through alternating transitional and organic stages, was being tested; before his very eyes was passing in fast-forward a transitional stage. Here was a chance not only to explain progress in history but also to further it by providing the broader background needed for a true appreciation of the forces of movement and stagnation that underlay events both in France and in England. Any party that is on the side of movement is on the side of history and must be on the side of the people. It cannot be otherwise. Any party which opposes movement must be against the interests of France, of her people, and therefore of mankind. "The design of these papers was to prepare the English public . . . for the struggle which we knew was approaching between the new oligarchy and the people; to arm them against the misapprehensions . . .; to supply facts . . . without which we are aware that that they could not possibly understand the true character of the events which were coming" (No. 61).

At the beginning of the series, Mill's hopes were high. The French people had behaved in exemplary fashion, showing that they were the unselfish force of the future, willing at present to leave their interests in the hands of their natural leaders, the educated men. As early as 19 September, however, he was aware that there were those who "in every step which it [the Revolution] takes towards the achievement of its destiny . . . are more keenly alive to the dangers which beset it, than to the glory and the happiness towards which it is irresistibly advancing" (No. 44). Two things worried Mill right from the start: one was the apparent jobbing which immediately took place on a grand scale after the change of government. Place hunters poured into the Elysée Palace by the thousands. The power of self-interest was evident, and Mill realized that France was still ruled by an oligarchy, self-interest being the result of oligarchical rule. A second worry was much more serious. Even in an oligarchy, there can be a division between movement and stagnation. But many Frenchmen and nearly all Englishmen mistook the Doctrinaires under Guizot for the party of reform and gave them their support (No. 49); it could even be enough support for the Doctrinaires to dominate in the Chamber of Deputies and in the Government. But Guizot and his constitutionalists were backward looking. The "221" looked to the preservation of the Charter for which they had laudably fought against the encroachments of Charles X. Since the Glorious Days such an attitude was folly, was the result of a misunderstanding of the shift in the balance of power that had taken place when the people realized their strength, was a denial of the movement. Mill heaped abuse on the "fund of stupidity and vulgar prejudice in our principal



journalists” (No. 56); especially the *Quarterly Review* and *The Times* constantly misinformed their readers about the true nature of the parties in France (Nos. 44, 49, 54, and 56 in particular).

In the early days, Mill could not believe in spite of his worries that he had misread the effects of revolution and the timing of history. The French would, he believed, “effect their parliamentary reform in two years, perhaps sooner,—not with muskets, but with newspapers and petitions: after which there will be ‘tranquility,’ if that name can be given to the intense activity of a people which, freed from its shackles, will speedily outstrip all the rest of the world in the career of civilization” (No. 44). His belief in the importance of newspapers was strengthened by his increasing hesitation about the anachronistic Chamber of Deputies; it was in the newspapers edited by young men that one heard the voice of the movement. A new Chamber chosen by an enlarged electorate was an essential first step, to be followed by elected municipal governments and a reformed peerage; these modest planks constituted the republican platform (No. 51).

When Laffitte, whom Mill saw as a liberal and (in spite of his age) more forward-looking than the constitutionalists, left the presidency of the Chamber to join the cabinet at the end of October, Mill was delighted at this sign that Louis Philippe was turning away from the stationary party (No. 55). It may be only a coincidence that Mill started at this time to contribute regular detailed reports on French politics and brought to a close his discursive series on the “Prospects of France.” He argued for the domination of the Chamber by the Ministry—not a position English readers would expect a Radical to adopt; he thought Laffitte’s Ministry (in which he included Louis Philippe) ought to control the Chamber because its members were more advanced than the majority of the Deputies. It was certainly more than a coincidence that Mill was putting forward these ideas in November when in England the debate on the speech from the throne, the first test of Lord Grey’s support, was taking place. In Mill’s analysis of the political developments, the popularity that would allow Laffitte to dominate the Government could only come from the popular press. (Mill used “popular” not to mean representing majority opinion among the people, but being on the side of the people, on the side of history.) Most of the popular press was republican—*Le National*, of which Armand Carrel was one of the editors, was his ideal; these young journalists alone dared to question institutions hallowed by time. This was not like the licentious press of England and America where people pursued journalism as a trade, “as they would gin-making,” for it was written by the “highly cultivated portion of *la jeune France*” out of the most noble principle (No. 54). Mill is quite carried away by the prospect afforded by the brilliant young men leading “this noble people [who] afford every day some new and splendid example of its progress in humane feelings and enlightened views” (No. 52), even when they were rioting in favour of the death penalty for Polignac and his ministers.

Mill was very disturbed when the rejection at the end of November of Benjamin Constant’s Bill to exempt printers from obtaining licences showed that the Chamber was prepared to see the press curbed (No. 62). The rejection led him to question and then qualify the use of the ballot. The Deputies voted on separate clauses openly and every clause passed, but the Bill as a whole failed to pass on the final vote by ballot. The ballot, he concluded, was not suitable for use in a representative assembly where a man’s vote should be known to his constituents, but was for the

constituents themselves who needed its protection. His position drew him briefly into a debate with the *Standard* (Nos. 63 and 65).

By December the young enthusiast's growing doubts were given a particular issue to cluster around. Because "a revolution carries society farther on its course, and makes greater changes in the popular mind, than half a century of untroubled tranquillity" (No. 48), Louis Philippe and the Ministry must not be content to tinker with the system but must reconstitute it in accordance with the new society. Laffitte's proposed reform of the election law—at least what it was rumoured to include—was far too narrow to satisfy Mill, especially a Mill with one eye on events in England (No. 64).<sup>59</sup> Earl Grey should realize that a far-reaching reform bill was the only way to bring English institutions into harmony with the new society. Mill's growing disillusionment spills over in his reporting of the death of Benjamin Constant: "We are assured that this lamented patriot, almost with his last breath, expressed to the friends who encircled his death-bed, the regret which he felt, while dying, that the revolution of July was *manquée*, and had fallen into the hands of *intrigans*" (No. 68). The champion of a free press was dead, and the *intrigans* were persecuting and silencing the young men who stood for the movement.

The King's dismissal of Lafayette at the end of December was followed by Laffitte's replacement in March by the less acceptable—to Mill—Casimir Périer. Mill now set his hopes (as he was to do in English politics after the Reform Bill passed and Parliament changed not) on a radical opposition. Indirectly warning the Whigs at home, he poured vitriol on the head of Guizot, who was attempting to form a middle party between the popular party, led by Lafayette, and the oligarchy, for his "bigotted and coxcombical devotion" (No. 74) to his own ways instead of joining the popular party which had the backing of all under thirty-five and was thus "a power which no one dares despise; and, by earnest and well-directed exertions, is sure of ultimate victory" (No. 72).

There were small improvements, but little to feed Mill's hopes or catch his imagination. The number of judges was to be reduced; the Commissioner who introduced the Bill delighted the heart of the editor of Bentham's *Rationale of Judicial Evidence* by showing a sense "of the immense importance of the principle of undivided responsibility" of judges (No. 76),<sup>60</sup> but the fact that he was the only one in the debate who did so somewhat lessened the delight. There was to be Government retrenchment of salaries. And then there was the municipal bill by which the local bodies were to be elected "by a suffrage tolerably extensive," though "all the good which would otherwise result from the law is neutralised" by their being elected for six years. The amount of moral improvement engendered amongst the people would presumably therefore be minimal. Mill went so far as to argue that it might be better if the municipal officers continued as Crown appointees, because then they could be removed if the popular outcry was strong enough. He was upset but understanding when the people threw the Archbishop's furniture into the Seine. The people, Mill explained, though they loved religion, could not abide political religion—possibly a timely word to the English bishops (No. 87). Again with the reform crisis at home very much in mind—the Bill was to be introduced on 1 March—Mill chastised *The Times* and the *Quarterly Review* for their failure to realize that the Doctrinaires under Guizot were the stationary

party: “If the English and the new French government are destined severally to give another lesson to the world on the incapacity of oligarchies, howsoever constituted, to learn wisdom from experience, the trial must be submitted to: but at least those who shall provoke it shall do so knowingly, and must hold themselves prepared to suffer the natural consequences of their own folly” (No. 89).

On 6 March, 1831, Mill wrote on both Lord John Russell’s Reform Bill (No. 90) and French electoral reform (No. 91). Mill’s reaction to Russell’s Bill was surprisingly cool, since it was surely more thorough than he had expected: it should be supported, although limited, because either the new Parliament under it would represent the wishes of the people or the people would force the ballot. (Mill, like his allies and most others at this time, makes no distinction between the middle class to be enfranchised and the lower classes who are not.) When the new French electoral law was introduced, Mill should have been delighted that it was more generous than he had expected, but instead he was depressed as the parties in the Chamber manoeuvred to secure an election date to serve their selfish interests: “The destinies of France are in the hands of men more than nine-tenths of whom are not fit to have any part in the government of a parish” (No. 91).

With such men in power, throughout the spring of 1831 Mill understandably continued in low spirits.<sup>61</sup> The revolution seemed to have stagnated, to have declined into piecemeal reforms extracted from a grudging Ministry, passed by a petty, selfish, factionalized Chamber of Deputies. Even the middle classes were not satisfied “either in respect to men or measures”; consequently there was no feeling of security. Until there was security, “the labouring population will be without work, will be dissatisfied, a prey to agitators, and ready for continual tumults: which tumults, so long as they do not endanger human life or private property, the National Guard [some of whose companies, Mill does not mention, were commanded by young republicans] will give themselves as little trouble as possible to suppress” (No. 89). It was thus the Government’s fault that mobs and rioting were once more commonplace. Mill’s enthusiasm for the republican youth was not diminished.

Mill never ceased to defend the right of the youth of Paris to speak and write their thoughts, even in extreme cases when the results of their behaviour were dangerous by ordinary standards. At twenty-four, Mill felt he had much in common with the gallant band of young men who had placed themselves in the van of history. As their influence waned and power became established in the hands of the older liberals, Mill became profoundly disturbed. He hardly mentioned the republicans’ part in fuelling the December riots during the trial of the ex-Ministers—the reports of which he had at first dismissed as exaggerated rumour (Nos. 72 and 89)—for which they had been arrested, tried, and acquitted. He referred to the “pretended republican conspirators” (No. 100) “who, it has been supposed by good-natured, timid friends of freedom, both in this country and in France, must needs be firebrands and sowers of sedition” (No. 101). Mill translated Cavaignac’s speech in his own defence; the appeal to him was obvious: “it is inevitable; . . . all things are moving in that direction; the course of events, the human mind, and outward things. I have

perceived, that it is impossible for the movement which now rules the world to end in any thing but a republic.” (App. A.)

It is this spirit, this understanding of the forward movement of history to progressively more democratic institutions, the shift in power to greater numbers, that Mill is trying to inculcate in his readers. It is this spirit that is the spirit of the age. In early 1831, to develop these ideas more elaborately, he wrote five long articles under that title.<sup>62</sup> His belief explains his lack of interest—the words are not too strong—in the details of Grey’s Reform Bill. The historical process will bring reform to England; with or without revolution is the choice before Englishmen. He wanted to persuade Englishmen to vote on the side of history; the alternative for England was revolution.

The price had been worth paying in France. Mill is so convinced that revolution is always a great leap forward, an advancing of the historical process, that his vision at times must have made his thought a little obscure to his readers. It triumphed over any disappointment, and he assured Englishmen that despite appearances the French Revolution was a good. If at times the young enthusiast felt that history moved in mysterious ways, his prose revealed no hint of irony.

It is not to be denied that, up to this moment, the Revolution of 1830 has brought forth none but bitter fruits;—the ruin of hundreds of opulent families; thousands of industrious workmen thrown out of employment; perpetual apprehension of internal tumults or foreign war; the most grievous disappointments; the most violent political dissensions; and, finally, a Government not more democratic in its constitution—not more popular in its spirit—and, by the necessity of its false position, not less oppressive and anti-national in its acts, than that of Charles X. . . .

To all this, the answer is, that the circumstances of France and the character of the French nation are grievously mistaken, if it is imagined that the people of France made their Revolution under the conception that it was a thing to *gain* by. (No. 98.)

Such sentiments were a far cry from “*amour de soi* being the universal mover.”<sup>63</sup>

The universal mover had become the historical process whose agent was the people. Leaders on both sides of the Channel must understand that power was inevitably moving to the people; political democracy would come. The young men of France knew this truth and were actually striving to prevent the stationary party from perpetuating unrest in France. In a time of transition, it is the young who question the received ideas and who will eventually develop the new ideas that will bring stability. It is essential, therefore, that they be permitted freedom of speech and action.

The men of the present day rather incline to an opinion than embrace it; few, except the very penetrating, or the very presumptuous, have full confidence in their own convictions. This is not a state of health, but, at the best, of convalescence. It is a necessary stage in the progress of civilization, but it is attended with numerous evils; as one part of a road may be rougher or more dangerous than another, although every step brings the traveller nearer to his desired end. (No. 73.)

It was absolutely essential to keep stepping. If the leaders refused to help the historical process, there would be a long period of disruption, perhaps much bloodshed; the period of transition would be prolonged in all its uncertainty. This was the message Mill delivered in the spring of 1831 as both Louis Philippe and William IV dissolved their parliaments, the former with dignity after the new electoral law had been passed, and the latter in some haste to forestall the Lords after the proposed electoral reform had been thwarted: “in the two greatest nations in the world, general elections will simultaneously take place, and the new legislative bodies will be simultaneously called upon to determine the future constitution of their country” (No. 102). Mill had two elections of great interest to watch.

But he also had to plan a trip to the Lake District for July, an exciting journey involving four days of conversation with Wordsworth, which, along with Harriet Taylor’s safe delivery of a daughter, Helen, may have done something to lift his spirits. For the next few years, Mill’s annual summer trips coincided naturally with the summer political recess and with, equally naturally, a gap in his political reporting, and they form for editors convenient chapter breaks. Before he went on his trip, he took time to fulfil a few occasional obligations such as an obituary and a review (Nos. 108 and 110), a response to an attack, if oblique, on a principle (Nos. 109 and 111), and puffs for friends or friends of friends (Nos. 104, 106, and 112). These last remind one that Mill was now, as was Harriet, a frequenter of the *Monthly Repository* circle and a close friend of W.J. Fox and Eliza Flower.

#### AUGUST 1831 TO JULY 1832

Back from his holiday in the Lake District, Mill returned to his France-watching in a somewhat better frame of mind. But he returned to an England that was to come to the brink of revolution in the next nine months. Grey’s increased support from that summer’s elections meant the reintroduced Reform Bill easily passed its third reading in the Commons in September; in October the Lords threw it out; the Bristol riots the same month showed how little protection property had against the mob. Throughout the winter, while cholera raged, the country waited to see which way the King would lean: towards the creation of peers, Grey, and reform, or towards the House of Lords, Wellington, and repression. Then in May 1832 came the ten days without a Government, when Wellington tried and failed to form one; this was the turning point. Grey returned to power with William IV’s promise to create peers if need be. In June of 1832, the first Reform Bill received Royal Assent. With considerable excitement the country prepared to elect a reformed Parliament.

Mill’s curiously detached attitude towards English politics is explained in a long, very personal letter he wrote to John Sterling:

If the ministers flinch or the Peers remain obstinate, I am firmly convinced that in six months a national convention chosen by universal suffrage, will be sitting in London. Should this happen, I have not made up my mind what would be best to do: I

incline to think it would be best to lie by and let the tempest blow over, if one could but get a shilling a day to live upon meanwhile: for until the whole of the existing institutions of society are levelled with the ground, there will be nothing for a wise man to do which the most pig-headed fool cannot do much better than he. A Turgot, even, could not do in the present state of England what Turgot himself failed of doing in France—mend the old system. If it goes all at once, let us wait till it is gone: if it goes piece by piece, why, let the blockheads who will compose the first Parliament after the bill passes, do what a blockhead can do, viz. overthrow, & the ground will be cleared, & the passion of destruction sated, & a coalition prepared between the wisest radicals & the wisest anti-radicals, between all the wiser men who agree in their general views & differ only in their estimate of the present condition of this country.—You will perhaps think from this long prosing rambling talk about politics, that they occupy much of my attention: but in fact I am myself often surprised, how little I really care about them. The time is not yet come when a calm & impartial person can intermeddle with advantage in the questions & contests of the day. I never write in the Examiner now except on France, which nobody else that I know of seems to know any thing about; & now & then on some insulated question of political economy. The only thing which I can usefully do at present, & which I am doing more & more every day, is to work out *principles*: which are of use for all times, though to be applied cautiously & circumspectly to any: principles of morals, government, law, education, above all self-education. I am here much more in my element: the only thing that I believe I am really fit for, is the investigation of abstract truth, & the more abstract the better.<sup>64</sup>

Mill's reporting of French affairs could not help but be increasingly coloured by events in England and his attitude to them. During the next twelve months, Mill seems in his articles to be analyzing the political process more than reporting it. He claimed he was only good for the "investigation of abstract truth," but his newspaper articles qualify that claim, because it was from watching the French argue principle and fail to achieve the needed reforms that he began to realize the truths of practical politics. As soon as he returned in August he wrote two pieces on the French elections, which had also resulted in gains for "the popular party." More than ever he thought the Ministerial Party under Casimir Périer was that of resistance and the opposition the party of movement—the Bonapartists and Republicans being insignificant in the Chamber—but he now thought the balance of power would allow reason to prevail and slow change would result. The French should now rest content until "the great step which their institutions have now made, shall have had leisure to produce its fruits" (No. 114). He recommended calm to allow the new French electoral law, although very inadequate, to make its effect felt; Mill did not want a revolution in England, and continuing ferment and further demands in France might stiffen the resistance, especially of the Lords, at home.

The main issue in the French Chamber during the autumn was the abolition of the hereditary peerage, one of the issues that helped Mill to work out principles and their use. In the article he wrote Mill seemed to be thinking out loud, not just about the peerage in England or France,

but about leaders in a time of transition in whatever country.<sup>65</sup> “The will of the majority is not to be obeyed as a law, but it is to be attended to as a fact: the opinions and feelings of the nation are entitled to consideration, not for their own sake, but as one of the circumstances of the times . . . which produces effects not to be overlooked; a power, which so largely modifies and interferes with all you do, that unless it is allowed for in your calculations, you can predict nothing” (No. 115). The experience of these years had only confirmed his dislike of those liberal thinkers who were “for making every man his own guide & sovereign master, & letting him think for himself & do exactly as he judges best for himself. . . . It is difficult to conceive a more thorough ignorance of man’s nature, & of what is necessary for his happiness or what degree of happiness & virtue he is capable of attaining than this system implies.”<sup>66</sup>

He had moved a long way from his earlier radicalism; his observation of the immediate result of the French Revolution made him adjust his theories to fit the actual rather than the abstract consequences of a revolution. He had watched, and reported on, the devolution of an heroic struggle into a depressing battle between stationary liberals and conservatives, with only the people unthinkingly on the side of movement—and their thinking leaders, the young republicans.

The events in France during the months from October 1831 to May 1832 are of less interest than Mill’s reaction to them. The temporary excitement he had felt at the uprising in Lyons in December had been quickly evaporated by its suppression. Debates on the Civil List and the budget dragged on. The Bill for national education was delayed. Corruption seemed everywhere. All feeling, except disgust, had been dissipated by the rumours of poisoning that had accompanied the devastating outbreak of cholera in Paris in the spring of 1832. Riots had taken place and Paris was placed under martial law; warrants were issued for the arrest of men as different as Armand Carrel and Chateaubriand; Louis Philippe had handed the Government over to the stationary party, that of the Doctrinaires (nominally under Marshal Soult). Mill did not try to hide his contempt:

The French Chambers were prorogued on the 21st of April, after a session of nine months, in which but little that is of any real use has been even talked about; and of that little, nothing but the most paltry and insignificant fraction has been accomplished. The first session of the first Parliament elected under the Citizen King and the *charte-vérité*, has demonstrated nothing but the vices of the institutions of France, and the backwardness of her national mind. (No. 161.)

The fruits which leisure had produced while the French rested content were unpalatable. How could England save herself from a similar fate? By understanding and avoiding the conditions which caused it.

France’s failure could be accounted for by the disastrous effect the concentration on the Charter had had, especially on the young men; the majority were mesmerized by its defence throughout the 1820s, so that when

the Revolution of July [came]: the greatest advance which any nation perhaps ever made by a single step—an advance which no one expected, and for which no one’s habits and ideas were prepared—a change which gave the French nation a clear field

to build on, . . . they had [not] possessed themselves of the materials to build withal; a leap, which cleared in an instant a space of many years journey; and transported France through mid-air, away from the scenes with which she was familiar, into regions unvisited and unknown. (No. 162.)

Tragically for France, power was in the hands of Guizot and the Doctrinaires, who were trying to suppress the only group, the young republicans, who were capable of charting those regions. Particularly, Mill cited the Saint-Simonians, who were “just now, the only association of public writers existing in the world who systematically stir up from the foundation all the great social questions” (No. 158). Mill continued to support those who shared with him the vision of those unknown lands even if he disagreed about how they should be settled.

In his comparison of the French and English intellects (No. 158),<sup>67</sup> Mill was not only lending his support to his fellow travellers but he was also pursuing his work as a political scientist. He needed to learn so that he could help the English Radicals to avoid suffering the same disastrous aftermath when England had achieved her radical reform as the French had.<sup>68</sup> From this perspective, the differences between the two nations, viewed

in any way in which it can be looked at by an enlarged intellect, and a soul aspiring to indefinite improvement, . . . is a subject of rejoicing; for it furnishes the philosopher with *varied* experiments on the education of the human race; and affords the only mode by which all the parts of our nature are enabled to move forward at once, none of them being choked (as some must be in every attempt to reduce all characters to a single invariable type) by the disproportionate growth of the remainder (No. 158).

He still felt in 1831, or so he told his French friends, that when he wished

to carry discussion into the field of science and philosophy, to state any general principles of politics, or propound doubts tending to put other people upon stating general principles for my instruction, I must go where I find readers capable of understanding and relishing such inquiries, and writers capable of taking part in them. . . I conceive that, in political philosophy, the initiative belongs to France at this moment; not so much from the number of truths which have yet been practically arrived at, but rather from the far more elevated *terrain* on which the discussion is engaged; a *terrain* from which England is still separated by the whole interval which lies between 1789 and 1832. (No. 158.)<sup>69</sup>

Some English friends, such as Sterling and Carlyle, were capable of understanding and relishing such enquiries, but for the most part

In writing to persuade the English, one must tell them only of the next step they have to take, keeping back all mention of any subsequent step. Whatever we may have to propose, we must contract our reasoning into the most confined limits; we must place the expediency of the particular measure upon the narrowest grounds on which it can rest; and endeavour to let out no more of general truth, than exactly as much as is absolutely indispensable to make out our particular conclusion. (No. 158.)



His lack of active participation in the reform struggle in England can be at least partly attributed to the lack of lofty feelings involved:

The English people have never had their political feelings called out by abstractions. They have fought for particular laws, but never for a *principle* of legislation. The doctrines of the sovereignty of the people, and the rights of man, never had any root in this country. The cry was always for a particular change in the mode of electing members of the House of Commons. . . . (No. 158.)<sup>70</sup>

But once passed, the Reform Act, although limited in its immediate provisions, could effect a bursting of the fetters on the spirit of the English people. By May of 1832 the task of persuading them of the next step had come to seem more attractive—at least more than watching the French politicians. In France there had been “only public discontent and irritation, and a voice perpetually crying out ‘Do something,’ but not telling what to do, not having any thing to tell” (No. 162). In the Chamber were “scenes of confusion and disturbance” and outside there was no public opinion to pressure the Deputies (No. 164). The riots continued; the Duchess of Berry invaded (No. 171). At the end of the session Mill exclaimed: “The nature and amount of the doings of the French Chambers, during the session which has just expired, raise a serious doubt of the capacity of those assemblies as at present constituted, we will not say to legislate tolerably, but to legislate at all” (No. 172). So when the passage of the English Reform Bill was assured, he writes that it is small wonder that “The interest of foreign politics now fades before that of our own. The theatre of political excitement has changed. The current of the *mouvement* has now shifted to Great Britain: how rapidly to proceed, or in what latitudes to terminate, he must be a bold man who deems that he can foreknow: nor needs he: it is not now the time to *hope* but to do.” (No. 165.)

The immediate “doing” was the election precipitated by the new franchise. Mill’s limited contribution was two articles (Nos. 174 and 177) on a question which divided the Radicals: whether candidates should be required to pledge themselves to certain courses of action in return for support. The articles show the influence of Mill’s French experience on the development of his ideas, ideas that were later to be incorporated into *Representative Government*. Only a general pledge should “be tendered to a candidate, his acceptance or refusal of which would decide whether he is with us or against us,—whether he is for the Movement or the Resistance,—whether he voted for the Reform Bill as a prop to all our remaining institutions, or as a means of beating down such of them as are bad, and repairing such as are decaying . . .” (No. 177). Mill’s ideal electorate would be chosen from among the superior men trained to govern: “Government must be performed by the few, for the benefit of the many: and the security of the many consists in being governed by those who possess the largest share of their confidence, and no longer than while that confidence lasts” (No. 174). To govern well, the legislators must remember that “the test of what is right in politics is not the *will* of the people, but the *good* of the people” (No. 177)—a view he had espoused the previous September during the debate over the French peerage.

There is a hint in these articles that he saw himself as a possible candidate. Though it was not until thirty-three years later that he was to fulfil that ambition, when he did, he lived up to the youthful principles:

When all other things are equal, give your votes to him who refuses to degrade himself and you by personal solicitation. To entrust a man with a burthensome duty (unless he means to betray it) is a compliment indeed, but no favour. The man who manifests the highest opinion of the electors, is not he who tries to gain them over individually by civil speeches, but he who assumes that their only object is to choose the fittest man, and abstains from all canvassing, except by laying his pretensions before them collectively, on the hustings, at public meetings, or through the press. (No. 174.)

Although English politics had been neglected by Mill the journalist—of his sixty-five contributions, all to the *Examiner*, between August 1831 and August 1832, all but some fifteen had been on France—he found time for his English friends. The affectionate and loyal side of the young man showed as he again inserted favourable notices of his friends in the *Monthly Repository* circle, Eliza Flower (No. 155), William Pemberton (No. 168), and also two other acquaintances, Charlotte Lewin (another of George Grote’s sisters-in-law) (No. 175) and William Hickson (No. 141). He also praised Whately on his promotion (No. 121) and, as was sadly inevitable, Jeremy Bentham on his death (No. 170). His interest in logic dictated lengthy book reviews of Todd (No. 144), Smart (Nos. 151 and 153), and Lewis (No. 159).<sup>71</sup> The other items in this period are disparate, but many of them reveal the shifting sands of Mill’s ideas: the Sugar Refinery Bill and the Slave Trade (No. 118) showed that some things changed very little; the one on the Irish character (No. 138), a very nineteenth-century piece, is of interest in light of his later thoughts on national character; the ideas behind “Property in Land” (No. 163) came from his French friends and would underlie the later Irish articles, the *Political Economy*, and his eventual membership in the Land Tenure Reform Association; and some short pieces were perhaps simply the product of Fonblanque’s having passed on to Mill items well within his known competence.

Mill had begun the two articles on pledges with a grand flourish suitable for the new era ushered in by the royal signature on the Reform Act: “The steed is at the door, saddled and bridled, and it is time to mount and journey onward” (No. 174). But for the moment, with both the French and English parliaments adjourned, he was content to go on foot for a tour of the New Forest, Hampshire, West Sussex, and the Isle of Wight.

## SEPTEMBER 1832 TO AUGUST 1833

Mill returned to London but did not settle down to his journalism immediately. Presumably he had some India Office correspondence to catch up with, and he was also planning to go to Cornwall for a couple of weeks with the Bullers. He took time before he left to write recommendations for some of those anxious for election under the new dispensation (No. 179). Many of

those he recommended were known to him; all of them, as he made a point of saying, were young.

On his return in October his writings for the *Examiner* were once more resumed, and once more on France. On English affairs there are only two quite predictable pieces on the Corn Laws. After what he had said, such an allotment of his time may seem strange, but in England there was the inevitable delay in Parliamentary activity: the necessity of registering the enlarged electorate postponed the elections into the fall.<sup>72</sup> Earl Grey's Ministry was unchanged by the election: the Radicals' old champion, Lord Brougham, was Lord Chancellor, Russell and Durham were Paymaster-General and Lord Privy Seal, and the stalwart Viscount Althorp continued as Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the Commons. Parliament did not meet until 29 January, 1833, and when it did the House appeared little altered overall although, importantly for Mill, it contained a small but recognizable group of Radicals, among whom stood out Mill's old friends, George Grote, J.A. Roebuck, and Sir William Molesworth. For his own part, having appreciated the vital part the young French journalists played in forwarding the movement, and acknowledging that his position at India House prevented his entering Parliament himself, he started orchestrating the radical programme. Such plans as were to mature with the appearance of the *London Review* in April 1835 might have crossed his mind as early as 1832; such a supposition is given substance by his criticism of the English journalists and praise of the French, especially Armand Carrel, in the article addressed to the latter, written in December of 1832 (No. 186).

In the glare of the illuminations for the Reform victory, Mill might well have seen a role for himself as the ginger journalist if his friends were elected<sup>73</sup> and exuberantly forgotten about the necessary political hiatus. This speculation also provides perhaps a key to his continued reporting on the French riots, insurrections, and prosecutions of the press.<sup>74</sup> It was important that his English readers know about the ruthless but inevitably futile attempts to bring stability to France. The continuous unedifying prosecutions for libel that attempted to silence the youth of France and the uncivilized behaviour of all parties both in the courtroom and in the streets<sup>75</sup> were instructive as Mill prepared the way for the radical reforms that were vital if England was to reap the benefits of her revolution and avoid France's failure.<sup>76</sup> The Government of the Doctrinaires, he says, "is an instructive experiment upon what is to be expected from those who affect to found their political wisdom principally on history, instead of looking to history merely for *suggestions*, to be brought to the test of a larger and surer experience" (No. 181).<sup>77</sup>

The Guizot party were not, he argued, to be confused with the Whigs, in spite of their own claims. They thought they were modelling themselves on the English Whigs but that was because they thought 1688 and 1830 were comparable and because they thought the Whigs had principles. The first thought was the result of their being

a kind of people for whom history has no lessons, because they bring to its study no real knowledge of the human mind, or of the character of their own age,—[and, therefore they] could hit upon nothing better than erecting into universal maxims the

conditions of the compromise which they fancied had been made at our Revolution of 1688, between the monarchical and the popular principle (No. 181).

If Mill's readers had read his "Spirit of the Age," they would have known that the knowledge one got from history was that the character of an age was peculiar to that age, always changing, evolving into the next stage, and that therefore no such things as universal maxims could be found; especially short-lived were all maxims in an age of transition.

The second thought was the result of confounding the French and the English: "in England few, except the very greatest thinkers, think systematically, or aim at connecting their scattered opinions into a consistent scheme of general principles. . . . 'Whig principles' simply meant, feeling and acting with the men called Whigs. . . . The Doctrinaires have not the wisdom of the beaver; they will never yield a part to save the remainder. . . . They are the most inflexible and impracticable of politicians." (No. 181.) The inevitable disaster for France under Louis Philippe and his Doctrinaires Mill now sat back to watch, knowing it would come and in coming would prove his analysis of the spirit of the age correct. England should watch and note well the fatal outcome of stationary government.

The ideas he had put forward in the "Spirit of the Age" were being tested against events in France; his hypotheses were being proved correct; his analyses accurately predicted outcomes. Stability could only be restored to a society in transition by completing the revolution. Mill's articles on France were the windows through which Englishmen could see the fate awaiting them if they too arrested the revolution before it was completed. Thus Mill continued until the end of 1832 to report, with an air almost of satisfaction, the signs of deterioration: the corruption in the courts (No. 182), the attempt to shoot Louis Philippe on his way to open the new session (according to Mill all a farce enacted by the Government to gain public support) (Nos. 185 and 188), the manipulation of the election of the President of the Chamber of Deputies (No. 185). He noticed with commendation the re-establishment of the Department of Moral and Political Science in the Institute (No. 183) and also the move towards freer trade (No. 190). But the only times when strong feelings appeared were in a moving obituary of his old friend Say (No. 185) and a biting denunciation of the British press which, he assured Carrel, did not represent British feelings. "The popular party in England think as ill of the present French Government as M. Carrel himself, and are as anxious as he can be that republican institutions, whether with an elective or hereditary chief, should be firmly established in France" (No. 186).<sup>78</sup> Throughout 1833 Mill reported very infrequently on French politics; his reasons are adumbrated in his earlier remark that "we almost doubt whether the scenes that are unfolded took place in a civilized country" (No. 182), and now made plain: "We have discontinued of late our usual notices of French affairs, because all which has been doing in that country is so paltry . . ." (No. 199);<sup>79</sup> "What then has the Session produced? Produced! It has produced money. Its results are the vote of an enormous budget, and an endless series of extraordinary votes of credit." (No. 204.)<sup>80</sup> Throughout these months perhaps only the establishment of national education and municipal institutions gave him concrete grounds for hope for France.

In January of 1833 the first session of the British Parliament since the Reform Act opened. The English political scene seemed promising; Mill had remarked in December:

we see reason to congratulate the friends of improvement upon the definiteness of their objects, and the zeal and unanimity of their exertions. Scarcely a voice has been raised for any causeless or fantastic change, nor has any captiousness been exhibited about mere forms and phrases. This, indeed, would have been inconsistent with the positive, practical, matter-of-fact character of the English mind. (No. 191.)

Mill had had enough for the moment of Frenchmen in debate. His mind, in any case, was distracted,<sup>81</sup> and even on English politics his writing in 1833 lacks the concentration of the past year.<sup>82</sup> There were a number of favourable pieces in the *Examiner* on the *Monthly Repository* (Nos. 198, 200, and 207); the first of these contained a revealing review of the life of Mehetabel Wesley and the tragedy of her indissoluble marriage.<sup>83</sup> The two studious reviews of Eliza Flower's songs (Nos. 197 and 201) and the praise of Beolchi's poetry anthology (No. 206) were also the products of his friendship with W.J. Fox and his circle.

None of these pieces was demanding.<sup>84</sup> During the whole of the session, which lasted until the end of August, only one or two political matters received his attention; his Parliamentary friends were left largely unaided and unguided while the House discussed factory legislation, the Irish Church, education, law reform, and the emancipation of the slaves.

The proposed budget raised his ire in the spring (No. 202) and in the summer he roundly attacked the Government over that old chestnut the Bank Charter Bill (Nos. 208, 209, and 212). His criticisms were not very different from what he might have written ten years earlier, although his skill in vituperation is more assured. And, in spite of his dismay at the French opposition floundering in a sea of principles, he can still be almost equally dismayed at the British lack of them:

no power of grasping any principle; no attempt to ground their proceedings upon any comprehensive, even though false, views; no appearance of understanding the subject, or even of thinking they understand it; nothing contemplated which rises to the dignity of even a half-measure—only quarter and half-quarter measures; a little scratching on the surface of one or two existing evils, but no courage to attempt their excision, because there has been no vigour or skill to probe them to the bottom (No. 209).

In his piece on the commission to make recommendations about municipal institutions (on which sat some of his friends), Mill again stressed that England needed reform but even more needed principles to elevate the tone of public discourse:

A solemn declaration of opinion from an authoritative quarter, going the full length of a great principle, is worth ten paltry practical measures of nibbling amendment. The good which any mere enactment can do, is trifling compared with the effect of whatever helps to mature the public mind . . . and we always find that

*gradual* reform proceeds by larger and more rapid steps, when the doctrines of radical reform are most uncompromisingly and intrepidly proclaimed. (No. 211.)

At the end of the parliamentary session, Mill did not go for his usual summer ramble but stayed in town. Not parliamentary affairs but his own affairs determined his movements, and his own affairs had reached a crisis. Harriet and John Taylor had come to an understanding, the precise nature of which cannot be known, but Harriet Taylor was preparing in the spring of 1833 to go to France.<sup>85</sup> The situation was unclear, and John Stuart Mill, an infatuated twenty-six year old, was uncertain of her plans and, therefore, of his. Throughout the spring and summer he hung uncertainly around town.<sup>86</sup>

#### SEPTEMBER 1833 TO OCTOBER 1834

Mill's dithering in London continued throughout September; he finally left for Paris on 10 October. After nearly six weeks in Mrs. Taylor's company, he returned alone to London on 18 November. Despite the unsatisfactory state of his heart, Mill's health improved, and he threw himself into his writing, perhaps easing his feelings by producing some acidic articles.

There could be no quarter given. The Radicals must not be associated with the Whigs either in Parliament or in the *Examiner*.<sup>87</sup> The party of movement must not be embraced and disarmed by the stationary party, as had happened in France. But Mill and his father were to be disappointed by the radical group, partly because their row was particularly difficult to hoe without helping the Whig garden to grow. The truth was that, in spite of Mill's acidulous tone, this first reform Ministry was a reforming Ministry; it did not emulate its French counterpart. Many reforms had been introduced dealing with factory children, slaves, the Irish Church, and much else. Frequently, therefore, the Radicals had found themselves voting with the Ministers even if they had not spoken with them. And for Mill such collusion spelled disaster. Grey's Ministry was after all Whig—Melbourne was Grey's successor in July 1834 when, deserted by Stanley and Graham over Ireland, Grey retired. Mill had seen the French Doctrinaires triumph from the confusion in the Chamber of Deputies when the Radicals had failed to coalesce and many had been co-opted by the Ministry. It was his role and that of the Parliamentary Radicals to keep their own principles flying and to prevent the Whigs from stagnating.

Mill's series attacking the Whig Ministry, elicited by the pamphlet he refers to as the *Ministerial Manifesto*,<sup>88</sup> was as much a rallying cry to the Radicals as a criticism of Grey's Ministry (or Althorp's Ministry, as Mill persists in calling it, Grey possibly being too much the popular hero). In this fight against the English counterpart of the Doctrinaires, nothing was to be praised; Mill pours vitriolic criticism indiscriminately on all the Ministry's achievements: "Ten years, or even five years ago, some of these things might have been matter of praise; but now! to hear a Ministry deified for the Irish Church Bill! for the Slave Bill! for the East India Bill! for the Bank Bill! for the Factory Bill!"<sup>89</sup> This Ministry could not

once find in their hearts to commit themselves to a principle, fairly embark themselves with a principle, wed it for better or worse! But no—they are afraid of principles. . . . They are men of shifts and expedients. What they are from the necessity of their own want of knowledge and judgment, they fancy they are from the necessity of the case. It is their notion of statesmanship. (No. 216.)

Here lay the crucial difference between the stationary Whigs and the advanced Radicals who had the capacity of “in the first place choosing right [principles] . . . [and] in the second, of discerning where the dominion of one principle is limited by the conflicting operation of another” (No. 216).

In one cause, however, Mill’s praise could not be withheld—well, not altogether; there was too much Bentham in Lord Brougham’s law reforms even be he now a Whig Lord Chancellor. “These things, if accomplished, are the greater part of all which is to be desired. Codify the law, common and statute together, and establish Local Courts *with unlimited jurisdiction*, and all that will remain to complete a systematic reform of the law, is to simplify the procedure, and establish good courts of appeal.” (No. 218.) Maybe Fonblanque gave a jab; maybe Mill recalled his role of “keeping up the fight for radicalism.” The next week, he wrote of Brougham in terms he applied also to Bentham: “He is great as a destroyer; not great as a rebuildder. All that he has overthrown well deserved to fall; nothing that he has established, in the opinion of the most thorough law reformers in the profession, deserves to stand. Not only his reforms are partial and narrow, but they are such as cannot fit into any more comprehensive plan of reform.” (No. 219.) But on the whole Mill’s article did not bear out such an opening condemnation, although the proposal for more than one judge to hear a case brought a sharp rebuke. The subject had been Mill’s for so long that Bentham’s voice rang through, perhaps the louder for his French experience:<sup>90</sup>

to set three or four judges on a bench to hear *one* cause, is not only paying three or four persons to do the work of one, but it renders absolutely certain their doing it ill. *One* judge feels the public eye upon him; he is ashamed to be corrupt, or partial, or inattentive; but when there are several, each dares perpetrate under the sanction of the others, wickedness the undivided obloquy of which he would have shrunk from; each trusts that others have been listening though he has not, that others have given their minds to the cause though he has not; and instead of the services of several judges, the public has something considerably less than the best services of one. (No. 219.)

Neither had his French experience given him cause to qualify his father’s teaching about the present: the members of Parliament were, “when strong public clamour does not *compel* some regard to the public interest, still as stupidly and as blindly selfish as in the worst times” (No. 219).

Mill found his row almost as difficult to hoe as did his Parliamentary friends. He again went after Brougham for his Corporation Bill (No. 220), but it was a half-hearted attack and the interest lies more in his advocacy of government by experts, a position that Tocqueville was to reinforce. He could not condemn the Factory Act (drawn up by Chadwick on the recommendations of the commission managed by him) except for the inclusion—not recommended by Chad-

wick—of certain classes of adults (No. 220). Neither could he condemn the proposed Poor Law reforms based also, he knew, on Chadwick's work. But he could take a column or two to denounce the Labour Rate Bill defeated by the efforts of the Radicals though supported by Althorp. Althorp was a frequent target, unmistakably Whig, unquestionably honest but not fast on his intellectual feet. But it was with some difficulty and a scathing tone<sup>91</sup> that Mill upheld the distinction in a reforming House between the good (the Radical and not in power) and the bad (the Whig and in power).

As always he had time for his radical friends, Harriet Martineau for her *Tale of the Tyne* exposing the evils of impressment (No. 222), Charles Napier for his book on the government proper to colonies, all of which ought to pay for themselves—in this particular case the Ionian Islands (No. 224)—and W.J. Fox for the December 1833 issue of the *Monthly Repository*. The approval of this last was slightly, but significantly, qualified:

In every word . . . we concur; but with the qualification, that not *only* the more vigorous minds in the poorer class, but persons also with the superior opportunities of instruction afforded by a higher station, *may* be, (and of this the writer himself is an example) most efficient instructors of the poorer classes, provided they have sufficient freedom from the littleness of mind which caste-distinctions engender. . . .

One must speak to the working man in Mill's best of all possible worlds as "equals . . . less informed than himself on the particular subject, but with minds quite as capable of understanding it" (No. 225).

At the beginning of 1834, however, Mill had little intention of speaking to the working man. When he and Harriet were in Paris on a dry run as lovers, Mill had visited Armand Carrel, one of the much persecuted editors of the republican journal *Le National*, whom he had long admired and defended in the *Examiner*. Carrel had much to recommend him in Mill's eyes (including a mistress).<sup>92</sup> Carrel's example had inspired Mill; he was the embodiment of the youthful Girondist dream. The meeting with Carrel, the stay in Paris amongst all the elevated youth, the most perfect of beings as his companion, had given a great impetus to the side of Mill which had brought about the stimulating friendship with Carlyle.<sup>93</sup> If it had not been for Harriet Taylor and Armand Carrel perhaps the events in France would have dimmed Mill's vision. The reality of Mill's return to England alone and Harriet's return to John Taylor would, on the surface of it, have dimmed most visions. But Harriet loved him, Armand Carrel led "formidable looking champions,"<sup>94</sup> and, most excitingly, a role similar to Carrel's was being suggested for him at home: the possibility of organizing and inspiring the English equivalent of the French left through the establishment of an English counterpart to *Le National*. Plans were being mooted for a journal to replace the *Westminster Review*, which in the eyes of the Mills had not under Bowring been fulfilling its original purpose.

This possibility was the more important because there was danger of the *Examiner*, or at least of the *Examiner* as guided by Fonblanque, having to fold. Even working with the excellent Fonblanque, Mill, now he was in the thick of it, desperately anxious to play a role, had become increasingly dissatisfied with his part in the enterprise. When Mill had briefly considered purchas-



ing the *Examiner* (he had decided that doing so was totally impracticable) he discussed with Carlyle at some length Fonblanque's problems and the policy of the paper. It is hard not to apply his description of the paper in general to his own particular recent articles on the Ministerial Manifesto:

such as do not take a daily paper, require in a weekly one a better abstract of *news*. . . . Then the more moderate radicals are revolted by the tone of hatred in which the paper is written. This feeling extends to many who would have no objection to, but would applaud, the utterance of the bitterest truths, but do not like a *perpetual* carping at little things, honestly indeed, yet often unfairly & making no personal allowances, sometimes misstating altogether the *kind* of blame which is deserved, & meting it out in unequal measures to different people, so as to give an appearance of spleen & personal antipathy to individuals—especially to some of the Ministers, & among them, most perhaps to some of those who deserve it rather *less* than the others. . . . At the very time . . . he [Fonblanque] was offending the moderate radicals by the nature of his attacks on the ministry. . . .95

Carping is the word that certainly springs to mind when reading Mill's attacks on the Ministry, and equally Althorp could certainly be thought to "deserve it rather *less* than the others." These feelings must have made the prospect of a new outlet for his writing, over which he would have more control, excitingly inviting. The solution to both the Bowring and Fonblanque situations would be a new radical review: "Roebuck, Strutt, Buller, and other radical members of Parliament have a scheme to start a radical review as their organ, with individual signatures like J.R., in which we should all of us write—the thing looks possible, and everybody seems so eager about it that I really think it will come to pass."<sup>96</sup> And indeed it did, although not quite after the fashion he had expected and not until the spring of 1835.

Meanwhile, Mill's dissatisfaction was by no means great enough in January of 1834 to cause him to cease writing for Fonblanque, although he again concentrated on French affairs that spring, writing little on contemporary English politics after 1833 in the *Examiner*.<sup>97</sup> Many a man watching French politics in 1834 would have thrown up his hands in despair (were that not too Gallic a gesture) and railed against the French and their preference for the thought over the deed. Mill certainly expressed disgust at times. But he was consciously testing his hypotheses and in the process was learning a good deal about representative bodies, their nature, the difficulties of operating within them and through them to achieve reforms. Undoubtedly his visit with Carrel had given him a deeper awareness of the frustrations and hazards of French political life, and the persistent line that Mill took on French affairs during the first eight months of 1834 can be understood only in the light of this experience. His analysis in 1834 of the French Government was soberer and more perceptive than it had been three years earlier: "The Chamber is no place for advocating doctrines in advance of the existing charter; for such the press is the proper organ; in the Chamber an orator, even of the most commanding talents, could not obtain a hearing for such opinions as are held by the ablest opponents of the present French Government" (No. 230). Mill no longer gave vent to feelings of exasperation at the failure of a popular opposition to emerge in the Chamber; he accepted the conservatism of those who actually wielded power. He

had said as much in the autumn, more in the English context than the French, but certainly influenced by the “*varied* experiments” in which he had been participating:

There is a third kind of Minister whom we could allow to take to himself, to whom we could cheerfully give, a large share of credit for his administration. This would be a man who, taking the reins of office in a period of transition, a period which is called, according to the opinions of the speaker, an age of reform, of destruction, or of renovation, should deem it his chief duty and his chief wisdom to moderate the shock: to mediate between adverse interests; to make no compromise of *opinions*, except by avoiding any ill-timed declaration of them, but to negotiate the most advantageous compromises possible in actual *measures*: to reform bit-by-bit, when more rapid progress is impracticable, but always with a comprehensive and well-digested plan of thorough reform placed before him as a guide. . . . (No. 216.)<sup>98</sup>

But just because a body of elected governors did not and could not represent advanced opinion in an age of transition, it was absolutely essential that the young men outside the Government be allowed to speak out. The reports of French affairs that Mill continued to provide for the *Examiner* throughout the first half of 1834 have these young men as their focus. The Government persecutions of the young journalists drew his wrath, especially those of Armand Carrel’s *Le National* (Nos. 232, 237, 238, 241, 247, 249, 266, and 269). Mill was prepared to defend the opposition outside the Chambers even when it went beyond mere words and even when it went beyond Armand Carrel (Nos. 226, 249, 250, and 251). The behaviour of these young men in court or in the streets might seem to some irresponsible and indefensible, but to Mill they had acted in the only way left to them as Louis Philippe and his Ministers tried to muzzle France and thwart the forward march of history. The misrepresentation by “Tory publications” (No. 244) must not delude England into similar disastrous repressions. The extreme activists of the Société des Droits de l’Homme were not to be feared. On the contrary, “The evil we are apprehensive of is stagnation,” and therefore those who put forward anti-property doctrines, although Mill could not “give such doctrines any encouragement,” performed a needed service: “unless the ruling few can be made and kept ‘uneasy,’ the many need expect no good” (No. 233). These men were the forces of history itself in an age of transition.

One important force was the Saint-Simonians. Mill’s courageous defence, after they had disbanded, of their doctrines, which again he made clear he did not share—or did he?—is very moving. They had dared to develop bold philosophical speculations that led them to “the most hostile scrutiny of the first principles of the social union” (No. 233) and had arrived at a

scheme, impracticable indeed but . . . only in *degree*, not in kind . . . of a perfect human society; the spirit of which will more and more pervade even the *existing* social institutions, as human beings become wiser and better; and which, like any other model of unattainable perfection, everybody is the better for aspiring to, although it be impossible to reach it. We may never get to the north star, but there is much use in turning our faces towards it if we are journeying northward. . . . We have only to

imagine the same progression indefinitely continued, and a time would come when St. Simonism would be practicable; and if practicable, desirable. (No. 234.)

He could not deny the vision three times, and he never ceased to defend those who, like him, had the vision of a different and brighter future.<sup>99</sup> In spite of the immediate outcome of the Revolution of 1830, Mill continued to believe in the promised land; he had seen it. And for Mill it was French intellectual speculation that would reveal the path out of the desert. However reactionary the surface of French life might appear, the Revolutions of 1789 and 1830 had broken the bond that had enchained the French spirit and still fettered all others. The movement was, however, temporarily halted in France, and in the summer of 1834 Mill ceased to write regularly both on France and for the *Examiner*. It was fitting that his last article on France reported the acquittal of Armand Carrel on charges of libelling Louis Philippe (No. 269).

Apart from the articles on France, most of what he had contributed since the end of 1833, even possibly his earlier attacks on the Grey Ministry, could come under the heading of helping one's friends, not that such help excludes in the least furthering one's principles. His reviews of Wilson (No. 231) and Sarah Austin (No. 256),<sup>100</sup> of Eliza Flower's new songs (No. 248), and his mention of the German periodical begun by Garnier, a refugee friend of Carrel's (Nos. 267 and 270), are interspersed with defences of the Poor Law proposals of Edwin Chadwick (Nos. 252 and 253) and the colonization scheme of Wakefield and Torrens (Nos. 259, 261, and 263). In his zeal for his friends, Mill broadened his audience by contributing to the *Morning Chronicle* in August an article on the Poor Law (No. 265) and in September one on Australian colonization (No. 271).

The articles on colonization throw very clear light on Mill's view of the best planned society possible in his own time; it is a far cry from the Saint-Simonians' M<sup>en</sup>ilmontant. He is most concerned, and quotes Wakefield approvingly at length in this cause, that the proper balance between land, labour, and capital be maintained. No country can be civilized and prosperous that does not possess various groups: some who own land; some who employ capital; and some who labour for the first two groups. There was no question here of anti-property doctrines; what was needed for present-day Englishmen at home or overseas was not the north star. But it was nevertheless the north star toward which Mill strove for the rest of his life to turn the faces of his countrymen.

## JANUARY 1835 TO JUNE 1846

It was not only the state of the revolution in France in the summer of 1834 that led Mill virtually to stop writing for Fonblanque. That summer Sir William Molesworth, a wealthy, young, devoted Radical, had offered the money for the longed-for periodical if his hero, John Stuart Mill, would edit it. Mill, who had just turned twenty-eight, was still a young man, one who knew his capabilities but had not yet found the proper field for their exertion. Excluded from direct politics, he eagerly took on the task of editing and writing for the *London Review*. His articles in dailies and weeklies became very occasional. In any case, for him England's politics were quite humdrum in the mid-1830s. The fervour surrounding the reform crisis had dissipated. Some

good legislation was passed. Ireland was an habitual problem—much the same as always—with Daniel O’Connell providing fireworks in the House but no dangerous blaze in the country. Lord Melbourne had replaced Grey, who gratefully retired back to the north, and was then himself briefly replaced in December by Sir Robert Peel, on the King’s initiative.<sup>101</sup> There was a stir over such a royal indiscretion but no one really thought that Silly Billy was plotting to become a despot. An election was held but Peel failed to win a majority despite his Tamworth Manifesto, and in April of 1835 Melbourne was again Prime Minister. The country was enjoying another of its periods of prosperity. Both the Chartists and the Anti-Corn Law Leaguers were no more than gleams in their future leaders’ eyes. There was some rioting, of course, but by and large Melbourne was considered to have overreacted to the Tolpuddle labourers (the Government pardoned the martyrs in 1836 and brought them home again). The Poor Law of 1834 was decidedly unpopular throughout the country, and it was fortunate that for the moment the meetings on the Yorkshire moors where Richard Oastler and James Raynor Stephens led thousands of men and women to demand the Ten Hours Bill had temporarily ceased after the Factory Act of 1833.

By the end of the decade, however, the country was stirring, but Mill did not turn back to newspapers even after he gave up the *Review* in 1840. In 1841 Sir Robert Peel succeeded Melbourne as Prime Minister, having failed to do so in 1839 thanks to the Bedchamber Crisis. Compared with 1819, the times were peaceful. But only in comparison. Mill knew the country could not yet be stable. And quite right he was; in 1842 the Plug Plot gave a taste of the violence the Oastlerites and the Chartists were threatening and the Anti-Corn Law League was predicting. This period of Mill’s journalism ends with the outbreak of the Irish famine and the repeal of the Corn Laws. By that time Mill had tried and failed to shape a radical party to complete the revolution—a completion undoubtedly appearing somewhat different to a man in his forties than it had to one in his twenties—and had instead established an unassailable reputation with his *Logic* (1843).

Understandably Mill did not write regularly for the newspapers during the frantic years of writing and editing the *London Review*.<sup>102</sup> The tale of Mill’s hopes and hardships with the *London* and *London and Westminster* has been told elsewhere.<sup>103</sup> He expended an enormous amount of effort and the last of his youthful ambitions as well as hard cash and five years of his life on the *London Review*. He wrote twenty-seven articles and part of eleven others until he withdrew from the editorship in 1840. But in spite of the excitement and work involved in preparing the first number, rather than neglect his friends he found time at the beginning of 1835 for a few newspaper notices. Eliza Flower’s *Songs of the Months* were mentioned as usual in the *Examiner* (No. 273); Nassau Senior’s pamphlet on National Property was reviewed twice—of course, favourably—in the *Sun* and in the *Morning Chronicle* (Nos. 272 and 275). As was not uncommon, long excerpts made up most of these articles. Senior criticized William IV’s independent action, and promoted the reduction of church endowments, municipal reform, and the admission of Dissenters to Oxford and Cambridge. He also advocated, calling forth Mill’s great approval, making peers eligible to sit in the House of Commons.

Mill stayed within the circle of his acquaintance when he contributed to the *Globe*; the *Globe* was still the *Globe and Traveller* and was still owned by Colonel Torrens. Walter Coulson had gone, and in 1834 it had come under the editorship of another of Mill's friends, John Wilson (who had just finished working on the factory commission with Edwin Chadwick). Mill wrote eight articles for the *Globe* from February to October 1835—the only paper he wrote for at that time. (Perhaps these articles were a *quid pro quo* for Wilson's contributions to the *London and Westminster Review*.)<sup>104</sup> Being longer leaders than most of those he had written for the *Examiner*, they gave him an opportunity to press his views before a wider and different, in fact, a Whig audience; at least it was widely believed that the *Globe* was used by Melbourne. Occupied as he was, however, he wrote only occasional pieces supporting particular persons or proposals. However, his article defending the “destructives,” a label bestowed on the Radicals by Mill's arch-enemy, *The Times*, contained an illuminating catalogue of what Radicals were made of at the beginning of 1835; Mill was first quoting and then amplifying the list in *The Times*: they were

for the ballot, for the separation of church and state, for the repeal of the union, and, it has the modesty to add, for an “equitable adjustment” with the fundholder . . . , corporation reform . . . , [and] repeal of the corn laws. . . . All who wish the reform bill to be made effectual by the improvement of the registration clauses, by disfranchising the corrupt freemen of such places as Norwich and Liverpool, and by getting rid of such of the smaller constituencies as have already become, beyond hope of redemption, close or rotten boroughs—all who wish that taxes should be taken off the necessaries of the poor instead of the luxuries of the rich—all who wish for local courts, or any other substitute for the irresponsible and incapable jurisdiction of the country magistracy—all who wish to see any measures introduced for the relief of the Dissenters but such as the Dissenters will indignantly reject—all who wish to see *the Universities reformed* . . . all who wish to see the church of England reformed, and all rational persons who do *not* wish to see it destroyed—all who wish to see the church of Ireland reduced to reasonable dimensions, and the national property . . . employed for the benefit of the unhappy oppressed Irish people . . . and, finally, all who will not endure that a dignitary of something calling itself a Protestant and English church shall go forth with armed men and assassinate the children and neighbours of a poor widow because she will not any longer give to him of her scanty substance the wages of a degrading tyranny. (No. 274.)

Although his style was less vituperative than formerly, his ideas were not moderated as he continued to lend his support to radical friends such as Charles Buller. In one article (No. 277), Mill was to help a very close friend indeed, himself. With his now customary practice of having one stone hit a flock of birds, his article promoted the first number of the new *London Review*; the author of one of the articles, J.A. Roebuck; one of his favourite subjects, corporation reform; one of his abiding interests, Ireland; and first and foremost, the Radicals in Parliament, with special mention for the proprietor of the *Review*, Sir William Molesworth, and a hint as to the line he should adopt in the House. All this he did in a long leader, only the first paragraph of which he had to compose; the rest he copied from Roebuck's article in the *London Review*. His skill, acquired

in youth, of getting the most for his time and effort was standing him in good stead in these incredibly busy months.

In 1835 he also gave support to two old allies in two articles on the Poor Law (Nos. 278 and 279). The first of these particularly praised Nassau Senior's careful analysis of the differences amongst countries that accounted for the varied success of the systems of relief. Mill stressed that most countries, like England, granted people a legal right to relief, but there was no such thing as a natural right. In October he lent support to the Radicals' proposal for reform of the House of Lords. He drew on the French experience to refute the possibility of the Government's making good appointments and to argue the necessity of those forming the Upper Chamber having the respect of the country. Mill wanted the House of Commons to choose the members of the House of Lords to ensure complete identity of interest: "But they would be a wiser, a more instructed and discreet body" (No. 281). Mill had been reading Tocqueville—his review in the *London Review* came out in the same month—and was here putting forward one solution to the problem about which he had become increasingly worried by Tocqueville's discussion of democracy (*A*, 199-201). In these letters he waxed eloquent over the virtues of an Upper House which in theory would be chosen by a House of Commons for whose judgment in practice Mill rarely showed much respect. They would choose men "whom they believed the most fitted in point of talents and acquirements," men "in whose intentions and in whose judgment they have full confidence" (No. 281). Such a conclusion seems born of the *a priori* reasoning of the earlier, much younger, Mill. He had not had a social laboratory in which to test this hypothesis.

The last piece of daily journalism Mill wrote that year was also about a friend's work—a laudatory review of two books for teaching young children arithmetic and perception, both published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and both by Horace Grant, a debating and walking-tour companion who worked beside Mill in the India Office. Mill's praise of Grant's system sounds very like his later description of his own education.

It has, for instance, been long felt that there are two methods of what is called instruction, which are as remote from each other as light from darkness. One of these is the system of *cram*; the other is the system of cultivating mental *power*. One proposes to stuff a child's memory with the results which have been got at by other people; [by] the other . . . the child acquires . . . ideas, and with those ideas the habit of really discovering truths for himself. . . . [H]e should be accustomed not to get by rote without understanding, but to understand, and not merely to understand, but whenever possible to find out for himself. (No. 282.)

Such strong praise from the young man of nearly thirty for a system obviously close to that he had himself experienced adds support to the words of the *Autobiography* and the positive feelings there expressed about the benefits he had received from his father's training (*A*, 33-5).

The son may have been consciously acknowledging a debt of which at that time he must have been acutely aware, for this was the last piece Mill wrote in the newspapers while his father was alive. He did not write for them again until the desolate year, 1836, was passed. James Mill's health had been deteriorating during 1835 and a rapid worsening of his tuberculosis brought his

death on 23 June, 1836, one of the few dates Mill specified in the *Autobiography*. The illness and death of his father increased not only the emotional and familial burden on him but also the editorial and literary one imposed by the *London and Westminster Review*.<sup>105</sup> Another shock was sustained the month after his father's death when Armand Carrel, the man who had provided much of the inspiration for assuming his present labours, was killed in a duel.<sup>106</sup> It is hardly surprising that Mill had to take three months' leave of absence to travel.<sup>107</sup> He took his two younger brothers with him as far as Lausanne; they stayed there while he continued to Italy, where Harriet Taylor joined him.

When he had returned, somewhat recovered, he began work on the *Logic*, a book for which he had long been planning. There is something awesome about a man who spends part of each twenty-four hours helping to direct the governing of India, part trying to direct the governing of England, and part analyzing the method of arriving at the principles that direct his directing, while fulfilling family obligations with devotion and sustaining a relationship with a demanding lady. The little that he contributed to the press at this time was written for personal reasons, either his person or a friend's.<sup>108</sup>

Gibbon Wakefield was given a long review (No. 283) in the *Examiner* and a second article (No. 284) in the *True Sun*, now edited by his old friend from the *Monthly Repository*, W.J. Fox, and owned by the long-time radical publisher Daniel Whittle Harvey, Member of Parliament for Southwark and one of Mill's hopes for his radical parliamentary party. Mill had long supported Wakefield's schemes; in addition, he may possibly have had shares in the new colony in South Australia. In return for his article in the *True Sun*, Mill got a long review from Fox for the *London and Westminster*—a brilliant example of multiple cuts with two strokes of the pen. Certainly friendship was the main reason for the placing of his piece on American banks (No. 285); Henry Cole, another old friend, had, under Mill's urging, undertaken a rival to the *Examiner* called the *Guide*. (It survived for only nine issues.)<sup>109</sup> His friends, J.P. Nichol, "who has carried into physical science a sounder philosophy than most mathematicians" (No. 286), William Molesworth, who had given a speech written by Mill at the end of 1834 (No. 287), and Lord Durham, who returned from Canada at the end of 1838 (the *Examiner* had noticed Mill's *London and Westminster Review* article, "Lord Durham and His Assailants," and then printed a long letter, signed "A.," in which Mill continued the discussion [No. 288]), completed the list of people for whom Mill wrote to the papers. Nothing more appeared until the summer of 1841.

Looking back and reassuming the feelings of defeat of the years 1836 to 1840 when he was running the *Review* and trying to forge a radical ginger group in Parliament,<sup>110</sup> Mill forgot how very much he had accomplished both within and without his own head.

I had, at the height of that reaction [against Benthamism], certainly become much more indulgent to the common opinions of society and the world, and more willing to be content with seconding the superficial improvement which had begun to take place in those common opinions, than became one whose convictions, on so many points, differed fundamentally from them. I was much more inclined, than I can now approve, to put in abeyance the more decidedly heretical part of my opinions, which

I now look upon as almost the only ones, the assertion of which tends in any way to regenerate society. (A, 237-9.)

Mill perhaps did less than justice to himself (as is frequently the case when he is seating himself in the shadow of Harriet). The lesson he had learnt from French politics by 1833 he had applied to English politics: “to make no compromise of *opinions*, except by avoiding any ill-timed declaration of them, but to negotiate the most advantageous compromises possible in actual *measures*” (No. 216).<sup>111</sup> Although in his more direct political commentary he had expressed approval for practical and somewhat limited reforms without presenting the wider philosophical context, and although in forwarding the reforms of his friends (who were fewer than they had been before he began preaching his new radicalism in the *London and Westminster Review* in 1837) he was sometimes less than incisive, he had nonetheless taken many opportunities to express, sometimes obliquely, his vision of the future to which the historical process would bring mankind. To combine an understanding of the art of the possible with a vision is an unusual accomplishment, and it was the basis for Mill’s extraordinary attraction and influence over many decades. He had acquired the gift from his father’s teaching, reinforced by political participation through journals and periodicals during the crucial revolutionary years.

Between 1841 and 1846 Mill prepared the *Logic* for the press, and then his *Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy*, and began the *Principles of Political Economy*. Understandably he was still writing very little for the press—what he did write was in the less radical *Morning Chronicle* (both Melbourne and Palmerston were now reputed to be using it). John Black had retired in 1841 but the new editor, Andrew Doyle, was well known to Mill. Quite predictably he wrote on behalf of his friends: his praise of Sterling’s poem, *The Election* (No. 290), and his enjoyment of its wit show genuine warmth; the particularity of his defence of Tocqueville and the warmongering of the French against Brougham is skilful if idiosyncratic (No. 296); a strong article (No. 293) drew attention to the *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* by Edwin Chadwick.<sup>112</sup> More significant and puzzling, for those—and there must have been many—who still did not fully grasp the Radicals’ historical point of view, would have been his praise, albeit somewhat backhanded, of Puseyism (Nos. 291 and 292); it would have been even more so had they known it came from the son of James Mill. He praised Newman and the Puseyites for “embracing not only a complete body of theology and philosophy, but a consistent theory of universal history” and he praised the mediaeval Catholic Church. There was more to this particular case than free speech. The fruitfulness of institutions for their own time was an essential part of his philosophy of history, and his friendship with d’Eichthal had recently encouraged more reading in this interest;<sup>113</sup> his review of Michelet<sup>114</sup> and his recently commenced correspondence with Auguste Comte show that the philosophy of history and within it the historical role of religion were occupying more and more of his attention.<sup>115</sup> His heart and mind were not in his journalism.

At the end of 1842, Mill wrote a despondent letter to Robert Barclay Fox:

But these things [public affairs, especially the Corn Laws], important as they are, do not occupy so much of my thoughts as they once did; it is becoming more & more



clearly evident to me that the mental regeneration of Europe must precede its social regeneration & also that none of the ways in which that mental regeneration is sought, Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Puseyism, Socialism, Chartism, Benthamism &c. will *do*, though doubtless they have all some elements of truth & good in them. I find quite enough to do in trying to make up my own mind as to the course which must be taken by the present great transitional movement of opinion & society. The little which I can dimly see, this country even less than several other European nations is as yet ripe for promulgating.116

The lack of enthusiasm can be felt. In a review of Torrens, Mill explained how Continental workmen could compete with the British:

Before a Continental operative can be as steady a workman as an Englishman, his whole nature must be changed: he must acquire both the virtues and the defects of the English labourer; he must become as patient, as conscientious, but also as care-worn, as anxious, as joyless, as dull, as exclusively intent upon the main chance, as his British compeer. He will long be of inferior value as a mere machine, because, happily for him, he cares for pleasure as well as gain. (No. 295.)

Mill might not have known what constituted happiness but he knew who had it not, and very depressing it was if prosperity could only be bought through joylessness. Nothing seemed advancing; nothing seemed certain, even in banking: “There is a fashion in mercantile, as well as in medical opinions. There is generally a favourite disease and a favourite remedy; and to know what these are we have seldom so much to consider the nature of the case as the date of the year, whether it is 1814 or 1844.” (No. 299.)

The most enthusiastic piece Mill wrote in the first half of 1846 and the last in this desultory period of journalism—a review in the *Spectator* of the first volumes of Grote’s *History of Greece*—combined his interest in history and in friends.117 His task was pleasant. His friendship with George and Harriet Grote, going back to his boyhood, had been strained in more recent years and now was under repair.118 Friendship was strengthened by his genuine admiration of Grote’s attempt at a philosophical history. Mill’s praise of Grote is based on two virtues of the historian in particular. Grote has an “unbiased opinion,” in contrast to Thirlwall, whose “impartiality seems rather that of a person who has no opinion”:

We do not say that an author is to write history with a purpose of bringing out illustrations of his own moral and political doctrines, however correct they may be. He cannot too carefully guard himself against any such temptation. . . . But we do say, that the mere facts, even of the most interesting history, are of little value without some attempt to show how and why they came to pass; . . . a history of Greece, which does not put in evidence the influences of Grecian institutions and of Grecian opinions and feelings—may be a useful work, but is not *the* history which we look for. . . . (No. 304.)

This unbiased opinion goes hand in glove with Grote’s “sympathy with the Greek mind,” his ability to recognize historical periods and the concomitant historical differentiation of men’s

ideas. For instance, Mill praises Grote for not separating legend and history, for recognizing that both are inextricably blended and “formed together the body of belief in the mind of a Greek” (No. 304). The Greeks lived in the infancy of the human race, and their minds are not to be seen simply as Victorian ones in Greek dress.

## OCTOBER 1846 TO JUNE 1847

The potato crop failed in Ireland in the summer of 1845; the people avoided starvation that winter by eating the seed potatoes. The full extent of the disaster became apparent only at the beginning of the following winter and precipitated the repeal of the Corn Laws in June 1846. The next month Lord John Russell’s Whigs replaced Peel’s bitterly divided Tories. But repeal could not save a potato-less Irish peasantry, and schemes for more direct relief were under consideration by Russell’s Government.

Mill’s newspaper writing, except for the occasional review, might well have ceased altogether by the mid-1840s. His professional career had prospered; he was now third in rank at the India Office with a handsome salary of £1200, very ample for a bachelor of mild tastes living at home with his mother and sisters. He continued to find the work congenial, leaving him time for his writing. The *Logic* had established his reputation as a serious thinker, and he was working now on the *Principles of Political Economy*. But two pressures acted on him to prevent his abandoning journalism: Ireland and Harriet Taylor.<sup>119</sup>

Mill turned his concentrated attention to influencing the Government’s Irish poor-relief policy. Putting aside the *Political Economy* (though he later used in it much of what he now wrote), Mill, between 5 October, 1846, and 7 January, 1847, a period of only ninety-four days, published forty-three articles

in the *Morning Chronicle* (which unexpectedly entered warmly into my purpose) urging the formation of peasant properties on the waste lands of Ireland. This was during the period of the famine, the winter of 1846/47, when the stern necessities of the time seemed to afford a chance of gaining attention for what appeared to me the only mode of combining relief to immediate destitution with permanent improvement of the social and economical condition of the Irish people. (A, 243.)

Mill shows himself in these articles very much aware that he is arguing a particular case for a particular time in history. The level of civilization which the Irish have reached—a very low one—is constantly before him. His solution is for the Irish as they actually behave in 1846, not as he or anyone else might think they ought to behave; but the more distant goal of the eventual improvement of their character is also constantly before him. Perhaps immediate charity was essential, at least “the whole English people are rushing frantically to expend any number of millions upon the present exigency,”<sup>120</sup> but, as Mill so happily puts it, “Anybody may have a fixed idea, on which he is inaccessible to reason, but it does not follow that he is never to add a second idea to it” (No. 322). This second idea was that any reform, as opposed to a temporary expedi-

ency, “must be something operating upon the minds of the people, and not merely upon their stomachs” (No. 316). He rejected the principle of outdoor relief; it had once pauperized the English peasantry and it would be no remedy now in Ireland. He discussed fixity of tenure but saw it as not only unjust to the landlord but also devoid of the beneficial effects of ownership of land. A large emigration of Irish was undesirable: “. . . Ireland must be an altered country at home before we can wish to create an Ireland in every quarter of the globe, and it is not well to select as missionaries of civilization a people who, in so great a degree, yet remain to be civilized” (No. 317).

There remained public works. If these were on roads, the result would be that the Irish labourer would prefer to work for the Government, which paid well, rather than for a landlord or for himself. Neither should these be on a landlord’s land at the expense of the Government because such a profit to the landlord was totally unjust (No. 331), nor through loans to the landlord for the same reason—the profit from this tragedy would be all on the one side. “It would be an actual crime to bestow all this wealth upon the landlords, without exacting an equivalent” (No. 324). In addition rents would increase, thus augmenting the injustice to the peasant. Finally Mill argued that the immediate effect of large-scale improvement of agriculture by the landlord was to diminish the number of people employed on the land.<sup>121</sup>

No, what Ireland needed was

something which will stir the minds of the peasantry from one end of Ireland to the other, and cause a rush of all the active spirits to take advantage of the boon for the first time proffered to them. We want something which may be regarded as a great act of national justice—healing the wounds of centuries by *giving*, not *selling*, to the worthiest and most aspiring sons of the soil, the unused portion of the inheritance of their conquered ancestors. (No. 321.)

This unused portion was the waste lands of Ireland. Those needing relief should be set to work and provided with tools to reclaim the uncultivated land, much of it bog; drainage projects should be supervised. The advantages of Mill’s scheme were manifold, and he pressed them home. The spirit of the Irish would be restored: “Trust to the feeling of proprietorship, that never-failing source of local attachments. When the cottage is theirs—when the land which surrounds it is theirs—there will be a pleasure in enlarging, and improving, and adorning the one and the other.” (No. 316.) Mill then outlined the benefits produced by small peasant properties (and at the same time praised his beloved France and his old friend Sismondi). It was at one time predicted that France would be a “pauper-warren,” but, quite to the contrary, it has been proved statistically that “the state of her rural population, who are four-fifths of the whole, has improved in every particular; that they are better housed, better clothed, better and more abundantly fed; that their agriculture has improved in quality; that all the productions of the soil have multiplied beyond precedent; that the wealth of the country has advanced, and advances with increasing rapidity, and the population with increasing slowness” (No. 328). It was absolutely vital that the opportunity should not be misused or lost:

We must give over telling the Irish that it is our business to find food for them. We must tell them, now and for ever, that it is *their* business. . . . They have a right, not to support at the public cost, but to aid and furtherance in finding support for themselves. They have a right to a repeal of all laws and a reform of all social systems which improperly impede them in finding it, and they have a right to their fair share of the raw material of the earth. (No. 337.)

At the end of the year Mill thought he had triumphed and that it was now certain that the reclaiming of waste lands and the resettling of the peasantry would form at least part of any Government plan (Nos. 348 and 351). When Mill heard in January that the Treasury was suggesting further loans to landlords, just when he understood the Government to be preparing “a general plan for the reclamation of waste lands, in which the claims of the peasantry to receive some share in the common inheritance of the whole nation are not overlooked,” he was appalled (No. 352). The cup of victory was to be dashed from his lips by administrative fiat. On 7 January Mill brought his series to a close; he had done all he could during the parliamentary recess to influence policy.

When Mill ceased to write the leaders on Ireland for the *Morning Chronicle*, he did not give up entirely trying to stay the madness. He wrote four leaders controverting John Wilson Croker, another on the debates in the House of Commons, three condemning the proposed Irish Poor Law, a scathing one on the proposed National Fast, and a melancholy one on emigration from Ireland. On balance, Mill was on the losing side, and the bitterness of the defeat provoked some of his more brilliant displays of verbal acidity. He was not prepared for one minute to admit that peasant proprietors in France or anywhere else in Europe farmed badly. The principal cause of poor agriculture in France, contrary to Croker’s view, was “the exclusive taste of the wealthy and middle classes for town life and town pursuits, combined with the general want of enterprise of the French nation with respect to industrial improvements. . . . The thing would be soon done if the love of industrial progress should ever supplant in the French mind the love of national glory, or if the desire of national glorification should take that direction.” (No. 357.) France was still beloved, but the years since 1830 had left their mark.

On the proposed National Fast (No. 363), Mill cut loose with controlled satiric venom. He almost found delight in the depths of hypocrisy of a people who, professing to believe that God’s wrath had descended upon them for their “manifold sins and provocations,” and who, praying with penitent hearts to Him to “withdraw his afflicting hand,” could, in order thus to profess and pray, move the Queen’s drawing-room from Wednesday to Saturday. Even his friends got the back of his tongue—but only in private. “Roebuck . . . is enlisting his talents in support of the madness. . . . Molesworth, except that he has only made one speech instead of fifty, is just as bad.”<sup>122</sup> By the end of March his despair was complete.

The people are all mad, and nothing will bring them to their senses but the terrible consequences they are certain to bring on themselves. . . . Fontenelle said that mankind must pass through all forms of error before arriving at truth. The form of error we are now possessed by is that of making *all* take care of *each*, instead of stimu-

lating and helping each to take care of himself; and now this is going to be put to a terrible trial, which will bring it to a crisis and a termination sooner than could otherwise have been hoped for.<sup>123</sup>

However close Mill was to come to a “qualified Socialism” (*A*, 199), the Irish experience when incorporated in the *Political Economy* suggested no more than that property in land was a legitimate area for government intervention. The Saint-Simonian hypothesis might be said to have been tested against the reality of County Clare and the time found far from ripe. Mill’s historical sense was reinforced; time determined measures. Whatever the future might hold, whatever form of socialism was to evolve, his view of the Irish peasantry had strengthened his belief that “the object to be principally aimed at in the present stage of human improvement, is not the subversion of the system of individual property, but the improvement of it, and the full participation of every member of the community in its benefits.”<sup>124</sup>

Mill’s socialism was an integral part of his sense of historical progression, the approaching stage in the human development; that belief had not altered since he had first met Saint-Simonian ideas. But if Bentham has to be watched for his shift in mood from “is” to “ought,” a keen eye has to be kept on Mill’s tenses. He does not always make clear what is an “actual measure” and what a “plan of thorough reform”; although they are in the same line of progression, the multiplication of peasant proprietors and the nationalization of the land belong to different levels of civilization.

During that spring, Mill wrote for the *Morning Chronicle* only two pieces not on Ireland:<sup>125</sup> a review (No. 360) of the article on “Centralisation” in the *Edinburgh Review* by his old tutor and friend John Austin<sup>126</sup> and a report (No. 366) on the opening of the Prussian Diet. Both are fine examples of Mill’s historical relativism, which his less historically-minded friends, and more particularly his enemies, sometimes found puzzling and smacking of inconsistency and radical opportunism.<sup>127</sup> He wrote to Austin, discussing his review: “I have necessarily thought a good deal about it lately for the purposes of a practical treatise on Pol. Economy & I have felt the same difficulty which you feel about the *axiomata media*. I suspect there are none which do not vary with time, place & circumstance.”<sup>128</sup> A good example was Austin’s discussion of the reform of local government which should have both an immediate end, the provision of “a good administration of local affairs,” the means for which might vary between time and place—between, say, France in 1831 and England in 1835, to provide Mill with an example from his own past advocacy—and “its ulterior and paramount object,” the “social education of the country at large” (No. 360). In the article on the opening of the Prussian Diet he praised both an enlightened despot and a democratic diet; each benefited the country at the appropriate stage of its development.

This last piece marked the end of an era for Mill; the *Morning Chronicle*, for which he had written from his youth, was to become an organ for the Conservatives under the new ownership of Lord Cardwell and Beresford Hope. Although Mill would still have access to its pages, they were no longer the pages wherein he joined with like-minded men who had “carried criticism & the spirit of reform” into English institutions; the sense of belonging was gone.<sup>129</sup>

Another of Mill's long-time friends and mentors claimed his attention before the summer break. George Grote had published volumes three and four of his *History of Greece* and Mill gave them a long, careful review in the *Spectator* (No. 368), underlining again the historical relativism which informed his understanding and analysis of his own times. He praised once more Grote's understanding of the Greek mind and his ability to communicate that understanding. But above all he lauded Grote's achievement in ascribing the enlightenment in the first place "to her unlimited Democracy" (qualified by a footnote noting the omission of women, aliens, and slaves); "and secondly, to the wise precautions, unknown to the other free states of Greece, by which the sagacity of Solon and of Cleisthenes had guarded the workings of Athenian institutions against the dangers to which they were most liable [from unlimited Democracy],—precautions which insensibly moulded the mind of the Demos itself, and made it capable of its heritage of freedom" (No. 368). Reading the *History*, Mill said, strengthened the arguments that had already led him to complete agreement with the author's conclusions. Grote's *History* no doubt lent added force to some of the passages in *On Liberty* and increased Mill's delight in Hare's proportional representation; but Tocqueville needed little support. For by the summer of 1847 Mill's mind was set in most of its ways. Grote was not altering but confirming Mill's own conclusions by providing more of the necessary "verification and correction" which come "from the general remarks afforded . . . by history respecting times gone by."130

#### DECEMBER 1847 TO JULY 1858

During the next eleven years—years that began with the collapse of the Chartists and ended, after the Indian Mutiny, with the Crown taking over the East India Company—John Stuart Mill is to the outside eye a rather curious, almost a pathetic, figure. Alexander Bain said bluntly of the forty-one-year-old Mill, "His work, as a great originator, in my opinion, was done."131 He lived almost in seclusion and was frequently in a low state. Although he had received great respect (as well as money) for his *Logic* and his *Political Economy* and had now an established public reputation, that to which he had devoted his life had not been achieved. The moral elevation of Europe, never mind England, seemed no nearer. Despite his position as a public sage and his vast, almost semi-official, correspondence, he had not been able to inspire the people, or their leaders (or the one leader), with the great principles needed to propel civilization onward. Mill seemed little impressed with the practical reforms that had been achieved. They appear, with hindsight, to have been vast: repeal of the Combination Acts, reform of Parliament, effective factory legislation, the abolition of slavery, an education grant, the new Poor Law (of which indeed he approved at length), rationalized municipal institutions, and repeal of the Corn Laws, none of these—not all of them combined—seemed to bring lasting satisfaction to Mill. The country was better off; prosecutions of the press and of the individual were far less frequent; the labouring classes were of national concern. But to Mill the country was still mean.132 The practical reforms for which he had once striven in the belief that their effects would be the moral education of mankind had proved ineffectual.

For a considerable time after this [the publication of the *Political Economy*], I published no work of magnitude; though I still occasionally wrote in periodicals. . . . During these years I wrote or commenced various Essays, for eventual publication, on some of the fundamental questions of human and social life. . . . I continued to watch with keen interest the progress of public events. But it was not, on the whole, very encouraging to me. The European reaction after 1848, and the success of an unprincipled usurper in December 1851, put an end, as it seemed, to all present hope for freedom or social improvement in France and the Continent. In England, I had seen and continued to see many of the opinions of my youth obtain general recognition, and many of the reforms in institutions, for which I had through life contended, either effected or in course of being so. But these changes had been attended with much less benefit to human well being than I should formerly have anticipated, because they had produced very little improvement in that which all real amelioration in the lot of mankind depends on, their intellectual and moral state: and it might even be questioned if the various causes of deterioration which had been at work in the meanwhile, had not more than counterbalanced the tendencies to improvement. I had learnt from experience that many false opinions may be exchanged for true ones, without in the least altering the habits of mind of which false opinions are the result. The English public . . . have thrown off certain errors [but] the general discipline of their minds, intellectually and morally, is not altered. I am now convinced, that no great improvements in the lot of mankind are possible, until a great change takes place in the fundamental constitution of their modes of thought. (A, 245.)

In this intellectual frame of mind the political events in England during the next eleven years affected him little—at least publicly. The climax, or anti-climax, of the Chartist demonstration rained out on Kennington Common drew no more public comment from him than the political manoeuvrings of the Peelites.<sup>133</sup> He did not comment in the newspapers on the Crimean War with all its mismanagement, even when Roebuck's motion for an inquiry toppled the Government, nor on the Indian Mutiny.

Political events in France in 1848, however, roused him to write three items; Carlyle's views on Ireland prompted two articles; Joseph Hume's motion for Parliamentary reform elicited three articles; and Alexander Bain got a review. Those nine items were all he wrote for the papers in 1848. Although the establishment of a Provisional Government in France in February 1848 had not the effect on Mill of the one eighteen years earlier, he was briefly exhilarated: "I am hardly yet out of breath from reading and thinking about it" was how he put it. "If France succeeds in establishing a republic and reasonable republican government, all the rest of Europe, except England and Russia, will be republicanised in ten years, and England itself probably before we die. There never was a time when so great a drama was being played out in one generation."<sup>134</sup> Perhaps not bliss to be alive but very stirring. However, Mill was prompted initially to no more in the newspapers than a letter to the editor of the *Spectator* (No. 370). In August after the street fighting in June and the suppression of the insurrectionists by General Louis Cavaignac—a name that must have stirred memories for Mill—he denied the Tory press's claim "that the insurrection

was something unheard-of for its horrible barbarity” (No. 376). No barbarous actions had taken place and France was advancing rapidly but calmly. Ten days later, France had ceased advancing and Mill was not calm; his tone was one of outrage verging on disbelief as he expostulated against the gagging of the press by the executive commission supported by a democracy which had proved to be conservative. He had seen it all before: “It is the very law of Louis Philippe . . . ” (No. 378). Once again, as he had more than a decade earlier, Mill defended the young men who were forced to take up arms against their repressors. But it was a disillusioned voice that asked, “How much longer must we wait for an example, anywhere in Europe, of a ruler or a ruling party who really desire fair play for any opinions contrary to their own?” (No. 378) without which the spark of progress cannot be struck.<sup>135</sup>

Mill’s equilibrium was further upset that spring by Carlyle’s response to the disturbances in Ireland. The prophet was now prophesying for the wrong tribe, calling for force, preaching false doctrines about Ireland and England and also throwing in a few heresies on France and on the Chartist demonstration. The crowning touch was that his ravings appeared in the *Examiner*—a sad result of Fonblanque’s retirement and replacement by John Forster. Just when Mill was feeling that the future direction of Europe hung in the balance—wondering whether in England and in all Europe “faith in improvement, and determination to effect it, will become general, and the watchword of improvement will once more be, as it was of old, the emancipation of the oppressed classes” (No. 376)—Carlyle wrote prophesying anarchy and doom and citing France as proof. Mill trumpeted back, his sarcasm reaching sublime heights as he fought against this political incarnation of intuitionism. Carlyle said it was England’s mission to pacify Ireland. Mill first pointed slyly to the example of Cromwell; he who had had the authority and “courage and capacity of the highest order” had not succeeded. “But at present the individual in whom England is personified, and who is to regard himself as the chosen instrument of heaven for making Ireland what it ought to be, and is encouraged to carry fire and sword through Ireland if that assumption should be disputed, is—Lord John Russell!” (No. 372.) And how had England proved herself after four-and-a-half centuries of rule over Ireland fitted to fulfil her mission? “They spent ten millions in effecting what seemed impossible—in making Ireland worse than before. They demoralized and disorganized what little of rational industry the country contained; and the only permanent thing with which they endowed Ireland, was the only curse which her evil destiny seemed previously to have spared her—a bad poor law.” (No. 372.) The prophet of rationalism could also thunder from the mountain tops when roused. In his letter to the *Examiner* Mill quoted the Bible three times and Homer once.

A much sunnier note is struck in the three leaders Mill wrote in July 1848 (Nos. 373, 374, and 375) for the *Daily News*, supporting the motion of his father’s old friend, Joseph Hume, for Parliamentary reform. The move to the *Daily News* was entirely natural, both the *Morning Chronicle* and the *Examiner* having fallen into less congenial hands. The *Daily News*, whose first leader had been written by W.J. Fox, was the foremost liberal London paper.<sup>136</sup> Its present editor was Eyre Evans Crowe, who had been a resident in France in 1830 and an enthusiastic witness to the street fighting, later Paris correspondent for the *Morning Chronicle*, and writer of a history of France for Lardner’s *Cabinet Cyclopaedia*. A congenial editor, obviously, of a paper under the equally conge-



nial ownership of the Dilke family. The *Morning Chronicle* under Black and then Doyle had been serious; the *Daily News* was determined to be popular. It succeeded admirably, and, with a circulation briefly of over ten thousand a day, rivalled the influence of *The Times* and far surpassed that of the *Morning Chronicle*. Mill's style was bright and clever, proving that he was quite master of his pen, able to write to an editor's direction.

Mill's message was the same in 1848 as in 1830: there was nothing to fear from reform; the natural order would not be turned upside down; from historical progress all would benefit. Mill used the example of France, which now had "universal" suffrage (Mill did not stop this time to qualify his use of the term), and yet not twenty members in an assembly of nine hundred were working class.

Then what has France gained, it may be asked, or what would England gain by the admission of the working classes to the franchise? A gain beyond all price, the effects of which may not show themselves in a day, or in a year, but are calculated to spread over and elevate the future. . . .

Grant but a democratic suffrage, and all the conditions of government are changed. . . . The discussions of parliament and of the press would be, what they ought to be, a continued course of political instruction for the working classes. (No. 374.)

Here again speaks the spirit of the age. "The present age . . . is an age of struggle between conflicting principles ["between the instincts and immediate interests of the propertied classes and those of the unpropertied"] which it is the work of this time, and perhaps of many generations more, to bring into a just relation one with another" (No. 374). The peroration also could have been written any time in the last two decades: "The world will rally round a truly great principle, and be as much the better for the contest as for the attainment; but the petty objects by the pursuit of which no principle is asserted, are fruitless even when attained" (No. 375).

Mill's occasional journalism in 1848 ended abruptly in the summer (although in September he managed a promotion of Bain's first of four lectures for a course "On the Application of Physics to Common Life" [No. 379]), when his health, already weak from the labour involved in writing the *Principles*, was further aggravated by a nasty fall. According to Bain,

In treating the hurt, a belladonna plaster was applied. An affection of his eyes soon followed, which he had knowledge enough at once to attribute to the belladonna, and disused the plaster forthwith. For some weeks, however, he was both lame and unable to use his eyes. I never saw him in such a state of despair. Prostration of the nervous system may have aggravated his condition. His elasticity of constitution brought him through once more; but in the following year, 1849, he was still in an invalid condition.<sup>137</sup>

The year 1849 was not a good one for Mill. The first six months were full of disaster, both public and private. Louis Napoleon had beaten Cavaignac by some four million votes to become President of France. England's reforming spirit was buried beneath relief and satisfaction at having withstood unscathed the European upheavals. Mill's health was still very poor: although his

leg healed slowly and his eyes gradually improved, his overall depression remained. His friendship with the Austins, which went back to the time when he played with little Lueie in the garden at Queen Square Place, had not survived the disagreements over the Revolution of 1848 in France, and now they were planning to remove with the Guizots to the neighbourhood of Walton-on-Thames, where Harriet Taylor had kept a country home since 1839. Their presence would necessitate her moving, she claimed. To return permanently to Kent Terrace was out of the question; the dedication of the *Political Economy* to her had elicited very sharp words from John Taylor.<sup>138</sup> Her health was poor; her own family upset her beyond enduring; her father was seriously ill (in fact, terminally); her lover was hobbling, partially blind and depressed. She fled to the Continent. Only the prospect of joining her there in April lightened Mill's gloom. That and reading volumes five and six of Grote's *History*. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that no new ideas were developed in the three newspaper articles he wrote in the first six months of 1849. All appeared in March, two in the *Spectator* favourably reviewing Grote (Nos. 380 and 381)—there was far more quotation than review—and one, with Harriet's encouragement, in the *Daily News* on the admission of Jews to Parliament (No. 382).<sup>139</sup>

The year which had begun so badly went steadily downhill. By the summer, Mill's emotional frame of mind was, if anything, worse. Harriet Taylor had refused to accede to her husband's implied request in a letter telling of his increasing ill health that she come home at the end of March.<sup>140</sup> She had replied that she had a duty to Mill and could not consider her own wishes; it was her duty to follow through with the arrangements to meet him at Bagnères in the Pyrenees in April. She arrived home in the middle of May to find her husband in the last stages of cancer. She nursed him hysterically until his death on 18 July, 1849. For the rest of the year, Mill himself published alone<sup>141</sup> just four short pieces, keeping faith with people who had striven for their ideals and been crushed by a philistine world. He added the prestige of his voice to the plea for the Hungarian refugees who had fled to Turkey and were in danger of being handed back to the Czar (Nos. 384 and 385), and with a touch of his old economy got in a slap at France who, "in a moment of insanity, has given herself up for four years to the discretion of the relative (by marriage), and servile tool of the Emperor of Russia, by whose help he hopes to be made Emperor of France" (No. 384), and at the British public who could not be trusted "for support in any energetic and generous course of action in foreign affairs" (No. 385). As always loyal to, and admiring of, any followers of Saint-Simonism, he drew the public's attention to the persecution of Etienne Cabet on trial for fraud in the United States and of Jules Lechevalier prosecuted in France (Nos. 386 and 387). They were men of noble character, dedicated, in the words of Cabet's followers living with him in his utopian community, "to the moral education of mankind" (No. 386). Such dedication was a flame to be cherished in a dark world.

John Taylor's death had done nothing to lighten it, as some might callously have expected. There is no question that it was a dreadful blow to them. It was a sad and very unsettling event; while he was alive, the Mill-Taylor relationship, if far from ideal, had been stable, and custom had made it familiar. Now all was open once more to public speculation, and their small circle of acquaintance and family could not help but be turning on them those prying eyes they both so loathed. They withdrew into even deeper seclusion, and perhaps not surprisingly in 1850 they

resumed their joint productions,<sup>142</sup> initiated in 1846 just before the series on Ireland. These articles, mostly on domestic brutality, have been largely overlooked by modern critics. The understandable prejudice against Harriet Taylor, certainly not lessened by Mill's indiscreet praises of her; the instinctive dislike of accepting his reversal of the most obviously reasonable view of their intellectual relationship; the diffuse, if not scattered, composition of parts of the articles; and the offensively Punch and Judy nature of the subject matter—all these factors have led to a somewhat embarrassed ignoring of the roughly twenty articles of their joint production. They are cited very rarely and then mostly only for evidence either of the deleterious influence Harriet Taylor had on John Mill or of his besotted state. These joint productions ought not, however, to be passed over.

The passage in the *Autobiography* quoted at the beginning of this section makes clear that in his mid-forties Mill was looking for an explanation of the failure of Europe and England to produce any real improvement in the lot of mankind. Europe had had revolutions; England had had reforms; and yet the expected, eagerly awaited leap forward had not taken place. Why was there so little improvement in the “intellectual and moral state”? How could it be that “the general discipline” of people's minds, “intellectually and morally, [was] not altered”? All the reforms had brought no satisfaction because no “great change” had taken place “in the fundamental constitution of their modes of thought.” Mill's convictions would incline him to the conclusion that there must exist an anachronistic social institution—or institutions—that was damming up the historical process, and that he and his fellow Radicals had so far not exposed. Radical analysis had failed to reveal the next step for the improvement of mankind. By intuition Harriet Taylor succeeded.

Mill's disclaimer of having learnt from Harriet Taylor to recognize the claims of women is well known. His acknowledgment of that which he did come to understand through her is almost equally unknown.

Undoubtedly however this conviction was at that time, in my mind, little more than an abstract principle: it was through her teaching that I first perceived and understood its practical bearings; her rare knowledge of human nature, and perception and comprehension of moral and social influences, shewed me (what I should never have found out in more than a very vague way for myself) the mode in which the consequences of the inferior position of women intertwine themselves with all the evils of existing society and with the difficulties of human improvement. Without her I should probably always have held my present opinions on the question, but it would never have become to me as, with the deepest conviction, it now is, the great question of the coming time: the most urgent interest of human progress, involving the removal of a barrier which now stops the way, and renders all the improvements which can be effected while it remains, slight and superficial. (*A*, 252.)

The vast “practical bearings” and “the consequences of the inferior position of women” were illuminated for Mill by the reports of legal proceedings, frequently concerning brutality, to which Harriet Taylor drew his attention. Together they tested the new hypothesis “by common experi-

ence respecting human nature in our own age.”<sup>143</sup> He became convinced that injustice and tyranny were perpetuated in society by the familial arrangements between the sexes. When these were changed, only then would come about the fundamental reconstitution of modes of thought.<sup>144</sup>

This belief was a natural enough development in Mill’s thought. He had been first stirred by the possibilities of reshaping society through law reform; he accepted unreservedly associationist psychology; he lived in a society that believed fervently in the moral superiority of women and their irreplaceable civilizing role in the family. The belief in phases of history and the seeking of causes for the characteristics of each age were essential to his way of thinking; his interest in ethology led him to contemplate a book on the subject; and his faith for the future had always been reliant on the working class. In the most basic of all social relationships, that between man and woman, was to be found the explanation of working-class brutishness and the fundamental cause, and therefore the remedy, of “one of the chief hindrances to human improvement.”<sup>145</sup> Equality for women was to become “a badge of advanced liberalism”;<sup>146</sup> his having raised the question of women’s suffrage, was, he said, “by far the most important, perhaps the only really important public service I performed in the capacity of a Member of Parliament” (*A*, 285).

Their joint productions began to appear, very infrequently, at the beginning of 1846 in a manner quite reminiscent of the youthful Mill’s articles in the *Morning Chronicle*. Specific cases were used as springboards to the larger questions lying behind certain legal practices. The acquittal of the brutal Captain Johnstone (No. 303) on a charge of murder led to a discussion of “temporary insanity” as a legal fiction; the conviction by twelve Surrey tradesmen of Dr. Ellis (No. 305) for professional incompetence raised the questions whether medical practitioners ought to be held responsible for the results of treatment sought by the patient and whether a jury picked at random was competent to judge such treatment; and the case of Private Matthewson (No. 307) brought forth once again Mill’s theme of the need for disinterested judges. By the end of 1846 the Mill-Taylor interest had become more focused. The three cases of Sarah Brown (No. 318), William Burn (No. 329), and the North family (No. 350) all had to do with family relationships and the iniquitous consequences of the subordinate position of wives and children. Contemplation of these inequalities before the law led to strong conclusions about the married state, the brutality of some husbands, and the helplessness of all wives. Mill had known since he was a boy that the second-class position of women could not be upheld by *a priori* reasoning; through Harriet Taylor he learnt to feel it insupportable, and to understand its consequences. When Mill sent Eugène Sue a copy of his *Political Economy* in 1848 he wrote, “sur le mariage et sur l’entière égalité de droits entre les hommes et les femmes les opinions de l’auteur de ‘Martin’ et du ‘Juif Errant’ sont non seulement les miennes mais j’ai la conviction profonde que la liberté, la démocratie, la fraternité, ne sont nulle part si ce n’est dans ces opinions, et que l’avenir du progrès social et moral ne se trouve que là.”<sup>147</sup>

By 1850 the principle had been more fully developed and was more clearly applied. The persistence in society, especially among the lower classes, of coarseness—a combination of brutality and tyranny—was the result of the formative years being spent in domestic relations where the

law recognized the rights of men only, refusing any to wives and children, and where, consequently, mistreatment of those weaker, either because of age or sex, was commonplace, physical chastisement being, if not encouraged, certainly not discouraged by society. In Mill's youth self-interest had been the root cause of evil, circumstances being seen as capable of redirecting it to good. Then political institutions had been blamed for society's lack of progress in civilization. Reform had come but not progress. In these articles, guided by Harriet Taylor's "rare knowledge of human nature, and perception and comprehension of moral and social influences," Mill the scientist traced the flaws in society to the nurturing of its citizens in an atmosphere of brutality, tyranny, and injustice.

The series of letters in 1850<sup>148</sup> starts out with one on the Californian constitution (No. 388); nearly half of the letter is devoted to the granting of married women's property rights. Harriet Taylor herself had suffered greatly in spirit if not in body from the law's most universal injustice to women—the deprivation of all civil rights upon marriage.<sup>149</sup> Women legally disappeared *sous couverture*. The law then had to assume, and it did, that all members of the family were subsumed under the male head. In society generally, but particularly among the lower classes, this fiction was reflected in a common attitude that inflicted degradation and hardship on wives and children:

The baser part of the populace think that when a legal power is given to them over a living creature—when a person, like a thing, is suffered to be spoken of as their own—as *their* wife, or *their* child, or *their* dog—they are allowed to do what they please with it; and in the eye of the law—if such judgments as the preceding are to be taken as its true interpretation—they are justified in supposing that the worst they can do will be accounted but as a case of slight assault. (No. 400; cf. No. 395.)

The law positively encouraged brutality in the family (No. 389). Wife or child beating should be regarded with greater revulsion than common assaults outside the home. Those most affected, tragically, are "the wives and children of the brutal part of the population," and on their torturers the law should be harshest (No. 400).

The law's callous sufferance of wife beating was all the more deplorable because it deprived a woman of any alternative to dependence on her husband. Thanks to the law she could not leave him to escape his brutality because legally all her earnings belonged to him. In these circumstances could there be a greater injustice than that inflicted by a law which fined a husband for a barbarous cruelty but did not protect the wife from future torture? Mill cited the case of a man acquitted on charges of attempted murder on the evidence of his terrified wife, who said he had hanged her only in jest, "for what would have been the consequence to her of having given strong evidence against him, in the event of his acquittal?" (No. 400.)<sup>150</sup> Husbands could beat their wives and, if they chanced to kill them, they would be tried for manslaughter. "Is it because juries are composed of husbands in a low rank of life, that men who kill their wives almost invariably escape—wives who kill their husbands, never? How long will such a state of things be permitted to continue?" (No. 393.) Insidiously destructive was the habitual violence, the daily brutality, that never came to court.

Let any one consider the degrading moral effect, in the midst of these crowded dwellings, of scenes of physical violence, repeated day after day—the debased, spirit-broken, down-trodden condition of the unfortunate woman, the most constant sufferer from domestic brutality in the poorer classes, unaffectedly believing herself to be out of the protection of the law—the children born and bred in this moral atmosphere—with the unchecked indulgence of the most odious passions, the tyranny of physical force in its coarsest manifestations, constantly exhibited as the most familiar facts of their daily life—can it be wondered if they grow up without any of the ideas and feelings which it is the purpose of moral education to infuse, without any sense of justice or affection, any conception of self-restraint. . . . (No. 390.)

Brutal treatment in childhood prepared the victim “for being a bully and a tyrant. He will feel none of that respect for the personality of other human beings which has not been shown towards his own. The object of his respect will be power.” (No. 396.)<sup>151</sup> Domestic tyranny and the brutality that accompanied it, encouraged as they were in society by the courts’ tolerance, had a profound, an historically crucial, effect on society.

The great majority of the inhabitants of this and of every country—including nearly the whole of one sex, and all the young of both—are, either by law or by circumstances stronger than the law, subject to some one man’s arbitrary will [and] it would show a profound ignorance of the effect of moral agencies on the character not to perceive how deeply depraving must be the influence of such a lesson given from the seat of justice. It cannot be doubted that to this more than to any other single cause is to be attributed the frightful brutality which marks a very large proportion of the poorest class, and no small portion of a class much above the poorest. (No. 390.)

Seen in the light of their belief in its vast social ramifications, Harriet Taylor’s plea “that her Majesty would take in hand this vast and vital question of the extinction of personal violence by the best and surest means—the illegalising of corporal punishment, domestic as well as judicial, at any age” (No. 383) was foolish only from its impracticability. Failing the Queen, two acts were needed immediately to reform the law to prevent its continuing inculcation of domestic brutality and tyranny.<sup>152</sup> “There should be a declaratory Act, distinctly setting forth that it is *not* lawful for a man to strike his wife, any more than to strike his brother or his father. . . . It seems almost inconceivable that the smallest blow from a man to a man should be by law a criminal offence, and yet that it should not be—or should not be known to be—unlawful for a man to strike a woman.” And there should be “a short Act of Parliament, providing that judicial conviction of gross maltreatment should free the victim from the obligation of living with the oppressor, and from all compulsory subjection to his power—leaving him under the same legal obligation as before of affording the sufferer the means of support, if the circumstances of the case require it” (No. 395). Given the state of the unreformed law, Mill’s renunciation of his rights in 1851 seems a little less quixotic.

Harriet Taylor’s interest in cases of domestic brutality, whatever its origins, profoundly influenced John Stuart Mill’s understanding of the present condition of society and its historical de-

velopment. It had provided an environmental cause—and hence a remediable one—of the condition of the working classes to refute the anti-democratic assumption of the innate brutishness of the lower orders. In the laboratory of the courts the hypothesis that men and women were not irredeemable brutes by nature but depraved by and, therefore, salvageable by nurture, had been tested and proved (though there remained some question as to the extent of man's redemption). The importance of these ideas for Mill's future thought and actions should not be ignored. The joint productions themselves are not major works, but they should be taken seriously as the exploration of a significant new element that Mill was adding to his basic beliefs about the necessary steps towards the improvement of mankind.

The parallels with the *Subjection of Women* are too obvious to need elaboration.<sup>153</sup> The very tones were recaptured, although Mill now worked alone: "the wife is the actual bondservant of her husband: no less so, as far as legal obligation goes, than slaves commonly so called"; "the full power of tyranny with which the man is legally invested"; "however brutal a tyrant she may unfortunately be chained to—though she may know that he hates her, though it may be his daily pleasure to torture her, and though she may feel it impossible not to loathe him—he can claim from her and enforce the lowest degradation of a human being. . . . While she is held in this worst description of slavery as to her own person, what is her position in regard to the children in whom she and her master have a joint interest? They are by law *his* children. . . . Not one act can she do towards . . . them, except by delegation from him. Even after he is dead she is not their legal guardian. . . ." <sup>154</sup> "The family is a school of despotism, in which the virtues of despotism, but also its vices, are largely nourished."<sup>155</sup> The book was written to show that "the legal subordination of one sex to the other . . . is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement. . . ." <sup>156</sup> It was from working with Harriet that this truth had been borne in upon him.

Denial of the suffrage was the political side of the legal subordination. Although Mill did not designate as a joint production his letter to the *Leader* (No. 398)<sup>157</sup> of 17 August, 1850, on the stability of society, it certainly dealt with a subject they had talked over together. Harriet Taylor was already working on her article on the enfranchisement of women,<sup>158</sup> and there is no doubt that Mill expressed their mutual views in this early public advocacy of women's suffrage. The letter started as a reply to a gentleman who had written that society without strict divorce laws to guide it would run aground. There was a humorously presented analysis of what society's being on a sandbank could possibly mean: understanding what it meant for a ship to come upon a sandbank, Mill wanted "to have it made equally clear to me what would happen if, in consequence of permitting facility of divorce, 'society' should . . . come upon a sandbank." Mill went on in more serious vein to point out that in two other letters, one in favour of divorce and one in favour of extended suffrage, "the writer shows the most unaffected unconsciousness that anybody has an interest in the matter except the *man*," whereas women have more need of facility for divorce, and every argument for men's voting applies equally to women's voting.

But this entire ignoring of women, as if their claim to the same rights as the other half of mankind were not even worth mentioning, stares one in the face from every

report of a speech, every column of a newspaper. In your paper of the 27th ultimo, there is a long letter signed Homo, claiming the “right of the suffrage” as justly belonging to every *man*, while there is not one line of his argument which would not be exactly as applicable if “woman” were read instead of “man;” yet the thought never appears to occur to him. In a Conservative this would be intelligible—monopoly, exclusion, privilege, is his general rule; but in one who demands the suffrage on the ground of abstract right, it is an odious dereliction of principle, or an evidence of intellectual incompetence. While the majority of men are excluded, the insult to women of their exclusion as a class is less obvious. But even the present capricious distribution of the franchise has more semblance of justice and rationality than a rule admitting all men to the suffrage and denying it to all women. (No. 398.)

It is little wonder, with the memories of what they had once talked over together, that Mill had noticeably to pause to control his emotions after he began to speak in the House of Commons on 20 May, 1867, moving to substitute “person” for “man” in the Representation of the People Bill.

After their marriage in April 1851 until Harriet’s death in November 1858 Mill wrote for the papers hardly at all: eight pieces in as many years; in 1851 he wrote only one piece. The question of street organs would perhaps be deemed an odd choice for the solitary contribution to the newspapers in over a year by the author of the *Logic* and the *Principles of Political Economy*, but that was the subject upon which Mill contributed an article—to the *Morning Chronicle*—in 1851 (No. 401). Miscarriages of justice and the limited understandings of magistrates had been the subject of their joint letters, and perhaps this was a sequel drafted or suggested by his wife. In 1852 he took time for only two letters (Nos. 402 and 403), very short, supporting free trade in the book trade and opposing the control exercised by the Booksellers’ Association. The following year, 1853, plagued by ill health, but intensely loyal to the East India Company through which he genuinely believed India was getting as good a government as was humanly available, he published two articles (Nos. 404 and 405) during the debate on the India Bill to defend the Company against the meddling fingers of a harassed Government. In the spring of 1854 he was told his life was in danger from consumption, and from then on he and Harriet tried to put on paper for posterity their best thoughts, and only twice were their thoughts sent to the newspapers for their contemporaries. Time, they felt, was running out. Harriet’s health was weak; she nearly died of a lung haemorrhage at Nice in 1853 and now John was threatened. His father and one brother had already died of tuberculosis, and another brother was living abroad but with no hope of curing the disease, only delaying its progress. Mill’s health remained unreliable even after the consumption was arrested (seemingly by 1856); splitting headaches continued to make his India Office duties more onerous than normal. There was less time for writing; he was frequently travelling for his health and when he was not, she was. The newlyweds worked hard outlining the ideas they wished to leave to the future—even on their separate trips.<sup>159</sup>

When they were together, they lived very private lives. In November 1854 in the *Morning Post* they published one more joint effort (No. 406). It was a short letter expressing distress and disgust that even after the passing of the new Act to protect battered wives, magistrates would not hand



down hard sentences. Mill did not write again for the daily press until, somewhat unexpectedly after three-and-a-half years of silence, on 31 July, 1858, he sent a letter to the *Daily News* on the Laws of Lunacy (No. 407). The surprise results from the sudden break in the silence, not from the topic; recent incidents in which “refractory wives” had been declared insane prompted the letter. Criticism of the Lunacy Laws was not uncommon at this time but it was rarely presented from the women’s point of view. This was the last piece in the papers published with his wife’s encouragement.

In October they left for a long, warm winter in southern Europe; at Avignon, Harriet Mill collapsed and on 3 November she died.

### MARCH 1863 TO MAY 1873

When John Stuart Mill returned to public life, he had beside him his stepdaughter, Helen Taylor. She had been born in 1831 and, still in her twenties when her mother died, had already developed great strength of character. (She had abandoned an apprenticeship as an actress to join Mill in his despair.) Mill referred to her somewhat inappropriately as a “prize in the lottery of life” (4, 264). For the next six and a half years, the grieving pair lived quiet lives, half the year in Blackheath and half in Avignon. They travelled together and on one occasion, in 1862, took a genuinely daring trip through the Greek interior. She helped him in many ways after her mother’s death, one of which was with his correspondence; the echo of Taylor phrasing can still be heard, therefore, in some of his later public letters, though less in those concerning international affairs. After he recovered from the shock of his loss, Mill devoted himself to making ready for publication works he and Harriet had planned.<sup>160</sup> He was only fifty-two, but Harriet’s death halted his mental development—at least he felt so—and those developments in his thought which took place are not best seen in his sporadic journalism. The general set of his thinking was established. He was a highly respected philosopher and Radical. Commentary on contemporary events was no longer of value to his own development, nor was daily journalism the medium most effective for the exercise of his influence, especially when he was in Parliament. Mill’s concern was less to influence immediate actions than to complete mankind’s guides to the future. His final pieces, then, have interest but little cohesion, being disparate and few. Events in England seem not to provide the occasion; Europe, friends, and ideas are the stimulants.<sup>161</sup>

The year 1865 saw the realization of an ambition he had first dreamt of thirty years earlier; he was asked to stand for Parliament. His candidacy gave him an excellent chance to express his views on matters for which the occasion might not otherwise have presented itself. He had been promoting Thomas Hare’s system of proportional representation ever since, in the spring of 1859, he had first received and read Hare’s book, which had, “for the first time, solved the difficulty of popular representation; and by doing so, [had] raised up the cloud of gloom and uncertainty which hung over the futurity of representative government and therefore of civilization.”<sup>162</sup> In contradiction to a writer in the *Spectator*, he affirmed that Hare’s system “is equally suitable to the state of things under which we now live, since it would at once assure to

that minority in the constituencies which consists of the operative classes, the share in the representation which you demand for them,” as it will be to that state when the operatives far outnumber those likely to support the eminent men (No. 411).

He attacked the ballot when reviewing Henry Romilly’s pamphlet favouring it (No. 413).<sup>163</sup> His arguments are very similar in one way to the arguments he had put forward on the opposite side under his father’s tutelage forty years earlier. In the old days the good of the country was served by diminishing the power of the aristocracy through giving a man a ballot and thus removing influence and bribery at one stroke. But now Mill saw man’s actions as not determined solely by his selfish interests but—in keeping, in fact, with Bentham’s list of influences that make a judge a good judge too—people were influenced by the desire to stand well with their fellows. This social motive would be weakened “when the act is done in secret, and he can neither be admired for disinterested, nor blamed for mean and selfish conduct” (No. 413). He repeated his unequivocal denial whenever asked (No. 425).

But the real, the great reward of his candidacy was his election on 12 July, 1865. His letter thanking the Liberal electors of Westminster is warming to read over a century later. All Mill had feared about democracy had been (at least temporarily) assuaged and all he had claimed about Radicals and workers had been triumphantly vindicated—and by a personal triumph. It must have been a sweet moment when, after a long stationary period, the historical process, with him as its agent, seemed to be visibly advancing. “I should join . . . in hearty and grateful acknowledgments to the Liberal electors generally, and especially to the great number who, by their strenuous and disinterested personal exertions, renewed the lesson so often forgotten, of the power of a high and generous purpose over bodies of citizens accustomed to free political action. . . . That I may not fall so far below your hopes as to make you regret your choice, will be my constant and earnest endeavour.” (No. 414.) The knight’s armour was slightly loose, the limbs not so lithe, but he rose to do battle against the “personal and pecuniary influences” who had won a majority in the House with the same conviction and sense of righteousness with which he had wielded his pen for the last forty years.

While Mill was a sitting member of Parliament, he does not appear to have written for or to the newspapers. During the election of 1868, he published two letters.<sup>164</sup> In September he wrote a letter to the borough of Greenwich which had emulated Westminster and further rekindled Mill’s hope for the future by “electing a public man, without any solicitation on his part” (No. 416). The only other public letter from this time published in England was an attempt to mop up the hot water boiled over by his support of Chadwick for a riding in which there was a sitting Liberal member, albeit an Adullamite (also a leader in the anti-feminist forces). The letter, published in *The Times*, had some fine hits by the Avignon team; the tone of Helen Taylor is evident in the sharp riposte to Bouverie: “For my part I never presumed to give you any advice, nor did I ‘invite’ you to retire in Mr. Chadwick’s favour, because I had no idea that you were in the least likely to do so; I merely, in reply to a communication from yourself, shewed how very public spirited a proceeding I should consider it if you did.”<sup>165</sup>

The memories evoked by Mill's active role promoting women's right to vote, especially his preparation of the *Subjection of Women*, surely must relate to a letter intended for the *Daily News* in January of 1870 (No. 419), which seems to put the calendar back twenty years. The attention of the readers was drawn to the case of William Smith, a policeman, sentenced for (according to the magistrate) an "unprovoked, brutal, and unjustifiable" assault upon a man who had knocked his wife down in the street. Though now Mill could write also to the Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, and the Recorder of the City of London, he could not secure the unfortunate policeman's reinstatement in the force when he came out of prison.

Now a distinguished philosopher in his sixties, Mill had no need and no desire to put his ideas before the public through the newspapers. He preferred to develop his thoughts in longer form and published, apart from books, 166 lengthy essays in the *Fortnightly Review* edited by his disciple John Morley.<sup>167</sup> In 1870 he commented on the Education Bill (No. 420) and Russia's threatened abrogation of the Treaty of 1856 (Nos. 421 and 422).<sup>168</sup>

Mill did not speak out again in newspapers until the last year of his life.<sup>169</sup> It was a singularly appropriate ending to his long association with the newspapers: he wrote for the *Examiner*, and on a subject that was part of his vision, land tenure. Since his youth many advances in public thinking had been made on the question, promoted in part by the state of Ireland and Mill's writings on it; it had been possible for Gladstone to introduce an Irish Land Act. To advance the public attitude further, Mill now actively promoted a Land Tenure Reform Association, for which he had drawn up and published the programme.<sup>170</sup> The justification for restricting the rights in land already in private hands is vintage Mill:

The land not having been made by the owner, nor by any one to whose rights he has succeeded, and the justification of private ownership in land being the interest it gives to the owner in the good cultivation of the land, the rights of the owner ought not to be stretched farther than this purpose requires. No rights to the land should be recognised which do not act as a motive to the person who has power over it, to make it as productive, or otherwise as useful to mankind, as possible. Anything beyond this exceeds the reason of the case, and is an injustice to the remainder of the community. (No. 427.)

All his life he had pitted reason against injustice.

Mill died quite unexpectedly on 7 May, 1873, after a long walk botanizing. He died while still enjoying the full vigour of a mind that analyzed with logical precision each next step forward for mankind's betterment. His advocacy had been extraordinarily influential, because his dreams of the future had been tempered by his knowledge of present possibilities. This commonsensical approach to the millenium was the reward he reaped from all his arduous efforts to instruct his countrymen through the newspapers, because awareness of his readers never allowed him to forget that reforms had to be designed for, and accepted by, his fallible contemporaries. His career as a journalist ensured that he kept his feet firmly on the ground while he urged mankind forward towards his hoped-for heaven.

## Endnotes

[1] John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive, Collected Works [CW]*, VII-VIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), VIII, 874.

[2] J.S. Mill, *Autobiography [A]*, in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger, *CW*, I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 37. Subsequent references to the *Autobiography* are given in the text. References to Mill's newspaper writings are also given in the text by the item number assigned in these volumes.

[3] Young John might well have listened "with interest and instruction" while his father talked over with Francis Place the possible need to form a Committee of Public Safety contingent on the reform meeting they were organizing in September 1816. The meeting was to have Burdett, Cochrane, and Hunt as speakers, proposing the selection of delegates from all districts to come to London, ostensibly bearing petitions for reform, in time for the opening of the official Parliament's session. No one could foresee the result of such a proposal. The meetings continued and led directly to the Spa Fields attempt of the Spenceans. James Mill and Francis Place had by then drawn back. But nonetheless in December 1816 a Convention of Delegates was gathered in London. It was a very thin line between peaceful agitation as it was practised in the London meetings and armed insurrection. Elie Halévy's account of the state of London and Radical agitation is still the best, in his *The Liberal Awakening* (London: Benn, 1949), 9-53. And note the title of Joseph Hamburger's fine study, *James Mill and the Art of Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).

[4] Mill said of his younger self: "the most transcendant glory I was capable of conceiving, was that of figuring, successful or unsuccessful, as a Girondist in an English Convention" (*A*, 67)

[5] It is an indication of the precarious state of England and the hatred that existed that the Whigs and Radicals could, for one minute, much less a year, make that indefensible woman their champion. London was illuminated for three nights when the Bill against her was dropped and the House of Commons voted her the enormous annuity of £50,000.

[6] Anna J. Mill, ed., *John Mill's Boyhood Visit to France* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 10.

[7] Some of the early newspaper pieces may well have grown out of papers for the Utilitarian Society.

[8] "Writing of a very high order is thrown away when it is buried in periodicals, which are mostly read but once, and that hastily: yet the only access now to the general public, is through periodicals. An article in a newspaper or a magazine, is to the public mind no more than a drop of water on a stone; and like that, it produces its effect by *repetition*.

"The peculiar 'mission' of this age, (if we may be allowed to borrow from the new French school of philosophers a term which they have abused,) is to popularize among the many, the more im-

mediately practical results of the thought and experience of the few.” (“Writings of Junius Redivivus [I],” *Monthly Repository*, n.s. VII [Apr. 1833], *CW*, I, 372.)

[9] “Armand Carrel,” in *Essays on French History and Historians*, *CW*, XX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 174. In an earlier version his wording had shown even more awareness: “but before his thoughts can be acted upon, they must be recast in the mould of other and more business-like intellects. There is no limit to the chimeras which a man may persuade himself of, whose mind has never had anything to do but to form conceptions, without ever measuring itself and them with realities.” (*Ibid.*, 173k.)

[10] These ideas are developed by Mill in the *Logic*. See also J.M. Robson, *The Improvement of Mankind* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), esp. Chap. 6, “Method: Scientist and Artist.”

[11] One brief daisy chain will illustrate the compactness, marginality, and mutual support of the circle. *The Traveller* was owned by Colonel Robert Torrens, an old friend of James Mill’s, political economist and founder member of the Political Economy Club; it was edited by Walter Coulson, whose father had worked in the dock yards supervised by Samuel Bentham, who had been instrumental in young Walter’s becoming an amanuensis of Jeremy Bentham, who in turn was the connection to Colonel Torrens and the *Traveller* (soon amalgamated with the *Globe*). Because both were close associates of Torrens and James Mill, Coulson would frequently meet John Black, whom he would succeed as editor of the *Chronicle* in the forties. He would also know Albany Fonblanque, who, having written for Black in the *Chronicle* and been a leader writer for the *Examiner*, followed in the footsteps of Leigh Hunt, who also had written for the *Traveller*, and became editor of the *Examiner*. Leigh Hunt, S.T. Coleridge, Charles Lamb, and Thomas Barnes of *The Times* all attended Christ’s Hospital, the “Blue Coat” School; it is quite reasonable to believe that if a London journalist were not a Blue Coat, he was a Scot. A young friend of Leigh Hunt’s was John Forster, in his early days dramatic critic of the *True Sun*, for which W.J. Fox, editor of the *Monthly Repository* from 1826 to 1836, became leader writer in 1835. Forster then wrote for the *Courier* and the *Examiner* and for Lardner’s *Cyclopaedia* before becoming briefly in his later years editor of the *Daily News* (succeeding Dickens) and then, for nine years, editor of the *Examiner*. Forster’s successor at the *Daily News* was Eyre Crowe, who had also written for Lardner’s *Cyclopaedia* before becoming French correspondent for the *Morning Chronicle*. “They could not have moved in a circle less small had they been inhabitants of a country town” (T.H.S. Escott, *Masters of English Journalism* [London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911], 142).

[12] Richard Garnett, *Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. Albany Fonblanque.

[13] Robert Harrison, *ibid.*, s.v. John Black.

[14] *The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill, 1849-1873* [LL], ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, *CW*, XIV-XVII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XV, 979 (12 Dec., 1864). This letter is written to Robert Harrison, who used it in his article on John Black cited above.

[15] A circulation of between 3000 and 5000 was adequate for a newspaper in the 1820s; particular brilliance or popular events might raise it to 10,000. The readership was, of course,

greater, but one must be uneasy about the estimate of between ten and twenty readers for each purchaser; there must have been an enormous difference on that score between the *Examiner* and the *Northern Star*, to take a somewhat extreme example.

[16] Escott, *Masters of English Journalism*, 159.

[17] I do not know whether *The Times*' occasional resort to Latin for the details of a particularly lurid crime indicates a solicitude for female readers.

[18] James Mill might well have been anxious for his son's help. He felt he could not desert Bentham but he much doubted John Bowring's ability to edit a political and philosophical review and "augured so ill of the enterprise that he regretted it altogether" (A, 93).

[19] Lord Robbins, Introduction to *Essays on Economics and Society*, CW, IV-V (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), IV, viii.

[20] "War Expenditure" (1824), CW, IV, 3-22.

[21] In a letter to the Grotes the following year, Mill wrote: "Malthus, it seems, has been puffing himself again in the Quarterly—tho' I have not seen the article, it propounds what no other mortal would think of propounding, his *Measure of Value*" (*Mill News Letter*, XX, no. 2 [Summer 1985], 6 [1 Sept., 1824]).

[22] Alexander Bain, *James Mill: A Biography* (London: Longmans, Green, 1882), 196-7.

[23] East and West India Sugar; or, A Refutation of the Claims of the West India Colonists to a Protecting Duty on East India Sugar (London: Relfe, and Hatchard and Son, 1823).

[24] Jeremy Bentham, *On the Liberty of the Press and Public Discussion* (1821), in *Works*, ed. John Bowring, 11 vols. (Edinburgh: Tait, 1843), II, 275-97.

[25] Bain, *James Mill*, p. 206. Bain gives 14 June as the date of the meeting, but *The Times* for that date reports on the meeting of the previous evening. James Mill's name does not appear in the list of the important people attending.

[26] Of the changes in both criminal law and the law of juries wrought during the five years after Sir Robert Peel had accepted the Home Office, Mackintosh claimed it was as though he "had lived in two different countries, and conversed with people who spoke two different languages" (George Peel, *Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. Robert Peel).

[27] George Grote earnestly explained in a letter to his nineteen-year-old sister-in-law, Fanny Lewin: "Volney is an excellent book, but take care that his vague expressions (such as *loi naturelle*, *droit invariable et eternel*, etc., etc.) do not impose themselves upon you as ultimate truths. Never suffer a word or phrase to take the place of a reason, and whenever you meet such an expression, resolve it into the principle of utility." (*The Lewin Letters*, ed. Thomas Herbert Lewin, 2 vols. [London: Constable, 1909], I, 202.) For Mill's repeated reliance on this passage in Bentham, see John M. Robson, "John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, with Some Observations on James Mill," in *Essays in English Literature Presented to A.S.P. Woodhouse*, ed. M. MacLure and F.W. Watt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 245-68.

[28] Jeremy Bentham had used this example in “*Swear Not at All*”: *Containing an Exposure of the Inutility and Mischievousness, as Well as Anti-Christianity, of the Ceremony of an Oath* (London: Hunter, 1817), in *Works*, V, 187-229. James Mill used the same argument in his article on “Ecclesiastical Establishments” in the *Westminster Review*, V (Apr. 1826), 504-48. This comment is not meant to add to the store of examples of James’s using his son’s time and brain but rather to illustrate the common body of knowledge on which they all drew.

[29] Pierre Etienne Louis Dumont, *A Treatise on Judicial Evidence, Extracted from the Manuscripts of Jeremy Bentham Esq.* (translated into English) (London: Baldwin, et al., 1825), 81; the argument of efficacious causes also appears in *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789), in *Works*, I, 14-15 (Chap. iii). The dates of Bentham’s works here cited are not all previous to Mill’s articles. The assumption is that the young disciple saw and heard much of Bentham’s work before it was ordered for publication; Bentham’s habits of composition justify the assumption. For a detailed look at when Mill probably read and where he directly refers to Bentham’s works, see J.M. Robson, “Which Bentham Was Mill’s Bentham?” *Bentham Newsletter*, no. 7 (May 1983), 15-26. (The phrases and examples in Mill’s attacks in 1823 tempt me to question the year—the end of 1824 or beginning of 1825—given in the *Autobiography*, 117, for the year he received the papers from Dumont for the editing of the *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*.)

[30] *A Treatise on Judicial Evidence*, 84-5.

[31] *Rationale of Judicial Evidence, Specially Applied to English Practice*. From the Manuscripts of Jeremy Bentham, ed. J.S. Mill, 5 vols. (London: Hunt and Clarke, 1827), V, 125-6.

[32] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Chap. vi, sect. 2.

[33] Particular examples appear in *A Treatise on Judicial Evidence*, 81, and in Mill’s edition of the *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, I, 242-6, 375-6.

[34] Mill throughout his life was parsimonious of his time and energy to the extent of occasionally plagiarizing himself. He was a polemicist as well as a philosopher, and if an idea was worth developing once, it was worth developing again and again until it took root in the public mind.

[35] *Lewin Letters*, 201.

[36] See *A Treatise on Judicial Evidence*, 69, and *Rationale*, I, 279.

[37] James Mill, “Prison and Prison Discipline,” in *Essays* (London: printed Innes, [1825]), 8.

[38] Jeremy Bentham, *The Rationale of Punishment* (1830), in *Works*, I, 440.

[39] *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, IV, 32.

[40] Place’s argument is sustained by the example of Middlesex, an example, including the numbers cited, and even Ellenborough’s statement at Cobbett’s trial, to be found in Bentham’s pamphlet, *The Elements of the Art of Packing as Applied to Special Juries, Particularly in Cases of Libel Law* (1821), in *Works*, V, 61-186. Place also quotes Bentham’s *Church of Englandism* (1818) and refers to his *Judicial Establishment in France* (1790).

[41] Rationale of Judicial Evidence, IV, 59.

[42] Bentham's actual words would have been too rich even for John Black: "Fiction of use to justice? Exactly as swindling is to trade," and "The fictions by which . . . the adjective branch is polluted, may be distinguished in the first instance into two great classes: the falsehoods which the judges are in the habit of uttering by themselves, or by the officers under their direction" (*ibid.*, IV, 300).

[43] James Mill, "Government," in *Essays*, 9.

[44] *Ibid.*, 8.

[45] *Ibid.*, 11. James Mill's views were unlikely to allow the satiation of the aristocracy: "Mr. Mill had the strongest convictions as to the superior advantages of democratic government over the monarchical or the aristocratic; and with these he mingled a scorn and hatred of the ruling classes which amounted to positive fanaticism" (Harriet Grote, *The Personal Life of George Grote* [London: Murray, 1873], 22).

[46] In an interesting letter to Kate Amberley, Helen Taylor discusses the books she and Mill were reading on the subject of the formation of character in connection with, she implies, the writing of the *Subjection of Women* (29 Mar., 1869; Russell Archives, McMaster University).

[47] *The Subjection of Women* (1869), in *Essays on Equality, Law, and Education*, *CW*, XXI (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 262.

[48] "The Corn Laws" (1825), "The Silk Trade" (1826), and "The New Corn Laws" (1827), *CW*, IV, 45-70, 125-39, and 141-59; "Law of Libel and Liberty of the Press" (1825), *CW*, XXI, 1-34.

[49] "Mignet's French Revolution" (1826), "Modern French Historical Works" (1826), and "Scott's Life of Napoleon" (1828), *CW*, XX, 1-14, 15-22, and 53-110.

[50] "Ireland" (1826), in *Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire*, *CW*, VI (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 59-98; "Paper Currency and Commercial Distress" (1826), *CW*, IV, 71-123; "Foreign Dependencies—Trade with India" (1826-27), in the penultimate volume of *CW*; and "Intercourse between the United States and the British Colonies in the West Indies" (1828), *CW*, VI, 121-47.

[51] J.A. Roebuck, looking back on these years, gives a sense of the messianic fervour: "I often laugh now at our splendid plans of moral & political regeneration. We frightened all the old people, by our daring doubts and conceptions. . . ." (Bodleian Library, MS Eng., Lett. c. 295, f. 41; quoted in Sarah Wilks, "The Mill-Roebuck Quarrel," *Mill News Letter*, XII, no. 2 [Summer 1978], 9.)

[52] Harriet Taylor was one of those who shared his vision; therein lay the root of Mill's admiration. The shared vision was what drew Mill to two such disparate men as Auguste Comte and William Gladstone.



[53] Details of those events are given in the headnotes to Mill's articles where they will be of more use to readers whose memories are good but short. "One of the major problems in modern French history is the often confusing changes of governments and the appearance of many politicians, men of letters, and military leaders who very briefly play their role upon the stage and disappear. To the English or American mind this appears to be a kaleidoscopic madness which fails to lend itself to themes and steady interpretations. Certainly, there are basic threads within the history of modern France, but almost as certainly there is a certain Gallic tendency to be scattered." (James J. Cooke, *France 1789-1962* [Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1975], 7.)

[54] Quoted in René de la Croix, duc de Castries, *La Fayette* (Paris: Tallandier, 1981), 443.

[55] Marie Joseph Gilbert du Motier, marquis de Lafayette, *Mémoires, correspondance, et manuscrits du général Lafayette* (Brussels: Hauman, 1839), 525.

[56] Letter to John Sterling, 20-22 Oct., 1831, in *Earlier Letters, 1812-1848* [EL], ed. Francis E. Mineka, *CW*, XII-XIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), XII, 78.

[57] "For the next few years I wrote copiously in newspapers. It was about this time that Fonblanque, who had for some time written the political articles in the *Examiner*, became the proprietor and editor of the paper. It is not forgotten with what verve and talent, as well as fine wit, he carried it on, during the whole period of Lord Grey's ministry, and what importance it assumed as the principal representative, in the newspaper press, of radical opinions. The distinguishing character of the paper was given to it entirely by his own articles, which formed at least three fourths of all the original writing contained in it: but of the remaining fourth I contributed during those years a much larger share than any one else. I wrote nearly all the articles on French subjects, including a weekly summary of French politics, often extending to considerable length; together with many leading articles on general politics, commercial and financial legislation, and any miscellaneous subjects in which I felt interested, and which were suitable to the paper, including occasional reviews of books." (4, 179-81.) For a recent discussion of Mill's contributions on French politics, see Ann P. and John M. Robson, "'Impetuous Eagerness': The Young Mill's Radical Journalism," in *The Victorian Periodical Press*, ed. Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff (Leicester: University of Leicester Press, 1982), 59-77.

[58] *EL*, *CW*, XII, 54-67 (13, 20, and 21 Aug., 1830).

[59] Mill kept his gaze on England long enough to write three orthodox articles supporting the stands taken by his old acquaintances Hume and Hyde Villiers, now in Parliament, on the Truck System and on the Poor Law (Nos. 67, 69, and 70)

[60] See *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, IV, 444, where Mill himself has a note to this effect; also James Mill, "Jurisprudence" (1821), in *Essays*, 29-30.

[61] However much Mill's personal life may have determined his writings, it can, for the most part, here receive only occasional mention. This particular spring and summer may have been a little trying on his spirits as Harriet and John Taylor were expecting their third child, Helen, born in July.

[62] “Mere newspaper articles on the occurrences or questions of the moment gave no opportunity for the development of any general mode of thought; but I attempted, in the beginning of 1831, to embody in a series of articles, headed ‘The Spirit of the Age,’ some of my new opinions, and especially to point out in the character of the present age, the anomalies and evils characteristic of the transition from a system of opinions which had worn out, to another only in process of being formed. These articles were, I fancy, lumbering in style, and not lively or striking enough to be at any time acceptable to newspaper readers; but had they been far more attractive, still, at that particular moment, when great political changes were impending, and engrossing all minds, these discussions were ill timed, and missed fire altogether. The only effect which I know to have been produced by them, was that Carlyle, then living in a secluded part of Scotland, read them in his solitude, and saying to himself (as he afterwards told me) ‘here is a new Mystic,’ enquired on coming to London that autumn respecting their authorship; an enquiry which was the immediate cause of our becoming personally acquainted.” (A, 181.)

[63] Lewin Letters, 201.

[64] *EL, CW*, XII, 78 (20-22 Oct., 1831).

[65] The letter to Sterling gives grounds for thinking Mill was pondering his own role.

[66] Again from the long letter to Sterling, *ibid.*, 84. John Austin’s influence undoubtedly played a part; see Richard B. Friedman, “An Introduction to Mill’s Theory of Authority,” in *Mill: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. J.B. Schneewind (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968), 379-425.

[67] The article was planned as the first of a series but *Le Globe* ceased publication on 20 April, 1832, two days after its appearance.

[68] That others saw a parallel between recent events in the two countries is shown clearly in Armand Carrel’s toast to “ ‘The People of England,’ with expression of the warmest sympathy and congratulation upon our late glorious though pacific Three Days” (No. 169).

[69] His truest companion for walking on elevated terrain—and walking hand-in-hand—was Harriet Taylor: “she possessed in combination, the qualities which in all other persons whom I had known I had been only too happy to find singly. In her, complete emancipation from every kind of superstition . . ., and an earnest protest against many things which are still part of the established constitution of society, resulted not from the hard intellect but from strength of noble and elevated feeling . . .” (A, 195.)

[70] Mill’s views on this point only became stronger as his experience grew: “The English are fond of boasting that they do not regard the theory, but only the practice of institutions; but their boast stops short of the truth; they actually prefer that their theory should be at variance with their practice. If any one proposed to them to convert their practice into a theory, he would be scouted. It appears to them unnatural and unsafe, either to do the thing which they profess, or to profess the thing which they do. A theory which purports to be the very thing intended to be acted upon, fills them with alarm; it seems to carry with it a boundless extent of unforeseeable consequences. This disagreeable feeling they are only free from, when the principles laid down

are obviously matters of convention, which, it is agreed on all parts, are not to be pressed home.” (“Vindication of the French Revolution of February 1848” [1849], *CW*, XX, 331-2.)

[71] Lewis was also reviewed for *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, I (May 1832), *CW*, XVIII, 1-13.

[72] And he had turned his attention to England so far as to write three major articles for the *Jurist* and *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*: “The Currency Juggle” (1833), “Corporation and Church Property” (1833), *CW*, IV, 181-92, 193-222; and “Writings of Junius Redivivus [II]” (1833), *CW*, I, 379-90.

[73] In his *Autobiography* Mill wrote of this time: “In the meanwhile had taken place the election of the first Reformed Parliament, which included several of the most notable of my Radical friends and acquaintances; Grote, Roebuck, Buller, Sir William Molesworth, John and Edward Romilly, and several more; besides Warburton, Strutt, and others, who were in parliament already. Those who thought themselves, and were called by their friends, the philosophic radicals, had now, it seemed, a fair opportunity, in a more advantageous position than they had ever before occupied, for shewing what was in them; and I, as well as my father, founded great hopes on them. These hopes were destined to be disappointed.” (203.) See also Ann P. and John M. Robson, “Private and Public Goals,” in *Innovators and Pioneers: The Role of the Editor in Victorian Britain*, ed. Joel Weiner (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), 231-57.

[74] He said, revealingly, of the prosecution of the Saint-Simonians, that it was quite unnecessary since they were killing themselves through ridicule—but that they had the right to be left free to do so (No. 180).

[75] One of Mill's harshest criticisms of the French is provoked by their utter disregard of the law—“the first and fundamental condition of good government, and without which any people, however civilized they may imagine themselves, are little other than savages” (No. 173).

[76] Mill also worked privately to improve understanding. He wished to introduce to John Taylor two of his “acquaintances,” Jules Bastide and Hippolyte Dussard, “distinguished members of the republican party in France, [who had] been compelled to fly their country for a time in consequence of the affair of the fifth & sixth of June. They were not conspirators,” says Mill, “for there was no conspiracy, but when they found the troops and the people at blows, they took the side of the people. Now I am extremely desirous to render their stay here as little disagreeable as possible, and to enable them to profit by it, and to return with a knowledge of England and with those favourable sentiments towards our English *hommes du mouvement* which it is of so much importance that they and their friends should entertain.” (*EL*, *CW*, XII, 115.)

[77] Cf. the statement of the teen-age Mill, “the enemies of improvement hold out—what? Theories founded upon history; that is upon partial and incomplete experience.” (No. 13.)

[78] Mill's sense of “republican” is fifty years earlier than that cited by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which gives a quotation from the *Quarterly Review* of 1885: “Republic lately came to mean a government resting on a widely extended suffrage.”

[79] When Mill said “we”, he spoke for the *Examiner*. It had virtually ignored French affairs since January, thus reinforcing by omission the inference that Mill’s views were editorial policy

[80] He did have favourable comments to make on the Act providing national education which had finally passed the Chamber of Deputies (No 205).

[81] Mill’s relationship with Harriet and John Taylor was in crisis; see F.A. Hayek, *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), 36ff., and M.St.J. Packe, *The Life of John Stuart Mill* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1954), 137ff.

[82] In 1832 Mill had written sixty-one pieces for the newspapers, virtually all on France; in 1833 he wrote only thirty-three and only eight of those were on France. He wrote to Carlyle in April 1833: “. . . I will not if I can help it give way to gloom and morbid despondency. . . . I have allowed myself to be paralysed more than I should, during the last month or two by these gloomy feelings. . . . I have therefore a poor account to render of work done.” (*EL, CW, XII*, 149.)

[83] Is it in human nature to read this article in the spring of 1833 and not to think of the entangled affairs of Harriet and John? These affairs were not prospering at this time any better than his health.

[84] Much more demanding were longer articles he contributed to the *Monthly Repository*, but even so his output was far below what had become his norm.

[85] The W.J. Fox-Eliza Flower affair also reached a crisis this spring with Mrs. Fox shouting her wrongs from the attic. For a full account, see Richard Garnett, *The Life of W.J. Fox* (London and New York: Lane, 1910), 155ff.

[86] See the letters to Carlyle that summer (*EL, CW, XII*, 161-4, 169-73, 174-7).

[87] Mill comments in the *Autobiography*, “What I could do by writing, I did. During the year 1833 I continued working in the *Examiner* with Fonblanque, who at that time was zealous in keeping up the fight for radicalism against the Whigs” (205)

[88] The series, which started in the *Examiner* in September, went right through October and into November. Perhaps Mill sent copy back from Paris, but it is more likely that he wrote them all at a very rapid rate before he left. In a nice conceit Mill professes to be taken in by the book’s having only Le Marchant’s name on it, and to wish the Ministers concerned had written it themselves instead of causing it “to be composed and sent forth by an understrapper” (No. 216); it was well known that it had been written by Lord Althorp, *et al.*

[89] In the spring of 1833, Mill had written to Carlyle: “the Reformed Parliament has not disappointed me any more than you; it is (as Miss Martineau, I understand, says of Brougham) so ridiculously like what I expected: but some of our Utilitarian Radicals are downcast enough, having deemed that the nation had in it more of wisdom and virtue than they now see it has, and that the vicious state of the representation kept this wisdom & virtue out of parliament. At least this good will come out of their disappointment, that they will no longer rely upon the infallibility of Constitution-mongering: they admit that we have as good a House of Commons as *any* mode

of election would have given us, in the present state of cultivation of our people.” (*EL, CW, XII*, 145.)

[90] See above, 1, and also No. 76.

[91] Mill’s journalist’s licence occasionally carried him far, e.g., in his suggestion that the whole diplomatic service be abolished now that statesmen were literate and could write to each other (No. 217).

[92] For a detailed account of Carrel’s influence on Mill and his career as editor of the *London and Westminster Review* see Robson and Robson, “Private and Public Goals,” 235-7. For Mill’s description of his meeting with Carrel in a letter to Carlyle, see *EL, CW, XII*, 195-6 (25 Nov., 1833).

[93] Carlyle in an uncharacteristic moment described Harriet Taylor at this time as “a living romance-heroine, of the clearest insight, of the royallest volition; very interesting, of questionable destiny, not above twenty-five” (letter to John Carlyle of 22 July, 1834, in *Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle*, ed. Charles Richard Sanders, *et al.* [Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1970-], VII, 245-6).

[94] *EL, CW, XII*, 195 (25 Nov., 1833).

[95] *Ibid.*, 201 (22 Dec., 1833).

[96] *Ibid.*, 198 (26 Nov., 1833).

[97] In the first half of 1834, twenty-four of his thirty-two contributions were on French affairs.

[98] It was only another short time before he could extend this same understanding to his *bête noire* of 1833, François Guizot: “I confounded the prudence of a wise man who lets some of his maxims go to sleep while the time is unpropitious for asserting them, with the laxity of principle which resigns them for personal advancement. Thank God I did not wait to know him personally in order to do him justice, for in 1838 & 1839 I saw that he had reasserted all his old principles at the first time at which he could do so with success & without compromising what in his view were more important principles still. I ought to have known better than to have imputed dishonourable inconsistency to a man whom I now see to have been consistent beyond any statesman of our time & altogether a model of the consistency of a statesman as distinguished from that of a fanatic.” (*EL, CW, XIII*, 454-5 [23 Dec., 1840].)

[99] See his description of the Saint-Simonians in *Principles of Political Economy*, *CW, II-III* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), II, 210-11. The last letter to d’Eichthal was 21 May, 1871 (*LL, CW, XVII*, 1820-1). On Harriet’s tombstone he had had inscribed, “were there but a few hearts and intellects like hers this earth would already become the hoped-for heaven” (Packe, 408)

[100] In February, Mill had forwarded a “MS on education,” presumably Austin’s, to Effingham Wilson, who published her work, to say that though he had not had time to read it, he knew it had “the highest character” (unpublished letter in private hands, to E. Wilson, 14 Feb., 1834).

[101] Mill himself wrote nothing (though he quoted Senior) on what historians have sometimes seen as a constitutional outrage; possibly compared to Charles X and even Louis Philippe, William IV cast a small shadow. A discussion of what Mill did not write about would be very illuminating. For instance, during these eleven years he hardly touched in his newspaper writings on the three movements—Anti-Corn Law, Ten Hours, and Chartism—which dominate accounts in modern histories.

[102] In 1835 he wrote eleven pieces mostly for the *Globe*, in 1836, none; in 1837, six pieces were published, two in the *Globe*, two in the *Examiner*, and one each in the *True Sun* and the *Morning Chronicle*; in 1838, one in the *Examiner*; none in 1839 or 1840; in 1841, two in the *Morning Chronicle*; in 1842, four items, three in the *Morning Chronicle* and one in the *Examiner*; in 1843, two, one each in the *Morning Chronicle* and the *Spectator*; in 1844, four in the *Morning Chronicle*; and in 1845, none. As noted, the *Logic*, on which he had been working intently since 1836, was published in 1843.

[103] See n92. Not all the hopes and hardships were in journalism. Mill's hopes were up and down as he and John and Harriet Taylor tried to sort out their relationship at the same time as W.J. Fox and Mrs. Fox and Eliza Flower and the whole South Place Chapel congregation tried to sort out theirs. It is impossible to conceive of, much less recapture, the scene and conversation when Harriet Taylor visited her father, a member of Fox's congregation, to persuade him to support Flower power. For a discussion of the difficult, if not ornery, team that Mill was trying to drive, see Joseph Hamburger's Introduction to *Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire*, *CW*, VI, xl ff.

[104] "Wraxall's Memoirs," *London and Westminster Review*, IV and XXVI (Jan. 1837), 483-501, and "Architectural Competition: The New Royal Exchange," *Westminster Review*, XXXV (Jan. 1841), 52-88.

[105] Molesworth had bought the *Westminster* at the beginning of 1836 to merge it with the *London Review*.

[106] On the early days of 1848 in France, Mill wrote to Henry S Chapman, "In my meditations and feelings on the whole matter, every second thought has been of Carrel—he who perhaps alone in Europe was qualified to direct such a movement . . ." (*EL*, *CW*, XIII, 731-2 [29 Feb., 1848]).

[107] According to Alexander Bain: "In 1836, his thirtieth year, he was seized with an obstinate derangement of the brain. Among the external symptoms, were involuntary nervous twitchings in the face." (*John Stuart Mill, a Criticism: With Personal Recollections* [London: Longmans, Green, 1882], 42-3.)

[108] He was fortunately relieved of the need to continue his unpaid contributions to the *Monthly Repository*, it having left W.J. Fox's hands in 1836. More strain was added, however, in 1840, when the family was deeply saddened by another death from tuberculosis—of Henry, aged only nineteen. They gathered at Falmouth to be beside him in his last days; Mill was very af-

fected. In addition fears were revived that his own health might be undermined by this family weakness.

[109] The piece is written with such feeling that the assumption would seem justified that the money was already invested that Mill was to lose in 1842 when American debts were repudiated.

[110] “And now, on a calm retrospect, I can perceive that the men were less in fault than we supposed, and that we had expected too much from them. They were in unfavourable circumstances. Their lot was cast in the ten years of inevitable reaction, when the Reform excitement being over, and the few legislative improvements which the public really cared for having been rapidly effected, power gravitated back in its natural direction, to those who were for keeping things as they were; when the public mind desired rest, and was less disposed than at any other period since the peace, to let itself be moved by attempts to work up the reform feeling into fresh activity in favour of new things.” (A, 203-5.)

[111] This lesson, reinforced by his English experience, contributed to his generous re-evaluation of Guizot (see above n98).

[112] Even more predictably to those who knew that Mill had advised Chadwick on its form: “I have read your report slowly & carefully. I do not find a single erroneous or questionable position in it, while there is the strength & largeness of practical views which are characteristic of all you do. In its present unrevised state it is as you are probably aware, utterly ineffective from the want of unity and of an apparent thread running through it and holding it together. I wish you would learn some of the forms of scientific exposition of which my friend Comte makes such superfluous use, & to *use* without *abusing* which is one of the principal lessons which practice & reflexion have to teach to people like you & me who have to make new trains of thought intelligible.” (EL, CW, XIII, 516 [Apr. 1842].) Chadwick rearranged it and Mill offered to review it (*ibid.*, 523-4 [8 June, 1842]).

[113] *Ibid.*, 487.

[114] “Michelet’s History of France” (1844), CW, XX, 217-55.

[115] See especially the letters of 8 November and 18 December, 1841 (EL, CW, XIII, 488-90 and 491-3).

[116] *Ibid.*, 563-4 (19 Dec., 1842). Later, in January 1846, two pieces in the *Morning Chronicle*, one on the malt tax (No. 301) and one on poor rates (No. 302), could possibly be seen as bearing very indirectly on the corn law issue.

[117] He also wrote at the same time a review of Grote for the *Edinburgh Review* (1846), CW, XI, 271-305.

[118] The strain had been increased by both personal and political differences: Harriet Grote was thought to have gossiped about the relationship between Mill and Mrs. Taylor; the Grotes had not approved of Mill’s acceptance of Carlyle’s “Memoirs of Mirabeau” for the *London and Westminster Review* (IV and XXVI [Jan. 1837], 382-439), and Mill had been critical of George Grote’s parliamentary behaviour. After Harriet Taylor Mill’s death in 1858, George and Harriet

Grote's home was one of the very few Mill visited. They had never by any means ceased altogether to co-operate; in 1844 Grote had obliged Mill by providing financial support for Auguste Comte.

[119] Beginning in 1846 but more frequently in the 1850s, Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill wrote articles jointly. These co-operative efforts, of which Nos. 303, 305, 307, 318, 329, and 350 are examples, are best treated out of strict chronological ordering; they are all discussed in the next section.

[120] *EL, CW, XIII*, 709 (9 Mar., 1847).

[121] This argument was based on information in Torrens's letter to Peel (No. 295), which he had reviewed four years earlier.

[122] *EL, CW, XIII*, 709 (9 Mar., 1847).

[123] *Ibid.*, 710-11 (27 Mar., 1847). A few years later he was cheered by the realization that his endeavours had not been an entire failure but had, in fact, furthered his life's work of improving mankind's lot. "Are you [Harriet Taylor] not amused with Peel about Ireland? He sneers down the waste land plan, two years ago, . . . & now he has enfanté a scheme containing that & much more than was then proposed—& the Times supports him & Ireland praises him I am extremely glad he has done it—I can see that it is working as nothing else has yet worked to break down the superstition about property—& it is the only thing happening in England which promises a step forward—a thing which one may well welcome when things are going so badly for the popular cause in Europe—not that I am discouraged by this—progress of the right kind seems to me quite safe now that Socialism has become *inextinguishable*." (*LL, CW, XIV*, 21 [31 Mar., 1849].)

His assessment in the *Autobiography* is less cheery: "the profound ignorance of English politicians and the English public concerning all social phenomena not generally met with in England (however common elsewhere) made my endeavours an entire failure. Instead of a great operation on the waste lands, and the conversion of cottiers into proprietors, Parliament passed a Poor Law for maintaining them as paupers: and if the nation has not since found itself in inextricable difficulties from the joint operation of the old evils and the quack remedy, it is indebted for its deliverance to that most unexpected and surprising fact, the depopulation of Ireland, commenced by famine, and continued by emigration." (*A*, 243.)

[124] *CW*, II, 214.

[125] There were a further two rather curious pieces, one on "Sanitary" versus "Sanatory" (No. 365) in *The Times* and one on enlightened infidelity (No. 367) intended for G.J. Holyoake's *Reasoner* but not published. Some of the phrasing suggests Harriet Taylor's prompting.

[126] *Edinburgh Review*, LXXXV (Jan. 1847), 221-58. The lack of stir caused by Austin's laboriously written article prompted Mill to explain to him: "It seems to me that reviews have had their day, & that nothing is now worth much except the two extremes, newspapers for diffusion & books for accurate thought" (*EL, CW, XIII*, 711-12 [13 Apr., 1847]).



[127] Alexander Bain reports that George Grote “would say to me, ‘Much as I admire John Mill, my admiration is always mixed with fear’; meaning that he never knew what unexpected turn Mill might take” (*John Stuart Mill*, 83).

[128] *EL, CW, XIII*, 712.

[129] *LL, CW, XV*, 978-9. It is an indication of Mill’s standing in the world of the press that he was offered joint-proprietorship of the *Chronicle* at this time (Harriet Taylor to John Taylor, 18 Jan., 1848, Mill-Taylor Collection, British Library of Political and Economic Science, London School of Economics, XXVIII, 174).

[130] *CW, VIII*, 874.

[131] John Stuart Mill, 91.

[132] He wrote to John Austin: “I think with you that the English higher classes . . . mean well, ‘what little they do mean’ as my father said of some person. They have grown good even to goodness . . . [but show] more & more their *pitoyable* absence of even that very moderate degree of intellect, & that very moderate amount of will & character which are scattered through the other classes. . . . The doctrine of averting revolutions by wise concessions to the people does not need to be preached to the English aristocracy. They have long acted on it to the best of their capacity, & the fruits it produces are soup-kitchen and ten hours bills.” (*EL, CW, XIII*, 712-13 [13 Apr., 1847].)

[133] In 1842 Mill had written privately to William Lovett offering help although, as he pointed out, he was not a democrat (*EL, CW, XIII*, 533-4 [27 July, 1842]).

[134] *Ibid.*, 731-2 (29 Feb., 1848).

[135] Nonetheless Mill wrote a defence of the revolution as forwarding France’s history: “Vindication of the French Revolution of February 1848,” *CW, XX*, 317-63.

[136] The paper had started in 1846 under the very brief editorship of Charles Dickens, followed for nine months by John Forster, who then took over the *Examiner*.

[137] *John Stuart Mill*, 90. Bain introduced Mill to Dr. Thomas Clark who attempted without success to induce Mill to try the water-treatment. Perhaps Harriet remembered the case of Dr. Ellis’s patient (see below).

[138] Hayek, 120ff. The dedication of the *Political Economy* caused considerable *éclat* within their small circle; their lives became even more reserved and (coincidentally?) their joint productions for a time ceased.

[139] His comment to Harriet, who had encouraged him to write the last article, illustrates the anonymity they wished to preserve at this time. “As you suggested I wrote an article on Russell’s piece of meanness in the Jew Bill & have sent it to Crowe. . . . But I fear the article, even as ‘from a correspondent’ will be too strong meat for the Daily News, as it declares without mincing the matter, that infidels are perfectly proper persons to be in parliament. I like the article myself. I

have carefully avoided any thing disrespectful to Russell personally, or any of the marks known to me, by which my writing can be recognized.” (*LL, CW, XIV*, 18 [17 Mar., 1849].)

[140] John Taylor to Harriet Taylor, 30 Mar., 1849, Mill-Taylor Collection, XXVIII, 227.

[141] Just four days before John Taylor’s death, they had published an article on corporal punishment (No. 383), their first work designated as a joint production since December 1846—if one discounts the *Principles of Political Economy*.

[142] Mill quite frequently added “very little of which was mine” to the designation “joint production” in his bibliography. Some of these articles would appear to have been drafted by Harriet Taylor and little more than signed by John Stuart Mill.

[143] *CW, VIII*, 874.

[144] It was not perhaps unnatural that during the twenty-one months between John Taylor’s death and Harriet Taylor’s remarriage to John Mill, the subject of marriage and the laws governing it should have been much on their minds. Only one of their joint productions during those months, “Questionable Charity” (No. 394), was not concerned with domestic relations.

[145] Subjection of Women, *CW, XXI*, 261.

[146] Letter to Parker Pillsbury, *LL, CW, XVI*, 1289 (4 July, 1867).

[147] *EL, CW, XIII*, 736 ([May?] 1848).

[148] Apart from the co-operative productions, Mill published in the papers on only three occasions during 1850. The first and most significant was a review in the *Spectator* of Volumes VII and VIII of Grote’s *History*; it was again favourable. He also wrote two letters to the *Leader* (Nos. 397 and 398) in one of which there was a defence of nonconformity similar to that in *On Liberty*: “No order of society can be in my estimation desirable unless grounded on the maxim, that no man or woman is accountable to others for any conduct by which others are not injured or damaged” (No. 397). There was also one, dated 1 February, 1851 (No. 399), a draft of an unpublished letter to the *Weekly Dispatch*, defending the non-believer, who is undogmatic about religion, from the charge of being “merely a speculative, disquisitive, logical, thinking machine.”

[149] On his own marriage to Harriet, Mill wrote a solemn renunciation of any rights over his wife or her property granted him by the law: “Statement on Marriage,” *CW, XXI*, 97.

[150] This piece, entitled “Wife Murder,” was the first one written after their marriage.

[151] Another aspect of the case of the illegitimate child, Edward Hyde, who had been brutally beaten by his natural father, Edward Kenealy, roused the Mills as reflecting also on the injustice caused by a wife’s legal non-existence. Lord Campbell rejoiced that no stain would be left on Mr. Kenealy’s character; on the contrary, Lord Campbell bestowed praise on him for having shown an interest in his son when, by law, an illegitimate child was the responsibility solely of the mother. The injustice was the greater as a legitimate child belonged in law solely to the father because of the wife’s legal non-existence.

[152] In 1853, Mill, acting “chiefly as amanuensis to [his] wife,” published a pamphlet, *Remarks on Mr. Fitzroy’s Bill for the More Effectual Prevention of Assaults on Women and Children* (London: n.p., 1853), *CW*, XXI, 101-8.

[153] In the final version of the *Autobiography*, Mill wrote: “that perception of the vast practical bearings of women’s disabilities which found expression in the book on *The Subjection of Women*, was acquired mainly through her teaching” (A, 253n).

[154] *Subjection of Women*, *CW*, XXI, 284-5.

[155] *Ibid.*, 294-5.

[156] *Ibid.*, 261.

[157] The *Leader* had been newly established in 1849, based on a policy of positivist reporting; George Henry Lewes was principal writer, and Marian Evans and Harriet Martineau were regular contributors.

[158] “Enfranchisement of Women” (1851), *CW*, XXI, 393-415.

[159] In the late fall of 1853 Mill had accompanied his wife and stepdaughter to Nice, returning alone to London in December. Harriet Mill’s health made the avoidance of a Blackheath winter necessary (in a letter to her daughter in the winter of 1857, Harriet Mill apologized for her handwriting, explaining that the temperature in the room in front of the fire was 36°F. [Mill-Taylor Collection, LII, 103 (29 Jan., 1857)]), and mother and daughter did not return until the spring of 1854. Mill then, having waited until their return to tell them that he had consumption, left for two months in Brittany, returning home in July. They separated again in December—John Stuart Mill to Greece for six months for his health and Harriet Mill to Torquay for hers, she being too weak for the extended trip.

[160] Most notably, *On Liberty* (1859), *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform* (1859), *Dissertations and Discussions* (1859), and *Utilitarianism* (1861)

[161] For example, in 1863 Mill wrote on Poland for the *Penny Newsman*, edited by Edwin Chadwick. one of the revolutionary journalists, Ogareff, whom he was praising for “shaking the whole fabric of Russian despotism,” was a follower of Saint-Simon (No. 408).

[162] *LL*, *CW*, XV, 598-9 (3 Mar., 1859).

[163] Mill was continuing his policy of supporting his friends by aiding in the establishment of new journalistic ventures. A group including Herbert Spencer, Thomas Huxley, John Cairnes, and Mill himself had attempted to rescue the failing *Reader* in 1865.

[164] A third (*LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1443-8 [24 Sept., 1868]) was published in the United States, solicited by Charles Eliot Norton, expressing strong disapprobation of the proposal for the American Government to pay its debts in debased currency and to cancel the interest His sentiments are unchanged over thirty years although he now had nothing to lose.

[165] *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1461. In *LL* the reading is “ ‘incite’ you to retire” but the version in *The Times*, 22 Oct., 1868, 3, gives “ ‘invite’ you to retire”; Bouverie’s own letter supports the latter reading.

[166] The most significant being *The Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy* (1865), *Auguste Comte and Positivism* (1865), the *Inaugural Address* (1867), his edition of *James Mill’s Analysis* (1869), and *The Subjection of Women* (1869).

[167] “*Endowments*” (1869) and “*Thornton on Labour and Its Claims*” (1869), *CW*, V, 613-29 and 680-700; and reviews of *Cliffe Leslie* (*CW*, X, 669-85), *Taine* (*CW*, XI, 441-7), *Berkeley* (*ibid.*, 449-71), *Grote* (*ibid.*, 473-510), and *Maine* (in the penultimate volume of *CW*).

[168] Mill also published “*Treaty Obligations*” (1870), *CW*, XXI, 341-8.

[169] Mill’s denial in 1871 (No. 424) that he was to take the chair at a meeting to be addressed by Emily Faithfull probably reflects Helen’s views of her—views perhaps determined by the somewhat colourful episodes in Faithfull’s past.

[170] *Programme of the Land Tenure Reform Association, with an Explanatory Statement* by John Stuart Mill (London: Longmans, et al., 1871), *CW*, V, 687-95.

**VOLUME XXVI - JOURNALS AND DEBATING SPEECHES PART I. INTRODU-  
TION BY JOHN M. ROBSON**

SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXVI - Journals and Debating Speeches Part I*, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/260/52425>>.

INTRODUCTION BY JOHN M. ROBSON

Mill is known as a sage, whose major works are detachable from time and author; only careful analysis shows them related to “persons and places,” to borrow George Santayana’s chosen determiners for his memoirs. More easily connected with episodes in Mill’s life are periodical essays, great and small, occasioned by and developed in response to external forces. The principal sources of personal information are his *Autobiography* and his correspondence, which provide a great wealth of information about his development, almost always in relation to his ideas (decided and tentative). This record needs to be supplemented from records of his daily life that locate him—body as well as mind—in public places and in relation to other people. These are the materials of this collection.

This is not, however, the place for a biography, especially as these documents are concentrated in one period of Mill’s life, heavily significant for an understanding of him but not leading to a full portrait. An appropriate goal is an outline of the biographical surround that touches on the relations between life and thought, and suggests significances.

FRANCE: 1820-21

Up to 1820, Mill’s fourteenth year, his recorded life is mainly one of directed study, not of cram but of a planned expansion of intellectual powers, driven by his father’s will and his own curiosity. His year in France (1820-21) did not change the direction or intensity of this programme, but it laid the ground for later developments that diversified his ideas and his behaviour. Initially the plan was very much part of the established pattern. James Mill had thought it essential, as early as 1814, to nurse his limited means by moving his family to the less expensive domain of France.<sup>1</sup> As his position, financial and public, improved, the translation seemed less attractive, and his appointment to the Examiner’s Office of the East India Company made it impracticable. But the possibility of his son’s benefiting from a linguistic and cultural immersion was still appealing, especially because the family of Sir Samuel Bentham, the younger brother of Jer-

emy, already known to the Mills, was living in the south of France. In response to a query about the progress of his education, John Mill wrote a detailed letter to Samuel Bentham that surely must have surprised even a man so accustomed to talent as he.<sup>2</sup> Shortly thereafter Jeremy Bentham's current amanuensis, Richard Doane, joined the Samuel Bentham family, with whom he stayed for more than six months, and Jeremy proposed that he be replaced by John Mill.

Well: I must draw back one pet-boy from you; what say you to my sending you another? . . . What other? Why John Mill, whom you may shew for 6*d.* a piece and get rich. The scheme is this, if you happen to take to it. John Mill to continue here 6 months after R.D.'s return, learning French of him, and teaching him other things. This will suffice to enable him to ask for victuals on the road, and then you may manufacture him into a French boy in 6 other months. I remember you had a project . . . for manufacturing his temper; this it may still have some need of, but it is a good deal better, I believe, now. I thought that what he saw and heard of P[om]pignan and R.D. would excite the fellow's concupiscence. But I would not throw out the least hint about it; waiting for him to rub his cheeks against my legs, and *pur*, which at last he did.<sup>3</sup>

A month later the project was agreed, as Jeremy Bentham informed his brother: James Mill is reported as having "grinned pleasure and twice declared himself 'much gratified': *gratified* is a conjugate to *grateful* and *gratitude*: but nearer to *gratitude* than this he never comes; for he is and always was proud as Lucifer."<sup>4</sup> The plans moved to completion, and finally Bentham was able to write on 12 May to Lady Bentham to say that the boy would set out on Monday for Paris by diligence via Calais, in the company of their friend George Ensor; the date of his departure for the South was still uncertain.<sup>5</sup>

James Mill thought it wise to prepare the somewhat secluded youth for a wider acquaintance, and did so effectively, as Mill's *Autobiography* records:

I remember the very place in Hyde Park where, in my fourteenth year, on the eve of leaving my father's house for a long absence, he told me that I should find, as I got acquainted with new people, that I had been taught many things which youths of my age did not commonly know; and that many persons would be disposed to talk to me of this, and to compliment me upon it. What other things he said on this topic I remember very imperfectly; but he wound up by saying, that whatever I knew more than others, could not be ascribed to any merit in me, but to the very unusual advantage which had fallen to my lot, of having a father who was able to teach me, and willing to give the necessary trouble and time; that it was no matter of praise to me, if I knew more than those who had not had a similar advantage, but the deepest disgrace to me if I did not.<sup>6</sup>

This lesson well engraved, John began his trip a few days before his fourteenth birthday (20 May), and started his journal immediately. Instructed by his father to record all his activities, John responded in typically obedient fashion, differing in this as in other respects from David Ricardo and George Grote, who were similarly instructed by James Mill, but fell short of his exacting

standards.<sup>7</sup> In fact, this was not his first attempt; in one of his very few childhood letters, written from Forde Abbey on 13 September, 1814, the eight-year-old boy says: “What has been omitted here will be found in a journal which I am writing of this and last year’s journeys.”<sup>8</sup> That journal has not survived, and the one of his French journey gives us such full detail that the loss of the former must be regretted.

The outline of the French trip may be quickly sketched. After two weeks in Paris at the home of Jean Baptiste Say, the eminent economist, the youth travelled by himself to the Château de Pompignan, near Toulouse, where the Samuel Bentham’s were in accommodation rented from the impecunious Marquis. There he stayed until 24 June, when the Bentham’s took him with them to Toulouse, where they lived for almost two months. Then on 10 August they began touring about, going first to Bagnères-de-Bigorre, then on a long excursion to Bayonne, followed by more time spent in Bagnères-de-Bigorre and Bagnères-de-Luchon, then back to Toulouse, before settling finally in Montpellier in mid-October. Though it had been planned that he return to England after six months, Mill stayed with the Bentham’s in Montpellier, attending lectures and further expanding his acquaintance, until March 1821. After a brief visit to Restinclières in mid-March he went to Paris, where he again stayed with the SAYS, from 23 April to 19 May, and then went on to Caen, visiting his father’s friend, Joseph Lowe, before finally going home in July.

This brief glance at his itinerary does not even hint at the importance of the year in France to Mill’s education, formal and informal.<sup>9</sup> The first pages of the Journal, written in an unformed, large, youthful hand, and much blotted, give the impression of a normally intelligent, healthy if somewhat fastidious boy, excited by a first trip alone and abroad, but determined to keep his feelings under control. While in Paris he consorted, appropriately in view of Bentham’s and his father’s reputations, with prominent French radicals, and was in “high request”;<sup>10</sup> but only in retrospect, in the *Autobiography*, does he make anything of the experience. One may remark his digesting a dialogue in the Socratic manner as evidence of the precocity that was unquestionably his, but on his coach trip to the South there is little further evidence, as he observes the unpleasant, comments unremarkably on the pleasant, and displays his growing French vocabulary.

With his entry into the Bentham household on 2 June, and the resumption of his studies, the extraordinary begins to predominate. That household was by any standards but Benthamic ones very unusual. It was headed by Sir Samuel, naval architect, mineralogist, explorer, inventor, ex-Brigadier General in the army of Catherine the Great of Russia, and ex-Inspector General of His Majesty’s Naval Works, the inventor of the Panopticon usually attributed to his brother.<sup>11</sup> Lady Bentham, daughter of George Fordyce, the celebrated Scottish physician and chemist, intelligent, learned, and active in managing the domestic details, was responsible for overseeing Mill’s routine. Their three daughters make only fleeting appearances in the account, although it becomes quite clear that the troubles of the eldest, who at the beginning of Mill’s visit was about to give birth to a daughter and was being abandoned by her feckless husband, caused much of the family’s domestic confusion and perambulations. Quite important to the young Mill was the son, George, nearly twenty years of age, who was just beginning the studies that would make him an internationally renowned botanist.<sup>12</sup> Though the Bentham’s engaged outside masters (charging

the expense to James Mill), the education of their visitor was a joint family concern; the general supervision, as well as some particular instruction in French, botany, and zoology, devolved on “Mr. George.” The Bentham’s were not as overawed as others by the boy’s abilities and attainments, because they had already heard of them and in part seen them displayed in England seven years earlier, and also because they themselves had displayed the like. In his manuscript autobiography George Bentham mentions that his sisters made their own clothes for their fourth birthdays and were able to make a list of them; he also records that when they went to Russia for two years he (at age five) and his brother (two years older) quickly learned Russian, French, and some German, “resumed” their Latin studies, and picked up a bit of Swedish on the way home.

The matter of Mill’s French may be first approached. It will be recalled that the initial plan was for Richard Doane to begin John Mill’s instruction during the six months between his return to London and John’s departure. But because Doane did not leave the Bentham’s until the end of February,<sup>13</sup> and Mill started on his trip in early May, not much teaching can have taken place. Nonetheless, a start was certainly made, and it seems probable that Mill got busy on his own account with a French grammar as soon as the trip was bruited. And, as the entry for 4 July indicates, he had been reading (perhaps with a translation) Voltaire’s *Essai sur les mœurs* before his departure. Jeremy Bentham mentions that James Mill had “found a man for commencing the instruction of the son in French and supplying his place as instructor to the other children,”<sup>14</sup> but there is no evidence that such an engagement actually took place, and Sarah Austin may have taken on the latter part of the scheme.

The progress he had made was already evident when he reached Paris, for he indicates in his entries of 19 May, 1820, that “None of them except [M. Say] and his eldest son can speak a word of English” and that “Mme Say . . . does not understand English, so that I was obliged to speak always French to her, and commonly also to M. Say.” And of a visit to the theatre in Toulouse on 3 June, just after his arrival at the Bentham’s, he says he “understood a good deal” (Journal entry for 3 June). George Bentham’s diary entry for the same day gives further evidence: “he conversed a good deal in French about crops, the country he has passed etc. though he has been but a fortnight in France and had learn[ed] but a month or six weeks before from Richard.”<sup>15</sup> And in another place he comments on Mill’s “rapid progress in French,” as well as his “readiness at difficult algebraic problems which had rather puzzled me etc.”<sup>16</sup>

Mill’s reading programme, begun as soon as he reached Pompignan, is equally impressive. Beginning with Millot (probably *Eléments de l’histoire de France*), he moved quickly to plays, “by the advice of Mr. George and of Lady Bentham, who say that dialogues are better to be read, on account of their giving the 1st and 2nd person of the verbs, and for many other reasons” (13 June). Between 9 and 16 June he read three or four plays by Voltaire, three by Racine, one or two by Molière, and one by Corneille. Lady Bentham also recommended parts of the *Code Napoléon*.<sup>17</sup> A further recommendation was the memorization of fables, most likely Lafontaine’s, as also giving all the persons of verbs and having common words. He began a “Livre Statistique,” primarily to learn the geography of France, but also to gain familiarity with names and terms, and started daily “French exercises” on 8 June, probably helped by George Bentham, though there is no ex-



PLICIT reference by Mill to such aid until 5 July (George Bentham mentions it in his Diary earlier, on 26 to 28 June, after the move to Toulouse); on 10 July he began to take lessons from a French tutor, M. Sauvage. Thereafter the lessons are frequent, with details of texts read, studied, and translated.

Mill evidently went through a varied and thorough programme in advanced grammar and elegant expression, with additional work on pronunciation. He was, of course, practising his French in talk with the marquise de Pompignan, her son, the curé, and other visitors to the Benthams, as well as with his other masters in fencing, music, etc. The Benthams seem to have encouraged him to converse with local inhabitants: looking just to the first month in the South, one finds him going “with the domestique Piertot to see his Metairie and his little piece of land and help him to gather cherries” (12 June); he fell in with the “very talkative” Garde Champêtre (13 June); and “had a conversation with two workmen,” who seemed “to be very intelligent,” and told him that “they are able to read an English book though they cannot speak English; they speak Spanish” (23 June). By the beginning of August, his competence was such that he decided to keep his records in French, as is indicated by the Notebook, started on the 10th of that month when they departed for the Pyrenees. George Bentham commonly read over the entries, making corrections, until, by the time the Journal ends, Mill needed little help of that kind.<sup>18</sup> Tracing this process of rapid learning—which resulted in Mill’s being a practising bilingualist for the rest of his life—reveals more.

The first part of the record shows vividly a boy most remarkable in his activities, lesson piling on lesson, text on text, as carefully recorded down to the quarter hour as in a modern law office.<sup>19</sup> But the full account reveals more and implies much more. The reader lives through the confusion of the Bentham household in its last weeks at Pompignan, recorded by a boy slightly bewildered, unaccustomed to neglect and family chaos, his books packed, unpacked, repacked, as the timetable for removal shifts. A week later there is a glimpse of the supposedly self-sufficient youngster haunting the Toulouse post-office in what seems a rather homesick way, and responding to the long-awaited news with eager messages and requests for more. He is able to accept what comes, however, commenting with dry humour, and with increasing niceness of phrase, on life’s hazards and mishaps. The general tone, it may be admitted, is laconically impersonal, with little to choose between the accounts of reading and fencing; the rare outbursts of enthusiasm (not his father’s *métier*) defy classification, spontaneous delight over Lucian being matched by awed wonder at Franconi’s amazing horses.<sup>20</sup>

Other elements, however, catch the eye: family jokes, trouble with the domestics and the dilatory washerwoman; comments with a liberal bias on political events; accidents in the redoubtable charabanc, now past its prime; a great deal of the outdoors, especially of the hot, thirsty Sunday expeditions, chasing butterflies (for scientific reasons, of course, although the exercise and broader observations were not merely coincidental) and consuming glass after glass of water. These welcome details in fact merely bring into sharper focus the central occupation of the Pompignan-Toulouse period: the boy’s prodigious programme of reading and study, carried on in defiance of continual distractions and competing claims.

The next period (and the last covered in the Journal as distinct from the Notebook), the visit to the Pyrenees with three weeks at Bagnères-de-Bigorre and ten days at Bagnères-de-Luchon, has special interest. First, there is the evidence of Mill's growing competence in French and topographical descriptions rendered with the help of guidebooks and within the limits of an untrained eye and an as yet narrow basis for comparison. But also one finds a constantly expanding awareness of externals, gradually being incorporated into understanding and judgment. While it is true that, deprived of his books and his routine, the boy has to record—for record he must—impressions other than those of his studies, it is equally true that the trip and its recording put him in the way of a new maturity, by giving him both experience and the opportunity to reflect on it. The scenery, so different from the familiar gentle landscapes of southern England, indelibly marked his aesthetics: “This first introduction to the highest order of mountain scenery,” he says in the *Autobiography*, “made the deepest impression on me, and gave a colour to my tastes through life.”<sup>21</sup> Even more, he was introduced to his lifelong avocation, botanizing. At Toulouse, the Sunday “entomotheric” expeditions had been interludes in the graver concerns of the week; in the Pyrenees botanical and entomological activities were the main business. George Bentham was (unknowingly) laying the foundation of his first important work, on the flora of the region,<sup>22</sup> and Mill was privileged to be with him on many of his field trips.

The Journal entries end on 13 October, two days before the party reached Montpellier, and the Notebook records the next few months there, until 6 February, after which the French record is blank except for the lecture notes in logic and one letter of 25 April to his father from Paris. But the Notebook, supplemented by the lecture notes and the related *Traité de logique* (Nos. 2 and 3 below), gives us ample evidence that the tour through the Pyrenees did not alter, except by strengthening, Mill's relentless pursuit of the knowledge that makes wisdom possible. There can be little doubt that he took as careful and detailed notes in Chemistry and Zoology as in Logic, and the surviving notes of the last bear witness to his still surprising mastery of French (how seldom is there a gap indicating a term not understood or not heard), and his ability to comprehend and even to criticize the lecturer's presentation of concepts. Indeed the fullness and accuracy of his notes demonstrate yet another extraordinary power, even allowing for his making revisions when copying. That he attempted to make a book out of his logic notes is less surprising, given his previous addiction to composition,<sup>23</sup> but still when looking at it one has to make oneself remember that it was the work of a fourteen-year-old, writing in a language he had begun to learn less than a year earlier.

July 1821 saw the end of the “plus heureux” months of his youth, as he called them more than twenty years later.<sup>24</sup> James Mill showed his customary enthusiasm on the results of the trip, writing to Ricardo on 23 August: “John has been at home for some weeks: very much grown; looking almost a man; in other respects not much different from what he went. He has got the French language—but almost forgot his own—and is nearly as shy and awkward as before. His love of study, however, remains; and he shews tractability and good sense. If he do not make what the French call an *aimable* man, I have no doubt he will make what the English call an amiable and a useful one.”<sup>25</sup>

To that end his “education resumed its ordinary course.”<sup>26</sup>

## DEBATING SPEECHES: 1823-29

Though Mill came again under his father’s direction, the manner and matter both changed, as the boy moved to early manhood (“teenage” seems inappropriate as well as not available in French). The most memorable element for him was his induction into active Benthamism, but related to that enlistment was his studying of law under the tutelage of John Austin, and of philosophy, stimulated by his father but carried on solo. Before long he became a force for reform in his own right, in a whirl of activities not fully evident even in the *Autobiography*’s detailed account. In bare outline, with the debating activities discussed below, he busied himself first by forming the Utilitarian Society in 1822-23, whose membership included Richard Doane, for discussion of political and ethical questions; this was succeeded by the Society of Students of Mental Philosophy (1824-29) that dealt with detailed questions in philosophy and economics; during the period he kept a journal (not extant) of his group’s activities, and also planned a Philosophical Dictionary for which he wrote a few articles (also not extant). Having begun his extensive work as a newspaper journalist in 1822, he became the most frequent contributor to the *Westminster Review* after its foundation in 1824, participated as one of the major planners and authors in the *Parliamentary History and Review* from 1825 to 1828, and edited the three manuscripts of Jeremy Bentham’s *Rationale of Judicial Evidence* into its five published volumes (1827). He engaged in what seems like continuous discussion of all subjects from architecture to zoology during extensive daily, weekly, and holiday walks while botanizing and searching out the picturesque, and cultivated music through practice on the piano and at musical evenings. Quite enough for a man of leisure, which he was not: in May 1823 on his seventeenth birthday (the earliest possible date), he entered the Examiner’s Office of the East India Company, where he was to earn his living for thirty-five years.

Mill’s activities as a debater demonstrate clearly his maturation. From his early years he had been trained in “dissecting a bad argument,” and had studied with his father the Greek and Latin orators, especially Demosthenes, “some of whose principal orations [he] read several times over, and wrote out, by way of exercise, a full analysis of them.” James Mill, in addition to stressing the substance,

pointed out the skill and art of the orator—how everything important to his purpose was said at the exact moment when he had brought the minds of his audience into the state most fitted to receive it; how he made steal into their minds, gradually and by insinuation, thoughts which if expressed in a more direct manner would have roused their opposition. Most of these reflections were beyond my capacity of full comprehension at the time; but they left seed behind, which germinated in due season.<sup>27</sup>

An interesting window is opened on James Mill’s views by one of his letters to another pupil, Ricardo, in this same period:

Let those discourses . . . which we have so often talked about, be written without delay. And do not stay, in the first instance, to be very nice and punctilious about any thing; run the matter off while the vein is open. I would, if I were you, set down in the first place, on a separate piece of paper, in a distinct proposition or propositions, the subject which I meant to handle, and then under it I would state the different points which I meant to take up, as well my own propositions as the answers to them. I would pass and repass these in my mind; to see as far as I could recollect, if they contained every thing, and if I had them in the best possible order; that is, the order in which that is taken first which needs nothing of what follows to explain it, and which serves to explain what follows; that is taken second which is explained by what precedes, and is serviceable for explaining what follows, without needing what follows for explaining itself. This is the plain rule of utility, which will always guide you right, and in which there is no mystery. After this, I would sit down to write, and expand. When the writing is done, you should *talk* over the subject to yourself. I mean not *harangue*, but as you would talk about it in conversation at your own table; talk audibly, however, walking about in your room. This will practice your memory, and will also practice you in finding words at the moment to express your thoughts. After this you shall talk the various subjects over to me, when we have again an opportunity of being together: and after this you may have perfect confidence in yourself. One thing more, however; you must write your discourses, with the purpose of sending them to me. Depend upon it, this will be a stimulus, not without its use. I will be the representative of an audience, of a public; and even if you had in your eye a person whom you respect much less than you do me, it would be a motive both to bestow the labour more regularly, as it should be; and to increase the force of your attention. Therefore no apologies, and no excuses will be listened to.<sup>28</sup>

Delivery, so important to the Classical theorists, was not overlooked by James Mill.

He had thought much on the principles of the art of reading, especially the most neglected part of it, the inflexions of the voice, or *modulation* as writers on elocution call it (in contrast with *articulation* on the one side, and *expression* on the other), and had reduced it to rules, grounded on the logical analysis of a sentence. These rules he strongly impressed upon me, and took me severely to task for every violation of them: but I even then remarked (though I did not venture to make the remark to him) that though he reproached me when I read a sentence ill, and *told* me how I ought to have read it, he never, by reading it himself, *shewed* me how it ought to be read. . . . It was at a much later period of my youth, when practising elocution by myself, or with companions of my own age, that I for the first time understood the object of his rules, and saw the psychological grounds of them. At that time I and others followed out the subject into its ramifications, and could have composed a very useful treatise, grounded on my father's principles. He himself left those principles and rules unwritten. I regret that when my mind was full of the subject, from systematic practice, I did not put them, and our improvements of them, into a formal shape.<sup>29</sup>

Just before John Mill began to debate, he was advised by his father to write practice orations. Obedient as ever, and availing himself of his “familiarity with Greek history and ideas and with the Athenian orators,” he wrote “two speeches, one an accusation, the other a defence of Pericles on a supposed impeachment.”<sup>30</sup> Thus armed, he was ready for actual debate, initially in a “Mutual Improvement Society,” a little documented organization.<sup>31</sup> However, his surviving contributions to it (Nos. 4-6) are formal and rigid, seldom indicating any flexing in response to audience or occasion—though one must recall that these, like all the similar surviving manuscripts, were prepared in advance, and (these may be an exception) not actually read from in debate. In the absence of any indication, one cannot assume that he formulated the topics for debate in the Mutual Improvement Society, though they certainly are apt to his interests then and later.

Considerable rhetorical advance is seen in the next speeches (Nos. 7-13), prepared for debates between the young Utilitarians (or Philosophic Radicals as they became known later) and the followers of Robert Owen at the latter’s Co-operative Society, which has left surprisingly few traces. In the *Autobiography* Mill notes that early in 1825 Roebuck had attended some of their weekly public discussions in Chancery Lane, and the proposal was mooted that a debate between the two groups would be useful. He continues:

The question of population was proposed as the subject of debate: Charles Austin led the case on our side with a brilliant speech, and the fight was kept up by adjournment through five or six weekly meetings before crowded auditories, including along with the members of the Society and their friends, many hearers and some speakers from the Inns of Court.<sup>32</sup>

The texts themselves indicate that the Philosophic Radicals were in the affirmative, asserting the perils of over-population, and that, following the first round, Mill took over the management of their side from Charles Austin. After this debate, Mill says, “another was commenced on the general merits of Owen’s system”;<sup>33</sup> it appears from No. 9 that again the Philosophic Radicals were in the affirmative, criticizing the Owenites’ view of economics, and that Mill himself had proposed the question. The “contest altogether lasted about three months,” Mill says:

It was a *lutte corps-à-corps* between Owenites and political economists, whom the Owenites regarded as their most inveterate opponents: but it was a perfectly friendly dispute. We who represented political economy had the same objects in view as they had, and took pains to shew it; and the principal champion on their side was a very estimable man, with whom I was well acquainted, Mr. William Thompson, of Cork,<sup>34</sup> author of a book on the Distribution of Wealth, and of an *Appeal* in behalf of women against the passage relating to them in my father’s *Essay on Government*. Ellis, Roebuck, and I, took an active part in the debate, and among those from the Inns of Court who joined in it I remember Charles Villiers. The other side obtained also, on the population question, very efficient support from without. The well known Gale Jones, then an elderly man, made one of his florid speeches; but the speaker with whom I was most struck, though I dissented from nearly every word he said, was Thirlwall, the historian, since bishop of St. David’s, then a Chancery barrister, un-

known except by a high reputation for eloquence acquired at the Cambridge Union before the era of Austin and Macaulay. His speech was in answer to one of mine. Before he had uttered ten sentences, I set him down as the best speaker I had ever heard, and I have never since heard any one whom I placed above him.<sup>35</sup>

The encounter with the Owenites led to the formation of the debating society most important in Mill's intellectual and social development. It is better documented: many of the details missing from Mill's own account and not to be inferred from his speeches and letters are supplied by three printed documents of the London Debating Society<sup>36</sup> and Henry Cole's *Diary*;<sup>37</sup> there are some references and a few surviving speeches by others. The description in the *Autobiography* of its founding follows immediately on that of the Owenite battles.

The great interest of these debates predisposed some of those who took part in them, to catch at a suggestion thrown out by McCulloch, the political economist, that a society was wanted in London similar to the Speculative Society at Edinburgh, in which Brougham, Horner and others first cultivated public speaking. Our experience at the Cooperative Society seemed to give cause for being sanguine as to the sort of men who might be brought together in London for such a purpose. McCulloch mentioned the matter to several young men of influence to whom he was then giving private lessons in political economy. Some of these entered warmly into the project, particularly George Villiers, afterwards Earl of Clarendon. He and his brothers Hyde and Charles, Romilly, Charles Austin, and I, with some others, met and agreed on a plan. We determined to meet once a fortnight, from November to June, at the Freemason's Tavern, and we had soon a splendid list of members, containing, along with several members of parliament, nearly all the most noted speakers of the Cambridge Union and of the Oxford United Debating Society.<sup>38</sup>

It was, of course, not particularly the procedures, but the proved utility of the goals and experience of these societies that suggested them as models for the London Debating Society. Consequently a few words about them are appropriate.

J.R. McCulloch seems not to have been a member of the Speculative Society, founded in Edinburgh in 1764 and located on the grounds of Edinburgh University, which included in its illustrious but limited membership—in addition to Henry Brougham and Francis Horner—Walter Scott, Francis Jeffrey, Lord John Russell, and Lord Cockburn. Its self-perceived importance is seen in Cockburn's comment that to record the affairs of the "Spec" would be to write "a history of the best talent that has been reared in Scotland" and "of the subjects which have chiefly engaged the attention of the literary and scientific youths, of statesmen, of parties, and of the public." It would disclose "the early seeds of the individual eminence, which, after being brought into bud there, is blown, in various walks, over the country," and would provide "the most inspiring picture that the real life of youth can exhibit of the results of mental energy or of mental sloth, when excited or sunk by competition."<sup>39</sup>

While this hyperbolic prediction is not borne out by the histories of the Speculative Society, it makes it all the more regrettable that the records of the London Debating Society, which could

make a similar, if lesser claim, are so meagre. On the evidence, one cannot tell how serious the suggestion was that the London Society model itself on the Edinburgh one, particularly when other models were closer to hand (though perhaps not warmer to heart among the London Scots) in Cambridge and Oxford, whence came many of the members of the London Debating Society and, to a lesser extent but even closer for Mill, in the Mutual Improvement Society. However, Edinburgh deserves some attention as the original exemplar. It met weekly (on Tuesdays after Fridays proved difficult) in its own small premises, and initially heard papers as well as engaging in debate. Divisions had been introduced into its debates in 1783, and many of the subjects, not surprisingly, parallel generally those later in London. Also, after a period of prohibition, discussion of the politics of the day was permitted at the beginning of 1826, on the grounds that the proscription had been beneficially and systematically violated for some time; the London Debating Society would certainly not have seen the “Spec” as a model had political debates not been allowed. The same sort of proscription had, in fact, been in force at Cambridge and Oxford, and it seems likely that the freedom of choice in London was associated at least in Mill’s mind with freedom from university ecclesiastical control.

The Cambridge Union was formed in 1815, during the excitement of the initial postwar months, through a merging of three debating societies, the most important of which had taken the Edinburgh Speculative Society as its model.<sup>40</sup> The subjects, chosen by the body of some two hundred a few weeks in advance, were, in keeping with the spirit of the times, political and historical, and within two years conflict with the university authorities arose, at a time when Connop Thirlwall, whose debating skills so impressed Mill in 1825, was Secretary. As a result, the Union became a reading club from 1817 to 1821, when the restrictions on dangerous topics were relaxed by making it permissible to debate political topics before 1800, and then prior to twenty years before the date of debate. This limitation was ingeniously evaded by adding the phrase “twenty years ago” to obviously contemporary questions, such as reform of the Commons, or the appropriateness of the Greek independence struggle—in 1799.<sup>41</sup> In the early 1820s the Union attracted brilliant speakers, including many later to join the London Debating Society, such as Macaulay, Bulwer, Charles and Hyde Villiers, Praed and, most relevant to Mill, Charles Austin, President in 1822, who was a powerful propagator of Bentham’s and James Mill’s views. Later in the decade other familiars of Mill were active, not least Charles Buller, F.D. Maurice, and John Sterling, the last well known in that context as a radical. The Union was the place to make a name, and many succeeded. Some of course failed, W.M. Thackeray being a well established case, his initial disaster presaging his notorious lifelong inability to speak in public.<sup>42</sup>

The Oxford Union was less significant, being itself founded only in 1823 in obvious imitation of Cambridge.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, early in 1825 the two Unions offered reciprocal privileges, and the temper and subjects ran in parallel, with the pressures of contemporary politics making for divisions into liberal and conservative, though the former was less strident at Oxford, and conflict with the authorities, though not unknown, was less significant. The topics of debate are reminiscent of those in Edinburgh and Cambridge, and foreshadow those in London. One of the most significant debates from this point of view occurred in 1829, when the London Society was well into its active life; at Cambridge’s instigation, representatives from its Society went to Oxford to debate

the relative merits of Byron and Shelley. That the subject attracted much interest, ranging over political as well as literary grounds, indicates yet again the importance attached to such issues in the 1820s. And the interest was not only among the participants, for the public took note of the activities of the rising generation.

Though, as mentioned, the Oxford Union was less important as a model for London than the Edinburgh or Cambridge societies, the overall parallels are obviously significant, and some members of the London Debating Society had made a name at Oxford. Most important in determining Mill's role was Donald Maclean, who had presided over the first debate at Oxford in 1823, and was to fail in the first one in London. And the intention, to acquire confidence and control while dealing with great issues, was of course similar, though the London debates were, for the Oxbridge men, postgraduate, and therefore more mature but also less enthralling.

To ensure the requisite heat, Mill and his friends tried to recruit Tories, but had more success in attracting a number of prominent men of diverse but generally liberal views. Mill's account, with its suppressed but evident enthusiasm, continues:

Nothing could seem more promising. But when the time for action drew near, and it was necessary to fix on a President, and find somebody to open the first debate, none of our celebrities would consent to perform either office. Of the many who were pressed on the subject, the only one who could be prevailed on was a man of whom I knew very little [Donald Maclean], but who had taken high honours at Oxford and was said to have acquired a great oratorical reputation there; who some time afterwards became a Tory member of parliament. He accordingly was fixed on, both for filling the President's chair and for making the first speech. The important day arrived; the benches were crowded; all our great speakers were present, to judge of, but not to help our efforts. The Oxford orator's speech was a complete failure. This threw a damp on the whole concern: the speakers who followed were few, and none of them did their best: the affair was a complete *fasco*; and the oratorical celebrities we had counted on went away never to return, giving to me at least a lesson in knowledge of the world. This unexpected breakdown altered my whole relation to the project. I had not anticipated taking a prominent part, or speaking much or often, particularly at first; but I now saw that the success of the scheme depended on the new men, and I put my shoulder to the wheel. I opened the second question [with No. 14], and from that time spoke in nearly every debate. It was very uphill work for some time. The three Villiers' and Romilly stuck to us for some time longer, but the patience of all the founders of the Society was at last exhausted, except me and Roebuck.<sup>44</sup>

As to the frequency of his speaking, it is indicative that he felt it necessary in his last extant speech to the Society in 1829 to apologize for the great number of appearances he had made before it. But he did more than speak. Though initially he was not an officer, he joined the Committee of Management, and his activities soon included the unhappy treasurer's duties of dunning delinquent members (the subscription was £1 per annum),<sup>45</sup> and undoubtedly attempting to en-



sure a good attendance at the sessions, which, as indicated above, were held fortnightly on Friday evenings from November until June. Occasionally they assembled on other days and infrequently at weekly intervals. There was a month's gap from mid-December to mid-January. The sessions began with a business meeting at 7 p.m. (attended, one may safely assume, by Mill and very few others), the debate opening at 8 p.m.

The first debate, the "*fiasco*," on the topic, "That the Colonies are beneficial to Great Britain," was held on 25 November, 1825, with the negative carrying the day, 28 to 21. The second, "That the Influence of the Aristocracy in the Government of this Country is beneficial," on 9 December, was not proposed by Mill but opened by him (against normal practice, in the negative). Mill's contribution was anticipated by a letter of December from Henry Taylor to his mother that gives, from another point of view, the excitement generated by the Society (called by Taylor the Academics).

The audience was a more striking one in appearance than one can see elsewhere—the Houses of Lords and Commons furnish no remarkable assemblage. Young Mill is to open the debate on Friday week with an attack upon the aristocracy as a pernicious class. He is about twenty years old, a great speaker, and considered to be a youth of very singular ability. Singular one can certainly tell him to be in a moment. I have only heard him speak a few words now and then when the rules of the Society were debated. He is an animated, determined-looking youth, and speaks, I am told, without hesitation, digression, ornament, or emphasis, in a tone to me in the little I heard almost ridiculously simple and with very odd but very considerable effect.<sup>46</sup>

Taylor wrote after the second debate to his father, mentioning Hyde Villiers' success in the first session and his own failure, and adding:

But our great speaker hitherto (we have only had two meetings) is young Mill, son of the Radical of that name at the India House. The youth (only nineteen years old) believes as he has been taught—that is, in the book of Jeremy; from which he preaches in all parts, being the apostle of the Benthamites. The smallest ornament or flourish is a sin with this school, and they draw their conclusions from their narrow premises with logical dryness and precision.<sup>47</sup>

The vote in the second debate, despite what Mill saw as a heavy liberal overloading, was 63 affirmative and 17 negative. The number of votes, of course, is not equivalent to the attendance, but it is noteworthy that considerably more members took an active interest in the second than in the first debate, indicating either that Mill's anxieties were misplaced, that his memory was faulty, or that his shoulder got the wheel moving quickly. At the next session, however, on 20 January, 1826, when he proposed the subject, "That the Law and Custom of Primogeniture are detrimental to Society," and, though not the opener, spoke to it in the affirmative (No. 15), there were only 16 affirmative and 12 negative votes.<sup>48</sup>

Perhaps, however, the weather was bad, for there were more than 70 votes at the debate on 3 February,<sup>49</sup> at which Mill did not speak,<sup>50</sup> though only 47 on 17 February, when, on the question,

“That it is expedient that the New Catholic Association be suppressed,” Mill opened, once more in the negative, and won easily, there being no speakers in the affirmative. There is no record of his remarks on this occasion, though one would expect that, as opener, he would have prepared some. Perhaps the small and single-minded attendance forced him into the opener’s role. The shortest extant list of speakers is recorded for the session on 28 February when Mill (and only he) opposed Roebuck (and only him), arguing against the proposition “That the Character of Cati-line has been calumniated by the Roman Historians” (No. 16); the vote was 25 negative (with Mill) and 12 affirmative.<sup>51</sup> He proposed and opened for the affirmative on the next topic (16 March), “That the Resolution lately moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the Suppres-sion of One and Two Pound Notes was inexpedient,” this time losing by two votes in a total of 40. Again no text survives.

Sustaining his loyalty, Mill spoke again on 7 April, arguing, with a winning majority, against the proposition “That the System pursued at our Universities is adapted to the Ends of Educa-tion” (see Nos. 17 and 18, not all spoken, but prepared for this occasion). He did not speak during the next debate, on 21 April, “That a speedy Emancipation of the Slaves in the West Indies is incompatible with the Interests of all parties concerned,” though, since he was not given to argu-ing a case against his beliefs, one may be sure he would have been in the negative; however, he returned to the fray in the next debate, the first one to be adjourned to a second session, on 5 and 19 May, “That the practical constitution of Great Britain is adequate to all the Purposes of good Government.” He spoke (see Nos. 19 and 20) only on the second occasion, and not surprisingly in the negative; though there was a good roster of speakers at both sessions, there were only eighteen votes, equally divided, with the affirmative winning by the casting vote of the chair. Mill is not recorded as contributing to the discussion on 2 June, “That the Character of Napoleon Buonaparte deserves the detestation of Mankind,” a subject on which he certainly had views, but he joined in the winning affirmative on 16 June, the last debate of the session, “That the Resi-dence of the Irish Landlords upon their Estates would not alleviate any one of the Evils of Ire-land”; again his remarks are not recorded.

This, the end of the opening session, 1825-26, is as far as the first printed record of the Soci-ety takes us. Mill says that in the second session, 1826-27,

things began to mend. We had acquired two excellent Tory speakers, Hayward,<sup>52</sup> and Shee (afterwards Sergeant Shee): the radical side was reinforced by Charles Bul-ler, Cockburn, and others of the second generation of Cambridge Benthamites; and with their and other occasional aid, and the two Tories as well as Roebuck and me for regular speakers, almost every debate was a *bataille rangée* between the “philosophic radicals” and the Tory lawyers; until our conflicts were talked about, and several per-sons of note and consideration came to hear us.<sup>53</sup>

One practical result is seen in Roebuck’s career. “Mr. Roebuck first became celebrated as one of the most eminent members of the London Debating Society. The celebrity which he obtained for his oratory at this society, and for his various literary productions in the ‘Westminster Review’

and elsewhere, made him known to several leading Reformers, and through their recommendations he was introduced to the citizens of Bath.”<sup>54</sup>

Cole, who met Mill first on 7 November, 1826, and says he attended debates on 10, 18, and 22 November, 1826,<sup>55</sup> and 10 January, 1827 (respectively a Friday, Saturday, Thursday, and Wednesday), did not begin to record the topics until 19 January, 1827, and did not join the Society until 25 May of that year, though thereafter he attended regularly. There are no surviving texts, and no record of Mill’s participation, in November and December of 1826.<sup>56</sup> Cole records the subject of debate on 19 January, 1827, proposed by Roebuck, as “Whether the writings of Lord Byron had an immoral tendency.” Roebuck’s opening speech (on the losing side) is the only one mentioned by Cole; Mill’s account<sup>57</sup> of his differences with Roebuck over the poetry of Byron most obviously refers to No. 32 of 1829 (discussed below), but it seems likely that, if he was in attendance as one may presume, Mill participated in this debate.<sup>58</sup> In February 1827 Henry Taylor participated in a debate the precise topic of which is not known, but centring on the question of selfishness as the main motive to action, with Taylor arguing “in refutation of [his] friends, the young Benthamites.”<sup>59</sup> Once more it is hard to imagine Mill remaining silent.

There is no further record of the debates until that of 30 March, 1827, “Whether Lawyers’ Influence is not pernicious to Morals, Jurisprudence, and Government,” which appears to be the one for which Mill prepared No. 21;<sup>60</sup> Cole mentions no speakers, but indicates a victory for the affirmative, on which side Mill certainly was found. On 25 May the Society debated “Whether Logic is more curious than useful,” with “useful” carrying the day by a majority of 8: Mill’s silence would be surprising, but there is no record. The occasion of No. 22, “The Use of History,” is not certain, but the manuscript is dated 1827, and looking at the gaps in Cole’s record, one may hypothesize a date in the first half of the year, perhaps 8 June, for which Cole has no entry.<sup>61</sup> The final debate of the session, “That the Coalition of the Whigs with Mr. Canning was natural, honorable, and conducive to the best interests of the state,” occupied two meetings, 22 and 29 June; Cole gives neither speakers nor outcome, but obviously No. 23 was prepared for this debate, and internal evidence marks it as intended for 29 June.

By this time Cole had become a regular member of the Students of Mental Philosophy in their meetings at Grote’s house in Threadneedle Street,<sup>62</sup> and was now a constant companion of Mill’s. He began his own career in the London Debating Society at the first meeting of the next session, on 16 November, 1827. The subject, “That the Literature of this Country has declined and is declining,” was also addressed by Mill (No. 24).<sup>63</sup> Cole records the meetings of 30 November, 14 December, and 18 January without mentioning Mill, but the second of these may have been the occasion when Mill, according to Neal, proposed that “freedom of discussion upon religious subjects should not be restricted by law”; Cole records the topic on 14 December as “Whether it would not be beneficial to Society that all opinions should be openly avowed either respecting Politics, Morals, and Religion.”<sup>64</sup> “That England derives no benefit from its Church Establishment” was debated on 1 and 15 February, 1828. Roebuck opened on the first occasion with what Cole thought “a most excellent speech,” and John Sterling, “a new member,” made his maiden address; Mill delivered No. 25 on the second evening. Mill’s next recorded appearance is

in the debate on “Perfectibility,” which began on 2 May, when he delivered No. 26, and concluded a week later on the 9th.<sup>65</sup> And on 30 May, Gustave D’Eichthal, then on a Saint-Simonian missionary visit to London, reports that Mill spoke during a debate identified by Cole as “That the laws relating to cruelty to animals have arisen in a misconception of the objects and without the scope of Legislation.” D’Eichthal says:

M. Mill parla le dernier; il admit la convenance de la loi en principe, mais il en regarda l’application comme impraticable, puisqu’il était impossible de déterminer bien souvent jusqu’à quel point un mauvais traitement était plus ou moins nécessaire. Mais M. Mill ne se borna pas à poser son opinion sous cette forme parfaitement raisonnable. Il reprit les uns après les autres tous les points touchés dans la soirée, même ceux qui n’avaient qu’une relation éloignée avec le sujet, et sur chacun il émit une opinion pleine de bon sens et de mesure et dégagée de toute considération absolue. C’est ainsi qu’il passa en revue ce qu’on avait dit des droits des animaux, des droits de l’homme sur eux, de l’effet des peines, des changements dans la morale et la législation, etc. Jamais je n’ai entendu un discours dans lequel j’aurais moins voulu changer quoi que ce soit.<sup>66</sup>

Cole was “too much fatigued” to attend on 13 June, but D’Eichthal reports, “J’ai de nouveau assisté à cette société le vendredi 13 juin. La question débattue était: *le gouvernement de l’Inde doit-il être laissé à la Compagnie?*” and adds disparagingly:

Telle m’a paru du moins être la position de la question, car elle n’a été nettement posée par personne.

J’ai trouvé généralement le même défaut que la première fois, c’est-à-dire le penchant à se jeter dans les généralités et une grande négligence des faits provenant sans doute de leur ignorance. J’ai trouvé la même hostilité contre le gouvernement et aussi la même disposition à mettre le *mot pour rire* et à donner un tour plaisant à la discussion, ce dont j’avoue, j’ai été surpris et charmé. On ne manquait jamais l’occasion de faire quelque manifestation de principes bien libérale et de lancer un coup de patte à ses adversaires. . . .<sup>67</sup>

In Mill’s view, the acclaim that the Society gained in 1826-27 had increased in 1827-28,

when the Coleridgians, in the persons of Maurice and Sterling, made their appearance in the Society as a second Liberal and even Radical party, on totally different grounds from Benthamism and vehemently opposed to it; bringing into these discussions the general doctrines and modes of thought of the European reaction against the philosophy of the eighteenth century; and adding a third and very important belligerent party to our contests, which were now no bad exponent of the movement of opinion among the most cultivated part of the new generation. Our debates were very different from those of common debating societies, for they habitually consisted of the strongest arguments and most philosophic principles which either side was able to produce, thrown often into close and *serré* confutations of one another.<sup>68</sup>

The session of 1828-29 began on 14 November (with an adjournment to the 28th) on the question, as Cole reports, “That the Constituent assembly deserve the eulogy of Posterity.” Roebuck opened, and Mill delivered “a most elaborate Speech” that was “somewhat lengthy 1 hour and half.” This is probably the occasion intended by Neal when he says that Mill “proposed to show . . . ‘that *the French Revolution was necessary*’ ”; these unrecorded remarks would be a useful addition to his contemporaneous reviews of French history.<sup>69</sup>

Mill’s next known contribution (No. 27) was one of his most important, on the proposition “That Wordsworth was a greater poet than Byron.”<sup>70</sup> The debate was opened on 16 January, 1829, by Sterling, “who made a long rambling speech,” followed by Roebuck who, Cole thought, made “a good case out for Byron” in “a most excellent speech.” On 20 January, Cole visited Mill to talk over the merits of Byron and Wordsworth, and perhaps warmed by this discussion Mill, when the debate resumed on 30 January, “delivered a most excellent essay which from its length (2 hours) caused some squabbling at the end of the debate.”<sup>71</sup> Sterling’s judgment is recorded in a letter to Joseph Williams Blakesley on 8 February, where he says: “I practised upon the vigilance of no one but Roebuck, and I suppose you do not consider it an atrocity to cheat that mousing owl.” His speech was, he thinks, too short; he “should have stipulated for being allowed to speak for at least five hours.” He continues:

On the second evening of the Debate there were two or three unhappy performers of nonsense of whom I remember little.—but Mill, the Westminster Reviewer (attacked absurdly in the last Edinburgh) made an admirable speech in defence of Wordsworth. It was at least as long as mine, & infinitely better. I wish you had heard it. Except in Wordsworth & Coleridge & Maurice’s conversation I have never seen or heard anything like the same quantity of acute & profound poetical criticism. Late in the evening I replied in a speech of half-an-hour, & was obliged from want of time to omit the greater part of what I should have liked to have said.<sup>72</sup>

Richard Monckton Milnes reported to his father after the debate that the Society did not seem “half as good” as the Cambridge Union, adding: “Sterling spoke splendidly, and Mill made an essay on Wordsworth’s poetry for two and three-quarter hours, which delighted me, but all the rest was meagre in the extreme.”<sup>73</sup>

Mill seems not to have participated in the next two sessions listed by Cole (13 February and 13 March),<sup>74</sup> but he ended his appearances for that spring on the topic, “That Montesquieu as a political and philosophical writer is not worthy of the character he usually bears.” The debate opened on 27 March, when Sterling spoke; on its resumption on 3 April, Mill spoke against Sterling (No. 28) in exceptionally strong terms.<sup>75</sup>

In the autumn of 1829, Mill is listed in the *Transactions* as speaking on 27 November in the affirmative, with Roebuck, on the proposition “That Persons refusing to contribute to the Defence of a State, ought not to be considered criminal.” The negative carried the debate, and there is no record of Mill’s remarks. That appears to have been his last regular participation. He says in the *Autobiography*: “After 1829 I withdrew from attendance on the Debating Society. I had

had enough of speech-making, and was glad to carry on my private studies and meditations without any immediate call for outward assertion of their results.”<sup>76</sup>

This remark, while it accurately indicates that Mill wrote little for the next year, is a trifle disingenuous, for his leaving the Society unquestionably was occasioned by his strongly expressed dissent from the positions of Roebuck and Sterling. In the case of Roebuck, though the exact timing and cause of Mill’s disaffection are moot,<sup>77</sup> the lack of fellow feeling with one of his closest companions and allies, a friend who saw himself as having been taught by Mill, must have made public debating difficult. In the case of Sterling, a new and growing affection could not tolerate the outspoken and unqualified rhetoric of debate. His withdrawal, with Sterling, was certain and recognized, for Cole, who continued to be active until the break up of the London Debating Society in 1832, notes on 19 February, 1830, that he fears the Society to be “in a bad way—doubtless owing to the secession of Mill and his friends.” New preoccupations brought Mill back once, however; on 18 February, 1831, Cole reports that “Mill made a good explanatory speech on the progress of the French Revolution,” one he was well qualified to make on the basis of his weekly series on France in the *Examiner*.<sup>78</sup>

The Society but not the experience was left behind by Mill. “For my own part,” he says,

nothing I ever wrote was more carefully elaborated both in matter and expression than some of those speeches. My delivery was and remained bad; but I could make myself listened to; and I even acquired a certain readiness of extemporaneous speaking, on questions of pure argument, and could reply offhand, with some effect, to the speech of an opponent: but whenever I had an exposition to make in which from the feelings involved or from the nature of the ideas to be developed, expression seemed important, I always most carefully wrote the speech and committed it to memory, and I did this even with my replies, when an opportunity was afforded by an adjourned debate. Therefore many of my speeches were of some worth as compositions, to be set against a bad and ungraceful manner. I believe that this practice greatly increased my power of effective writing. The habit of composing speeches for delivery gave me not only an ear for smoothness and rhythm but a practical sense for *telling* sentences and an immediate criterion of their telling property, by their effect on a mixed audience.<sup>79</sup>

The few extant reports do not give strong evidence of his having a “bad and ungraceful manner;” but, looking at the speeches in sequence, we can certainly see evidence, of his growing powers of persuasion. The early ones are stiff and unresponsive, vehement through shrillness rather than power, and shaped more by the extrinsic evidence supplied by his teachers than by the intrinsic evidence of the strong yet supple mind. It is of course almost as difficult to judge delivery from a manuscript as to record it in writing. There are in the manuscripts few instances of underlining for emphasis, or of exclamation points (“The people capricious!” [384]; “But no!” [405]). One may treat merely as an example of the combined emotional and ethical appeals, rather than objective description, Mill’s early remark to the Cooperative Society: “the tones of my voice are not sufficiently vehement and sufficiently energetic—in short . . . I do not speak

well” (306). This kind of self-deprecation appears more frequently in the first speeches—in the exordia of Nos. 5 and 7 (which are almost identical), and of Nos. 14 and 18, for instance—but even there with increasing skill; the last of these incorporates a defence of his limited range of comment on universities. The anti-rhetorical stance of the novice is also evident: in No. 7 he asserts that the subject, population, does not permit of panegyric, vivid painting, glowing and poetical description, elegant metaphor, or florid declamation; in No. 9 he apologizes “for confounding . . . one who treats his audience like children, to be dazzled by a gaudy brilliancy of colouring, with one who treats them like men, and I may add, like women, of judgment and sense” (298);<sup>80</sup> in No. 14 he deplures topics that invite rhetorical extravagances; and in No. 19 he exemplifies the fault, inveighing against the “varnish of rhetoric . . . the tinsel and frippery of the harlot eloquence” (365).

Against these cosmetic accessories, he is early able to employ the “rational” strategies so beloved of his father. Noteworthy are his arguing in No. 9 (not in vain, since no vote was taken) that a flaw in the wording of the question should not stand in the way of correct judgment, and, in the same speech, his using a basic logical strategy: “The gentleman has at the same time two contrary theories—the one, that education can do nothing, the other that it can do every thing: both theories may be false, but both cannot be true” (305). Compare a passage from No. 14, where the accusation of *petitio principii* is calmly levelled:

But it has usually been deemed sufficient to point to the British Constitution, and to beg the three following questions in relation to it: 1. that it is a balance, 2. that it is good, and 3. that it is good, because it is a balance: which three premisses being taken for granted, the conclusion, that a balance must be good, follows, it must be owned, quite easily and naturally (334).

Fine flourishes of the logical wand are seen in No. 16: “The absence of evidence against [Cataline] is not evidence in his favour” (344), and in No. 18: “If to have been at the University be the end of education there is no doubt but that by going to the University that end may be most effectually attained” (355).

Such comments were an early stock in trade, none the worse for being repeatedly displayed: “that speech is the most difficult to answer of any—for the difficulty of refutation is usually proportional to the insignificance of the arguments, and it is not easy to reply, where nothing has been adduced” (283); “No one can be required to argue against a bare assertion: if I shew that it is a bare assertion, I have surely done all that can be required” (300); “An opinion, however erroneous, is much sooner stated than refuted” (315); “Assertion without proof, takes up little time: misrepresentation is always beautifully brief” (367).

Mill’s opponents are often faulted for adopting other than the rational appeal: “the honourable opener may learn that even when he is in the wrong, a little logic will do him no harm” (363); “transcendent talents are not necessary” to achieve the effects of his opponent, for it “only requires a tolerable command over the two great instruments, assumption and abuse” (371); “The orator who has the fears of his audience on his side, has only to awaken the emotion by a

few frightful words, and persuasion follows of itself” (379). His own manner is of course much different: “. . . I thought it best to appear what I am, straightforward and uncompromising” (370).

In that passage we see the obvious apologetics of the ethical appeal that Mill learned to use more subtly, as in: “From the length to which my remarks have already extended, I have left myself but little time” (366; note that the speech was of course prepared ahead of time); and “If I seem to dismiss these theories in a summary manner, want of time must be my apology” (375).

Clear *divisio*, always one of Mill’s goals and powers, is seen throughout, but his early perorations are, like his exordia, not well developed. It may be observed, of course, that closing remarks are much better conceived on the spot, being most powerful when they take into account the past and future of the debate; probably Mill left them to the impulse of the moment, although there are some effective elements in the drafts. One may instance a conciliatory note (313-15), a supplication to the uncommitted as well as to allies (335), and (that favourite radical ploy) an appeal to the inevitable future (371). An unusual note is struck in No. 23, where he closes with the announcement that he will not vote in the division, as events will settle the question. Certainly where the speeches show him attempting to anticipate a reaction from his audience one must assume that he in fact modified his words *ad hoc*.<sup>81</sup> That he took notes during the debate is evident in the manuscript materials for No. 21 (and doodles are found elsewhere, though they appear to be byproducts of the process of composition rather than of boredom).

Non-rational persuasion is, of course, present. While figurative language—viewed as the false rhetorician’s poisoned honey—is not Mill’s forte, he always was capable of some power, referring as early as No. 4, for instance, to “the terrific engines of auricular confession and absolution” (260). His greater strength, displayed in several of the examples above, is epigrammatic, as when he anticipates Emerson: “Every man is a man, long before he is a poet or a philosopher” (410). In one place (375-7) he uses a fable that he felt telling enough to be used almost without modification in print nine years later.<sup>82</sup> Given the habits of the age, it is surprising that Mill uses so few Latin tags, but perhaps he simply threw them in *ad libitum*; there are, indeed, few quotations of any kind, except when, as in No. 27, they are the main part of the argument (and here they are only signalled in the manuscript). One can only guess at the background of his remark in No. 20, “quotations have become so ridiculous that I shall not venture upon the original [in Italian]” (385); the earlier version of that speech (No. 19) in fact has the original. There are many allusions, including rather more Biblical ones than might be expected, and one interesting “dramatized” illustration: “Well, the provident man says to the spendthrift, You are a strong man . . .” (311).

Rhetorical questions are found in plenty but not excess, often involving irony; for instance: “is eating my dinner inconsistent with the practice of benevolence? Must we either renounce our virtues or our meals?” (316).<sup>83</sup> At 337 a question is put into his opponents’ mouths in another of his rare excursions into reported direct speech, and at 372 there is a nice twist from the assertive to the interrogative. Also effective is the anaphora at 407: “Do they . . . ? Do they . . . ? Do they . . . ? Do they . . . ? No.”<sup>84</sup> Another variation is seen at 406: “I would ask Mr. Canning—if I were at this moment in his presence I would ask him. . . .”



In such speeches we would not expect much evidence of the fairness (or, in the judgment of those who are suspicious, the appearance of fairness) for which Mill later strove,<sup>85</sup> although it is traditional in debating, of course, to make some claim to disinterest, even when the basis of the game is evident enough to all. But Mill shows throughout at least the minimal courtesy of attending to his opponent's arguments, including those offered on previous occasions;<sup>86</sup> this courtesy he was later to elevate into an essential part of the endeavour to discover truth.

His major goal in these years, however, was the exposure and uprooting of error, and many will find the matter of his speeches more revealing than the manner. The basic judgments round which the earlier speeches are structured will quickly be recognized as those of the philosophic radical group. The march of mind is celebrated: "Knowledge has triumphed. . . . It is in vain to suppose that it will pass by and spare any institution the existence of which is pernicious to mankind" (261); "I am an enemy to church establishments because an established clergy must be enemies to the progressiveness of the human mind" (424). Perhaps with a reference to his senior colleague in the Examiner's Office of the East India Company, Thomas Love Peacock, he notes that the "march of intellect" is to opponents "a subject of laughter and derision" (424), whereas in truth the "most important quality of the human intellect is its progressiveness, its tendency to improvement" and "a really good education would promote to the utmost this spirit of progression, to inspire an ardent desire of improvement" (349). Here lie the grounds for hope, enabling us to judge mankind not "merely by what they are" but "by what they are capable of becoming" (349).<sup>87</sup> To that end, another of the Radicals' nostrums, cheap publications, will advance the cause, for "a stupid and ignorant people cannot be a happy one" (382; cf. 368-9).

The Radicals' adaptation of Aristotle's distinction between the "few" and the "many" appears time and again.<sup>88</sup> In only one place is the distinction applied to other than the *ruling* few and the *subject* many, and here the balance jumps quickly to the other side, as Mill refers to the "cant words by which the many who do not think are in the habit of expressing their contempt for the few who do" (364). This tergiversation, typical of Radicals torn between populism and elitism, led to the tension in Mill's mature thought when he tries to balance the values of democratic participation and expert leadership.

Most strongly marked in the apprentice speeches is the retailing of James Mill's characteristic tenets. Mill draws directly on his father's "Government" for the idea that there are three simple forms of government,<sup>89</sup> and security for person and property is stressed,<sup>90</sup> as are securities for good government.<sup>91</sup> These are common in the son's early essays as well, accompanied by the hallmarks of the father's short and easy way with the irrational who oppose him. The young debater asserts: "Now I proved in my opening speech, on data the correctness of which cannot be and has not been called in question" (315); he avers that "to wait for specific experience is [the characteristic] of the man who is incapable of doing more than groping in the dark" (268); he bluntly claims that "Experience has shewn" (378), and that "All experience . . . bears testimony to the extreme difficulty of supplying motives sufficient to keep such men within the line of virtue—it is the grand problem of political science" (395). The great problem in moral science, he might then have said, was to avoid the irrational; we know from his *Autobiography* that he was

taught to eschew feeling,<sup>92</sup> and the lesson is manifest at 296: “this is the first time I ever heard that feeling is the test of truth; that a proposition is true or false, according as we happen to like or dislike it, and that there can be no such things as unpleasant truths.” And again: “Feeling has to do with our actions, reason with our opinions; it is by our reason that we find out what it is our duty to do; it is our feelings which supply us with motives to act upon it when found” (307).

Equally characteristic of his father’s message is the appeal to an undescribed human nature: reasoning from “the properties of the human mind” leads him to the “general principles of human nature” (284); he appeals to “our experience of human nature” (350); and asserts that “The best measures, we know, cannot from the nature of man, be always adopted . . .” (366).<sup>93</sup> Its authority is constantly appealed to: “that favourable opinion of human nature which universal experience shows to be a necessary foundation of all the active virtues” (390); that “volume which should be [a statesman’s] guide is not the book of history but the book of human nature” (393).<sup>94</sup> And that book is not hard to scan: “When I wish to foretel men’s actions, I endeavour to put myself in possession of the motives under which they act, and to see how other men would act in their situation” (284).<sup>95</sup>

Parental manner and matter are combined in “I rest [my case] upon two assertions: that an aristocracy is bad, and that this government is an aristocracy” (271).<sup>96</sup> A further attack on the aristocratic hegemony draws on James Mill’s “seesaw” argument that there is no difference between the Whigs and Tories except as “ins and outs” (273).<sup>97</sup> Another reiterated early lesson concerns the values and relations between theory and practice:<sup>98</sup> “If by calling it theory he means to allege that it is unfounded, this is precisely the question on which we are at issue. I dare him to the proof, but if by theory, he means general principles I agree with him. . .” (283; the argument continues for some time).<sup>99</sup> And in a most filial moment, he asks his honourable opponents to “point out in the whole world a single individual who believes a theory for any reason except because he considers it to be founded upon experience . . .” (392).

Mill’s other great mentor, Jeremy Bentham, is also present in attitude and, when lawyers are in the dock, even tone: “If the law were so clear and intelligible that its import could not be mistaken, and if the administration of justice were so cheap and expeditious that no one could benefit himself by contesting a just claim, lawyers must starve” (386).<sup>100</sup> Similarly Benthamic is the willing acceptance of the sanction of public opinion: “Each working man becomes himself better qualified to distinguish right from wrong, while each knows that he is under the constant surveillance of hundreds and thousands equally instructed with himself” (259).<sup>101</sup> The notion of the opposition between “sinister interests” and the “general interest” is heavily deployed in key speeches: “The many can act wrong only from mistake—they cannot act wrong from design, because they have no sinister interest” (366).<sup>102</sup> Also Benthamic are passages bearing on the relation between morals and politics, such as: “a time is approaching when the enquiry, What has been, shall no longer supersede the enquiry, What ought to be, and when the rust of antiquity shall no longer be permitted to sanctify institutions which reason and the public interest condemn” (269-70). Other of the master’s targets are sighted: ambiguity of terms (365), the unpaid magistracy (273-4, 361, and 362), the universities (354-5 and 274) and with them poetry, Mill asserting that

at Oxford the Classical poets, “being the least useful, are the most cultivated, and as the dramatists are hardly of any use at all it may easily be conceived with what ardour they are studied” (352). A less celebrated Benthamic echo is seen in Mill’s hope that “the time will come” when there will be “no evils but those arising from the necessary constitution of man and of external nature” (442).

In all of this (and there is much) one might miss the independence of mind that becomes increasingly apparent. And, of course, it is not judicious to assume that agreement with his teachers and friends signals mere parroting; thought and discussion, even if directed down set channels, developed the powers that enabled Mill to originate, assess, and revise rather than merely adopt. So it is, for instance, with his views on population in the debates with the Owenites; see especially his reference to the failure of the prudential check to operate in Ireland (305).<sup>103</sup> One can almost date to the same debates his conversion to sexual equality. Earlier he seems committed to the usual diction and banter: “if the greater good, a government responsible to the people, can only be obtained by means of a commotion, no weak and feminine humanity will induce me at least to deprecate such a result” (270);<sup>104</sup> and has some typical male fun with his opponent’s saying that the British Constitution results in the beauty of women: “Sir, no one would lament more than myself, that any deterioration should take place in female beauty . . .” (277). But suddenly in 1825 one finds a quite different note: “nor does Mr. Thompson himself lament more deeply than we, that miserable thralldom in which the weaker half of our species are held, by the tyranny of the stronger, aided and encouraged by their own abject and slavish submission” (314).

It is easy also to detect a new note in another of his arguments against the Owenites, when he objects to the Cooperative system because

in its very nature it is a system of universal regulation. I am not one of those, who set up liberty as an idol to be worshipped, and I am even willing to go farther than most people in regulating and controlling when there is a special advantage to be obtained by regulation and control. I presume, however, that no one will deny that there is a pleasure in enjoying perfect freedom of action; that to be controlled, even if it be for our own good, is in itself far from pleasant, and that other things being alike, it is infinitely better to attain a given end by leaving people to themselves than to attain the same end by controlling them. It is delightful to man to be an independent being. (321.)

And *On Liberty* seems even less far in the future in other passages. Referring to Condorcet on questioning the authority of received opinions, he says: “If they are wrong, it is of course an advantage to get rid of an error: if they are right, it is still no small advantage, to believe upon evidence what we had hitherto believed upon trust” (341). Again, he argues that, supposing established opinions to be correct, “It is not the less true that in the progress of human improvement every one of these opinions comes to be questioned. The good of mankind requires that it should be so.” (350.)<sup>105</sup>

Mill’s new interest in poetry, increasingly seen as a moralizing agent, is demonstrable in the speeches that follow the first onset of his mental crisis. While the comment that “our literature

has declined and is declining” incorporates a debating commonplace, it is followed by the personal judgment that Wordsworth is the only active British “poet of the first rank,” who “will probably never write any more” (410). One thinks of the moral aesthetic to be enunciated in the early 1830s when reading that “the passions are the spring, the moral principle only the regulator of human life” (432); while the image is taken from his father, the “only” is his. And he is certainly on his own when he asserts the importance of poetry to education, referring explicitly to his own need, the education of the feelings (436). Indeed the tone for once becomes confessional when, after asserting that the condition of one’s own mind determines the response to poetry, he says:

I have learned from Wordsworth that it is possible by dwelling on certain ideas to keep up a constant freshness in the emotions which objects excite and which else they would cease to excite as we grew older—to connect cheerful and joyous states of mind with almost every object, to make every thing speak to us of our own enjoyments or those of other sentient beings, and to multiply ourselves as it were in the enjoyments of other creatures: to make the good parts of human nature afford us more pleasure than the bad parts afford us pain—and to rid ourselves entirely of all feelings of hatred or scorn for our fellow creatures. . . . My own change since I thought life a perpetual struggle—how much more there is to aim at when we see that happiness may coexist with being stationary and does not require us to keep moving. (441.)<sup>106</sup>

In the same speech—given in January 1828—he notes the need to “Shew the difference between describing feelings and being able to analyse them . . . ” (440), and evidence that he had already been analyzing his own experience and seeking defences of his guides is found a few months earlier (November 1827) both in themes and diction:

We all know the power of early impressions over the human mind and how often the direction which they give, decides the whole character, the whole life of the man. The greatest men of every age, generally bear a family likeness to their contemporaries: the most splendid monuments of genius which literature can boast of, bear almost universally in a greater or less degree the stamp of their age. (411; cf. 430-1.)<sup>107</sup>

Hints at the reassessment of his heritage are also seen when he conducts his defence of Bentham in No. 28 in terms that suggest some defence is needed<sup>108</sup>—and Coleridge, Bentham’s “completing counterpart,”<sup>109</sup> makes an appearance at 429-30. His praise of Turgot, who had been attacked as a visionary and theorist (396-7), is another adumbration of his mature views, and in this context may also be placed his disclaimer of sectarianism (444), a lesson he says in the *Autobiography* he learned from Condorcet’s life of Turgot.<sup>110</sup> Other themes that he developed later in theory and practice are seen in his comment on the effect on an author of writing anonymously (416); his definition of nature (295-6); his assertion that, of the “culture of our intellectual faculties . . . there are two great instruments, education and discussion” (424); his argument, foreshadowing that in the *Principles of Political Economy*, that the distribution as well as the production of human happiness is a proper consideration for legislators (336); and his anticipation of a main strategy of that work: “it is not by a review of the evils of the Competitive system that this great

question can be decided, but by a fair comparison of the evils of the Competitive and the evils of the Cooperative system” (319).<sup>111</sup> And a difference from his senior guides is that, while they were committed in their own fashion to the well-being of the lower orders, there is already in Mill’s enunciation of principles a modified message (that would of course become further modified): “the working people being the majority of the whole population, the interests of all the other classes are of no importance compared with theirs” (312).<sup>112</sup>

## WALKING TOURS: 1827-32

Whatever Mill knew of the working classes, he was a leading exemplar of the walking classes. Through the years when he was debating, Mill walked seemingly increasing distances daily, weekly, and during holidays.

I passed most Sundays, throughout the year, in the country, taking long rural walks on that day even when residing in London. The month’s holiday was, for a few years, passed at my father’s house in the country: afterwards a part or the whole was spent in tours, chiefly pedestrian, with some one or more of the young men who were my chosen companions; and at a later period, in longer journeys or excursions, alone or with other friends.<sup>113</sup>

In fact, through his life, he went afoot and apace, though one must infer most of the activity from incidental and indirect evidence.

There are, however, extant journals of five early holiday tours, all but the last in mid-summer: Sussex (20-30 July, 1827); Berkshire; Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Surrey (3-15 July, 1828); Yorkshire and the Lake District (ca. 8 July-8 August, 1831); Hampshire, West Sussex, and the Isle of Wight (19 July-6 August, 1832); and Western Cornwall (3-9 October, 1832).<sup>114</sup> (Only the Yorkshire one has no dated entries.)

He did not walk alone: in the first tour he was accompanied by his close friends George John Graham and Horace Grant; the latter, who worked with Mill in the Examiner’s Office, also joined him in the second, along with Francis Edward Crawley and Edwin Chadwick, both members of the London Debating Society and otherwise connected with Mill. Grant again went with Mill on the third tour, and they were joined towards the end by Henry Cole, a recently acquired friend, who continued his walk (guided by Mill’s instructions) after they left him; Cole was Mill’s sole companion on the fourth of these tours. On the last one, setting out alone, he was met by Sarah and John Austin for the main part.

Both purpose and inclination were generally served best by pedestrian travel, but occasionally coaches were necessary to get to starting points or ending places, to get quickly over uninteresting or previously traversed ground, or because of a companion’s infirmity.<sup>115</sup> More occasionally boats were used to make views possible or better, or simply to get to promising areas. Neither destinations nor routes were by chance; internal evidence reveals consultation of guide books and maps.<sup>116</sup>

That Mill took such tours is as unsurprising as it is commendable; his having kept records of them may appear to some both unexpected and unmeritorious. He himself seems not to have been unaware of the problem, saying, in words that will strike a responsive chord: "It is dull work describing every inch of a country: The only way to be enduring is to select such particulars as will suggest a conception of the rest" (617).<sup>117</sup> Passing by the unendurable, one may ask, What guided his selection?

Looking at the details, one is of course struck (or oppressed) by the comments on the walker's main concern, topography, but Mill, who should perhaps, like others, be primarily identified in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as a pedestrian, is not one to complain about hills. Also, unlike many similarly occupied in England, he gives little space to the weather. Indeed, he is easily pleased, noting (in July) "the agreeable temperature produced by the bright sun and high wind" (489). Rain is sometimes troublesome, though seldom sufficient to cancel excursions. His strongest statement (or understatement) comes at 534-5: "we did not get back to Keswick without being caught in a shower; an example of the uncertainty of the climate of these mountains; the ordinary English climate is steadiness itself in comparison."

As one would expect, flora (including trees) attract his notice, and even serve as the basis of comparison. For example, the situation of a tarn and its little extent "remind one of the pure crystalline water which collects in the basin formed by the united leaves of the teasle, or other perfoliate plants. But the comparison is too humble, and does it injustice." (550).<sup>118</sup> He reveals both an interest in and some knowledge of geology, referring, for instance, to "greenstone, or trachytic amygdaloid" and "red sienitic mountains" (523, 540);<sup>119</sup> evidence that he had, not surprisingly, been reading texts is seen in such references as that at 633 to the "now prevailing school of geologists" (cf. 586).

Architectural features of abbeys and great houses are occasionally noted (usually with the detectable odour of a guidebook); a comparison with parallel passages in Cole's diaries indicates Mill's amateur status and relative indifference, as well as his preoccupation with the grounds. His early accounts are almost comic; he devotes only two sentences to Prevensey Castle, commenting that while part of the "outer *enceinte*" and the keep's walls are preserved, "in other respects it was just like any other ruin"—and he quickly passes to the botanical find on its walls (468). His interest and confidence grew, so that by No. 30 he is willing to see Wycombe Abbey as "a model which it were much to be wished that our stupid race of London architects had consulted before they had deformed the capital with a race of new churches, the ugliest surely which ever were built by man" (491). Though recognizing his limitations—"I must leave it to those who better understand the subject, to describe this beautiful building [the church in Christchurch] in detail" (602)—he has views on the coming craze: Gothic unites, he says, by keeping elements subordinate to the main scheme, "the most barbaric splendour and often the most barbaric quaintness and even grotesqueness in the details, with the greatest purity and chasteness and the most striking grandeur in the general effect" (603); and elsewhere he scorns "the gewgaw stile of the modern Gothic" (633). His infrequent excursions into art criticism are reluctant, as at Knole Castle: "I am so indifferent a judge of painting, that I will not venture to say any thing of their merits, though I

was greatly struck with several pictures”; those he mentions are portraits, which of course have non-aesthetic associations (474).

Towns and villages are in his narrative mainly places where inns are found and whence one can walk, but there is a sufficient account of their plans and leading features. And observation is much more common than participation in local opportunities: one exception is immersion in the cold chalybeate water at Tunbridge Wells (472). Mill was never one to seek promiscuous society, and there is here little about people. It is surprising to find those on the road to Portsmouth characterized as “altogether a different race from the people about Selborne, and far from handsome or prepossessing; the women instead of being merely free and lively, as at Selborne, seemed impudent” (567).<sup>120</sup> The people observed seem not much occupied; local details are seldom cited,<sup>121</sup> and even politics is not a major theme, though we are introduced to one opinionated nurseryman (599),<sup>122</sup> and treated to some irony when we are told of a conservative who is “averse to those violent innovations and changes which some call for” (574-5).

So far interest will take us in explanation of the journal keeping, but what of habit and use? As seen above, Mill was trained by his father to keep daily records when afoot and abroad, and it seems *prima facie* probable that these journals were kept primarily for his own use. They are, like diaries and personal memoranda, utile in recording data for later consideration and reconsideration. There can be little in the way of internal evidence to show that the record was designed to stimulate memories; one does not expect to find in travel diaries statements such as “This description will enable me to recall the experience more vividly”—though such may indeed be the intention and the fact. There is, however, negative evidence of a kind; that which is clearly remembered need not be recorded: “I was now upon ground familiar to me, and have therefore the less occasion to be extremely particular in the description” (491).<sup>123</sup> As he says at 566, the “remainder of our day’s journey has been described in one of my former tours” (i.e., No. 29), and therefore need not be recorded. His occasional rough illustrations seem to be designed as prods to recollection,<sup>124</sup> and one may stretch a point to say that his reticences (most notably the boating escapade with Cole at 598) may cover matters for which reminders were unnecessary and which were better left unrecorded.

Field naturalists will be pleased with those entries recording botanical finds, where Mill is probably expanding entries in notebooks like those that exist for other excursions.<sup>125</sup> These lists typically include some comments of interest, such as that the people of the neighbourhood practised forbearance in not picking the flowers in the gardens, though such often happens “where the taste for flowers is new” (512). This conservationist’s passion (normal in Mill) is balanced by the collector’s urge evident in his regret at not being able to gather specimens on an inaccessible part of a cliff (588).

Other, sometimes tenuous, evidence suggests that Mill saw journal keeping as an exercise in composition, the goal being to record impressions (and some events) in a clear narrative form; doing so evidently meant writing the full account from jottings, for there is unmistakable evidence that he went over notes or a draft when composing the extant versions. For instance, at 455 he says in an interlineation: “N.B. I have since discovered that it [a ridge of high land] does lie just

beyond Cobham. . . .”<sup>126</sup> And of one of his illustrations he says: “This being taken from memory is of course extremely inaccurate in respect of proportions, but it is quite correct in the general conception” (630).

Practice made better, if not perfect. Mill increasingly founded aesthetic judgments on more fully considered grounds. The implied audience is increasingly evident, subjective responses multiply, and metaphors appear. His self-conscious training is most obvious in the frequent flourishes, a few of which may be quoted. In No. 29: “until at last these hills dropped down, and so did we” (464); “village, or hamlet (call it which you will)” (472). Ironically, he says: “And here ‘ends this strange eventful history’ ” (499—one of his favourite Shakespearean tags). In No. 31: “It is a great quality in a mountain as in a woman, to carry herself well and to seem conscious of her whole height” (505).<sup>127</sup> In No. 32, quite exceptionally: “when we reached the top we left the road and exspatiated like young horses over the turfy slopes and eminences” (566). And finally, with a touch of litotes, “petty obstacles of various kinds connected with time, space, and conveyance, rendered this journey impracticable” (635). If one played the game of quoting lines from Mill least likely to be identified as his, a serious contender would be: “I should like to *ride* over the forest on a forest pony, and immerse myself more completely in its green and grassy glades” (607).

Another personal use related to rhetorical practice is undeniable: Mill was developing his sensibilities through testing and training his perception. Increasingly the tours show his cultivation of the romantic response to the picturesque, his initiation having occurred as early as 1813, when on a tour of the West Country with his father and Bentham, he had acquired his “first taste for natural scenery, in the elementary form of fondness for a ‘view.’ ”<sup>128</sup> In France his appreciation had deepened, the mountains of the Pyrenees giving birth to his “ideal of natural beauty,”<sup>129</sup> a phrase he uses in connection with Wordsworth’s healing effect on him. He obviously was acquainted with writings on the picturesque, especially those of William Gilpin, which were the staple of travellers in the period,<sup>130</sup> and of Uvedale Price, as well as contributing works such as Archibald Alison’s associationist *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* (formerly in his library). Not that he could be considered either a practised “painter” or an uncritical devotee (his mentor Wordsworth was opposed to the pure picturesque).

Nonetheless Mill was affected by the passion, and in these journals uses the term itself to reveal an implicit norm: the hills had “nothing picturesque in their forms” (504); the brooks “are crossed by numerous bridges, built of lumps of slate put upon their ends; these have a highly picturesque effect” (537).<sup>131</sup> Usually, however, the descriptions themselves embody the desiderata. In the tradition, behind the natural forms lie the ideal ones, towards which a painter turns. But actual observation leads to revision, and—certainly in Mill’s case—the natural transforms the ideal. He typically looks for a view that is varied, with sinuous development of a treed valley towards a horizon closed by jagged heights without a break at ground level: for instance, “We could see the valley for the length of miles before us, winding down towards the plain, among cornfields and woods, until stopped and closed by the high chalk hill beyond Wycombe” (491). To close, to embrace, to hem in: this is essential for the beauty of views that would otherwise be “incomplete and tame” (599).<sup>132</sup>



Mill also mentions the observer's point of view, so central to picturesque theory: when valleys are observed from within themselves, "especially by a spectator placed halfway up one of their hilly sides, they are seen to be, as they in fact are, one of the most strikingly beautiful and remarkable objects in this or in any country" (614; cf. 570). Other aspects of scenic composition are elucidated: were Crummock lake "no otherwise beautiful, it is water, and therefore an unequalled foreground to hill or mountain scenery" (547). Every "fine prospect should have some points more conspicuous than others" (512). The outline of Skiddaw "might be correctly conveyed by a much smaller number of lines than even the little mountains near Ambleside; and this is eminently favorable to imposingness of effect as we see in a Greek temple" (531).

The massing of mountains is crucial: Patterdale is "much finer" than the other broad valleys, but it is not easy to say

in what its superiority consists: the mountains are not so high; they are hardly even steeper; but there seems to be more among them of what a painter would call, harmony of composition: there are no striking contrasts, or bold reliefs, but one mountain seems to glide naturally into another, every one seems in his place, and you feel at every point, that his shape is just what it should be. The secret, I suspect, is, variety without tameness. . . . (553.)

This passage points to another desideratum. Uniformity is to be avoided: "The curve was just sufficient to take off the monotonous regularity of a rectilinear shore, while it did not greatly diminish the extent of the watery horizon" (572);<sup>133</sup> change is to be sought: above Guildford there "is so much variety in the arrangement of the hills one behind another, and so much richness in the appearance of the country, . . . that the Chiltern hills are entirely eclipsed by it" (499).

Like other connoisseurs, he values active but contained streams: "A waterfall, in itself gives me little pleasure: I value it only as one of the incidents of a mountain torrent"; a stream "rushes with arrowy swiftness, yet with that deep repose and silence which excites far stronger feeling of power, than is raised by a noisy torrent" (520, 543).

Another picturesque note is sounded when Mill expresses dislike for "improvements": he objects to the whitewashing of cottages in the Lake District, thinking they should be left like the barns, which are built of the same rough stones (523). He can approve the artificial plantings on Latrigg only because they are "an exception to the general rule," being done "with real taste: woods, corn fields and bare turf or brown heath, are in this instance mixed with very agreeable effect" (535).

The utilitarian, however, is not dead—a meadow "is one of the finest whether for beauty or pasture which I ever beheld" (491)—but can touch sacred themes ironically: "Cockneys, though they destroy seclusion, have this advantage that they cause increased traffic and consequently improved communications" (488). The solitude is dearer, however, to the Romantic in training: the tall trees "contribute greatly to give [the ruin of Netley Abbey] that tranquil yet wild and deserted air which harmonizes so well with the other parts of the scene" (609). Wordsworth had made his mark; tranquillity, felt and recollected, would never cease to charm Mill: "We . . . could have staid here a week with pleasure under the certainty of seeing this, and nothing but this, every day"

(513). Solitude, a basic Byronic goal, is valued: “[We had] for the first time in our present journey, a feeling of perfect separation from the world and all its concerns. . . .”<sup>134</sup> This passage allows, in its continuation, for a Wordsworthian mixture of the social, for Mill says that other features “superadd to the feeling of seclusion, that of life and rural enjoyment, and render the spot one of those, among all I ever saw, which excited in the imagination the most vivid sense of the delight of living there for one’s whole life” (543). But some forms of “rural enjoyment” are far from admirable: Mill remarks—and will win modern hearts in doing so—that a sea-mark of chalky material is much “cut or . . . mouldered away, and the remainder as far as arm can reach, is scribbled over with the names of sundry John Browns and Dick Smiths, who with that aspiring desire so general among Englishmen, that something of them though it be but a thumb-nail shall survive them, have taken the trouble of informing posterity of the name of the Norton or Sutton or Greatham or Littleham which they inhabited” (571). Similarly, he sees Netley Abbey as “a place where (if tourist and sight-seers could be but for so long a time excluded) one might dream and muse for a whole summer day”; the passage continues, and one recalls that Mill was just then formulating his distinction between the artist (Shelley, Harriet Taylor, Carlyle) and the scientist (his humble but active self), “and a poet might perhaps derive inspiration from time so passed, though to any one else, if in the full vigour of his health and faculties, it would be a scarcely justifiable piece of indolent self-indulgence” (609). But the logician, unlike the hills, should not be hemmed in: a “spot of green meadow . . . alone distinguishes the prospect before you from a mere desert; but a desert of cheerful aspect; you see nothing of man, but you do not seek him. . . . Were there a single house on its banks, its peculiar charm would be gone: it would be beautiful, but no longer Wastwater.” (545-6.) That most Wordsworthian of the tours concludes with the comment, as they leave Windermere, that their “departure had something of the melancholy character of parting from a beloved friend; and the image of the lake and mountains remained impressed upon the internal eye, long after the physical organs could see them no more” (556).

Mill was also, not surprisingly, open to the Romantic contrast between the beautiful and the sublime: “we were enabled to study, under most favorable circumstances, the effect, pictorially considered, of that imposing feature in a landscape, darkness” (504). He “who has not seen mountains in the very worst state of the weather is far from knowing what beauty they are capable of” (554). “Sunny seas are fine things, for the ocean is beautiful as well as sublime: but there is nothing really awe-striking but a gloomy sea” (631).<sup>135</sup>

All of the foregoing suggests that the journals were used for personal exploration and development. But, as suggested above, there is evidence that someone else was expected to read and profit from the final versions. We know that the French journal was written for James Mill (and the rest of the family); similarly in these journals explicit (utilitarian) intimations are given, with respect to the cost: “I subjoin an account of the expenses of our tour for the information of myself and others on future occasions” (475); “I shall insert an account of our expenses in case we or any others should wish to go this journey hereafter” (499). Most of the other intimations of audience are muted, but seem not merely tokens of rhetorical practice. Minor examples abound: for example, if the record were only for his eyes, why say that Hastings is, “as all know,” a very old town (470)? Or that a particular stretch of country “need not be described to any person who

has seen chalk hills” (482)? It might also be inferred that his rough illustrations (especially the later ones) were intended for another’s instruction (delight seems unlikely).

Other clues are comments that parallel guide-book inducements: “the mode I should recommend of seeing Beaulieu is to come to it by water quite from the river’s mouth” (598-9); advice to visit the Pearce brothers’ hotels is prefaced by “Notice to all travellers who read this” (624). Some of these passages evolve into fuller descriptions, more lyrically conceived (and in part executed). “Thus far have I ventured though without much confidence of success, to attempt to convey an idea of what I saw; but here I hardly dare proceed further, so impossible do I feel it to make any one who has not seen Falmouth and its harbour, comprehend what it is that renders them so enchantingly beautiful” (619). Later in the same journal there is direct instruction as to response as well as action:

Now stand on the extreme verge of one of the rocks, and look down, you will see . . . and you will see . . . , but you will see it different in every different period of the tide. . . . Look to the left, and you will see. . . . But now look rather to your right. . . . [You] are saved from hearing [the faint murmur of an expiring wave] by the groaning of the succeeding waves long series of which are already up and following the first. The first! as if there had been a first! Since there has been a world, these breakers have succeeded one another uninterruptedly; and while there is a world they shall never cease. (628-9.)<sup>136</sup>

These remarks seem indeed to be directed at a specific audience, and if one recalls when Mill was first experiencing the love of a man for a woman, it seems not at all fanciful to think that the last two or three, and most surely No. 32, were written at least in part for Harriet Taylor. In No. 32 occur curious references to an article on Sandown Bay in the *Monthly Repository*. Mill is coy about the authorship of the article (572), though he must have known that it was by W.J. Fox, the editor, who had introduced Mill to the Taylors in 1830 (and had been a contributor to the *Westminster Review* from its inception). There seems no reason for the tone in a journal meant only for himself,<sup>137</sup> especially given the excessive sentiment of his second reference to the article: “the beauty of the scene” at Sandown Bay was “enhanced . . . by the charm which true poetry whether metrical or not gives to all which it has touched, endowing it with beauties not its own” (581). It seems reasonable to assume that such a comment was intended for a close friend, and she is the most likely, particularly in the light of external evidence. That tour concluded in the New Forest of Hampshire, where Mill gathered some flowers. An undated letter to Harriet Taylor, almost certainly written just after his return, in an attempt to prevent a cessation of their relations, begins: “Benie soit la main qui a tracé ces caractères!” and ends: “Elle ne refusera pas, j’espère, l’offrande de ces petites fleurs, que j’ai apportées pour elle du fond de la Nouvelle-Forêt. Donnez-les lui s’il le faut, de votre part.”<sup>138</sup>

Whatever uses Mill may have had in mind, there is no question that we can use the journals as evidence of biographical fact and as basis of inference about his behaviour and development. One of his frequent devices is comparison, which normally involves memory of past experience. So little is documented about his early life and views that even the trivial takes on interest. For

example, he believes that the judgment that the bread of Godalming is the best in England “will not be easily credited by any person who has lived at Dorking” (456). In No. 30 he went over much ground familiar to him from an extensive journey in 1821: he refers to “living near Sandhurst College” (478), and notes that after passing through the village or hamlet of Sandhurst, they “soon came to the Military College, where [he] revived [his] old recollections by wandering about the semi-cultivated ground in front of the College, about the Governor’s house, and on the margin of the first lake” (497). He also mentions that the plants of the neighbourhood were not “rare or curious” to him, for he had “explored the Surrey chalk hills,” but worth enumerating—and here is another hint of (at least ideally) a reader—because “a young botanist may expect to find” them (490).<sup>139</sup> This same tour describes a second meeting at Reading with Gustave D’Eichthal, the Saint-Simonian disciple who became a close friend (478), and sees him joining his family at their summer home in Walton-upon-Thames (496).

Memories of France confirm the deep impression it had made upon him.<sup>140</sup> In No. 30, for instance, two hills near Bagshot Heath are seen to bear “a considerable resemblance in shape to the round volcanic hills of Cette and Agde on the coast of Languedoc” (478), while a plain appears “like some parts of France, particularly the Haute Normandie” (482). Later the country has “something of the appearance of the plain of the Garonne seen from the Frontin and Pompignan hills” (483), and he notes that in “every village, or close to it there was one, and but one, very large house and grounds which reminded us of a French village and the château of its seigneur, and no doubt originated in the same way” (484). Similarly, in the next journal, when in the Lake District, he finds that Troutbeck vale “well represents on a small scale, some of the valleys of the Pyrenees” (515), and the Greta reminds him “much of the Adour near Bagnères de Bigorre, in the Pyrenees” (535).<sup>141</sup> Probably the most revealing comment, showing the hidden side of his youthful emotion, closes No. 33, as, looking from the coach, after leaving Cornwall, he says that he “thought the rich green hills of Somersetshire, and the forests of hedgerow elms, much more beautiful than I ever thought them before. So I remember being in extacy [*sic*] at the beauty of the Southampton road immediately after landing from Normandy” (637).<sup>142</sup>

There are memories also of the earlier walking tours, including several references to the Leith hill ranges in Surrey, seen at 498, 499; some of these demonstrate an acute visual memory: “As I walked along the solitary and sequestered beach [looking at the Solent], I was forcibly reminded of the shores of Ulleswater and Windermere. . . . In this respect the resemblance [of the long projecting headlands] was still greater to the south coast of Cornwall” (569; cf. 572).<sup>143</sup>

#### DIARY: 1854

Whatever questions may arise about the intended audience for the walking tours, there can be no question about that for the intimate record that Mill kept in the early months of 1854. He wrote to his wife on 11 January of that year: “The little book was procured—I wrote in it for the first time on Sunday and have written something each evening since—whether what I have written was much worth writing is another question.” And again on the 19th: “I write every evening

in the little book.”<sup>144</sup> It is a heavy requirement (see the first entry) to have a profound thought each day; most diarists are content with less than memorable mundane events, and it is not surprising that the entries cease in April, when Harriet Taylor Mill returned to London for more direct communication and mutual stimulation of ideas.

The tone is valedictory and autumnal as Mill thinks much of death, both he and his wife being manifestly ill of pulmonary disease, and one recalls that this is the period when they planned together the work by which they wished to be remembered.<sup>145</sup> The entries touch on this theme, and also, in spite of the general intellectual orientation, give both interesting and affective personal judgments and anecdotal biographical hints. One may instance his mention of the Examiner’s Office (641), and the eulogy of his father, in which he identifies James Mill’s only flaws as those of omission (642). His comments on character, clearly self-reflexive, are instructive generally and particularly: he mentions (and will surprise some by doing so) the need for some lightness of character to combat evils and even prevent madness (643), lauds the personal benefits of poetry and music (647-8) and the role of the “Artist” (667), and also touches on a matter that must have been at least quietly vexing to him, now that the Romantic urges were quieter in these years of comparative isolation, the tendency of solitary occupations to deaden sympathy (655).

<sup>146</sup> Not least interesting are adumbrations of ideas found in the works he, with Harriet Taylor Mill, was planning and even drafting at the time. For example, one thinks of the *Autobiography* when one reads his condemnation of onesideness (644), or his account of the threat to a true picture of human relations that gossip poses by magnifying insignificant particulars (649-50). And the eulogies of his wife in that work are here forecast when he mentions the value of vision (645), in his estimation one of her great qualities, and acknowledges his debt to her for enlarging his ideas and feelings, while regretting that she could not give him the same expansion in power of execution (655-6).

Without attempting to exhaust the intimations, it may be mentioned that *On Liberty* is suggested by the references to the deadliness of custom in the East (647) and the difficulty of removing received opinions (649), as well as by the description of the progress of opinion as an uphill spiral (661), and the praise of freedom of expression (661-2). Key matters in *Utilitarianism* appear: for instance, Mill presents the ideal of humanity as inspiring (654, 661), and insists on the vital necessity of considering the quality as well as the quantity of happiness, even using what became one of his famous comparisons, that between Socrates and a pig (663).

Perhaps most surprising is the amount of comment on religion, and especially on the hope of immortality (for instance, 654 and 662); but one recalls that once again a later work, the *Three Essays on Religion*, was on their minds, and the strong smell of mortality was in their nostrils. Finally, and less surprising, are his comments on sexual equality (663), to be manifested in many a speech and in *The Subjection of Women*.

Ending the account with the diary entries of 1854, valetudinarian in tone (though Mill had nearly twenty more active years of life), makes for a “Whiggish” effect, with all the documents

showing development and adumbrating mature views. Because Mill matters to most people as a political philosopher and sage, such an effect is almost inevitable, and need not be regretted. But there is in the journals and speeches other matter with other messages. Mill is revealed—not that he would like the term—as a social being, caught up in the excitement of youth, curious about his world, looking about rather than within, and responding to people as well as ideas. We can look elsewhere in the period, say to Crabb Robinson for gossip, to Carlyle for vituperative personalities, to Macaulay for brilliant paradox, or to Sidney Smith for boisterous wit; these are not Mill's weaknesses or strengths. He shows, however, what none of those does in the same degree, an extraordinary intellectual sensitivity, almost unmarked by egocentricity. Even in the years when he later admitted he may have appeared to be “a mere reasoning machine,” these personal documents prove that the ideal improvement he sought was vital as well as ideal, individual as well as social. The highest standards he set were for himself.

## Endnotes

[1] For details concerning these plans, as well as generally for the background of the French trip, see *John Mill's Boyhood Visit to France: Being a Journal and Notebook Written by John Stuart Mill in France, 1820-21*, ed. Anna J. Mill (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), x-xxv. As indicated elsewhere, we have drawn heavily and unashamedly on the work of Dr. Mill, who was to have been a co-editor of these volumes.

[2] Letter of 30 July, 1819, in *The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill, 1812-1848 [EL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, Vols. XII-XIII of *Collected Works [CW]* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), XII, 6-10.

[3] Bentham Correspondence, IX, ff. 380-1.

[4] *Ibid.*, f. 386 (9 Feb., 1820). Bentham added later in the same letter that James Mill said what Samuel Bentham had taken for “something else in the boy was sureness. Quare non. But I have a notion you will find him mended,—considerably mended.” (*Ibid.*, f. 387.)

[5] *Ibid.*, f. 411.

[6] *Autobiography [A]*, in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger, *CW*, I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 37.

[7] For Ricardo, see *The Works and Correspondence of David Ricardo*, ed. Piero Sraffa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), IX, 209 (4 Aug., 1822); for George Grote, see John M. Robson, “John Stuart Mill to the Grotes: An Unpublished Letter of 1824,” *Mill News Letter*, XX, No. 2 (Summer, 1985), 2-12.

[8] *EL*, *CW*, XII, 5.

[9] The next few paragraphs draw extensively, and often verbatim, from Anna J. Mill's account, xiv-xxv.

[10] Letter from Jeremy to Samuel Bentham, Bentham Correspondence, IX, f. 418.

[11] About him much may be learned from his wife's two books: Maria Sophia Bentham, *Memoir of the Late Brigadier-General Sir Samuel Bentham* (London: Weale, 1856) and *The Life of Brigadier-General Sir Samuel Bentham* (London: Longmans, 1862); one gets only information about him, however, there being no hint, except on the title page, even that he was married. The volumes of correspondence in the *Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham* are essential to an appreciation of the family.

[12] Much supporting detail, used here and in the editorial notes to the Journal and Notebook, comes from George Bentham's manuscript autobiography and diary, Kew Gardens, which were used as the basic sources for Benjamin Daydon Jackson's *George Bentham* (London: Dent; New York: Dutton, 1906).

[13] George Bentham, MS Autobiography, ff. 91-2.

[14] Bentham Correspondence, IX, f. 395.

[15] MS Diary, f. 53. See also the letter from Mill to Doane in App. B below, where he says: "Vous voyez que je vous ecris de lettres Françaises, comme en Angleterre." Anna J. Mill suggests (xiv n) that Sarah Austin was Mill's first instructor in French, basing her judgment on Mill's remark (Journal, covering letter of 11 July): "I should be much obliged to you to tell her [Sarah Austin] that I am very grateful to her for the instruction she has given me in French." But "the instruction" refers evidently to "des bons conseils" mentioned in his letter to her of 17 January, 1821 (*EL, CW, XII, 11*), where he implies that she had worked hard at her letter to him: "J'avoue que je ne suis point digne de cet *effort* que vous avez fait pour m'écrire. . . ." Had she been his teacher, surely he would not have waited more than six months before writing to her.

[16] MS Autobiography, f. 92. The algebraic problems are also referred to in his Diary entry for 3 June; Mill comments on solving such problems in his Journal (see the entries for 27 and 29 June and 13, 14, and 19 July).

[17] Perhaps she thought the vocabulary dealing with family relations in the laws of inheritance would be useful as well as different in level.

[18] The corrections first appear in the Notebook entries of 20-25 August, during the period for which there is no corresponding Journal text. When the Journal resumes, it can be seen that Mill dutifully incorporated them into his text except when "des circonstances inévitables" prevented Bentham from making corrections before Mill felt obliged to send off another portion of the Journal. Close examination shows that Mill adopted corrections for the entries for 26 and 28 August, but not for 29 August to 2 September, probably because he had sent off the Journal before Bentham had time to correct the Notebook. The Journal for 3 to 12 September was held back until Bentham had time to correct the Notebook, and even then the last two days are untouched. The next section, 13 to 17 September, is corrected only by Mill himself; in fact little emendation was necessary, the level of performance being quite high in the Notebook. (One of his common practices, as will be noted, was to alter the structure of the opening sentences to

make them more elegant.) Bentham's proposals are less evident, and less needed, in the remainder of the account.

[19] This section of the Journal is best known, because Alexander Bain included passages from it in his *John Stuart Mill* (London: Longmans, 1882).

[20] The latter leads to an unexpected view of the young Mill, unquestionably with his family, attending with pleasure the great London show at Astley's.

[21] *A*, 59; interestingly, this sentence is not in the Early Draft of the *Autobiography*, and so shows further recollection even longer after the fact.

[22] *Catalogue des plantes indigènes des Pyrénées et du Bas-Languedoc* (Paris: Huzard, 1826).

[23] See in *CW*, I, the Introduction, x-xi, and the Appendix on his early writing, 582-8.

[24] *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 540 (to Auguste Comte, letter of 12 Aug., 1842).

[25] Ricardo, *Works*, IX, 43.

[26] *A*, 63.

[27] *Ibid.*, 23-5.

[28] Ricardo, *Works*, VII, 301-2 (23 Sept., 1818).

[29] *A*, 27.

[30] *Ibid.*, 75.

[31] Mill says he did not belong to it, because of his "multiplicity of occupations" (272). Perhaps more than one such society existed. There are indications that Bentham was the patron of a Mutual Improvement Society that met in his home (see John M. Robson, "John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, with Some Observations on James Mill," in *Essays in English Literature Presented to A.S.P. Woodhouse*, ed. M. MacLure and F.W. Watt [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964], 254), and there are references to one founded by a shoemaker, Rider, that included leading artisans such as John Gast (Iorweth J. Prothero, *Artisans and Politics in Early Nineteenth-Century London* [Folkestone: Dawson, 1979], 185).

[32] *A*, 127. From Mill's surviving manuscripts one can conclude only that four sessions occurred, and that there was no division because the question was hastily and ill worded. As to the size of the assembly, one can assume that Mill's estimate (at 305) that there were some fifty bachelors in the room comes fairly close to the total at least for that moment. The subjects of these debates were vital to the Owenites. Their organ, *The Co-operative Magazine and Monthly Herald* (which began in January 1826) gives the subject for discussion in Red Lion Square on Tuesday, 28 March, 1826, as "Is the Statement of Mr. Malthus, that 'Population has a Tendency to Increase faster than the Means of Subsistence,' if correct, an insuperable barrier to the Co-operative System?" and on 11 April and 2 May, 1826, as "Is there any principle in human nature which presents an insuperable obstacle to the Co-operative System?" (On 16 January and 13 February,



1827, they turned to another topic that would have found the Benthamites on their side: “Are Mankind in a State of Progressive Improvement?”) There seems to be no question about the accuracy of these dates, and so the Owenites must have returned to gnaw the bones left by Mill and his friends a few months earlier.

[33] *A*, 127-9.

[34] Thompson had stayed in Bentham’s house, next to the Mills’, on earlier visits to London.

[35] *A*, 129.

[36] *The Laws and Transactions of the London Debating Society; with A List of the Members, Corrected up to November 1st, 1826* (London: printed Taylor, 1826); *Fourth Supplement to the Laws and Transactions of the London Debating Society; Comprising the Transactions of the Season 1829-1830; and A List of the Members, Corrected up to November 1, 1830* (London: printed Page and Son, 1831); and *The Laws of the London Debating Society; Corrected up to November 1st, 1831* (London: printed Burslem, 1832). Copies of the intervening supplements have not been located.

[37] Victoria and Albert Museum.

[38] *A*, 129-31.

[39] Letter of 16 May, 1842, in *The History of the Speculative Society, 1764-1904*, ed. William Watson (Edinburgh: Speculative Society, 1905), 27-8. This work gives most of the details, but omits the list of subjects of debate, which are found in the earlier volume that Cockburn was encouraging, Thomas Cleghorn and Robert Balfour’s *History of the Speculative Society* (Edinburgh: Speculative Society, 1845).

[40] *Recollections of the Cambridge Union, 1815-1939*, ed. Percy Craddock (Cambridge: Bowes and Bowes, 1953), 3n. The list of officers is here given, but details concerning the subjects and speakers are impressionistic. Mill may himself have attended the Cambridge Union in 1822, when visiting Charles Austin; see Karl Britton, “J.S. Mill and the Cambridge Union Society,” *Cambridge Review* (29 Oct., 1955), 92. However, the statement in Caroline Fox, *Memories of Old Friends*, ed. Horace N. Pym (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1882), that Mill’s acquaintance with Sterling dated from a meeting at the Cambridge Union, when Sterling appeared “as a mystic,” is undoubtedly mistaken; Sterling there appeared Radical, as indicated below.

[41] *Ibid.*, 9-10.

[42] His own description lays bare the despair of failing when “spouting” at the Union: “. . . I got up and stuck in the midst of the first footstep, and then, in endeavouring to extricate myself from my dilemma, I went deeper and deeper still, till at last, with one desperate sentence, to wit, that ‘Napoleon as a captain, a lawgiver, and a king, merited and received the esteem and gratitude of France,’ I rushed out of the quagmire into which I had so foolishly plunged myself, and stood down, like Lucifer, never to rise again with open mouth in that august assembly. So much for the Union.” (Gordon N. Ray, *Thackeray: The Uses of Adversity, 1811-1846* [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955], 35.)

[43] See Herbert Arthur Morrah, *The Oxford Union, 1823-1923* (London: Cassell, 1923). Here again the subjects and speakers are given merely illustratively; the Presidents only are listed for each term.

[44] *Ibid.*, 131. In the Early Draft (*ibid.*, 128-32) Mill's account is a little fuller: in a cancelled passage he notes that in the first debate the "only creditable performance" was "a short sensible speech by Romilly"; he also says that Praed was the only one of the "notabilities" to speak in the debates, though but once or twice; he refers to other speakers, including Robert Hildyard (then a "violent radical Benthamite"), Henry Taylor (whom he then first met), and Vernon and Leveson Smith. Among the few extant speeches from the Society, in addition to those of Roebuck mentioned in n51, there are one full and one partial by Henry Taylor (see nn47 and 59) and one by Leveson Smith, published posthumously as *Remarks upon an Essay on Government* (London: Ridgway, 1827) that seems, on internal evidence, to have been prepared for the London Debating Society.

[45] See *EL, CW*, XII, 20, 21, 24, and 25. Mill served as Treasurer for two terms, 1827-28 and 1828-29.

[46] *Correspondence of Henry Taylor*, ed. Edward Dowden (London: Longmans, Green, 1888), 6.

[47] *Ibid.*, 7 (undated). A few sentences from Taylor's speech in this debate are in the *Autobiography of Henry Taylor, 1800-75*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1885), 80n-1n.

[48] In this and other cases when there is no record of a manuscript, it is possible—and usually probable—that Mill spoke extemporaneously.

[49] At this meeting the Society deleted "Union" from its initial name, the London Union Debating Society.

[50] This debate, "That the present Decline in the Influence of Oratory is a striking Mark of the Improvement of the Age," was both proposed and opened by Maclean, who perhaps wished to justify his previous failure.

[51] John Neal, who like Mill and Roebuck was involved in the management of the Society, recalled more than forty years later that Roebuck had undertaken to show, "beyond all question," that Catiline "was a much-abused patriot and trustworthy citizen, and Cicero a slanderer and a sneak; and really, though there was nothing very new in the facts he brought to bear upon his theory, they were so ingeniously paraded and so cleverly urged, that the impression he made was quite favorable. He seemed so much in earnest, and so thoroughly convinced himself, that one had not the heart to disbelieve, or contradict him, though his argument was crowded with paradox and assumption, from beginning to end." ("Phantasmagoria—No. 2," *American Phrenological Journal*, XLVII [June 1868], 209.) The manuscript of this speech was formerly in the possession of the late Professor Francis Hyde, with other speeches by Roebuck on the immorality of Byron's poems (19 Jan., 1827), the desirability of avowing obnoxious opinions (14 Dec., 1827), on the Church (1 Feb., 1828), and on the conduct of the Constituent Assembly in France (14 Nov., 1828). A list in Roebuck's hand that accompanied the manuscripts mentioned (without dates) speeches on "the Ministers" (presumably on 22 or 29 June, 1827), "on the execution of Charles I," and "on the Revolution of 1688."

[52] Abraham Hayward became an inveterate foe of Mill's, battling with him over an article in the *London and Westminster Review*, being blackballed at a club by Mill's ally Roebuck, and finally poisoning the wells by spreading the story of Mill's early arrest for broadcasting neo-Malthusian literature, and so leading Gladstone to withdraw support from the proposal to place a memorial to Mill in Westminster Abbey.

[53] *A*, 131-3.

[54] "John Arthur Roebuck," *British Ladies' Newspaper*, 27 Jan., 1838, 56.

[55] No explanation of this flurry of activity has emerged.

[56] This would appear to be the period when Mill suffered the first attack of depression so famously described in his *Autobiography* as leading to a "mental crisis." It is much to be regretted that Cole does not say more than that he met Mill at this time, for the biographical record is remarkably bare, not a single letter being extant.

These months may also have been marked by two debates mentioned by Neal: "that the ends of penal law can be obtained *without the punishment of death*" (proposed by Roebuck), and "that the intellectual powers of the sexes are equal" (proposed by Neal). ("Phantasmagoria," 209.)

[57] *A*, 153-5.

[58] In the account (quoted in the Textual Introduction below) by Harold J. Laski of his acquiring the manuscripts of Mill's debating speeches, it is suggested that he had such a manuscript, though one could interpret his remarks as applying to No. 32. There is some speculation that there was another manuscript, destroyed by enemy action during World War II.

[59] *Autobiography of Henry Taylor*, I, 90. Taylor prints his speech (the manuscript of which is in the British Library) on 90-5.

[60] Other possible dates are 24 April and 19 June, 1829, when the law and lawyers were under discussion, but neither seems as likely on internal evidence as this.

[61] When Laski edited the speech (with its folios incorrectly ordered) for the *Bermondsey Book*, 6 (1929), 11-17, he dated it to 1823, and said it was prepared for the Utilitarian Society; the judgments are inexplicable, given that the manuscript and the derived typescript both unambiguously say 1827.

[62] See *A*, 123-7, for Mill's account of this group.

[63] Cole reports that he himself "absolutely horrified some honourable gents by stating that such [i.e., literature] did not exist at the present day." He does not give the outcome.

[64] Neal, "Phantasmagoria," 209. Cole in his *Diary* records the subjects on 30 November, 1827, and 18 January, 1828, as "That if Russia should signify any intention of taking military possession of Turkey—it would not be advisable for Great Britain to interfere"; and "Whether Chivalry has been beneficial or pernicious" (Cole made his second speech on the latter). One of

the “greater events” of his year, he notes on 31 December, 1827, was his joining the London Debating Society.

[65] In the interval between the occasions of Nos. 25 and 26, Cole records the debate on 29 February (1828 being a leap year) on the proposition “That Dr. Johnson’s Character as a moralist has been greatly overrated” (Cole was ill and did not attend; nothing is known about the discussion), and that on 18 April, “Whether Duelling—the advantages of—be not counterbalanced by its disadvantages” (this was proposed by Edwin Chadwick, another of the group close to Mill, but Mill is not known to have attended or spoken).

[66] D’Eichthal’s Diary, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS 14381, printed in “Condition de la classe ouvrière en Angleterre (1828),” *Revue Historique*, LXXIX (May 1902), 84. Cole reports that the debate was proposed by “Mr. Morrice,” almost certainly intending F.D. Maurice, the friend of Sterling who now also became active in the Society.

[67] Diary, *ibid.*

[68] *A*, 133. Writing to Charles Edmund Maurice on 19 May, 1872, Mill recalls those days: “during about two years that your father was a member of [the London Debating Society], he was not a very frequent speaker, but your uncle Sterling was, and together they formed a third intellectual party or *nuance*, opposed both to the Benthamite and to the Tory sections which used to fight their battles there” (*LL*, XVII, 1898).

[69] Neal, “Phantasmagoria,” 209. For Mill’s published views on the Revolution, see *Essays on French History and Historians*, *CW*, XX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 1-110.

[70] In the interval Cole records two debates without mention of Mill: on 12 December, 1828, “Whether the competition likely to arise between King’s College and London University will be beneficial to Education,” and on 2 January, 1829, “The Claims of the Catholics.”

[71] This comment (with the allusion above to Mill’s almost equally lengthy speech on the Constituent Assembly) somewhat reduces the force of his earlier attempt to gain sympathy by contrasting his meagre effort to the endurance of William Thompson: “it is not every one who has either the physical power or the inclination to speak for two hours” (No. 12)—but perhaps both wind and will had strengthened in the intervening years.

[72] The present location of this letter, information about which I owe to Peter Allen and Eric W. Nye, is unknown. The absurd attack was in William Empson’s review of Mill’s edition of Bentham’s *Rationale of Judicial Evidence* (1827), in *Edinburgh Review*, XLVIII (Dec. 1828), 462n-6n, which included this among other gentle remarks: “The cannon’s roar in the text is, throughout, ludicrously accompanied by a discharge of the editor’s pocket-pistol in the note” (465n).

[73] Thomas Wemyss Reid, *The Life, Letters, and Friendships of Richard Monckton Milnes, First Lord Houghton*, 2 vols. (London: Cassell, 1890), I, 62 (26 Feb., 1829).

[74] The subjects being, respectively, “That metaphysics are practically useful,” and (closely paralleling that on which Mill first spoke) “That the influence of Aristocracy upon Morals and Manners is pernicious.”

[75] The next debate, on 10 April, would surely have attracted him: “That the System of Female education is bad, etc.” Other subjects during the spring of 1829 included “That the profession of a practical lawyer is morally and intellectually pernicious” (24 April, proposed, Cole says, by Roebuck “who made a good speech thereupon—followed by Hayward in a passion and others”); “That the periodicals of this Country are detrimental to its Literature” (8 May, opened by Cole, who proposed the question); “that the Ministry had forfeited the Confidence of the Country” (22 May); “That the rights of man properly understood from a component part of education” (5 June); and the last of the session, “That an efficient administration of the law can only be obtained by a code” (19 June, opened by Roebuck).

[76] *A*, 163.

[77] Mill dates its beginning from the debate on Byron and Wordsworth, though saying that they “continued for some years longer to be companions” (*ibid.*, 155); Roebuck unequivocally gives the cause as his suggestion a few years later that Mill was being indiscreet in appearing in public with a married woman, Harriet Taylor. See *The Life and Letters of John Arthur Roebuck*, ed. R.E. Leader (London: Arnold, 1897), 39, and Sarah Wilks, “The Mill-Roebuck Quarrel,” *Mill News Letter*, XIII (Summer, 1978), 8-12.

[78] See *Newspaper Writings*, ed. Ann P. and John M. Robson, Vols. XXII-XXV of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), XXII, 180-263.

[79] *Early Draft*, *CW*, I, 132. The word “mixed” here does not of course mean of both sexes, but of divergent views.

[80] This is an early indication of his adherence to sexual equality. Perhaps the earliest exposure to such questions is seen in his notes of Gergonne’s 26th lecture: “On a voulu proscrire sur ce principe l’instruction des femmes, parce qu’elles sont quelquefois pédantes, et qu’elles ne voudraient pas s’occuper des soins domestiques. Mais si l’instruction était universellement répandue parmi les femmes, elles ne se glorifieraient pas plus pour leur savoir que pour la possession de bras et de jambes: et si les femmes instruites sont d’ordinaire plus pédantes que les hommes, c’est que l’instruction est moins répandue parmi elles. D’ailleurs si elles étaient parfaitement bien instruites, elles ne se refuseraient point aux soins domestiques; elles en sentiraient la nécessité de s’y appliquer: tout comme les hommes les plus savans sont très souvent obligés à s’appliquer à des choses qui n’exigent pas une intelligence égale à la sienne, mais ils en voient la nécessité, et s’y donnent sans murmurer.” (227.)

[81] See No. 11, where the text reads: “I pause for an answer” and then resumes after a paragraph break: “The gentleman has judged rightly” (313). In No. 16 Mill guesses in advance “the greater part of the arguments which have been advanced against us this evening” (431), and later in the same speech includes detail that almost suggests that the speech was written retrospectively, perhaps for someone to read or even as practice.

[82] See “Rationale of Representation,” in *Essays on Politics and Society*, Vols. XVIII-XIX of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), XVIII, 44n-5n.

[83] Other uses of irony typify his and his allies' temper at the time: he refers in No. 6 to Members of Parliament as subservient to "mob influence" (275—later of course this would not be an irony for him); he alludes to the nation as made up of "the happiest people in the world" in the same speech (279). In No. 9 he has some fun with Gale Jones's ability to measure and determine his own imponderable invention. Typical radical targets are treated to a curl of the lip: fox-hunting country gentlemen (No. 14), the paternal solicitude of the rich (No. 15), the Church of England and the higher classes generally (No. 18). Another that he would later regret having abused is found in No. 28: "the miserable contrivance of a ballot box" (448).

[84] Cf. in No. 15 the fine logical sequence, "If, if, if, if, if, then, but if, if, then. . ." (340).

[85] There can be little doubt that the excitement of the game was spoiled for Mill by Sterling's reaction to his vigorous indictments of him for religious bigotry in No. 25, and for arrogance and lack of care in preparing evidence in No. 28, his last speech at the London Debating Society.

[86] See, e.g., Nos. 11 and 12.

[87] This sentiment is expressed most consistently in No. 26, but one important Romantic note not concordant with James Mill's views is also there sounded: "moral excellence does not suppose a high order of intellectual cultivation, since it is often found in greatest perfection in the rudest minds" (432).

[88] See, e.g., Nos. 4, 6, 14, 19, and 20.

[89] See Nos. 5 and 14.

[90] See Nos. 5, 15, 16, and 19.

[91] See Nos. 6 and 20. Undoubtedly less owing to his father's lessons than to John Austin's recent tutoring is the very early argument for the necessity that the supreme power in any government be unified (264).

[92] *A*, 51-3.

[93] The assurance that all is plain to the sound in intellect and morals is manifest in such phrases as "its utter inconsistency with all that is known of human nature" (319), and "There is not now time, nor is it necessary, to enquire into that principle of human nature . . ." (384).

[94] That argument proceeds further to undermine the value of historical examples: "in history no one instance can be a rule for another. One instance might be a rule for another if all the circumstances were the same: . . . and besides these there may be a hundred others which we do not dream of." (393-4.) Cf. 342: "History, which resembles a novel in so many other respects, resembles it also in this, that it matters little whether the actions which the historian or the novelist relates ever really happened or not, but it matters very much that the moral judgment which we form of those actions should be correct." And earlier in the same speech: "To me, who, in history as in most other things, look chiefly to that which is practical, which bears upon the present situation of the human race . . ." (342). Once more, while there are hints here towards Mill's mature

views on logic and on the philosophy of history, the bare arguments are not ones he would later have embraced.

[95] Cf. “If you rest your case upon the universal principles of human nature, . . . this is called declamation and assumption, and you are asked for facts. “—this passage, which comes from his thumping denunciation of Sterling, continues in a more independent vein: “when, in obedience to this demand, you bring forward facts, drawn from different periods of church history, . . . you are triumphantly informed that each one, if there were only that one, might be a singular instance and was no proof of a general rule” (418).

[96] Cf. 274 and No. 14 *passim*.

[97] Cf. No. 19.

[98] “. . . I recollect . . . [my father’s] indignation at my using the common expression that something was true in theory but required correction in practice; and how, after making me vainly strive to define the word theory, he explained its meaning, and shewed the fallacy of the vulgar form of speech which I had used; leaving me fully persuaded that in being unable to give a correct definition of Theory, and in speaking of it as something which might be at variance with practice, I had shewn unparalleled ignorance” (A, 35).

[99] Cf. “Every general principle which they do not like they call a theory: and when they have called it a theory, we, it is to be understood, are to reject it without examination. Now the sort of theories which I condemn are those which are founded upon an insufficient number of facts” (361—this argument develops with a nice turn of phrase and irony).

[100] Here the rhetorical effect is questionable, for Mill was facing a Society many of whose members were reading, if not practising law.

[101] Is this the germ of Mill’s later rejection of the ballot? Compare 367, and see also 378, where his later view of civic liberty is adumbrated. His opponents agree that “public opinion” is “the proper check” on the House of Commons, but they “think that the check is sufficient if the public are allowed to speak freely, I think that it is not sufficient unless they are allowed to act as well as speak.”

[102] Cf. “Another reason for preferring stupid, obstinate and ignorant persons who have not a sinister interest, to stupid, obstinate and ignorant persons who have, is that the former acting under the dictation of their interest will do as much good as their limited faculties will permit, the latter as much harm. And though it requires some capacity to do good, unfortunately it requires none to do mischief” (381); each class having “its separate interest and its share of the general interest,” that “which ought to be represented is the latter” (375). The need for an identity of interest between governors and governed is emphasized throughout No. 19; see also 269-70.

[103] That “ill-fated island,” he says, “I believe is the only country in the world where the two sexes begin to propagate their kind as soon as nature enables them to do so without the slightest thought of the future . . .” (305). He then turns to a matter that had brought him into court (as

many of his hearers must have known), when he says that he has “some reason to know” that the idea (of neo-Malthusianism) was spreading in the manufacturing districts (306).

[104] Cf. Mill’s later strictures on George Grote for such language, cited in John M. Robson, “‘Feminine’ and ‘Masculine’: Mill vs. Grote,” *Mill News Letter*, XII (Winter, 1977), 18-22.

[105] The economical debater never throwing away a good phrase or two, when for the purposes of argument he allows that all the opinions taught by the clergy are right, he concludes: “It is not the less true that in the progress of human improvement, every one of these opinions comes to be questioned. The good of mankind requires that it should be so.” (425.)

[106] He was not yet ready to give up the “Movement,” however, adding a few moments later: “Allow that at present great struggles are necessary and that men who were nourished only with [Wordsworth’s] poetry would be unnerved for such struggles” (442).

[107] It is interesting to see him as a man of his age, exemplifying what are often thought to be Victorian mores a decade before Victoria came to the throne: “We live in a refined age. . . . It is now the height of *mauvais ton* to be drunk, neither is it any longer considered decorous among gentlemen, that the staple of their conversation should consist of bawdy.” (412.)

Minor biographical details are buried in the speeches, for example, the indication that he is not a member of the Mutual Improvement Society (271). The unanticipated onus of a major role in the London Debating Society is alluded to in the opening of No. 14, and his scientific education is mentioned: “I too have paid some attention to chemistry and natural philosophy” (300). One is reminded of George Bentham’s judgment when Mill says, concerning the mathematics taught at the universities: “I think it will be allowed that here is no more than may be acquired by any boy of ordinary capacity by the age of fourteen” (356; given his sisters’ attainments, he might have said “girl” as well as “boy”). A memory of France is seen in his reference to the peasants of Languedoc being better off than parallel groups in the United Kingdom (374).

[108] Particularly indicative is his assertion at 452 that Bentham did not believe in constructing a good government out of negatives.

[109] See “Coleridge,” in *Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society*, CW, X, 121.

[110] *A*, 115-17.

[111] In connection with the *Principles*, one may also detect an early justification of the Ricardian method: “For if there are any tendencies, common to all mankind and in particular if all the stronger tendencies of human nature are such, . . . it surely is not an irrational subject of enquiry, what are the laws and other social arrangements which would be desirable, if no other tendencies than these universal tendencies of human nature existed” (451).

[112] For other references to the “people” that show both the heritage and the growing independence of thought, see 382-3, 405, and 433.

[113] *A*, 85-7.



[114] One may well think of Mill's letters to his father from Paris in 1830 as similar in type, though they record not walking but talking and observing (see *EL, CW*, XII, 54-67). Even closer are his later letters to his wife and, after her death, to her daughter when he was abroad, some of which are numbered like those of his early journal to his father (*Later Letters*, ed. Francis E. Minneka and Dwight N. Lindley, Vols. XIV-XVII of *CW* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972], XIV, 114-204, 208-34, 247-494 [3 series]). Much to be regretted, because the events and reactions are nowhere else recorded, is the loss of the journal of his tour of the Rhine in 1835 (see the Textual Introduction for a description), only alluded to in the *Autobiography*, 87.

[115] Cole's unspecified illness in No. 32 resulted in his going by a vehicle while Mill walked (570), and then in both taking the somewhat faster if less comfortable means (575). In Cornwall the Austins were not disposed to walk and so coaches were hired for most of the travel.

[116] See, e.g., 471 and 473.

[117] Curious readers may wish to consult the completion of the sentence: "There was nothing worthy of notice in this space until . . ." (498). Mill was not unaware earlier of the problems of full description: overwhelmed by the view of the Pyrenees, he wrote in his Journal for 14 September, 1820: "Pour décrire particulièrement ce spectacle magnifique, il n'y aurait pas assez d'une volume."

[118] The fauna are almost unnoticed: at 467 seagulls are admired, and at 582 "small . . . shrimps or prawns" come into view, "not larger than woodlice."

[119] Such colour terms are rare; most of his landscapes are without hue (for an exception, see 591).

[120] Comparison with Cole's diary suggests that it was Cole's observation that prompted the account, and the succeeding one that in Portsmouth the people were "all well dressed, and all ugly, with broad squat faces" (568). Cole frequently has occasion to notice the sparkle in women's eyes, which presumably were averted from Mill, whose attention was as little on other low physical needs, for he says almost nothing about another of Cole's themes, food and accommodation. Mill's attitude is fairly caught by his remark at 587 about "The George Inn [at Yarmouth], where we put up, (and were, *par parenthèse*, very well entertained)."

[121] Inspection of an Infant School in Lewes produces only a sentence about its type and its patrons (465), and almost the only local "news" is an account of apprehended smugglers (590).

[122] It can easily be forgotten in these accounts that the Radicals' agitation for Reform triumphed in these years. There is reference, knowledgeable of course but hardly passionate: see 564, 574-5, and 621. Electioneering appears at 594-5, and one may recall that Mill recommended parliamentary candidates in the *Examiner* at this time (see *CW*, XXIII, 507-9).

[123] Cf. "I shall not describe the vale of Albury, as it was familiar to me before" (499) and "thus far the road was familiar to me, and I need not describe it" (557).

[124] See those at 473, 528, 552, 622, and 630.

[125] His botanical notebooks in the Mill-Taylor Collection and the Musée Requien in Avignon list plants found on trips in Southern England and the Lake District, Italy, Switzerland, Greece, Spain, Austria, and much of France.

[126] Cf. these passages, not interlined: “every church which we saw, in this evening’s walk and that of the following day, with one exception . . .” (484); “of these I shall have occasion to speak more fully hereafter” (484); “We were afterwards told by Miss Wordsworth” (515); because of rain, he was shut up in Southampton, and put to it to find occupations, “of which one was that of finishing this journal” (611). I find only one counterindication, at 561: “South of it [Hindhead] lay Blackdown and other hills of which if we execute our plans I shall have occasion to speak more largely hereafter.”

[127] Mill’s growing feminism, commented on earlier, is not evident in that remark, or in the journals generally. The following account reads somewhat oddly when it is realized that he was in the company of the Austins, and Carne and his daughter, both geologists; concerning sitting in St. Michael’s Chair (at St. Michael’s Mount in Cornwall), Mill says: “Whether any legend is connected with this I do not know, but the singular saying is that whoever sits in the chair ensures the prerogative of rule during the married state. I know not whether this be an ancient superstition, or a joke founded on the very probable supposition that a woman who has boldness enough to brave so much apparent danger (it is chiefly *apparent*) will by the exercise of the same boldness obtain (as it is ten chances to one she will deserve) the government of her husband. At the hazard of passing for cowards, and at the sacrifice of our prospects of conjugal preeminence, we unanimously forbore to fill St. Michael’s Chair.” (634.)

[128] *A*, 57.

[129] *Ibid.*, 151.

[130] For a full discussion, see Anna J. Mill, “John Stuart Mill and the Picturesque,” *Victorian Studies*, XIV (Dec. 1970), 151-63.

[131] As early as 1820 Mill had used the French equivalent, saying that the valley de la Pique “ést dire être plus pittoresque que celle de Campan, et je ne puis nier que cette opinion ne me semble fort bien fondée” (Journal, 18 September).

[132] For other instances, see especially No. 31, e.g., at 506, 510, 537, 540, 542, 542-3, 548, 549, and 570: “This crowding of all the formations into a small space throws the hills close together, and is therefore very favorable to beauty of scenery.”

[133] At Bognor (which he reached by a walk “over a dull and dreary flat”), the beach was “still duller and more monotonous than the sea shore usually is” (457).

[134] The strongest expression is found in the final journal: the “tiny archipelago” of the Scilly Isles “would be the place for sea-views and solitude! A storm in such a spot must be worth seeing.” (629.)

[135] Here one encounters firm judgment; earlier, inexperience stood in the way, as he confesses that he is “unused to sea views.” This admission occurs where he is impressed, not with the

sea, but rather with the curious visual effect of ships seeming to sail in the clouds (462). Clouds, another romantic icon, also capture his attention at 549, where he notes that smaller fragments of the main mass over the mountains, “continually disengaging themselves from the larger masses, (detachments which never diminished the main body) always took the direction of the valleys and never adhered to the heights which bounded them.”

[136] Other isolated comments support the inference: “Let the visitor beware of climbing any of the hills. He will find nothing but bleakness and barrenness there . . .” (505); “After leaving the head of the lake, you must turn to the right, and . . . find yourself” (515, and cf. 519); after listening to the waves “dash against the shore,” Mill comments: “This may seem too strong an expression . . .” (517); “For, (laugh who will) there are coaches between Ryde and Newport” (570).

[137] The anonymity of journalism at the time might be thought to have induced an unbreakable habit, but the tone of the passage is not compatible with his simply following inappropriate custom.

[138] *EL, CW, XII*, 114. That the letter is in French might mean many things, but certainly suggests a desire to express sentiment; that the third person is used for Harriet Taylor does not necessarily signal an avoidance of the *tutoyer* mode.

[139] Other reminiscences in this journal include these: “we were not so much struck with this country [around Marlow] as I had been in 1821, or as it is probable we all should have been, if we had taken it in an earlier part of our walk” (492); and his remarking that on the Oxfordshire side there is “an old house, which seven years before, when I was last there needed to be propped up by buttresses” (495). In No. 32 also bits of the past are found: pieces “of this same Weald Clay, taken from the roadside at Den Park near Horsham, in Sussex, have hardened into shale of the very same kind in my pocket” (579); an “inland lake or pond” resembles “one of the Broads (as they are called) in Norfolk” (597—reflecting his stay with the Austins in 1822); and Netley Abbey is compared to Bolton Priory (608-9—here the memory is of the previous trip, recorded in No. 31).

[140] Not surprisingly, the young Mill abroad had home thoughts. In his French Journal it will be noted that he makes occasional comparisons with the West Country, undoubtedly remembering the times his family spent with Bentham at Forde Abbey.

[141] A tarn is “the first genuine” one he has seen “in these mountains (I had seen others in the Pyrenees)” (550), and he is delighted to find the “beautiful *Campanula heredacea* growing amongst the fern: I had gathered it in the Pyrenees, but never in England till now” (608).

[142] Comparison is stirred also by memories drawn from books and pictures. For example, in No. 31, a prospect reminds him of “panoramic views of the Alps” (511); they locate the prospect of Windermere which they “had oftenest seen in paintings” (515); Skiddaw reminds him “of the conception [he] had formed of Aetna, from its extensive base, its insulated position, and the descending arms which it stretches out into the plain” (530). No. 32 finds him commenting that the “finest river scenery in England” (near Hythe) is “the only scenery which I suppose can be assimilated, however remotely, to that of the great American rivers” (608)—which, to preserve his

illusion, he never saw. Dartmoor is “intersected at very short distances by glens or chasms, similar to the *Baranca*’s which divide the great plateau of Mexico” (614). The rather unpleasant village of Sennan does “not differ much from one’s ideal of an Irish village” except “in the better construction of the houses and the well-glazed windows”; he adds, “I notice this not as the rule but as the exception” (627).

[143] More particular is his comparison of a cottage with that of Mr. Buller’s “Polvellen” near Looe (576); this comes before the Cornwall tour (No. 33), and so confirms that he had made an earlier visit (see also 593).

[144] *CW*, XIV, 128, 137.

[145] For an account of these plans, see the Textual Introduction to *CW*, X, cxxii-cxxix.

[146] A, 111.

[*w-w*]GB] JSM d’une manière qui le surprit

**VOLUME XXVIII - PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY SPEECHES PART I NOVEMBER 1850 - NOVEMBER 1868. INTRODUCTION BY BRUCE L. KINZER**

SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXVIII - Public and Parliamentary Speeches Part I November 1850 - November 1868*, ed. John M. Robson and Bruce L. Kinzer (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/262/52701>>.

INTRODUCTION BY BRUCE L. KINZER

Were it not for his Westminster years (1865–68), there would be very little to do in the way of editing or introducing John Stuart Mill's post-London Debating Society speeches. Mill had an impressive facility for putting thoughts into words, written or spoken, but he recognized that he could usually accomplish much more with his pen than with his tongue. He also understood that formal prose was the only medium capable of doing complete justice to the ideas and arguments he wished to convey to his audience. It can be assumed that Mill felt more comfortable at his desk than on the platform or in the House of Commons. The psychological security offered by his study, however, is not responsible for the marked preference he showed for the written word. Mill's sense of public duty was such that there would have been a great deal more labour for the editors of these volumes had he been persuaded that his goals could be better advanced through speeches than through essays.

Mill delivered very few public speeches before 1865. Those that he did give were of modest length and ambition; they did not attract much notice at the time and they do not call for special analysis now. From his defeat at the 1868 general election until his death in 1873, Mill was certainly a much more active and prominent speech-maker than he had been prior to the 1865 Westminster campaign. The content and context of that activity constitute a distinctive phase in his life-long experience of political engagement. Even so, the intervening parliamentary career, which established Mill as a highly visible figure in the political world of mid-Victorian England, goes far towards explaining the disparity in quantity and dimensions between the pre-1865 and post-1868 public speeches. Of paramount concern are the origin, character, and significance of that career.

THE *AUTOBIOGRAPHY* AND THE WESTMINSTER YEARS

The temptation exists to dismiss J.S. Mill's three years in the House of Commons as a relatively insignificant episode in a life distinguished by extraordinarily influential writings on virtually every subject central to the intellectual discourse of his age. Whereas the *Autobiography* has induced a literature of impressive proportions on Mill's education, his mental crisis, and his association with Harriet Taylor, nothing like commensurate attention has been paid to the section of this peculiar work that discusses his years in the House of Commons. Such neglect is not the result of the brevity of the treatment he provides. The account of the 1865 to 1868 period of his life, an account that concentrates heavily on his experiences as a candidate and Member of Parliament, constitutes over a tenth of the entire *Autobiography* (eighteen printed pages are given to these four years—approximately two-thirds of the space allocated to the preceding quarter-century).<sup>1</sup> It is not how much Mill says but what he says and how he says it that has made scholars generally indifferent to Mill's portrayal of his parliamentary career. Although a conception of purpose with regard to his political objectives imparts a focus and a measure of unity to the parliamentary paragraphs, their content lacks the personal dimension so singularly displayed in the early chapters. The cumulative effect of the self-satisfied detachment with which Mill describes his support of parliamentary reform and purity of election, women's suffrage and personal representation, justice for Ireland and no less for Jamaica, can produce mild irritation, unrelieved by anything twentieth-century readers are disposed to find absorbing or provocative.

The formality and flatness of tone characteristic of Mill's consideration of these years cannot be attributed to temporal distance. Written less than two years after his defeat at the November 1868 general election, the exposition of the Westminster period drew upon eminently fresh recollections. The distance is rather psychological and rhetorical, serving an argumentative function that is not without paradox. The final portion of the *Autobiography* embraces an explanation and justification of his political conduct between 1865 and 1868. If the need to explain and justify is responsible for the disproportionate length of the account, that need itself is a consequence of his failure to secure re-election in 1868. Mill patiently builds up his case, making it abundantly clear, if only by implication, that while he lost nothing of substance at the 1868 general election, the electors of Westminster denied themselves the opportunity of being represented by one whose integrity, intellectual weight, and moral authority did honour to his constituents and his country.

An intellectual and moralist in politics? So much can be taken for granted. But the real interest of his parliamentary career lies in its illumination of Mill as politician. The ultimate objectives invariably involved a commitment to the "improvement" or "regeneration" of mankind. His head might be in the air, but Mill always saw himself as a man whose feet were firmly planted on the ground. The successful moralist had to be an able tactician. Mill's labours, whether in or out of the House of Commons, always assumed a form consistent with his understanding of the obligation to marry theory and practice. His grasp of political realities may have sometimes been deficient; his sense of politics as "the art of the possible" remained a constant.

Whatever doubts Mill had respecting the advisability of his entering the House of Commons, they did not spring from an apprehension of personal unfitness. A passage in the *Autobiography* remote from the parliamentary section makes explicit Mill's supreme confidence in his capacities

as a practical man of business. Evaluating the benefits he gained from his long service in the East India Company, Mill observes:

as a Secretary conducting political correspondence, I could not issue an order or express an opinion, without satisfying various persons very unlike myself, that the thing was fit to be done. I was thus in a good position for finding out by practice the mode of putting a thought which gives it easiest admittance into minds not prepared for it by habit; while I became practically conversant with the difficulties of moving bodies of men, the necessities of compromise, the art of sacrificing the non-essential to preserve the essential. I learnt how to obtain the best I could, when I could not obtain everything; instead of being indignant or dispirited because I could not have entirely my own way, to be pleased and encouraged when I could have the smallest part of it; and when even that could not be, to bear with complete equanimity the being overruled altogether. I have found, through life, these acquisitions to be of the greatest possible importance for personal happiness, and they are also a very necessary condition for enabling any one, either as theorist or as practical man, to effect the greatest amount of good compatible with his opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

A disadvantage of his position at India House, however, was that it excluded him “from Parliament, and public life,” an exclusion to which he “was not indifferent.”<sup>3</sup>

Mill never questioned his ability to function effectively in the House of Commons. Although there are very good reasons for viewing the nineteenth-century House as a unique institution with distinctive traditions, conventions, and assumptions that had to be learned and understood before a member could feel at home there, Mill in 1865 never considered the possibility that his full acceptance and recognition would require a period of apprenticeship. He not only entered the House as an established public figure; he also, as his remarks indicate, had a consciousness of himself as a mature and experienced politician. Servant of the East India Company from 1823 until its demise as an agency of government in 1858; erstwhile active member of the London Debating Society; political journalist and editor of the *Westminster Review* in the 1830s; political theorist habitually aware of the need to comprehend contemporary developments and relate them to his analytical objectives—the Mill of the mid-1860s thought he possessed the credentials and qualities necessary to demonstrate what a member of Parliament should be (as opposed to what most members generally were).

## MILL'S 1865 CANDIDACY

In March of 1865 Mill received a request from James Beal, representing a Committee organized to serve the Radical interest in Westminster, to allow his name to be put forward as a possible candidate for the general election expected to occur before the year was out.<sup>4</sup> Beal's association with Mill was not personal. He believed Mill's name could carry Westminster and sought to use Mill's presence in the House to advertise the programme of the Metropolitan Municipal Reform Association, founded by Beal in this same year.<sup>5</sup> In *Representative Government* Mill had criticized

both the Corporation of the City of London (“that union of modern jobbery and antiquated foppery”) and the Metropolitan Board of Works,<sup>6</sup> the primary targets of Beal’s reform campaign. Assuming he could be elected, Mill’s sponsorship of the Association’s proposals in the House would boost the visibility of the issue and the organization that worked to publicize it.<sup>7</sup>

In response to Beal’s approach, Mill indicated that he would be willing to stand should a majority of Liberal electors so wish. But he told Beal in no uncertain terms that his would be no ordinary candidacy. Having implied that they were not doing him a favour in offering him the prospect of a seat in Parliament—“All private considerations are against my accepting it”—Mill said that, if elected, he would not undertake to look after the constituency’s “local business” in the House of Commons. He went on to observe that a seat in the House interested him only as a vehicle for the promotion of his opinions. The electors were entitled to know the nature of those opinions but they should have no expectation that he would modify them to conform with their own. At this time, however, Mill probably thought more about the contribution he could make as a candidate than as an M.P. If he did not win the opportunity to exemplify the correct *modus operandi* of a parliamentarian, he might at least draw attention not only to his substantive views on major questions but also to his prescriptive conception of the electoral process. Mill intimated that because it was not quite right for an individual to “want” to be in Parliament, he would do nothing to assist any committee formed to secure his return.

It is the interest of the constituencies to be served by men who are not aiming at personal objects, either pecuniary, official, or social, but consenting to undertake gratuitously an onerous duty to the public. That such persons should be made to pay for permission to do hard & difficult work for the general advantage, is neither worthy of a free people, nor is it the way to induce the best men to come forward. In my own case, I must even decline to offer myself to the electors in any manner; because, proud as I should be of their suffrages, & though I would endeavour to fulfil to the best of my ability the duty to which they might think fit to elect me, yet I have no wish to quit my present occupations for the H. of C. unless called upon to do so by my fellow-citizens.<sup>8</sup>

Elections should involve the qualifications of the candidates—their principles, opinions, and capabilities. They should not be decided by the longest purse.

Mill was deeply disturbed by what he perceived as the growing influence of money at elections. He informed Beal of his conviction “that there can be no Parliamentary Reform worthy of the name, so long as a seat in Parliament is only attainable by rich men, or by those who have rich men at their back.”<sup>9</sup> A man whose Liberal credentials Mill held suspect,<sup>10</sup> and whose financial resources were considerable, had already entered the field in Westminster. Captain Robert Wellesley Grosvenor, a nephew of the Marquess of Westminster, had declared his intention of seeking to represent the constituency.<sup>11</sup> An inexperienced Liberal barely more than thirty years of age, Grosvenor had little to recommend him but his name and flush connections (usually sufficient recommendations at mid-Victorian elections). That Mill felt a special affinity for the Radical tradition of Westminster<sup>12</sup> can be accepted as a given; that Grosvenor would do less than jus-



tice to that tradition few of advanced persuasion could doubt. If Westminster wished to reclaim its status as the fulcrum of English Radicalism, Mill was inclined to assist if asked.

By mid-April the decision had been made—Beal’s electoral Committee wanted Mill to be their candidate.<sup>13</sup> Even before the invitation was issued, Mill had sensed the momentum building in his favour. On 6 April he sanguinely reported to J.E. Cairnes on recent developments:

there is something very encouraging in the enthusiasm which has been excited, both in Westminster and elsewhere, not simply for me, but for the opinion respecting the proper position of a candidate, which I expressed in my letter [to Beal]. . . . The greatest pleasure which public life could give me would be if it enabled me to shew that more can be accomplished by supposing that there is reason and good feeling in the mass of mankind than by proceeding on the ordinary assumption that they are fools and rogues.<sup>14</sup>

Mill could scarcely have been in a more satisfactory position. He had no intention of allowing the campaign to interfere with his Avignon spring. Beal’s Committee had promoted his candidacy and they could now get on with the task of helping Westminster electors prove themselves something other than “fools and rogues.” As a matter of principle Mill would do nothing to help himself. He could best instruct the voters of England in the value of purity of election by refusing to allow the Westminster contest to distract him from his work in Avignon.<sup>15</sup> He planned to return to London in early July<sup>16</sup> to await the judgment of the electorate—a judgment less on his qualifications as a candidate than on the wisdom of the Committee that nominated him and the virtue of the electors to whom that Committee made their appeal.<sup>17</sup>

By the end of April there were three candidates in the field—Grosvenor, Mill, and W.H. Smith. Smith, the son of Victorian England’s most innovative bookseller and now the effective head of the firm, offered himself to the electors as a “Liberal-Conservative.” Tories did not win seats in Westminster, and Smith, while he hoped to win Tory votes, did not come forward as a follower of Lord Derby. He claimed to be “unconnected with either of the great political parties”; he desired to act “as an independent member at liberty to vote for measures rather than for men”; he declared that he would “not be a party to any factious attempt to drive Lord Palmerston from power.”<sup>18</sup> Smith’s aim was to combine the votes of the Conservative minority in Westminster with those of Palmerstonian moderates in sufficient number to outdistance Mill. If the Tories had a candidate in this contest, Smith was it.

What did Mill think of his chances as he passed the month of May in Avignon? He does not seem to have taken Smith very seriously. On 11 May he wrote Edwin Chadwick: “I do not think the Tories expect their man to come in, otherwise some more considerable person would have started in that interest.”<sup>19</sup> Yet at the end of the month he informed Max Kyllman that he thought “it hardly possible” his own candidacy “should succeed,”<sup>20</sup> a view echoed by Helen Taylor two days later in a letter to Kate Amberley.<sup>21</sup> With two seats open and only three candidates, one of whom Mill two weeks earlier had lightly dismissed, it is not easy to see how such pessimism could be justified.

A letter from Chadwick in late May could account for it. Chadwick reported that Mill's Committee wanted him to return to London to meet with them and the electors. Inasmuch as Mill had given clear indication of his unwillingness to play the part of candidate, the approach through Chadwick did not augur well. Mill, nonetheless, held his ground.

If I were now to attend meetings and make speeches to the electors in the usual . . . manner, it would seem as if there had been no truth in my declaration that I did not personally seek to be in Parliament; as if I had merely been finessing to get myself elected without trouble and expense, and having found more difficulty than I expected, had at last shewn myself in my true colours.<sup>22</sup>

Shortly thereafter Mill's Committee became increasingly uneasy about the charges of atheism being levelled against Mill by elements of the metropolitan press. The controversy stemmed from a passage in the recently published *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*. Attacking H.L. Mansel's theology, Mill had stated that he could not worship a God whose goodness could not be comprehended in relation to human morality: "I will call no being good, who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go."<sup>23</sup> In the late spring and early summer of 1865 perhaps no passage in print received more attention.<sup>24</sup> Charles Westerton, a prominent member of Mill's Committee, suggested that he return to England to answer the allegations of irreligion being hurled at him. On 21 June Mill told Westerton that a candidate's private religious opinions were no business of the electors. As for his published work, he would not disavow anything he had written, but added that the refusal to worship any God "but a good God" did not make him an atheist. He indignantly declined to dignify the charges brought against him by the likes of the *Record* and *Morning Advertiser* by issuing a response.<sup>25</sup>

Less than a week later, however, Mill agreed to return early to meet with his Committee and to address the electors of Westminster.<sup>26</sup> He explained to Chadwick that an urgent letter had arrived from Westerton that left him little choice: "it is due to those who have taken so much trouble about me that I should not give them the impression that for my own convenience I expose them to the probable frustration of all their endeavours."<sup>27</sup> Mill's Committee had evidently persuaded him that he could win, but not without helping himself. Smith's candidacy jeopardized Mill's election because of the strained relations prevailing between the Committees of Grosvenor and Mill.<sup>28</sup> Few doubted that Grosvenor would top the poll when the day was done, and Mill's Committee feared that in the absence of cooperation between the two Liberal candidates many Whiggish Westminster electors would split their two votes between Grosvenor and Smith, leaving Mill odd man out. The Committee therefore wanted Mill to take up the fight against Smith, and to sanction negotiations with Grosvenor's Committee.

On 30 June Mill, now back at Blackheath Park, told Westerton that he would not meet with either Grosvenor or Grosvenor's Committee. But if he would not support cooperation between the two Committees, neither would he forbid it. He insisted that the campaign was theirs, not his, and it was for them to decide how to conduct it.<sup>29</sup> Before the first week of July was out, an ar-

rangement with Grosvenor's Committee had been concluded. Mill tersely disclosed to Chadwick: "there was nothing for me to do but acquiesce in it."<sup>30</sup>

Mill's "acquiescence" in the deal that was cut by the Committees was the product of the same forces that had moved him to become an "active" candidate. His Committee believed that such a course of action was indispensable to the success of their cause. And now that he was in the thick of it, Mill realized that he too wanted that cause to succeed. He felt most comfortable on the high ground, surveying the battle from an elevated vantage point. But a detachment born of disinterest could not be effectively maintained once the struggle had reached a decisive stage. The role of observer had to be abandoned for that of participant, and Mill descended warily into the contested zone. Having done so, he would not veto the negotiations considered necessary to ensure his return to the House of Commons.

## THE ELECTION SPEECHES OF 1865

There are several noteworthy features about Mill's election speeches in July 1865. Not at all surprising is the element of defensiveness in his explanation to his audience of why he had come among them after declaring emphatically that he would not be a candidate in the usual sense. "I was told by those who had good means of judging that many of you desired to know more of me than you have been able to collect from what I have written. Such a statement as that left me no option, for you have a right to know my opinions and to have an opportunity of judging for yourself what man you are to select." (21.) Mill would not admit to his listeners or to himself that he harboured any ambition to sit in the House of Commons. There is more self-deception than fine calculation or hypocrisy in the way he makes bedfellows of disinterestedness and self-advertisement.

When I stated in my letter [to Beal] that for my own sake I should not desire to sit in Parliament, I meant what I said. I have no personal objects to be promoted by it. It is a great sacrifice of my personal tastes and pursuits, and of that liberty which I value the more because I have only recently acquired it after a life spent in the restraints and confinements of a public office; for, as you may not perhaps know it, and as many people think that a writer of books, like myself, cannot possibly have any practical knowledge of business, it is a fact that I have passed many hours of every day for thirty-five years in the actual business of government. (19–20.)

Characteristically, the interpretation Mill offers of the contest at hand focuses on issues of principle and morality, not personality. If Grosvenor figures in this interpretation at all, it is only by implication. The arrangement made by their respective Committees notwithstanding, Mill could not at this stage recommend Grosvenor to the electors of Westminster. After what had transpired, however, neither could he condemn him. The best Mill could do was ignore Grosvenor and behave as though the choice before the voters was between Smith and himself, each representing diametrically opposed versions of what the electoral process was about. If Westminster's virtue was for sale, Mill suggested, Smith could meet the price. Emphasizing the symbolic

importance of the decision Westminster had to make, Mill urged her electors in flattering terms to demonstrate that they could not be bought, by supporting the candidate who preferred the public to the private interest.

It is no exaggeration to say that all eyes are upon you. Every friend of freedom and purity of election in the country is looking to you with anxious feelings. . . . If you elect me and I should turn out a failure . . . you would have nothing to be ashamed of. You would have acted an honest part and done that which at the time seemed to be best for the public good. Can the same thing be said if you return the candidate of a party against which for a century past Westminster has in the most emphatic manner protested, for his money? If this great constituency should so degrade itself it will not only be the deepest mortification to all who put faith in popular institutions, but Westminster will have fallen from her glory, and she can never hold her head as high as she has done, because the progress of popular institutions, which cannot possibly be stopped, will have to go on in future without her. (25–6.)

Mill repeatedly hammered away in his election speeches at the unwholesome influence of money in the British political system. His rhetoric was often quite unlike that he adopted later in the House of Commons. Although he certainly did not hesitate to express his views frankly and forcefully in parliamentary debates, he for the most part phrased his thoughts with a judiciousness frequently absent from his extra-parliamentary speeches. He may have sometimes misjudged his audiences but he invariably sought to manifest a sensitivity to their character and expectations. On 8 July Mill asked his hearers whether they thought it a good thing that the House of Commons should be the preserve of the rich or (an oblique reference to Grosvenor?) “men with rich connections?” Admitting that the rich showed a paternalistic concern for the poor, Mill nonetheless insisted that their fundamental sympathies lay with their own kind. In language that some would probably have considered inflammatory, inciting bad feeling between the poor and their betters, Mill revealed his capacity for platform oratory. The rich

had almost universally a kind of patronising and protective sympathy for the poor, such as shepherds had for their flocks—only that was conditional upon the flock always behaving like sheep. But if the sheep tried to have a voice in their own affairs, he was afraid that a good many shepherds would be willing to call in the wolves. (32.)

That Mill had a certain relish for polemical combat had been evident long before his candidature; but he had no time for polemic for the sake of polemic. Moral purpose always informed his engagement in controversy. He might have welcomed the opportunity to pitch his message at a level somewhat beneath that he thought suitable for the printed page or the House of Commons, but for all that, the moral intent of the message was not blunted. Mill felt very strongly that purity of election was essential to a healthy political order. Something nobler than money should determine the outcome of elections. As he saw it, his candidacy was undertaken to promote the integrity of the electoral process, and he would have been derelict had he not drawn attention to this aspect of his campaign.

Mill did not eschew the philosophical in these election speeches, setting forth with clarity and directness the method of his politics and offering his prospective constituents a line of vision that looked beyond the pressures, constraints, and opportunities of the moment. He would readily confess that good will and altruistic motives in themselves did not make the ideal politician—a realistic grasp of immediate difficulties, limitations, and contingencies was essential to working a representative political system to progressive advantage. In effect Mill argued that the best politician was one who used the possibilities inherent in a particular political context to further ultimate objectives favourable to the public interest.

In the nature of things, however, many could not see what the future required of the present. Even well-intentioned and liberal-minded politicians could all too easily succumb to the demands, details, and routines of day-to-day political life, and conclude that acting upon principle was a luxury they could ill afford. Progress could not result from subordinating principle to practice, but from seeking the maximum good in each specific set of circumstances. Mill laid out the essence of his political method to the electors of Westminster on 5 July in St. James's Hall.

Believing as I do that society and political institutions are, or ought to be, in a state of progressive advance; that it is the very nature of progress to lead us to recognise as truths what we do not as yet see to be truths; believing also that . . . it is possible to see a certain distance before us, and to be able to distinguish beforehand some of these truths of the future, and to assist others to see them—I certainly think there are truths which the time has now arrived for proclaiming, although the time may not yet have arrived for carrying them into effect. That is what I mean by advanced Liberalism. But does it follow that, because a man sees something of the future, he is incapable of judging of the past? . . . I venture to reverse the proposition. The only persons who can judge for the present . . . are those who include to-morrow in their deliberations. We can see the direction in which things are tending, and which of those tendencies we are to encourage and which to resist. . . . But while I would refuse to suppress one iota of the opinions I consider best, I confess I would not object to accept any reasonable compromise which would give me even a little of that of which I hope in time to obtain the whole. (23.)

One could compromise one's principles or one could compromise in the interest of one's principles. While in the House of Commons Mill would strive to avoid the former and pursue willingly the latter, which he deemed both honourable and wise.

Of course the impact of Mill's appearances on the results of the Westminster contest cannot be known. It is safe to say they did him no harm. On polling day, 12 July, only nine votes separated Mill and Grosvenor (the latter headed the poll with 4,534 votes), while Smith trailed by seven hundred. In his speech following the declaration of the poll, Mill retroactively gave his imprimatur to the compact that encouraged Liberal electors to support both Mill and Grosvenor rather than plump for either or split their votes between Grosvenor and Smith.<sup>31</sup> Mill approvingly observed that the electors of Westminster had "shown that whatever differences of opinion may exist amongst the several shades of Liberals, whatever severe criticisms they may occasionally

make on each other, they are ready to help and co-operate with one another when the time of need arrives" (45). Part of the politician's art is to make a virtue of necessity.

Yet it may be that cooperation with Grosvenor was not vital to Mill's victory. It had been some time since Westminster had had an opportunity to put its mark on a general election. It did so in 1865 by electing Mill; it did so in 1868 by defeating him. A month before polling day in the first election Lord Russell had written to Amberley: "I expect Mill to come in for Westminster, & tho' I am far from agreeing with him, I think he is too distinguished a man to be rejected."<sup>32</sup> Mill's triumph did not reflect any deep personal commitment to him among the mass of Westminster electors. Bagehot remarked on Mill's success in *The English Constitution*: "what did the electors of Westminster know of Mr. Mill? What fraction of his mind could be imagined by any percentage of their minds? They meant to do homage to mental ability, but it was the worship of an unknown god—if ever there was such a thing in the world."<sup>33</sup>

## MILL AND PARTY

The Mill elected by Westminster in 1865 represented no identifiable group, interest, or party in England. He could fairly be described as a Radical or advanced Liberal, but he occupied an unequivocally independent and highly personal position within the spectrum of left-wing liberalism. The weight of his established intellectual and moral authority had been employed to promote certain principles and propositions, not to further the political interests or ambitions of a particular set of men who defined their aims in relation to institutional party objectives: Mill did not lack the rudimentary elements of a theory of party,<sup>34</sup> nor was he opposed to organized cooperation among men pursuing common goals (his chairmanship of the Jamaica Committee and, later, of the Land Tenure Reform Association come immediately to mind). Although he generally preferred Liberals to Tories, Mill did not find much to choose between Palmerston and Derby,<sup>35</sup> and the divisions within Radical ranks were such as to render impossible an affiliation with any specific segment of advanced opinion.

The peculiar character of Mill's radicalism was highlighted by Bagehot in the latter's *Economist* article of 29 April, 1865. Mill's letter of 17 April to Beal, outlining his position on some of the major issues of the day, was intended for publication (it appeared in the *Daily News*, *Morning Advertiser*, and *The Times* on 21 April). This letter served as Mill's election address, which Bagehot considered "one of the most remarkable . . . ever delivered by any candidate to any constituency,—especially in respect to the qualities of honesty, simplicity, and courage." According to Bagehot, Mill's radicalism, grounded in "a thorough logical capacity, unflinching integrity of purpose, and a profound knowledge of the facts and principles involved," amounted to a shattering indictment of the creed of the advanced wing of the Liberal party. Bagehot proceeded to cite the opinions expressed by Mill in his letter to Beal and to contrast them with the views of the "Radicals" on the subjects concerned. He observed that the Radicals want the ballot whereas Mill does not; the Radicals want government revenues to be drawn exclusively from direct taxation

whereas Mill prefers a mixture of direct and indirect taxes; the Radicals stand for a foreign policy based on the principle of non-intervention whereas Mill asserts that there are circumstances in which English intervention on behalf of freedom abroad may be justified; the Radicals recommend drastic reductions in military expenditure whereas Mill favours only those economies that will in no respect weaken England's capacity to defend her national interests in the face of aggressive and potentially hostile European despotisms; the Radicals urge abolition of purchase in the army whereas Mill cautions that thought must be given to ensure that the cure for the disease not be more damaging than the disease itself; the Radicals call for the complete abolition of flogging whereas Mill thinks it an appropriate punishment for certain crimes; the Radicals strongly oppose whereas Mill ardently supports the representation of minorities.<sup>36</sup>

Bagehot is using Mill to slam the radicalism of Bright and the Manchester School. In doing so he occasionally distorts the content of Mill's letter. Mill's preference for a combination of direct and indirect taxation is qualified by his assertion that taxes should not be placed on "the necessities of life."<sup>37</sup> From Bagehot's discussion of Mill's views on purchase in the army one would not infer Mill's confidence that a satisfactory means could be devised for terminating "the monopoly by certain classes of the posts of emolument." To flogging Mill is "entirely opposed . . . except for crimes of brutality."<sup>38</sup> Yet Mill would have no wish to deny Bagehot's basic contention: his radicalism was not Bright's. Apart from their differences on specific issues, there is evidence to show that Mill regarded Bright as a demagogue<sup>39</sup> who represented an inferior brand of radicalism from which Mill desired to distance himself.

How can this depiction of Mill as an independent agent in 1865, a depiction that in the *Autobiography* he by implication extends to his entire parliamentary career,<sup>40</sup> be squared with John Vincent's treatment of Mill as "a good party man in Parliament"?<sup>41</sup> By "a good party man" Vincent means an admirer and supporter of Gladstone. When Mill took his seat in February of 1866 the House of Commons was led not by Palmerston, who had died the previous autumn, but by Gladstone, who together with Russell headed a Liberal government pledged to introduce a reform bill. In Palmerston's hand had lain the key to both the stability and sterility of the politics of the early 1860s, and he held it firmly in his grasp to the very end, knowing there was no one to whom he could safely pass it on.<sup>42</sup> Gladstone and Palmerston had been at odds before and after the former accepted the Chancellorship of the Exchequer in the Liberal administration formed in 1859.<sup>43</sup> By comparison with Palmerston, Gladstone, notwithstanding his Tory antecedents and instincts, represented the politics of movement. Palmerston's departure dramatically transformed the political context within which Mill found himself. Many whose liberalism was so moderate as to verge on the nominal had comfortably followed Palmerston. These could not help but be uneasy at the prospect of a government subject to the pre-eminent influence of a man thought by more than a few to be constitutionally (in both senses of the word) unsound.<sup>44</sup> The Conservatives, relegated to minority status since the split over the Corn Laws, would now prepare to exploit the fissures opening in Liberal ranks. Their animus against Gladstone was vehement. That Mill should be drawn to a politician of Gladstone's intellectual stature and great abilities with enemies such as these is no great mystery. The vulnerability of the Russell-Gladstone government led Mill to limit his independence. For much of the eighteen months following the resignation of Russell and

Gladstone in June 1866, the latter's leadership of the party was not secure. On those issues Gladstone chose to stake his authority on, Mill circumspectly avoided action that might weaken Gladstone's position.

Vincent therefore is not wrong to see Mill as "a good party man," but he may be misleading. Mill could back Gladstone and yet retain a good deal of independence. On a whole range of subjects upon which Mill felt strongly—Jamaica, women's suffrage, proportional representation, metropolitan government—he could not look to Gladstone to take the lead. But because these were not "party" questions, in striking an independent line on them Mill in no way jeopardized Gladstone's leadership. The character of the House of Commons and the party system of the 1860s gave Mill scope to exercise a marked degree of autonomy. The initiatives he took, many of which had no chance of attracting Gladstone's endorsement, were often on subjects that fell outside the sphere of party questions as defined by the political world Mill had entered in February of 1866.

Mill has various things to say about his mission in the House of Commons. In the *Autobiography* he emphasizes an independent strategy based on the premise that he should concentrate on doing what others would not or could not do so well. He was less interested in parliamentary influence for himself than in gaining exposure for views that would remain unexpressed were it not for his presence. An element of isolation was inherent in his approach. He often found himself taking up subjects "on which the bulk of the Liberal party, even the advanced portion of it, either were of a different opinion from mine, or were comparatively indifferent."<sup>45</sup> Mill suggests that he chose a role that required more courage than most of his Radical colleagues could muster. His duty was "to come to the front in defence of advanced Liberalism on occasions when the obloquy to be encountered was such as most of the advanced Liberals in the House, preferred not to incur."<sup>46</sup>

Associated with this role was a larger ambition: the construction of an advanced Liberal party, which, he told Theodor Gomperz, could not be done "except in the House of Commons."<sup>47</sup> Mill had to use his opportunity to show Liberals in the House and in the country that his brand of liberalism could practically contribute to the formation of a Gladstone-led party built on a foundation of sound Radical doctrine. In essence, Mill saw himself as a shaper of future public and party opinion. He explained to a correspondent, in language rather more grandiose than he employed in the *Autobiography*: "I look upon the House of Commons not as a place where important practical improvements can be effected by anything I can do there, but as an elevated Tribune or Chair from which to preach larger ideas than can at present be realised."<sup>48</sup> Hence Mill's objectives in the House were much like those in his political writings. They were educative in nature. He had moved into a new forum in the hope that he could reach more people more effectively than he had hitherto.

There is no reason to question the sincerity of Mill's statements about purpose. Yet they convey a conception of his part in the parliamentary history of these years that is altogether too static and abstract. No politician in this Parliament functioned within a fixed political context. The major players—Russell, Gladstone, Derby, Disraeli, Bright—had a good deal to do with



what Parliament would or would not do, but even they could not control the ebb and flow of political currents that swept through the House of Commons in 1866–67. On many important questions Mill became enmeshed in a web not of his own making. He might be able to affect the web's configuration but he could not alter its constitution in any fundamental way. He could exercise no influence whatsoever if he pretended that the web had nothing to do with him. His handling of the overwhelmingly dominant issue of parliamentary reform reveals him working those strands that seemed to him most promising.

## PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

Mill had an agenda of reform but it was not his agenda that counted. He might want adult suffrage limited only by a literacy qualification, and a redistribution modelled at least in part on Thomas Hare's scheme of personal representation.<sup>49</sup> But only a government bill could pass through Parliament and Mill would not be one of its draughtsmen.

The 1866 Bill of record would be the work of Russell and Gladstone. Mill cared much about the content of a reform measure but in 1866 he cared more about supporting Gladstone. In February of 1865, five months before his triumph at Westminster and eight months before Palmerston's death, Mill told Max Kyllman, "no Reform Bill which we are likely to see for some time to come, will be worth moving hand or foot for."<sup>50</sup> By the end of the year he had come to view the matter rather differently, admitting to Chadwick,

The whole of our laws of election from top to bottom require to be reconstructed on new principles: but to get those principles into people's heads is work for many years, and they will not wait that time for the next step in reform. . . . And perhaps some measure of reform is as likely to promote as to delay other improvements in the representative system.<sup>51</sup>

Mill had not changed his ideas concerning what should go into a reform bill. Nor did he expect that any bill emerging from the deliberations of the Liberal government would remotely resemble what he wanted. But Mill was now member for Westminster; Palmerston was dead; Russell and Gladstone had left no doubt that parliamentary reform would be the centrepiece of their 1866 legislative programme. Where Gladstone led on this critical party question, Mill would follow.

A comparison of a letter Mill wrote to Hare in January of 1866 with his response to Gladstone's Reform Bill shows the extent to which he had chained himself to Gladstone's slow-moving chariot. To Hare Mill expatiated on the dangers a bill confined to franchise extension presented to their position. The proposal and passage of such a bill, Mill argued, would exclude the subject of personal representation from the sphere of parliamentary discussion. Once a reform bill had been enacted "the whole subject of changes in the representation will be tabooed for years to come."<sup>52</sup> (Chadwick, after receiving Mill's letter of December 1865, would presumably not have attributed such an opinion to his friend.) Mill did not expect the Liberal government to offer a

measure that incorporated the views he and Hare held, but he did hope the bill would be sufficiently broad in scope to justify raising the issues that he wanted to air in the House of Commons.

The Bill Gladstone introduced on 12 March provided for a reduction in the borough household qualification from £10 to £7 and for a county occupation franchise of £14. It was a franchise bill and nothing more.<sup>53</sup> Had it passed, working-class voters would have constituted approximately a quarter of the total electorate of England and Wales (a doubling of working-class electoral weight). The Tories were not inclined to mount a frontal assault on the measure. They were more than happy to let Robert Lowe and the band of Liberal renegades hostile to parliamentary reform, whom Bright referred to as the “Adullamites,” make the running. Although the bulk of Mill’s fine 13 April speech (No. 16) focused on the need for working-class enfranchisement, the occasion for it was a motion tabled by Lord Grosvenor (an Adullamite) and seconded by Lord Stanley (a Conservative for whom Mill had considerable regard) that called for postponement of the Bill’s second reading until a redistribution package had been presented. Mill, knowing that the Adullamites and their Tory sympathizers wanted to wreck the Bill, apprehended that from such a wreckage Gladstone would not emerge without serious injury. That Mill must have agreed with the substance of Grosvenor’s motion did not move him to support it. The preface to his elegant argument on behalf of parliamentary reform was devoted to a defence of the ministry’s exclusive concentration on the franchise. Mill insisted that the Bill, though “far more moderate than is desired by the majority of reformers,” significantly enlarged working-class electoral power and was therefore “not only a valuable part of a scheme of Parliamentary Reform, but highly valuable even if nothing else were to follow” (60–1).<sup>54</sup>

The government and its Bill survived for another two months. On 18 June Lord Dunkellin’s amendment to substitute a rating for a rental franchise in the boroughs was carried against the ministry by a vote of 315 to 304.<sup>55</sup> A week later the Russell-Gladstone government resigned. Throughout their difficulties over the reform question, Mill had steadfastly adhered to the Gladstonian line.<sup>56</sup>

Mill’s behaviour should not be attributed to servility. He knew what he was doing and why he was doing it. He admired Gladstone and cast him as the future leader of a radicalized Liberal party. That radicalization could occur only in conjunction with a marked increase of working-class political power. Mill had grave misgivings about class power of any sort and did not advocate working-class political ascendancy.<sup>57</sup> The enormous appeal Hare’s scheme had for Mill lay partly in its capacity to promote both democratic political participation and meritocratic government.<sup>58</sup> Aristocratic and middle-class prejudices retarded social and political improvement. A sizeable injection of working-class influence was required to achieve the accelerated rate of progress Mill wished to foster. He sensed the growth of working-class activism, as manifested in the Reform League, and put this together with Gladstonian leadership and franchise extension to come up with a new and better political order. In January of 1866 he told H.S. Chapman,

English statesmanship will have to assume a new character, and to look in a more direct way than before to the interests of posterity. We are now . . . standing on the

very boundary line between this new statesmanship and the old; and the next generation will be accustomed to a very different set of political arguments and topics from those of the present and past.<sup>59</sup>

In 1866 and 1867 Mill was prepared to serve as a bridge between Gladstonian parliamentary Liberalism and working-class political agitation. There were other bridges (Bright was unquestionably the most important). But Mill's conduct inside and outside the House of Commons in relation to both Gladstone's position and the aspirations of the politically conscious members of the working classes resonates with an acute sensitivity to new forces at work and their potential for constructive political engagement.

The resignation of Russell and Gladstone was followed by the formation of a minority Conservative government under Derby and Disraeli. The public agitation for parliamentary reform, led by the Manchester based middle-class dominated Reform Union and the metropolitan based artisan dominated Reform League, heated up in response.<sup>60</sup> The Reform League, eager to impress upon the new government the earnestness of the working classes on the question of the franchise, announced their sponsorship of a mass public demonstration to be held in Hyde Park on 23 July. The right to hold public meetings had been one of the issues galvanizing those responsible for organizing the Reform League. The view of the Derby ministry, one supported by Sir George Grey, Home Secretary in previous Liberal administrations, was that Royal Parks were not appropriate locations for public meetings, and that such gatherings were prohibited by law.<sup>61</sup> The Tory Home Secretary, Spencer Walpole, authorized Sir Richard Mayne, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, to issue an order forbidding the meeting.<sup>62</sup> At about 6 p.m. on 23 July the Leaguers, led by their President, Edmond Beales, arrived at the locked gates of Hyde Park and were confronted by a police barricade. Beales did not mind the government's thinking he carried the match that could ignite an agitation of truly dangerous proportions, but he had no intention of striking that match. On being informed that the demonstrators would not be admitted to the Park, Beales led his forces off to Trafalgar Square. The confusion arising from the shift, aggravated by the turbulence of a crowd that apparently included more than a few ruffians out for a bit of fun, resulted in the felling of the Park railings. Three days of commotion in Hyde Park ensued. Damage to the grounds was fairly extensive and some two hundred people were injured.<sup>63</sup>

In his speech of 24 July, given while the tumult was still in progress, Mill laid responsibility at the government's door. In attempting to enforce an exclusion for which there could be no justification, the ministry had precipitated the disturbance and heightened bad feeling between the governing classes and the masses. "Noble Lords and right honourable Gentlemen opposite may be congratulated on having done a job of work last night which will require wiser men than they are, many years to efface the consequences of" (100).

Under the circumstances, Mill's speech, delivered in a House many of whose members felt they had good cause to be alarmed at the recent turn of events, was remarkably bold.<sup>64</sup> Disraeli, cognizant that Mill's opinions on this matter were shared by few M.P.s on either side of the House, rose when Mill resumed his seat, and opened with an observation designed to accentuate Mill's isolation: "I take it for granted . . . that the speech we have just heard is one of those in-

tended to be delivered in Hyde Park, and if I may judge from it as a sample, we can gather a very good idea of the rhetoric which will prevail at those periodical meetings we are promised.” In a masterful brief speech calculated to highlight the contrast between the responsible conduct of ministers of the crown and the irresponsible language of the member for Westminster, Disraeli rejected Mill’s imputations. He denied that the government was opposed to working-class political meetings, but declared that these should be held “at the proper time and place.” The 23rd of July at Hyde Park, Disraeli implied, was neither, as the “riot, tumult, and disturbance” unleashed by the League’s initiative unhappily demonstrated.<sup>65</sup>

Mill devotes more than a page of the *Autobiography* to the curious and rather enigmatic aftermath of the Hyde Park riots. A trace of bitterness enters into his account of the part he played in dissuading the League from endeavouring to hold a meeting in Hyde Park on 31 July in defiance of the government. Mill thought it highly probable that serious violence would erupt from such a confrontation and that nothing good could come of it. Having successfully made his case, he agreed to address a League meeting at the Agricultural Hall on the 30th (No. 32). He believed that he had been “the means of preventing much mischief.” His bitterness was directed not against the League but against certain elements of the metropolitan press that had accused him of being “intemperate and passionate.” “I do not know,” he said, “what they expected from me; but they had reason to be thankful to me if they knew from what I had in all probability preserved them. And I do not believe it could have been done, at that particular juncture, by any one else.”<sup>66</sup>

The object of reviewing this well-known episode is not to assess the accuracy of Mill’s claims. Evelyn L. Pugh, after a searching and sympathetic enquiry into Mill’s connection with the Hyde Park affair, concedes that there is no evidence to corroborate Mill’s assessment of his effectiveness. What Mill reported no doubt did occur, but his interpretation perhaps assigns too much weight to his intervention.<sup>67</sup> Whatever the practical import of Mill’s involvement with the League in late July of 1866, the whole business usefully illuminates the purposeful intent that fashioned his response to the reform crisis of 1866–67.

The political coin minted by Mill in answer to the franchise question had Gladstone on one side and the working classes on the other. Through Gladstone the working classes could be integrated into the political process. The mode of achieving this objective could also contribute to a transformation of the Liberal party into an effective instrument of social and political reform.<sup>68</sup> But for Gladstone to keep in the air a sufficient number of balls to secure his ascendancy over other ambitious jugglers, he had to put a respectable distance between himself and the radicalism of the Reform League. To some degree both Bright and Mill consciously acted as Gladstone’s surrogates.<sup>69</sup>

Not too much should be made of Mill’s refusal to join the Reform League. Considering the strong exception he took to its programme of manhood (rather than adult) suffrage and the ballot, his identification with its struggle is impressive. In declining the invitation to join the League, Mill observed that “the general promotion of the Reform cause is the main point at present, and . . . advanced reformers, without suppressing their opinions on the points on which they may still

differ, should act together as one man in the common cause.”<sup>70</sup> Not only did Mill defend the League in the Commons on the Hyde Park question, but he sent a £5 donation to assist those arrested by the police on 23 July.<sup>71</sup> In February of 1867 he participated in a deputation whose purpose was to persuade Walpole to appoint a working man to the Royal Commission on Trades Unions.<sup>72</sup> In the summer of 1867 Mill subscribed to a Reform League fund established to organize the newly enfranchised electors on behalf of advanced Liberalism.<sup>73</sup> The League also had cause to appreciate Mill’s role in the successful fight to stop the 1867 Parks Bill from getting through the House of Commons.

In late July of 1866, in urging caution on the League, Mill had drawn on some of the moral and political capital he had invested in the working-class movement. He had done what he could to prevent violence and to ease the war of nerves between the authorities and the agitators. Mill asserted himself not merely for the sake of peace. Indeed, he had no desire to moderate the conflict between the government and the League; rather, he sought to enclose the League’s expression of that conflict within bounds prescribed by the need to build and sustain an unofficial and necessarily unacknowledged alliance between Gladstone and the working-class reform movement.

The same concern prompted Mill to call upon the League to exercise self-restraint in early 1867. At a League-organized conference of late February, delegates representing the League and the trades unions passed a resolution threatening that, in the event of governmental resistance to working-class enfranchisement, it would “be necessary to consider the propriety of those classes adopting a universal cessation from labour until their political rights are conceded.”<sup>74</sup> The *Morning Star* reported that the speeches given at the meeting were demagogic.<sup>75</sup> On reading this report Mill wrote to William Randal Cremer, a leading figure in trades union and radical political circles, protesting against the extreme rhetoric employed on the occasion. Mill argued that any reform bill acceptable to Parliament would in the nature of things have to be a compromise. Violent language hinting at “revolutionary expedients” should not be indulged in by those leading the agitation. The conditions that might justify revolution, Mill unequivocally stated, did not exist in England.<sup>76</sup> He did not deny that League members had been given “ample provocation and abundant excuse” for their “feelings of irritation.” To allow such irritation to rob them of their sense of proportion, however, was likely to harm the cause of reform. Especially arousing Mill’s displeasure was the message carried in the speeches of “a determined rejection beforehand of all compromise on the Reform question, even if proposed by the public men in whose sincerity & zeal as reformers you have repeatedly expressed the fullest confidence.”<sup>77</sup> Mill feared that the rather tenuous line joining Gladstone to the working-class reform movement was beginning to fragment. The course pursued by Derby and Disraeli in 1867 further jeopardized the enterprise to which Mill had committed himself.

The parliamentary struggle over the details of the Conservative Reform Bill centred on the borough householders and their payment of rates. Derby and Disraeli offered borough household suffrage, subject to the stipulation that only householders who paid their rates directly should be eligible for the franchise. In 171 boroughs the composition of rates, whereby the local

authorities compounded with the landlords for the payment of the occupier's rates, had proved a highly convenient mechanism.<sup>78</sup> These compound householders, whose names did not appear on the rating book, would be excluded from the vote under clause 3 of the Tory Bill. Disraeli would show himself to be infinitely flexible in committee but he rigidly maintained that on the principle of ratepaying the Bill would stand or fall.<sup>79</sup>

Gladstone was appalled by what he took to be the dishonest and fraudulent character of the Bill. Early in the debate on clause 3 he moved to eliminate for electoral purposes the distinction between direct ratepayers and compounders. Gladstone held no brief for household suffrage "pure and simple." His humiliating setback of the previous session doubtless very much with him, Gladstone was now ready to put his strength to the test in opposition to the aspect of the Tory Bill that he thought most unacceptable. The outcome he looked for was a defeat of the government and settlement of the question on terms that satisfied his own preferences. But his reach exceeded his grasp. In the division of 12 April forty-seven Liberals, a number of Radicals among them, rejected Gladstone's leadership and the amendment went down by a vote of 310 to 289. Suspecting that, although he would do no business with Gladstone, Disraeli would find it necessary to do business with them, these Radicals put the survival of the Bill before a parliamentary victory for Gladstone. In his diary Gladstone recorded: "A smash perhaps without example."<sup>80</sup> Mill voted with the minority.<sup>81</sup>

Mill's sole major speech on the ratepaying issue was delivered in the debate that saw Gladstone empty his barrels in a final attempt to wound the measure fatally. On 6 May Disraeli informed the House that the government could not accept the amendment of J.T. Hibbert, Radical M.P. for Oldham, that would allow compounders who wished to opt out of composition to pay a reduced rate. Instead, he indicated, the government would offer an amendment providing that the full rate would have to be paid by those opting out of composition, but that amount could be deducted from the rent received by their landlords. If defeated on the amendment, Disraeli announced, the government would dissolve. Gladstone took up the challenge and advised the House to reject Disraeli's amendment. That advice was not heeded by fifty-eight Liberals who voted with the government, which sailed through the division with a majority of sixty-six.<sup>82</sup>

A correct deciphering of Mill's speech of 9 May hinges on an understanding of what was at stake in this debate. The Tory Bill had sent tremors through Liberal ranks, as Derby and Disraeli had intended that it should. Mill vehemently criticized Disraeli for politicizing the ratepaying issue and sponsoring an amendment calculated to increase electoral corruption. But Mill's words were directed less at the government than at the Radicals. "I hope that honourable Gentlemen on this side of the House, who, loving household suffrage not wisely but too well, have brought matters to this state, intend to come down handsomely to the registration societies in their own neighbourhoods; for the registration societies are destined henceforth to be one of the great institutions of the country" (147). Shortly thereafter Mill warned those Radicals who had shown a tendency to act on the supposition that more of what they wanted could be had from Disraeli than from Gladstone that they would pay a heavy price at the polls (monetarily and politically) for their determination "to outwit the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and make his Bill bring forth

pure and simple household suffrage, contrary to the intentions of everybody except themselves who will vote for it” (147).

These sentiments did not originate in a conviction that household suffrage was a bad idea. Mill wanted his free-wheeling Radical colleagues to realize they were gambling on getting a form of household suffrage they could live with. More importantly, he wanted them to understand that purchasing any bill of goods from Disraeli at Gladstone’s political expense could severely damage the prospects for the formation of an effective advanced Liberal party.

Disraeli had managed to put Gladstone on the defensive. The stepped-up pace of the agitation out of doors may for a time have had a similar effect. In 1866 the leaders of the League might have thought a £7 franchise bill from Gladstone preferable to anything the Tories were likely to offer. By April of 1867 they could not be so sure. Frances Gillespie notes that in this month the League “utterly denounced” Gladstone’s proposal of a £5 rating franchise.<sup>83</sup> On 6 May the League defied the government and held a demonstration in Hyde Park. Feelings were running high inside and outside the House. Gladstone could make no overt move towards the League. Mill had to take up ground distinct from that occupied by the League while doing everything possible to convince its supporters that Gladstone was the man to whom they must turn for leadership.

Gladstone made that task somewhat easier after the defeat of 9 May. His “reaction to this second defeat,” Cowling observes, “was to abandon the £5 rating line altogether . . . and to deliver a sarcastic address to the Reform Union on 11 May in which he attacked the Adullamite Whigs for the first time in public . . . and went as near as a responsible politician could to committing himself as soon as he returned to office to reject the personal payment principle.”<sup>84</sup>

On 17 May Disraeli made his stunning announcement to the House that the government intended to accept the principle of Grosvenor Hodgkinson’s amendment for the abolition of compounding. The amendment was not incompatible with Disraeli’s insistence on retaining the rate-paying principle, but its acceptance swept away the restrictive effects of the Bill’s distinction between direct ratepayers and compounders. The fuss that ensued, in which Mill took part (see Nos. 54, 58, 59), focused on the procedure by which the abolition of compounding was to be implemented.<sup>85</sup>

Disraeli’s bravura performance on 17 May obviated Radical obstruction and ensured the passage of the Bill. Once again he had caught Gladstone off guard and made it appear that the House could carry on very well without Gladstone’s assistance. In his speech to a London meeting of the Reform Union on 25 May, Mill tried to counteract this impression by emphasizing who had done what for whom in 1866 and 1867. He complained of the government’s unfair treatment of the compounder and suggested that Disraeli had been consistent only in his unwillingness to play straight.

This is very like all that has been going on ever since the beginning of these reform discussions. It has been a succession—I will not say of tricks, because I do not like to use hard words, especially when I cannot prove them, but of what is called in the vernacular, trying it on. The

object is just to see what you will bear, and anything that you will bear you shall have to bear, but if you show that you will not bear it, then perhaps it may not be required of you. (169.)

No better could perhaps be expected of Disraeli; but Mill thought it vital that he not be rewarded for a technique designed to conceal the identity of the real author of reform. Reformers should have no patience for the leader of the House of Commons

when he gibes at those to whom we really owe all this, when he . . . talks of their “blundering hands,” and gives it to be understood that they have not been able to carry reform and he can, and that it is not their measure. He is quite satisfied if he can say to Mr. Gladstone, “You did not do it.” But Mr. Gladstone did do it. He could not carry his measure last year because Mr. Disraeli and his friends opposed it; Mr. Disraeli can carry his Reform Bill because Mr. Gladstone will not oppose anything but that which is not real reform, and will support to the utmost that which is. I have no objection to thank everybody for their part in it when once we have got it, but I will always thank most those to whom we really owe it. The people of England know that but for the late government this government would have gone one hundred miles out of their way before they would have brought in any Reform Bill at all. And every good thing we have got in this bill, even that which seems to be more than Mr. Gladstone was prepared to give, has only been given for the purpose of outbidding Mr. Gladstone. (170–1.)

Ideas and ideals were central to Mill’s liberalism, but politics was an indispensable medium for their having practical effect. The Liberal party was important to Mill for what it could become. Its development in a direction consonant with his objectives required, he believed, both a leadership dominated by Gladstone and an active influential rank and file with a strong working-class contingent. His response to the reform crisis of 1866–67 followed from this conviction.

Mill, disappointed by the fortunes of radicalism at the 1868 general election, gave scant indication in the *Autobiography* of the motives that governed his general political disposition in 1867. There he writes not of party political purposes but of independent advocacy of fundamental principles concerning women’s suffrage and the representation of minorities. “In the general debates on Mr. Disraeli’s Reform Bill, my participation was limited to the one speech [on 9 May] already mentioned; but I made the Bill an occasion for bringing the two greatest improvements which remain to be made in representative government formally before the House and the nation.”<sup>86</sup> Mill invariably stressed the non-party character of these initiatives, but the “occasion” for bringing them forward was coloured by party considerations. On 7 June 1866, he presented to the House a women’s suffrage petition signed by 1521 women. He also gave notice of a motion for a return of the number of women who met the existing property qualifications but were barred from the vote by reason of their sex.<sup>87</sup> Mill had no intention of pressing the issue beyond this point in the 1866 session, explaining to a fellow M.P. (C.D. Griffith) that “there is no chance that we can succeed in getting a clause for admitting women to the suffrage introduced with the present Reform Bill.” The object was “merely to open the subject this year, without taking up the time of the House and increasing the accusation of obstructiveness by forcing on a discussion



which cannot lead to a practical result.”<sup>88</sup> Had the Reform Bill of 1866 carried it is possible that Mill would never have proposed the enfranchisement of women in the House of Commons (“perhaps the only really important public service I performed in the capacity of a Member of Parliament”).<sup>89</sup> Much the same can be said of the personal representation amendment. In November of 1866 Mill wrote to Hare:

There will, in all probability, be a Tory Reform Bill, and whatever may be its quality, no moving of amendments or raising of new points will in the case of a Tory bill be regarded by Liberals as obstructiveness, or as damaging to the cause. Then will be the very time to bring forward and get discussed, everything which we think ought to be put into a good Reform Bill.<sup>90</sup>

## JAMAICA AND IRELAND

No one was obliged to treat seriously Mill’s views on women’s suffrage and personal representation. Those who disliked such opinions could regard their propagation as foolish but not as dangerous. For the trouble he took on these matters he may have attracted the admiration of some, the derision of others. Few politicians would care to have the measure of their power taken by reference to either the esteem they inspire or the ridicule they provoke. Whatever political power Mill commanded was inseparable from the intellectual and moral authority he could bring to bear on issues that the governing classes could not easily shrug off. Jamaica and Ireland were such issues, and the high moral line Mill adopted on both is well known.<sup>91</sup> But his course of action on these questions too was not unaffected by his sensitivity to party and personal struggles, and to their possible implications for the future of Gladstone and the Liberal party.

On no subject that he addressed during his Westminster years did Mill feel more strongly than that of the conduct of Governor Eyre and the Jamaican authorities in October of 1865, following the uprising at Morant Bay.<sup>92</sup> The intensity of Mill’s reaction to the reports from Jamaica and his assumption that consideration of Eyre’s behaviour did not lie beyond the parliamentary pale were evident as early as December, when he wrote to a correspondent: “There seems likely to be enough doing in Parliament, this session, to occupy all one’s thoughts. There is no part of it all, not even the Reform Bill, more important than the duty of dealing justly with the abominations committed in Jamaica.”<sup>93</sup>

When Mill took his seat in February the Royal Commission appointed to investigate the Jamaica troubles had not completed its work. The ministry, preoccupied with the Reform Bill, hoped that all parties, including the anti-Eyre Jamaica Committee, of which Mill was a prominent member, would hold their fire until the Commission had reported.<sup>94</sup> It is perhaps not surprising that Mill kept himself in check while the Commission took evidence and deliberated, even though he seems to have already made up his mind that Eyre was responsible for the terrible things that had been done and that the rule of law demanded he be punished accordingly. When the Report reached London on 30 April, its content did nothing to soften Mill’s view of Eyre.<sup>95</sup> His self-imposed silence on the subject for nearly three months after the Report became public

was probably dictated by his resolution that Gladstone's friends should refrain from aggravating in any way their leader's formidable difficulties in the House of Commons.<sup>96</sup>

With the defeat of the Reform Bill and the fall of Russell and Gladstone, Mill's role in the anti-Eyre movement was transformed. At the end of June Charles Buxton resigned as Chairman of the Jamaica Committee, having vainly argued that the Committee should not attempt to prosecute Eyre for murder. The burden of Buxton's case was that conviction was highly improbable and, if obtained, would be followed by a royal pardon. While prosecution could produce but meagre results, it would alienate public opinion, which would come to see Eyre as a dutiful servant of the crown, hounded by a vindictive group who failed to appreciate the heavy responsibility borne by the governor of an island whose predominantly black population could present a grave threat to the life and property of the white minority. The Jamaica Committee, Buxton urged, would best serve the interests of the victims and the cause of justice by working to secure an official condemnation of Eyre and those who had used the declaration and continuance of martial law to inflict unwarrantable and cruel suffering on thousands of British subjects. That condemnation could form the basis of a campaign to win financial compensation for the victims and their families.<sup>97</sup>

Mill and Bright (also a member of the executive committee) held that the course Buxton saw as impolitic offered the only means by which the principles of law, morality, and justice could be vindicated. Eyre's removal from the governorship (he had been temporarily superseded in January of 1866 and his successor would be commissioned in July) fell far short of what was required. Compensation for victims should be sought, but such compensation could not restore the moral authority of British imperial government. If the government refused to prosecute, then the Committee must, as was explained to the public in a document issued by the Committee not long after Buxton's resignation as Chairman.

In undertaking to discharge this duty, so far as circumstances and the means at their disposal may permit, the Committee are not . . . activated by vindictive feelings towards those whom they believe to have violated the law. Their aim, besides upholding the obligation of justice and humanity towards all races beneath the Queen's sway, is to vindicate, by an appeal to judicial authority, the great legal and constitutional principles which have been violated in the late proceedings, and deserted by the Government.<sup>98</sup>

Mill and Bright carried the executive with them on 26 June. On 9 July Mill was elected to replace Buxton.<sup>99</sup> Ten days later Mill put his Jamaica questions to the government in the House of Commons.<sup>100</sup> On 31 July he delivered his single major speech (No. 33) on the subject in the debate occasioned by the introduction of four resolutions by Buxton.<sup>101</sup>

Mill could hardly have acted as he did on the Jamaica question in July had the fragile Russell-Gladstone government still been in office. Certainly the object in pressing the issue was to rescue England's moral reputation, not to irritate the Conservative ministry. The fact remains that however strongly Mill felt about the matter, he abstained during the first half of the year from venting his feelings in the House of Commons. Had a perfectly secure Liberal government been in office

he surely would not have held back. The spectacle of a vulnerable Gladstone harassed by anti-reform forces persuaded Mill that the assertion of principles dear to him had to be subordinated, at least momentarily, to political exigencies.

The Eyre question never acquired a significant parliamentary status.<sup>102</sup> Irish subjects, especially the land question, had such a status and Mill came to think that he had an important role to play in making England aware of the remedies appropriate to Irish problems.

Very soon after first taking his seat in the House of Commons Mill spoke on the suspension of habeas corpus in Ireland (February 1866). He did not offer remedies on this occasion; instead he made very plain his belief that England had abysmally failed to reconcile Ireland to British rule. Mill's words did not sit well with the House.<sup>103</sup> His general condemnation of English government in Ireland, however, did not translate into a criticism of the particular Liberal ministry then in office. That suspension of habeas corpus should be necessary pointed up the inadequacy of what had hitherto been done for Ireland, but Mill did not question the necessity. A notable feature of the speech is his separation of Russell and Gladstone from the causes that had brought Ireland to the edge of rebellion.

He was not prepared to vote against granting to Her Majesty's Government the powers which, in the state to which Ireland had been brought, they declared to be absolutely necessary. . . . They did not bring Ireland into its present state—they found it so, through the misgovernment of centuries and the neglect of half a century. [Such words gave Gladstone more cover than they did Russell.] He did not agree with his honourable Friend the Member for Birmingham [Bright] in thinking that Her Majesty's Ministers, if they could not devise some remedy for the evils of Ireland, were bound to leave their seats on the Treasury Bench and devote themselves to learning statesmanship. From whom were they to learn it? From the Gentlemen opposite, who would be their successors, and who, if they were to propose anything which his honourable Friend or himself would consider as remedies for Irish evils, would not allow them to pass it? (53.)

If Mill's tolerance stretched so far as to accommodate Jamaica during the first half of 1866, it would not snap over Ireland.

Mill's solicitude for the beleaguered Russell-Gladstone ministry is evident in his speech on the government's 1866 Irish Land Bill. Introduced on 30 April by Chichester Fortescue,<sup>104</sup> Irish Chief Secretary, this "extremely mild measure"<sup>105</sup> proposed to invest Irish tenants with a legal claim to compensation for improvements in those cases where there existed no written contract between landlord and tenant denying the latter's right to such compensation.<sup>106</sup> On the second reading of the Bill Mill "delivered one of [his] most careful speeches . . . in a manner calculated less to stimulate friends, than to conciliate and convince opponents."<sup>107</sup>

Mill's opponents could be forgiven for wondering what it was he was trying to convince them of in this speech of 17 May. He began with an assertion that may have inadvertently done Gladstone and Fortescue more harm than good. "I venture to express the opinion that nothing which any Government has yet done, or which any Government has yet attempted to do, for Ireland . . .

has shown so true a comprehension of Ireland's real needs, or has aimed so straight at the very heart of Ireland's discontent and of Ireland's misery" (75). Such an endorsement from Mill of an Irish land scheme in a House of Commons that had its full complement of landlords was something the Liberal government might have preferred to manage without. Nonetheless, Mill meant to do well by the government and that intention gave rise to a very curious speech on a Bill whose place in the history of the Irish land question is deservedly obscure.

Two themes uneasily cohabit in Mill's speech. The first concerns the need for English legislators to think seriously about whether Ireland could be best governed according to English principles. Mill argued that Irish conditions resembled those on the Continent and that English assumptions concerning the ordering of agricultural society were unorthodox. "Irish circumstances and Irish ideas as to social and agricultural economy are the general ideas and circumstances of the human race; it is English circumstances and English ideas that are peculiar" (76). Continental experience had shown that where the tenant was also the cultivator of the soil his welfare depended on his having "the protection of some sort of fixed usage. The custom of the country has determined more or less precisely the rent which he should pay, and guaranteed the permanence of his tenure as long as he paid it." (77.) But if Mill seemed to be saying that Irish tenants should be given fixity of tenure, that is not what he proceeded to advocate. Instead, and here emerges the second theme, Mill defended the ministerial measure on the premise that it would contribute to achieving the aim supported by the English governing class: the promotion of the English system of agriculture in Ireland. Such a goal, whose wisdom Mill openly questioned, entailed making prosperous farmers of the most capable of the Irish tenantry. Indispensable to this process was the provision of compensation for improvements, without which tenants would lack the incentive to act the part of Anglicized tenant farmers.

Mill knew the House of Commons would not sanction fixity of tenure and he had to admit that he knew it. He could not remain silent when the opportunity arose to tell the House that Ireland needed fixity of tenure. He would not, however, use the occasion to criticize the government's feeble proposal. On the contrary he would bestow extravagant praise upon its authors. His admission that fixity of tenure would not fly in the House served to justify a course of action consistent with an allegiance to political ends that could not be dissociated from the fate of Gladstone.<sup>108</sup>

Towards the end of 1867 Mill concluded that the time for pulling his punches had passed. The Fenian outbursts in Ireland and England in 1867 convinced him that England could not and should not keep Ireland unless she could furnish a satisfactory settlement of the land question. In his pamphlet *England and Ireland*, published in early 1868, Mill eloquently and trenchantly pleaded the case for fixity of tenure.<sup>109</sup> Dr. Steele has documented the hostile reception given this pamphlet and has argued that Mill, realizing that he had gone too far, retreated from his exposed position on 12 March in his speech on the state of Ireland.<sup>110</sup>

Mill's speech reads differently from his pamphlet but the difference does not come from his having had second thoughts about fixity of tenure for Irish tenants. Rather it arises from the distinct roles Mill assigned the pamphlet and the speech in his campaign. The scheme he proposed

in *England and Ireland* was deliberately presented simply, boldly, directly. Mill wanted to get people's attention.—the fleshing out of details belonged to a later stage. The primary function of the speech was to answer the criticisms and misapprehensions the pamphlet had incited, and to emphasize the flexible application to which its principle was subject. The relation of the pamphlet to the speech was plainly laid out by Mill in a letter to Cairnes, written only hours before the opening of the debate on Ireland. "The object [of *England and Ireland*] was to strike hard, and compel people to listen to the largest possible proposal. This has been accomplished, and now the time is come for discussing in detail the manner in which the plan, if adopted, would work."<sup>111</sup> The generally conciliatory tone of the speech does not represent any backtracking on Mill's part. He did not hesitate to announce to the House that "Great and obstinate evils require great remedies" (249), nor did he decline the opportunity to reiterate his defence of peasant proprietorship (259–61).

Before March of 1868 Gladstone's political star, apparently on the descent during the Reform Bill struggle, had begun to regain altitude in a climb that by December would carry him to the premiership with a large majority at his back. At Christmas 1867 Lord Russell resigned the leadership of the party, and Gladstone succeeded to a position that conferred on him an authority he had hitherto been denied. The dissension caused by the controversy over reform had largely dissipated and the prospect of a general election provided ample incentive for the party to put its house in order and unite behind a strong leader. Gladstone was ready to provide that leadership. In February of 1868 he introduced his Bill for the abolition of compulsory church rates, which would not long thereafter become law. Four days after Mill spoke on Irish land, Gladstone committed himself in the House to Irish Church disestablishment, which he made the subject of the resolutions he proposed on 23 March. His grip on the party, so unsure in 1866 and 1867, had tightened noticeably. Mill no longer had to tread softly for Gladstone's sake. Indeed, Mill's shift into high gear on the Irish land question reflected his understanding that Gladstone's growing strength had opened up a fast lane to the leader's left.

In the drive towards a Liberalism more programmatic than anything yet seen, Mill attempted to set a pace that he hoped would keep him within Gladstone's sight while helping the latter gain acceptance for measures that would have horrified Palmerston. Mill's lunge on Irish land did something to make the question ripe for serious legislation and also enlarged the framework of debate. That Gladstone got as much as he did on Irish land in 1870 (he did not get all that he wanted)<sup>112</sup> owed a little (maybe more) to *England and Ireland*. Mill may have had less reason than Gladstone to applaud the legislation of 1870, but he had known better than to entertain expectations incapable of immediate fulfilment. As he told Cairnes in March of 1868: "I do not share your hopes that anything much short of what I have proposed, would give peace or prosperity to Ireland in union with England: but if there is any intermediate course which would do so, its adoption is likely to be very much promoted by frightening the Government and the landlords with something more revolutionary."<sup>113</sup>

## CORRUPT PRACTICES

The Irish land question, however important to Mill in 1868, was overshadowed by his immersion in the issue of corrupt electoral practices. Disraeli had promised a bill on the subject for 1868.<sup>114</sup> The depth of Mill's detailed involvement with this measure exceeded that of any other he encountered during his years in Parliament. Believing that a number of advanced Liberals shared his interest, he was disposed to assume responsibility for directing and coordinating their strategy and tactics. In November of 1867 he wrote to Chadwick:

The great question of next session will be the promised bill against electoral corruption. The advanced Liberals must have *their* rival bill, and I am anxious that all who have thought on the subject . . . should put down, as heads of a bill, all that has occurred to them as desirable on this subject. When all suggestions have been got together, the most feasible may be selected, and the best radicals in and out of the House may be urged to combine in forcing them on the government.<sup>115</sup>

Later that month Mill was in touch with W.D. Christie, whom he considered the leading authority on the subject.<sup>116</sup> He asked Christie to draw up a measure that could serve as an instrument of discussion for advanced Liberals, who might meet on the reassembling of Parliament “and produce an outline of a Bill which might be circulated among the Liberal party. It might be possible to prevail on Mr. Gladstone to introduce it: but . . . the bill will only be a rallying point: the fight will . . . be . . . on the attempt to engraft its provisions on the bill of the Tory Government.”<sup>117</sup>

In late December Mill, having heard from Christie, clearly felt the time had come to talk about details. The major points Christie wished to press concerned the inclusion of municipal elections within the bill's purview and the desirability of conducting a post-election enquiry into all contests regardless of whether or not a complaint had been lodged. Mill agreed that corruption at parliamentary elections often fed off the unsavoury techniques used at the municipal level and that any bill that did not apply to both would be highly unsatisfactory. As for a uniform and comprehensive enquiry process, Mill admitted the idea was new to him. “One can at once see many reasons in its favour, but it will be a difficult thing to get carried, owing to the habitual objection to ‘fishing’ enquiries, and to enquiries when there is no complaint. It is, however, evident that the absence of complaint is, in such a case, no evidence of the absence of mischief.” Mill also raised other questions with Christie at this time: what punishment should be imposed on the convicted briber? should all money spent by candidates and their agents at elections “pass through a public officer, so that the mere fact of incurring expenditure in which he is passed over should be legal proof of an unlawful purpose?”<sup>118</sup>

At the beginning of the new year Mill received and read Christie's pamphlet *Election Corruption and Its Remedies* (1867), whose recommendations he considered “excellent.” Of these Mill deemed Christie's proposal for the appointment of an official in each constituency to supervise all aspects of the local electoral process to be of central importance.<sup>119</sup> On 17 January Christie learned of Mill's preference for his plan “of an investigation after every election, parliamentary

or municipal, by a special officer, with the addition of an appeal from that officer to one of the Judges.”<sup>120</sup>

Disraeli, unlike Mill, did not look to Christie for instruction on this matter. The key question addressed by the government’s Election Petitions and Corrupt Practices at Elections Bill concerned jurisdiction over controverted elections.<sup>121</sup> The measure proposed to transfer jurisdiction from Election Committees of the House of Commons to a judicial tribunal.<sup>122</sup> What little opposition there was to the principle of the Bill was not party motivated. Gladstone accepted the need for such a change and did not take a leading part in the debates. Mill himself endorsed the measure, declaring that “though it does in reality only one thing, that thing is a vigorous one, and shows an adequate sense of the emergency” (262). Mill had no wish to see the Bill defeated; rather, he sought to expand its scope so that it could be made into a powerful weapon in the fight against the corrupt influence of money at elections.

The campaign organized by Mill secured none of its objectives.<sup>123</sup> Nothing could be done to establish the enquiry mechanism urged by Christie. The Act of 1868 did not prohibit paid canvassers or limit each candidate to one paid agent; it did not apply to municipal elections; it did not transfer official election expenses from the candidates to the rates, an alteration advocated by Mill in *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform* and in *Representative Government*.<sup>124</sup>

The account of this episode in the *Autobiography*, no doubt coloured by Mill’s experience of the general election of 1868, carries the full weight of his disappointment. Referring to the “fight kept up by a body of advanced Liberals,” he blames the Liberal party for the futility to which that fight was condemned.

The Liberal party in the House was greatly dishonoured by the conduct of many of its members in giving no help whatever to this attempt to secure the necessary conditions of an honest representation of the people. With their large majority in the House they could have carried all the amendments, or better ones if they had better to propose. But it was late in the Session; members were eager to set about their preparations for the impending General Election: and while some . . . honourably remained at their post . . . a much greater number placed their electioneering interests before their public duty. . . . From these causes our fight . . . was wholly unsuccessful, and the practices which we sought to render more difficult, prevailed more widely than ever in the first General Election held under the new electoral law.<sup>125</sup>

Implicit in the passage is a criticism of Gladstone’s leadership, the quality of which Mill would do nothing to impugn during 1868.

That Mill should seek to strike a blow for purity of election can surprise no one; that he should identify the cause so exclusively with a group of advanced Liberals reveals something of his underlying hopes for political realignment. A less narrow identification could have been made. Radicals may have been the most aggressive advocates of a systematic attack on corrupt practices but such advocacy was not confined to them. Beresford-Hope, a Tory, proposed an amendment to forbid the use of public houses as committee rooms. The *Saturday Review*, not known to sympathize with advanced Liberalism, expressed regret that the Bill did not go further. “The truth is

that the Government Bill is only a half-measure. The whole of our election system requires overhauling. It is better to do what is proposed than to do nothing, but far more will yet have to be done before we have exhausted all reasonable legal efforts to put down or to detect bribery.”<sup>126</sup> *The Times*, not one of Mill’s favourite newspapers, could write that “the great increase in the number of the moneyed class is as threatening a spring of danger as the adoption of Household Suffrage.”<sup>127</sup> There could be an aristocratic as well as a democratic bias against money at elections.

Mill’s was emphatically of the latter sort. In *Considerations on Representative Government* he had written:

There has never yet been, among political men, any real and serious attempt to prevent bribery, because there has been no real desire that elections should not be costly. Their costliness is an advantage to those who can afford the expense, by excluding a multitude of competitors; and anything, however noxious, is cherished as having a conservative tendency, if it limits the access to Parliament to rich men. . . . They care comparatively little who votes, as long as they feel assured that none but persons of their own class can be voted for.<sup>128</sup>

Mill’s objection to the Palmerstonian ascendancy was that it seemed impervious to politics as he understood the term. Palmerston’s House of Commons was a club of complacent comfortable gentlemen who felt strongly only about preserving an order of things that they found highly congenial. The broad appeal of the Palmerstonian Liberal party emanated from its standing for an ill-defined “progress” in general and nothing very much in particular. Politics without principles might serve nicely the interests of the rich but could not foster the social and moral improvement that Mill prized.

The transformation of the Liberal party into a vehicle of radical reform was vital to the creation of a politics of principle. The entry into the political arena of men of intelligence wedded to ideas and ideals had to be encouraged. Working-class participation in an advanced Liberal party purged of Palmerstonians was also requisite. If these objectives could be secured, the Liberal party would become something different from and far better than the loose combination of individuals who had followed Palmerston. Indispensable to this achievement, however, was a dramatic reduction in the cost of contesting elections, the end to which each of the amendments put forward by Mill and his associates was directed. The substitution of plutocracy for aristocracy could not make English government or English society what it should be; indeed, Mill was inclined to think that plutocracy aggravated the worst tendencies of aristocracy while introducing new ones to which aristocracy was not normally prone. “They desired to diminish the number of men in this House, who came in, not for the purpose of maintaining any political opinions whatever, but solely for the purpose, by a lavish expenditure, of acquiring the social position which attended a seat in this House, and which, perhaps, was not otherwise to be attained by them” (280).

## THE 1868 WESTMINSTER ELECTION



The impact (if not the existence) of corrupt practices in the Westminster election of 1868 remains open to doubt. W.H. Smith's great wealth contributed to his success in 1868, but its failure to obtain the desired result in 1865 suggests that other factors were at work in Mill's second Westminster contest.

Parliament was prorogued on 31 July and formally dissolved on 11 November. The prorogation accelerated an election campaign that had indeed already begun, and lasted over three months. Mill left London for Avignon at the beginning of August and did not return to England until early November, two and a half weeks before polling day. His absence handicapped his Committee, which had just cause for irritation at Mill's posture. His removal from the scene of action suggested an aloofness from the proceedings that probably did his cause no good. It did not, however, prevent him from making seemingly desultory thrusts into the electoral terrain—without consulting those who were working to secure his re-election—that his Committee understandably considered ill-advised.

In late August Mill sent a ten-pound contribution to Charles Bradlaugh's Northampton election fund.<sup>129</sup> Not only was Bradlaugh a notorious atheist, Malthusian, and Radical, but his candidacy in a constituency already represented by two well-established Liberals (Charles Gilpin and Lord Henley) would inevitably provoke discord in local Liberal ranks. Prudence dictated that a candidate standing in the Gladstonian interest should refrain from promoting challenges to Liberal incumbents, especially when the challenger was Charles Bradlaugh. Mill either failed to see the potentially destructive ramifications of his identification with Bradlaugh or he was indifferent to the consequences. A Bradlaugh victory could only be had at the expense of one of the sitting Liberals, and Gilpin (a member of the Jamaica Committee executive), an advanced Liberal himself though certainly not in Bradlaugh's league, respectfully expressed his unease to Mill in a letter of 7 September. In response, Mill assured Gilpin that Bradlaugh wanted Henley's seat and assumed, along with Mill, that Gilpin's position at Northampton was unassailable. He went on to say that Bradlaugh was a man of ability with distinctive opinions that should be heard in the House of Commons, adding that though "it is most important to uphold honest & honourable men, faithful supporters of our own party, like Lord Henley against Tories & lukewarm Liberals, [he did] not think that their claims ought to be allowed to prevail against the claims of exceptional men."<sup>130</sup>

By late September Mill had learned from his Committee that the subscription for Bradlaugh had provoked considerable fuss in Westminster and created difficulties for his supporters. Mill, "exceedingly sorry" that there should have been "trouble or annoyance," was not penitent. Had he not been a candidate he would have assisted Bradlaugh and he could not allow his own candidacy at Westminster to interfere with a course of action he thought right. It would be wrong for people to infer, Mill maintained, that his sympathy for Bradlaugh had any connection with the latter's religious opinions. What Mill admired in Bradlaugh was his thoughtfulness, his "ardour," his independence of mind. He was a "strenuous supporter of representation of minorities" and an "earnest" Malthusian. "If the capability of taking & the courage of maintaining such views as

these is not a recommendation, to impartial persons, of an extreme radical politician, what is?" Admitting that the first priority should be the return of supporters of Gladstone, Mill observed that opponents of Gladstone were not contesting Northampton and that it was necessary to look beyond "the immediate struggle." He expressed the hope that the House of Commons elected in 1868 would embark on "a general revision of our institutions" and begin to act "against the many remediable evils which infest the existing state of society."

Already the too exclusive attention to one great question [the Irish Church] has caused it to be generally remarked, by friends & enemies, that there will be very little new blood in the future Parlt, that the new H. of C. will be entirely composed of the same men, or the same kind of men, as the old one. Now I do not hesitate to say that this is not what ought to happen. We want, in the first place, representatives of the classes, now first admitted to the representation. And in the next place we want men of understanding whose minds can admit ideas not included in the conventional creed of Liberals or of Radicals, & men also of ardent zeal.<sup>131</sup>

In a letter of 1 October Mill again turned to the need for a real representation of working-class "opinions and feelings," which he was not at all sure the result of the 1868 general election would secure. It would be the responsibility of the new House to pass legislation that would improve the quality of life for the masses. "This cannot be expected unless the suffering as well as the prosperous classes are represented."<sup>132</sup>

That Bradlaugh, if elected, would do useful work in the House of Commons, Mill did not doubt; Edwin Chadwick's services there, Mill believed, would be invaluable. Their longstanding friendship made him keenly conscious both of Chadwick's ambition to sit in the House and of England's shabby treatment of a man who had done much for the betterment of his society. Mill encouraged Chadwick to stand for Kilmarnock against E.P. Bouverie, an Adullamite, and Mill's intervention in this contest would give rise to nearly as much unfavourable comment as did his support of Bradlaugh.<sup>133</sup>

Chadwick took with him to Kilmarnock a glowing letter of recommendation from Mill. On 16 and 22 October *The Times* published the exchange of correspondence that ensued between Bouverie and Mill. In his letter of 25 September the former conveyed his surprise and chagrin that Mill should instigate a division among the Liberals at Kilmarnock, who had supported Bouverie as their member for more than two decades. Acknowledging that he and Mill had their political differences, he observed that these had not prevented him, as an elector in Westminster, from endorsing Mill's candidacy. "Toleration for minor differences, union for common public objects, such, at least, is the doctrine I entertain with regard to party action, and without a practical adherence to it, I believe the Liberals will be powerless for good."<sup>134</sup>

In his response of 4 October Mill did not say what he thought of Bouverie's notion of party. Instead, he concentrated on Chadwick's special claims as an "exceptional man," asserting that "I would very gladly put him in my place if I saw a probability of success." Chadwick's qualities were such that considerations of party were, in his case, of secondary importance. Mill implied, however, that he could, if pressed, defend his intervention on party grounds.<sup>135</sup>

Bouverie did press him. On 13 October he accused Mill of setting himself up as an authority competent to determine the best interests of the electors of Kilmarnock. "If I were to act on your advice [by withdrawing], the result would be a substitution of your individual opinion for the free choice of the constituency." As the electors of Westminster, presumably, did not want Chadwick as their representative, there might be good reason to suppose that he would be no more acceptable to Kilmarnock. In effect, Bouverie charged Mill with an arrogant presumption that threatened to harm the Liberal interest, affirming that "the best hope of our common political adversaries lies in the Liberal constituencies being exposed to a contest among Liberals."<sup>136</sup>

Mill issued a very lengthy rejoinder on 19 October, in which he projected a conception of the Liberal party from which he knew Bouverie must dissent. He laid bare the significance he attached to the general election, placing personal considerations well into the background, and announcing that "we are not now in ordinary times." There were new electors and "new questions to be decided." Parliament required men who understood "the wants of the country" and the remedies for "the most pressing existing evils." The challenge to the Palmerstonians was unmistakable. If the "recognised candidates of the party" did not include "a reasonable number of men of advanced opinions, or possessing the confidence of the working classes," then they should not be surprised to face competition from unrecognized candidates. The Adullamites had wounded the Liberal party in the preceding Parliament and "if a similar result should befall it in the next there will be cause for bitter regret that the liberal party did not fight out its battles at the polling booths rather than in the lobby of the H. of C." Mill's strident conclusion stated as bluntly as could be stated under the circumstances his view that the Liberal party could well afford to do without Bouverie and those who sympathized with his politics.

We do not want men who cast reluctant looks back to the old order of things, nor men whose liberalism consists chiefly in a warm adherence to all the liberal measures already passed, but men whose heart & soul are in the cause of progress, & who are animated by that ardour which in politics as in war kindles the commander to his highest achievements & makes the army at his command worth twice its numbers; men whose zeal will encourage their leader to attempt what their fidelity will give him strength to do. It would be poor statesmanship to gain a seeming victory at the poll by returning a majority numerically large but composed of the same incompatible elements as the last.<sup>137</sup>

Mill hoped that the general election would initiate a Radical take-over of the Liberal party.

He may have felt fairly confident of his own success during the months in Avignon. By late October, however, the concern of Liberal organizers over the effort being mounted by W.H. Smith led to Mill's being summoned to London for the final fortnight of the campaign.<sup>138</sup> Only upon his return did he comprehend the seriousness of his predicament. The tone and content of his election speeches suggest that leading figures on the Liberal Committee, believing that Mill had put himself in a dangerously exposed position and desiring to undo some of the damage that had been done, counselled moderation, restraint, and discretion. That such advice should be

proffered is entirely understandable; that Mill should have taken it to heart is perhaps a little baffling.

The most striking characteristic of Mill's November election speeches is that they are indistinguishable in message from what orthodox Liberal candidates were saying up and down the country. They are highly conventional partisan speeches. Praise for Gladstone, cuts for the Tories, the obligatory reference to the Irish Church, vague allusions to Irish land and social reform—these are the staple of Mill's election addresses.<sup>139</sup> He had little to say about Jamaica, women's suffrage, personal representation, or the radicalization of the Liberal party. Something approaching defensiveness crept into both the speeches and the letters he wrote for publication at this time. In reiterating his hostility to the ballot, Mill expressed regret that he should find himself "conscientiously opposed to many of the Liberal party, though not in principle, upon the ballot question." (Mill stood on principle in rejecting the ballot; where this left the multitude of Liberals who favoured secret voting—from whom he pointedly declined to separate himself "in principle"—it is not easy to know.) His audience, in any case, need not worry about his position on the issue: "If he was wrong, he would be beaten in the end; so they could afford to let him have his way" (344). More revealing yet is Mill's letter of 9 November on the Bradlaugh connection that appeared two days later in *The Times*, *Daily News*, and *Morning Star*. Written in response to the fuss over the matter being kicked up by the Tories, it says much for his state of mind a week before polling day.

I suppose the persons who call me an Atheist are the same who are impudently asserting that Mr. Gladstone is a Roman Catholic. . . . An attempt was made to raise the same cry against me at my first election, & the defence which I did not choose to make for myself was made for me by several eminent dignitaries of the C[hurch] of England. . . . If any one again tells you that I am an atheist, I would advise you to ask him, how he knows and in what page of my numerous writings he finds anything to bear out the assertion.<sup>140</sup>

Helen Taylor, on discovering that Mill had penned such a letter for publication, was not a little indignant. "I cannot tell you how ashamed I feel. . . . Do not disgrace yourself as an open and truthful man; do not shut the door to all future power of usefulness on religious liberty by such mean & wretched subterfuges as this letter."<sup>141</sup>

Helen Taylor did not walk in Mill's shoes (though she may have tied them for him). In early November Mill had become acutely aware of the difficulties that in the preceding months had not penetrated his Avignon refuge. He held his cards close to his chest in the fortnight before the election because he lacked faith in the hand he had dealt himself. It was by no means a hand to be ashamed of—the pursuit of Eyre, fixity of tenure for Irish tenants, the contribution to Bradlaugh's campaign, and the endorsement of Chadwick—and Mill was not ashamed of it. He feared, however, that it might be a losing hand. Mill wanted to win in 1868 in order to be part of a new Liberal dispensation to which he felt he had much to offer.

Neither Mill nor perhaps anyone else could have known in early November that W.H. Smith was not beatable. In the interval between the 1865 and 1868 elections Smith and his people had

been assiduously nursing Westminster. His commitment and money, the latter drawn from a purse so deep as to approximate bottomlessness, generated the foundation of the London and Westminster Constitutional Association and fuelled the high level of activity it sustained in the lead-up to and during the 1868 election.<sup>142</sup> Excluding the money spent on this effort prior to the summer of 1868 and the money spent by the London and Westminster Constitutional Association on behalf of Smith's candidacy while the election was in progress, expenditure directly attributable to Smith at the contest came to £9000, more than four times what the Liberal Committee spent for Grosvenor and Mill.<sup>143</sup>

The Liberals got many more votes for their money than did Smith, but they were not enough to carry Mill: Smith, 7648; Grosvenor, 6584; Mill, 6284. Smith's victory marked the beginning of a trend that would establish Westminster as a virtually invincible Tory stronghold in the late nineteenth century. Two Tories would be returned at the 1874 election, Smith on this occasion polling 9371 votes, nearly 5000 more than the stronger of the two Liberal candidates.<sup>144</sup> When viewed from this perspective, a perspective unavailable in 1868 to Westminster Liberals disappointed with their showing, it can be seen that Mill did not do at all badly. Might he have won had he known that Grosvenor and not Smith was the man to beat and acted accordingly?

Mill did not run against Grosvenor in 1868 nor could he have done so. In 1865 animosity between their respective Committees had been overcome shortly before polling day in the interest of mutual assistance, from which Mill stood to benefit more than Grosvenor. In 1868 there was a single Liberal Committee sponsoring both candidates. It could not be said that Grosvenor had distinguished himself in the House of Commons, but then no one had expected him to. Unlike his kinsman, the future Duke of Westminster,<sup>145</sup> Captain Grosvenor had kept his distance from the Adullamite camp and done nothing to give offence to either Gladstone or advanced Liberals. In July of 1868 the leader of the Liberal party, aware that Grosvenor intended to stand again, sent a letter to the Chairman of the Westminster Liberal Committee recommending Grosvenor to the electors of the constituency.<sup>146</sup> A unilateral decision by Mill to take on Grosvenor would have created havoc in Liberal ranks and probably harmed Mill more than Grosvenor, who might have attracted more Tory votes than he did if Mill had gone after him. Most Conservatives clearly plumped for Smith, but those who did not would be far more likely to split their votes between Smith and Grosvenor than between Smith and Mill. If Liberals of whatever stripe could find little to complain of in Grosvenor's conduct, he was inconsequential enough to generate much less hostility among Tories than did his Liberal associate. Mill, in short, had almost no room for manoeuvre in November of 1868; that he finished only three hundred votes behind Grosvenor was in itself a triumph of sorts.

Although Mill was the most eminent of the Radicals denied admission to the Gladstonian host elected in 1868, he had plenty of worthy company. Bradlaugh and Chadwick were defeated. George Odger, in whose candidacy Mill had taken a special interest,<sup>147</sup> retired from the field in Chelsea to prevent a Conservative victory there. Edmond Beales, George Howell, and W.R. Cremer—leading figures (as was Odger) in the political world of working-class activists—failed to win their contests. The university Liberals—G.C. Brodrick, E.A. Freeman, Auberon Herbert,

George Young, Godfrey Lushington, Charles Roundell—were also unsuccessful.<sup>148</sup> None of this was lost on Mill, who found little to celebrate in the results. In a letter to Charles Eliot Norton, Mill remarked on “the defeat of the radical party throughout the country.”<sup>149</sup>

A Liberal party, even one led by Gladstone, that did not include a substantial battalion of Radicals in the House of Commons (working-class representatives among them) was of limited use to Mill. The experience of 1868 compelled him to recognize that Liberal constituency organizations, largely dominated by men of means, would resist the changes in personnel and policy that he wished to promote.<sup>150</sup> He also believed that such short-sightedness would ultimately alienate the working-class electorate and enfeeble the Liberal party. In early November he asserted to John Plummer that the “Liberal party will have cause to repent of not having adopted the best leaders of the working men and helped them to seats.”<sup>151</sup> Mill urged working-class political organizations to use their influence to insist on representation equal to that of the higher classes within the party. “Where a place returns two members, one of these should be a candidate specially acceptable to the working classes: where there is but one, he shd be selected in concert by both sections of Liberals.”<sup>152</sup> Mill’s loyalty to a Gladstonian Liberal party that refused to give the working classes their due did not extend very far. By February of 1870 he was ready to sanction tactics that emphasized his complete detachment from the Liberal establishment. Writing to George Odger, Mill declared: “It is plain that the Whigs intend to monopolise political power as long as they can without coalescing in any degree with the Radicals. The working men are quite right in allowing Tories to get into the House to defeat this exclusive feeling of the Whigs, and may do it without sacrificing any principle.”<sup>153</sup>

When Mill came to write the concluding section of the *Autobiography* he had been disabused of the notion that the 1867 Reform Act and a Gladstonian ascendancy would usher in a new political era responsive to his sense of priorities. He conceived of the years immediately following his defeat as the beginning of a transitional period, the outcome of which could not be confidently predicted.<sup>154</sup> Mill’s post-election uncertainty manifestly distorted the account he gave of his parliamentary career by refracting it through a lens that elevated the independent aspects of his conduct at the expense of the pattern of action moulded from his interpretation of the ongoing party struggle and its possible implications. Such a pattern did exist, and its source resided in Mill’s view of himself as a progressive politician functioning within a system that seemed to offer unprecedented opportunities for a fundamental reshaping of the Liberal party.

In retrospect it may appear that Mill should have known better than to think that things could have turned out other than they did in 1868. His hopes and illusions, it might be supposed, were those of an amateur lacking a sound grasp of the English political world and the social forces that shaped it. Such condescension would be misplaced. The mid-Victorian equilibrium and the reassurance it gave the governing classes concerning the stability of English society made the granting of borough household suffrage a conceivable option in 1867. But those who conceded so much were by no means sure that nothing untoward would flow from it. Mill’s perhaps unreasonable hopes were matched by equally unreasonable fears on the part of some whose miscalculations could not be ascribed to political naïveté. Lord Derby meant what he said when he spoke

of “a leap in the dark.” Mill was looking for a leap into the light, and from 1866 through 1868 he had done what he thought best to help prepare the way for it.

## THE LATE PUBLIC SPEECHES

Released from parliamentary constraints and responsibilities, Mill redirected his political activism in the last five years of his life to focus on several abiding passions: women’s suffrage, education, and land reform.<sup>155</sup> As assessment of Mill’s parliamentary career shows in its abundant variety those elements that defined its essential unity, so analysis of the late public speeches reveals features common to the core of Mill’s radicalism. Hitherto, the fundamental question has been: What do the Westminster years demonstrate about the character of Mill’s political objectives in the second half of the 1860s and the means by which he sought to give them effect? Emphasis has been placed on Mill’s conception of the party struggle and its relation to his ultimate purposes. The claim is not that the meaning of each and every speech he gave in the House of Commons can be uncovered only through a penetration of the political layers within which the words were often embedded, but that on those critical issues determining the rise and fall of party fortunes Mill acted as a politician in pursuit of fairly precise political aims. Even though the parliamentary context is not especially germane to most of the late public speeches, when viewed as a group they can be seen to encapsulate themes basic to what Mill had been doing from 1865 through 1868.

The speeches on women’s suffrage, education, and land reform manifest Mill’s commitment to a politics of inclusion. The exclusion of women from the franchise “is a last remnant of the old bad state of society—the regimen of privileges and disabilities” (407). Mill wants a sound elementary education made available to all children. He stoutly rejects the claims of religious sectarianism to rate-money designated for educational ends. The exclusionist tendencies of sectarianism were anathema to Mill. The existing distribution of landed property in England, buttressed by such artificial contrivances as primogeniture, entail, and strict settlement, unjustly excluded the vast majority of people from what should be accessible to all. Mill, speaking on behalf of the Land Tenure Reform Association, denounced such contrivances. The Association’s programme, in the drawing up of which Mill had been instrumental, also called for preservation of the commons, government supervision of the waste lands in the interest of the public and the agricultural labourers (to whom allotments on favourable terms should be offered), and—most radical of all—a tax on the unearned increment of rent.<sup>156</sup> Landed property must no longer be treated “as if it existed for the power and dignity of the proprietary class and not for the general good” (417).

Unquestionably, a strain of old anti-establishment radicalism lingered in Mill. Privileges, monopolies, exclusiveness—in his mind, these were linked inextricably to the pernicious consequences of aristocratic government. Mill, however, was more interested in elucidating the advantages of progressive change than he was in savaging what remained (quite a lot) of the establishment.

Mill's politics of inclusion sprang from a profoundly democratic civic consciousness. Participation was integral to political education. An educated citizenry was vital to the creation and perpetuation of a healthy body politic. The expansive ideal of citizenship inculcated by Mill put a premium on a widely diffused energy, virtue, and intelligence. The achievement of a higher politics required, among other things, opportunities for personal growth, which entailed bringing more and better schooling, more civic participation, more material benefits, and more beauty within the reach of more and more people. Thus Mill ardently supported working-class enfranchisement and women's suffrage; universal elementary education, which should be in no way inferior to the best primary education bought by the rich; the election of women and working men to school boards; generous allotments for agricultural labourers; public access to parks and commons; and, indeed, a citizen army ("Henceforth our army should be our whole people trained and disciplined") (413). Political development, personal growth, and an increase in the total sum of human happiness were to advance together.

Mill appreciated that very practical considerations respecting political power had to be attacked by a reformer with an agenda such as this. Abraham Hayward, in his obituary on Mill for *The Times*, observed that "of late years Mill has not come before the world with advantage. When he appeared in public it was to advocate the fanciful rights of women, or to propound some impracticable reform or revolutionary change in the laws relating to land."<sup>157</sup> It should be borne in mind that Hayward and *The Times* would have cheered the resurrection of Palmerston. The picture of the later Mill as a crotchety philosopher promoting hare-brained schemes comforted those who wanted no part of his radicalism. That radicalism deliberately cultivated a hard-headedness that Hayward's shallow dismissal cannot obscure. Mill persistently grappled with issues of power: political, intellectual, and economic. A state that withheld the franchise from women, quality elementary education from the masses, and land reform from the agricultural labourers of England and the tenant farmers of Ireland illegitimately denied to these groups the power needed for self-protection. The liberal state advocated by Mill would confer that power upon the disadvantaged and dispossessed. Mill's political speeches, no less than his political writings, evince a readiness to tackle the problem of power. "Safety does not lie in excluding some, but in admitting all, that contrary errors and excesses may neutralise one another" (390–1). With the suffrage, women "cannot long be denied any just right, or excluded from any fair advantage: without it, their interests and feelings will always be a secondary consideration, and it will be thought of little consequence how much their sphere is circumscribed, or how many modes of using their faculties are denied to them" (380). Mill is encouraged by signs of an awakening agricultural labouring class, the "most neglected, and, as it has hitherto seemed, most helpless portion of the labouring population." They had at last "found a voice, which can, and which will, make itself heard by the makers of our laws" (430). There is plenty of room for disagreement among commentators concerning how successfully Mill assayed the problem of power; it cannot be persuasively argued that he overlooked or evaded it.

The theoretical and practical tenability of a politics of inclusion partly hinged upon its enlistment of a valid principle *and* process of authority.<sup>158</sup> The final authority for public policy must reside in the will of the democracy. The exercise of that will in the public interest, however, ne-



cessitated the acceptance by the demos of a conspicuous role for individuals with superior abilities, knowledge, and experience.

Different people had very different ideas of popular government; they thought that it meant that public men should fling down all the great subjects among the people, let every one who liked have his word about them, and trust that out of the chaos there would form itself something called public opinion, which they would have nothing to do but to carry into effect. That was not his idea of popular government, and he did not believe that popular government thus understood and carried on would come to good. His idea of popular government was, a government in which statesmen, and thinking and instructed people generally pressed forward with their best thoughts and plans, and strove with all their might to impress them on the public mind. What constituted the government a free and popular one was, not that the initiative was left to the general mass, but that statesmen and thinkers were obliged to carry the mind and will of the mass along with them; they could not impose these ideas by compulsion as despots could. (395.)

In Parliament and out, Mill strove with all his might.

## Endnotes

[1] *Autobiography* [A], in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* [CW], I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 229–90.

[2] *Ibid.*, 87.

[3] *Ibid.*, 85. In 1842 Mill had written to Comte: “la question de participation au moins directe, au mouvement politique, se trouve pour moi à peu près décidée par ma position individuelle. Je remettrai à un autre temps l’exposition de mes vues sur les circonstances politiques de mon pays, qui malgré la force incontestable de vos objections, font encore à mes yeux de la tribune parlementaire la meilleure chaire d’enseignement public pour un philosophe sociologiste convenablement placé, et qui chercherait peut être à faire des ministères ou à les diriger dans sons sens, mais en s’abstenant d’en faire partie, sinon probablement dans des moments critiques que je ne crois pas, chez nous, très éloignés.” (*Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill* [EL], ed. Francis E. Minneka, *CW*, XII–XIII [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963], XIII, 503.) In 1851 Mill declined an offer, made by Charles Gavan Duffy and Frederick Lucas, to stand for an Irish county constituency. Mill writes in the *Autobiography* that “the incompatibility of a seat in Parliament with the office I then held in the India House precluded even consideration of the proposal” (A, 272).

[4] Beal led a group of “New Reformers” in Westminster that wished to challenge the dominance of the “Old Reformers” who had virtually dictated the representation of the constituency since 1837. Captain Grosvenor was the candidate of the “Old Reformers.” See Marc Bradley

Baer, “The Politics of London, 1852–1868: Parties, Voters and Representation,” Ph.D. diss., 2 vols., University of Iowa, 1976, I, 156–62.

[5] See David Owen, *The Government of Victorian London, 1855–1889: The Metropolitan Board of Works, the Vestries and the City Corporation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), 196.

[6] *Essays on Politics and Society, CW, XVIII-XIX* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), XIX, 538–9.

[7] While in the House of Commons Mill actively promoted Beal’s municipal reform programme. He did so as a member of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Local Government (see App. B), and as a metropolitan member of the House. For his initiatives on the question see Nos. 56, 82, 93, and 105. In the *Autobiography* Mill refers to his attempt to obtain a Municipal Government for the Metropolis: “on that subject the indifference of the House of Commons was such that I found hardly any help or support within its walls. On this subject, however, I was the organ of an active and intelligent body of persons outside, with whom and not with me the scheme originated, who carried on all the agitation on the subject and drew up the Bills.” (4, 276.)

[8] Letter to James Beal, *Later Letters of John Stuart Mill [LL]*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, *CW, XIV-XVII* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XVI, 1005–6 (7 Mar., 1865).

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] In February of 1865 Kate Amberley recorded in her journal: “Mill said they could not have one [a candidate] worse than Mr. Grosvenor, for at a meeting he had been at he had been as illiberal as possible for a liberal to be” (*The Amberley Papers*, ed. Bertrand and Patricia Russell, 2 vols. [London: Woolf, 1937], I, 369).

[11] One of the sitting Liberal members for Westminster, Sir George De Lacy Evans, had previously announced his retirement. The other sitting Liberal, Sir John Shelley, would subsequently withdraw from the field.

[12] William Thomas, *The Philosophic Radicals: Nine Studies in Theory and Practice, 1817–1841* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 46–94; and E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Gollancz, 1963), 451–71.

[13] For Mill’s response, see letter to James Beal, *LL, CW, XVI*, 1031–5 (17 Apr., 1865).

[14] *Ibid.*, 1026–7.

[15] John M. Robson has noted that “more editions of Mill’s works appeared in 1865 than in any other year” (Textual Introduction, *Essays on Politics and Society, CW, XVIII*, lxxxix).

[16] Letter to William Hickson, *LL, CW, XVI*, 1044–5 (3 May, 1865).

[17] In an 1868 article Edward Dicey observed that over £2000 was spent on behalf of Mill’s candidacy in 1865. Mill might have considered that too much, but as Dicey points out, it was

Mill's name that made it possible to win on such a small investment ("The Candidates for Next Parliament," *Macmillan's Magazine*, XVIII [Sept. 1868], 445).

[18] Quoted in Viscount Chilston, *W.H. Smith* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), 50. H.J. Hanham notes that Smith "was in some demand as a Liberal candidate" in the early sixties (*Elections and Party Management: Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone* [London: Longmans, 1959], 226).

[19] *LL, CW*, XVI, 1050.

[20] *Ibid.*, 1063 (30 May, 1865).

[21] Amberley Papers, I, 434.

[22] Letter to Chadwick, *LL, CW*, XVI, 1059 (28 May, 1865).

[23] *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, *CW*, IX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 103.

[24] For the press controversy on this passage, see the *Spectator*, 27 May, 585, and 10 June, 1865, 631–2; the *Record*, 2 June, 3; 14 June, 2; and 19 June, 1865, 2; *Morning Advertiser*, 3 June, 5; and 28 June, 1865, 2.

[25] *LL, CW*, XVI, 1069–70.

[26] See letter to Westerton, *ibid.*, 1073 (26 June, 1865).

[27] *Ibid.*, 1072 (26 June, 1865).

[28] In May Mill had said of Lord Amberley: "It is really a fine thing in him to have withdrawn from Grosvenor's Committee and come over to me" (letter to Chadwick, *ibid.*, 1050 [15 May, 1865]).

[29] *Ibid.*, 1073–4. Helen Taylor wrote to Kate Amberley on 2 July, "Mr. Mill has undergone a sort of persecution from his Committee to show himself and speak at meetings, which, in moderation, however, he is willing to do; but others want him to combine with Captain Grosvenor which he thinks quite out of the question. He has no objection to the Committee co-operating with Captain Grosvenor's committee if they themselves think fit, since he leaves the conduct of the election in their hands, but any personal combination between himself and a man who (as well as the Tory candidate) is employing all the old corrupt practices would be an utter dereliction of the principle on which he declared himself willing to stand." (*Amberley Papers*, I, 437.)

[30] *LL, CW*, XVI, 1075 (6 July, 1865).

[31] Grosvenor's Committee offered more than advice to Liberal electors. Cabs, paid for by Grosvenor, transported supporters of the Liberal candidates to the polls. See Leslie Stephen, "On the Choice of Representatives by Popular Constituencies," in *Essays on Reform*, ed. Leslie Stephen (London: Macmillan, 1867), 111–12.

[32] Amberley Papers, I, 394.

[33] *The English Constitution*, in *Political Essays*, ed. Norman St. John Stevas, *Collected Works of Walter Bagehot*, V-VIII (London: The Economist, 1974), V, 302. In 1867 Leslie Stephen asserted that “the efficient cause of Mr. Mill’s election was the enthusiasm which his name excited in a large number of thinking and educated men; that the zeal with which they supported him induced the electors to accept him upon their recommendation; and that, in short, whatever were the intermediate steps by which Mr. Mill’s reputation was brought to bear upon the electors’ votes, that reputation really caused his election” (“On the Choice of Representatives,” 112). In a similar vein, Henry Taylor wrote that Mill “furnished the first example of a man sought out by a large constituency to represent them in the House of Commons, without any proposal or desire of his own to do so, partly on account of his political opinions no doubt, but chiefly on the ground of his eminence as a political philosopher” (*Autobiography*, 2 vols. [London: Longmans, Green, 1885], I, 80).

[34] See Bruce L. Kinzer, “J.S. Mill and the Problem of Party,” *Journal of British Studies*, XXI (1981), 106–22.

[35] Mill’s hostility to the party environment of the Palmerstonian ascendancy was profound. On the change at the top from Derby to Palmerston in June of 1859 Mill wrote: “I see no prospect of anything but mischief from the change of ministry. . . . The new cabinet will never be able to agree on anything but the well worn useless shibboleths of Whig mitigated democracy. . . . The Liberals, by refusing to take the [Reform] bill of the late government as the foundation for theirs, have given redoubled force to the mischievous custom almost universal in Parliament, that whatever one party brings forward, the other is sure to oppose. . . . All parties seem to have joined in working the vices and weak points of popular representation for their miserably low selfish ends, instead of uniting to free representative institutions from the mischief and discredit of them.” (Letter to Thomas Hare, *LL, CW*, XV, 626–7 [17, June, 1859].) Of the parliamentary politics of the late 1850s Norman Gash has said: “Majorities in divisions were composed to a large extent of men to whom the matter in dispute was less important than the result. Factional votes were justified by disingenuous arguments in support of dishonest resolutions.” (*Aristocracy and People: Britain, 1815–1865* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979], 266.)

[36] “Mr. Mill’s Address to the Electors of Westminster,” in *Historical Essays*, ed. Norman St. John Stevas, *Collected Works of Walter Bagehot*, III-IV (London: The Economist, 1968), III, 541–6.

[37] Letter to Beal, *LL, CW*, XVI, 1032 (17 Apr., 1865).

[38] *Ibid.*, 1034.

[39] Letter to Chadwick, *ibid.*, XV, 654–5 (20 Dec., 1859).

[40] *A*, 275–6.

[41] John Vincent, *The Formation of the Liberal Party, 1857–1868* (London: Constable, 1966), 158–61.

[42] In June of 1865 *Blackwood’s Magazine* observed that Palmerston “has long arrived at the conviction that after him will come chaos; and as far as his own party is concerned, we believe

him to be right. . . . [I]t is certain that to the future he looks forward with an alarm which he scarcely takes the trouble to disguise, and that his great bugbear of all is the almost certain advance of democracy.” (G.R. Gleig, “The Government and the Budget,” *Blackwood’s Magazine*, CXVII [June 1865], 754.)

[43] See Richard Shannon, *Gladstone, I, 1809–1865* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1982), 336–7, 358, 359, and Chaps. vii and viii, *passim*.

[44] To make matters worse, Gladstone had recently descended from the rarefied atmosphere of Oxford University, where he had been defeated in 1865, into South Lancashire, a pit of popular politics.

[45] *A*, 275.

[46] *Ibid.*, 276.

[47] *LL, CW, XVI*, 1197 (22 Aug., 1866). Mill admitted to Gomperz doubts concerning the value “of chipping off little bits of one’s thought, of a size to be swallowed by a set of diminutive practical politicians incapable of digesting them” (*ibid.*, 1196).

[48] Letter to Arnold Ruge, *ibid.*, 1234 (7 Feb., 1867).

[49] Letter to Kyllman, *ibid.*, 998 (15 Feb., 1865).

[50] *Ibid.*, 997 (15 Feb., 1865).

[51] *Ibid.*, 1129 (29 Dec., 1865).

[52] *Ibid.*, 1138–9 (11 Jan., 1866).

[53] For the cabinet’s decision not to take up redistribution, see Maurice Cowling, *1867: Disraeli, Gladstone and Revolution: The Passing of the Second Reform Bill* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 99–100. After indicating in March that it would offer a Seats Bill only after the second reading of the Franchise Bill, the government introduced the measure on 7 May. On 31 May Mill spoke on this Bill and briefly argued the case for personal representation. He did not oppose Gladstone’s redistribution scheme.

[54] Gladstone’s diary entry for 13 April includes: “Reform Debate. Mill admirable.” (*Gladstone Diaries*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew, Vol. VI: *1861–1868* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978], 430.)

[55] A rating value of seven pounds was approximately equivalent to an eight-pound rental value. The intent of the amendment was to restrict the extent of working-class enfranchisement. Mill’s prediction that the Bill would be “carried by increasing instead of diminishing majorities” proved mistaken (57).

[56] Kate Amberley recorded in her journal on 23 June a conversation with Gladstone. “I told him that Mill was so grieved at the Govt. going out, and said that . . . he had never hoped to be under a leader with whom he could feel so much sympathy and respect as he did for Gladstone, and Gladstone answered ‘Poor fellow, he has all through been most kind and indulgent to me’ ” (*Amberley Papers*, I, 516).

[57] To David Urquhart Mill wrote: “I doubt not that they would be corrupted like other classes by becoming the predominant power in the country, though probably in a less degree because in a multitude the general feelings of human nature are usually more powerful & class feeling less so than in a small body. But I do not want to make them predominant.” (*LL, CW, XVI*, 1209 [26 Oct., 1866].)

[58] For a discussion of Hare’s scheme in relation to Mill’s preoccupations with participation and competence, see Dennis F. Thompson, *John Stuart Mill and Representative Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 102–12.

[59] *LL, CW, XVI*, 1137 (6 Jan., 1866).

[60] For the public agitation, see Cowling, *1867*, 242–86; Frances Elma Gillespie, *Labor and Politics in England, 1850–1867* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1927), 235–88; and Royden Harrison, *Before the Socialists: Studies in Labour and Politics, 1861–1881* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), 78–136. Both the Union and the League had endorsed Gladstone’s Reform Bill.

[61] See Grey’s speech of 19 July, 1866: *Parliamentary Debates [PD]*, 3rd ser., Vol. 184, cols. 1074–5.

[62] *Ibid.*, 1073–4.

[63] Henry Broadhurst, who was present, gives a useful account of the riots in his autobiography, *The Story of His Life from a Stonemason’s Bench to the Treasury Bench* (London: Hutchinson, 1901), 33–40; see also the full report in the *Daily News*, 24 July, 1866, 5.

[64] Matthew Arnold’s linking of Mill and Jacobinism in *Culture and Anarchy* derived at least in part from Arnold’s hostile response to the Hyde Park riots and Mill’s defence of the Reform League. See *Culture and Anarchy with Friendship’s Garland and Some Literary Essays*, ed. R.H. Super, *Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, V (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965), 111, 132–3.

[65] *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 184, cols. 1412–14.

[66] *A*, 278–9.

[67] Evelyn L. Pugh, “J.S. Mill’s *Autobiography* and the Hyde Park Riots,” *Research Studies*, L (Mar. 1982), 1–20. Pugh rightly emphasizes the central role Mill played in killing the 1867 government bill to prohibit public meetings in Royal Parks.

[68] Mill wrote to Fawcett: “One of the most important consequences of giving a share in the government to the working classes, is that there will then be some members of the House with whom it will no longer be an axiom that human society exists for the sake of property in land—a grovelling superstition which is still in full force among the higher classes” (*LL, CW, XVI*, 1130 [1 Jan., 1866]).

[69] For a stimulating discussion of Bright, Mill, and the emergence of the Gladstonian Liberal party, see Vincent, *Formation of the Liberal Party*, 149–211.

[70] Letter to [George Howell?], *LL, CW, XVII*, 2010–11 (22 July, 1865).

[71] Letter to Edmond Beales, *ibid.*, XVI, 1186 (26 July, 1866).

[72] See 133–4, and letter to George Jacob Holyoake, *LL, CW*, XVI, 1242–3 (16 Feb., 1867).

[73] Letter to Beales, *ibid.*, 1291–2 (22 July, 1867).

[74] Quoted in Gillespie, *Labor and Politics*, 284.

[75] *Morning Star*, 28 Feb., 1867, 2.

[76] What conditions could justify revolution? “One is personal oppression & tyranny & consequent personal suffering of such intensity that to put an immediate stop to them is worth almost any amount of present evil & future danger. The other is when either the system of government does not permit the redress of grievances to be sought by peaceable & legal means, or when those means have been perseveringly exerted to the utmost for a long series of years, & their inefficacy has been demonstrated by experiment.” (Letter to W.R. Cremer, *LL, CW*, XVI, 1248 [1 Mar., 1867].)

[77] *Ibid.*, 1247–8.

[78] There were approximately 486,000 compound householders in parliamentary boroughs. The system spared the occupier the bother of putting aside money to meet his quarterly rating obligations. What was in it for the landlord and local authority? “A deduction of twenty or twenty-five per cent was allowed when the rate was compounded, so that the owner of fifty or a hundred small houses derived no small profit by calling on his tenants to pay the full rate in their rent, while he had a discount in paying it over to the parish. Naturally it was convenient for the parish to be saved the trouble of collecting from the small occupiers.” (Charles Seymour, *Electoral Reform in England and Wales: The Development and Operation of the Parliamentary Franchise, 1832–1885* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915], 149.)

[79] “The bill as it went into committee included no lodger franchise. . . . The Act enfranchised all £10 lodgers in parliamentary boroughs. The county occupation franchise in the bill began at £15 p.a. In the Act it was lowered to £12 and supplemented by a £5 franchise for copyholders. The period of qualifying residence was two years in the bill, one in the Act. The provision to allow voters to vote by voting papers, which was included in the bill, was removed by the time it was passed.” (Cowling, *1867*, 223.)

[80] Gladstone Diaries, VI, 513.

[81] For the division, see *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 186, col. 1700 (12 Apr., 1867).

[82] Cowling, *1867*, 269–71.

[83] *Labor and Politics*, 278n.

[84] *1867*, 272.

[85] In the end the 1867 Act abolished composition in parliamentary boroughs. The confusion and inconvenience caused by the change, however, led to the passage in 1869 of a measure

(32 & 33 Victoria, c. 41) that reinstated composition and also provided that compound occupiers have their names recorded in the rate-book.

[86] *A*, 284.

[87] Mill put this motion on 17 July; see No. 25.

[88] *LL, CW*, XVI, 1175 (9 June, 1866).

[89] *A*, 285.

[90] *LL, CW*, XVI, 1215 (18 Nov., 1866).

[91] See *A*, 280–2; Bernard Semmel, *The Governor Eyre Controversy* (London: Macgibbon and Lee, 1962), esp. Chap. iii; Lynn Zastoupil, “Moral Government: J.S. Mill on Ireland,” *Historical Journal*, XXVI (1983), 707–17.

[92] For a good general treatment of the Jamaican background, see W.P. Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age: South Africa, New Zealand, and the West Indies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 399–432.

[93] To William Fraser Rae, *LL, CW*, XVI, 1126 (14 Dec., 1865). Two weeks later he observed to Henry Fawcett: “The two great topics of the year will be Jamaica and Reform, and there will be an immensity to be said and done on both subjects” (*ibid.*, 1131 [1 Jan., 1866]).

[94] For a valuable discussion of the governmental response to the Eyre difficulties, see B.A. Knox, “The British Government and the Governor Eyre Controversy, 1865–1875,” *Historical Journal*, XIX (1976), 877–900.

[95] Among its other findings the Commission concluded that “the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent”; “the floggings were reckless, and at Bath positively barbarous”; “the burning of 1,000 houses was wanton and cruel.” For these findings, see “Report of the Jamaica Royal Commission,” *PP*, 1866, XXX, 489–531.

[96] If Mill assumed that Gladstone was deeply disturbed by what had occurred in Jamaica he was right. Knox has noted that “Gladstone leaned towards a sterner view of Eyre’s conduct than did his colleagues” (“The British Government and the Governor Eyre Controversy,” 880).

[97] See Semmel, *Governor Eyre Controversy*, 68–9.

[98] “Jamaica Documents,” in *Essays on Equality, Law, and Education, CW*, XXI (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 423.

[99] For a report of the meeting at which he was elected, see *The Times*, 10 July, 1866, 5.

[100] Disraeli insisted that Mill state in full each of the questions, into which were built allegations the justification of which Mill seemed to take for granted. Disraeli’s masterful response charged Mill with having assumed guilt where none had yet been legally established. He also made it clear that the government had no intention of taking any further action against Eyre. For Disraeli’s speech of 19 July, 1866, see *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 184, cols. 1064–9.



[101] The first of Buxton's resolutions, which the government agreed to accept on the understanding that he would withdraw the other three, deplored the excessive punishments inflicted in Jamaica. The second asked that the conduct of military, naval, and colonial officers responsible for such excesses "be inquired into with a view to their punishment." The third concerned compensation for victims or their families, and the last the treatment of Jamaicans held in connection with the disturbances. For the motion and the debate, see *ibid.*, cols. 1763–1840. In the *Autobiography* Mill says that his Jamaica speech "is that which I should probably select as the best of my speeches in Parliament" (A, 281).

[102] No government, Liberal or Tory, would have been prepared to act upon the recommendations of the Jamaica Committee. No criminal convictions followed from the prosecutions launched by the Committee. As Buxton had feared, the policy pushed by Mill aroused sympathy for Eyre, led to the formation of the Eyre Defence Committee, and engendered a good deal of hostility towards members of the Jamaica Committee, Mill included. He had no regrets, observing in the *Autobiography*, "we had given an emphatic warning to those who might be tempted to similar guilt hereafter, that though they might escape the actual sentence of a criminal tribunal, they were not safe against being put to some trouble and expense in order to avoid it. Colonial Governors and other persons in authority will have a considerable motive to stop short of such extremities in future." (*Ibid.*, 282.)

[103] Particular exception, it seems, was taken to the following: "Every foreigner, every continental writer, would believe for many years to come that Ireland was a country constantly on the brink of revolution, held down by an alien nationality, and kept in subjection by brute force" (53). Mill alludes to the occasion in the *Autobiography*. "I did no more than the general opinion of England now admits to have been just; but the anger against Fenianism was then in all its freshness; any attack on what Fenians attacked was looked upon as an apology for them; and I was so unfavourably received by the House, that more than one of my friends advised me (and my own judgment agreed with the advice) to wait, before speaking again, for the favourable opportunity that would be given by the first great debate on the Reform Bill" (A, 277). The third reading of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Bill passed the House of Commons by a vote of 354 to 6. Mill abstained.

Among those urging Mill, after the habeas corpus debate, to hold his tongue until the second reading of the Reform Bill was J.A. Roebuck. No longer the friend he had once been, Roebuck "did not presume to address him directly," but instead went through Chadwick. Roebuck, always ready to speak his mind, plainly stated that the debate on the Reform Bill should have been the occasion for Mill's "debut." Whatever mistakes Mill might have made in February, the opportunity to establish himself as a force in the House had not been conclusively lost. All would depend on his Reform Bill speech. "Having determined what to say, he ought to plant himself steadily on his feet, give the right pitch & tone of voice, then earnestly and with perfect simplicity, make his opening statement. The House will be anxious to hear him—Let him shew, that he is no mere puppet, that he is no man's follower—but one possessed of strong opinions—well thought opinions—and really anxious to have those opinions fairly & honestly laid before his country. . . . Let

him give all the body he can to his voice. He should above all things be manly, quiet [?], self-possessed & earnest. . . . I know that he is able to teach the House, but he must not appear to be a teacher. He ought to seem merely desirous of laying his whole heart before the House, honestly, fearlessly & in all sincerity. If he follows these badly expressed counsels, he will succeed.” (9 Mar., 1866, Mill Collection, Yale University Library.)

That Roebuck felt such advice was called for suggests that Mill had gotten off to a shaky start. The word going around in late February of 1866, according to William White, Door-Keeper of the House of Commons, was “failure.” From this judgment White dissented. “To ascertain whether a man is a failure we must ascertain what he aims at. Mr. Mill never thought to startle and dazzle the House by his oratory, as Disraeli did when he first rose to speak. Mr. Mill has no oratorical gifts, and he knows it. Nor can he be called a rhetorician. He is a close reasoner, and addresses himself directly to our reasoning powers; and though he has great command of language, as all his hearers know, he never condescends to deck out his arguments in rhetorical finery to catch applause. His object is to convey his thoughts directly to the hearer’s mind, and to do this he uses the clearest medium—not coloured glass, but the best polished plate, because through that objects may be best seen. . . . What Mr. Mill intended to do was to reason calmly with his opponents, and this he succeeded in doing. . . . He has not a powerful voice, but then it is highly pitched and very clear; and this class of voice goes much further than one of lower tone—as the ear-piercing fife is heard at a greater distance than the blatant trombone. The giant, then, is not a failure; no, except in the eyes of the pigmies.” (William White, *The Inner Life of the House of Commons*, 2 vols. [1897] [Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1970], II, 31–3.)

White and Roebuck agreed on the quality and impact of Mill’s Reform Bill speech on 13 April. The former confessed that it was not in his power to give “an adequate description of Mr. Mill’s great reform speech.” He considered it “something entirely new in the debates of the House. Search Hansard from the time that record first began, and you will find nothing like it for purity of style and closeness of reasoning; and, secondly, as we venture to think, nothing like it for the effect it produced upon the House. . . . When Mr. Mill sat down the House cleared. As the Liberal members passed the gangway, not a few stepped out of their way to thank Mr. Mill.” (*Ibid.*, 42–3.) Roebuck was no less impressed. Writing to Chadwick on the day after Mill’s speech, he described it as “the outpouring of a great, honest, yet modest mind; the vigorous expression of well-considered & accurate thought.” The speech, “an epoch in parliamentary oratory,” had “settled for sure the position Mill is to hold in the House & I believe lays open to him the highest offices in the administration of the country” (14 Apr., 1866, Mill Collection, Yale University Library).

[104] See *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 183, cols. 214–22.

[105] *A*, 279.

[106] The government hoped the Bill would encourage improvements and discourage evictions.

[107] *A*, 279. For the background to Mill's involvement with the Irish land question, see T.A. Boylan and T.P. Foley, "John Elliot Cairnes, John Stuart Mill and Ireland: Some Problems for Political Economy," *Hermathena*, CXXXV (1983), 96–119; Bruce L. Kinzer, "J.S. Mill and Irish Land: A Reassessment," *Historical Journal*, XXVII (1984), 111–27; E.D. Steele, "J.S. Mill and the Irish Question: The Principles of Political Economy, 1848–1865," *ibid.*, XIII (1970), 216–36; and Zastoupil, "Moral Government."

[108] The constraints affecting Mill at this time were evident in connection with another dimension of the Irish question that deeply concerned him: Irish universities. Mill was anxious to see preserved the non-denominational integrity of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland that together made up the Queen's University. Every encouragement should be given to bringing "youths of different religions to live together in colleges" (letter to Cairnes, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1134 [6 Jan., 1866]). Just before leaving office Russell's government issued a supplemental charter to the Queen's University, which was empowered to set matriculation examinations independent of those held at the Queen's Colleges and to award degrees to suitably qualified candidates who had not studied in any of those Colleges. Mill's unhappiness at this development was pronounced. Writing to Cairnes on 3 July he declared: "We, who were holding back on account of the Reform Bill, certainly were led to expect a further notice [before the issuing of the supplemental charter]: otherwise we should have brought the matter before the House at once, which would have been very disagreeable to the Govt." (*ibid.*, 1178). Sir Robert Peel, a member of the Queen's University Senate and son of the Prime Minister who had established the Queen's Colleges, was determined to fight the implementation of the supplemental charter. Mill was ready to do what he could to support Peel's effort but he did not want to be "the prominent person in a move which is very likely to break up the alliance between the Irish Catholics and the English Liberals, and perhaps keep the Tories in office for years" (*ibid.*, 1184 [15 July, 1866]). See Bruce L. Kinzer, "John Stuart Mill and the Irish University Question," *Victorian Studies*, XXXI (1987), 59–77.

[109] *England and Ireland*, in *Essays on England, Ireland, and the Empire*, *CW*, VI (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 505–32. For differing perspectives on the significance of *England and Ireland*, see E.D. Steele, "J.S. Mill and the Irish Question: Reform and the Integrity of the Empire, 1865–1870," *Historical Journal*, XIII (1970), 419–50; and Kinzer, "J.S. Mill and Irish Land," 121–7.

[110] Steele, "Reform and the Integrity of the Empire," 437–48.

[111] *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1373 (10 Mar., 1868).

[112] For the making of the 1870 Irish Land Act, see E.D. Steele's excellent study, *Irish Land and British Politics: Tenant-Right and Nationality, 1865–70* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

[113] *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1373 (10 Mar., 1868).

[114] The Conservative government had actually introduced a bill on the subject in 1867, which had been referred to a select committee of the House. It was, however, withdrawn on 29

July, and on 16 August Disraeli informed the House of the government's intention to deal with the matter early in the following session. See *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 189, col. 1606.

[115] *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1325 (4 Nov., 1867).

[116] In February of 1864 Christie had read a paper, "Suggestions for an Organization for the Restraint of Corruption at Elections" before the Jurisprudence Department of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science. Less than two months later Mill attended a meeting of the Law Amendment Society, at which Christie's paper "Corruption at Elections" was discussed. For Mill's brief remarks on this occasion, see No. 3.

[117] Letter to William Dougal Christie, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1331 (20 Nov., 1867).

[118] *Ibid.*, 1337 (28 Dec., 1867).

[119] *Ibid.*, 1348 (8 Jan., 1868).

[120] *Ibid.*, 1353.

[121] Cornelius O'Leary provides a good account of the Bill and its passage in *The Elimination of Corrupt Practices in British Elections, 1868–1911* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 27–43.

[122] The Act provided that the judges of each of the three superior courts at Westminster annually select one of their members to try election petitions.

[123] Mill's correspondence during the first half of 1868 testifies to his vigilance on behalf of the cause. See his letters to Christie: *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1381–2 (31 Mar.), 1383–4 (3 Apr.), 1397 (8 May), 1398 (11 May), 1399–1400 (20 May), 1403 (25 May), 1409 (6 June), and 1425 (27 July).

[124] *CW*, XIX, 320, 496. Henry Fawcett's amendment for placing official election expenses on the rates was actually carried in a small House by a vote of 84 to 76. On the third reading, however, the government managed to reverse that decision, defeating Fawcett's amendment 102 to 91.

[125] *A*, 283–4.

[126] Quoted in O'Leary, *Elimination of Corrupt Practices*, 39n-40n.

[127] Quoted *ibid.*, 38.

[128] *CW*, XIX, 497–8.

[129] Letter to Austin Holyoake, *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1433 (28 Aug., 1868).

[130] *Ibid.*, 1434–5 (12 Sept., 1868).

[131] Letter to Thomas Beggs, *ibid.*, 1449–50 (27 Sept., 1868).

[132] Letter to Samuel Warren Burton, *ibid.*, 1452.

[133] See *The Times*, 21 Oct., 1868, 9. On 29 October Mill would admit to Cairnes that he was "more attacked for helping Chadwick against Bouverie . . . than even for subscribing to

Bradlaugh; though the latter proceeding is the more likely of the two to alienate voters in Westminster" (*LL, CW, XVI, 1465*).

[134] *The Times*, 16 Oct., 1868, 10.

[135] *LL, CW, XVI, 1453–4; The Times*, 16 Oct., 1868, 10.

[136] *The Times*, 16 Oct., 1868, 10.

[137] *LL, CW, XVI, 1460–4; The Times*, 22 Oct., 1868, 3.

[138] See his letter to Cairnes, *LL, CW, XVI, 1465* (29 Oct., 1868).

[139] Laudatory remarks on Gladstone were a commonplace in the election speeches of Liberal candidates, and Mill certainly was not remiss in this respect. Bagehot observes: "Mr. Gladstone's personal popularity was such as has not been seen since the time of Mr. Pitt, and such as may never be seen again. . . . A bad speaker is said to have been asked how he got on as a candidate. 'Oh,' he answered, 'when I do not know what to say, I say "Gladstone," and then they are sure to cheer, and I have time to think' " (Introduction to 2nd ed. of *The English Constitution, Works*, V, 171).

[140] Letter to Frederick Bates, *LL, CW, XVI, 1483*.

[141] Helen Taylor to Mill, Mill-Taylor Collection, British Library of Political and Economic Science, Vol. LIII (12 Nov., 1868).

[142] See Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 107–8. The Hambleden Papers (W.H. Smith and Son, London) for these years supply abundant evidence of the buildup of a formidable Tory machine in Westminster under Smith's leadership.

[143] Mill's supporters filed a petition against Smith's return, claiming that the Smith campaign had bought votes. The petition was heard by Baron Martin, who ruled that although the bribing of voters seemed to figure among the practices of the London and Westminster Constitutional Association, Smith could not be held responsible for the conduct of this "independent agency." Smith's election stood. See O'Leary, *Elimination of Corrupt Practices*, 50–1.

[144] See John Biddulph Martin, "The Elections of 1868 and 1874," *Royal Statistical Society Journal*, XXXVII (1874), 197. The combined total of votes for the two Liberal candidates at Westminster in 1874 was only 8184; the two Tories polled 18,052 between them.

[145] Hugh Lupus Grosvenor; see xxx above.

[146] "Captain Grosvenor . . . has shewn himself to be an able and faithful representative, whom his constituents might well have chosen from his personal merits and ability alone" (Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 80).

[147] See letter to W.R. Cremer, *LL, CW, XVI, 1485* (10 Nov., 1868).

[148] For a valuable study of the university liberals, see Christopher Harvie, *The Lights of Liberalism: University Liberals and the Challenge of Democracy* (London: Penguin, 1976).

[149] *LL, CW, XVI*, 1493 (28 Nov., 1868).

[150] The leading item on Mill's list of policy changes would probably have been the land question, Irish and English. For Mill's relation to this subject, see David Martin, *John Stuart Mill and the Land Question* (Hull: University of Hull Publications, 1981).

[151] *LL, CW, XVI*, 1479 (5 Nov., 1868).

[152] Letter to R.C. Madge (Secretary of the Chelsea Working Men's Parliamentary Electoral Association), *ibid.*, 1514 (7 Dec., 1868).

[153] *Ibid.*, XVII, 1697 (19 Feb., 1870).

[154] In January of 1869 Mill wrote that he had "never felt more uncertainty about the immediate future of politics" (part of a passage deleted from a letter to W.T. Thornton, *ibid.*, 1548 [16 Jan., 1869]). Two months later he admitted to Fawcett that he had "considerable difficulty in judging . . . of any question of political tactics, during the present transitional state of politics" (*ibid.*, 1579 [22 Mar., 1869]).

[155] Whereas Mill was central in initiating the organized movements for women's suffrage and land reform, his taking up of the education question was prompted by the government's 1870 Education Bill. Although he spoke on education, he did not publish material on the subject during these years, as he did on the other two. *The Subjection of Women* appeared in print in 1869. Relevant to his association with the land question in this period are two essays written for the *Fortnightly Review*, "Professor Leslie on the Land Question," n.s., VII (1870), 641–54 (in *Essays on Economics and Society, CW, IV-V* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967], V, 669–85); "Mr. Maine on Village Communities," n.s., IX (1871), 543–56; the 1871 *Programme of the Land Tenure Reform Association, with an Explanatory Statement by John Stuart Mill* (in *CW, V*, 687–95); and three contributions to the *Examiner* in 1873: "Advice to Land Reformers," 4 Jan., 1–2; "Should Public Bodies Be Required to Sell Their Lands?" 11 Jan., 29–30; "The Right of Property in Land," 19 July, 725–8 (in *Newspaper Writings*, ed. Ann P. and John M. Robson, *CW, XXII-XXV* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986], XXV, 1227–43).

[156] For a stimulating assessment of the general controversy over land reform and its political significance, see Harold Perkin, "Land Reform and Class Conflict in Victorian Britain," in his *The Structured Crowd: Essays in English Social History* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1981), 100–35. For Mill in particular, see Martin, *John Stuart Mill and the Land Question*, and Samuel Hollander, *The Economics of John Stuart Mill*, 2 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), II, 833–55.

[157] *The Times*, 10 May, 1873, 5.

[158] Although a theory of authority is implicit in much that Mill wrote, he never furnished an extensive or systematic treatment of the issue. For a valuable exploration of the problem, see Richard B. Friedman, "An Introduction to Mill's Theory of Authority," in *Mill: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. J.B. Schneewind (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 379–425.



## VOLUME XXX - WRITINGS ON INDIA. INTRODUCTION BY MARTIN MOIR

### SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, XXX - Writings on India*, ed. John M. Robson, Martin Moir, and Zawahir Moir (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1990). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/264/21794>>.

### INTRODUCTION BY MARTIN MOIR

In May 1823, my professional occupation and status for the next thirty-five years of my life, were decided by my father's obtaining for me an appointment from the East India Company, in the office of the Examiner of India Correspondence, immediately under himself. I was appointed in the usual manner, at the bottom of the list of clerks, to rise, at least in the first instance, by seniority; but with the understanding, that I should be employed from the beginning in preparing drafts of despatches, and be thus trained up as a successor to those who then filled the higher departments of the office. My drafts of course required, for some time, much revision from my immediate superiors, but I soon became well acquainted with the business, and by my father's instructions and the general growth of my own powers, I was in a few years qualified to be, and practically was, the chief conductor of the correspondence with India in one of the leading departments, that of the Native States. This continued to be my official duty until I was appointed Examiner, only two years before the time when the abolition of the East India Company as a political body determined my retirement.<sup>1</sup>

Thus in his *Autobiography* John Stuart Mill tersely and modestly sums up his long period of employment in the Examiner's Office of the East India Company. To this factual resumé he later adds a few remarks on the increase in his official responsibilities that took place towards the end of his career.<sup>2</sup> More tantalizingly, he also includes some brief observations on the benefits and occasional limitations of his employment. For example, as a "theoretical reformer of the opinions and the institutions of his time," he appreciated the useful insight into "the practical conduct of public affairs" which his Company experience brought him. On a more personal level, he noted that the experience also taught him how best to present his own views to "persons unlike" himself, how to compromise on non-essential matters, and—perhaps most significant for his personal happiness—how to accept with equanimity occasional defeats at the hands of his superiors.<sup>3</sup>

As for the interest and demands of his Company work, and its general place in his life, he concluded that his duties "were sufficiently intellectual not to be a distasteful drudgery, without being such as to cause any strain upon the mental powers of a person used to abstract thought,



or to the labour of careful literary composition.”<sup>4</sup> And in a passage omitted from the published text of his *Autobiography* at the instance of his wife, Harriet, he pointed more frankly to the real advantages of his official duties: “While they precluded all uneasiness about the means of subsistence, they occupied fewer hours of the day than almost any business or profession, they had nothing in them to produce anxiety, or to keep the mind intent on them at any time but when directly engaged in them.”<sup>5</sup> No doubt he regretted certain limitations attached to his position—his short period of annual leave (only four weeks) and the fact that he was virtually prevented from playing a part in public life. But these restrictions were acceptable when set against the advantages of an employment which guaranteed his financial security and left him with sufficient time and energy for his “private intellectual pursuits.”<sup>6</sup>

The fact that Mill offers this short and low-key account of his East India Company activities, apparently relegating them to the level of a useful but essentially subordinate part of his intellectual life, has presented his modern interpreters with a whole range of problems. Most immediately, how could someone so deeply committed to the understanding and betterment of human society, apparently fail to appreciate the importance and interest of his own central position in the formulation and review of the East India Company’s policies in South Asia? Was he really comparatively detached from his official duties, as his *Autobiography* suggests, or was he more committed than he chose to admit? Alternatively, was his position in the Examiner’s Office perhaps less influential than might at first sight appear, placing him primarily in the position of a servant of the Company charged with the preparation of its despatches? Moreover, any exploration of the problem of Mill’s East India Company role leads imperceptibly to the more basic and, to the post-colonial sensibility, more puzzling issues of how to connect Mill the administrator with Mill the political philosopher. How, for instance, did the author of *On Liberty* and *Representative Government* view the rights and best interests of the Indian subjects of the East India Company?

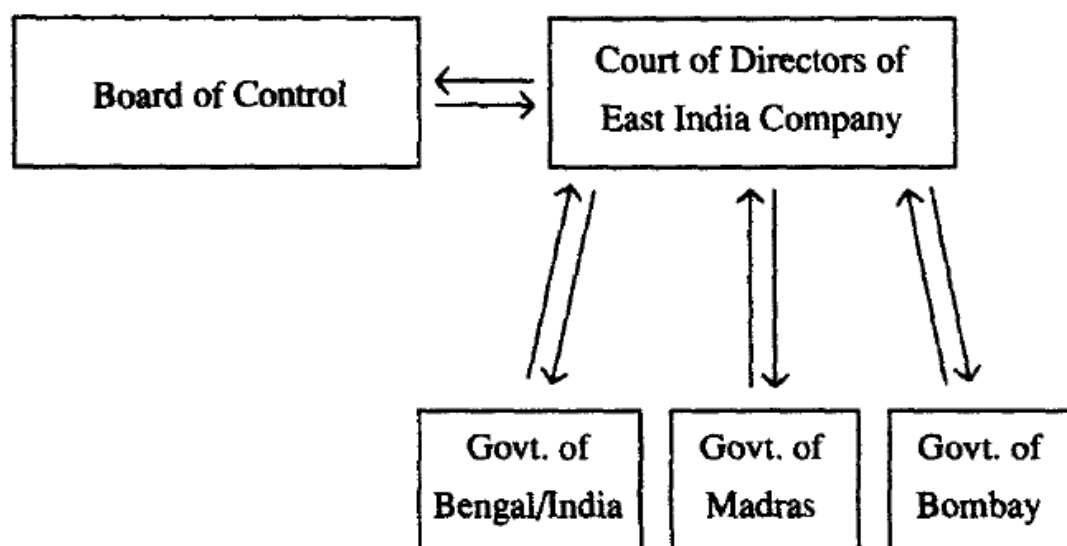
Though definitive answers to all such enquiries and conundrums are unlikely to be found, one can at least reduce some of the mystery by reviewing and assessing the surviving evidence for Mill’s Company career in considerably more detail than his *Autobiography* provides.

## THE HOME GOVERNMENT OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY<sup>7</sup>

The East India Company that Mill joined in 1823 occupied a central position in the rather elaborate system for the home government of British India. Certain features of this system were later much admired and defended by Mill as conducive to the good government of India. But in 1823 it is likely that he was more struck by its administrative complications than by its latent political virtues. The principal features of the Company’s organization within the wider administrative framework, as Mill first experienced them, can best be represented by a diagram (Table 1).

TABLE 1

**TABLE 1**



The East India Company was immediately responsible for the administration of British territories in India and elsewhere but was itself subject to close government supervision through the Board of Control. The executive part of the Company, the Court of Directors, consisted of twenty-four directors elected by the Company's larger share-holders or proprietors and broadly representative of the main sectional interests in the Company's affairs (e.g., the City of London, "ex-Indian" administrators, etc.). Every year the Company's directors appointed a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman (the "Chairs") as their leading spokesmen; they also assigned themselves to a number of standing committees, each responsible to the Court as a whole for the management of a distinct aspect of the Company's activities. When the young Mill first joined the Company there were thirteen main committees (the most important of which were concerned with correspondence, buying and warehouses, and shipping) apart from the special statutory Secret Committee, discussed below. The Court and its committees were also assisted in their transaction of business by a large number of officials and departments led by the Company's Secretary and the Examiner of Indian Correspondence. Most of the Company's formal decision-making took place at the meetings of the Court of Directors, usually held about twice a week. The Court of Proprietors' policy role was by this period somewhat circumscribed, being largely confined in its expression to the quarterly general meetings and occasional specially convened meetings.

During this period the Company still traded extensively with India and China, etc., but it had already lost its monopoly rights over the Indian trade in 1813 and was soon to be stripped of all its commercial functions through the Charter Act of 1833. However, while the Company's trading operations gradually decreased, the importance of its political and administrative responsi-

bilities for the government of vast territories in South Asia continued to expand and develop. Essentially, the Company's control of these territories was maintained through an immensely detailed and regular correspondence with the leading administrative bodies established in the Indian Sub-continent—the Governor-General and Council at Calcutta and the Governors and Councils at Bombay and Madras.

In the exercise of its growing political responsibilities the East India Company was, as has already been indicated, subject to close government scrutiny and direction through the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, usually known simply as the Board of Control, which had been established under Pitt's India Act of 1784. Though technically still composed of a group of paid and unpaid official commissioners, the Board was in practice dominated by its President—the first named of its commissioners. Supported by a staff of secretaries and departmental clerks, the President upheld the Board's statutory powers of control over the Company by means of a well-established bureaucratic system. According to this system, the Company was obliged to supply the Board with copies of all its incoming Indian letters and to submit all its drafts of outgoing despatches for the Board's approval and possible alteration before issue. The Board was further empowered to prepare and send its own secret instructions to India on matters of war, peace, and diplomacy through the medium of the special Secret Committee of the Court of Directors (consisting of the two Chairs plus a senior director); and also to call upon the Court to prepare and submit for approval despatches on any subjects connected with the civil and military government of the Indian territories.

Within this complex system of dual government it will be evident that the Office of the Examiner of Indian Correspondence, in which so many of the Company's despatches were prepared, necessarily occupied a position of central importance. Not only had the despatches drafted by the Examiner and his Assistants to satisfy the critical scrutiny of the Board of Control; they also had ultimately to constitute authoritative statements of policy and principles for the guidance of the governing bodies in India. Given the exceptional nature of these duties, it is not surprising that the Company's directors began to keep a fairly close watch over the working of the Office during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Two particular aspects were perceived as requiring attention. In the first place there was the need to ensure that the department had enough staff to keep pace with the ever-increasing size of the Indian correspondence and also to see that the correspondence itself was clearly and efficiently divided up among the available staff. Secondly, both the Court of Directors and the Board of Control became gradually more aware of the importance of selecting and retaining men of sufficient ability to maintain the quality of the Indian correspondence as its character inevitably became more complex and demanding.<sup>8</sup>

In so far as the staffing aspect was concerned, the directors were initially rather slow in recognizing the manpower needs of the Examiner's Office. In fact until 1804 the Examiner had to cope with virtually the whole of the correspondence single-handedly, drafting despatches in most of the Office's departmental branches, viz., Public, Revenue, Military, Judicial, and Political, besides acting as Clerk to the Company's Secret Committee (see above). Thereafter, during the next

five years, a measure of relief was afforded by transferring the Military correspondence to the Auditor (and later to a new Military Secretary) and by appointing two or three Assistants to the Examiner to take charge of drafting the Judicial, Public, and Revenue despatches. Thus in the years immediately preceding Mill's appointment much of the basic structure of the department had gradually been reshaped to include the Examiner, two or three Assistants, plus a staff of about a dozen clerks to perform the more routine duties.

More radical than this modest expansion of the Examiner's immediate staff were the directors' new arrangements for appointing outsiders to the Assistants' posts. These experiments involved official recognition that the traditional Company practice of filling vacancies by promoting clerks in strict order of seniority could not always be counted on to produce a man of the right calibre to perform the intellectual activities required. The more perceptive directors gradually persuaded their colleagues that in such circumstances it was better to disappoint the clerks by looking outside the Company for more suitable candidates, "sooner than submit to so serious an evil as that of having momentous business imperfectly performed."<sup>9</sup> In this way, from 1809 onwards, several talented outsiders were brought in to fill senior vacancies in the Office, including William McCulloch who, having been recruited in 1809 as an Assistant, was promoted to the position of Examiner in 1817—a post which he continued to hold when John Stuart Mill entered the Office in 1823.<sup>10</sup>

However, undoubtedly the most spectacular experiment in this form of recruitment—and one that sets the scene for the younger Mill's arrival—took place in May 1819 when, to fill a number of vacancies that had arisen, the Court of Directors selected three outsiders as Assistants to the Examiner: James Mill, Thomas Love Peacock, and Edward Strachey. As to the mode of selection, it appears that the directors were sufficiently impressed by the elder Mill's recently published *History of British India* to waive further scrutiny of his qualifications. Indeed, Mill himself believed that he owed his appointment principally to his book. Somewhat similarly, Edward Strachey, with his considerable experience of judicial administration in India, was deemed well qualified for the work. Peacock, on the other hand, despite his literary reputation, was seen as more of an unknown quantity. He was therefore called upon to furnish evidence of his capacities to understand Indian administration, emerging triumphantly from this trial with a lucid survey of revenue policies entitled "Ryotwar and Zemindarry Settlements."

Once established in the Office, the three distinguished "outside examiners" were each allotted responsibility for the correspondence of a particular department, Strachey being placed first with the Judicial, followed by Mill with the Revenue, and Peacock with more miscellaneous duties—all the Assistants working under the supervision of the Examiner, William McCulloch. The more delicate question of determining their final order of seniority was left open for several years, and it was not until April 1823 that the Court of Directors finally grasped the nettle by appointing James Mill as Assistant Examiner, ranking immediately after McCulloch with an annual salary of £1200, leaving Strachey (with £1000) and Peacock (with £800) still classed as Assistants to the Examiner.<sup>11</sup> Clearly the elder Mill was now regarded as the most likely successor to the headship of the office (he eventually succeeded McCulloch in 1830), and his growing ascendancy was fur-

ther reflected in the appointment of his son as an additional junior clerk in the Examiner's Office on 21 May, 1823.

#### MILL'S APPOINTMENT AND APPRENTICESHIP WITH THE EAST INDIA COMPANY (1823-28)

Before exploring the wider significance and consequences of the appointment of John Stuart Mill as junior clerk in 1823—for Mill's father, for the East India Company, and for Mill himself—it is necessary to summarize the available documentary evidence concerning the nature and terms of the appointment itself. In the Company archives, the main outlines of the story as given in the Minutes and Reports of the Committee of Correspondence and the Minutes of the Court of Directors are simple enough. On 9 April, 1823, the Correspondence Committee briefly concluded that the business of the Examiner's Office “requires an additional Clerk,” and accordingly proposed the appointment of such a clerk with the further recommendation that the right to nominate to the new post should be given to the Chairman, James Pattison.<sup>12</sup> The Court agreed to these proposals on the same day, and it then appears that, with Pattison's support, the younger Mill formally petitioned the Court for the post (following the usual Company practice) and was duly appointed on 21 May, 1823.<sup>13</sup>

As regards the actual terms of his employment, Mill's own account in the *Autobiography*, quoted earlier, is fully borne out by the Company records and other sources. That is to say, his appointment as junior clerk was made subject to the “usual terms and conditions,” and he took his place at the lowest level in the clerical establishment of the Examiner's Office, with twelve clerks above him in seniority, above whom in turn stood the small élite group of Assistants to the Examiner now led by his father.<sup>14</sup> Equally, his appointment was subject to the normal Company regulations for junior clerks, which obliged him to serve for three years without salary, though modestly encouraged by a small annual gratuity of £30.<sup>15</sup> More interestingly, the Company records also precisely confirm the classic account given in his *Autobiography* of the unusual nature of his work during his first few years, i.e., that he was employed “from the beginning in preparing drafts of despatches” under the supervision of his father and his immediate superiors, and on the understanding that he would be “thus trained up as a successor to those who then filled the higher departments of the office.” Indeed, the Court Minutes for 2 March, 1825, almost exactly foreshadow his own later account of this process, explaining that it had proved possible to employ him “in preparing drafts of Despatches, instead of performing the duties usually assigned to persons of his standing” because of “the great pains bestowed on his education” as well as his own “acquirements which are far in advance of his age” (he was only seventeen—the minimum age for appointment—when he joined).<sup>16</sup> Thus the celebrated educational regime instituted by his father was acknowledged and endorsed by his employers.

For James Mill there was thus the dual satisfaction of securing his son's rather special employment at the same time as his own promotion to the level of Assistant Examiner, over and above Strachey and Peacock. Did he owe these successes solely to the good opinion of his own

conspicuous ability, industry, and eloquence which the Company's directors had by then formed? According to a rather strange tradition passed down through the family of Edward Strachey, which surfaced in a review of Alexander Bain's life of James Mill published in the *Spectator* in April 1882, there were indeed more sinister influences at work. Faced with the prospect that Edward Strachey would be recognized as his official superior on the completion of the agreed period of probation for the three new Assistants to the Examiner, James Mill, so the Strachey family darkly believed, had deliberately and successfully sought to undermine the position of his rival by insinuating to the Chairman that Strachey was insufficiently conciliatory in his dealings with the Board of Control. The Strachey family further suspected that, having secured by these means his own appointment as Assistant Examiner, the elder Mill went on—this time unsuccessfully—to try to secure Peacock's post for his son, whom he had brought into the Office "with singular adroitness."<sup>17</sup>

It is difficult to determine whether there was any factual basis at all for these suspicions. Certainly Mill's sister Harriet firmly denied the story in a letter to the *Spectator* which appeared some two months after the original review of Bain's book, though she admitted that by then it was very hard to find any reliable first-hand evidence about the issue.<sup>18</sup> Alexander Bain also concluded that there was no truth in the Strachey story. It may be added that the Company records have nothing concrete to say on the matter beyond confirming that Edward Strachey did indeed temporarily resign his post in 1823 in protest against what he considered his unfair supersession by Mill.<sup>19</sup>

Whatever the truth of the Strachey allegations, there can be no doubt that John Stuart Mill's work in the Examiner's Office soon won the support and approval of the Company directors. By March 1825—some eighteen months after he had taken up his new appointment—the Court not only recorded their special appreciation of his ability to draft despatches, in the terms quoted above, but also awarded him a gratuity of £100 in recognition of his past services, and arranged for his transfer into the newly formed Correspondence Branch of the Examiner's Office (see below).<sup>20</sup> In the following March he was again rewarded with another special gratuity, this time of £200,<sup>21</sup> and soon afterwards, in May 1826, after completing the usual three years' service without salary, he was formally appointed a salaried clerk of the Company with an initial remuneration of £100 per year.<sup>22</sup> A further special gratuity of £200 was granted to him in March 1827 for his "zeal and assiduity," in addition to his basic salary.<sup>23</sup> Finally, in February 1828, after noting that Mill had by then successfully completed nearly five years' experience in drafting despatches in the Political and Public Departments of the correspondence, the Court of Directors decided to bring his period of apprenticeship as a clerk to a conclusion, and with the full support of the Examiner, William McCulloch, promoted him to the position of Fourth Assistant to the Examiner, with the starting salary of £310 per annum, exclusive of any gratuities.<sup>24</sup>

Apart from its many other points of interest, the story of Mill's apprenticeship at East India House illustrates certain general features in the development of the East India Company's home administration during this period. In particular, it is already evident, from the earlier discussion of the underlying issues involved in the Company's new-found willingness to recruit talented outsiders to perform the more demanding intellectual duties of the Examiner's Office, that the younger

Mill was fortunate in arriving at a time when the traditional bureaucratic norms that had previously governed the prospects of the Company's clerks were being modified in favour of more dynamic and meritocratic criteria. Indeed, in the context of these developments, Mill's period of training for higher responsibility between 1823 and 1828 provides a special case-study of the Company's readiness to extend its new, quasi-meritocratic recruitment policy into the internal structure of the Examiner's Office.

This point emerges most clearly in the general reorganization of the Examiner's Office that took place in March 1825. In this fairly radical operation the directors for the first time decided to split the whole department into two divisions, one the Correspondence Branch (immediately consisting of the various Assistant Examiners) and the other that of the ordinary clerks, thus in effect drawing a stronger line between the intellectual duties of the former and the more routine or mechanical functions of the latter. More significantly, the Court declared that in future the higher posts in the Correspondence Branch were to be fully "open to talent," so that although clerks of long standing continued to be eligible for promotion, "mere length of service in the absence of the necessary qualifications gives no claim whatever." In return for losing their automatic claim on the higher posts the ordinary clerks were given a certain compensation in the form of increased allowances for the senior clerical positions, but essentially the Court had come down more firmly in favour of the more flexible meritocratic approach to the choice of Examiners and their assistants. On the same occasion, as if to give immediate expression to the new principles, John Stuart Mill was, as already noted, formally transferred to the new Correspondence Branch. Although he was still classed as clerk, it must by then have become obvious to his clerical colleagues that the young man's promotion over their heads to the Examiner class in the Correspondence Branch was now only a matter of time—three years in the event. How far these administrative reforms, which clearly prepared the way for his son's elevation, may have had their origin in the ideas and ambitions of James Mill is impossible to determine; the Court Minutes state only that they were introduced for the future better management of the Examiner's Office, and with the backing of Mill's superior, William McCulloch.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, in considering the wider significance of his first few years of employment at East India House, it is necessary to enquire, at least briefly and speculatively, what that experience may have meant to Mill himself. Did it, for instance, contribute in any way to that deeply felt sense of his own mental development that increasingly provides a connecting link between his personal psychology and his philosophical and social ideas? In this speculation we may begin by looking again at the passage in his *Autobiography*, quoted earlier. Two contending ideas seem to emerge from these later reflections on his East India House initiation. On the one hand, he is concerned to emphasize his father's decisive role in securing the appointment "immediately under himself," and thereby determining his "professional occupation and status for the next thirty-five years." This strong notion of James Mill's determining influence over the future course of his life is enhanced by the younger Mill's passing reference to the instructions he received from his father while learning to prepare despatches in the Examiner's Office. In fact, viewed from these paternalist perspectives, the first few years of J.S. Mill's East India Company employment look more like prolongation of his father's celebrated tutelage than the first moves towards personal inde-

pendence. However, Mill's autobiographical account also conveys a contrary and increasingly dominant sense of the eventual significance of his own work. Thus, having acknowledged his debt to his father's instructions, he goes on to show that with "the general growth of [his] own powers," he was able to master the art of drafting despatches to the extent that he was soon officially recognized as competent to take independent charge of "one of the leading departments" of the Indian correspondence.

This idea of Mill's first five years at East India House as involving a progression from youthful dependence to mature self-direction—as a true professional apprenticeship in fact—seems to contribute positively to a wider understanding of his intellectual and emotional development during this crucial period. On this reading, for example, the small group of Political and Public despatches which he prepared between 1824 and 1826 under the eyes of his father and the Examiner may be set alongside the early articles for the *Westminster Review* and newspapers, and the editorial work on Bentham's *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*, which he also prepared during these years. Taken together these writings represent both the culmination of his youthful capacity to absorb and structure new knowledge under his father's guidance, and the beginnings of a special personal ability to synthesize that knowledge and put forward his own original ideas with confidence and fluency. Arguably, of course, it was this latter development that, turned round against itself in the "mental crisis" of 1826-27, eventually propelled Mill forward to break free from the exclusive culture of rational analysis associated with his father's dominance.<sup>26</sup> It is perhaps unlikely that his East India House experiences played any direct part in this personal crisis. Nonetheless, as he emerges from it in 1827-28, with a new sense of purpose and his own developing conception of the nature of human culture, it is curiously appropriate that his period of clerical apprenticeship should also have been ended and official maturity recognized in his promotion to the level of Assistant to the Examiner.

#### MILL AS ASSISTANT TO THE EXAMINER (1828-56) AND THE DRAFTING OF DESPATCHES

Mill's promotion in 1828 marks the beginning of the very long central part of his official career with the East India Company, which continued until his appointment as Examiner in March 1856. During this period the basic character of his role as an Assistant to the Examiner, responsible mainly for the drafting of Political, Foreign, as well as some Public despatches, seems to have changed very little. But before considering the exact nature of this work, it is important to look more carefully at the question of his general standing within the Examiner's Office during these years. How far is it right to conceive of his position as essentially static? Was there perhaps more movement beneath the surface than may at first appear?

Part of the answer to these questions may be found in the records concerning Mill's financial position, particularly during the 1830s. The years between 1834 and 1836 saw a rapid improvement in his personal fortunes. The process began in April 1834 when the Court of Directors decided to incorporate the annual gratuity of £200—which had been granted to him regularly



since 1825—into his annual salary in the form of a special allowance. This, together with the usual small annual increments he had received since his appointment as Assistant in 1828, brought his salary up to £600.<sup>27</sup> In February 1836, as the result of the retirement of one of his senior colleagues, Mill moved up to Second Assistant to the Examiner (just below David Hill and Thomas Love Peacock), while his salary was also increased to £800.<sup>28</sup> Finally, a few months later, in July 1836—as part of a general reorganization following the death of his father—Mill moved forward once again into the place of First Assistant to the new Examiner, Thomas Love Peacock, ranking next to David Hill (who had succeeded to the position of Assistant Examiner). Along with this move came a further salary increase for Mill, bringing his annual remuneration to £1200.<sup>29</sup> However, with Peacock and Hill then firmly established above him, Mill's period of rapid upward mobility came to a halt and he continued in the position of First Assistant for the next twenty years. Only near the end of this long period, in August 1854, did the directors decide to award him a further salary increase, this time of £200 (see xxix below), apparently in connection with his defence of the Company during the Parliamentary investigations leading to the Charter Act of 1853 (16 & 17 Victoria, c. 95).<sup>30</sup>

The picture of Mill's career emerging from this personal data is of a short initial phase of rapid advancement followed by a long, rather static period and a final upturn; it gains definition, however, when other elements in his professional situation are considered.

Among the more powerful but imponderable influences must be reckoned the effects of his father's death in June 1836. Mill's reaction to that event, and the stress that preceded it, appears to have taken the form of another bout of sickness and depression, for which in July 1836 he obtained over three months' official leave which he spent in travelling abroad with his brothers. It is clear from his private correspondence that this period of personal unhappiness continued into 1837 when he returned to his arrears of work at East India House with the feeling that for the first time he had become "a thorough mechanical drudge."<sup>31</sup> But in the long run it is reasonable to suppose that the removal of his father's stern and dominating presence gradually had a positive and even a creative effect upon Mill's outlook and attitude to his Company work and the opportunities it afforded, as well as on his more general development as an independent thinker.<sup>32</sup>

One particular episode which seems to bring out the growing underlying strengths of his position during the long middle period of his career was his success in obtaining a junior clerkship in the Examiner's Office for his younger brother, George Grote Mill, in April 1844. On this occasion, following the usual Company practice, Mill was required to provide a testimonial on his brother's behalf in which he certified that the latter's education "has been under my exclusive superintendence during the last seven years with the exception of short intervals; that his conduct and character have always been excellent and his acquirements considerably surpass the average of well educated youths."<sup>33</sup> George Mill was duly installed in the Office, and after a short period of probation was transferred into the Correspondence Branch to gain experience in the drafting of Indian despatches under his brother's tutelage. He there seems to have shown considerable promise, to the extent that it was soon the declared intention of the Examiner, Thomas Love Peacock, to recommend him for one of the specially remunerated posts of "Clerk of

Correspondence.”<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, further advancement was prevented by his increasing ill health—he had contracted lung disease—and in the autumn of 1848 he was obliged to take a long period of sick leave and eventually to retire altogether in March 1850. He died three years later in Madeira.<sup>35</sup>

The most striking feature of this episode lies in its close resemblance to J.S. Mill’s own early career with the Company and again, as with that more celebrated apprenticeship, George Mill’s experience can be interpreted in several different ways. On one level the episode seems to indicate a curiously strong readiness on J.S. Mill’s part to assume a paternal position towards his younger brother, even to the extent of employing phrases of recommendation in his testimonial which almost seem to mimic what James Mill had told the Company directors about his own qualities and attainments some twenty years before. There are obvious pitfalls in seeking too specific a psychological explanation for these curious resonances, but the record of the occasion may at least be tentatively added to the other evidence that exists for the ever-intriguing story of Mill’s paternal problems.<sup>36</sup>

On a more mundane level, George Mill’s appointment and short career reflect the high status and influence by then enjoyed by J.S. Mill within the Company’s home establishment. They also reinforce the picture already formed of the rather special influence which the representatives of the Mill family had directly or indirectly come to exert on the way in which the Examiner’s Office had developed and functioned. The point here is not that the Mill’s influence was in any way improper or unusual (such dynasties of family employees were quite common in the Company’s history) but rather that J.S. Mill’s experimental apprenticeship in the 1820s provided the Company with the kind of model it later used in training other potential despatch writers in the Correspondence Branch of the Examiner’s Office, including, for a short while at least, George Grote Mill.<sup>37</sup>

Finally, in trying to identify the less obvious but positive features of Mill’s long middle period of Company employment, we must also recognize the importance of the opportunities for personal friendship and freedom that his official career offered. Rather sadly, there is little to suggest that his personal relations with Peacock, his immediate superior, were at all close.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, there is ample proof that Mill did enjoy close and stimulating friendships with several other Company colleagues during the 1830s and 1840s, most notably with Horace Grant (who held one of the special Correspondence Branch clerkships between 1837 and 1845) and William Thornton (who, after a short spell in the Examiner’s Office, worked in the Marine Branch of the Secretary’s Office from 1837 to 1856).<sup>39</sup> Such contacts grew out of shared intellectual interests, connected, for example, with Grant’s educational studies and Thornton’s economic and literary works. But the records also clearly show that Mill’s friendship warmly extended into acts of personal kindness and support for both Grant and Thornton.<sup>40</sup>

There is also evidence that, in so far as the pressures of his official business allowed, Mill was able to use his room in East India House as a place where he could informally invite various friends and acquaintances.<sup>41</sup> This amenity may have been of considerable value to him during the years when his external social contacts tended to diminish as a result of the delicacy and diffi-

culty of his longstanding relationship with Harriet Taylor. In the same way, as his *Autobiography* suggests, he was able to use whatever free time came to him during his rather gentlemanly official working day (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) to get on with his personal correspondence and writings. Although Mill himself sometimes complained to his personal correspondents of the extent to which his freedom was restricted by his Company duties,<sup>42</sup> the hundreds of private letters which he wrote from East India House during the 1830s and 1840s testify to a not inconsiderable degree of official latitude. And both his *System of Logic* and *Principles of Political Economy* were written on East India Company stationery, almost certainly during office hours.

The general opportunities which Mill's position normally gave him are brought out most illuminatingly in a letter which he wrote to Thomas Carlyle from India House on 30 June, 1837, with which he forwarded a copy of his review of Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution*. "I have," he writes,

very little to do here at present. I have worked off my arrear of business at this office, and the work does not now come in nearly so fast as I can do it. It is the way of my work to go in that sort of manner—in fits—and I like that well enough, as it gives me intervals of leisure. I am using this interval to get on with my book—a book I have done little to since the review began, and which you will think very little worth doing—a treatise on Logic.<sup>43</sup>

The extent to which Mill was able during these years to combine his official duties with his other intellectual interests during the "intervals" in his working day naturally raises the whole question of the character and scope of his Company work. How demanding were his duties, and—more interesting perhaps—how far was he in a position to formulate and control the Company's Indian policies through the despatches which he drafted?

Attempts to throw light on these issues may usefully start with the factual, especially the quantitative, aspects of Mill's work, and fortunately it is here possible to construct a kind of base-line for determining the sheer scale of his official activities by using his own list of despatches supplemented by other archival data.<sup>44</sup> The significance of this evidence was in fact perceived very early on by his friend William Thornton when contributing his account of Mill's Company career for the obituary notices published in the *Examiner* in May 1873.<sup>45</sup> After describing his former colleague's own list of despatches, "a small quarto volume of between 300 and 400 pages, in their author's handwriting," Thornton went on to recall that at East India House the Court of Directors' despatches used to occupy on average for each year "about ten huge vellum bound volumes, foolscap size, and five or six inches thick, and that of these volumes, two a-year, for more than twenty years running, were exclusively of Mill's composition."<sup>46</sup> Rather less vividly but more exactly, Table 2 shows the variations in Mill's annual output of despatches for the whole of his Company career (1823-58). In interpreting this data it is also, of course, necessary to have an idea of the average length of these despatches. For this purpose it may suffice to note that in 1837 (when Mill found time during his office hours to write part of his *Logic*) his output of 34 despatches occupy some 1200 pages of the generously spaced copyist's handwriting, giving an average of 35 pages per despatch. These figures may be contrasted with those for 1844 (the year of

George Mill's appointment) when Mill's output rose to 88 despatches, occupying about 2120 pages, giving an average of 24 pages per despatch. Table 2 shows that thereafter his annual quota of despatches averages 66 for the remaining period of his employment.

TABLE 2

Despatches drafted by John Stuart Mill (1824-58)<sup>47</sup>

TABLE 2  
Despatches drafted by John Stuart Mill (1824-58)<sup>47</sup>

Year	Political	Foreign	Public	Public Works	Ecclesiastical	Marine	Law	Commercial	Prince of Wales Island	TOTAL
1824	3		6					1		10
1825	3		6			1				10
1826	5		11		3			1	2	22
1827	4	1	13		3		1		1	23
1828	10		15		1	4			2	32
1829	10	1	2						2	15
1830	20	1	6						1	28
1831	11		9							20
1832	16		5							21
1833	14		3							17
1834	21		2							23
1835	67	3	3							73
1836	20		2							22
1837	32	2								34
1838	74	2	1							77
1839	29	2								31
1840	46	2								48
1841	63	2	1							66
1842	57	2								59
1843	56	1								57
1844	86	1	1							88
1845	56	1	4		1					62
1846	61	2	1							64
1847	48	1	1							50
1848	57									57
1849	72									72
1850	66									66
1851	65		1							66
1852	73									73
1853	96									96
1854	83									83
1855	36									36
1856	56									56
1857	51		1	26						78
1858	56			22						78
1523	24	24	95	48	8	5	1	2	8	1713

The administrative and subject range of Mill's despatches can to some extent be deduced from the departmental headings shown in the table. Clearly, his principal responsibility throughout his official career was for drafting the Political despatches (amounting to 1522). Broadly speaking, these despatches are concerned with the Company's non-secret relations with independent and protected princely states throughout the Indian Sub-continent, as well as with the frontier regions and territories bordering on British India, such as Afghanistan, Iran and the Gulf, Burma, etc. Very closely connected with the despatches of the Political Department—and eventually absorbed by them—are those of the Foreign Department (1827-47), which mainly deal with the affairs of other European powers in South Asia, notably the French, Dutch, and Portuguese. The remaining 190 or so despatches drafted by Mill may be roughly grouped into four categories: Public Department despatches (1824-57) which range widely over many aspects of the civil government of British India but are particularly concerned with education and the press;<sup>48</sup> Prince of Wales Island despatches (1826-30) covering the general administration of the Prince of Wales Island (or Penang) Presidency; miscellaneous despatches (1824-45) including Ecclesiastical, Marine, Law, and Commercial despatches; and Public Works Department despatches (1857-58) relating principally to roads and canals in British India.

This extensive information makes it possible to gauge the descriptive and quantitative range of Mill's despatches in considerable detail and with a fair degree of precision. What, however, poses more difficulty is the evaluation of the qualitative aspects of his contribution and, in particular, the assessment of his personal and official influence over the Company's policies in India. To begin to sketch out part of an answer, it is necessary, first, to understand the peculiar function of the Company's Indian despatches, and second, to look more closely at the elaborate procedure by which the despatches were prepared and approved—a procedure in which, as Mill himself admitted, he was “merely one wheel in a machine, the whole of which had to work together.”<sup>49</sup>

As regards the essential function of the Company's despatches, Mill provides some enlightening observations in the course of his own evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee in 1852:

*The home Government at this moment exercise an absolute control over the Government in India. Within what limits do you think that control should be exercised?* There are very few acts of the Government of India which it is possible for the authorities here to set aside when they are once done. Some very important things they can do: they can put a stop to pecuniary jobbing when they detect it; they can cancel improper appointments, and control salaries and establishments; and they can, and often do, redress the grievances of individuals. But in most of the political measures of a general character, they have very little power of interfering with effect or advantage, after the thing is done. They have, however, a great power of making useful comments, which may serve as instructions for subsequent cases of the same kind; and it seems to me the greatest good that the home authorities can do is to comment freely on the proceedings of the local authorities, to criticise them well, and lay down general principles for the guidance of the Government on subsequent occasions. (69-70.)

In other words, Mill is here indicating the reactive and *ex post facto* character of most of the home government's despatches, including, of course, his own. Even with the improvements in the speed of communications between London and India, it was clearly not feasible for the Court of Directors (and behind them the Board of Control) to try to regulate the actions of the "men on the spot" in Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay in detail or in advance.<sup>50</sup> The most that could usually be aimed for, as Mill shows, was to comment critically on what had already been done in India, to lay down general principles for future guidance, and to correct any specific abuses that had been brought to light in the official letters from India. Thus Company despatch writers were more often critically reviewing Indian policies than actually controlling them. However, as Mill makes clear elsewhere in his evidence before the Select Committee, there were also differences in the amount of prior consultation that was possible between the Government of India and the Company in London, depending on the area of administration concerned. For example, while in the ever-shifting field of political and foreign relations the opportunity for such prior discussions was inevitably limited, it was possible for more substantive policy consultations to take place in the correspondence concerned with the introduction of new policies in "internal government" (e.g., over land revenue, judicial and educational reforms, or public works expenditure) (43-4).

The effects of these general limitations on the scope and character of the Company's Indian correspondence are at once apparent in many of the despatches which Mill himself drafted. Thus, typically, the successive paragraphs of his Political Department despatches add up to a careful critical review of the events and decisions reported earlier in great detail in the Indian government's own letters to London. In many or most instances, the despatch gives the Court of Directors' retrospective approval for particular measures already taken, including here and there a piece of advice and criticism, and occasionally some enunciation of broader principles or policy to be followed more carefully in future when appropriate. In general, in Mill's Political despatches, the more significant broad expressions of policy or principle occur in the context of comments on the degree of intervention that is proper or politic in the internal affairs of particular princely states. For example, the whole question of how far the Company should actively interfere in the internal government of Oudh in the light of its existing treaty relations with that state is a recurrent theme in the twenty or so Political despatches concerning Oudh which Mill drafted between 1828 and 1856. Many less known comments on the advisability or otherwise of British intervention in the internal affairs of other states occur throughout Mill's enormous output of Political despatches. It hardly needs to be added that such general comments on the theme of intervention and internal sovereignty are not included because Mill himself was interested in such subjects, but rather because they were part of the larger, more contentious issues attached to British rule in South Asia during that period—issues that regularly dominated the minds of all officials concerned with the expansion and security of the Company Raj. Why, in such circumstances, Mill himself, from his position in London, decided to take one particular line rather than another, remains of course a distinct and often very difficult area for exploration (see I-liv below).

Another, perhaps less important field in which Mill, as the representative of the Court of Directors, often felt obliged to take a more active critical line in his Political despatches was that concerned with the financial and other personal claims of individual officials in the employ of

the Indian Political Department, and in the control of the whole Political Department establishments. Here he is specially concerned with redressing the genuine grievances of individuals and regulating government expenditure, even if doing so meant giving instructions to the British Indian authorities to countermand their earlier decisions.

In the case of the non-Political despatches for which he was responsible—which, it must be stressed, constitute a minority within his total output—Mill’s comments to the Select Committee, quoted earlier, are also pertinent. Thus, although his despatches in these departments conform to the general pattern of those issued in the Political Department (i.e., a systematic review of the relevant transactions reported earlier by the governments in India), they also from time to time contain more positive statements of the policy or principle to be followed in particular aspects of “internal government.” Among the best known of such statements are those included in a succession of Public Department despatches devoted to educational matters. Between 1825 and 1836 Mill was responsible for about seventeen such despatches, and there is sufficient evidence to show that the central questions thrown up in the course of this correspondence—most notably, how far it was proper to encourage indigenous Indian learning and culture, and what were the best ways of spreading Western knowledge in Indian society—were matters on which he was ready to take a strong personal stand. The nature of that stand, along with his other “personal views” on British Indian policy, will be considered more closely in the last part of this Introduction (xxxix-liv below).

In addition to being somewhat restricted by the generally retrospective character of the Company’s despatches, Mill and his colleagues in the Examiner’s Office and elsewhere were of course obliged to submit their drafts for approval and possible alteration by a variety of authorities within the Company and the Board. To this extent, as was earlier noticed, Mill realized that he was “merely one wheel in a machine.” To appreciate the force of what he meant it is necessary to describe the main bureaucratic hoops through which his drafts had to pass before they finally emerged from East India House in the form of despatches signed by the necessary quorum of directors. One of the fullest contemporary accounts of how the correspondence system worked is that given by Mill’s colleague, James Cosmo Melvill, the Company’s Secretary, to the Select Committee in 1852. This account may be taken as a basis for a further clarification of the extent to which Mill’s drafts were influenced and altered by others.

Each despatch from India is laid before the Court of Directors. When a despatch comes from India it is accompanied by a collection of papers bearing upon the subject, and of course that collection contains the former correspondence relating to it, and the present proceedings of the Government upon it. This despatch comes to the secretary’s office, and from it, is immediately transferred to the department to which it relates. In that department an abstract of the contents of the despatch is made; this is lithographed, and copies of it are sent to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, and the members of the committee having the superintendence of the department to which the despatch relates. The officer in charge of that department then communicates with the Chairman and Deputy upon the despatch, and, in cases in which the



subjects are not mere routine, receives instructions as to the tenor of the reply. A draft answer is then prepared, and submitted with the collections to the Chairman and the Deputy; they confer together, and with the officer, upon the subject: and when the draft conforms to their views, they place their initials upon it as the authority for its being sent to the President of the Board, in what is technically called "P.C.;" that is to say, previous communication. In due time the draft is returned either unaltered, or with alterations made in it by the President of the Board. If unaltered, the draft is immediately submitted to the committee of the Court having superintendence of the department in which it is. If altered, the officer communicates with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, who either allow wholly or partially, or reject entirely, the alterations. The draft is finally arranged by the Chairman and Deputy, and is then in like manner submitted to the committee. Drafts generally lie on the table of the committee for a week, during which time both the draft, and any papers bearing upon the case, are perused by the members of the committee. The committee then discuss the draft, and adopt or alter it as they think fit, after which it is submitted to the Court, who usually take a week for consideration, and then the draft comes on for discussion. Every director has an opportunity of expressing his sentiments, and if he differs from the majority, of recording a dissent. When the draft is approved by the Court, the secretary sends it officially, with all the papers, including the dissents, if any, to the Board of Commissioners, and the Board return it quickly, and always within two months, the period limited by law, approved or altered; and if altered, with a statement of their reasons for making the alteration. The unaltered drafts are immediately transcribed, and fair copies, signed by at least 13 members of the Court, are despatched to India. The altered drafts are referred to the proper committee, upon whose report the Court decide, either that the alterations shall be acquiesced in, in which case the draft is signed and despatched to India, or that a remonstrance shall be addressed to the Board against the alterations, in which case the draft is sent back until the final decision of the Board is communicated, and then the despatch is forwarded. Such is the ordinary course of proceeding, but it frequently happens that important questions are raised by the Government of India requiring prompt attention, and those are, both by the Court and the Board, taken out of the usual course and quickly disposed of; so that replies to references from India are often, now that the communication is so accelerated, received there within six months from the date of the reference, and in some cases earlier than that.<sup>51</sup>

This account of the operation of the procedure, though lengthy and complex, effectively identifies the key stages at which the drafts, initially prepared in the Examiner's Office and other departments, were then subject to approval or alteration by (1) the Chairmen, (2) the President of the Board in "Previous Communication," (3) the Chairmen again, (4) the appropriate committee of the Court of Directors, (5) the Court of Directors, and (6) the Board of Control. In the face of such a complicated system, involving reference to so many different individuals and interests, it may be reasonably conjectured that the chances of the author's original document emerging unaltered were not high, particularly in the case of drafts dealing with controversial subjects.

The archival evidence for the passage of Mill's drafts through the above stages is remarkably detailed and extensive but by no means comprehensive. In particular, there is hardly any surviving documentation for the preliminary stages in the drafting process—no record, for instance, of any instructions received by Mill from the Company Chairmen or of the rough sketches for the Previous Communications which drafting officers such as Mill would appear to have produced prior to the preparation of the formal PC (Previous Communication) documents (i.e., stage 1 of the process outlined above). However, for the remaining stages in the process, the regular archive series in the India Office Records (the Company's E/4 Despatches and the Board's L/P&S/6 Previous Communications and Drafts), provide a very ample picture of any alterations or revisions that were made to Mill's Political and Foreign drafts, from the Board's unofficial scrutiny at the PC stage to the final official approval of the despatch by Court and Board (i.e., stages 2 to 6 inclusive). Unfortunately, in the case of the drafts which he prepared in other departments, there is for the most part no record of the scrutiny and alterations at the PC stage, and it is only the later stages, involving the submission of the official drafts to the Committee, Court, and Board (i.e., stages 3 to 6), that are fully documented.<sup>52</sup>

It would clearly be necessary to investigate, sift, and assess the surviving archival evidence in detail before hazarding any comprehensive conclusions as to the extent to which Mill's own drafts were subject to alteration by others—the Chairs, the committees, and especially the Board of Control.<sup>53</sup> Several spot-checks suggest that the majority of his Political PCs were in fact subject to some, if slight, alteration by the Board. Any more thorough investigations of the Board's reviews, in particular, would also need to distinguish carefully between minor verbal alterations and more drastic changes involving the substitution or insertion of whole new paragraphs designed to convey a different view of the matter from that contained in Mill's original draft. When asked by the Select Committee in 1852 whether it was untrue to say that the real direction of the Government of India resided in the Court of Directors (as distinct from the Board), Mill replied: "It is practically by no means a fiction, since it does not happen once in a hundred times that a despatch, prepared by the Court of Directors, undergoes alteration in principle and substance by the Board of Control" (54). It is perhaps more likely than not that this general estimate would prove to be generally correct in relation to the Board's treatment of his own drafts. After all, he himself evidently thought of his despatches as being sufficiently "his" to prepare a special list of them, as well as including those which were printed for Parliament in the record he kept of his own publications.<sup>54</sup> At the same time it is important to keep in mind that Mill also qualified his positive reply to the Select Committee about the successful passage of the Court's despatches, by admitting that the Chairs "seldom send up a proposed despatch which they know is contrary to the President's opinion," thus acknowledging those rather shadowy occasions when drafts prepared in the Examiner's Office may have been directly or indirectly moulded by the Chairs so as to pass safely through the Board (54).<sup>55</sup> No doubt (as Mill told the Select Committee) the readiness of the Chairs to accept the drafts put up for them also depended on their own degree of interest in the Indian correspondence. For instance, writing to his wife on 6 March, 1854, Mill referred to the difficulties he had experienced in getting his drafts accepted by Sir James Weir Hogg, "explaining, defending, and altering so as to spoil it as little as I could," and contrasted Hogg's interrogations

with the easier responses of his successors, Russell Ellice and John Oliphant.<sup>56</sup> On the whole, in the face of the uncertainties, it is perhaps best to reserve judgment on the difficult issue of the survival and integrity of Mill's original drafts, at least until more detailed studies of particularly significant and representative drafts have been carried out.

Mill's long middle years as Assistant to the Examiner thus present many facets and episodes of considerable biographical interest, ranging from his more personal reactions concerning his position to the peculiar demands of his drafting responsibilities. Indeed, the evidence for his official activities during this period leaves the impression of Mill's steadily impressive buildup of knowledge about Indian government and of his growing intellectual authority within the Company. Appropriately enough, this impression of his development finds concrete expression towards the end of this period when in 1852 he was required to appear as a representative of the Examiner's Office before the House of Lords Select Committee on Indian Territories—as a senior Company spokesman in effect (see 31-74 below). On the basis of his wide knowledge and long experience of the Company's Indian affairs and his own unique philosophical training, he was then able to present his critical interlocutors with a clear, balanced, and subtly impressive picture of the overall advantages of Company rule. The directors were evidently well pleased with the effectiveness of his performance in their defence, even though the Company failed to deflect the legislature from effecting fresh inroads into its independence through the Charter Act of 1853.<sup>57</sup> In August 1854, as noted above, the directors expressed their appreciation in the time-honoured Company fashion by adding another £200 to his salary in recognition of “the high sense which the Court entertained of the admirable manner in which he conducts his duties.”<sup>58</sup>

#### MILL AS EXAMINER (1856-58) AND THE END OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

There was nothing unexpected or radical about the Company's appointment of John Stuart Mill as Examiner of Indian Correspondence on 28 March, 1856.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, given that Thomas Love Peacock, the Examiner, and David Hill, the Assistant Examiner, had both tendered their resignations after lengthy and distinguished service, Mill as First Assistant was next in line to succeed to the headship of the office. At the same time it seems almost more than fortuitous that, with Parliament about to embark on its final legislative attack on the Company's position—and with Peacock past seventy and Hill in his seventieth year—both men should have chosen this moment to resign, leaving the way clear for Mill, who had already proved his capacities to defend the Company's interests vigorously during the Parliamentary investigations that preceded the enactment of the Charter Act of 1853. The appointment of Mill thus secured for the directors their preferred candidate for the Examinership at a particularly crucial time, while also being strictly in keeping with traditional bureaucratic norms for promotion.

For Mill himself the promotion brought both a substantial rise in salary—from £1400 to £2000—and a considerably wider range of responsibility. As Examiner, he now technically ranked after the Secretary as the second most important officer in the Company's home establishment, and in real terms, considering his national reputation, he must have appeared to his

colleagues as a striking and uniquely distinguished figure in their midst. For the next two or more years it is also clear that the pressure of his new official duties left him with fewer of those “intervals” and opportunities for personal reflection and composition of the sort he had been able to enjoy while working in the office during the 1830s and 1840s.

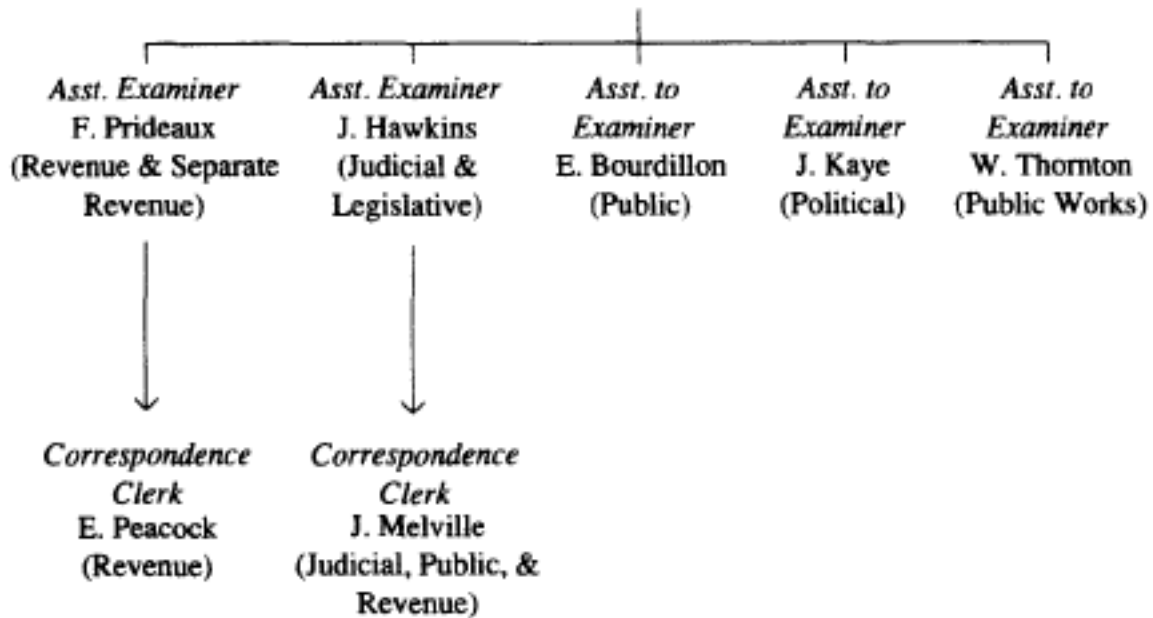
Mill’s overall responsibilities as Examiner may be roughly divided into three main aspects: (1) supervising the work of his Office, especially that of his immediate assistants, and continuing to draft certain despatches himself;<sup>60</sup> (2) acting as Clerk to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors;<sup>61</sup> and (3) advising the Chairs on key aspects of the Company’s Indian Government, especially in their dealings with the Board of Control and with Parliament.

As regards the first aspect, the scale and nature of his supervisory duties can be broadly gauged from an organization chart (Table 3).

To appreciate Mill’s role in more detail, it also needs to be borne in mind that as Examiner his particular responsibilities varied according to the status and autonomy of the principal staff groupings within the Office. For example, the two Assistant Examiners, John Hawkins and Francis Prideaux, stood immediately after Mill himself in the hierarchy, and might be occasionally called on to deputize for him.<sup>62</sup> They were normally expected to take full responsibility for their own draft despatches, discussing them with the Chairs, and piloting them through the Previous Communication negotiations with the Board (as Mill himself had done in the earlier stages of his own career). This pattern is confirmed by the fact that Mill’s own list of despatches during this period (1856-58) does not include any drafts in the Revenue, Judicial, and Legislative Departments—drafts for which Hawkins and Prideaux were primarily responsible.

TABLE 3

**TABLE 3**  
**Examiner**  
**J. S. Mill**



The position of the three Assistants to the Examiner, Edmund Bourdillon, John Kaye, and William Thornton, seems in theory at any rate to have been similar to that of Hawkins and Prideaux, in that they too were expected to manage most of their departmental drafts, leaving Mill to exercise only general supervision, and to advise or take on the more difficult or important policy issues raised by the correspondence. In practice, however, it appears that only Bourdillon, the most experienced of his Assistants, was able to operate with this degree of autonomy in his control of Public Department drafts.<sup>63</sup> In the case of Kaye, who had only joined the Office in 1856, Mill probably considered that it was necessary to lend more support while the newcomer found his feet among the complex issues of the Political Department. Certainly Mill's list of despatches shows that he personally continued to prepare over fifty Political drafts per year from 1856 to 1858, leaving Kaye to deal with the remainder.<sup>64</sup> Perhaps also Mill may have been a trifle reluctant to relinquish the reins in the Political Department which he had after all held for so long.

By contrast, William Thornton, who took over the Public Works Department in March 1856, presented Mill with another kind of problem. Thornton had been recommended for the new Assistant's post by Mill himself, on the basis of his personal knowledge of Thornton's intellectual attainments and commitment to the spread of public works. Unfortunately, some months after his appointment, Thornton succumbed to a form of nervous depression that, he said; "for nearly a year absolutely incapacitated me from mental labour." Faced with this critical situation, which might normally have led to Thornton's retirement, Mill came to his friend's rescue, "quietly tak-

ing upon himself and for the space of twelve months discharging the whole of my official duties, in addition to his own.” In practical terms this involved Mill in preparing some forty-eight Public Works drafts between May 1857 and April 1858, after which Thornton recovered his health and was gradually able to resume his regular duties.<sup>65</sup>

Detailed documentary evidence is somewhat lacking for Mill’s official relationships with the other members of his department, viz. the two clerks in the Correspondence Branch and the sixteen or so established clerks who performed the more routine office duties. There is, however, some slight evidence to suggest that he may have exercised supervision over the early drafts of John Melville, one of the Correspondence clerks, but in general it is likely that Melville and Peacock’s work on the Revenue, Judicial, and Public drafts was more closely linked with that of Prideaux, Hawkins, and Bourdillon.<sup>66</sup> For the remaining established clerks, Mill’s position was essentially that of a bureaucratic head of the department responsible for the effectiveness of his overall establishment and for taking up as necessary the periodic pecuniary and other personal claims and cases of individual clerks with the Company’s directors.

The role of Clerk to the Secret Committee, which Mill also assumed as part of his general duties as Examiner, was by this time somewhat less significant and onerous than might at first be supposed. The members of the Secret Committee, it will be recalled (see x above), consisted of the two Chairs and one of the senior directors. Together they were primarily responsible for transmitting to India secret instructions prepared at the Board of Control on important matters of war, peace, and foreign relations. When Mill first joined the Company in 1823 the Secret Committee had been a considerably more powerful body, able to put forward its own secret drafts to the Board and to enter into confidential discussions with the President concerning the general affairs of the Secret Department. By 1856, however, much of the earlier authority of the Committee had been lost as a result of the Board’s growing insistence on controlling the higher-level aspects of the British Indian foreign policy. Very occasionally the Committee was still able to issue isolated despatches concerning the more routine or fringe aspects of Secret Department business, but by and large it had been reduced to something of a cypher. To John Kaye, for instance, who joined the office in 1856, it was soon apparent that “The President of the Board was in reality the Secret Committee.”<sup>67</sup>

As Clerk to the Committee, Mill’s position was accordingly rather more formal and administrative than substantial or executive in character. Apart from having final responsibility for the transmission and despatch of the Secret correspondence and its occasional declassification (i.e., laying it before the Court as a whole), the most significant part of his work was preparing or approving the replies to various Secret Department enquiries sent to the Company by the Board, often at the request of the Foreign Office. For the most part the subjects dealt with were not of major diplomatic or military importance. Typically, they covered issues arising from current diplomatic exchanges, e.g. the status of French possessions in India, postal communications in the Gulf, and the recent history of the Kuria Muria Islands, etc. In such cases Mill was usually expected to provide relevant factual data and to represent the Company’s views of its own interests in these issues.<sup>68</sup>

More important than his specific work for the Secret Committee was Mill's general position as one of the principal policy advisers to the Chairmen and the Court of Directors between 1856 and 1858. Much of the normal administrative character of this role was obviously connected with the Examiner's general responsibility for the conduct of correspondence—a responsibility which regularly involved him in dealings with the Chairs, the relevant committees of the Directors, and the Court as a whole. Over and above these normal contacts, however, it is clear that Mill was increasingly called upon to advise the Company on some of the key issues then affecting its relations with the government. Central among these problems was the very future of the Company itself, now that the Parliament had determined, through the Charter Act of 1853 (16 & 17 Victoria, c. 95), that the Company's responsibility for India should be held in trust for the Crown (instead of being renewed for a further term of years as earlier Charter Acts had provided). Much as they may have wished to persuade themselves to the contrary, the directors, as well as Mill himself, must have realized that this enactment represented a very real threat to their future corporate existence—that indeed it amounted to a hanging sword whose descent would almost certainly be precipitated by any false move or perceived failure on their part. Unfortunately for the Company, the Mutiny or Great Indian Revolt of 1857, with its traumatic tales of death, disaster, and apparent political mismanagement, was inevitably viewed by government and opposition as just such a failure, requiring a radical legislative remedy.<sup>69</sup>

By the end of 1857 the directors knew that Lord Palmerston's ministry was preparing a comprehensive measure to end the Company's responsibility for the government of India, and they had evidently instructed Mill and other advisers to begin to prepare a defence. However, they still had no exact knowledge of the government's proposed new constitutional arrangements. On 31 December the Chairs accordingly sent a brief general defence of their position to Palmerston and asked him for details of the proposed India Bill.<sup>70</sup> Palmerston replied on 18 January that while his government would certainly accord due attention to their observations, he could not provide any more information concerning the new legislation prior to its formal presentation to Parliament.<sup>71</sup> Though still left in the dark but fully aware that time was running out, the Chairs swung the Company into action, and, in this bold counter-attack, Mill played a vital role. By 20 January, 1858, his draft defence of Company rule had been approved by both the directors and proprietors. Embodied in the form of a Petition from the Company to Parliament, it was then formally presented to the Commons on 9 February and to the Lords on the 11th (75-89).<sup>72</sup> The Petition was closely followed by a more extensive historical defence of the Company's record, also largely prepared by Mill, and entitled *Memorandum on the Improvements in the Administration of India during the Last Thirty Years* (91-160). A few days later, on 13 February, Palmerston introduced his bill for transferring the government of India from Company to Crown. Under his scheme, the home administration was in future to be entrusted to a President assisted by a Council of eight members, each holding office for eight years, and nominated by the Crown either on the basis of previous experience as directors of the Company or by virtue of service/residence in India. It was not a particularly radical scheme, but of course it meant the end of the Company.

The Company's Petition to Parliament as drafted by Mill had the initial disadvantage of having been prepared before the full details of Palmerston's measure were known. Nonetheless it was

to prove a remarkably potent and flexible defence. In a finely structured and eloquent sequence of propositions, the Petition gradually succeeded in casting serious doubts on the government's case for withdrawing the Company's Indian responsibilities. The Company, it argued, had on the whole been notably successful in building up a great empire, progressively administered at little cost to the Exchequer. The government had offered no advance justification for its proposed intervention—soon after the 1853 Parliamentary investigation—beyond implying that the Company was to blame for the “calamitous events which have recently occurred in India” (78). Such a charge was quite untenable given that the government itself, through the Board of Control, had long carried ultimate responsibility for the Company's Indian policies. If mistakes had been made, the government should accept a major share of the blame. Meanwhile the timing of the proposed measure could hardly have been worse—precipitated by reactive emotion, it was also likely to be interpreted by the Indian people as heralding a wholesale British attack on their traditional beliefs and customs. On the other hand, the Petition reasonably continued, the Company was certainly not opposed to introducing changes in the present form of government, provided these could be shown to be improvements on the existing system. Thus, if the government was still determined to transfer the home administration of India to a minister of the Crown, it would surely be recognized by all that a minister would require a special body of advisers to discharge his immense duties responsibly. To be at all effective, such a council would need to be composed of an adequate number of persons experienced in Indian government and with a majority holding their appointments independent of the minister; they would also need to play a full and independent part in the formation of British Indian policies—to prepare despatches, for instance, even if what they proposed was ultimately subject to the minister's approval. Finally, the Petition drily pointed out, if a council of this type was deemed essential for the home administration of India, the government did not need to look further than the existing Court of Directors. In fact—and here the Petition grasped the full irony of its logic—if all the basic conditions for the general good government of India were present in the existing pattern of administration represented by the Court and the Board, why bother to change the system?

The Petition, as drafted by Mill, combined with the detailed *Memorandum* on the Company's Indian administration, were soon recognized in Parliament as something of a *tour de force*. More particularly, while basically denying the need for radical legislation, the Petition had pointed the way towards a possible compromise with the government in which some of the essential features of the old Company regime might be perpetuated, especially through the creation of an active and independent council for the proposed minister. However, in the short time available neither Mill nor the Company's defenders inside Parliament could prevent the Commons from approving, in the course of February 1858, the basic principles of intervention contained in Palmerston's India Bill. In fact, the Company escaped further action on the basis of this bill only because Palmerston himself was turned out of office on another issue shortly afterwards.

Palmerston's departure provided only a brief respite for the Company, as the new ministry, led by Lord Derby, with Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Ellenborough as President of the Board of Control, was equally determined for various reasons to bring an end to the Company's rule. However, while Derby's new India Bill resembled Palmerston's in its basic objec-



tives, including the need for a council to advise the new Secretary of State, it failed to provide a generally acceptable constitution for the proposed council. According to the new scheme, the council was to consist of eighteen members, nine of whom were to be Crown nominees, while the remainder were to be elected, partly by persons who had served in India or held Company stock, and partly by the Parliamentary electors of the leading commercial cities, e.g., London, Manchester, Liverpool, etc. It soon became apparent that such an elaborate system would not gain Parliamentary approval. By April 1858 the government therefore agreed to drop the main provisions of the bill and to proceed more flexibly on the basis of a series of resolutions which could be more easily discussed and amended, and eventually formed into a new measure.<sup>73</sup>

By April 1858 the debates on the future constitution of the home government of India had reached a crucial stage. That two measures designed to bring about the change to Crown rule had had to be abandoned was not much comfort to the Company, since it was clear that the government still intended to push ahead with its basic plans. At the same time, the Parliamentary debates as a whole had begun to display a more sympathetic attitude to the Company than had previously been the case, and a greater willingness to consider some of the fundamental arguments in favour of a more independent body of councillors for the new Secretary of State, which Mill's Petition had originally articulated back in February. At this critical juncture the Court of Directors felt the necessity of acquainting the Company's proprietors with their views of the legislative threat that hung over them, and of planning their future defensive strategy. To accomplish this important stock-taking with realism and rationality they again turned to Mill. The resultant *Report to the General Court of Proprietors, Drawing Attention to the Two Bills Now before Parliament Relating to the Government of India*, largely drafted by Mill, was approved by the Court on 6 April (161-71). While noting the more favourable view of the Company's government now taken in the Parliamentary debates, the new Report actively criticized the provisions of both bills and concluded that neither had succeeded in putting forward a form of administration better than the existing Company/Board system. Only that system, with its built-in official checks and balances, was properly suited to the general good government of India. However, the Report acknowledged that there was now little prospect of deflecting the government from its intention to bring an end to Company rule. Instead, building realistically on the earlier arguments contained in the Petition, the Report urged that "every exertion should be used in its passage through committee to divest it of the mischievous features by which both Bills are now deformed, and to maintain, as at present, a really independent Council, having the initiative of all business, discharging all the duties, and possessing all the essential powers of the Court of Directors" (171).

Mill's ingenious strategy for maintaining a balanced and informed home government for India through a kind of covert survival of the Court of Directors in the form of the newly envisaged Council for India was effectively pursued by the Company's supporters inside and outside Parliament between April and June 1858. And beyond all earlier expectations they succeeded in putting forward or modifying many of the key proposals that dominated the constitutional debate during the final crucial phases of the legislative process. Mill himself was especially active during the period in writing pamphlets stressing the dangers inherent in the government's policy and the importance of implanting an active and independent council in the proposed new institutional

framework (*A Constitutional View of the India Question*, 173-8; *Observations on the Proposed Council of India*, 179-83; *Practical Observations on the First Two of the Proposed Resolutions on the Government of India*, 185-92; *The Moral of the India Debate*, 193-8; and *A President in Council the Best Government for India*, 199-204).

In seeking an audience for their case, Mill and his allies were no doubt considerably helped by the government's growing readiness "to deal tenderly with the Company."<sup>74</sup> In the series of government resolutions put forward and debated during May and June 1858, which eventually formed the basis of the new India Bill introduced by Lord Stanley on 24 June, there was on the whole more awareness of the importance of giving a measure of independence to the new council, more willingness to recognize the need for some continuity with the Court of Directors, and more appreciation of the need to protect Indian governments and revenues from the negative aspects of British party politics and overt exploitation. These various trends were strikingly illustrated in the final important exchanges that took place between the Chairs and Lord Stanley towards the end of June 1858. These exchanges opened with a letter of 23 June from the Chairs to Stanley, again drafted by Mill (205-12). In this letter the Chairs welcomed those elements in the new bill that gave more independence to the council, but went on to make a last-ditch effort to convince the government of the need to strengthen the council's powers in general policy-making, especially by giving it a right of veto over the Secretary of State's proposals to dispose of the Indian revenues. Somewhat surprisingly, the government then agreed to incorporate new clauses in the bill to give expression to at least those parts of the Chairs' recommendations which related to the security of the Indian revenues.

The "Act for the Better Government of India," which finally emerged from these debates and discussions, was successfully piloted through Parliament by Stanley and given royal assent on 2 August, 1858.<sup>75</sup> Although the Act brought no retreat on the central issue of the transfer of the Company's government of India to the Crown, many of its provisions represented a real compromise between the government and the Company. A Secretary of State for India was to take over all the powers of the Company and the Board of Control, but most of his powers were to be exercised in conjunction with a specially constituted Council of India consisting of fifteen members, the majority of whom had to have a substantial Indian qualification. Eight of the members were to be nominated by the Crown and seven elected by the retiring Court of Directors, with subsequent vacancies in each group to be filled by the Crown and the Council respectively. All members were also to hold office for life or during good behaviour. The Secretary of State was directed to submit all proposed orders and despatches to the Council before issue except those of a secret or urgent character. In general, the Secretary of State was empowered to overrule his Council if the need arose, except in cases involving expenditure from Indian revenues or affecting patronage and appointments in India, for which it was necessary to obtain the agreement of a majority of members present at a Council meeting.

The final India Act of 1858 must be reckoned in certain respects to be a rather equivocal measure. It was true that the Company was finally extinguished, but its directors were given at least some prospect of an after-life through the newly created Council of India. Was there really

so much structural difference, some may have reflected, between a President of the Board of Control working in conjunction with a Court of Directors, and a Secretary of State assisted by a Council? For Mill, in particular, who had intellectually masterminded so much of the Company's defence, there was at least the considerable satisfaction of seeing many of the essential checks and balances contained in the Company system—which he considered vital for the good government of India—appropriately incorporated into the new dispensation through the Secretary of State's Council. And, in describing the end of the affair to his friend Henry Chapman on 8 July, 1858, he could not resist a note of personal triumph.

The East India Company has fought its last battle, and I have been in the thick of the fight. The Company is to be abolished, but we have succeeded in getting nearly all the principles which we contended for, adopted in constituting the new government, and our original assailants feel themselves much more beaten than we do. The change though not so bad as at first seemed probable, is still, in my opinion, much for the worse.<sup>76</sup>

There is then no doubt that between January and June 1858, when the Company's future hung in the balance, Mill identified himself totally with its defence and with the furtherance of the ideals of government for which he believed it stood. But once the Company's fate was sealed by Stanley's India Act, he was understandably not inclined to join the new Office of the Secretary of State for India, the creation of which he had opposed, even though it also incorporated some of those positive features of Company administration which he had fought so hard to perpetuate.<sup>77</sup> On 18 August, 1858, the Company directors recorded their last appreciation of "the valuable services" which he had rendered for so many years, "especially of the distinguished ability and unwearied zeal with which he had assisted the Court of Directors during the recent Parliamentary discussions"; and they accordingly awarded him a special gift of five hundred guineas.<sup>78</sup> At the same time he made clear his intention to resign and was granted an annual pension of £1500.<sup>79</sup> Finally, on 2 September, 1858, when the Company's responsibility for India was withdrawn and its home establishment formally wound up, Mill took his leave from East India House. He refused offers of a seat on the new Council of India, almost refused to accept the silver inkstand which his Company colleagues had presented to him, and never again sought or occupied an official position in the home government of British India.<sup>80</sup>

## MILL'S INDIAN WRITINGS

Mill's writings about India and the East India Company that provide the subject matter of this volume<sup>81</sup> comprise (1) a huge corpus of official or quasi-official material, only a small proportion of which was ever published, and (2) a very small group of non-official published articles which may be judged to reflect his more personal interests.

The bulk of the official corpus is made up of the archival copies of Mill's draft despatches to India—over 1700 documents surviving in various forms in the India Office Records, only a small

minority of which were printed for the use of Parliament—together with some related official correspondence and minuting.<sup>82</sup> The remaining part of Mill's official writings consists of eleven items, all of which are included in the present volume. These may be roughly classified as follows: (a) one manuscript memorandum, the so-called Minute on the Black Act (1838), which forms part of the Broughton Papers held by the British Library (11-15); (b) five items officially printed by the East India Company and/or Parliament during the 1852-53 and 1858 Parliamentary enquiries into the future of the Company: "The East India Company's Charter" (1852), 31-74; *The Petition of the East India Company* (1858), 75-89; *Memorandum of the Improvements in the Administration of India during the Last Thirty Years* (1858), 91-160; *Report to the General Court of Proprietors* (1858), 161-71; *Letter from the East India Company to the President of the Board of Control* (1858), 205-12; (c) five items published as anonymous pamphlets designed to influence public opinion during the crucial Parliamentary debates of 1858: *A Constitutional View of the India Question*, 173-8; *Observations on the Proposed Council of India*, 179-83; *Practical Observations on the First Two of the Proposed Resolutions on the Government of India*, 185-92; *The Moral of the India Debate*, 193-8; and *A President in Council the Best Government for India*, 199-204.

The very small group of non-official Indian writings, also reproduced in this volume, consists of three articles, each dealing with a subject in which Mill seems to have had some personal interest. However, only one of these articles, the review of Maine's work on village communities (213-28), can be reckoned as a fairly solid contribution to the contemporary controversies concerning the historical development of private property rights and common ownership in Europe and Asia. The remaining two items are of minor Indian interest, the first being a youthful and rather technical comment on the application of free trade principles to British imperial commerce, "Trade with India" (1827), 1-9, while the second article, "Penal Code for India" (1838), 17-30, was intended to draw public attention to the significance of what had been recently achieved in the codification of Indian penal law.

The striking contrast between Mill's enormous official corpus of Indian writings and his tiny output of voluntary non-official writings about India raises again the teasing conundrum of what exactly India meant for him personally (see also vii-viii above). Thus, on one reading of this evidence, it is certainly true that he took his East India Company responsibilities very seriously, writing copiously in the course of their discharge, and receiving regular commendations from the Company's directors. The fact that during his thirty-five years of Company employment he chose to write very little in a personal capacity about Indian affairs may be partly accounted for by the constraints and demands of his official position. Yet, as his *Autobiography* and private letters indicate, it is also evident that for much of this time he thought of his Indian duties as essentially belonging to his official employment rather than to the sphere of his more personal interests. He was not, after all, a professional orientalist, and so, once freed from his official position in 1858, it is understandable that he should have decided to write very little about India and henceforward to devote himself almost entirely to his more consuming interests in philosophy, sociology, and political reform. In the face of these somewhat conflicting lines of interpretation, we may perhaps turn to Mill himself, not so much for a clear-cut answer on one side or the other but, more characteristically, for a clue to their possible reconciliation. In describing in his *Autobiography* the

circumstances that led to his decision to retire in 1858, he mentions among other factors the conclusion that he had “given enough” of his life “to India.”<sup>83</sup> In other words, he appears to have felt that having committed himself wholeheartedly to his Company duties for so long, and especially during the last few years, he now felt justified in bringing that period of his life to a close.

To recognize that Mill’s Indian writings resulted primarily from his strong commitment to his official duties rather than reflecting his personal concerns does not either lessen the importance of these writings or suggest that they were written in a special compartment of his mind closed off from his wider speculative thought. On the contrary, what we know of Mill, especially of his intellectual integrity, would presuppose certain connections between what he wrote officially about Indian government and society and his more general philosophical standpoint.<sup>84</sup> In his essay on Coleridge (1840) Mill explicitly rejected the idea that in the sphere of political and social action it is possible to proceed effectively without specific theoretical presuppositions and first principles: in such activities mere pragmatism or trial and error processes do not provide a sufficient *modus operandi*.

They [Coleridge and Bentham] agreed in recognising that sound theory is the only foundation for sound practice, and that whoever despises theory, let him give himself what airs of wisdom he may, is self-convicted of being a quack. If a book were to be compiled containing all the best things ever said on the rule-of-thumb school of political craftsmanship, and on the insufficiency for practical purposes of what the mere practical man calls experience, it is difficult to say whether the collection would be more indebted to the writings of Bentham or of Coleridge.<sup>85</sup>

At the same time, in view of the range and complexity of Mill’s speculative thought, it would be unrealistic to expect all the links between his official and personal writings to be easy or straightforward. Mill’s characteristic intellectual posture was that of attempted synthesis—a constant effort to reconcile the conflicting parts of his intellectual heritage. His East India Company role must have placed further strains on his reconciling powers, and one would expect signs of the associated tussles to be apparent in at least some of his official Indian writings.

Mill’s principal ideas about Indian government should be approached in the light of the preceding general consideration. And in the following brief resumé of these ideas some attempt is made, where relevant, to show the ways in which his Indian writings need to be set within the wider pattern of his thought.

To be more fully intelligible, Mill’s mature views on the best form of government for India—a central topic in the majority of his published Indian writings—have to be understood as a part of his general conception of the nature and purpose of government and its role in historical development as described in his non-Indian writings.<sup>86</sup> In general, Mill held that a system of representative government, based on universal suffrage and the greatest possible freedom of thought and expression, was the best form of government, as most conducive to the furtherance of human happiness and the development of virtues and intelligence in individuals and society as a whole. There was no doubt in his mind that such a system was very well suited to the needs of the more progressive nations of Western Europe. However, influenced by a combination of his

father's pessimistic views of Indian culture, together with Comtian and Saint-Simonian notions about the main stages in the progress of human thought, Mill concluded that representative government could not as yet be introduced into the less advanced and traditional societies of Asia, including India.<sup>87</sup> The people of these societies were, he contended, too passive, and too crushed by centuries of despotism, to take an active stand in defence of their individual legal and political rights. On a broader plane, he conceded that Asian countries such as India and China had in earlier ages achieved high levels of civilization, but he considered they were now too dominated by custom as the "final appeal," and insufficiently alive to the stimulating power of individualism and the claims of contrary opinions, sincerely and rationally held. As a result, in comparison with the advanced states of Europe, eastern societies such as India had become stationary, unable to progress on their own volition.<sup>88</sup>

What then was to be done about the government of such peoples? And how was India in particular to be awakened from its state of "semi-barbarism" and brought up to a higher level of intellectual and social progress? Mill did not believe that there were any simple answers to such questions. There was no "sweeping rule" which could be applied; India was viewed by him as "a peculiar country," its peoples "most difficult to be understood, and still more difficult to be improved" (155).<sup>89</sup> In general, however, he inclined to think that the best government for India and similar societies was some form of benevolent despotism. In theory such a government might be initiated by an unusually gifted indigenous ruler, such as Akbar, but such figures, Mill thought, were very rare. A more effective way forward would be through the benevolently inspired rule of a "superior people" belonging to "a more advanced state of society." This would have the very positive advantage of conveying the subject people "rapidly through several stages of progress."<sup>90</sup> On the other hand, Mill had reservations about the capacity of a foreign government to act in the interests of its subjects, especially where—as was the case between Britain and India—the rulers had very little understanding of the ruled and little sympathy for them. In these circumstances, he concluded the best solution was for the rulers to "govern through a delegated body, of a comparatively permanent character," well informed, and able to give priority to the best interests of the subject people.<sup>91</sup> In the context of this kind of reasoning it is hardly surprising that Mill came to regard the English East India Company as almost providentially designed to bring good government to India.<sup>92</sup>

At this point, Mill's more theoretical reasonings about the government of dependencies like India, as mainly set out in *Representative Government*, begin to merge with the more specific polemical arguments in defence of the Company contained in his various official writings about Indian government between 1852 and 1858. In these latter (cf. xxxiv-xxxix above), Mill is primarily concerned to define and defend the special advantages of Company government in India against those who sought to replace it by direct Crown rule. To some extent, the range and nature of the arguments he uses in these writings vary with the changing political circumstances (i.e., as between the situation facing the Company in 1852 and that which confronted it six years later). But in general he finds two or three main grounds for advocating the maintenance of Company rule. In the first place, he contends that the Company's delegated responsibility for India had enabled it to develop a whole tradition of disinterested and informed Indian administration in which offi-

cialists were able to serve free from the negative influences of British party politics and other sectional interests.<sup>93</sup> Secondly, he argues that under the dual government of the Company and the Board of Control, the Company had become institutionally committed to the needs of Indian government, its success being measured by the extent to which it was able to convince the Board of the soundness of the policies and the views contained in its draft despatches to India. The same system thus ensured that every significant proposal or enactment affecting Indian government was subject to the closest possible scrutiny by the two branches of the home government, as well as in India itself. Short of the benefits of a more open system of representative government—ruled out by Mill’s theoretical reasoning—there could hardly be a better guarantee of good government for India (42, 45, 59, 52-5; 87-8). Conversely, Mill believed that if the dual government were replaced by the single authority of a Secretary of State, all these advantages would be lost and Indian interests made subject to erratic, uninformed, and Anglo-centric policies.

Mill continued to deploy basic arguments of this type until it became clear in the course of the Parliamentary debates of 1858 that there was little hope of saving the Company. The emphasis in his writings then shifted from a direct defence of the Company to trying to make sure the new India Office would at least retain some of the vital checks and balances and informed commitment that characterized the Company system, through the medium of the proposed Council for the Secretary of State (163-9; 181-3; 201-4; 207-12; see also xxxvi-xxxvii above). These last efforts are of special interest for students of Mill’s style and psychology because they illustrate the peculiar way in which he succeeded in waging a skilful “political” campaign on the Company’s behalf without losing his character as a high-minded political thinker.

Although Mill always firmly denied that India was then fitted for any real form of representative government, at least some of his writings show that he also believed that Indians would eventually progress to the stage where they could take over responsibility for their own government. Indeed, in a general sense, he was committed, by his belief that the moral legitimacy of British rule in India ultimately depended on its progressive and benevolent character, to supporting policies designed to bring eventual self-government to the country.<sup>94</sup> In his evidence to the Select Committee in 1852, it is clear that Mill expected this progress to be directly reflected in a gradual increase in the number of Indians appointed to the more senior positions in the Indian administration. They were, he noted, already taking over as junior judges and deputy collectors in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, adding that “there is a great and growing desire to admit them to all offices for which they are considered sufficiently qualified in point of trustworthiness” (64). This process would, he envisaged, gradually continue until “the time arises when the natives shall be qualified to carry on the same system of Government without our assistance” (65).

Mill’s evidence here presents a rather sedate and academic picture of the likely road to Indian self-government, in which “trustworthy” Indian bureaucrats gradually prove themselves able to take over the system which their British superiors had in their wisdom installed. There is no sense of the likely effects of wider Indian political pressures and mass movements, no time-span is even roughly implied, and there is apparently no awareness of the ambiguity of “trustworthiness” as a criterion for Indian advancement. And yet for all its narrowness and vagueness—and

we must remember that Mill was on this occasion severely restricted by the need to respond cautiously and closely to the specific enquiries of his interrogators—his general prediction of the way in which the British Indian bureaucracy would adapt itself to a gradual process of “Indianization” and a measure of “responsible government” was not all that far from what eventually happened.<sup>95</sup>

So far only Mill’s principal ideas about the historical and philosophical *raison d’être* of British or, rather, Company rule in India, and its likely *dénouement*, have been briefly considered. What may be called the middle ground of his overall conceptions, i.e., the sort of broad policies, social, political, and economic, which he believed should be pursued during the high-tide of British ascendancy, has hardly been entered. It is this middle region that still poses the greatest difficulties for students of Mill’s Indian ideas, since his more accessible published writings for the most part provide only general indications of his views, while the vast corpus of his official draft despatches—in some respects the most promising source of fresh insights—still lies largely unexplored.<sup>96</sup> What follows is thus necessarily scarcely more than a series of introductory comments on the broad character of his ideas on social and political policies in India.

In approaching these issues of policy, it is important to begin by referring back to Mill’s broad theoretical guidelines concerning the objectives and methods to be followed by a Western-style government in a colonial and (in his view) “semi-barbarous” society. These guidelines are again set out more clearly in his general writings on government than in those that specifically deal with India. The following passage from his *Representative Government* offers perhaps the most illuminating starting point:

To determine the form of government most suited to any particular people, we must be able, among the defects and shortcomings which belong to that people, to distinguish those that are the immediate impediment to progress; to discover what it is which (as it were) stops the way. The best government for them is the one which tends most to give them that for want of which they cannot advance, or advance only in a lame and lopsided manner. We must not, however, forget the reservation necessary in all things which have for their object improvement, or Progress; namely, that in seeking the good which is needed, no damage, or as little as possible, be done to that already possessed.<sup>97</sup>

In other words, Mill is here articulating in the context of his examination of good government a characteristically personal synthesis of the conflicting political philosophies of Utilitarianism, organic conservatism, and, it appears, his own form of “administrative realism,” learnt perhaps partly at his desk in East India House. One would therefore expect to see something of the same rather complex balance of differing political criteria in his approaches to more specific aspects of British Indian policy and administration.

Mill’s approach to the particular issue of how far indigenous Indian religions and customs should be interfered with by the British Raj is in some ways the easiest of his “policy views” to identify from his published writings. Here, following the mainstream of Company policy, he strongly opposed “all interference with any of the religious practices of the people of India, ex-



cept such as are abhorrent to humanity” (81)—by which he appears to have meant practices such as *Sati* and *Thagi*. He was especially hostile to any official attempts to “force English ideas down the throats of the natives; for instance, by measures of proselytism, or acts intentionally or unintentionally offensive to the religious feelings of the people.”<sup>98</sup> The precise ground for his opinions on these matters is, however, somewhat more difficult to locate. Principally, it would seem that his stand was related to his strong belief in the virtues of toleration and freedom of conscience, to his equally strong aversion to any official support for the prejudices and privileges of British settlers in India, and to his overall idealistic conceptions of the Company’s government as the ultimate guardian and protector of the Indian people, able to respect their deeper feelings. It is clear too that, with the lessons of the 1857 Revolt very much in mind, he believed that any official backing for a policy of proselytism was likely to trigger widespread disaffection and even “a general rising throughout India” (81), thus endangering the successful outcome of the government’s overriding obligation to bring peace and progress to the Sub-continent. On the other hand—as part of the same civilizing duty—Mill, like most contemporary English liberals, was strongly in favour of all government measures aimed at eradicating what he regarded as cruel and barbarous practices like infanticide and slavery, as well as discouraging certain retrograde indigenous prejudices, such as that against the remarriage of Hindu widows (122-5).

The development and reform of judicial systems in British India constituted another area of contemporary controversy on which Mill had very decided opinions which to some extent parallel his attitudes towards Indian religions and customs. With the lessons of his early Benthamite education still dominant, he was particularly interested in the progress of legal reform in India, and vigorously supported the efforts and achievements of the Indian Law Commission from the 1830s onwards in preparing a penal code for India and the later codes of civil and criminal procedure. “These codes,” he noted, “when enacted, will constitute the most thorough reform probably ever yet made in the judicial administration of a country” (114; see also 19-30, 69). And there is little doubt that he conceived of measures of this type as representing the kind of wholesale improvements that it was the Company’s special moral duty to deploy for the benefit of Indian society. At the same time, he was notably sensitive during the 1830s to the importance of ensuring that British settlers in India, especially traders, planters, and fortune seekers, should be made to abide by Indian laws, administered through the Company’s courts, in regulating their dealings with Indians outside the Presidency towns. “An Englishman has no right to go up the country and say to the natives, I will regulate my transactions with you by the laws of my own country, and if you think I have injured you, you shall not have the redress your own laws would give you, but shall be satisfied with that given by laws you know nothing about” (i.e., those administered by the Supreme Court at Calcutta) (13). In this whole area of equality before indigenous laws, Mill consistently took the side of Indians against the settlers who “are naturally inclined to despise the natives and to seek to make themselves a privileged caste” (15). But again, as in his defence of religion and custom, there was also what sounds like a prudential and non-moral element in his position. For instance, he argues that Indians needed to be protected against oppression by the English settlers because the future security of the British Empire in India depended on maintaining the British reputation for “superior moral worth and justice” in their dealings,

and of “being more just and disinterested than the native rulers” (15). If pressed about the moral dubiety of this particular justification, it is uncertain how Mill would have responded. Perhaps he would have explained his reasoning in Utilitarian terms by invoking the importance of the ultimate good to be brought to India by disinterested and responsible British rule.

Mill’s views about educational policy in some ways constituted the most developed and original of his several efforts to postulate and explore the fundamental aims of British social policy in India. Not surprisingly, these ideas have already attracted considerable scholarly interest, even though they find their fullest expression not in his published writings but in a smallish group of his draft despatches to India.<sup>99</sup> Mill was responsible for preparing some seventeen drafts on the subject of Indian educational policy between 1825 and 1836. Of these documents, the most detailed exposition of his mature ideas is contained in Public Department PC 1828 of 1836, the contents of which were, somewhat ironically, totally rejected by Sir John Hobhouse, the President of the Board of Control, in December 1836, so that Mill’s draft was never actually issued as a despatch.<sup>100</sup>

Mill’s document was primarily intended as a detailed rebuttal of the new educational policy adopted in March 1835 by the Government of India led by Lord Bentinck and Lord Macaulay. Convinced of the immense superiority of Western scientific knowledge and literature over traditional Indian learning, and faced with a growing need for more Indian government employees with a knowledge of English, Bentinck decided that official funds should in future be entirely “employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of the English language.”<sup>101</sup> Previous government funding for oriental learning (e.g., stipends for professors and students, and grants for translation work) was accordingly to be withdrawn. Mill’s critique of this policy took the form of a complex and interlocking argument. He begins in a characteristically prudential vein by warning against the “alarm and disaffection on the part of the people” likely to result from the new policy of withdrawing funds from oriental learning, with its implied rejection of Indian culture and religion.<sup>102</sup> However, more importantly, he then proceeds to take issue with the whole underlying logic of the Bentinck-Macaulay thesis. Essentially, he does this by drawing a clear distinction between (a) the limited plan of funding colleges to teach English to potential government employees, and (b) the more fundamental policy of spreading Western ideas and knowledge through the country, given that “the object of our measures” is “the intellectual and moral improvement of the people of India.” Mill is ready to approve expenditure on the new English-language colleges, but argues that in pursuit of the larger project it would be quite “chimerical” to try to diffuse Western ideas to the people at large through the medium of a foreign language, and through the agency of men seeking only enough knowledge of English to enter government employ. Such an immense project, Mill maintains, could be accomplished only through the medium of the vernacular languages used by the mass of the population. Consequently, the government should try to enlist the active cooperation of the Indian learned classes—pandits, maulvis, and others able to interpret complex Western ideas by adapting “the requisite words and terms of expression” from Arabic and Sanskrit for use in the vernacular languages. Only such scholars could be reasonably expected to prepare the necessary textbooks for use in Indian schools, and themselves act as teachers. Instead

of alienating the scholarly class by withdrawing funds from oriental learning, the government should do as much as possible to secure their support and assistance by restoring the funds for their professors and students and the grants for translations, as well as encouraging the more promising of such scholars to pursue their own studies of English language and literature to a high level.

Mill's vision of a gradual modernization of Indian thought and society achieved through the active involvement of the Indian scholarly class may have struck his opponents as too idealistic, much as their contrary ideas appeared "chimerical" to him. But with the benefit of historical hindsight, it may be reasonably conjectured that at least some of the more negative processes of social alienation and polarization associated with less thoughtful promotions of Westernization might have been lessened had his ideas been accorded a more positive official reception and a more sustained programme of support.

Mill's general ideas about socio-economic development in India seem in certain respects to be complementary to his views about the best way to achieve intellectual and educational progress in the Sub-continent. They are not, however, as fully developed or sustained as his educational policies and, indeed, they have to be extracted and even partly deduced from several of his brief general accounts of British Indian land-revenue policy, principally those contained in the *Memo-randum of the Improvements in the Administration of India* and the *Principles of Political Economy*, plus other less formal writings, such as his review of Maine's book on village communities.<sup>103</sup> The lack of a more detailed treatment of these issues is perhaps understandable given that Mill himself had no special or direct responsibility in the Examiner's Office for the preparation of despatches in the Revenue Department. Incidentally, the reasons why Mill's ideas about economic and social development occur within his scattered writings about Indian revenue policy have to do with the central importance of the subject—especially of settlement policy—in the economy of nineteenth-century British India. Upon this policy much else depended, including the financial resources available to the government, the prosperity of the rural economy, and legal rights of landlords and peasant cultivators.

Essentially Mill believed that India's economic and social progress substantially depended upon government support for the *ryots* (peasant cultivators) and the *panchayats* (village councils). He thus approved both the earlier *ryotwari* settlements in Madras and Bombay and the later settlements with the *panchayats* of the North-Western Provinces and Punjab. He likewise argued for the strengthening of the proprietary rights of the *ryots* in Bengal and Oudh over and against the *zamindars* and *taluqdars*, whom he viewed as non-productive landlord classes.

In adopting this general position, Mill was characteristically drawing upon the different strands of his inherited and acquired philosophies. His championing of the *ryots* very much recalls his father's earlier Benthamite stand in their favour. On the other hand, as a liberal individualist, Mill also evidently conceived of the *ryots* as potential agents of agrarian progress to be freed from the oppressions of their landlords and encouraged to improve the value of their lands. At the same time there are also signs of Mill's attachment to historicist values in his approach to these issues. He is, for instance, very pleased to discover historical and other evidence to support

the contention that both *ryots* and *panchayats* had originally held a stronger position in Indian society. To that extent they could be seen by him as representing part of the good already possessed within Indian society which it was the government's moral duty to foster and revivify. The *panchayats* in particular he regarded as part of the real framework of Indian society, fascinating for their apparent evocation of an earlier tradition of the common ownership of land—a favourite theme of Mill's—and encouraging for their evidence of constructive cooperation among local Indian communities.

Mill's ideas and writings about the protected Indian states are of a somewhat different character from what he thought and wrote about major social questions affecting British India. Not only was his official involvement in the affairs of Indian states—the most important part of Political Department business—more intensive and prolonged than his concern with social issues such as law, but the states' affairs themselves were of a peculiarly complex legal and historical nature, not easily reducible to broad policy statements for one who understood their intricacies. In fact, to appreciate Mill's views on the states more clearly, it is first necessary to understand something of their overall political position vis-à-vis the British Indian government during the first half of the nineteenth century.

In general, British relations with the Indian states during this period were largely based upon a system of subsidiary alliance-cum-suzerainty, in which the Government of India normally recognized and even guaranteed the internal sovereignty of the states, while assuming responsibility for their external affairs and power to depute political agents to reside within their borders.<sup>104</sup> However, in practice this system covered a wide variety of political relations based on particular conventions and practices affecting particular states or groups of states. These ranged from the Company's treaties with Oudh, which made British political and military support dependent on the Nawab's achieving some improvement in the state's internal government, to the complex arrangements with the numerous minor rulers of Kathiawar, which gave the Government of India a special residuary power to ensure effective judicial administration within their territories. Moreover, during the later part of Mill's administrative involvement, the overall position of the Indian states was further complicated by the Government of India's tendency to intervene more drastically in their internal affairs, using, for example, the doctrine of lapse (the refusal to allow rulers to adopt heirs when their natural lines had failed) to justify direct annexations. Faced with the need to comment regularly upon particular instances of this complex and evolving system of suzerainty, there was perhaps a natural tendency for someone in Mill's position to limit his views to the particular circumstances of the case, rather than to elaborate grand theories or strategies. Nonetheless, there were also certain fundamental and recurrent issues of policy, such as the pros and cons of the general system of indirect rule and the circumstances under which intervention was deemed to be politically or socially justified, about which Mill was certainly expected to hold views of a general kind.

In so far as his official writings are concerned, there is an embarrassment of riches awaiting the attention of students of Mill's ideas about the states in the form of hundreds of Political Department PCs and Drafts held by the India Office Records in London. So far only a few scholars

have ventured to investigate in detail parts of this vast archive, most recently Robin Moore and Lynn Zastoupil.<sup>105</sup> Their first findings are of considerable interest, revealing certain similarities in Mill's working approach to the problems posed in different areas, as well as offering different interpretations of his more general attitudes towards the states. By contrast, there is comparatively little about the Indian states to be found among Mill's published writings, partly perhaps because of a certain official reticence on his part and partly because, as suggested earlier, the piecemeal complexity of the subject did not lend itself to the formation of a satisfactory overall synthesis. Certain brief indications of his attitudes to the civilizing benefits of indirect rule may, however, be gleaned from portions of his 1858 *Memorandum of the Improvements in the Administration of India*. Somewhat similarly, the Indian states did not figure much in his private correspondence, though, as will be noticed below, a few of his personal letters throw some interesting light on the general principles that lay behind his approach.

With these important reservations, we may now tentatively enquire whether it is possible to discern any general shape for Mill's views about the states. As already mentioned, the recent researches of Moore and Zastoupil have already yielded some important insights on the way Mill approached the thorny question of intervention in states where the Company judged the subsidiary-alliance system was failing to induce the necessary improvements in their internal administration. According to Moore's analysis of Mill's draft despatches concerning relations with Oudh, Mill was converted to an acceptance of the need for direct annexation only during the 1850s, despite the long history of failure in the Company's attempts to bring about some kind of reform and improvement in the Nawab's government. For almost thirty years before the final annexation in 1856 Mill consistently preferred to try every possible intermediate course, ranging from encouragement and cajolery to temporary assumptions of power, to try to secure improvements in the state. On the basis of this and other evidence, Moore concludes that Mill preferred on the whole to work for improvement "by the engraftment of British advice upon princely administration."<sup>106</sup>

Zastoupil's findings about Mill's approach to the problem of lawlessness in the territories of the petty rulers of Kathiawar are not inconsistent with Moore's findings about Mill's Oudh policy, although Zastoupil's general interpretation of Mill's approach differs significantly from Moore's. Zastoupil shows that between 1830 and 1856 Mill abandoned his earlier more punitive approach to the Kathiawar rulers in favour of a constructive and conciliatory policy that encouraged the local rulers to play an active role alongside British officials in settling their subjects' internecine disputes peacefully through local tribunals. Whereas in Oudh the Company's long-standing attempts to induce the Nawab to improve local administration—attempts supported by Mill—ultimately ended in failure and British annexation, the more limited operation of reducing lawlessness in Kathiawar through the agency of the rulers and the courts—also strongly backed by Mill—eventually met with some success.

This view of Mill as substantially committed to a policy of seeking gradual improvements in the internal conditions of the Indian states through advice and influence is also partly confirmed

by his own account of what he saw as the more significant achievements of the Company in its relations with the states.

In the more considerable native states, our influence is exerted on the side of good, in every mode permitted by positive engagement. Not only have the British representatives incessantly, and to a great degree successfully, incited native princes to prohibit and suppress the barbarous usages which we have ceased to tolerate in our own territories; but defects have been pointed out, and improvements suggested, in their revenue and judicial administrations. Financial disorder and general misgovernment have been the subject of grave remonstrance, followed up by such positive marks of displeasure as were consistent with the respective treaties. (152.)

Ever an optimistic educator, Mill then goes on to describe the benefits that had accrued from the Company's policy of instructing young rulers during their minorities "in European knowledge," and initiating them "into public business under the eye of a British officer" (152).

While there is thus some agreement that Mill generally inclined towards a policy of guiding states towards social and administrative improvements, there is also substantial disagreement about the reasons that led him to follow this policy, and uncertainty about the circumstances in which he was ready to abandon it for more radical schemes of intervention and annexation. For example, Moore finally tends to see Mill as a penetrating, non-doctrinaire political analyst, whose more general theories play little part in his practical approach to the problems of the states and of Indian government generally. In particular, Moore concludes that he lacked "any special regard for existing institutions or traditions, except that they formed the given, the datum line in any particular case."<sup>107</sup> Zastoupil, however, sees a significant growing readiness on Mill's part to work with, and respect, existing Indian agencies and practices and even a willingness to empathize with Indian customs, in the interests of achieving overall social progress. He then interprets this approach in terms of the gradual breakaway from his father's more narrow Benthamite principles which Mill achieved during the 1830s, partly under the influence of romantic conservative writers like Coleridge, but also through exposure to the ideas of British Indian administrators, such as Munro, Elphinstone, and Malcolm, who favoured the more sympathetic and positive use of indigenous Indian structures, social groups, and traditions.<sup>108</sup>

Mill himself has provided an interesting retrospective account of the basic grounds upon which he was prepared to abandon indirect rule in favour of direct intervention. In a private letter to John Morley on 26 September, 1866, in which he discusses the justification for the use made by Lord Dalhousie (Governor-General 1848-56) of the doctrine of lapse in annexing different states, he comments:

I approved of all Lord Dalhousie's annexations, except that of Kerouli which never took effect, having been at once disallowed from home & indeed Lord D. himself gave it up before he knew of its having been negatived. My principle was this. Wherever there are really native states, with a nationality, & historical traditions & feelings, which is emphatically the case (for example) with the Rajpoot states, there I would on no account take advantage of any failure of heirs to put an end to them.

But all the Mahomedan (Rampore excepted which descends from Fyzoola Khan the Rohilla chief) & most of the Mahratta kingdoms are not of home growth, but created by conquest not a century ago & the military chiefs & office holders who carry on the government & form the ruling class are almost as much foreigners to the mass of the people as we ourselves are. The Scindia & Holkar families in Central India are foreign dynasties, & of low caste too, Mahrattas who have usurped provinces from their native dynasties of Jats, Goojars, Boondelas &c. The home of the Mahrattas is in the South, & there is no really native Mahratta kingdom now standing except Kolapore. In these modern states created by conquest I would make the continuance of the dynasty by adoption not a right nor a general rule, but a reward to be earned by good government & as such I would grant it freely.<sup>109</sup>

Mill's account offers a number of points of interest, particularly (1) the distinction he tries to draw between "really native states, with a nationality, & historical traditions & feelings," and states more recently created by foreign conquest and usurpation, and (2) his readiness to deploy the threat of annexation by lapse in the case of states belonging to the latter category. In the first place there is something rather unrealistic and subjective about this attempt to draw a clear line between "really native states" and the rest, and to construct a viable policy on the supposed distinction. Indeed, the implied picture of Mill himself weighing the destinies of assorted Indian dynasties from his office in London has a certain cartoon quality about it. One can perhaps see the position he is reaching for as a characteristic blend of utilitarian and historicist values, but the actual formulation given here does not seem easily applicable to the complexities of contemporary Indian polity. It should, of course, also be borne in mind that Mill was writing informally about complex events long after they had happened, and perhaps also wishing to simplify for Morley's benefit.

On another level, Mill's "principle," as described in this letter, is not entirely compatible with either Moore's or Zastoupil's initial conceptions of his fundamental political posture—a little too historicist for the portrait of a non-doctrinaire analyst and a shade too interventionist and utilitarian for the picture of a conciliatory respecter of Indian institutions. Mill, who enjoyed the processes of classification, is not himself easily classified.

These continuing uncertainties and differences of interpretation again underline the importance of carrying out further detailed investigations of Mill's original draft despatches to India in order to arrive at more broadly based conclusions about his policies concerning Indian states. That such an undertaking would also involve making fine judgments on matters of documentary evidence, as well as setting the new data within the wider context of Mill's development as a political philosopher and social theorist, only serves to confirm the substantial challenges that Mill's work still throws out to modern interpreters.

## **Endnotes**

[1] *Autobiography [A]*, *Collected Works [CW]*, I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 83-5. References to material in this volume are given in parentheses in the text.

[2] *Ibid.*, 247, 249.

[3] *Ibid.*, 87.

[4] *Ibid.*, 85.

[5] *Ibid.*, 84n.

[6] *Ibid.*, 85.

[7] For more detailed accounts of the East India Company and the Board of Control, see “Minutes of Evidence Taken before the (House of Commons) Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company; I, Public,” *PP*, 1831-32, IX; “Report from the (House of Commons) Select Committee on Indian Territories: Minutes of Evidence,” *PP*, 1852, X; C.H. Philips, *The East India Company, 1784-1834* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1961); Martin Moir, *A General Guide to the India Office Records* (London: British Library, 1988).

[8] See Martin Moir, “The Examiner’s Office: The Emergence of an Administrative Elite in East India House (1804-58),” *India Office Library and Records Report* (1977), 25-42.

[9] Quoted *ibid.*, 32.

[10] For William McCulloch, see Martin Moir, “The Examiner’s Office and the Drafting of East India Company Despatches,” in *East India Company Studies Papers Presented to Professor Sir Cyril Philips*, ed. Kenneth Ballhatchet and John Harrison (Hong Kong: Asian Research Service, 1986), 135.

[11] India Office Records [IOR]: Court Minutes (9 Apr., 1823), B/175, 1077; Correspondence Committee Minutes (9 Apr., 1823), D/8, 1131-2.

[12] IOR: Correspondence Committee Minutes (9 Apr., 1823), D/8, 1132.

[13] IOR: Court Minutes (21 May, 1823), B/176, 134.

[14] IOR: Accountant General’s Records: Salary Warrants (Dec. 1823), L/AG/9/4/15.

[15] See entries for Mill in Quarterly Salary Warrants in IOR: Accountant General’s Records: Salary Warrants (1824), L/AG/9/4/16.

[16] IOR: Court Minutes (2 Mar., 1825), B/177, 666.

[17] Review by Sir Edward Strachey of Alexander Bain’s *James Mill: A Biography*, *Spectator*, 15 Apr., 1882, 499-500. See also IOR: Sir William Foster’s Notebooks, L/R/5/225, 40-1.

[18] *Spectator*, 24 June, 1882, 828.

[19] IOR: Miscellaneous Letters Received (6 May 1823), E/1/151, 37-45; Court Minutes (23 Apr., 21 May, and 10 June, 1823), B/176, 25, 138, and 192.

[20] IOR: Court Minutes (2 Mar., 1825), B/177, 666-7.



- [21] IOR: Correspondence Committee Reports (19 Feb., 1828), D/77, 294.
- [22] IOR: Correspondence Committee Reports (31 May, 1826), D/74, 77-8.
- [23] IOR: Correspondence Committee Reports (3 Mar., 1827), D/75, 362.
- [24] IOR: Correspondence Committee Reports (19 Feb., 1828), D/77, 293-4; Court Minutes (20 Feb., 1828), B/180.
- [25] IOR: Court Minutes (2 Mar., 1825), B/177, 666-7.
- [26] *A, CW*, I, 137-91.
- [27] IOR: Correspondence Committee Reports (27 Mar., 1834), D/90, 200-1; Court Minutes (8 Apr., 1834), B/187, 663-4.
- [28] IOR: Court Minutes (17 Feb., 1836), B/191, 421.
- [29] IOR: Court Minutes (22 July, 1836), B/192, 444.
- [30] IOR: Court Minutes (30 Aug., 1854), B/228, 928-9; Finance and Home Committee Reports, No. 227 (23 Aug., 1854), L/F/1/90.
- [31] Mill to Nichol (29 Jan., 1837), in *Earlier Letters, 1812-1848*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, Vols. XII-XIII of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), XII, 322. See also IOR: Court Minutes (29 June, 1836), B/192, 283; and Mill to Henry Taylor ([1837]), in *Later Letters, 1848-1873*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, Vols. XIV-XVII of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XVII, 1969-70.
- [32] For the differences between the Indian “policies” of James and John Stuart Mill, see Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 47-50, 240-2, etc.; Lynn Zastoupil, “J.S. Mill and India,” *Victorian Studies*, XXXII (Autumn, 1988), 31-54. See also below, 1.
- [33] IOR: Finance and Home Committee Papers, No. 31 (Apr. 1844), L/F/2/82; Court Minutes (9 Apr., 1844), B/207, 653.
- [34] IOR: Finance and Home Committee Papers, No. 22 (Mar. 1850), L/F/2/132; Mill to Sterling (29 May, 1844), *CW*, XIII, 629; Mill to Chapman (9 Mar., 1847), *CW*, XIII, 708.
- [35] IOR: Court Minutes (13 Mar., 1850), B/219, 851-2.
- [36] In this connection it is interesting to recall the emotional effect that reading a passage in Marmontel’s *Memoirs* had on Mill during his mental crisis of 1826-27 (*A, CW*, I, 145).
- [37] Moir, “The Examiner’s Office: An Administrative Elite,” 37-8, 41-2.
- [38] William Foster, *The East India House. Its History and Associations* (London: Lane, Bodley Head, 1924), 211; Mill to Harriet Mill (6 Jan., 1854), *CW*, XIV, 122-3.
- [39] Foster, *East India House*, 224-5, 238-9; Moir, “The Examiner’s Office and the Drafting of Despatches,” 132, 139.

[40] IOR: Finance and Home Committee Reports (2 July, 1845), L/F/1/22, 429-31; Finance and Home Committee Papers, No. 43 (July 1845), L/F/2/93; see also below, xxxi-xxxii. In Mill's will, Grant and Thornton were named as executors, though in the event they were superseded by Helen Taylor; see *CW*, Vol. XXXI, App. A.

[41] Foster, *East India House*, 215-18; IOR: Sir William Foster's Notebooks, L/R/5/226, 106.

[42] See, for example, Mill's letter to Carlyle of 22 December, 1833, in which he complains that his position at East India House "hampers [his] freedom of action in a thousand ways" (*CW*, XII, 200).

[43] *CW*, XII, 340.

[44] For Mill's list of despatches, see Appendix A.

[45] *Examiner*, 17 May, 1873, 506-8.

[46] *Ibid.*, 506-7. Mill's list of despatches, to which Thornton refers, apparently passed from the custody of the East India Company to that of the India Office in 1858 when the Company was dissolved and Mill himself retired. The volume was subsequently put away in the office and forgotten. It was rediscovered in 1916 among the miscellaneous records of the Political Department, transferred to the India Office Record Department, and added to the Home Miscellaneous Series as Volume 832. It is now included among the European Manuscripts of the India Office Library and Records (MSS Eur B 405). See IOR: Sir William Foster's Notebooks, L/R/5/225, 253; and also Appendix A.

[48] It also seems that Mill was responsible for overseeing the Public and Ecclesiastical drafts prepared by his younger brother, George Grote Mill, between 1844 and 1848 (Moir, "The Examiner's Office and the Drafting of Despatches," 136; see also above, xviii-xix).

[49] *A*, *CW*, I, 87.

[50] In 1828, when Mill became an Assistant to the Examiner, it usually took about six months for letters from the Bengal Government to reach the Company in London. During the 1830s and 1840s the communication system improved considerably as the Company began to employ steamships and to make more use of the Red Sea route. By 1852, when Mill gave his evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee, letters from Bengal usually took about two months to reach London. See also Philips, *East India Company*, 264.

[51] *PP*, 1852, X, 16-17.

[52] Moir, "The Examiner's Office and the Drafting of Despatches," 140-52.

[53] In the evidence he gave to the Parliamentary Select Committee in 1852, Mill stressed the extent to which the directors who then sat on the three committees of the Court of Directors took an active interest in the drafts submitted to them. However, any alterations made by the committees can usually be clearly identified from the records, whereas the earlier part played by the Chairs in the preparation of the PCs is not normally documented. For the functions of the three committees—Finance and Home, Political and Military, and Revenue, Judicial, and Legisla-

tive—which were established in 1834 following the decision to end the Company’s commercial activities, see Moir, *General Guide*, 28-9.

[54] In considering the question of how far Mill’s despatches were altered by the Board, etc., it is important to note that Mill himself omitted over twenty items from his own list of despatches (MSS Eur B405) apparently on the grounds that, though originally prepared by him, they were then so substantially altered by the Board at the PC stage as to cause him to disown them. See those marked with X in Appendix A.

[55] There is some evidence in the L/P&S/6 series of Previous Communications and Drafts that, when faced with particularly difficult or delicate drafts, the Chairs occasionally decided to sound out the President of the Board privately with a “Pre-PC,” i.e., an official draft sent ahead of the more formal PC in order to elicit his first reactions. See, for example, Political PC 9097, concerning Jagirs in the Punjab, sent to the President as a “Pre-PC” in November 1854 (Item 721X in the List of Despatches in Appendix A).

[56] *CW*, XIV, 178; see also 42-3 below for Mill’s comments on the role of the Chairs.

[57] The Charter Act of 1853 (16 & 17 Victoria, c. 95) reduced the number of directors from twenty-four to eighteen, six of whom were to be appointed by the Crown. The Act also abolished the Company’s patronage over Indian civil and military appointments.

[58] IOR: Court Minutes (30 Aug., 1854), B/228, 928-9.

[59] IOR: Court Minutes (28 Mar., 1856), B/231, 1306-7.

[60] *A*, *CW*, I, 247-9. It should be noted that the Examiner’s Office at this time was responsible for the preparation of despatches to India in the Political, Public, Judicial, Legislative, Revenue, Separate Revenue, and Public Works Departments. It was not concerned with Financial or Marine despatches, which were dealt with in the Secretary’s Department, or with Military despatches, which were handled by the Military Secretary. See also Moir, *General Guide*, 31-2.

[61] M.I. Moir, “A Study of the History and Organization of the Political and Secret Departments of the East India Company, the Board of Control and the India Office, 1784-1919” (thesis for London University Diploma in Archive Administration, 1966), 50-2.

[62] For the official careers of John Hawkins and Francis Prideaux, see Moir, “The Examiner’s Office and the Drafting of Despatches,” 133, 138.

[63] *Ibid.*, 131.

[64] *Ibid.*, 134-5.

[65] *Examiner*, 17 May, 1873, 507. See also Appendix A, pp. 293-4.

[66] Despatches to India and Bengal, Judicial No. 47 (12 Nov., 1856), E/4/840, 229.

[67] Moir, “A Study of the Political and Secret Departments,” 106.

[68] *Ibid.*, 101-2. Examples of Mill’s correspondence with the Board of Control on Secret Department business (1856-58) are in Secret Miscellany Book L/P&S/3/1, 440-2, 482-5.

[69] The account given here of the successive Government of India bills between January and August 1858 is mainly based on *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates* [PD], 3rd ser., 1857-58, Vols. 148-51; *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. VI: *The Indian Empire, 1858-1919*, ed. H.H. Dodwell (Delhi: Chand, 1964), 206-12; Sir Courtenay Ilbert, *The Government of India* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), 94-7; and Donovan Williams, *The India Office, 1858-1869* (Hoshiarpur: Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute, 1983), 1-19.

[70] "Correspondence between the First Lord of the Treasury and the Directors of the East India Company Respecting Legislative Measures to be Proposed for the Future Government of Her Majesty's Dominions in India," *Sessional Papers of the House of Lords*, 1857-58, XI, 445-7.

[71] *Ibid.*, 448.

[72] *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 148, col. 970.

[73] *Ibid.* (12 Apr., 1858), Vol. 149, col. 877; for the Resolutions, see *ibid.*, Appendix.

[74] *Cambridge History of India*, VI, 211.

[75] *PD*, 3rd ser., Vol. 151, col. 2369.

[76] *CW*, XV, 560.

[77] *A*, *CW*, I, 249.

[78] IOR: Court Minutes (18 Aug., 1858), B/236, 1345-6.

[79] IOR: Accountant General's Records: Organization of Home Establishment, Entry for J.S. Mill, L/AG/30/12; Accountant General's Records: General Establishment Book, L/AG/21/6/23, 541.

[80] Foster, East India House, 222-5.

[81] There are, of course, also scattered Indian "writings" and references included in other volumes of *CW*, especially in Vols. XII-XIX, and XXII-XXV.

[82] Mill's despatches are listed in Appendix A. Other letters and notes written by Mill in the course of his official duties at East India House will be found in several archive series in the India Office Library and Records, most notably in Secret Home Correspondence, 1856-58, L/P&S/3/1, 47-61. These will be found in *Additional Letters*, Vol. XXXII of *CW*.

[83] *A*, *CW*, I, 249.

[84] See Zastoupil, "J.S. Mill and India," 31-54.

[85] "Coleridge," in *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), X, 121.

[86] Principally in *Considerations on Representative Government* [CRG], in *Essays on Politics and Society*, Vols. XVIII-XIX of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), XIX, 371-577; and *On Liberty*, *CW*, XVIII, 213-310.

[87] *A*, *CW*, I, 26-9, 171-3; George D. Bearce, *British Attitudes towards India, 1784-1858* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 69-78; Stokes, *The English Utilitarians*, 53-6; Alan Ryan, *The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill* (1970; 2nd ed., London: Macmillan, 1987), 177-81.

[88] *On Liberty*, *CW*, XVIII, 224, 272; *CRG*, *CW*, XIX, 377-8, 393-4, 396-7, 401, 406, 413-14.

[89] Cf. *CRG*, *CW*, XIX, 377-8, 567-8.

[90] *Ibid.*, 418-19; cf. *ibid.*, 567.

[91] *Ibid.*, 573.

[92] *Ibid.*, 577.

[93] *CRG*, *CW*, XIX, 573-5; and 36-8, 39, 41, 49-51, 79-80, 84-5, 169-70, and 176 below. However, although Mill believed that the delegated responsibility exercised by the Company had enabled it to develop a tradition of disinterested administration in India, he was largely in favour of recruiting Company civil servants through competitive examinations (see 60, 73).

[94] 51; *CRG*, *CW*, XIX, 567-73.

[95] Mill's gradualist attitude towards Indian self-government, combining a firm view that Indian society was then insufficiently advanced for representative institutions with a cautiously optimistic estimate of its likely future progress towards that goal, needs to be studied further within the wider context of his own position and the contemporary political scene in Britain and India. Not only was Mill's approach conditioned by his *a priori* views of the backwardness of oriental societies, but he may also have been constrained by the circumstances of his own Company employment. For example, within Britain itself, the minority of politicians who were then prepared to take a more radical view of the possibilities of British withdrawal or a measure of constitutional advance for Indians—e.g., Richard Cobden, John Bright, T.C. Anstey, etc.—were also often highly critical of Mill's East India Company employers. The situation for Mill was further complicated by the somewhat separate issue of how far the remaining independent and protected princely states in the Sub-continent should be preserved. See also l-liv below; Bearce, *British Attitudes towards India*, 231-3, 237; Stokes, *English Utilitarians*, 287, 298-9.

[96] But see the pioneer research of Joseph Hamburger, "The Writings of John Stuart Mill and His Father James Mill in the Archives of the India Office," *American Philosophical Society Yearbook*, 1957, 324-6; Abram L. Harris, "John Stuart Mill: Servant of the East India Company," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XXX (1964), 185-202. See also li and liv below.

[97] *CRG*, *CW*, XIX, 396.

[98] *Ibid.*, 570.

[99] See, for instance, Bearce, *British Attitudes towards India*, 282-6; K.A. Ballhatchet, "The Home Government and Bentinck's Educational Policy," *Cambridge Historical Journal*, X (1951), 224-9; R.J. Moore, "John Stuart Mill at East India House," *Historical Studies*, XX (Oct. 1983), 497-519; Mitsuo Takashima, "John Stuart Mill and Indian Education: A Phase of His Work at East India House," *Economia*, No. 99 (Dec. 1988), 7-24.

[100] IOR: Revenue, Judicial, and Legislative Committee Miscellaneous Papers: PC 1828, Recent changes in native education, L/P&J/1/92; Mill to Henry Taylor ([1837]), *CW*, XVII, 1969-70. See also Appendix A, No. 1578X.

[101] *Selections from Educational Records*, Pt. I, ed. H. Sharp (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1920), 131.

[102] IOR: Revenue, Judicial, and Legislative Committee Miscellaneous Papers: PC 1828, L/P&J/1/92. The quotations in this paragraph are from this document.

[103] *Principles of Political Economy*, Vols. II-III of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), II, 121-2, 237, 240-1, 319-23; and 93-111 and 213-28 below. For a full account of Mill's economic ideas in relation to India, and their influence on British Indian administrators, see S. Ambirajan, *Classical Political Economy and British Policy in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

[104] *The Imperial Gazetteer of India: The Indian Empire*, new ed., 26 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907-09), IV, 77-82.

[105] Moore, "John Stuart Mill at East India House"; Zastoupil, "J.S. Mill and India."

[106] Moore, "John Stuart Mill," 508.

[107] *Ibid.*, 518.

[108] Zastoupil, "J.S. Mill and India," 54.

[109] *CW*, XVI, 1202-3.

**VOLUME XXXI - MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS. INTRODUCTION BY JOHN M.  
ROBSON**

SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXXI - Miscellaneous Writings*, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1989). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/238/53522>>.

INTRODUCTION BY JOHN M. ROBSON

The range of volume titles in the *Collected Works* might suggest that “miscellaneous” is redundant in Mill’s case; however, given that the current laws of the political economy of publishing rule out very slender volumes, his breadth of interest has defeated our taxonomical abilities. The label must nevertheless not be seen as denigrating; collectively these materials contribute substantially to a full understanding of Mill’s life and thought, and many have independent value. The following comments are designed to make that statement plausible to any sceptics who may have strayed into these underpopulated Millian territories, although full mapping of them remains a task for cartographers as yet unsighted.

JEREMY BENTHAM AND JAMES MILL

*Rationale of Judicial Evidence*

Mill’s first major work was as an editor, and it is a credit to his capacity and temper that he was able to describe it in his *Autobiography* with such equanimity:

About the end of 1824, or beginning of 1825, Mr. Bentham, having lately got back his papers on Evidence from M. Dumont (whose *Traité des Preuves Judiciaires*, grounded on them, was then first completed and published), resolved to have them printed in the original, and bethought himself of me as capable of preparing them for the press; in the same manner as his *Book of Fallacies* had been recently edited by Bingham I gladly<sup>1</sup> undertook this task, and it occupied nearly all my leisure for about a year, exclusive of the time afterwards spent in seeing the five large volumes through the press. Mr. Bentham had begun this treatise three times, at considerable intervals, each time in a different manner, and each time without reference to the preceding, two of the three times he had gone over nearly the whole subject.<sup>2</sup>

Bentham's project in fact dated back to the early 1800s, as Mill indicates in his Preface of 1827: "The papers, from which the work now submitted to the public has been extracted, were written by Mr. Bentham at various times, from the year 1802 to 1812."<sup>3</sup> There had been several attempts to shape manuscript into book before Etienne Dumont, who had already laboured mightily in the vineyard to squeeze out the 1802 vintage Bentham (*Traité de législation civile et pénale*), succeeded in 1823 with his French redaction, *Traité des preuves judiciaires*. In 1809, when Dumont had just commenced the work that took some fifteen years to complete, Bentham described the early states of the manuscripts to him, partly explaining in the process why Dumont was to take so long:

In reading the old stuff of Years 1803 and 1804 (1804 was part of the way a 2d edition [i.e., version] of 1803) it would be an act of charity or of justice (place it to which account you please) if you would hold a *pencil* in your hand and mark by *canceling lines* such passages as are clearly superseded by the edition of 1808, as on the opposite page.—[Bentham illustrated on a page of this letter.]

still more if with pencil or better still if with pen you would, in such parts as may appear not superseded, make a memorandum indicative of the places in which they may with most propriety be respectively inserted: for example *in* such a Chapter: or *between* such and such a Chapter. viz in the edition of 1808 which contains 14 or 15 Chapters.

If in this way you amend the French, it will be ingratitude in you to grudge doing the same service to the English.<sup>4</sup>

Not only Dumont was acting as a legal aide to Bentham. In the same letter Bentham says that "the whole of Book Circumstantial" in the version of 1808 had been "marginal-contented" by Herbert Koe, then his amanuensis.<sup>5</sup> The pattern is similar to that he adopted in most of his publications, which appeared as edited by disciples, so that, in Sydney Smith's words, Bentham was Bentham to the civilized world "after that eminent philosopher has been washed, trimmed, shaved and forced into clean linen."<sup>6</sup>

Never one to underestimate, Bentham looked for someone to take on "the coal-heavers work of revising, expunging various Sections and polishing," or, as he alternatively phrased it, "revision, with confrontation of the parts, that there may be no repetitions or inconsistencies, or gaps."<sup>7</sup> And even these editorial labours take one only up to the press, not through it, as Dumont had earlier pointed out to Bentham: "Yet what a life—what a galley-slave life is an editor's Correct as he may, faults will remain to tear his soul in pieces—an & is wanting—a word is omitted—a letter misplaced—stops in confusion. Truly a corrector of the press is a galley-slave!"<sup>8</sup>

In addition to Koe, James Mill, newly acquainted with Bentham and dependent on free-lance writing and editing, was enlisted as coal-heaver and galley-slave on the masses of "evidence" manuscript. Ever hopeful, Bentham wrote to his brother on 29 September, 1809: "Evidence—the editing it forms [James] Mill's sole business, and the business of striking out various sections so to fit it for the press goes on prosperously. I hope to see it ready for the press before Christmas—yes considerably before."<sup>9</sup> Mill exerted himself in his usual thorough fashion, giving "a lesson in



reading Benthamic copy” to the printer, who became “far less frightened than he formerly was, or pretended to be”; Mill also was putting in hard days at sections such as “Circumstantial,” which left him “not a little non plused, on more occasions than one, whether to take or reject—unwilling to lose, and yet unwilling to overload,” and “Pre-appointed, . . . a remarkably interesting part, [which] is not for that reason a part the sooner to be got through.”<sup>10</sup> Letters between Dumont and Bentham are full of badinage as well as hints about how the revisions were made,<sup>11</sup> but one letter from James Mill to Bentham best summarizes the labour:

I have this day got to the end of *Exclusion. Impossibility* then is all that remains: and I am at the end of the principal stage of my labours, viz. my operations upon your text,—*i.e.* among your various lections, the making choice of one—the completing of an expression, when, in the hurry of penmanship, it had been left incomplete, etc. Editorial notes, of which we have so often talked, are only thus far advanced, that a variety of rudiments are set down, with references to the places of the work where they should be introduced. But it has often happened to me to find, what I had thought might be added as a note in one place, was given admirably by yourself in another place, and a better place. And in truth, having surveyed the whole, the ground appears to me so completely trod, that I can hardly conceive anything wanting. It is not easy, coming after you, to find anything to pick up behind you. My memory, too, is so overmatched by the vast multiplicity of objects which the work involves, that I am afraid to trust myself in any kind of notes, save suggestions of cases, illustration by instances,—lest what I say should be an idea brought forward in some other part of the work. All this, however, is not intended to operate as an apology or pretext for indolence. Notes there shall be written, and very full ones,—whether these notes shall be printed, is another question.<sup>12</sup>

In October 1811, writing to James Madison, President of the United States, to demonstrate his competence to supply a comprehensive code, Bentham says:

The subject of evidence has been examined in its whole extent and sifted to the bottom. A work of mine on this subject under the title of *The Rationale of Evidence* enough to occupy two moderate sized quarto volumes, has been for some time in the hands of another friend of mine [*i.e.*, James Mill], and will be in the Printers’ hands in the course of about two months.<sup>13</sup>

But such was not to be, and James Mill’s mighty efforts appear to have been wasted. In late November Bentham’s attention turned to what became *An Introductory View of the Rationale of Evidence for the Use of Non-Lawyers as well as Lawyers*, of which 148 pages (about one-third of the whole) were printed by 1812, and the rest was written at that time, but the work was not published until Bowring’s edition in 1843.<sup>14</sup>

And only in 1823 did a much abbreviated version of the *Rationale* itself appear in Dumont’s redaction, *Traité des preuves judiciaires*, which was followed by an anonymous English translation of it. *A Treatise on Judicial Evidence*, in 1825. The younger Mill, saying nothing of his father’s or anyone else’s shaping hand, indicates that all was still to do when his call came.

[The] three masses of manuscript it was my business to condense into a single treatise: adopting the one last written as the groundwork, and incorporating with it as much of the two others as it had not completely superseded I had also to unroll such of Bentham's involved and parenthetical sentences, as seemed to overpass by their complexity the measure of<sup>15</sup> what readers were likely to take the pains to understand It was further Mr. Bentham's particular desire that I should, from myself, endeavour to supply any *lacunae* which he had left: and at his instance I read for this purpose, the most authoritative treatises on the English Law of Evidence, and commented on a few of the objectionable points of the English rules,<sup>16</sup> which had escaped Bentham's notice. I also replied to the objections which had been made to some of his doctrines, by reviewers of Dumont's book, and added a few supplementary remarks on some of the more abstract parts of the subject, such as the theory of improbability and impossibility. The controversial part of these editorial additions was written in a more assuming tone, than became<sup>17</sup> one so young and inexperienced as I was but indeed I had never contemplated coming forward in my own person, and, as an anonymous editor of Bentham. I fell into the tone of my author, not thinking it unsuitable to him or to the subject, however it might be so to me. My name as editor was put to the book after it was printed, at Mr. Bentham's positive desire, which I in vain attempted to persuade him to forego.<sup>18</sup>

The concluding sentences are borne out by correspondence both at the time of publication and when the work was reprinted for the Bowering edition of Bentham's *Works*. While the work was in press (it was published in mid-May 1827),<sup>19</sup> Bentham wrote on 18 April:

Dear John

It is matter of no small surprise to me to see the title page without your name to it Nothing could be more clearly understood between us than that it should be there I do not say that the word title page was used on that occasion—but such was the meaning. If what you have done has been written under a different impression, so much the worse for me—and if the book be good for any thing, for the [world?] at large.

To this Mill replied:

I certainly did not understand you to have expressed any desire that my name should be in the title page. Nevertheless, if you positively require it, I am willing that it should be so, rather than that you should imagine I had taken less pains with the work under the idea of its being (so far as I am concerned) anonymous. But I confess I should greatly prefer that my name should be omitted. That the work should be benefited by it is out of the question. I myself might be benefited inasmuch as it would prove that you thought me worthy to be the editor of a work of yours. But on the other hand very little of the labour which I have bestowed upon the book appears on the face of it, or can be known to any one who was not acquainted with the MS. If my name were annexed to it people would think that I wished to make a parade ei-

ther of your good opinion [of] me, or of the few notes which I have added.<sup>20</sup> The notes are not of sufficient value to make it of any consequence to the public to know who wrote them—I should be very sorry to be suspected of wishing to obtain a reputation at a cheap rate by appearing before the public under the shelter of your name.

Bentham's brief response on 24 April was decisive: "My dear John / Your name is of far too great importance to the work to be omitted in the title page to it." Mill's immediate acceptance is lost, but Bentham's confirmation (still on the 24th) is again typical: "Dear John / Amen. If you know not what that word means send to the Booksellers for a Hebrew Dictionary." "P.S. Name at the end of the Preface."<sup>21</sup>

So much for modesty and deference. After the *Rationale* was published, the editor's close friend, John Arthur Roebuck, reviewing the work in the house journal, the *Westminster Review*, gave little away:

On the labour of the editor we are hardly entitled to give an opinion; not knowing the state of the papers from which he has compiled the work, we are unable to judge in how much we are indebted to him for the order and regularity which the work at present evinces. The notes and additions he has supplied are few, but those few are judicious they are short and to the purpose.<sup>22</sup>

And the *Law Magazine*, which says Mill edited the work "with great ability," and in a later article judges that he "contributed by far the most valuable part of the chapter on conclusive evidence,"<sup>23</sup> can have given only pleasure. But through William Empson's pen, the old enemy, the *Edinburgh Review*, gave the reviewer's sting that brought on Mill's allergic regret about his tone. In the course of a thorough thrashing of the author, Empson takes but a little breath before turning on the editor.

Mr Mill, junior, is not likely to have underrated the importance of the trust confided to him by Mr Bentham . . . ; yet, unless they were persuaded, upon Hindoo principles, that he was born of a legal caste, and that therefore talents of this description must be hereditary; or unless they took the fiction, by which every Englishman is supposed to be acquainted with the law, for a reality, we think that both parties would have exercised a sounder discretion—the one in not reposing, the other in not accepting, such a charge. Considering that Mr Bentham's own experience of the law of England must have been long suspended, and can have been at best only an acquaintance with principles rather than details, an accurate knowledge of this despised part of jurisprudence became an indispensable qualification on the part of his assistant—the groom, to whom a colt, so naturally wild, and so peculiarly circumstanced, was made over to be physicked, broken in, and got ready for the fair. If it were likely that a pamphlet might be compiled of the minor inaccuracies of the original, there could be no object in leaving more than a given portion of them uncorrected, and it was surely quite unnecessary to add supplemental errors in the notes.

And perhaps equally unnecessary for the reviewer to add:

The cannon's roar in the text is, throughout, ludicrously accompanied by a discharge of the editor's pocket-pistol in the note. The deep growl that mutters from above, is followed by a snap and a snarl from below; so that, in the place of any instructive commentary, or even reproof, there is a long reproachful howl, which reminds one of nothing philosophical and scholastic—except possibly it may be the accompaniment with which a litter of young Cynics used to attend the lectures at Diogenes's Tub.<sup>24</sup>

The riposte in the *Westminster* to the *Edinburgh's* attack on the *Rationale* included only a brief allusion to the youthful editor, in which the usual irony against the *Edinburgh* is blunt. Offering the reviewer's constant plea of limited space, the anonymous friend says:

We must leave Mr Mill, junior, under rebuke for having found fault with the English law, lacking the knowledge of a craftsman; while it is confessed that the law should be level and accessible to all understandings—when the very accusation of ignorance becomes a condemnation of the thing indicated. . . .<sup>25</sup>

There can be no doubt that Mr. Mill, junior, agreed that he had taken the prudence out of jurisprudence, and when in 1837, a decade older and proportionately wiser, he was approached by John Hill Burton about the reprinting of the *Rationale* in the collected edition, his response indicates a lingering smart: "If it is proposed to reprint, along with the *Rationale of Evidence*, my preface & notes, I should like much to see the proofs, as there are various things in the notes which I regret having published. Otherwise I have nothing to suggest."<sup>26</sup> On Burton's urging, he took second thought, and suggested the suppression of the note at I, 126 (15-16 below), then adding:

But I should wish my signature, at the end of the preface, & all mention of my name, to be omitted. I never intended to put my name to the book in any shape, & only did so because Mr Bentham insisted on it, & I feared that if I persisted in my refusal he would think I had done my work so ill as to be ashamed to avow it.

I should also wish a paragraph to the effect of that on the opposite page, to be added in brackets, at the end of the preface.<sup>27</sup>

That paragraph was the basis of the addition to the preface in the Bowring edition, in which Mill anonymously apologizes for "the air of confident dogmatism perceptible in some of [the] notes and additions," excused partly by "their having been written in very early youth," and partly by his belief that they would be anonymous, and so should be "accordant with the spirit of the work itself, and in Mr. Bentham admissible. . . ." "His name," he concludes truthfully if in the exculpatory third person, "was subsequently affixed, contrary to his own strongly expressed wish, at the positive desire of the venerable author, who certainly had a right to require it."<sup>28</sup> After sending the paragraph to Burton, Mill wrote again to suggest further adding the words (quoted above from the final version) "and in Mr. Bentham admissible":

Otherwise I shall have the appearance of censuring the tone of the work, which I am very far indeed from intending. I still wish to suppress any direct mention of my name, not to prevent it from being known to the reader if he chuses to enquire about

it which I know cannot be done, but because its suppression is as it were, an act of disavowal as to any appropriateness in the notes and additions to my present frame of mind, and because I do not like to perk in the face of the world in general that the person known by my name has written things which he is ashamed of, when my name has never in any instance been put to writings I am not [*sic*] ashamed of.<sup>29</sup>

One must not assume, however, that the experience was a disaster for Mill. His account, written, it should be recalled, some thirty years after the editing, concludes with a passage that emphasizes individual without entirely forgetting general utility:

The time occupied in this editorial work was extremely well employed in respect to my own improvement. The *Rationale of Judicial Evidence* is one of the richest in matter of all Bentham's productions. The theory of evidence being in itself one of the most important of his subjects, and ramifying into most of the others, the book contains, very fully developed, a great proportion of all his best thoughts, while, among more special things; it comprises the most elaborate exposure of the vices and defects of English law, as it then was, which is to be found in his works; not confined to the law of evidence, but including, by way of illustrative episode, the entire procedure or practice of Westminster Hall. The direct knowledge, therefore, which I obtained from the book, and which was imprinted upon me much more thoroughly than it could have been by mere reading, was itself no small acquisition. But this occupation<sup>30</sup> did for me what might seem less to be expected, it gave a great start to my powers of composition. Everything which I wrote subsequently to this editorial employment, was markedly superior to anything that I had written before it.<sup>31</sup> Bentham's later style, as the world knows, was heavy and cumbersome, from the excess of a good quality, the love of precision . . . But his earlier style . . . is a model of liveliness and ease combined with fulness of matter, scarcely ever surpassed: and of this earlier style there were many striking specimens in the manuscripts on Evidence, all of which I endeavoured to preserve. So long a course of this admirable writing had a considerable effect upon my own. . . .<sup>32</sup>

Given the striking stylistic differences between Mill's journalism and speeches in his apprentice years and in the early 1830s, there is no reason to question this assessment. Nor can one doubt that his practised diligence and beaverish industry were helped into habit by the work. Also, the sheer bulk of the *Rationale* calls for the kind of commendation too often denied to editors.<sup>33</sup> In this respect, the skill of the youngster would command the highest of meagre wages paid such diligent servants (present coal-heavers and galley-slaves excepted). The heaviest demands were made by Bentham's manuscripts themselves—the hand-writing execrable, the fragmentary state of the references and the allusiveness exhausting, the repetitions with variation mind-destroying.

As to the benefit to Mill of the content, some debate is possible, but the coincidence of Bentham's major themes<sup>34</sup> with Mill's own cast of thought is hardly accidental or trivial. In general, one can point to the epistemological, psychological, and logical speculations in the *Rationale* as reflected throughout Mill's writings. The last is most obvious, though no pushing of slender infer-

ence would justify asserting that Mill's *System of Logic* grew directly and solely out of his editing of Bentham's *Rationale*, for he had begun the study of logic in early youth, had written his "Traité de Logique" (derivative as it was) in 1820-21, and had worked hard on the subject with his fellow "Students of Mental Philosophy" during the mid-1820s.<sup>35</sup> But he began seriously considering writing on "the science of science itself, the science of investigation—of method,"<sup>36</sup> not long after the appearance of the *Rationale*. And the interconnections are significant. In the first place, the examination of evidence is at the centre of induction.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, Bentham's discussion of probability and improbability prompted some of Mill's more interesting notes (e.g., 17-18, 28-32) that adumbrate his speculations in the *Logic*.<sup>38</sup> Bentham's attention to psychological factors is less obviously manifest in Mill's work, but is consonant with his discussions not only in the *Logic* but in his social thought.

More pervasive, especially in Mill's newspaper writings at the time, and his strenuous propagandism for the Philosophic Radical programme, is what L.J. Hume identifies as Bentham's "single intellectual enterprise" between 1802 and 1822, "the development of a campaign against misrule in all its forms."<sup>39</sup> The centrality of the *Rationale* in this enterprise is obvious in such statements as "Evidence is the basis of Justice,"<sup>40</sup> and the young Mill, though not subtle about the meaning of "justice," certainly worked for his mentors' version of it. Probably the most telling example, linking cause with effect, is the note attacking the dicta of the moral-sense schools, beginning "An appropriate name for this class of phrases would be *covers for dogmatism*; an appellation indicating the property common to them all, of serving as cloaks for ipse-dixitism . . ." (15). This passage echoes tone for tone the chapter in Bentham's *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* that Mill repeatedly cited in his own polemical essays on ethics<sup>41</sup>—his reason for suppressing it in Bowring's edition is not at all obvious, as repetition is the norm rather than the exception in that edition, and Mill used the same material in his well-known essay on Bentham in the *London and Westminster* in 1838, and developed part of the argument further in his essay on Nature, written in the 1850s. Furthermore, the argument appears in other guise at 90, where the statement that the "love of justice" is not innate interestingly anticipates the final chapter of *Utilitarianism*.

Apart from absorbing general tenets, Mill must also have stocked his capacious mind with considerable information, for Bentham's quirky text is as full of matter as of mannerism, and abounds in suggestive and telling opinion. However, much of this matter (as well as the general tenets) was also found elsewhere in Bentham's and James Mill's writings (including the latter's Commonplace Books), as well as in the intense Radical discussions and ephemeral journalism, and tracing any specific notion in the younger Mill's work to the editing of the *Rationale* is uncertain. In his many general allusions to Bentham's thought he of course touches on ideas found in the *Rationale* as well as in other writings of a genius not liable to single utterance of insights, and, curiously enough, the central issue of the *Rationale* stayed with Mill, though it occupies almost no place in his own concerns. In a letter to Cliffe Leslie, the comment, late and solicited, is definite:

I agree with you in going the complete length with Bentham as to the admissibility of evidence. There are I believe frequent cases like that you mention, of practical

mischief both to the accused & to others from his not being examined as a witness. The one point on which alone B seems to me to be wrong is in allowing the judge to interrogate.<sup>42</sup>

Apart from the fundamental issues raised in the *Rationale*, specific points and applications can be seen in Mill's writings, especially those of the 1820s, many of which, as he said, dwelt on "some defect of the law, or misdoings of the magistracy or the courts of justice,"<sup>43</sup> and, as he might have added, the inutility of oaths, the culpability of "Judge and Co.," and the absurdities of technical obstructions. However, on the whole Mill took comparatively little interest in most legal questions, the early decision not to enter the Inns of Court being as decisive as that not to go to Cambridge. His mind did not take a legal bent, and so, even allowing for his youth and inexperience, it is not surprising to find little obvious originality in his notes and additions, which had not even the energy derived from self-prompting. Still, Roebuck's remark quoted above hardly seems adequate (though it would be welcomed by the present editor): "The notes and additions [the editor] has supplied are few, but those few are judicious: they are short and to the purpose." First, Mill's contributions are not really few or short: they number about seventy, plus forty-two referential footnotes, and while some are perfunctory and several, appropriately brief, concern the text (e.g., 13, 24, 24-5), bring information up to date (e.g., 38, 45), or give internal references (e.g., 33), the majority are substantive, including definitions (e.g., 11, 12, 18), illustrations (e.g., 18-19), and corrections (e.g., 22-3, 28-30, 30-2, 49, 50—this last is specially interesting, as it uses information from James Mill's *History of India*).<sup>44</sup>

Were Mill's contributions "to the purpose"? To judge that they are seems apposite. In substance Mill did not overreach himself or his brief, although it must be admitted that Bentham's extravagant play of mind makes pontification about proper exclusion or inclusion difficult. The critic who has looked most closely at Bentham's writings on adjective law, William Twining, is enthusiastic about Mill's general contribution, saying that it

must rank as one of the most remarkable editorial feats in history. Anyone who has had occasion to work with Bentham manuscripts will recognise the magnitude of the task, the crabbed script, the convoluted prose, the tendency to repetition and, above all, the sheer volume of the material, are enough to daunt committed and experienced editors.

But, he adds,

The quality of the achievement is less easy to assess. Mill succeeded in organising the material into a reasonably coherent structure; he judiciously preserved many eloquent passages in Bentham's early, more direct, style; no doubt he made it more readable than the original manuscripts, although much of it falls far short of the clarity and simplicity of Dumont. Mill competently filled in a number of gaps; he was generally scrupulous in identifying passages of which he was the author and in indicating points where he disagreed with Bentham. His youth and his lack of training may have been an advantage in allowing him to approach the task boldly with few

inhibitions, yet there is little to suggest that he misrepresented, distorted or suppressed any of Bentham's views.<sup>45</sup>

The longest of Mill's substantive additions, especially 70-83 and 84-90, quite justify Twining's judgment about the extraordinary nature of the editing.<sup>46</sup> In them particularly he seems to be saying what would be "in Mr. Bentham admissible," though he is less spectacular than his mentor; the imitation is so close, indeed, that at times two readings are needed to get at the syntax, though in Mill's passages no more are generally required to get at the sense.

Were Mill's contributions, in spite of his own later doubts, "judicious"? In rebuking the *Edinburgh* for its earlier sins (see esp. 57-64, 64-6), Mill did not go near the limits of the journal warfare of the time,<sup>47</sup> but should have expected the spirited rebuff he received after making such comments on the *Edinburgh's* reviewer as: "But I waste time, and fill up valuable space, in arguing seriously against such solemn trifling" (66). The "pocket-pistol" comment presumably was prompted by the heavy irony against lawyers found throughout (see, e.g., 46, 46-8), as well as the attacks on religion (e.g., 54-5). And Mill's adoption of an ethical stance learned from his father is not endearing: "After an attentive consideration . . . , the reader will probably join with me . . ." (30). Apart from these local and political short-term reverberations, the evidence suggests, as he might have said, that a less bellicose and dismissive tone would have been appropriate, even though it would have left Bentham alone on the provocative salient he himself typically advanced.

#### *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*

The circumstances of Mill's other major editorial work were quite different; though his intimate study of his father's *Analysis* began even before he started work on the *Rationale* in 1824-25, his edition of the *Analysis* was one of his last literary projects, appearing in 1869. It must be seen, therefore, as a much more carefully considered endeavour, and one that reflects lifelong intellectual and indeed personal concerns.

The *Autobiography* gives the initial context. James Mill, says his son, "could only command the concentration of thought necessary for this work, during the complete leisure of his holiday of a month or six weeks annually"; and he commenced the *Analysis*

in the summer of 1822, in the first holiday he passed at Dorking; in which neighbourhood, from that time to the end of his life, with the exception of two years, he lived, as far as his official duties permitted, for six months of every year. He worked at the *Analysis* during several successive vacations, up to the year 1829, when it was published, and allowed me to read the manuscript, portion by portion, as it advanced.<sup>48</sup>

After its publication J.S. Mill enlisted others in the regime of careful reading and study to which he attributed so much. Describing the activities of the "Students of Mental Philosophy," which met twice a week in George Grote's house, beginning in 1825 (that is, while the youthful employee of the East India Company was, very much *inter alia*, editing Bentham), Mill says that one of them read aloud a section of the work under study (they started with James Mill's *Elements*



of *Political Economy*), after which discussion began, “any one who had an objection or other remark to make” being heard.

Our rule was to discuss thoroughly every point raised, whether great or small, prolonging the discussion until all who took part were satisfied with the conclusion they had individually arrived at, and to follow up every topic of collateral speculation which the chapter or the conversation suggested, never leaving it until we had untied every knot which we found. We repeatedly kept up the discussion of some one point for several weeks, thinking intently on it during the intervals of our meetings. . . .

After political economy, they turned to logic, and then “launched into analytic psychology,” beginning with David Hartley.

When we had finished Hartley, we suspended our meetings; but, my father’s *Analysis of the Mind* being published soon after, we reassembled for the purpose of reading it. With this our exercises ended. I have always dated from these conversations my own real inauguration as an original and independent thinker. It was also through them that I acquired, or very much strengthened, a mental habit to which I attribute all that I have ever done, or ever shall do, in speculation; that of never accepting half-solutions of difficulties as complete; never abandoning a puzzle, but again and again returning to it until it was cleared up; never allowing obscure corners of a subject to remain unexplored, because they did not appear important; never thinking that I perfectly understood any part of a subject until I understood the whole.<sup>49</sup>

It is surely not fanciful to hear an echo of this discussion in the Preface that Mill supplied for the edition of the *Analysis* in 1869. At its conclusion he suggests that the best way to approach the edition is to read James Mill’s text first (perhaps a chapter at a time); when the “student has done all he can with the author’s own exposition—has possessed himself of the ideas, and felt, perhaps, some of the difficulties, he will be in a better position for profiting by any aid that the notes may afford, and will be in less danger of accepting, without due examination, the opinion of the last comer as the best” (104).

It cannot now be determined how much the detailed scrutiny by the Students of Mental Philosophy in 1829 contributed to the notes Mill wrote for the edition of 1869,<sup>50</sup> but it is certain that he himself had “become possessed . . . of the ideas, and felt . . . some of the difficulties,” and one may assume, given his devotion to the *Analysis*, that many of the points tackled forty years later were originally puzzles that had been again and again returned to until cleared up. He was loyal almost to a fault to his father’s writings, even paying for a reissue—without notes—of the little read and polemically narrow *Fragment on Mackintosh* after he had contracted with Longmans for the second edition of the *Analysis*.<sup>51</sup> Throughout his life he referred to the virtues of the *Analysis*, which it would appear he valued above the work that established James Mill’s reputation and career, the generally more appreciated *History of British India*.

His first tribute appeared in 1833, in an appendix to Lytton Bulwer’s *England and the English* that, if not directly written, was certainly prompted by Mill.

As a searcher into original truths, the principal contribution which Mr. Mill has rendered to philosophy, is to be found in his most recent work, *The Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*. Nothing more clearly proves what I have before asserted, viz.—our indifference to the higher kind of philosophical investigation, than the fact, that no full account—no *criticism* of this work has appeared in either of our principal Reviews.<sup>52</sup>

After quickly summarizing the doctrine, and suggesting that some points should be contended, the notice continues:

The moment in which this remarkable work appeared is unfortunate for its temporary success. Had it been published sixty years ago—or perhaps sixty years hence, it would perhaps have placed the reputation of its author beyond any of his previous writings.<sup>53</sup>

In the next year Mill recommended his “father’s metaphysical work” warmly to J.P. Nichol, offering him a copy,<sup>54</sup> and there was no diminution of his admiration after James Mill’s death, as is evident in the paragraph he contributed to Andrew Bisset’s article on James Mill in the 7th ed. (1842) of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

Mr. Mill’s ingenuity as a very acute and original metaphysician was abundantly displayed in his *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, published in 1829. In this work he evinced analytical powers rarely, if ever, surpassed; and which have placed him high in the list of those subtle inquirers who have attempted to resolve all the powers of the mind into a very small number of simple elements. Mr. Mill took up this analysis where Hartley had left it, and applied the same method to the more complex phenomena, which the latter did not attempt to explain. From the general neglect of metaphysical studies in the present age, this work, which, at some periods of our history, would have placed its author on a level, in point of reputation, with the highest names in the republic of letters, has been less read and appreciated than his other writings.<sup>55</sup>

Though in 1853, being busy with other work and probably disaffected from John Chapman, he resisted Chapman’s suggestion that he publish “notes to the Analysis,”<sup>56</sup> he continued actively to promote and recommend it.<sup>57</sup> He became immersed again in the experientialists’ battle with the intuitionists during the writing and revision of his *Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy* and was reminded of his early activities and friends during his campaign for the parliamentary borough of Westminster in 1865, so it is not surprising that his father’s work should be in his mind during the parliamentary recess of 1867. He decided to settle down in Avignon to a “winter’s work which will not be political or economical but psychological.” “I am,” he told his associate and friend W.T. Thornton, “going to prepare in concert with Bain a new edition of my father’s *Analysis of the Mind* with notes and supplementary matter. This will be not only very useful but a very great relief by its extreme unlikeness to parliamentary work & to parliamentary semi-work or idleness.”<sup>58</sup>

Alexander Bain, mentioning that the work began in that recess, says it was finished in 1868, and comments: "I had necessarily a long correspondence with him on the allocation of topics; but each of us took our own line in regard to the doctrines."<sup>59</sup> An undated but obviously preliminary list in Mill's hand of "Notes required" seriously underestimates the work to be done:

1. On latent feelings; & the question whether sensations of which we have no memory, have ever been in consciousness.
2. On the ignoring in the Analysis, of all direct action on ideas by external stimuli operating on the brain: no production of ideas being recognised save by sensations & association.
3. (Bain) The nervous character of ideation.
4. (Bain) The parts of speech.
5. To correct the philology of conjunctions & prepositions.<sup>60</sup>

At that point Bain clearly had been recruited, but the lack of a name against the final point suggests that the philologist Alexander Findlater had not yet been asked, and there is no indication that the assistance of George Grote (probably James Mill's most consistent admirer) had been solicited on questions of Greek philosophy.

Mill's account in his *Autobiography* (written soon after the publication of the edition early in 1869) deals with these matters, and emphasizes his continued hopes for the *Analysis's* much-delayed success as well as his explanation for its failure:

. . . I commenced (and completed soon after I had left Parliament) the performance of a duty to philosophy and to the memory of my father, by preparing and publishing an edition of the *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind* with notes bringing up the doctrines of that admirable book to the latest improvements in science and in speculation.<sup>61</sup> This was a joint undertaking: the psychological notes being furnished in about equal proportions by Mr. Bain and myself, while Mr. Grote supplied some valuable contributions on points in the history of philosophy incidentally raised, and Dr. Andrew Findlater supplied the deficiencies in the book which had been occasioned by the imperfect philological knowledge of the time when it was written.<sup>62</sup> Having been originally published at a time when the current of metaphysical speculation ran in a quite opposite direction to the psychology of Experience and Association, the *Analysis* had not obtained the amount of immediate success which it deserved, though it had made a deep impression on many individual minds, and had largely contributed, through those minds, to create that more favourable atmosphere for the Association Psychology of which we now have the benefit. Admirably adapted for a class-book of the Experience Metaphysics, it only required to be enriched, and in some cases corrected, by the results of more recent labours in the same school of thought, to stand, as it now does, in company with Mr. Bain's treatises, at the head of the systematic works on Analytic psychology.<sup>63</sup>

There can be no doubt that, as in the *Autobiography* itself, in the new edition of the *Analysis* the two motives, loyal devotion to his father and active service in the war against intuitionism, were

genuine, united, and indeed inseparable. Though in early near-apostate moments, especially when manoeuvring to stay close to John Sterling, he could admit doubts, the saving words are present—for example in the following passage, “your need,” “bad moods,” “if I could”:

I am very far from agreeing, in all things, with the “Analysis,” even on its own ground—though perhaps, from your greater distance, the interval between me & it may appear but trifling. But I can understand your need of something beyond it & deeper than it, & I have often bad moods in which I would most gladly postulate like Kant a different ultimate foundation “subjectiver bedürfnisses willen” if I could.<sup>64</sup>

Normally the allegiance is clear. In a passage not found in the Early Draft of his *Autobiography*, he says of his father:

leaving out of the reckoning all that portion of his labours in which he benefitted by what Bentham had done, and counting only what he achieved in a province in which Bentham had done nothing, that of analytic psychology, he will be known to posterity as one of the greatest names in that most important branch of speculation, on which all the moral and political sciences ultimately rest, and will mark one of the essential stages in its progress.<sup>65</sup>

And he emphasizes the link between his own major work and the *Analysis* when explaining the polemical purpose of his *System of Logic*:

the chief strength of this false philosophy [the intuitive] in morals, politics, and religion, lies in the appeal which it is accustomed to make to the evidence of mathematics and of the cognate branches of physical science. To expel it from these, is to drive it from its stronghold: and because this had never been effectually done, the intuitive school, even after what my father had written in his *Analysis of the Mind*, had in appearance, and as far as published writings were concerned, on the whole the best of the argument.<sup>66</sup>

Again, explaining his purpose in assailing Hamilton, Mill says:

That philosophy [the intuitional metaphysics], not always in its moderate forms, had ruled the thought of Europe for the greater part of a century. My father’s *Analysis of the Mind*, my own *Logic*, and Professor Bain’s great treatise, had attempted to reintroduce a better mode of philosophizing, latterly with quite as much success as could be expected. . . .<sup>67</sup>

About the intentions, then, nothing more need be said. About the effect, there is little to be claimed specifically for the *Analysis*. Of course, though the details are moot and the history tangled, twentieth-century Anglo-American philosophy drew much impetus from the experientialist school and much of its energy from opposing the heirs of the intuitionists, and experimental psychologists, who have shown little interest in their antecedents, owe a considerable debt to the associationists. But it cannot be argued that the second edition of James Mill’s *Analysis* in itself contributed much more to the tradition than its first edition. And that little more — a very little — is traceable to interest in John Stuart Mill’s notes, which have attracted some modest attention in relation not to his father or to the experiential school but to his own thought.

Mill's notes to the *Analysis*, like those to the *Rationale*, may be categorized according to purpose and content. A few are merely locative (e.g., 107, 108), while many are critical of James Mill's terminology (e.g., 104-5, 123, 153, 198-9). Not surprisingly, there are frequent eulogies of author and work: "This exposition of Naming . . . is one of those specimens of clear and vigorous statement, going straight to the heart of the matter, and dwelling on it just long enough and no longer than necessary, in which the *Analysis* abounds" (122-3); "The doctrine of this chapter ["Conception"] is as just as it is admirably stated" (141).<sup>68</sup>

Many of the most interesting notes involve an expansion and elucidation of James Mill's ideas.<sup>69</sup> But the dominant kind are those in which such expansion and elucidation are marked by overt or strongly implied criticism. He is hardest on James Mill in the discussions of general names, classification, connotation and denotation, memory and expectation, the import of propositions, attention, will, and belief.<sup>70</sup> But the tone is appropriately gentle, as befits the relation between this editor and author: "The theory of Predication here set forth, stands in need of further elucidation, and perhaps of some correction and addition" (128). Mill can, however, be forthright: "I am unable to feel the force of this remark" (132). Probably the best illustrations of his tone come in passages where he strives for balance:

The reason assigned by the author for considering association by resemblance as a case of association by contiguity, is perhaps the least successful attempt at a generalisation and simplification of the laws of mental phenomena, to be found in the work. It ought to be remembered that the author, as the text shews, attached little importance to it. And perhaps, not thinking it important, he passed it over with a less amount of patient thought than he usually bestowed on his analyses. (120.)

That the pleasures or pains of another person can only be pleasurable or painful to us through the association of our own pleasures or pains with them, is true in one sense, which is probably that intended by the author, but not true in another, against which he has not sufficiently guarded his mode of expression (219).<sup>71</sup>

For students of J.S. Mill's thought, there is much to engage the attention. Generally, his associationism is laid out in much more detail here than elsewhere, especially if one takes into account his explicit and implied approval of James Mill's account and his explicit acceptance or modification of the views of Bain<sup>72</sup> and Spencer.<sup>73</sup> In Bain's words: "The work contains perhaps the best summary of his psychological opinions, although the *Hamilton* shows them in the more stirring shape of polemics."<sup>74</sup> That "stirring shape" can, of course, be discerned, as Hamilton, Mackintosh, and other intuitionists are not spared. The battle is joined most obviously at 117-19, and in the final chapters, but there are skirmishes throughout (e.g., 181-3), and no one could escape the conclusion that the rallying cry on all fronts is "Experience!"

As a result, useful parallel accounts and modifications of questions that occupy Mill elsewhere are found in these notes. Matters dealt with in his *System of Logic* recur, for instance in reference to syllogism (175). His brisk encounters with Samuel Bailey over Berkeley's theory of vision are revived (156),<sup>75</sup> and the account of personal identity (211-13) recalls parts of his *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*. The most compelling modifications relate to moral theory, the notes

to Chaps. xix ff., especially in their bearing on the development of moral feeling through sympathy, being essential to a full appreciation of Mill's utilitarianism (particularly the long note at 231-42).<sup>76</sup> Another interesting discussion, not duplicated elsewhere in his limited accounts of aesthetic issues, is that of beauty (223-6), where he reveals an acquaintance with aspects of Coleridge's and Ruskin's views.<sup>77</sup>

Here, indeed, interpretation moves close to biography. The notes contain a few pleasing personal touches, as when in using a typical philosopher's illustration, he says he has seen Lafayette (174); for the fact, see his *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 179. Also, he refers to ascending Skiddaw (212-13), an experience that occupies an important place in his walking tour of the Lake District.<sup>78</sup> His mention of the effect of music (222) has individual experience at its core, and when he then refers to the colour of flowers the feeling is powerfully manifest:

My own memory recals to me the intense and mysterious delight which in early childhood I had in the colours of certain flowers; a delight far exceeding any I am now capable of receiving from colour of any description, with all its acquired associations. And this was the case at far too early an age, and with habits of observation far too little developed, to make any of the subtler combinations of form and proportion a source of much pleasure to me. This last pleasure was acquired very gradually, and did not, until after the commencement of manhood, attain any considerable height. (223.)

Once more, the evidence of the gradual growth of pleasure in form and proportion is found in his walking-tour journals, where the Romantic picturesque is applied in personal ways. In the same passage dealing with colour and music, Mill's apparently general comment has at its heart his interpretation of his own sensibility in comparison with that of his wife:

The susceptibility to the physical pleasures produced by colours and musical sounds, (and by forms if any part of the pleasure they afford is physical), is probably extremely different in different organisations. In natures in which any one of these susceptibilities is originally faint, more will depend on association. The extreme sensibility of this part of our constitution to small and unobvious influences, makes it certain that the sources of the feelings of beauty and deformity must be, to a material extent, different in different individuals. (223.)<sup>79</sup>

The main biographical interest, however, must centre on Mill's comments about his father. When his discussion in the *Autobiography* of James Mill's denigration of the feelings is recalled, the note to the *Analysis* in which he says that the author undervalued the role of the "animal" as compared with the "mental, or intellectual" part of human nature stands out boldly (220-1). In another passage in the *Autobiography* Mill shortly but memorably mentions one of James Mill's shortcomings: "A defect running through his otherwise admirable modes of instruction, as it did through all his modes of thought, was that of trusting too much to the intelligibility of the abstract, when not embodied in the concrete."<sup>80</sup> In the Preface to the *Analysis*, he expands on the failure, though with his usual sense of needed justification:

an opening was made for some mistakes, and occasional insufficiency of analysis, by a mental quality which the author exhibits not unfrequently in his speculations, though as a practical thinker both on public and on private matters it was quite otherwise; a certain impatience of detail. The bent of his mind was towards that, in which also his greatest strength lay; in seizing the larger features of a subject—the commanding laws which govern and connect many phenomena. Having reached these, he sometimes gives himself up to the current of thoughts which those comprehensive laws suggest, not stopping to guard himself carefully in the minutiae of their application, nor devoting much of his thoughts to anticipating all the objections that could be made, though the necessity of replying to some of them might have led him to detect imperfections in his analyses. (102-3.)

The most telling parallel, however, is found between the accounts of James Mill's character and moral effect on the young in the *Autobiography* and in the Preface to the *Analysis*. It is tempting to quote the former at length, but one extract will perhaps be sufficient to suggest the whole.

My father's moral inculcations were at all times mainly those of the "Socratici viri", justice, temperance (to which he gave a very extended application), veracity, perseverance, readiness to encounter pain and especially labour; regard for the public good; estimation of persons according to their merits, and of things according to their intrinsic usefulness; a life of exertion, in contradiction to one of self-indulgent sloth. These and other moralities he conveyed in brief sentences, uttered as occasion arose, of grave exhortation, or stern reprobation and contempt.<sup>81</sup>

With that account one must compare the passage in the Preface:

The moral qualities which shone in his conversation were, if possible, more valuable to those who had the privilege of sharing it, than even the intellectual. They were precisely such as young men of cultivated intellect, with good aspirations but a character not yet thoroughly formed, are likely to derive most benefit from. A deeply rooted trust in the general progress of the human race, joined with a good sense which made him never build unreasonable or exaggerated hopes on any one event or contingency; an habitual estimate of men according to their real worth as sources of good to their fellow-creatures, and an unaffected contempt for the weaknesses or temptations that divert them from that object,—making those with whom he conversed feel how painful it would be to them to be counted by him among such backsliders; a sustained earnestness, in which neither vanity nor personal ambition had any part, and which spread from him by a sympathetic contagion to those who had sufficient moral preparation to value and seek the opportunity; this was the mixture of qualities which made his conversation almost unrivalled in its salutary moral effect. He has been accused of asperity, and there was asperity in some few of his writings; but no party spirit, personal rivalry, or wounded *amour-propre* ever stirred it up. (101.)<sup>82</sup>

Few sons have done so much to praise while explaining—but then few fathers have needed both so much.

## BOTANICAL WRITINGS

Most students of Mill's thought, as well as those casually acquainted with his writings and reputation, would find it odd that the *Examiner's* collective obituary of Mill included a section entitled "His Botanical Studies," by Henry Trimen.<sup>83</sup> But in fact Mill's passion for field botany began early and continued—indeed may be said to have contributed—to his death.

One can date the initiation quite accurately. Sir Samuel Bentham and family took their young guest with them on a tour of the Pyrenees and vicinity in August and September of 1820, during which George Bentham, who was to become one of the leading botanists of the century, was making the observations that led to his first book, *Catalogue des plantes indigènes des Pyrénées et du Bas-Languedoc* (1826). He introduced the fourteen-year-old Mill, six years his junior, to the pleasures of gathering and, emphatically, of *cataloguing*. When the party settled down in Montpellier for the winter celebrated in Mill studies as the hothouse forcing-ground of his precocity, Mill immediately reported in his notebook, *inter important alia*, the activity that became as incessant as he could manage: "Je m'occupai pendant toute la journée à écrire mon journal, à arranger mes plantes, et à lire l'oraison *Milonienne* de Ciceron."<sup>84</sup> Such entries occur frequently.<sup>85</sup>

Not entirely coincidentally, Mill's only reference in the *Autobiography* to his botanical passion comes in the midst of his vivid account of his true inception into the utilitarian faith, when it "burst" upon him, the "feeling rushed" upon him, that "a new era in thought" was commencing; the "vista of improvement" that Jeremy Bentham opened up was "sufficiently large and brilliant to light up" his life. Typically for Mill, this personal dedication depended on a method that offered clarity and evidence; one of the central persuasive elements in Bentham's *Traité*s was its classification of offences. Typically for Bentham, the model was scientific: "The Linnaeus of Natural History the world has had for some time past. The Linnaeus of Ethics is yet to come."<sup>86</sup>

Mill's comment in the *Autobiography* emphasizes the links:

Logic, and the dialectics of Plato, which had formed so large a part of my previous training, had given me a strong relish for accurate classification. This taste had been strengthened and enlightened by the study of botany, on the principles of what is called the Natural Method, which I had taken up with great zeal, though only as an amusement,<sup>87</sup> during my stay in France; and when I found scientific classification applied to the great and complex subject of Punishable Acts, under the guidance of the ethical principle of Pleasurable and Painful Consequences, followed out in the method of detail introduced into these subjects by Bentham, I felt taken up to an eminence from which I could survey a vast mental domain, and see stretching out into the distance intellectual results beyond all computation.<sup>88</sup>

The lesson is applied in Mill's *System of Logic*, especially in Bk. IV, Chap. viii, Sect. 5. After describing the "natural arrangement" based on "natural groups," Mill deals with the general value of classification:



Although the scientific arrangements of organic nature afford as yet the only complete example of the true principles of rational classification, whether as to the formation of groups or of series, those principles are applicable to all cases in which mankind are called upon to bring the various parts of any extensive subject into mental co-ordination. They are as much to the point when objects are to be classed for purposes of art or business, as for those of science. The proper arrangement, for example, of a code of laws, depends on the same scientific conditions as the classifications in natural history; nor could there be a better preparatory discipline for that important function, than the study of the principles of a natural arrangement, not only in the abstract, but in their actual application to the class of phenomena for which they were first elaborated, and which are still the best school for learning their use. Of this the great authority on codification, Bentham, was perfectly aware: and his early *Fragment on Government*, the admirable introduction to a series of writings unequalled in their department, contains clear and just views (as far as they go) on the meaning of a natural arrangement, such as could scarcely have occurred to any one who lived anterior to the age of Linnaeus and Bernard de Jussieu.<sup>89</sup>

It would have been inappropriate in that context for Mill to have said that he had been taken by Bentham's writings "up to an eminence" whence he "could survey a vast mental domain," and indeed, while admitting the great importance of classification to his thought, it would be silly pretence to assert that his botanical excursions always took him up to these heights: it was the ethical vision that inspired him. Nonetheless, his moral philosophy came, through a complicated personal development, to incorporate aesthetic feelings: his intense appreciation of landscape, first stimulated on the same journey that introduced him to botany, helped shape the poetic values that he found essential to moral practice.<sup>90</sup> And, holding as closely as he could to the dictum *mens sana in corpore sano*, he certainly worked for mental as for physical health in his constant and admirable walking regime, which allowed for continuous stooping to the vegetable level without evident damage to his sacroiliac.

The central purposes of his *Autobiography* not being biographical, he gives merely a passing reference to what was actually a fully realized avocation, alluding to his early habit of "taking long rural walks" on Sundays, and to his holiday "tours, chiefly pedestrian," with chosen companions, followed later in life by "longer journeys or excursions, alone or with other friends."<sup>91</sup> It is in the records of these walks, tours, and journeys—sufficiently pedestrian in style—that one can see the importance to Mill of his passion.

The evidence comes in several forms, physical as well as literary. As early as September 1828 Mill was able to engage Henry Cole for several evenings "pleasantly enough in the examination of his Hortus Siccus"—an arranged collection of dried plants—from which Mill gave him several specimens.<sup>92</sup> By 1840 the collection in the family's Kensington Square house, according to Caroline Fox, amounted to an "immense herbarium";<sup>93</sup> it continued to expand, and his Avignon collection was housed in a herbarium specially built for him in 1868 by his stepdaughter, Helen Taylor.<sup>94</sup>

These collections, which included Indian plants given to Mill by his colleague, Dr. Royle, a surgeon and naturalist who was in charge of the East India Company's correspondence relating to vegetable productions,<sup>95</sup> are now preserved in herbaria in at least four countries: in England in the collection of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew and the Holmesdale Natural Historical Club Museum in Reigate, Surrey;<sup>96</sup> in France at the Musée Requien, Avignon; in the United States at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, the National Arboretum in Washington, and Harvard University; and in Australia in the Royal Botanic Gardens and National Herbarium, South Yarra, Victoria.

The Avignon collection, consisting mainly of plants from the department of Vaucluse (with some English and a few other specimens), was at Mill's request put at the disposal of his friend and botanical collaborator, Jean Henri Fabre. It includes ten loose-leaf volumes containing about 1000 specimens with labels giving the plant's name and the date of its accession, the collection beginning in 1859, when Mill took up residence in Avignon following his wife's death, and continuing virtually up to his own death.<sup>97</sup>

The other collections (with the exception of that in the Holmesdale Natural Historical Club Museum, the provenance of which is unknown) were all originally part of the gift by Helen Taylor to Joseph Dalton Hooker, the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. She made the offer on 27 September, 1873, saying Hooker could have a choice of specimens for his own "private or any public collection."<sup>98</sup> He responded favourably, saying that in his view the plants should go to the National Collection at Kew, and on 9 February, 1874, she reported that the "packages" of his selection were now ready for shipment, and said he was free to choose from the many duplicates for his own collection.<sup>99</sup> A year later, four cases were shipped (at her expense), and she said on 20 March, 1875 (assuming that they had arrived) that she was "very glad" to accept his suggestion that he donate the duplicates to "Cambridge University, U.S."<sup>100</sup>

On 7 April, 1875, Hooker addressed a formal letter to the Secretary of the Royal Gardens saying that the gift, "of considerable extent and in excellent condition" had been received, and that an official letter of thanks should be sent to Helen Taylor. He commented:

These collections are of both scientific value and historical interest, on account of the eminence of their former possessor as a philosopher and writer, and because his botanical tastes and acquirements were well and widely known. In early life Mr Mill was a diligent observer and collector of British plants, and made some important discoveries relating to the Flora of these Islands, and he continued collecting and observing wherever he resided or travelled up to a very short period before his death.<sup>101</sup> Subsequently Hooker's annual report included an account of the gift:

The complete herbarium of the late J. Stuart Mill was presented after his death by Miss Helen Taylor. Although better known for his philosophical and other writings Mr. Mill collected diligently in the neighbourhood of London and in his later years travelled extensively in south Europe. The range of his specimens extends from the Pyrenees to the Bithynian Olympus, and Greece is particularly well represented partly by plants gathered by his own hands and partly by a collection procured from

Professor Van Heldreich of Athens. Amongst plants from Asia Minor is a new and very distinct species of flat-leaved *Sedum* which has been described by Mr. Baker in the Journal of Botany under the name of *Sedum Millii*. A selection of about 2,530 species has been made for the Kew Herbarium, and it is Miss Taylor's wish that the remainder be presented to Harvard University, U.S.A. and to the Botanical Museum of the Melbourne Gardens.<sup>102</sup>

What happened to the specimens not chosen by Hooker originally, which consequently remained in France, is not known; probably they are the non-Vaucluse items in the Musée Requiën. Also a record of the donation to Melbourne has not been located. The rest of Helen Taylor's gift took a complicated route: Hooker consulted, as he had indicated he would, Asa Gray, Director of the herbarium at Harvard (now named after him). Gray agreed to accept the material Hooker did not wish to retain at Kew, and when it arrived, made a selection from it, which is now at Harvard.<sup>103</sup> He then, in consultation with John H. Redfield, a scientific friend in Philadelphia, donated the bulk of the collection to the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, which was in the process of revitalizing its collections. On its receipt in April 1878, this portion of Mill's herbarium contained some 3000 species,<sup>104</sup> most of which are still in the Academy's collection. Some, however, were traded by Redfield, then Conservator of the Botanical Section in the Academy, to Isaac Martindale, another active supporter; his collection eventually was purchased by the U.S. National Arboretum in 1964, and in it were some 200 sheets attributable to Mill.

The written records of Mill's botanical passion run from single labels,<sup>105</sup> through lists and notebooks, references in journals and letters, and anecdotes by others, to the articles included in this volume, and the books in his library. Like all dedicated observers in that heyday of natural history, Mill knew the value of lists; like many, he was obsessive in keeping them; like few, he was famous enough to have them preserved. Short lists are in the Mill papers at Yale and Johns Hopkins and in the Mill-Taylor Collection of the London School of Economics,<sup>106</sup> but the main itemized records fill five notebooks in the Mill-Taylor Collection.<sup>107</sup>

Mill's walking-tour journals from 1827 to 1832 are mainly topographical in detail, but they sufficiently indicate that, in spite of the respectable distances covered, he took time to stoop and study. On the second day of the first trip, for example, he reports that an otherwise dull walk near Bognor "however afforded the *Atriplex laciniata* and *littoralis*, *Hordeum maritimum*, *Phleum arenarium* and *Beta maritima*."<sup>108</sup> This is typical, being simply a list that is revelatory only to the inditer and the initiate. Mill's role as instructor<sup>109</sup> occasionally appears: "I will enumerate the plants which a young botanist may expect to find" in the Vale of Aylesbury.<sup>110</sup> But only a few passages evoke feelings attractive to more general readers: in Upper Yewdale, "a complete Alpine valley,"

for the first time we saw some alpine plants, particularly the bright yellow Saxifrage, one of the most beautiful of our mountain plants whose golden flowers grow in tufts up the moist sides of this dell. . . . The pass [beyond Tilberthwaite] contains much boggy ground, which is completely covered with that delightful shrub, the sweet gale, also called the Dutch myrtle, from its myrtle like appearance and smell:

here and in Langdale, whole acres are covered with it, and the air is perfumed by it to a great distance. Mixed with its little bushes, a more delicate plant the Lancashire bog asphodel raises its bright yellow spikes.<sup>111</sup>

Generally more interesting and happy evidence is found in the diary of Mill's friend Henry Cole and in Mill's correspondence to and concerning his family and friends. Indeed Cole's diary again supplies unique information. The first botanical reference is dated 4 September, 1828: "Drank tea with John Mill and employed the evening in the examination of a portion of his Botanical Specimens of which he liberally made me several presents." On the next day he "Botanized in Battersea fields and Breakfasted with J. Mill," and from 11 to 25 September he employed three evenings, "pleasantly enough in the examination of [Mill's] Hortus Siccus."<sup>112</sup> Cole also records that on 12 June, 1829, he went to Battersea Fields "in company with John Mill and his brother [presumably James, then aged about 13] to seek for the *Orchis latifolia* which (as is usual in most cases where there is a specific proposal) we could not find." And a year later, on 29 June, 1830, he reports that when he called on Mill he found him "exulting in his discovery of the Martigon Lily at Dorking."<sup>113</sup>

Mill's correspondence also has some delightful moments. In 1837, writing in Greek to his brother Henry, aged seventeen, Mill says (translated and with place names interpreted): "In the wet parts of the source of River [Riverhead] I have seen a large plant and want to have it. But perhaps you have found it either in [Riverhead] or in [the Weald?]."<sup>114</sup> And two years later he writes to his mother from Venice: "Among other fruits of my journey [in Italy] I have botanized much, & come back loaded with plants. By the bye among those I want Henry to dry for me, I forgot to mention the common elder."<sup>115</sup> After Henry's death in 1840, there is evidence of even closer collaboration with the youngest boy in the family, George, who contributed three articles to the *Phytologist*; in the most impressive of these, "List of the Flowering Plants in the Neighbourhood of Great Marlow, Bucks, in the Early Part of the Summer 1843" (I [June 1844], 983-95), John undoubtedly collaborated.<sup>116</sup>

Nothing is known of Mill's sisters' botanical interests, and his wife was perceived as too delicate for field pursuits. She, however, took or was induced to adopt an interest in his hobby. For instance, he reports to her from St. Hélier during his continental search for health in 1854: "I have made a good many excellent captures of plants." And again from Morlaix, recalling an earlier trip with her and her daughter Helen, he comments: "I have got few plants yet in France—the botanizing at Vire & Dinan in 1844 seems to have exhausted this part of the country."<sup>117</sup> Indeed in almost every one of his daily letters in this series there is some reference to botany, usually conveying the pleasure and often the fun of the game.

When I got to the inn [in Palermo] I was not even tired, except indeed my arms with the weight of plants I carried, to the edification & amidst the apostrophes of the public—who were full of questions & remarks—the most complimentary of which was one I overheard, one woman having given a shout of astonishment (all speaking here by the common people is shouting) when another quietly remarked to her that it was for my *bella* & was a *galanteria*. I wish indeed it had been for my *bella*, & a day

never passes when I do not wish to bring flowers home to her. You see by this how beautiful the flowers are: this time, besides some lovely blue flowers, there were some noble specimens of the tall yellow asphodel of our gardens, which grew quite comfortably out of the rocks of Pellegrino & were gathered for me by an enterprising goatherd. On entering the town I was actually stopped at the octroi—I was asked what those were: “plants” I said—“what do they serve for?” “per science”. what did I bring them for? “for curiosity”—“there was nothing doganale”—they were quite satisfied & dismissed me with the pleased animated look & voice which everybody here has on every occasion.

Complaints such as the following are not to be taken seriously when the voice is an addict’s:

I was not at all tired, except the hand which carried the plants, for the load . . . was quite painful to mind & body. I never felt so much the embarras des richesses. Determining them with imperfect books takes several hours in every 24: it is now past 12 & I have only determined about a third, the rest must remain in water & in the tin case till tomorrow—to be determined by daylight—nor have I been able to change a single paper. I am here in the season of flowers as well as of all other beauty.<sup>118</sup>

The reports continued at home as well as abroad: “On Monday morning there was a Scotch mist but I made out my walk over Wrynose & down the Duddon to Broughton & though I could not see much of the mountains in Little Langdale it was still very fine & I found a rare fern & a rare mint, peppermint to wit, which I have never found before.”<sup>119</sup> And when, after her mother’s death, Helen Taylor became his almost constant companion, she not only received the botanical news, but joined him on several trips that included, as was mandatory for him, collecting samples. Even she, much more physically active than her mother, sometimes found Mill too much for her. For instance, after climbing the Pic du Midi through ice and snow, she comments from a warm ground-level, to her brother Algernon on 16 July, 1859: “Mr. Mill is still well, although he suffers from the great heat. Nevertheless as he walks all the mornings, determines plants all the afternoons and often sits up till 2 o’clock drying papers, and does not suffer from fatigue he must be getting better.”<sup>120</sup> The most significant series of letters from Mill to Helen Taylor concerns a major attempt to catalogue the collection in his Blackheath house, during January and February 1860, when he suggests to Helen, who was in Avignon, that she can “trace [his] progress” in Charles Cardale Babington’s *Manual of British Botany*.<sup>121</sup>

Of course Mill’s non-familial correspondence also reflects his botanical activities. Throughout his life, his letters written during or after tours report interesting findings to sympathetic ears (and at least temporarily sedentary legs). An early example reveals Mill in May 1830 moving towards acquaintance with William Jackson Hooker, the leading English botanist of the day, and author of the just-published *British Flora*. Through the agency of Henry Cole, who knew Hooker, Mill sends his notes on the work, giving additional stations, especially for *Oenanthe apriflora* and *Vicia sativa*. He adds:

As I am very favourably situated for observing the plants of Surrey, which have hardly been observed at all since Ray’s time if we except those in the immediate vi-

cinity of London, which are figured in Curtis's *Flora Londinensis* and many of which appear to have become extinct in the situations where Curtis found them, I may possibly be able hereafter to make other communications of a nature similar to this, if the present one should prove to be of any use. I have explored some parts of the County very fully, and almost every part of it more or less, but I expect to make many more discoveries before I have done.<sup>122</sup>

The immediate result was an exchange of specimens; the gradual one, Mill's acceptance by the botanical community.<sup>123</sup> He walked with some of the most avid collectors, and corresponded widely. The most extensive single letter is worth extracting at length, because it suggests much that may have been lost in non-extant correspondence. His friend Henry S. Chapman, in New Zealand, wrote concerning the possibility of importing useful plants (a proper enough concern for utilitarians, especially since the school's founder had been concerned with importing and exporting plants useful as well as decorative). Mill replied, "I lost no time in asking Dr. Royle for the Himalayan seeds," and "seeds of any useful plants that are likely to suit your climate." He had arranged for them to be sent directly by Dr. Jameson, a botanist who had pioneered tea planting in India, and was Superintendent of the East India Company's botanical garden at Saharunpore. He asked Chapman to send Jameson New Zealand seeds for trial in India, and he added, turning to the personal:

Many thanks for thinking of ferns for me. If you have anybody there who can name them it would be useful, as there are probably no books here on the botany of New Zealand; but if not, I will find someone to name and describe them here, as in any case there are likely to be new ones among them. Any other plants would be interesting as well as ferns,—all is fish that comes to my net, and there may be among plants picked up indiscriminately in a new country, as many and as interesting nondescripts as there were in Graham's Mexican collection.<sup>124</sup>

The concluding reference indicates the network involved: George John Graham, one of Mill's closest friends in the 1820s, travelling in Mexico from 1827 to 1829, had collected some 400 specimens of Mexican plants; his collection is mentioned by George Bentham in his *Plantae Hartwegianae* (1839). Mill botanized with Royle,<sup>125</sup> and with two of the main supporters of the *Phytologist*, its second publisher, William Pamplin, with whom Mill became friendly, and its final editor, Alexander Irvine, who became one of Mill's favourite walking companions.

All this activity did not mean that Mill confused collecting with extirpation. In company with other botanists, he objected strenuously to the Royal Horticultural Society's offering in 1864 "three prizes for the three best herbaria of every county in England, and three additional prizes for the best of these best," because the result would be "the extinction of nearly all the rare species in our already so scanty flora." In his view, expressed in a letter to the editor of the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, the invitation included the temptation to "all the dabblers in plant collection, a race whose selfish rapacity certainly needs no additional temptation, . . . to hunt out all the rare plants in every part of the country and to carry off all they find, or destroy what they do not carry off, in order that not only they may themselves possess the plant, but that their competitors may not."<sup>126</sup>

All of Mill's botanical writings intended for publication appeared in *The Phytologist: A Botanical Journal*, except for his loyal notice of the *Phytologist* in the *Westminster Review* in 1843. The journal, which began publication in June 1841, was initially conducted by George Luxford, was owned (and printed) by another botanical enthusiast, Edward Newman, and was published by yet another, John Van Voorst. From May 1855 to March 1863 the editor was Alexander Irvine.<sup>127</sup> Typical of its times, the *Phytologist* signalled the importance of natural theology by the inscription in a medallion, "Wisdom of God in Creation," in all volumes in the first series, and by religious epigraphs in Greek and Latin in both series. Mill was evidently not troubled by this devotion, which in any case did not flavour the journal's articles.

Mill's contributions appeared from the first number in June 1841 until October 1862, not long before the journal ceased publication. They are not regularly distributed, however, seven of the ten in the first series being from 1841, and nothing appearing between 1845 and 1856, when the first of his eighteen in the second series appeared. They are similarly unequal in length and significance, some dealing with single species, and one, "Botany in Spain," four parts printed in five instalments, being a comparatively full record of a walking tour with Helen Taylor.<sup>128</sup> Not the least of the conclusions to be drawn from it is just how energetic they both were; the two intervening years had, evidently, brought her up to his competitive standards.

Like many of the articles in the *Phytologist*, some of Mill's contributions are mere extracts from letters intended for publication in full or in part. One can only guess whether he sent material to the first series that was not published, but under Irvine's editorship each number included a list of "Communications Received" that gives firmer evidence.<sup>129</sup> Commonly there are close to twenty names in the list; Mill's name or initials appear comparatively frequently—a few dedicated readers outdid him by writing virtually every month. It would appear that mention in this list did not preclude publication of an actual extract elsewhere in the same or succeeding issues, though there were no regular quotations from correspondence until 1862, except for 1858, when three extracts from Mill appeared. Undoubtedly some of the "communications" received from Mill were printed, but certainly not all of his articles were listed as communications.<sup>130</sup>

Further evidence of his passion, not in itself persuasive or exciting for the general reader, comes from his collection of reference works. It is not now possible to determine the extent of Mill's botanical library, especially that portion of it that was in his Avignon home. The following titles, however, were included in the gift of his library to Somerville College, Oxford, in 1907 (those marked with an asterisk are no longer in the collection): C.C. Babington, *Manual of British Botany*, 5th ed. (London, 1862); A. de Brébisson, *Flore de la Normandie*, Pt. 1: *Phanérogamie* (Caen, 1836); J.A. Brewer, *Flora of Surrey* (London, 1863), and *A New Flora of the Neighbourhood of Reigate, Surrey* (London, 1856); W.A. Bromfield, *Flora Vectensis: Being a Systematic Description of the . . . Flowering Plants . . . Indigenous to the Isle of Wight*, ed. W.J. Hooker and T.B. Salter (London, 1856); George Louis le Clerc Buffon, *Histoire naturelle* (first 15 vols. of 1st ed. of 44 vols.) (Paris, 1749-67); M.H. Cowell, *A Floral Guide for East Kent* (Faversham, 1839); T.B. Flower, *Flora of the Isle of Thanet* (Ramsgate, 1842); E.F. Forster, *Flora of Tunbridge Wells* (London, 1816); G. Francis, *An Analysis of the British Ferns and Their Allies* (London, 1837); \**Observations on Modern Gardening* (London, 1770);

G.S. Gibson, *Flora of Essex* (London, 1852); Joseph Dalton Hooker, *The Student's Flora of the British Islands* (London, 1870); William Jackson Hooker, *The British Flora*, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1835); \*Alexander Irvine, *Illustrated Handbook of British Plants* (London, 1858); John Lindley, *A Natural System of Botany; or, A Systematic View of the Organisation, Natural Affinities, and Geographic Distribution, of the Whole Vegetable Kingdom*, 2nd ed. (London, 1836); Edward Newman, *A History of British Ferns, and Allied Plants* (London, 1844); \*Daniel Oliver, *Lessons in Elementary Botany* (Leipzig and Cambridge, 1864); \**Phytologist*, 15 vols.; G.E. Smith, *Flora of South Kent* (1829); H.C. Watson, *Compendium of the Cybele Britannica*, 4 vols. [one missing] (London, 1868-70), and *Part 1 of Supplement to the Cybele Britannica* (London, 1860). Many of these are well worn, though some must have been difficult to carry in the field.

What they demonstrate in the company of all the other evidence is the remarkable devotion that Mill gave to his avocation. In an age of amateurs, he made a mark, though not a top one. Henry Trimen's assessment is convincing; Mill's notes in the *Phytologist*, he says, though "always clear and accurate," give no "inkling of the great intellectual powers of the writer." They are, he continues,

merely such notes as any working botanical collector is able to supply in abundance. Mainly content with the pursuit as an outdoor occupation, with such an amount of home-work as was necessary to determine the names and affinities of the species, Mr. Mill never penetrated deeply into the philosophy of botany, so as to take rank among those who have, like Herbert Spencer, advanced that science by original work either of experiment or generalization, or have entered into the battle-field where the great biological questions of the day are being fought over.<sup>131</sup>

His slight contributions—slight compared to his work in other areas as well as to the major labours of others in this—are not quite trivial. Best known is the aid he gave in the preparation of Brewer's *Flora of Surrey*.<sup>132</sup> In fact, in the *Flora* stations observed by him are given for virtually every genus and on virtually every page. Surrey was his special territory, but certainly not his only one. Mountstuart Grant Duff reports: "I remember once, in the division lobby, asking him whether it was true that he was preparing a Flora of the department of Vacluse. 'Yes,' he said, 'I make a Flora of every district in which I settle. I made a Flora of Surrey.'" <sup>133</sup> That remark is open to a narrow interpretation, and in fact the only other comparable endeavour seems to have been his collaboration with Fabre, whom he met in 1859, on the flora of Vacluse.<sup>134</sup> Some of Mill's identifications have been mentioned in the specialist literature,<sup>135</sup> and the taxonomy records his name in the mushroom *Stuartella* and in *Sedum Millii*.<sup>136</sup>

On balance, it would seem, however, that the private outweighed the public utility of Mill's botanizing. The glimpses into his daily life and pleasures certainly help correct the view of him as a joyless moral machine. A letter from Mill to Herbert Spencer, not himself known for playful exuberance,<sup>137</sup> is welcome evidence:

My murderous propensities are confined to the vegetable world. I take as great a delight in the pursuit of plants as you do in that of salmon, and find it an excellent incentive to exercise. Indeed I attribute the good health I am fortunate enough to



have, very much to my great love for exercise, and for what I think the most healthy form of it, walking.

My late attack at Paris [at the end of June] was choleraic, dangerous for a few hours, and leaving me a little weak, but I am now quite recovered, thanks partly to having wandered about the Dunes at Calais and the Downs at Dover in pursuit of specimens for my herbarium.<sup>138</sup>

And Henry Trimen's snapshot is evocative:

The writer of this notice well remembers meeting, a few years since, the (at that time) parliamentary logician, with his trousers turned up out of the mud, and armed with the tin insignia of his craft, busily occupied in the search after a marsh-loving rarity in a typical spongy wood on the clay to the north of London.<sup>139</sup>

All in all, it is fitting that Mill's death was related to his loved avocation. On Saturday, 3 May, 1873, he made a fifteen-mile botanizing walk in Orange with Fabre, and had lunch with him before returning to Avignon, where he developed a chill on the Monday, and died on Wednesday, 7 May, of the erysipelas endemic to the area. His last extant letter was to Fabre, concerning their trip,<sup>140</sup> and what seems to have been his last written word is a notation of a plant located on that final—and happy—excursion.

## MEDICAL REVIEWS AND APPENDICES

### MEDICAL REVIEWS

Mill's interest in medicine, which was much more personal than theoretical, is very little evident in his published works, though not infrequently obvious in his correspondence. The only published items directly bearing on the subject are the two slight reviews here included, "King's Lecture on the Study of Anatomy," from the *Monthly Repository* in 1834, and "Carpenter's Physiology," from the *Westminster Review* in 1842. It will be noted that in both Mill emphasizes the importance of systematic method, praising the Continental physiologists for their powers of generalization, which the English were only beginning to emulate. His botanical bent is also shown in his praise of Carpenter for including the physiology of plants in his discussion. Anyone interested in Mill and medicine, however, should turn to his letters, especially those to his wife, and to a manuscript of twelve pages suggesting the proper preventive care and medication appropriate for visitors to Egypt.<sup>141</sup>

### APPENDIX A: WILLS AND DEED OF GIFT

in 1853, following his marriage, Mill made a short and conventional will, confirming not surprisingly his devotion to his wife by leaving everything to her, and in the event of her death, to

her daughter, Helen Taylor; they were, with his friends William Ellis and William Thomas Thornton, appointed executors. After Harriet Taylor Mill's death, he bought a plot in the Avignon cemetery, and a house and its land nearby; subsequently he drew up a French will in February 1859, securing these properties to Helen Taylor. In January 1864 he confirmed that will and added a codicil willing her additional properties he had acquired in the neighbourhood, as well as any he might acquire in the future. Another codicil in January 1867 added to her legacy all real and personal property that he possessed in Avignon and environs. To evade provisions of the French law of inheritance, he made all these provisions unnecessary by a deed of gift ("donation") to Helen Taylor in February 1869 that conveyed to her all his real property in the district, and the contents of the house (including 982 volumes).

Finally, in 1872 Mill added a long codicil to his English will, cancelling earlier codicils to it not now known, reconfirming Helen Taylor as executor (and, failing her, Ellis and Thornton). He also appointed Helen Taylor as literary executor, and left to her the manuscript of the *Autobiography* to be published as she saw fit, with the aim of protecting his reputation against any "pretended" biography; she also was entrusted with the decision to add to the autobiographical memoir a selection of his letters, all others to be destroyed. His French will was mentioned, and his wish that his mortal remains be buried in the tomb of his wife in Avignon. He further specified legacies not only to Helen Taylor and her brother Algernon and his children, but also to his sister Mary Elizabeth Colman and her children, and to his alternate executors, as well as to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (£500), the Land Tenure Reform Association (£500), and to the first university in the United Kingdom "to throw open all its degrees to female students" (£6000). His copyrights he left to John Morley for support of a periodical "which shall be open to the expression of all opinions and shall have all its articles signed with the name of the writer." These bequests, however, were subject to Helen Taylor's predeceasing him, which of course she did not, and it is not known which provisions she carried out, except that she expressly denied responsibility to carry out the gift to the university first to admit women.<sup>142</sup>

#### APPENDICES B AND C: "THE VIXEN, AND CIRCASSIA" AND "THE SPANISH QUESTION"

While Mill was not as interventionist an editor as Francis Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh* or Charles Dickens of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, his temper and talents were tested by some articles commissioned for or submitted to the *London and Westminster* during his stewardship from 1835 to 1840. In the manuscript list of his published works he included four articles to which he felt his contribution sufficiently justified the claim of co-authorship. Two of these are related to his specific interests, and are consequently included in earlier thematic volumes of the *Collected Works*.<sup>143</sup> The others, "The Vixen, and Circassia" and "The Spanish Question," both appeared in 1837,<sup>144</sup> reflecting particular international issues of the day and so calling for comment in the periodical, but neither involving a special concern of Mill's. They contribute, however, to an appreciation of his role and activity as editor, especially when read with his correspondence of the

period, and his editorial notes to the *London and Westminster*, which are reprinted in Volume I of the *Collected Works*. “The Spanish Question” is known to have posed problems that were undoubtedly recurrent: Mill first wrote to William Napier, experienced on the ground and in print about Spanish military matters, gently proposing that he contribute on the subject or name someone who could; Mill himself offered to supply comments on British foreign policy and the general question of intervention. Napier declined, but gave important details in his letter, and suggested Charles Shaw as a substitute; in his reply Mill indicated that Shaw was not appropriate, as his work would be reviewed in the article, and said that an (unnamed) author had been found.<sup>145</sup>

#### APPENDIX D: QUESTIONS BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON METROPOLITAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN 1867

During his parliamentary career, probably the closest Mill came to dealing effectively with constituency matters was through his part in the campaign for municipal government for the metropolis. He spoke often on the issue, and served actively on the Select Committee considering the proposal. The Committee issued three reports, two in 1866, and a third in 1867.<sup>146</sup> Mill’s interest in efficiency, fairness, and responsible leadership emerges in his questions, which thus help fill in the detail of his political beliefs and activities, especially in his interaction with sympathetic witnesses whose appearance was called for by his allied reformers.

#### APPENDIX E: MILL AT THE POLITICAL ECONOMY CLUB

An interesting glimpse into Mill’s combined intellectual and social life, similar to those deriving from the records of his debating activities, is provided by the records of the Political Economy Club, founded in 1821. He was elected to it in 1836, and became a member of its ruling Committee in 1840, as did his friend Edwin Chadwick. His father was one of its founding members (a portion of the draft rules is in his hand),<sup>147</sup> though he seldom attended and resigned in 1835, presumably because of ill-health; and George Grote was the first treasurer. The membership, originally limited to thirty, and raised to thirty-five in 1847, was not thoroughly orthodox but economically eclectic, including businessmen, politicians (cabinet ministers were honorary members after 1834), civil servants, and men of letters, as well as writers on economics. The meetings, on the first Monday of each month from December through June, were held successively during Mill’s membership in the Freemason’s Tavern (until 1850), the Thatched House Tavern (1850-61), the St. James’s Restaurant (1861-67), and Willis’s Rooms (1867-77); the original subscription was five guineas. The sessions began with a dinner at 6:30 p.m., and the discussion often lasted until 11, with the speakers remaining seated.

The proposed questions (often more than one for each meeting) were printed and circulated before each meeting, and the proposer, if present, opened the discussion, originally and through Mill’s period speaking without a text. Mill was an active member, as the list of topics in Appendix

E shows, and his prominence is indicated by the passing of a resolution regretting his death, a rare practice, and by the subscription of £50 from the Club's funds towards his proposed memorial.<sup>148</sup>

His questions cover, not surprisingly, a wide range of topics, from technical definitions, through queries about the practical effects of measures, to broad social and moral issues. They not infrequently reflect Mill's pondering over matters that appear prominently in his writings, not only in his *Principles of Political Economy* (first published in 1848, and much revised in later editions), but also in his newspaper articles on Ireland, his parliamentary evidence on the Bank Act and on income tax, and his comments in various essays on co-operation. There are also inferences to be drawn about his life from his absences in the record in 1854 when he was travelling for his health, and in 1859-60, after his wife's death, when he stayed for much of the year in semi-retirement in Avignon. His final appearance is interesting in that he gave attendance at the Club as the reason for his return to London early in July 1865;<sup>149</sup> he in fact became caught up reluctantly in the successful campaign for his election on 11 July as Member of Parliament for Westminster.

Initially I made the claim that the miscellaneous writings in this volume contribute substantially to a full understanding of Mill's life and thought, and that many have independent value: that claim can be substantiated only by a careful analysis of them, each in context, and the comments above are intended merely to make it plausible. In any case, taken with the great bulk of his better-known writings in earlier volumes, these materials certainly demonstrate that Mill's character and behaviour were much richer and more varied than narrow stereotypes have suggested. And if he is taken as representative of *homo victorianus*, that species too must be seen as vital, compelling, and emphatically not to be confined in a museum's *hortus siccus*.

## Endnotes

[1] In the Early Draft of the *Autobiography*, "gladly" does not appear.

[2] *Autobiography, Collected Works [CW]* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), I, 117.

[3] Below, p. 5. Subsequent references are given in parentheses in the text.

[4] *Correspondence*, VIII, ed. Stephen Conway (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 36 (11 July, 1809).

[5] *Ibid.* Mill himself learned from Bentham to "marginal-content" his essays; see, e.g., his early "Traité de Logique," in *Journals and Debating Speeches, CW, XXVI-XXVII* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 145-90.

[6] “Bentham’s *Book of Fallacies*,” *Edinburgh Review*, XLII (Aug. 1825), 367. Smith is actually referring to a second valetting by a reviewer, and indeed the *Rationale* after Mill’s ministrations still is not fully groomed.

[7] In a letter to his brother Samuel on 20 August, 1806, Bentham says he is within a few days of completion, and goes on to the first comment quoted above; in another of 18-20 September, he says, “Evidence—viz: the large volume that I mean to publish in the first instance, is finished: arrears of marginal-contenting of d<sup>o</sup> finished within the value of 3 or 4 days work,” and then makes the second remark quoted in the text. (*Correspondence*, VII, ed. John Dinwiddie [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988], 365, 381.)

[8] *Ibid.*, 12 (7 Mar., 1802).

[9] *Ibid.*, VIII, 46.

[10] James Mill to Bentham (25 July, 26 and 31 Oct., and 6 Nov., 1809), *ibid.*, 37, 47-8, 49, and 50.

[11] For example, Bentham to Dumont: “For Your [*sic*] miserable predilection in favour of *Evidence* I know of no other cause than the non-existence of it. Had it existence, it would contain, of course, like everything else from the same hand, ‘*formes trop abregées*’ or *trop etendues*, or both together: besides containing words,—the Lord above knows how many,—any one of which, like ‘*forthcomingness*’ would be sufficient to make the whole unreadable.” (*Correspondence*, VII, 518 [7 Aug., 1808].)

[12] *Ibid.*, VIII, 57-8 (6 Dec., 1809).

[13] *Ibid.*, 208.

[14] J.S. Mill took a rather dismissive attitude to this work: “My notions of Mr. Bentham’s intentions with respect to the ‘Introduction to the Rationale’ (though I confess it is but an indistinct notion) has always been that he intended to put it forth as a kind of feeler, at a time when he did not contemplate finishing the work itself for publication at an early period. My opinion is entirely adverse to publishing the Introduction at all; & if that is decided upon, the later in the collection it comes the better. I would much rather it followed, than preceded, the Rationale.” (To John Hill Burton, *Earlier Letters*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, Vols. XII and XIII of *CW* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963], XIII, 368; 23 Jan., 1837 [*sic* for 1838].) However, the *Introductory View* was published at the beginning of Vol. VI of the collected edition, before the *Rationale*; see note 26 below

[15] The Early Draft reads “to overpass in obscurity”.

[16] The Early Draft is more specific: “I read at his instance Phillipps on the Law of Evidence and part of Starkie and wrote comments [the cancelled version reads: “such comments as I could”] on those few among the defective points in the English rules of evidence.”

[17] Mill’s embarrassment over this tone, commented on below, is evident in his revision of the version in the Early Draft: “The tone of these additions, or at least of the controversial part

of them, was more assuming than became” [an earlier version reads, “assuming, even to arrogance, and unbecoming”].

[18] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 117-19. Cf. the account in the Preface below, which contains the anodyne remark that the editor’s task “has chiefly consisted in collating the manuscripts” (6).

[19] The *Examiner* on 13 May, 1827, said that it would appear “in a few days, in five thick volumes” (304).

[20] The word “added” is crossed out but the word substituted for it (“appended[?]”) is mostly torn away.

[21] Mill’s letter is in *EL*, *CW*, XII, 18-19, where Bentham’s letters are given in notes.

[22] *Westminster Review*, IX (Jan. 1828), 216.

[23] *Law Magazine*, I (1828-29), 185-219, and VI (1831), 356.

[24] *Edinburgh Review*, XLVIII (Dec. 1828), 464n-5n.

[25] “Bentham—*Edinburgh Review*,” *Westminster Review*, X (Apr. 1829), 392. It may be that the defence was less sturdy because the Mills had by this time withdrawn from the *Westminster* stable.

[26] Without pausing, he in fact went on with a proposal: “I should rather have suggested putting the ‘Introduction’ after the Rationale itself—as being a sort of summary or résumé of it, a kind of Table Analytique, as I imagine it to be—& more dry & more abstruse than the work itself, consequently rather calculated to repel readers from it. But without having read the Introduction (except a small portion which was printed in Mr. B.’s lifetime) I cannot presume to judge,” (*EL*, *CW*, XII, 361-2 [29 Nov., 1837].) Apart from the general sloppiness of the Bowring edition, the lack of any manuscripts meant that Mill’s edition had to be used. Several notes were added, but except for the matters mentioned in letters to Burton on 15 December, 1837 (*Later Letters* [*LL*], ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, Vols. XIV-XVII of *CW* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972], XVII, 1982) and 25 October, 1838 (see the next note), nothing of Mill’s was altered or removed. (Mill himself suggested in the first of these that the last paragraph of his note on the Belgic Code [92 below] be omitted, but it was not.) He had just a fortnight before his first letter to Burton indicated unambiguously to William Tait, the publisher of the Bowring edition, that he would not write a life, memoir, or critique of Bentham for the *Works* because he did not wish to be “in any way mixed up with their proceedings as [he liked] to avoid getting into a hornet’s nest,” and because he was planning “a very elaborate article, speaking [his] whole mind” about Bentham in “the proper place,” the *Westminster*, as a review of the edition (*EL*, *CW*, XII, 357-8 [18 and 20 Nov., 1837]). His “Bentham” appeared in December 1838 (in *Essays on Ethics, Religion, and Society*, *CW*, X [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969], 75-115).

[27] *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1981 (9 Dec., 1837). Nearly a year later, evidently on Richard Doane’s instigation, Burton suggested the omission of the note at II, 236 (22-3 below), and Mill agreed on the grounds that it was “of very trifling importance,” though he did not “feel the force of the objection to it” (*LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1988-9 [25 Oct., 1838]).

[28] The addition of 1837 is printed below (10) following the original Preface.

[29] *EL, CW*, XIII, 368.

[30] In the Early Draft Mill first wrote “day’s work” which he altered to “year’s work”.

[31] In the Early Draft he wrote and then cancelled: “This was the effect of the familiarity I gained with Bentham’s style as a writer.”

[32] Autobiography, *CW*, I, 119.

[33] It has been estimated that the still extant manuscripts by Bentham on evidence, procedure, and judicial organization exceed 13,000 folios (William Twining, “Bentham’s Writings on Evidence,” *Bentham Newsletter*, No. 10 [June 1986], 3). And the manuscripts that Dumont and Mill used are not among them, having presumably been discarded in the printing.

[34] The bulk of the *Rationale* being so daunting, William Twining’s amazingly clear and succinct summary should be recommended; indeed there is no substitute. He introduces his analysis by a one-paragraph “catechism” that indicates the central themes: the end being rectitude of decision; the system of procedure being the “Natural” rather than the prevailing “Technical” one; the greatest instrument the admission of all evidence unless irrelevant or superfluous, or leading to vexation, expense, or delay; and the means being legislative sanctions to make evidence “forthcoming” and non-mendacious, and to provide instructions to judges concerning the value and weight of various kinds of evidence. (William Twining, *Theories of Evidence: Bentham and Wigmore* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985], 27-8.)

[35] For the background and composition of Mill’s *Logic*, see the Textual Introduction to *System of Logic*, Vols. VII-VIII of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), VII.

[36] To John Sterling (20-22 Oct., 1831), *EL, CW*, XII, 79.

[37] John Henry Wigmore, the leading U.S. writer on evidence, used as an epigraph for his *Principles of Judicial Proof* a passage from Israel Zangwill’s *The Big Bow Mystery*, which includes the comment that evidence is “the science of the sciences. What is the whole of inductive logic, as laid down (say) by Bacon and Mill, but an attempt to apprise the value of evidence. . . .” William Twining agrees so fully as to use the same passage as one of the epigraphs to his *Theories of Evidence*.

[38] See esp. Bk. III, Chap. xxv (*CW*, VII, 622-38), where the same passage in Hume’s “Of Miracles” is cited, and the anecdote about the King of Siam’s disbelief in ice is repeated.

[39] *Bentham and Bureaucracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 166.

[40] *Rationale*, V, 1. Cf. “Evidence is the basis of justice: exclude evidence, you exclude justice” (*ibid.*, Pt. III, Chap. i).

[41] See John M. Robson, “John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, with Some Observations on James Mill,” in *Essays Presented to A.S.P. Woodhouse*, ed. M. MacLure and F. W. Watt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 245-68.

[42] *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 1558 (8 Feb., 1869). In a letter of 22 Sept., 1865, to Arthur John Williams, a law student, Mill says: “I am very desirous of promoting the abolition of the remaining exclusions of evidence, and will certainly support in Parliament any movement for that purpose” (Ms, College of Law, Nihon University, Tokyo; to appear in *Additional Letters*, ed. Marion Filipiuk, Michael Laine, and John M. Robson, *CW*, XXXII).

[43] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 91. For a discussion of these debts, see Ann P. Robson’s introduction to the *Newspaper Writings*, Vols. XXII-XXV of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), XXII, esp. xxxv-xxxviii.

[44] From the terms of Mill’s mandate, one would anticipate (and the *Edinburgh’s* reviewer would presumably have enjoyed) more quotation from authorities, as at 22 and 47.

[45] “Bentham’s Writings on Evidence,” 36, 37.

[46] Those who are in frequent contact with bright eighteen-year-olds might wish to consider the likely difficulties if one of them were asked to think carefully about the exclusion of various kinds of legal evidence, read the prevailing authorities, and then write a chapter like “Of the Rule, That Evidence Is to Be Confined to the Points in Issue” (84-90 below) that would not only deal with the questions, but do so in accordance with the conclusions of someone else’s argument and in that person’s manner and tone. In Mill’s case, a grade of A+ would seem insulting.

[47] Compare the relevant instances of James Mill’s and J.S. Mill’s lengthy attacks on the *Edinburgh* in the *Westminster Review* in 1824 (the latter, with references to the former, is in *CW*, I, 291-325), or Macaulay’s well-known vigorous demolitions of the Utilitarians in the *Edinburgh* (XLIX [Mar. 1829], 159-89; *ibid.* [June 1829], 273-99; and L [Oct. 1829], 99-125).

[48] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 71.

[49] *Ibid.*, 123-7. The Early Draft contains a further sentence: “It became a mental necessity with me, to require for my own complete conviction what Moliere calls ‘des clartés de tout,’ and this qualified me to make things clear to others, which is probably what I have best succeeded in as an expository writer” (126). For other references to the “Students of Mental Philosophy,” see the Introduction to *CW*, I, xii and n.

[50] The only known account with any indication of the actual discussions of the Students of Mental Philosophy is in the Diary of Henry Cole (Victoria and Albert Museum). Cole had met Mill in November 1826, and was attending the meetings of the group in Grote’s house in Threadneedle Street (he identifies the meetings by then location) by November 1827. He reports that Mill told him on 30 January, 1828; that the meetings were postponed “sine die.” On his evidence they resumed to discuss James Mill’s *Analysis* on 14 November, 1829, and he records meetings, most of which he attended, on 21 November, 6 January, 1830 (“Discussion on the Vividness of sensation—Mr. Mill seeming to imply that it could only be applied to such sensations as were either pleasurable or painful”), 9 January (“Why Custom should tend [to] render some ideas and sensations almost imperceptible and to add to others?”), 13 January (“discussion upon *custom* and several questions collateral”), 16 January, 10 February, 17 February (“the subject of whence arises our belief in the existence of *Matter* was postponed in consequence of the absence of Roebuck



and Graham”), 20 February (“Our subject was resemblance—but nothing peculiar occurred” [sic]), 6 March, 10 March (“Discussion on Matter”), 20 March (“Discussion on Matter resumed”), 24 March (“whence arises the belief in one’s existence”), 27 March (“Dissociability of ideas”), and 31 March. This record concludes with Cole’s rather unsettling comment on 20 September, 1830: “Reading Mr. Mill’s Analysis of the Human Mind”—but one hopes he meant re-reading.

[51] In this respect his fealty is shown in the long quotations from the *Fragment on Mackintosh* inserted in his notes to the *Analysis*. see 227 on motives, a passage cited approvingly, and 233-9, a passage on moral sentiments, mainly cited as valuable, but also to justify attempts at correction, as at 239-41.

[52] That is, in the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*. One had appeared slightly belatedly in the *Westminster*, XIII (Oct. 1830), 265-92, probably by Southwood Smith. Though the Mills had distanced themselves from the *Westminster*, the author, in the few pages where the work ostensibly reviewed is mentioned (282-4), heartily lauds James Mill and the *Analysis*; however, the great bulk of the article is devoted to matters ancillary—and not for the most part closely connected with the actual text.

[53] “A Few Observations on Mr. Mill,” App. C of Edward Lytton Bulwer, *England and the English* (London: Bentley, 1833); in *CW*, I, 590.

[54] *EL*, *CW*, XII, 237 (14 Oct., 1834).

[55] Reprinted in *CW*, I, 595.

[56] *LL*, *CW*, XIV, 104 (25 Apr., 1853).

[57] See, e.g., letters to a bookseller, to Harriet Taylor Mill, to W.G. Ward, and to Florence May: *LL*, *CW*, XVII, 2008 (25 Apr., 1853); XIV, 193 (3 Apr., 1854); XV, 649 (28 Nov., 1859); and XVI, 1472-4 (before Nov. 1868).

[58] *LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1320 (19 Oct., 1867).

[59] *J.S. Mill. A Criticism: with Personal Recollections* (London: Longmans, Green, 1882), 129. Bain discusses the work in detail in his *Autobiography* (London: Longmans, Green, 1904), 289-91.

[60] Ms. in the John Stuart Mill Papers, Yale University

[61] The text itself was not altered, except to correct a few typographical errors

[62] In fact Mill supplied the Preface and 111 notes (not all “psychological”). Bain contributed 50 (including many of the most significant and lengthy); Findlater 17 (all in the first volume); and Grote only 3, but very long.

[63] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 288-9.

[64] *EL*, *CW*, XIII, 406-7 (28 Sept., 1839).

[65] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 213.

[66] *Ibid.*, 233; the Early Draft contains this passage.

[67] *Ibid.*, 270; this passage is in the final section, written after the appearance of the new edition of the *Analysis*.

[68] Cf. 131, 133-4. Such remarks occur also in the midst of notes that contain criticisms. “As is well shewn in the text . . .” (126).

[69] See, for instance, 117-19, 157, 202-3; the last instances cases where the point is slight.

[70] Belief, a matter not extensively treated in this way by Mill elsewhere, and one on which he differed from Bain, is the subject of the longest note (159-74).

[71] For typical examples of such critical passages early in the text, see 112-14, 115-16, 120-1, and 127.

[72] Frequently Mill praises Bain’s notes which, when there is overlap, precede his. In their annotation, Bain says: “Coincidence of view was the rule, the discrepancy seldom went beyond the mode of statement, the chief exception being the topic of Belief” (*J.S. Mill*, 129). The coincidence may also be seen in Mill’s “Bain’s Psychology,” in *Essays on Philosophy and the Classics*, Vol. XI of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 339-73.

[73] Note especially the very long quotation from Spencer’s *Principles*, 205-10.

[74] *J.S. Mill*, 129.

[75] See “Bailey on Berkeley’s Theory of Vision,” *CW*, XI, 245-69.

[76] It seems uncharitable in Mill to omit references to Bentham in these contexts. And it is mildly annoying that when discussing evidence, though treating it in terms of belief, he does not allude to Bentham, and refers the subject to logic (175-6; cf. *CW*, VII, 554-603).

[77] Bain’s comment should, however, be noted. Mentioning that James Mill’s account of the aesthetic is gravely deficient, he says: “John Mill himself confessed that he was unable to grapple with the Sublime and the Beautiful without an amount of study which he could not devote to the topic” (Bain, *Autobiography*, 290-1). But see *CW*, XI, 363-4.

[78] See *CW*, XXVII, 537-9.

[79] For discussion of this issue, see John M. Robson, “Artist and Scientist: Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill,” *Queen’s Quarterly*, 73 (Summer 1966), 167-86, and “Mill on Women and Other Poets,” *Victorian Studies Association Newsletter*, No. XII (Nov. 1973), 75-80.

[80] *CW*, I, 27.

[81] *Ibid.*, 49. The passage continues with an account of James Mill’s moral character that gives clear indications of its effect on John Mill and other young associates.

[82] The reference to “asperity” undoubtedly derives from the remarks attributed to Bentham in the “Memoir” by Bowring that closes his edition of Bentham’s works. For the background, and Mill’s reply, which is here echoed, see “Letter to the Editor of the Edinburgh Review, on James Mill,” *CW*, I, 533-8.

[83] The tributes, published in the *Examiner* on 17 May, 1873, 502-18, were gathered and published as *John Stuart Mill: His Life and Works*, ed. H.R. Fox Bourne (London: Dalton; New York: Holt, 1873; the quotations below are from the latter). Trimen, who knew Mill slightly, was on the staff of the British Museum, and coedited the *Journal of Botany*. The only discursive article dealing with the subject is Simon Curtis's "The Philosopher's Flowers," *Encounter*, LXXX (Feb. 1988), 26-33, which gives interesting details about the collection in Avignon described below.

[84] "French Journal and Notebook," *CW*, XXVI, 125 (entry for 16 Oct., 1820). The succeeding entries provide more evidence.

[85] Mill regrettably seems to have had little to do with George Bentham after the latter's return to England in the late 1820s. A friendly letter, in response to one prompted by Mill's gift to him of his *System of Logic*, dwells on botanical matters, including specimens and books, and implies some further contact (*EL*, *CW*, XIII, 577 [14 Mar., 1843]).

[86] Deontology, in *Deontology*, together with A Table of the Springs of Action and Article on Utilitarianism, ed. Amnon Goldworth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 219.

[87] In the Early Draft, following his wife's suggestion, he rejected "a mere amusement" (*CW*, I, 68).

[88] *Autobiography*, *CW*, I, 69. The full account of the experience is on 67-71.

[89] *CW*, VIII, 731-2. Trimen quotes part of this passage in arguing that Mill's interest in classification was stimulated by botany: "The views expressed so clearly in these chapters are chiefly founded on the actual needs experienced by the systematic botanist; and the argument is largely sustained by references to botanical systems and arrangements. Most botanists agree with Mr. Mill in his objections to Dr. Whewell's views of a natural classification by resemblance to 'types,' instead of in accordance with well-selected characters. . . ." (47.)

[90] For the initial experience, see *CW*, I, 59. The importance is revealed in his essays on poetry, also in *CW*, I, and in *Journals and Speeches*, *CW*, XXVI-XXVII (see the Introduction to those volumes, xli-liv). For critical comment, see John M. Robson, "J.S. Mill's Theory of Poetry," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XXIX (July 1960), 420-38.

[91] *CW*, I, 85-7

[92] Entries for 4, 11, 18, and 25 Sept., 1828, in Cole's Diary, Victoria and Albert Museum.

[93] Caroline Fox, *Memories of Old Friends*, ed. Horace N. Pym, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, 1882), I, 189.

[94] Insisting on his pleasure at being out of the House of Commons, Mill described (in Bentham's terms) his Avignon retreat to W.T. Thornton on 16 January, 1869: "The terrace, you must know, as it goes round two sides of the house, has got itself dubbed the 'semi-circumgyratory.' In addition to this, Helen has built me a *herbarium*—a little room fitted up with closets for my plants, shelves for my botanical books, & a great table whereon to manipulate them all. Thus you see with my herbarium, my vibratory, & my semi-circumgyratory I am in clover & you may imagine

with what scorn I think of the H. of C., which, comfortable club as it is said to be, could offer me none of these comforts, or more properly speaking these necessaries of life.” (*LL, CW, XVII, 1549.*)

[95] These, as of more exotic interest than Mill’s European collections, have made tracing the steps in the dispersal somewhat easier.

[96] Some records mistakenly indicate that some of his plants are at Cambridge University because of the common confusion arising from the location of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

[97] For an account of this collection, with a very condensed summary of Mill’s career as a botanist, see Curtis, “The Philosopher’s Flowers,” in which places from which the plants were gathered are listed on 29-31.

[98] A.l.s., Royal Botanic Gardens, “Kew Herbarium—Presentations to,” 1900, Vol. 2, ff. 527-9.

[99] A.l.s., Royal Botanic Gardens, English letters 1843/1900, Vol. 103, ff. 23-4. Typical of her punctiliousness (or waspishness), is her explanation of the terms: “I have seen a statement in some of the newspapers to the effect that Mr Mill bequeathed his herbarium to the National Collection at Kew. This statement is entirely erroneous, as I believe you are aware. Had it been true, I should of course have had nothing to do but to despatch the whole collection at once to Kew, and if to you, to you, only in your official capacity. But the fact is that Mr Mill left his Herbarium to me, leaving the disposal entirely to my discretion, and with no expression of any wish on the subject. [In her letter of 27 September, 1873, she had expressly said that it was Mill’s “wish” that Fabre have the Vaucluse plants.] Aware of his high respect for yourself I asked your advice as to the best disposition to be made of the major part of it: and you were kind enough to favour me with your advice, recommending me to present it to the National Collection at Kew.”

[100] A.l.s., *ibid.*

[101] Autograph draft, Royal Botanic Gardens, “Kew Herbarium—Presentations to,” 1900, Vol. 2, f. 528.

[102] Report on the Progress and Condition of the Royal Gardens at Kew, During the Year 1875, 14. For the reference to Baker, see n136 below.

[103] There are no pre-1898 accession records for the Gray herbarium, and the Mill items are evidently not identified as his. There are many sheets marked “ex herb. hook” or “ex herb. kew,” several of which are of Royle’s Indian collections, and so almost certainly originated in the Taylor gift.

[104] Dr. David G. Frodin of the Department of Botany, Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, to whom I am indebted for some of the detail above, supplied this figure; in its official letter of thanks to Asa Gray, the Academy says: “2000 specimens of plants from the collection of the late John Stuart Mill, principally from Europe and Asia” (Royal Botanic Gardens, “Kew Herbarium—Presentations to,” 1900, Vol. 2, f. 529).

[105] The University of Bristol Library has a single signed label (presumably collected for its signature) for *Cirsium oleraccum*, gathered “near Brussels.”

[106] At Yale there are two folios giving findings near Orange in France. Item 35 in the Johns Hopkins’ collection also gives French items, from Gard, Hénault, Bouches-du-Rhône, and Drôme. Item 12 in Vol. LIX of the Mill-Taylor Collection, a single sheet which probably originally enclosed a specimen, dates from his first enthusiasm; it reads: “*Buxus sempervirens* L. / Restinclière, garrigues / 1821 Février.” In Vol. LXVIII, item 14, a letter of 6 August, 1842, to Henry Cole, has on its verso a list headed: “Plants found in the neighbourhood of London but not in Surrey.”

[107] Vol. XXXI contains (in this order) undated entries from Marseille, Italy, the Brenner Pass, Austria, Germany, and Coblenz; then France, Italy and Sicily, and Greece; then Italy again, and St. Gothard-Switzerland; and finally the Lake District and the Wye Valley (f. 22v).

Vol. XXXII contains a running record of what Mill collected, month by month, from October 1858 to October 1868, recording excursions mainly in the south of France, but also in the Pyrenees, Greece and Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Austria.

Vol. XXXIII evidently follows Vol. XXXII, having monthly lists from April 1869 to May 1873 (when Mill died). Up to July 1870, all the entries are from France; then they are from various English and Scottish stations (August 1870 to July 1871); then again from France until June 1872, when there are some entries from Italy and the Alps. English finds appear again in August, September, and November 1872, and April 1873, before the final list from Orange in May.

Vol. XXXIV is undated, except that near the beginning Mill writes “also in 1863.” Its sections are headed: “Species and habitats unverified in Surrey” (ff. 1v-23v), and “Additional Habitats not verified” (ff. 25v-60r).

Vol. XXXV contains several separate items: a pencilled list without dates or locations, lists of Greek finds (mostly on Olympus), with a list of corrections, and lists headed: “*Entre Broussa et la mer*,” “*Partie basse et boisée du Mont Olympe au dessous du plateau*” and “*Plateau du Mont Olympe*,” “*Partie alpine du Mont Olympe*,” and “*Thérapie et Buyukdéré*.” Finally there is a letter from Alexander Irvine to Mill, and a scrap in Irvine’s hand giving directions, with a hand-drawn map on the verso, to a botanical station.

[108] More finds are recorded in the next few sentences: see “Walking Tour of Sussex,” *CW*, XXVII, 457 (21 July, 1827).

[109] Having inducted Henry Cole, he continued to cultivate him: see below, and *EL*, *CW*, XII, 534-5 (6 Aug., 1842), with the matter cited in n106 above.

[110] “Walking Tour of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Surrey,” *CW*, XXVII, 490 (10 July, 1828).

[111] “Walking Tour of Yorkshire and the Lake District,” *ibid.*, 518 (14 July, 1831)

[112] On the last of these evenings he first met James Mill, though he had already been in the house several times (Cole’s Diary, Victoria and Albert Museum).

[113] *Ibid.*

[114] *EL, CW, XIII*, 743n (6 July, 1837).

[115] *Ibid.*, 399 (19 May, 1839).

[116] For a fuller account, see John M. Robson, “George Grote Mill: Another Field Botanist,” *Mill News Letter*, XXII (Winter 1987), 9-16. The collaboration is noted by Trimen, 45.

[117] *LL, CW, XIV*, 210 (13 June, 1854), and 216-17 (19 June, 1854).

[118] *Ibid.*, 341 (24 Feb., 1855), from Palermo, and 429 (21 and 23 Apr., 1855), from Athens.

[119] *Ibid.*, XV, 537 (16 Sept., 1857), from Settle. Cf. *ibid.*, 538, 564, and 566-7.

[120] Mill-Taylor Collection, Vol. XXIV, no. 712.

[121] *LL, CW, XV*, 667 (2 Feb., 1860), from Blackheath. For the other references to his mighty labour, see *ibid.*, 661, 664, 667, 671, 673, 675, 678, 680, 681-2, 684, 686, and 687.

[122] *EL, CW, XII*, 50-1 (26 May, 1830).

[123] See *ibid.*, 67-8 and 69-70.

[124] *Ibid.*, XIII, 685 (12 Nov., 1845). Chapman delivered at least the ferns to Mill, who returned thanks for the “beautiful set of ferns which arrived safe, in perfect condition, and gave [him] great pleasure” (*ibid.*, 732 [29 Feb., 1848]).

[125] See *LL, CW, XIV*, 41-2 and 59.

[126] 26 Jan., 1864, quoted in the obituary of Mill in the *Gardeners’ Chronicle*, 17 May, 1873, 679; see Anna J. Mill, “J.S.M., Conservationist,” *Mill News Letter*, X (Winter 1975), 2-3. The letter will be included in *Additional Letters, CW, XXXII*

[127] As is often the case with such specialized, or “class,” journals, the publishing history has difficult patches. The monthly numbers sold for sixpence until June 1842, when the price was raised to a shilling, and the issues were enlarged to 32 pages from 24 (having been increased from 16 in January 1842). Counting on faithful readers, the editors did not worry if some numbers ended in mid-article, and if the pagination guiding the binding into volumes was far from regular. The first series, edited by Luxford, was suspended when he died in June 1854, as the back wrapper, following p. 216, announces. (A cumulative index was issued with this number.) One concluding number, however, identified as No. clix. was issued two and a half years later, long after the publication in May 1855 of the first number of the new series, which was also called No. clix. (The printer of the New Series was John Edward Taylor.) The publisher of the first series, Van Voorst, advertised his last number on the front wrapper in the number for February 1857 of the new series, calling it the “Supplementary Number of the ‘Phytologist,’ completing Mr. Newman’s

Series.” Perhaps it was automatically sent to subscribers to the new series. (Irvine hints at the problems in n.s. II [Jan. 1857], 1-2.)

[128] Mill had also botanized in northern Spain in July 1859, a year before the trip that resulted in “Botany of Spain.” See his letters of 22 June to Pasquale Villari (*LL, CW, XV*, 628), and of 14 Aug., 1859 to Henri Bordère, a botanist of the Hautes Pyrénées (to be found in *Additional Letters, CW, XXXII*).

[129] Such lists are, of course, a common feature of class journals. There was no regular section replying to correspondents until 1862.

[130] There are no originals of any of his letters to the *Phytologist*, so only references to their reception can be given. In n.s. I: Apr. 1856, 304; Oct. 1856, 440; Nov. 1856, 484. In n.s. II: May 1857, 72; Aug. 1857, 192; Sept. 1857, 224; Oct. 1857, 256; Jan. 1858, 328; July 1858, 512; Sept. 1858, 568; Nov. 1858, 632. In n.s. IV: Jan. 1860, 32; Oct. 1860, 320. In n.s. V: Feb. 1861, 64; Apr. 1861, 128; May 1861, 160; July 1861, 224; Aug. 1861, 256; Sept. 1861, 288; Oct. 1861, 320; Nov. 1861, 352. In n.s. VI: Feb. 1862, 64; Apr. 1862, 128; Sept. 1862, 256; Oct. 1862, 314 (the extract in the editor’s mention of the correspondence is given as the last item in the text below); Jan. 1863, 416; Feb. 1863, 448; and Mar. 1863, 480 (the last number of the *Phytologist*).

[131] “His Botanical Studies,” 46-7.

[132] See, e.g., Ray Desmond, *Dictionary of British and Irish Botanists and Horticulturists* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1977), 437, and Trimen, 44-5.

[133] Notes from a Diary, 1886-88, I, 187, quoted in *Journal of Botany*, XLII (1904), 297.

[134] The idea originated, according to Fabre, with himself, as a means of honouring and utilizing the collections of Requier: “Un homme de bien, dont nous déplorons tous le perte récente, Stuart Mill, concertait ses efforts avec les miens dans cette entreprise” (J. Vèran, “Le Souvenir de Stuart Mill à Avignon,” *Revue des Deux Mondes* [1937], 215). This passage is quoted by Curtis, “The Philosopher’s Flowers,” 28-31, who gives a usefully succinct account of their relations, based in part on Lucien Gérin, “L’amitié entre Henri Fabre et Stuart Mill et la destruction de la maison de ce dernier, stigmatisée par l’écrivain Henri Bosco,” *Bulletin des Amis d’Orange*, No. 84 (1981), 3-5, which in turn quotes extensively from an article by Bosco in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, 7 Dec., 1961.

[135] See Desmond, *Dictionary*, 437, and the references there given.

[136] See J.G. Baker, “On a New Species of *Sedum* Discovered by the Late John Stuart Mill in Asia Minor,” *Journal of Botany*, XIII (1875), 236-7.

[137] For curious details about his private life, see the peculiarly moving account in “Two,” *The Home Life of Herbert Spencer* (London, 1906).

[138] *LL, CW, XVII*, 1620 (6 July, 1869), from Blackheath.

[139] “His Botanical Studies,” 47.

[140] “S’il ne s’agissait que d’herboriser une seule fois à Orange il vaudrait mieux certainement ne le faire qu’à quelque temps d’ici; mais il me reste, grace à vos découvertes, tant d’espèces précieuses à recueillir dans cette région qui toutes ne mûrissent pas en même temps, que j’ai envie d’y faire, ce printemps, plus d’une course dont le plaisir comme le fruit sera beaucoup plus grand pour moi s’il m’est permis de les faire avec vous. Je me propose donc de me rendre à Orange Samedi prochain par le train qui y arrive à 11.46 . . . et de revenir ici par le train qui passe par Orange à 5.40.” (*LL, CW, XVII*, 1952-3 [30 Apr., 1873], from Avignon.)

[141] Though the manuscript (in the John Stuart Mill Papers at Yale) is in Mill’s hand, it seems simply to be copied from some manuscript source; at one place, for instance, Mill indicates an uncertain reading by putting a word in square brackets with a mark of interrogation. Mill and Helen Taylor had planned a trip to Egypt in 1859, but abandoned it when difficulties arose over the completion of the memorial tombstone to Harriet Taylor Mill (Helen Taylor to Algernon Taylor, from St. Veran, 23 Oct., 1859, Mill-Taylor Collection, XXIV, 713).

[142] Professor William Knight of St. Andrews wrote to Helen Taylor on 8 March, 1881, saying that he anticipated that women would soon be admitted to the University, and asking about Mill’s bequest. She replied on 11 March: “Your letter of the 8th reached me only late last night and I hasten to say that Mr Mill did not make a bequest as you seem to have been informed. I rejoice much to hear that you are engaged on so good a work and heartily wish you all success.” (Mill-Taylor Collection, British Library of Political and Economic Science.)

[143] “Taylor’s *Statesman*,” co-authored with George Grote, in *Essays on Politics and Society*, Vols. XVIII-XIX of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), XIX, 617-47, and “Guizot’s Lectures on European Civilization,” co-authored with Joseph Blanco White, in *Essays on French History and Historians*, Vol. XX of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 367-93.

[144] Co-author of the first was Charles Buller; the *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals* suggests on internal evidence that the co-author of the second was William Cooke Taylor, the favourable referee who in 1842 recommended publication of Mill’s *Logic* to the publisher William Parker, and whose hand Mill then recognized (Bain, *John Stuart Mill*, 66n).

[145] *LL, CW, XVII*. 1964 (26 Apr., 1836), and 1972 (5 June, 1837). A comment about the article to William Molesworth, proprietor of the review, reveals more woes: “The editorial errors you speak of must be those (very bad to be sure) in a portion of the article on Spain, which I wrote myself. These errors remained uncorrected, or rather were miscorrected because the proof came to my house when I was out of town & so was printed off before I saw it. This was not Robertson’s [the sub-editor’s] fault, & I will take care it shall not happen again. Some such errors are inevitable when articles come in late, but I shall take care they do not happen frequently.” (*Ibid.*, 1976 [29 Aug., 1837].)

[146] For Mill’s questions and the witnesses’ responses given in the First and Second Reports, see *Public and Parliamentary Speeches*, Vols. XXVIII-XXIX of *CW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), XXIX, App. B, 437-542. The material from the Third Report was inadvertently omitted from that volume.



[147 ]See *Political Economy Club*, IV (1882). James Mill's draft, which included a "grotesque proposal for a nightly catechism of Members," was much revised before acceptance (*Political Economy Club*, VI [1921], xi).

[148 ]*Ibid.*, xvi-xvii.

[149 ]*LL*, *CW*, XVI, 1058 and 1061.

# VOLUME XXXII - ADDITIONAL LETTERS OF JOHN STUART MILL. INTRODUCTION BY MARION FILIPIUK

## SOURCE

John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXXII - Additional Letters of John Stuart Mill*, ed. Marion Filipiuk, Michael Laine, and John M. Robson, Introduction by Marion Filipiuk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1991). Chapter: Introduction. <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/239/53903>>.

## INTRODUCTION BY MARION FILIPIUK

Editors, both past and present, of Mill's correspondence have had to live with the certain knowledge that the task would remain incomplete. To the second volume of *Earlier Letters*, Professor Francis E. Mineka had to append three "Additional Letters" that had come to light after the volumes were in page proof.<sup>1</sup> At the conclusion of the fourth volume of *Later Letters*, he added another, much larger collection of recently discovered letters, one of which had, again, arrived too late to take its proper chronological place, even in the late additions.<sup>2</sup> We have been somewhat more fortunate with timing, in being able to add to this collection at the very last moment a newly arrived series of letters to M.E. Grant Duff. The ever impending problem of new acquisitions bears evidence to the continued flourishing state of Mill studies, and we cannot pretend to undue concern.

Even before the manuscript of Volumes XIV-XVII was submitted to the publisher, a misplaced fragment of a letter was sent to John M. Robson, appropriately by Professor F.A. Hayek, the originator of the project to collect and publish Mill's correspondence. The fragment appeared first in the *Mill News Letter*,<sup>3</sup> and was added in its proper place in Volume XIV. Six letters from Mill to Sir William Molesworth also made their first appearance in the *News Letter*,<sup>4</sup> and then were subsequently included in the Appendix to *Later Letters*.

Since 1972 thirty-seven more letters have been edited for publication in the *News Letter* by friends of Mill and members of the Mill Project, and seven others have been published in the *Mill Society Bulletin, Japan*. As we continued to become aware of the existence of yet other letters, and were fairly certain that in the intervening years new material would have found its way into manuscript collections, we became convinced that we should initiate a new search and gather in all known correspondence as part of the *Collected Works*.

Beginning in 1985, major public and university libraries and archives in the United Kingdom, the United States, and France, historical associations, relevant special collections, and selected libraries in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand were contacted about recent acquisitions

or holdings possibly overlooked, with some pleasantly surprising results. We were informed of three Mill letters in an important collection of manuscripts recently left to the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York by Gordon N. Ray; and a set of eight letters exchanged between Mill and James Fitzjames Stephen was drawn to our attention by the Librarian at Cambridge University. In the course of locating the various drafts of Mill's despatches in the India Office Library and Records for the publication of a finding list in Volume XXX of the *Collected Works*, Martin and Zawahir Moir found more than seventy letters and notes from Mill to his colleagues in the East India Company. Professor Shohken Mawatari undertook the task of checking the manuscript holdings in Japan, with resulting additions to this collection, and Professor Shigekazu Yamashita sent us copies of the letters to Theodor Gomperz, earlier believed lost, but now held at Kokugakuin University. Individual collectors, such as Professor Arnold Heertje, have also been extremely helpful and generous.

From the files of Professor Mineka (which included those of Professor Hayek), graciously passed on to us in 1985, emerged other clues to previously unpublished material, such as entries from dealers' catalogues. Though most of these letters could no longer be traced, three have subsequently been located, in the Pierpont Morgan (Ray) collection and in Japan; some, no doubt, remain in private hands. In the files was also a series of typescripts of letters from Mill to Henry Cole made by Professor James McCrimmon from manuscripts in his possession in the early 1940s. Some, but not all, of these were printed in Volumes XII-XIII; the rest appear here for the first time. We believe that the McCrimmon manuscripts, apparently sent off for inclusion in the Mill-Taylor Collection at the London School of Economics, were probably victims of enemy action while in transit during the Second World War. A letter to Professor Mineka, indicating the existence of a manuscript fragment at Manchester College, Oxford, enabled us to obtain the first part of Letter 1474A, to Mary Carpenter; and, much to our surprise, the remaining fragment appeared in the collection of the College of Law, Nihon University, Tokyo.

In all, well over 300 letters have come to light over the past eighteen years, and now take their place in the *Collected Works*. The distribution by decade is generally similar to that in the previous volumes. Three have been added to the relatively meagre number that hitherto represented the correspondence of the 1820s, and forty-three to each of the decades of the 1830s and 1840s. There are fifty-eight new letters written in the 1850s, of which forty-four derive from the India Office Records. By far the greatest number, however, 129, belong to the decade of the 1860s, when Mill achieved the height of his fame; and thirty-three, in a roughly similar proportion, represent the first two-and-a-half years of the 1870s. They add appreciably to our knowledge of almost every stage of Mill's life.

Particularly significant is the long letter to George and Harriet Grote (8.1), which describes many of the activities of Mill's circle in 1824-25, and three early letters to John Bowring (8.2, 8.3, and 31.1) that suggest the relations between him and the Mills may not have been quite so strained as has previously been believed. A letter of condolence to J.B. Say, on the death of Mme Say (29.1), reveals the deep respect and gratitude that Mill entertained for Say and his family, as well as the depth of his feelings on the suicide of his great friend Eyton Tooke. A response to

questions by J.A. Blanqui (85.1), Say's pupil and successor, about the teaching and propagation of political economy in England in 1833, illustrates Mill's boundless good will and effort in accommodating and assisting French acquaintances. A letter to the Paris bookseller Paulin (177.01) also, however, demonstrates his signal lack of success in making the *London and Westminster Review* a real vehicle for the international exchange of ideas.

The series of letters to Henry Cole, which is discussed in a separate section below, has greatly enriched the detail of the circumstances surrounding the transfer of the *Review* to him and William Hickson in 1840. Two other letters of that year (284.1 and 285.1) to John Calvert, from a Mill deeply grieved by his younger brother's death, show that relations with Calvert, John Sterling's great friend, on whom Mill relied during Henry's last days at Falmouth, were close. The second also throws light on the way in which discussions at the Sterling Club helped Mill to understand the Christian commitment of the Wilberforces, and it dates his earliest steps to revise his essays for publication, a plan not completed until the appearance in 1859 of *Dissertations and Discussions*. The correspondence with Theodor Gomperz, discussed in detail below, which began in the 1850s, illustrates another of Mill's warm, personal relations, in this case with a younger disciple who was much in need of the generosity of spirit that was shown him. A separate section is also devoted to consideration of the recently discovered internal memos from the archives of the East India Company, which add to our understanding both of the workings of the Company and of Mill's work as its employee.

Many previously unknown and interesting contacts during the decade of the 1860s came to light in the course of our search, some producing challenging questions. The second of three letters (594A, 617A, 1547A) to J.E. Thorold Rogers, Drummond Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, expresses Mill's relief at escaping "the crowd and turmoil of the present occasion," in mid-June 1863, and adds, "I should be a little ashamed, too, as well as surprised, at being thought sufficiently orthodox when Kingsley is not." No evidence has been found that Mill was, like Kingsley, nominated for the degree of Doctor of Common Laws, but at that time Kingsley withdrew his name from the lists of candidates because of objections to his views. A letter to the botanist John Lindley, editor of the *Gardeners' Chronicle* (671B), demonstrates both Mill's active concern for conservation and his intolerance of the "selfish rapacity" of those who would collect rare plants. Three letters to James Fitzjames Stephen (690A, 833A, 1431A) illustrate the course of their relationship between 1864 and 1869.<sup>5</sup> Two letters to the philosopher Henry Sidgwick in the fall of 1867 (1127A, 1160A) are, like two of those to Stephen, answers to requests for advice, and demonstrate the same tact and wisdom in response to difficult questions. Five to J.M.F. Ludlow (1046A, 1046B, 1112A, 1118A, 1521B) deal with more practical matters, the administrative reforms with which Mill was concerned; they reveal that in 1867 Ludlow was very active in assisting Benjamin Scott in preparing his evidence for the Select Committee on Metropolitan Government (on which Mill served), and that Ludlow had assisted James Beal in preparing his bills on the same subject.<sup>6</sup> One letter is Ludlow's reward for services rendered: a warm endorsement by Mill of his candidacy for the office of Registrar of Friendly Societies, along with a keen and humorous assessment of the politician Robert Lowe. There are three letters supportive, in principle, of William Rossiter's efforts in 1867 and 1868 to launch and develop the South London Working

Men's College and its accompanying school (1152B, 1239A, 1246A), and one to Elizabeth Malle-son (999A) applauding her similar endeavours for a Working Women's College.

An excerpt from a letter written to the General Council of the International Working Men's Association in July 1870 (1583A) confirms that Mill had indeed some knowledge of Marx, or, specifically, of his speech on the Franco-Prussian war, which may have been sent to him for comment and which he found admirable. Other new contacts in the few years of the 1870s that remained to him continue to illustrate the constant demands made upon his time for a variety of causes. A group of letters that are held at the Palais du Roure in Avignon may also illustrate something about the way Mill's correspondence was bundled up, when, more than thirty years after his death, books and papers were disposed of at the local Librairie Roumanille. There are fourteen letters to Mill, with seven draft replies written verso and two drafts on separate sheets, most dating from the short period of August to October, 1871; the remaining pieces are a certificate dated 1858, unanswered letters of 1861, 1864, and 1865, and an envelope from 1888.<sup>7</sup> In all there are twenty items, probably representing a single lot at the sale in May, 1905.

The editorial method followed here is virtually the same as that used in the six previous volumes of correspondence. When the autograph letter has not been available, the draft has been used and is so identified. We have reproduced our sources as closely as possible, retaining vagaries of spelling in both English and French without comment. We have, however, transferred dates and addresses that appeared at the end of a letter to the beginning, and occasionally have silently added an end-of-line comma or full stop. The first footnote to each letter provides the location of the manuscript; addresses and postmarks where available; publication information for letters previously printed; information about conjectural dating; and, at first references, identification of the recipient. When possible, letters have been related to those sent to Mill.

The practice in the Appendices of *Collected Works*, Volume XVII, has been followed for the enumeration of the letters. For additional *Earlier Letters*, a decimal notation has been used: e.g., Letter 284. 1 below, of 25 Apr., 1840, is next in chronological sequence after 284, of 22 Apr., 1840, in Volume XIII, pp. 429-30. An alphabetical indicator signals additions to *Later Letters*: e.g., Letter 336A below, of 29 Nov., 1858, follows 336, of 28 Nov., 1858, in Volume XV, p. 578. In eight cases, when the letter antedated one already inserted in the sequence, we were forced to resort to a further refinement; see, e.g., 171.01 and 862AA below. Letters already in *Collected Works* in incomplete form, reprinted here in full, retain their original numbers. Of fifty-two undated letters discovered, we have managed to assign dates to all but fifteen; these last have been arranged chronologically, as far as could be determined, in a separate section, and bear the prefix "No." In footnotes, letters in this volume will generally be referred to by number; letters in *Earlier* and *Later Letters*, by volume and page.<sup>8</sup>

## LETTERS TO HENRY COLE

Several of the new letters to Henry Cole and one to John Mitchell Kemble throw more light on the story of Mill's divesting himself of the *London and Westminster Review* and transferring it in the spring of 1840 to Cole and William Edward Hickson.<sup>9</sup> Mill's determination to withdraw from the costly proprietorship and onerous editorship was evident in October 1839, when he tried to interest Thomas Wentworth Beaumont, the wealthy proprietor of the *British and Foreign Review*, in taking it on. His first tentative approach (265.1 below) was through Kemble, the editor, with whom he had only "a former slight acquaintance," but through whom he thought it prudent to make the preliminary enquiry. Since the two reviews had had the "same difficulties to struggle against," and basically the same readership to draw upon, Mill thought there might be some pecuniary advantage to Beaumont in incorporating the rival radical organ. Kemble's reply apparently indicated several issues on which the opinions of the two reviews had been at variance, and clearly suggested that he was unfavourably disposed to the merger; but he offered to write to Beaumont.<sup>10</sup> Mill was left dangling for months, expecting some sort of response from Beaumont, and apparently unwilling to let the silence speak for itself.

As early as August 1839, Mill began to confide his problems with the *Review* (and with John Robertson, who had been mismanaging it in his absence on the Continent) to Cole, who was obviously interested in becoming involved, but said nothing at that point.<sup>11</sup> He knew about Mill's offering it to Beaumont, since they discussed the matter during walks to town in October. There is no hard evidence in Cole's diary that he was pressing his suit, though VanArsdel interprets the fact that all contact with Mill ceased during Cole's illness, 7 November to 14 January, as an indication that he was perhaps putting too much pressure on Mill.<sup>12</sup>

Robertson apparently called on Cole on the first day of that illness to talk about the "future management of the review." A previously unpublished letter from Mill to Cole (268.1) may be dated to 12 November, the Tuesday following that meeting. Robertson must have explained some sort of "plan" that he and Cole had formulated, which possibly involved their sharing of the editorial duties in future. The letter also suggests that they were hoping Mill might be persuaded to retain the proprietorship if he were relieved of the editorial burden. Robertson appears not to have felt that his position was threatened by the proposed arrangement, as Mill says, "He seemed to me to be neither *for* nor *against* the plan, but to await my decision. Now my decision, if I consider myself only, will be, whatever becomes of the review, to withdraw myself from it." Beaumont is still his major hope; he thinks, after waiting nearly a month, that he "cannot be much longer without" an answer. If Beaumont fails, Mill says: "I should like best . . . that your schemes should proceed, with some other person than myself as the proprietor."

There is no mention of Hickson in this letter, and no indication that the discussion went any further at this point. Mill may have decided that he preferred to shelve their plans until he knew definitely where Beaumont stood. Cole, however, was not totally idle. The diary for 17 November notes that Hickson called and "promised to help in some new arrangements of the L. and W.R." This is the first entry that specifically links Hickson with the plans, though contacts between Cole and Hickson were frequent during this period.<sup>13</sup>

Mill continued to wait throughout December and January, and the only relevant item in Cole's diary is the unspecific comment that on 7 January, 1840 he had a chat with William Makepeace Thackeray about the *Review*. It is likely that no one wanted to push Mill, since all were aware that he had serious concerns and financial responsibilities resulting from the declining health of his brother Henry. And it is likely that Mill's procrastination and wavering were at least partly the result of his disturbed state of mind and the uncertainty about his brother's fate.<sup>14</sup>

On 6 February, in the midst of this turmoil, and presumably feeling the pressure of shortly having to produce the March number, Mill suddenly offered the *Review* to Cole, still "in case of Beaumont's refusal to buy it," and then, just as suddenly, the next day withdrew the offer. Letters 273 and 276, the dates of which were uncertain, can now be assigned through Cole's diary to 6 and 8 February: Cole and his brother called on Mill on the 9th to try to straighten things out. "One or two friends" had, in the interval, been trying to persuade Mill that he should not allow the *Review* to continue with the name unchanged, as he would remain closely associated in people's minds with it, and that it would be more to his credit "that it should cease entirely than that it should be continued as anything else than the philosophical & political organ it was designed to be." Perhaps Mill felt guilty and embarrassed about having treated Cole badly, because, after a breathing space, contact, if not negotiations, resumed by 15 February.<sup>15</sup>

At the "eleventh hour," on a Thursday, probably 27 rather than 20 February, Mill wrote to Cole, again offering him the *Review* if he would carry it on under the name of *Westminster*, and adding that he would be even happier to turn it over to him and Hickson jointly, as Cole proposed, but all this still subject to a last-minute offer from Beaumont, "or from some other quarter almost as improbable."<sup>16</sup> Letter 277.1, here published for the first time, is obviously a second note written at "20 minutes before 6," on the same day, just as Mill was rushing off to Reynell's to oversee the printing of the March number of the *Review*.<sup>17</sup> It was prompted, obviously, by the fact that he had indeed had the offer from the "other quarter [he] alluded to," and he would suddenly like the matter decided, with "an announcement in the present number," but was still somewhat short of certain: "if you are willing to carry it on our agreement must be conditional on the very probable event of my refusing [the other offer]."

No such announcement appeared in the March number; though, curiously, discussion seems to have heated up among all parties almost at once. It is scarcely surprising that final arrangements failed to be made on such short notice, and other moves were apparently afoot. Cole had noted in his diary on 20 February (a Thursday) that Robertson had called on him; there is no specific mention of the *Review* at all, but on the following Friday, the 28th, Cole and Robertson dined together, and then with Mill and George Fletcher (an occasional contributor to the *Westminster*) walked to Kensington. How can all this be squared with Mill's making an offer to Cole on the 27th, which Cole not only failed to take up at once, but failed to mention in his diary?

It is possible that by 20 February Robertson could see that Mill was wanting to put the matter to rest soon, and that his job as editor was in jeopardy; so a reminder to Cole of his interest in staying on, and his difficulties, may have appeared timely. Cole's lack of response to Mill's offer may have resulted from "the force of circumstances"—an inability to reach Hickson, vagueness

in their arrangements (as everything still seemed to hinge on Beaumont), or his own financial uncertainty. Whatever the reasons, or the sequence of events, it is certain that after the conversations on the 28th, Robertson was aware that the tide had definitely set against him and that he immediately mounted a campaign to save his position. It sounds, indeed, as if Robertson had made a bid to conduct the *Review* as sole editor. Cole's diary for the 29th reports:

Walked to town with John Mill who seemed to think that Robertson could not manage the *Review* by himself. . . . Robertson called and in a round about manner urged all sorts of reasons to influence his remaining Editor of the *Review*. He said he did not like J. Mill's conduct and that he had offers to write in the *Edinburgh*, that without him and J. Mill the character of the *Review* would be gone, that in fact the *Review* owed him £900, that he had never been able to have his own way, etc. etc.<sup>18</sup>

It seems likely that Robertson had had a rude shock on the 28th when he discovered that Cole and Hickson were potential co-proprietors and his editorship was in question. Cole was apparently sympathetic to his problems, and Robertson persevered. On 5 March he returned to visit Cole, and made a new proposal—that Cole “be sole proprietor and he editor of the *Review*.” Mill must have heard about this scheme from Robertson later on the same day and hoped to talk to Cole about it the next morning, but missed him. This inference dates Mill's letter of Friday to 6 March.<sup>19</sup>

It is here that an undated letter of Cole's must fit, in response to Mill's early morning note.<sup>20</sup> It is also headed “Friday.” Cole had talked to Hickson on Thursday night; Hickson was unwilling to enter into a joint proprietorship with Robertson as editor. In the letter Mill is asked to decide between Cole and Hickson, or Cole and Robertson: “the decision must rest with you.” Later that day, Mill replies: “The responsibility thus devolving wholly on me I must take till Monday to consider. But I will be prepared to give you an answer positively on that day.” (277.2.)

Cole, however, did not wait for Mill's answer—or he knew what it would be. His diary for 6 March notes: “Wrote to John Mill abt. Robertson's editorship. . . . In the evening writing to Robertson to decline his proposition.” On Saturday, the 7th, Hickson made Cole a generous offer to take a greater number of the shares, thereby lessening Cole's financial responsibility in the venture.<sup>21</sup>

VanArsdel's dating of Mill's letter of partial explanation to Robertson to 10 or 11 March seems correct.<sup>22</sup> Mill undoubtedly would have written before the formal transfer took place, as it did on Thursday, the 12th.<sup>23</sup> Letter 279, in reply to Robertson's answer of complaint, may thus be dated to Monday, 16 March.<sup>24</sup>

Mill obviously agreed to help Cole and Hickson with the editing if they so wished, and the brief letter to Cole (287.1) can probably be dated “before 26 May,” the date of publication of the June issue. “The Critical and Miscellaneous Notices” section became a feature of the *Review* under the new owners, mentioned as such in the notice of change. Though Mill clearly thought it was a poor substitute for solid articles, he went over the notices for the June number, as requested, and contributed three to the September number. This letter must have reference to the June and



not the September number, because Cole withdrew in July and was no longer in charge of the section.<sup>25</sup>

The evidence from the three new letters to Cole printed below, Cole's diary, Caroline Fox's diary, and VanArsdel's article permits a redating and reordering of the letters from this period as listed below. (Those preceded by No. are found in *Collected Works*, Volume XIII.)<sup>26</sup>

268.1 [12 Nov., 1839?]	No. 275 [6 Mar., 1840]
No. 274 [22 or 29 Jan., 1840]	277.2 [6 Mar., 1840]
No. 273 [6 Feb., 1840]	No. 278 [10 or 11 Mar., 1840]
No. 276 [8 Feb., 1840]	No. 280 12 Mar., 1840
No. 277 [27 Feb., 1840]	No. 279 [16 Mar., 1840]
277.1 [27 Feb., 1840]	

## LETTERS TO THEODOR GOMPERZ

The relationship between Mill and his young Austrian disciple Theodor Gomperz was similar to that with the even younger Englishman, John Morley. With these two men, Mill's role was that of father figure as well as mentor, and his genuine interest in, and abundant kindness to, the rising generation of the talented and reform-minded is much in evidence in his dealings with them. But Gomperz's special problems brought out the depth of Mill's generosity of spirit for a troubled mind in a way that no other relationship called for. Mill was, in many ways, at his absolute best with Gomperz, in the honesty that accompanied the compassion and the modest reticence that avoided applying pressure to an overburdened spirit. Yet in the circumstances that accompanied Gomperz's aspirations to Helen Taylor's hand, Mill also demonstrated the naïveté bordering on blindness that was characteristic of his attitudes where his wife and her daughter were concerned. Gomperz treasured Mill's letters to him over the years, and they were used by his son Heinrich in a study of his father's life, based on his correspondence.<sup>27</sup> It was from this source and from drafts in the Johns Hopkins and Mill-Taylor collections that most of these letters came into *Later Letters*.

In a communication to the editor of the *New York Times* of 25 April, 1939, Heinrich Gomperz claimed to have "published all of these letters in their full English text," and then, having

put [them] to all the use they were capable of yielding, . . . sold the originals at a very modest price to a second-hand bookseller in London from whom they were purchased by Lord Stamp, who, not knowing that they had already been published, . . . wrote a lengthy article about them and, indeed, republished them in part in *The Times of London* on Dec 29, 1938.

Stamp's selection in fact revealed that Gomperz had not published quite all of the letters, or "their . . . full text," as, for example, a two-sentence fragment of Letter 292 and an additional paragraph of Letter 324 below, which Stamp included, bore witness. It was subsequently assumed that the letters were destroyed in 1941, when Lord Stamp died in an air raid that demolished his home.<sup>28</sup> We now know that such was not the case. The collection appeared on the market in 1986 and, through the Tokyo dealers, Maruzen, was purchased by Kokugakuin University. It includes thirty-nine letters to Gomperz, a questionnaire relating to the *Logic*, and a letter to Gomperz's sister Josephine von Wertheimstein. Owing to the good offices of Professor Shigekazu Yamashita, we were able to obtain copies for collation with the versions which had already appeared in *Later Letters*.<sup>29</sup>

Eight letters in the collection, and the questionnaire, are previously unpublished. Four have additional paragraphs, and other differences range from as many as three-and-a-half missing sentences to a short phrase or two. We have decided to reprint those letters (including the one to Gomperz's sister) that differ by as much as, or more than, a major clause from the version published in *Later Letters*, with substantive variants noted at the foot of the page. Variants (excluding consideration of salutations and complimentary closings) between the manuscripts and the other letters in *Collected Works*, not reprinted here, are listed in Appendix A below.

The friendship between Mill and Gomperz began when the latter wrote in the summer of 1854 asking permission to translate and publish a German edition of the *Logic*, a request which Mill readily granted.<sup>30</sup> Three previously unknown notes from Mill to Gomperz (262A, 262B, and 262C, below), dated almost two years later in the early fall of 1856, document the fact that Gomperz, when in England, was provided with the latest edition of the *Logic*, the fourth, and invited overnight to Blackheath to discuss the translation. It was the only occasion on which Gomperz met Harriet, and she seems to have approved of him, if one may judge from the personal revelation she made to him.<sup>31</sup> Her approval would surely help to account for Mill's continued loyalty to Gomperz, despite his inability, over a considerable period, to arrange for publication of the translations of Mill's works.

The friendship was thus firmly established in 1856, though there was at once to be a year's gap in their correspondence. Gomperz apparently next wrote to Mill on 30 September, 1857, telling of the death of his father earlier that year and asking a favour. Could Mill determine whether it would be possible for a medical friend of his to obtain a post in the service of the East India Company? Mill replied at once, on 5 October, as helpfully as he was able, in Letter 292 below (most of which is previously unpublished), and expressed an interest in learning more about Gomperz's own scholarly work. Yet another ten months passed before Gomperz wrote again, apparently on 21 August, 1858, telling of his publications in the *Rheinisches Museum*, and suggesting that he would like to include in his translation of the *Logic* some of Mill's controversy with Whewell. Once again, Mill's response (324 below) was immediate, on 30 August, agreeing to all Gomperz's suggestions, and in a previously unpublished paragraph saying that he needed a long "recruiting" from the "confinement of an office"; he had therefore seen fit to refuse the post on the Council of India that had been offered to him by Lord Stanley.

On 10 November, pleased to have at last, it seemed, found a publisher for the *Logic*, Weber of Leipzig, who was planning to bring it out in December and January, Gomperz replied.<sup>32</sup> He enclosed a pamphlet, *Die Theorie der Induktion*, by Professor Ernst Friedrich Apelt of the University of Jena, and asked Mill if he would care to answer the arguments and include his response in the translated volumes. He also asked for permission to be the translator of *On Liberty*. This letter arrived when Mill was crippled by grief at Harriet's death, but he dutifully replied to Gomperz on 4 December,<sup>33</sup> suggesting that perhaps Gomperz would make some comment on the controversy himself and seeming not to have focused on the request about *On Liberty*. In his lost letter of condolence of 10 December, Gomperz apparently was enthusiastic in his praise of Harriet; Mill was pleased that "so little as [he] saw of her, should have made so true an impresson." He acceded to Gomperz's request about the translation of the forthcoming work, promising to let him have "one of the earliest copies or the sheets."<sup>34</sup>

In January 1859, Gomperz apparently wrote again, asking another favour—that a copy of *On Liberty* be sent to a friend. Mill made the arrangements, and then, not having had any acknowledgment by 31 March, wrote volunteering to send another copy if the first had gone astray. He also made a discreet enquiry into Gomperz's "various literary projects" (381 below, previously unpublished). This letter went unanswered, and Mill wrote yet again on 16 May (392 below). He asked this time not about the book for the friend, but whether Gomperz had ever received the sheets of *On Liberty* and whether he was still wanting to do the translation, since he had had another offer from a Prussian magistrate, Eduard John, who was interested in undertaking it and seemed like "a competent person." Mill in fact directly asked Gomperz (in a sentence omitted by his son) whether he knew of John, and whether "in case the undertaking should not suit [Gomperz]," he should "close with [John's] offer." Mill was obviously anxious that *On Liberty* should make the impact and gain the recognition that the memory of Harriet deserved.

This appeal brought a response from Gomperz in late May or early June, in which he referred to "unhappy events which [had] caused [him] so much pain and disturbance of mind." Whatever the events, here was the first evidence of the emotional problems that were to plague Gomperz for the next several years and to impede progress both with his own scholarly work and with his good intentions of making Mill's writings known in German-speaking Europe. In his reply of 11 June (398 below), Mill said he was content to leave the translation of *On Liberty* with Gomperz as he wished, and he tried to remove any semblance of pressure concerning it. The relationship then lapsed into a period of silence for almost two years.

Mill's note of 18 April, 1861, and the follow-up of 3 July (487B and 494A below), were not published in *Briefe*, presumably because they underlined Gomperz's failure to fulfil his commitments. Unsure that the first note would reach Gomperz, since his address had been mislaid, Mill asked him to write and give it in full again so that a copy of *Representative Government* could be properly sent; he also mentioned his surprise at learning that a German translation of *On Liberty* had appeared. By 3 July Mill had found the address, and wrote to say that a copy of the new work was on the way and that he was "vexed" to learn of the German version by an unknown translator (494A). Whether Gomperz received the first of these appeals is not known, but the sec-

ond at least evoked a response written on 1 August, which fortunately is still extant. Gomperz had evidently been in the depths of a depression for some time. Though a considerable portion of the translation of *On Liberty* had been finished and even “*printed* long ago,” his lethargy and “apathy of mind” had prevented its completion and publication. His embarrassment at his lack of performance and his immense gratitude for Mill’s kindness in renewing their friendship are touching, as is Mill’s response of 24 August.<sup>35</sup> Mill was fully able to sympathize with a “morbid affection” that sapped energy, but expressed great confidence in Gomperz’s ability and encouraged him to continue with his translation of *On Liberty*. He also assured Gomperz that he did not “know anything more important or more intensely interesting than the progress and chances of the political transformation of Austria,” and that he agreed, “from beginning to end,” in Gomperz’s analysis of the Hungarian question.

Yet another silence fell until Mill, showing great forethought, wrote again, this time from Athens, on 12 June, 1862 (538B below, previously unpublished), to say that he and Helen were planning to visit Vienna and Budapest on their return home and would like to see Gomperz in Vienna, or elsewhere in Austria, “during the month of August.” He asked that Gomperz write to him, Poste Restante in Constantinople, where they hoped to be “in a month from this time, perhaps sooner.” Heinrich Gomperz did not publish this note, presumably because in his view it represented merely a complication of arrangements; but Mill watchers are interested in his deliberately planning to visit Gomperz (probably motivated in part by the young man’s new political concerns and connections) and his shortening his trip with Helen, reaching Constantinople by 24 June.<sup>36</sup> It is interesting too that they continued in the area until about 5 July, without receiving any communication from Gomperz, as Mill’s note to him of 17 July, announcing their early arrival in Vienna, suggests.<sup>37</sup> This note, which implies no failure on the part of Gomperz,<sup>38</sup> was published by his son Heinrich; it in fact initiated a visit of several days, which was both a pleasant interlude and a prelude to further problems.

On his return to Avignon from Bad Ischel, where he and Helen had left Gomperz, Mill wrote on 17 September (554 below) to tell him of their movements in Austria after they had parted, and their activities since, in three-and-a-half sentences of interesting detail that his son chose not to include. Heinrich also made another, apparently minor, omission at the end, of two short sentences: “I have found Dr Schiel’s letter; it is dated Frankfurt. Let me hear from you now and then.” The implications in the comment about Schiel, however, are rich. In 1849 J. von Schiel had published a translation of part of the *Logic*, as *Die inductive Logik*, and in 1862-63 through the same publisher, Vieweg, a complete translation of the work. Mill’s brief remark suggests that Schiel had written to Gomperz to tell him that he was issuing this new edition, and that he had also written to inform Mill. It suggests too that there had probably been some discussion of the difficulties that Gomperz had had in trying to find a publisher, and also of Gomperz’s position as the authorized translator of Mill’s works; yet, again, the fact of a previously issued translation did not negate Mill’s endorsement of Gomperz’s efforts, though still unfulfilled.

Before Mill had posted this letter of 17 September, he had received a letter from Gomperz (now lost) that expressed great anxiety at not having heard about their safe return. Gomperz had

apparently misread the signals of friendship that he had been receiving during their time together, and had begun to entertain romantic notions about a possibly permanent relation with Helen and her father. Mill's comment in his postscript to the letter of 17 September—"I should have written before, had I thought you would have felt any such anxiety as you mention on our account"—appears unintentionally to have fed Gomperz's hopes rather than lessened them.

The effect of these aspirations, and no doubt also of the appearance of Schiel's edition of the *Logic*, seems to have been that Gomperz was driven back to his own translation of that work, and to plans for a trip to England. He wrote to Mill in late November or early December,<sup>39</sup> setting out his hopes for a reunion in London in January and enclosing a questionnaire about the *Logic*, the first question of which reflects his persistent concern about his being the truly authorized translation, carried out "with the collaboration of the author" (564 below). Gomperz apparently reached London in mid-February, 1863, and Mill at once hastened to provide the new arrival with a letter of introduction, dated 20 February, to the Greek historian George Grote (589A below, previously unpublished). On that same day, Mill also took the trouble to write to the editor of the *Spectator* (589B below, also previously unpublished) to send him some information about the political situation in Austria that Gomperz had enclosed in an earlier letter. One must conclude that Mill hoped that the younger man would be pleasantly surprised, and encouraged in his endeavours, by seeing that some serious notice had been taken of his activities and his writings.

Mill clearly made an effort to repay the hospitality shown to him and Helen in Austria the previous summer, unaware that his gestures of friendship might well be misconstrued by a young man with marriage on his mind. Gomperz was invited on two consecutive Sunday evenings to dinner at Blackheath, where he met William Thornton and Thomas Hare.<sup>40</sup> Mill also arranged for him to attend a meeting of the Political Economy Club on 6 March,<sup>41</sup> and the public meeting of the 26th in St. James's Hall, at which the trades unionists of London demonstrated their support for the cause of the North in the American Civil War. Mill's invitation to that meeting (603A below), at which Gomperz was to meet Henry Fawcett, is previously unpublished. The occasion for Gomperz was an extremely impressive one, both historically, as it was the first time that the working men's societies had participated in public discussion of a great public question of the day, and personally, as he accompanied Helen, while Mill sat on the platform.<sup>42</sup> Yet another token of Mill's friendship was the gift of a copy of *Utilitarianism*; and on Gomperz's immediate request, permission was once again granted to him to be the authorized translator.<sup>43</sup>

Mill and Helen apparently never mentioned to Gomperz that they were planning to leave for Avignon two days after the meeting in St. James's Hall.<sup>44</sup> Gomperz's letter to his sister Josephine of 29 March, describing his reception at breakfast by the Grotes at their London home on that day, suggests that he was quite unaware of the departure.<sup>45</sup> By the time he returned on 5 April from a weekend with the Grotes and their friends at Barrow Green, however, he had heard the news, and, despite his recent social success, he was plunged into despair, both because he had obviously failed to convey his intentions about Helen and because he felt abandoned.<sup>46</sup> On 18 April Gomperz wrote to suggest that he join Mill and Helen in Avignon, where he hoped to make his feelings clear.

Mill's answer of the 23rd, dissuading him from the visit, poured cold water on his hopes.<sup>47</sup> He sent a tormented response, to which Mill replied, on 9 May,<sup>48</sup> honestly, yet somewhat tentatively, since Gomperz's letter referred to "suppositions," apparently adverse to himself, which Mill was deemed to have made. Gomperz then went off to Oxford, where he did, in fact, make some progress with his plans to study and edit tracings of manuscripts from Herculaneum, before experiencing a kind of breakdown towards the end of the month. His strange behaviour caused his new friends there to send for help from home, which arrived, apparently in the first week of June, in the person of his friend Eduard Wessel, but not before Gomperz had gone missing for a short time and caused some alarm.<sup>49</sup> According to Weinberg's account, it was on Saturday, 6 June, as this crisis was occurring, that Mill, back from Avignon, invited him to dinner on the 7th to meet Alexander Bain.<sup>50</sup> Gomperz of course did not receive this invitation until he came back to London shortly thereafter with Wessel.

The next note of invitation of 11 June (617 below) suggests that Mill, receiving no reply, went to call on Gomperz; the two phrases omitted from the letter as published by his son indicate that there was apparently some intervening arrangement proposed for the 12th, a dinner at Blackheath with Louis Blanc. When Blanc proved unavailable for that date, Mill wrote to suggest that Gomperz and Wessel come on Sunday, the 14th. The restoration of what may seem trivial omissions shows clearly that Mill was making an all-out effort to see the distressed young man.<sup>51</sup>

Distressed he most assuredly was, however, though apparently under control at the Sunday dinner party. On the following day, it seems that he wrote to Mill, hinting again at his "wishes" with regard to Helen and communicating his paranoid fears about having been "maligned" to them. This time, Mill understood what he was aiming at, and in his reply of 16 June very kindly, but firmly, suggested that he had no chance with Helen. Mill also, however, most wisely left a course of action open to him: "If you think fit to carry the matter farther, either by speech or writing—even if only for the relief of your own feelings—you will have my truest sympathy, as you have my sincere friendship and esteem. . . . I hope that nothing that has passed will make any difference in your friendly feelings towards us, who remain unchanged to you. . . ." And Mill expressed hope that Gomperz and Wessel would come (as had probably been arranged at the earlier meeting) on the following day.<sup>52</sup> Mill's sympathy for such mental anguish was the product of experience, and his everlasting tolerance of Gomperz's inability to bring out German editions of his works, as undertaken, was probably born of the awareness that he had contributed, even if unknowingly—or perhaps because unknowingly—to his suffering.

After Gomperz's departure from London, which must have occurred very shortly after their last visit, Mill wrote to him on 15 July a most kind and friendly letter of encouragement,<sup>53</sup> expressing confidence in his great ability and in the therapeutic benefits of "real intellectual work." Gomperz apparently responded immediately, on the 18th, from the depths of unhappiness and paranoia.<sup>54</sup> Mill waited until the 29th to reply, presumably because Gomperz had intimated that he would write again immediately, but then failed to do so. Once more Mill's wisdom in dealing with emotional disturbance, and delusions, is greatly in evidence. He forthrightly asks Gomperz to explain to him in exactly what way he sees himself as misunderstood, so that the matter may

be cleared up, and he gently reiterates the gospel of work, in proper doses, as the remedy for a great mind, greatly troubled. Nor did his active concern cease at that point. When he received no response to this encouragement, he replied on 25 August (639 below) to a letter from Gomperz's sister, apparently written earlier, on her brother's return to Austria, explaining the line of encouragement he had taken with him. In a sentence omitted by Heinrich Gomperz, Mill suggests that Wessel had, in the interim, sent him word of their friend's condition,<sup>55</sup> and Mill asked that he continue to do so.

It appears that Gomperz made some response himself after this second, indirect, effort, saying that he was somewhat better, and at work, but he also responded to Mill's attempt to let him clear the air. Mill's reply of 17 September (644 below) certainly suggests, however, that Gomperz was still suffering from paranoid delusions, which Mill once more dealt with directly; and once again he acceded to the request from Gomperz to be recognized as the authorized translator of *Utilitarianism*, enclosing a formal statement to that effect on a separate sheet.

At this point another silence fell, and it lasted until the summer of the following year, when Mill again wrote, on 26 June, 1864 (700 below), prompted, one might surmise from the introductory sentence (another omission of Heinrich Gomperz's), by a letter from Wessel that spoke of Gomperz's "intended publication" of Philodemus's *On Anger*. Mill yet again reaffirms his friendly feelings, as well as his genuine interest in, and the inherent value of, Gomperz's scholarly work. Gomperz apparently at once had a copy of the volume sent to Mill, without any personal communication; and Mill took the opportunity of a favourable notice in the *Saturday Review* to acknowledge and praise it, on 22 August.<sup>56</sup>

Gomperz's next gesture was to send Mill the first number of his Herculean series, concerning Philodemus on induction, and Mill wrote in reply the following spring, on 30 April, 1865 (806 below). It seems that Gomperz had written to him "some months ago," and had at the time promised a longer letter, which had failed to materialize (a detail Gomperz's son excised). Mill had already sent Gomperz both the *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, and the first part of his study of Comte (neither of which had apparently been acknowledged), and was planning to send shortly an advance copy of the second article on Comte. It had been two years since there had been any discussion of the projected translations of *three* of Mill's works, but never a word of question or hint of reproach had been whispered. Is such restraint possible in ordinary human nature?

And so the pattern would continue on both sides, Gomperz sending Mill yet another scholarly production, the second volume of the Herculean series, "dedicated [to him] with reverence and love, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, May 20," and Mill thanking him heartily, if a trifle tardily, on 22 August, 1866, giving parliamentary business as his excuse, and trying to elicit a response from the reticent disciple by asking his opinion about the remarkable political changes in Germany.<sup>57</sup> There is no evidence that his opinion was ever forthcoming; perhaps for that reason Mill's direct invitation to write to him in the final paragraph did not find its way into *Briefe*. The silence descended again until the beginning of 1868, at which time a flurry of activity about a possible collected edition of Mill's works in German began.

In January of that year, Mill received a letter from Julius Grosser, proprietor of the Viennese firm of Tendler and Co., which was prepared to undertake the project, and an accompanying note from Gomperz,<sup>58</sup> full of enthusiasm about this new undertaking. He naturally gave explanations for previous non-performance, described in Mill's reply of 28 January as "causes of unhappiness . . . respecting which you hold out the hope that I shall hear something from Mr Wessel";<sup>59</sup> and Mill apparently did subsequently learn through him of the sudden death of Gomperz's nephew, Carl, and the resulting breakdown of his sister Josephine.<sup>60</sup> Mill probably follows Gomperz's letter in discussing the works to be included in the new edition. The *Logic* would occupy the first two volumes, and Mill volunteered to send the alterations he was making at the time for the seventh edition. He informed Gomperz that he had already given permission to Dr. Anton Dohrn of Jena to translate the *Inaugural Address*, and suggested that Grosser get in touch with Dohrn. Mill had also referred Wilhelm Sattler to Grosser about a translation of the work on Comte. Gomperz had apparently asked Mill whether he had seen F.A. Wille's translation of *Representative Government* (1862), and Mill replied that it seemed to him to need "a good deal of correction." Gomperz had also asked about the possible inclusion of *Essays on Unsettled Questions of Political Economy*, and Mill commented that he would wish to alter the first essay considerably if they were to be reissued in English—not a very positive reply. Gomperz was sure, however, that it would be wise to keep the *Examination* back, at least at first.

Not having received any acknowledgment of the sheets of Book I of the *Logic*, Mill wrote again on 18 March, 1868 (a letter not included in *Briefe*), inquiring whether Gomperz had received them; he enclosed those for the rest of the first volume, and promised to have the sheets of volume two sent on to him "without any avoidable delay."<sup>61</sup> Gomperz replied apologetically on 26 March,<sup>62</sup> thanking Mill for the sheets of the whole work, which had arrived, and raising various issues and questions about the edition. The details are interesting, since they show that Gomperz now certainly wanted to take full charge and ensure that the translations would be of high quality. He recommended that Mill accede to Eduard Wessel's request, enclosed, to be the translator of *Dissertations and Discussions*, and that Wessel also be allowed to translate *Representative Government* again, as Wille's version was so poor. Sattler's translation of *Auguste Comte and Positivism* would be carefully scrutinized by Gomperz, who would not hesitate to correct "any material errors." (In the event it satisfied him so ill that another translation was undertaken later by Gomperz's wife, Elise.) Anton Dohrn had reported that he would have to give his translation of the *Inaugural Address* a thorough revision, but since he had no time for the task he had no objection to another's correcting it. Gomperz requested, however, that a new translation of the *Inaugural*, and that of *Utilitarianism*, be entrusted to his friend Adolph Wahrmund, an Oriental scholar, and that a formal statement of Mill's consent be forwarded, so as to give Gomperz "the advantage of a fuller control over these translations [than he] could otherwise exercise." Indeed he admitted that Wahrmund had already completed the major part of the latter task, and had "submitted without reluctance to a careful revision" by Gomperz himself.

To all this effort and enthusiasm Mill responded warmly, in a letter of 23 April;<sup>63</sup> but before any volumes were published, the firm of Tendler went bankrupt later that year. There was no hint of trouble, however, in Gomperz's reply of 11 May,<sup>64</sup> and apparently no further explanation



forthcoming either of this disappointment or of the later renegotiation of the project with the Fues Verlag of Leipzig.

Mill wrote again, in March of the following year (1413 below), to inquire about the edition, because he had “just received an agreeable evidence of the demand for it” in another proposal for a series of his works, which he proceeded to outline.<sup>65</sup> To his question, Mill seems to have had no reply, as on 15 June he gave Gomperz yet another gentle nudge, and for a similar reason. He had received several requests from aspiring translators for the recently issued *Subjection of Women*, and since it was “very desirable that this should be done immediately,” he had “accepted the offer of Dr Heinemann . . . reserving [Gomperz’s] right to include in the collected edition either his translation by agreement with him or a different translation.”<sup>66</sup> Three weeks later, on 6 July, Mill responded in a similar vein (1454A below, previously unpublished) to a letter from Anton Dohrn, agreeing to Dohrn’s issuing his translation of the *Inaugural*, “merely reserving the right of the publishers of the complete edition to include it (or another translation) afterwards in their series.”

From Gomperz he appears to have received only an announcement of his marriage, which took place on 8 August of that year. On 23 October Mill replied with warm congratulations and a request for information, not for himself, but for an acquaintance, whose address he enclosed, who was anxious to discover how the system of secret voting actually functioned in those countries where it had been adopted. The edition was not mentioned.<sup>67</sup>

This is the last letter in Mill’s correspondence with Gomperz, as his son Heinrich testifies, adding, in some surprise, that Mill never thanked his father for the first volume of the *Gesammelte Werke* (1869), which certainly must have been sent to him.<sup>68</sup> Whether it was indeed sent, or whether the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in July of that year had any effect upon the arrangements, it almost certainly never arrived, since it is inconceivable that Mill would not have acknowledged its appearance.

There was a hiatus of four years before the publication of Volumes II-IV of the edition which contained, at last, Gomperz’s translation of the *Logic*. Heinrich Gomperz claimed that he did not know why it had taken so long.<sup>69</sup> It was just at the time of Mill’s death that the final volume of the three was issued. In his letter of condolence to Helen Taylor of 11 May, 1873, Gomperz said he would send to her “the eight volumes of the translation of Mr. Mill’s works that have just come out.”<sup>70</sup> It is doubtful whether this intention was ever carried out, as in his letter of 25 November, 1873, thanking Helen for a copy of the *Autobiography*, he concluded: “If you would be good enough to let me know your residence, I would send you the nine volumes which have appeared (the ninth is being published at this moment).”<sup>71</sup> The tenth volume, which he said was also being printed at that time, was the first of the two-volume *Dissertations and Discussions*, translated by Wessel. It appears that none of these volumes was despatched as suggested, however, and that two more years elapsed before the publication of the second volume of the collected essays, because the publisher made difficulties about some of the subject matter. It was October, 1875 before Elise Gomperz could write to Helen: “My husband hopes that you have received the *eleven*

volumes of the translation he directed Mr. Reisland to send you.”<sup>72</sup> These reached their destination, and now form part of the Somerville College collection.

Gomperz was apparently relying on his friend Wessel to complete the translation of the works to be included in the final volume of the edition, and Wessel’s death in January, 1879 left him in dire need of assistance. He found it in the person of Sigmund Freud, who was recommended by his former philosophy professor, Franz Brentano, a colleague and friend of Gomperz at the University of Vienna.<sup>73</sup> Another year elapsed, however, before the twelfth volume appeared. When it did, Gomperz sent copies to Helen without delay,<sup>74</sup> and surely with a sense of relief that his commitment to making Mill’s works available in German was at last fulfilled. He could now, with a clear conscience, devote all his time to his own writings on classical thought,<sup>75</sup> which, in their own way, would continue to spread the influence of Mill’s empiricism in scholarly Europe.

## EAST INDIA CORRESPONDENCE

Mill’s work and influence at the East India Company has been the least studied area of his much explored life and thought. The record he compiled of the more than 1700 despatches that he drafted over the course of his thirty-five years in the Examiner’s Office of the Company<sup>76</sup> is daunting, even to scholars with a Benthamite bent for lists. It is only recently, thanks to the efforts of Martin and Zawahir Moir, co-editors with John M. Robson of Mill’s *Writings on India*, that his despatches have become really accessible,<sup>77</sup> and we anticipate that there will now be considerably more investigation of the role he played in the history of British India.

As the Moirs located the various versions of the despatches, other treasures of three kinds emerged from the collections: letters in Mill’s own hand to an official in another department, supplying further information about the matters dealt with in the documents; letters in a clerk’s hand, signed by Mill, as Examiner of India Correspondence, 1856-58, usually making requests to the Finance and Home Committee of the Company; and copies of letters, some with Mill’s signature, written when, as Examiner, he served as Clerk to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors and communicated their views to the Board of Control.<sup>78</sup> About half of the letters from that Committee are purely formal requests for the release by the Board of secret documents. These we have simply listed, in Appendix B, with a brief indication of the subject matter. The other seventy-three we are delighted to be able to include here, as they provide new insight into the nature of Mill’s responsibilities at the East India House, and illustrate its complex bureaucracy.

The workings of that bureaucracy were described and commented upon by officials of the Company, including Mill, as they answered the questions of an investigating Parliamentary Select Committee in 1852;<sup>79</sup> and they have been further explained and analysed in Martin Moir’s admirable Introduction to Volume XXX of the *Collected Works*. Some of that explanation bears repeating here, however, to give proper context to the letters below.

The East India Company was governed by two different bodies: the Court of Directors, elected from among its Proprietors (the shareholders); and what was known as the Board of Control, composed of a number of commissioners appointed by the British government to oversee the Company's operations. The Directors served on various standing committees, responsible for specific aspects of the Company's activities;<sup>80</sup> and to assist them in their administration they had a great number of paid officers and clerks in several departments. The Secretary was the senior official of the Company, and next to him was the Examiner, in charge of the office that had responsibility for drafting most of the despatches to India.<sup>81</sup> The Board, which was in practice dominated by its chief commissioner, the President, also had a number of officials and clerks to help carry out its supervisory role. The dual nature of this administration resulted in a complex procedural ritual for the handling of the correspondence with India, in which there were as many as six stages.<sup>82</sup>

An abstract of each despatch received from India was made in the department and circulated to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman (the Chairs) of the Court and the members of the relevant standing committee. If the matter was purely routine, a member of the Correspondence branch of the Examiner's office, such as Mill, would prepare a draft reply, which would be submitted, with a collection of accompanying documents, for the approval of the Chairs. (In delicate or difficult matters, the officer would take instruction from them before preparing the draft.) When each draft conformed to the views of the Chairmen (stage 1), it would be passed on for the unofficial consideration of the President of the Board (stage 2) in a form known as "PC" ("previous communication"). If the President returned it unaltered, it moved directly to the departmental standing committee. If he made alterations, the draft was returned to the Chairmen (stage 3), who had discretion to "allow wholly or partially, or reject entirely, the alterations,"<sup>83</sup> before passing it on to the committee, which also had discretion to introduce changes (stage 4). The official draft was next discussed, possibly amended further, and passed by the Court of Directors (stage 5). Then it returned once more to the Board as a whole for its official approval (stage 6). If accepted, it was immediately despatched to India. If altered at this late stage, it was again referred to the standing committee, "upon whose report the Court decide[d], either that the alterations [should] be acquiesced in, . . . or that a remonstrance [should] be addressed to the Board against the alterations, in which case the draft [was] sent back until the final decision of the Board [was] communicated, and then the despatch [was] forwarded."<sup>84</sup>

All the opportunities for alterations to the drafts in this description suggest that changes were more common, and more substantive, than was in fact the case. It was clearly in the best interests of the Company and of its officials and employees that unnecessary hitches or confrontations not occur in a procedure that was already slow and cumbersome enough, and matters were conducted so as to ensure a smooth passage of a draft through the system. We have, unfortunately, no record of Mill's conferring with the Chairmen, or receiving their advice, prior to drafting a despatch; but there are indications that the Chairs occasionally sounded out the President in a "Pre-PC" or "official draft sent ahead of the more formal PC in order to elicit his first reactions."<sup>85</sup> We know, from Mill's evidence before the Commons Committee, that the Chairs rarely submitted a PC to the Board which they knew to contain opinions directly contrary to

those of the President.<sup>86</sup> We also know, from the letters below, that disagreement occasionally occurred, and that Mill experienced the frustrations that normally result from bureaucratic delay and bungling.

In 229.02, for example, from the first group of letters, one of many addressed to William Cabell, Senior Clerk in the Political Department and Assistant Secretary to the Board of Control, we see Mill attempting to resolve a difference of opinion between the Chairs and the President concerning the affairs of Oudh: “If the President after reading the Oude P.C. should continue of his former opinion I should be much obliged to you if you would suggest to me the sort of modification which would best meet the President’s views.” The difficulties entailed by the pace of the process and the multiplicity of drafts is illustrated in 241.1, where Mill is writing to ask whether the PC forwarded to the Board three months earlier “is likely to be soon returned?” Several other PCs were being held up by it; so he “would venture to suggest that in case any point or points should require prolonged consideration . . . the paras relating to them might perhaps be detached & made into a separate PC & the rest proceeded with.” In 290.2, Mill offers Cabell an abject apology for “a gross & untraceable blunder in this office . . . one of the absurdest pieces of official negligence I have ever known of.” It had resulted in the original version of a despatch being sent to the Board a second time, “instead of a greatly altered PC which I prepared & which the Chairs sanctioned.” Such errors and delays were probably not so infrequent in the Company’s operation as Mill suggests.

About half of the letters below to Cabell serve to illustrate stage 2 of the complicated processing of despatches. Having received Mill’s draft PC, forwarded after its approval by the Chairmen for the Board’s consideration, Cabell occasionally asked for more documentation or clarification of some aspect of the matter at hand; for example, in 96.2, 125.1, and 239.3 below, Mill is responding to various sorts of requests. In the first, he reports that no trace had been found of a project that was thought to have appeared in despatches some number of years earlier; in the second, he records success in locating an agreement of even more recent date than the one the Board had requested; in the third, he provides a direct answer to a question regarding the desirability of asking for an explanation from the local government. Most responses, however, are more complex than these.

In 76.1 below, for instance, Mill is replying to the Board’s query whether the government in India had the legal power “to detain a civil servant in India against his will.” The question was apparently referred by the Examiner (then James Mill) to the solicitor retained by the Company, and Mill is duly reporting this man’s legal opinion. The context of the question, and several of Mill’s comments, reveal some of the characteristic features of the problems encountered by the Home Establishment in dealing with events in the field and in the handling of the despatches.

At issue was the case of Mordaunt Ricketts, the Resident at Lucknow, who had been dismissed for taking bribes and had left India before any other punitive action could be launched against him. As was so frequently the case, the officials at home were having to judge after the fact whether a matter had been properly handled on the spot, what measures could or should have been taken to ensure a different outcome, and what recommendations ought to be made to

direct policy in the future. In this instance, the Board wanted to know whether, and how, Ricketts's departure could have been prevented.

Mill's reply affirms that the Government might have applied for some sort of restraining order on Ricketts from the Supreme Court, but that the application might not have been successful, given "the presumption they could have established against him." This fact and the likelihood of his being able to get away "before process could have issued" should determine, in Mill's view, the official attitude of the Home Establishment to the Indian Government's conduct in the matter: "it is perhaps more than we could be warranted in affirming positively here that they were wrong in not making such an application." One of the functions of the despatches, to assess fairly what had been done in the field with a view to improving performance by analysis, and criticism when necessary, is demonstrated here.<sup>87</sup> In this case, with great tact, Mill moves on to suggest a legislative change: that power be given to the Indian Government, allowing it in future cases to detain "its servants in India until their accounts with Government are settled."

In 249.1 below, Mill himself provides a legal opinion in answer to a question directed to him by Robert Gordon, one of the two Secretaries to the Board of Control. The Board was considering the problem raised in the estate of the late postmaster at Ryepur by the questionable legitimacy of his children, who had been born before his marriage to their mother. Gordon had apparently been told that, since the parents were Catholics, the provision of the Canon Law, by which a subsequent marriage of the parents legitimized the children, might be applicable. Mill, "although unable to refer him at once to any authority," sounds quite certain as he explains the legal history—that the barons of England, unwilling to change the laws of the land under church pressure, had rejected this principle. Though it was relevant in Scotland and France, whose laws were of Roman origin, it was not applicable in an English jurisdiction. Mill's legal studies are not often so evidently on display.

In his capacity as drafter of political PCs, Mill was, technically, the voice of the Chairs, but it is certain that the contents of the despatches were very much of his own devising, a fact that is reflected, for example, in 308.1 below. Cabell had written to ask whether, in composing a particular paragraph, Mill had given proper weight to the opinion of James Sutherland, the Political Agent at Gujerat, which presumably was included in the collection Cabell was examining. Mill confirms that he had indeed taken Sutherland's views into consideration, but had been persuaded to come to a different conclusion based on other evidence.

The same responsibility for the opinions expressed in a PC under consideration by the Board of Control is demonstrated in a later reply (still at the second stage of the progress of the despatches through the system) to the questions of Thomas Nelson Waterfield, Cabell's successor in the Political Department. In 339.1, of 16 January, 1842, Mill explains why he draws a distinction between one division of ceded territory and the others, and the conclusion he has reached as to the Company's right to dues from it, grounding his reasons solidly on the evidence of the Resident who had negotiated the relevant treaty in 1817.<sup>88</sup> He also gives his interpretation of a separate treaty of the same period between two local rulers, affirming that the Company had been

making a mistake, irreparable so long after the event, in paying over the dues in question to one of them. The Chairs must have concurred, but the voice is Mill's.

Three letters in the collection illustrate the third stage in the processing of despatches, the consideration by the Chairmen of any alterations to the PCs made at the Board. In the matter of treaties with native princes, discussed in 103.1 below, the President, in adding to a paragraph, had given more status to some of the Boondela chiefs and to other individuals with hereditary rights to collect rents than they merited, and Mill is writing to explain why the alteration is being rejected. "The Chairman has often seen them when he was in Bundelcund and says they are petty Jageerdars of no sort of consequence, and their engagements are not treaties but are constituted by Sunnuds on our part, & acknowledgments of allegiance on theirs."<sup>89</sup> Mill adds that "we have made several additions to this PC since it returned to us. We find that it saves much time & trouble to continue the subjects up to the latest advices." The instances in which additional information about a given matter reached the home office as the discussion was in progress were obviously frequent. In this situation, however, Mill saw no difficulty created; the Board would simply be informed of the new circumstances when the PC was sent to it a second time for final approval.

Two other letters, 294.2 and 296.1, also contain criticism of the Board's alterations in a recently returned PC. In discussing the matter at issue, however, Mill relies on his own knowledge of the local rulers in making the objection:

It strikes me that the plan suggested by the Board would never answer. *We* could manage the villages of a native prince & pay over the revenues to him, because he can trust us—besides he *must*. But they never trust one another, & there is no instance among them I believe of a joint property in which the agents of both sharers do not exercise a right of joint management. It must end therefore in our managing the villages for both governments; which neither would like.

He follows the observations with another suggestion about a change that might be implemented by a recommendation from the Board: "Would it not be better to refer to the Govt of India as a general question, the possibility of negotiating an arrangement by which the double Revenue agency might be avoided?" And in the subsequent letter to Cabell, four weeks later, he adds more argument to "the remarks which I took the liberty of privately communicating to you." A third party to the question, the Raja of Nagpur, would never be satisfied with the arrangement. "It is not the money, but the tenure, as an ancient family possession, that he is solicitous about; & no money grant would compensate him for the cession of a privilege venerated for its antiquity."

Mill's objection to another alteration by the Board, in 239.2 below, relates simply to its wording: "I do not clearly understand in what manner the Joonaghur chief is to continue his responsibility for the Babrias, when he is specifically interdicted from interfering with them. It strikes me that a clearer statement of the Board's intentions would be desirable & would facilitate the passing of the Draft through the Court." Cabell obliged immediately with a better version that clari-

fied the matter for the benefit of the Chairmen, the members of the Political and Military Committee, and the Court, who were to consider it next, in stages 4 and 5 of the process.

The complications that could arise from the dual authority between the Board and the Court and the multiplicity of despatches are admirably illustrated in the problem created by Mr. Williams, the Resident and Commissioner at Baroda, which Mill discusses in 212.1 below. He is writing to explain why orders for Williams's dismissal are included in the PC on Baroda that he is forwarding with this letter, when similar orders incorporated by the Board in an earlier PC on the Mahi Kantha had been rejected. The Board is to understand the delicacy of choosing the proper grounds for the dismissal. It would be "more just and less embarrassing in its consequences" if Williams's removal were for

general unfitness . . . than for specific instances of misconduct of which his superiors (the Bombay government of the time) must share the blame & which the home authorities when they first animadverted on them did not deem worthy of so serious a punishment, for you will observe that the misconduct of Mr Williams in regard to the Myhee Caunta was as fully known to the Court when they sent out their last despatch on that subject as it is now.

A little face-saving all round is recommended in this matter. Why it would also be "more just" to fire Williams for general rather than specific reasons seems to relate to the case of his assistant, Mr. Erskine, whom the Board had ordered dismissed with him in the Mahi Kantha PC. "This seems very severe treatment for an error of judgment which in *him* was comparatively venial." In Mill's view it would be "hard to ruin the entire prospects of a young man," given the circumstances of the case. The wisdom and utility of dealing with Williams through the Baroda channel as outlined is most tactfully, but at the same time forcefully, made. The Board did not seem to get the point, however, as six months later, in 233.1, Mill is once against suggesting that the Chairs want Williams's conduct criticized in a general way.

Letter 271.1 below illustrates Mill's role in the processing of the despatches in its fourth stage, the consideration of the drafts by the relevant committee of the Court. Replying to a question from the Board about the reasons for the "additional matter in para 7" of the despatch they were considering for the second time, Mill explains that

it was inserted in the Political Committee on the proposition of a Director & I presume he cannot have adverted to the passages in the Collection, to which you have now been so obliging as to refer me. (If I had remembered their existence I would have pointed them out to him.) His object was to discourage the Government from embarrassing themselves with the domestic disputes of stipendiaries.

In this case, Mill seems to think that the Board has the better view, and one regrets not being able to report whether anything further was done in the matter. It is interesting to note, however, that Mill was in close contact with the members of the Political Committee as they considered his despatches, presumably assisting them, as requested, in their deliberations.

From the Committee, the despatch moved on to the Court of Directors, where further changes might be introduced. Letter 287.1 illustrates this fifth stage, and the power of the Court to influence policy. Sending Cabell some advance notice of the “two material variations” that the Board would find in the recently approved despatch “which either has been or will be immediately sent to you from the Court in the official form,” Mill explains the Court’s changes. The first of their alterations was in support “of the proposed reform of the Jyepore Army by the substitution for the greater part of it of a force under British officers,” as this was in line with “Lord Auckland’s views on the subject of bringing the armies of the native states under our control as opportunities offer,” to which they had recently grown “much more favourable.” The second change was again related to the misconduct of an employee. In the case of Major Borthwick, the Court had decided on the evidence that the accusation by the local ruler of Borthwick’s having misappropriated funds was false, and the paragraph of criticism had been removed.

The apparently persistent problem of incompetent or dishonest officials of the Company in the field is also the issue in another letter, 49.01, that again illustrates Mill’s efforts to prepare for the sixth stage of the process, final approval by the Board. The Court having passed “Bengal Political Draft No 237,” which contained criticism of an employee, Mill is returning it to the Board, pointing out that “explanations” from this individual had been recently received from India. In Mill’s opinion, they warrant making only “verbal” alterations “in the strictures on his conduct,” and not holding up the Draft altogether; but Mill defers to the possibility of a different view at the Board, suggesting various courses of action open, and leaving the matter to Cabell’s discretion: “When you have decided which of these alternatives to adopt, we will act accordingly.”

Mill’s position as Assistant in the Correspondence Branch of the Examiner’s office in the long middle period of his career, from 1828 to two years before his retirement, was clearly one of great responsibility, and there can be no doubt that he earned the respect and the admiration of his colleagues both for his drafts and for his skills as a negotiator. Though there is a little, and humorous, evidence, that they occasionally believed him to be mistaken,<sup>90</sup> his move upward to the senior post in the office, on the retirement of Thomas Love Peacock and David Hill in 1856, must have seemed to all concerned a normal and well-earned promotion. Then, as the new Examiner of India Correspondence, Mill naturally assumed some different duties, at least a few of which are fortunately illustrated in the other two series of letters that have recently come to light. One of these is addressed to the Finance and Home Committee of the Company, which, as its title suggests, was responsible for matters relating to the employees, the premises, and the records of the Home Establishment.

Mill’s correspondence with this Committee would not have been regular in the years *before* his promotion, but one letter does survive amongst the Finance and Home Committee papers from the earlier period. It is dated 9 April, 1844 (427.1), and is a statement in support of his brother George’s application for employment by the Company. The short note testifies to the superior “acquirements . . . conduct & character” of the young man, which Mill, as his chief tutor, was well qualified to know. Its success also testifies to the “high status and influence” that Mill himself enjoyed by that time in the Company, and to the fact that his own “experimental apprenticeship



in the 1820s [had] provided the Company with the kind of model it later used in training other potential despatch writers,” such as George, who joined the Correspondence Branch and learned the job under his brother’s supervision. The nepotism that was traditional (“dynasties of family employees were quite common in the Company’s history”) and generally and unashamedly practised in the nineteenth century is also illustrated by this episode.<sup>91</sup>

The twenty-seven later letters, from Mill as Examiner 1856-58, to the Home and Finance Committee, treat of more mundane subjects, and underline the irony that is often inherent in promotion. Any alterations to, or maintenance of, the “physical plant,” as we now say, had to be approved in principle, and in advance, by the Committee, as 258A, B, and D, and 286D illustrate. In the first, Mill is requesting an extra office, and suggests the necessity of providing yet another room, because “It frequently happens that permission is granted by the Chairman to gentlemen in the Honorable Company’s Service or others, to consult the official records either for public or private purposes, and there is at present no place in which they can make use of such permission except the compound of the Clerks in the Office.” The second is a request that “one of the two extra offices” be included in “the general order for painting.” The third is to report that “the new room ordered by the Honorable Committee for Mr Kaye<sup>92</sup> is now completed, and to solicit that provision of the necessary furniture may be sanctioned.” The last is in support of a letter from the Assistant Registrar in the Book Office, “representing the necessity of whitewashing the rooms occupied by his Department, and of effecting some minor improvements” in them. Diligently bureaucratic, Mill affirms: “I have the honor to state that from personal inspection I can confirm Mr Atkins’ representations, and I beg to recommend that his proposals be carried into effect.”

Changes in the accommodation of the Company’s records, the payment of the workmen involved, and the destruction of “old and useless duplicate Collections” also required the Committee’s approval (258E and G, 260B, 269B, and 286C). An increased volume of work in the Examiner’s Office necessitated the hiring of extra staff, which was sanctioned for periods of six months at a time (258G, 262D, 269C, 283A, 293A, and 306A). Provisions for individual employees, of various kinds, also required the Committee’s sanction. Leave of absence on account of illness had to be extended (269A); the death of an employee required his being replaced (258C), and his salary continued to his widow for the current quarter (258F); an official who had expended a great deal of extra time and effort on preparing a report for Parliament was entitled to special remuneration (323A); the petition from the messengers in the Book Office had to be forwarded (309B). It is not certain whether Mill actually dictated these letters or whether most were simply prepared for his signature. We do know, however, as noted above, that he personally ascertained that the Registrar’s rooms needed whitewashing.

As Examiner, Mill had to deal with the bureaucratic trivia of his office, and some of the problems in his employees’ lives. He was also concerned with more apparently important matters in his capacity as Clerk to the Secret Committee of the Court, which was composed of the two Chairmen and a senior Director, and handled matters relating to war, peace, and diplomacy. The third series of letters, addressed from this Committee to Waterfield or to one of the Secretaries of

the Board, number forty-three, twenty-six of which are simply official requests for the release of documents, and are listed, with their subjects, in Appendix B. The other seventeen also have their touch of (secret) bureaucratic trivia, in two requests (283C and 299B) for the Board's consent to the employment in the Secret Department of particular individuals, "on their taking the prescribed oath." The remaining fifteen letters, which throw light on a variety of contemporary problems, are of considerable historical and political interest.

The first is a proposed agreement between Britain and France, apparently suggested as early as 1852, for a mutually beneficial exchange of territory in India, France seeming anxious to consolidate her possessions around Pondicherry. The terms of the exchange—that is, finding settlements of equivalent value on both sides—were difficult to arrange, however, and several different plans came under discussion. In the five letters below on the subject, 260A, 263B, 266A, 283B, and 309A, over a period of almost two years, it is clear that the chief concern both of the Secret Committee and of the Board is with matters of revenue, though the political advantage for Britain is thought to be of some interest as well. It is also evident that both bodies had to rely heavily on the assessment of the situation by the government in India.

A second problem, dealt with in six letters, was that created by the brief war with Persia from November 1856 to March 1857, the dispute centring on the fortress city of Herat. These letters demonstrate the role of the Board as a channel of communication for the British Government with the Court. In 262F, for example, the Secret Committee is responding to a letter from the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, asking whether "it might be advisable to take possession of Mohammerah for the purpose of increasing pressure upon Persia." The Committee was forwarding all the information they had that might be relevant, but refrained "from expressing any opinion on the course which it might be most expedient to adopt." The Committee had a more positive reaction to questions about "postal communication for Government purposes . . . during the present war" in 270B, agreeing with Lord Clarendon's view that "Bagdad via Constantinople" would be the best route, and notifying the government that "Lieutenant General Sir James Outram [head of the Company's army for 'the Persian Expedition'] will therefore be apprised of the arrangement and instructed to send to Her Majesty's Ambassador a short summary of any important intelligence, which could be put into cypher at the Embassy and so forwarded by telegraph."

The presence of the telegraph by this time (at least as far as Constantinople) makes it seem less odd to think that the Secret Committee in London had also to be consulted about orders for individual officers and arrangements for specific missions (262E, 286E, 321A). It was to facilitate the establishment of a more extensive telegraph system that Britain had obtained the Kuria Muria islands from the Imam of Muscat in 1854, a cession whose legality Mill questions in 270D, relative to another issue—the difficulty of protecting British citizens granted rights to exploit the guano of those islands.

Another problem in the Persian Gulf area is the subject of perhaps the most interesting of these letters from the Secret Committee, 283D below, concerning the actions of that flamboyant lieutenant in the Bombay Army, just beginning his career as an explorer of exotic places, Richard

Burton. On leave late in 1854, Burton had undertaken his first trip into the interior of Somaliland (against the wishes of Outram, the Political Agent of the day at Aden), and had subsequently recommended to the Company that an agency be established at Berbera, a plan that the Governor of Bombay solidly rejected. Burton had then made the suggestion in a letter to the Royal Geographical Society, on which the Committee is commenting, readily concurring “in the observation of the Board respecting the impropriety of Lieutenant Burton’s conduct in addressing to the Geographical Society criticisms on the political measures of the Government of India.” An accompanying letter in the collection contains a comment to the effect that the Society ought to be discouraged from publishing Burton’s letter<sup>93</sup> —and indeed it did not appear at that time, a fact that perhaps demonstrates the Company’s power, when it so wished, to save itself embarrassment.

That the Examiner’s title was “Clerk” to the Secret Committee in its communications with the Board is probably just another instance of an inadequate job description. It was surely proper that only the most senior official in the Correspondence Branch should be admitted to the very highest level of deliberation in the Company, but his contribution was likely greater than merely that of a secretary. Mill himself probably exercised substantial influence in that Committee, as he had when he conferred with the Chairmen about the contents of his despatches; and he clearly enjoyed the confidence of the Court, the Board, and the government, as evidenced by his being offered a post in 1858 on the newly established Council of India. That he declined to accept it, since he disapproved of the government’s assumption of control and needed “a long recruiting, not so much from work, as from the confinement of an office” (324), is no surprise.

The discovery of Mill’s letters in the archival series of the India Office Library and Records has greatly enriched our knowledge both of his career and of the East India Company’s operations, and has also confirmed our collective certainty that the task of editing Mill’s correspondence will not end with Volume XXXII of the *Collected Works*. It is more than probable that, as scholars continue to consult the collections of despatches, other letters will emerge, and that previously unknown items will appear in the pages of dealers’ catalogues. We would be most grateful if readers continue to report their discoveries, through the University of Toronto Press, so that the record may be kept entire.

At the conclusion of this volume are six Appendices: Appendix A contains the variant readings derived from a collation of copies of the manuscript letters to Theodor Gomperz at Kōkugakuin University with those letters to him in *Collected Works* not reprinted here. Appendix B provides a list of the form letters from the Clerk of the Secret Committee of the East India Company to the Board of Control requesting the release of various secret documents. Appendix C contains some additions to the finding list of Mill’s Indian despatches in Volume XXX of the *Collected Works*. Appendix D provides a list of letters to Mill, compiled in response to many requests from readers over the years. Once more, we must mention our debt to Professor Mineka, who had listed the holdings at Yale and Johns Hopkins and made photocopies of the latter, thereby greatly facilitating the process of checking for accuracy. The Mill-Taylor Collection is, of

course, the other principal repository of such letters.<sup>94</sup> We conducted a further search, using references suggested in the footnotes to Volumes XII-XVIII, and through relevant printed sources, and were thus able to locate some previously unknown correspondence. Again, we ask readers to share their knowledge, for the record, of other “In” letters that may have been overlooked. Appendix E contains an index of the recipients of the letters printed in this volume.

Since Appendix F serves as an index to persons, writings, and statutes, references to them do not appear in the general Index, which has been prepared with the care and efficiency that is her hallmark by Dr. Jean O’Grady.

## Endnotes

[1] *Earlier Letters*, ed. Francis E. Mineka, *Collected Works [CW]*, XII-XIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), XIII, 742-3.

[2] *Later Letters*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, *CW*, XIV-XVII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), XVII, 1954-2016. Additional letters in the present volume will be referred to in the text by number, frequently in parentheses.

[3] See *Mill News Letter [MNL]* (Fall 1968), 29-30.

[4] William E.S. Thomas and Francis E. Mineka, eds., “New Letters of J.S. Mill to Sir William Molesworth,” *MNL*, VI (Fall 1970), 1-13.

[5] There is a full discussion of the eight letters in Jean O’Grady, “Mill and Fitzjames Stephen: Personal Notes,” *MNL*, XXII (Winter 1987), 2-9.

[6] For Mill’s introduction of Beal’s bills in the House of Commons, and his questioning of Scott in Committee, see *Public and Parliamentary Speeches*, *CW*, XXVIII-XXIX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), XXVIII, 162-5, 230-1, XXIX, 443-4, and *Miscellaneous Writings*, *CW*, XXXI (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 390-1, 402-4.

[7] For further detail, see Marion Filipiuk, “New Letters from Avignon,” *MNL*, XV (Summer 1980), 1-11.

[8] In the course of preparing this volume we have discovered that the following emendations should be made to the information provided in *Later Letters*:

The MS of Letter 513.1 below, at the Houghton Library, has enabled us to date the letter to John William Parker at *CW*, XVII, 2006, to 25 Oct., 1847.

The unidentified recipient of the letter dated [Before May 8, 1868], *ibid.*, XVI, 1397, is probably Mrs. Mary Johnson of Birmingham.

The letter to Edward Livingstone Youmans, *ibid.*, XVII, 1569, has been dated 9 Apr., 1869, from

the MS at the College of Law, Nihon University, Tokyo.

The librarian at Northwestern University informs us, on the basis of both internal and external evidence, that the recipient of the letter dated 3 June, 1870, *ibid.*, 1731-2, is not Herbert Spencer; no other identification has been made.

The letter to David King dated [Oct.? 1870], *ibid.*, 1768, may now be dated 9 Nov., 1870, from information in Letter 1631A below.

See also the summary of the reordering of letters, most to Henry Cole, on xvi below.

[9] Cole, Mill's intimate friend since 1828, was, at this time, an assistant keeper in the Public Record Office and an active advocate of postal reform; he was extremely ambitious for influence, but rather embarrassed for money. Hickson, in contrast, was an older, more experienced radical, with solid finances and a penchant for economy. The other player in the struggle for control of the *Review* was John Robertson, Mill's sub-editor since 1837. For many of the details of the story and the references to Cole's diary in the Victoria and Albert Museum, we are indebted to Rosemary T. VanArsdel, "The *Westminster Review*: Change of Editorship, 1840," *Studies in Bibliography*, XXV (1972), 191-204. The new letters here printed, however, as will be explained, alter the chronology she suggested for those already in *Earlier Letters*.

[10] Kemble's letter is not extant, but see Mill's reply of 14 October, *CW*, XIII, 410-11.

[11] Cole's diary, entry for 16 August.

[12] VanArsdel, "Westminster Review," 196.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] With his mother and sister, Henry had been sent off to Falmouth, en route for Madeira, probably immediately after a party at the Mills', mentioned by Cole, on 14 January. Mill's letter to Clara (No. 274, *CW*, XIII, 420) reveals that the doctor had admitted to him after their departure that Henry's case was in fact "alarming," and that he had recommended the trip only because Mill himself "so much wished it." Caroline Fox, the new family friend in Falmouth, noted in her diary on 8 February that "Mrs. Mill with her daughters, Clara and Harriet, have been for some weeks nursing Henry Mill . . . in lodgings on the Terrace"; this letter to Clara should then be dated to 22 or 29 January, 1839. (See *Memories of Old Friends*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. [London: Smith, Elder, 1882], I, 102-3.)

[15] *CW*, XIII, 419 and 421; Letter 273, headed "Thursday," must have been written on 6 February. Cf. VanArsdel, "Westminster Review," 196-8.

[16] No. 277, *CW*, XIII, 421-2.

[17] The advertisement in the *Examiner* of Sunday, 1 March, 1840, describes the number as "just published," making the date of 27 February likely for the letter.

[18] Quoted in VanArsdel, "Westminster Review," 198.

[19] No. 275, *CW*, XIII, 420.

[20] Referred to *ibid.*, n2.

[21] Cole's finances were undoubtedly one of the problems all along. He wanted the *Review* badly, but could not quite find the money when opportunity knocked, as it did, for example, on the 27th. The fact that he does not record this problem in his diary is no surprise.

[22] No. 278, *CW*, XIII, 422.

[23] With No. 280, *ibid.*, 424.

[24] *Ibid.*, 422-3; VanArsdel, "Westminster Review," 201n.

[25] Cole's diary for 4 and 10 August reports that he wrote some notices for the September number and sent them to Hickson (VanArsdel, "Westminster Review," 202).

[26] The dating of the letters in *EL* is as follows: No. 274 [Feb., 1840]; No. 273 [Feb.(?), 1840]; No. 276 [Feb. or March(?), 1840]; No. 277 [Feb. or March(?), 1840]; No. 275 [Feb.(?), 1840]; No. 278 [March(?), 1840]; No. 280, 12 Mar., 1840; No. 279 [March 1840(?)].

[27] Only one volume, *Theodor Gomperz, 1832-1912: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen* [hereafter *Briefe*] (Vienna: Gerold, 1936), covering the years up to 1868, was issued in Heinrich's lifetime. A much-abridged version of the remaining typescript, at Harvard, has appeared as *Theodor Gomperz, ein Gelehrtenleben im Bürgertum der Franz-Josefs-Zeit* [hereafter *Ein Gelehrtenleben*], ed. Robert A. Kann (Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1974).

[28] See Introduction to *CW*, XIV, xx, and *ibid.*, 238, n1.

[29] There is only one lacuna in the collection; the last page of the manuscript letter of 15 July, 1863, is missing. (In *CW*, XV, 865-6, the letter is incorrectly dated 5 July.)

[30] Gomperz's letter of 20 July, 1854, is in the Mill-Taylor Collection, and Mill's reply of 18 August is in *CW*, XIV, 238-9. Gomperz's own philosophical and philological studies were, as Mill put it, directed to "exhibiting the speculations of the ancients from the point of view of the experience philosophy" (324 below). A first draft of the translation of the *Logic*, based on the 3rd ed., was apparently completed by the beginning of 1855; see Gomperz's letter to Heinrich Jaques of 7 January (*Briefe*, 198-9), and Adelaide Weinberg, *Theodor Gomperz and John Stuart Mill* (Geneva: Droz, 1963), 14-15.

[31] Heinrich Gomperz's account (*Briefe*, 233) suggests that Harriet Mill told Gomperz that from the time she met Mill she had been a "Seelinfreundin," but no more, both to him and to her husband.

[32] MS at Johns Hopkins.

[33] *CW*, XV, 581.

[34] *Ibid.*, 589.

[35] Gomperz's letter is at Johns Hopkins; Mill's reply is in *CW*, XV, 739-40, where the date is incorrectly given as 21 August. Gomperz had apparently found some new interest in life through politics, and included copies of four articles he had written from Budapest on the history of Austro-Hungarian relations, three of which had been published in the *Neueste Nachrichten* of Vienna; the fourth had not appeared, presumably because the editor did not endorse his democratic and pro-Hungarian proposals. See Weinberg, *Gomperz and Mill*, 25-6.

[36] Letters to George Grote of 11 June and to J.E. Cairnes of 24 June (*CW*, XV, 781, 784). Helen's letter of 6 July to Fanny Stirling explains that they had hoped to take the overland route from Smyrna to Constantinople in order "to see the plains of Troy and to climb Mount Ida," but were dissuaded by the danger of fever and took the faster sea route (MS Mill-Taylor Collection).

[37] *CW*, XV, 786.

[38] He seems to have tried unsuccessfully, it being the holiday season, to make arrangements for Mill to meet his friends in Budapest (*Briefe*, 319-20).

[39] See Mill's reply of 14 December (*CW*, XV, 809 and n5).

[40] In a letter to his mother of 3 March, Gomperz described his various trips to Blackheath. On Sunday, 22 February, he first met Thornton, who, on their walk back to the station, pointed out to him what a rare privilege it was to be on such intimate terms with Mill, the best of men, and went on to describe the three happiest weeks of his life, spent the previous summer as a guest at Avignon. The second Sunday dinner occurred on 1 March. It appears that Gomperz also apparently called; uninvited, on Wednesday, 25 February, and again on Monday, 2 March; on the latter occasion, Mill and Helen were not at home (*Briefe*, 333-5).

[41] *Ibid.*, 335. See also Proceedings of the Political Economy Club (London, 1882), IV, 212.

[42] The occasion is described in a letter of 20 April (*Briefe*, 350-1).

[43] See Mill's letters to his publisher, Parker, of 14 March, and to Gomperz of 22 March (*CW*, XV, 849 and 849-50).

[44] See Mill's letter to Cairnes of 25 March (*ibid.*, 852).

[45] *Briefe*, 338-41.

[46] *Ibid.*, 341-5. See also Weinberg, *Gomperz and Mill*, 34-5.

[47] *CW*, XV, 854-5. Though Mill's tone was gentle, his protestations about not having enough time in Avignon to do justice to friends must have rung rather hollow, given Thornton's glowing account of his experience the previous summer.

[48] *Ibid.*, 858.

[49] Weinberg, *Gomperz and Mill*, 37-8.

[50] *CW*, XV, 861.

[51] Mill's letter of 16 June, to Harriet Grote, who had sent him good news about Gomperz's condition from a helpful Dr. Schlesinger, also tends to confirm the supposition that Mill had called on him, by the remark: "I have seen him twice, the last time for a whole evening" (*ibid.*, 863). The optimistic tone of this letter, 619, suggests that it was written and despatched prior to his receiving Gomperz's note, and replying to it in 618.

[52] Letter 618 (*CW*, XV, 862-3).

[53] *Ibid.*, 865-6, incorrectly dated 5 July.

[54] The evidence is in Mill's response, *ibid.*, 873-5.

[55] See the second last paragraph of Letter 639 below.

[56] *CW*, XV, 953-4. The notice, copied in Mill's hand, is at Kokugakuin University.

[57] *CW*, XVI, 1196 and n, 1197.

[58] Both are in the Mill-Taylor Collection.

[59] *CW*, XVI, 1356, dated 27 January.

[60] In a letter, now lost, enclosed with Gomperz's of 26 March, 1868 (MS at Johns Hopkins).

[61] *CW*, XVI, 1374-5.

[62] MS at Johns Hopkins.

[63] *CW*, XVI, 1391-2.

[64] MS at Johns Hopkins.

[65] Heinrich Gomperz omitted mention of the rival proposal in the typescript of Volume II of *Briefe*.

[66] *CW*, XVII, 1615-16, much abridged in *Ein Gelehrtenleben*, 45.

[67] *CW*, XVII, 1655-6; most in *Ein Gelehrtenleben*, 56.

[68] *Ein Gelehrtenleben*, 43.

[69] *Ibid.*, 42.

[70] MS, Mill-Taylor Collection. He presumably meant Volume I (1869), which contained *On Liberty*, translated by himself, and *Utilitarianism* and the *Inaugural Address*, both translated by Warrington; two of the three volumes of the *Logic* (Vols. II-III); three volumes of the *Political Economy* (Vols. V-VII), translated by Adolf Soetbeer; and Volume IX, *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, translated by Elise Gomperz. He was still waiting for Volume IV, in which he had incorporated, as an appendix, the changes made to the 8th ed. See Weinberg, *Gomperz and Mill*, 56-7.

[71] MS, Mill-Taylor Collection. The ninth volume was the tardy Volume IV, the third of the *Logic*. Mr. Reisland of the Fues firm asked for permission to include the *Autobiography* in the edi-



tion, but Helen declined, and accepted the offer of Mr. Vogel of Meyer and Zeller of Stuttgart (MSS, Mill-Taylor Collection).

[72] MS, Mill-Taylor Collection.

[73] An excerpt from Freud's letter to Heinrich Gomperz of 9 June, 1932 (*Ein Gelehrtenleben*, 106-7) explains the circumstances. Volume XII contained his translations of the *Enfranchisement of Women*, "Grote's Plato," "Thornton on Labour and Its Claims," and the "Chapters on Socialism." No explanation seems to exist of the fact that Harriet Mill's *Enfranchisement* was included, and Mill's *Subjection of Women* omitted. The arrangements with Dr. Heinemann for a translation of the *Subjection* had apparently fallen through, and another, by J. von Hirsch, had already been published by this time (Berlin: Berggold, 1869). Perhaps its appearance influenced the decision to issue the companion piece as part of the edition.

[74] His accompanying letter of 9 February, 1880, is in the Mill-Taylor Collection.

[75] His most important work was *Griechische Denker*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Veit, 1896-1909).

[76] The manuscript is at the India Office Library and Records, MSS Eur B405.

[77] The finding list that they prepared is in Appendix A of *CW*, XXX (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

[78] The first group of letters, dealing with political matters in the field, is in the L/P&S/6 archive series; the second is in the L/F/2 series; the third, Secret Home Correspondence, 1856-58, is in the L/P&S/3 series.

[79] See Mill's evidence in *CW*, XXX, 31-74.

[80] In 1834, when the Company's commercial operations ended, three committees were established: Finance and Home; Political and Military; Revenue, Judicial, and Legislative (XXX, xxvii n-xxviii n).

[81] For the Political, Public, Judicial, Legislative, Revenue, Separate Revenue, and Public Works Departments (*ibid.*, xxx n).

[82] Identified by Moir, *ibid.*, xxvii.

[83] From the evidence of the Secretary, James Cosmo Melvill, to the Select Committee, quoted *ibid.*, xxvi.

[84] *Ibid.*

[85] Moir, *ibid.*, xxviii n.

[86] *Ibid.*, 54.

[87] See Mill's evidence, *ibid.*, 69-70.

[88] James Rivett Carnac, son of a Company official and born in India, served in the field from 1802 to 1822, when he retired and moved to England. Elected Director in 1827, Deputy Chairman in 1835, and Chairman for two successive terms (an exception to general practice),

1836-38, he had returned to India as Governor of Bombay, 1838-41. Mill was citing a real authority.

[89] Henry St. George Tucker, the Chairman referred to, had also served in India for more than thirty years. A Director from 1826, and Chairman in 1834, he led the Directors' protest against the first Afghan War. It is occasionally assumed that the Company was governed largely by men such as James Mill, who had written a history of British India without ever having visited the place, but it is well to remember that there were Directors, such as Carnac and Tucker, and also officials, who brought a wealth of experience in India to their positions.

[90] See the comments written on the manuscript at 68n below.

[91] Cf. Moir, Introduction, *CW*, XXX, xix.

[92] John William Kaye, who had earlier served in India, had just been appointed to the post of Assistant Examiner in charge of the Political Department.

[93] Letter of 17 Jan., 1857, from George Russell Clerk, Secretary to the Board of Control, to Edmund Hammond, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in L/P&S/3/54, 484.

[94] We have not listed the purely formal addresses to Mill, from the employees of the East India Company on his retirement, and from academic institutions conferring honours.