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**ENGLISH HISTORY
THROUGH HISTORICAL NOVELS**

By
EMILY BRIDGERS



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By
EMILY BRIDGERS



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Note: This study is limited to England and does not include novels about Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and the nations of the Commonwealth. For excellent pictures in color of English persons, places, and scenes which accompany excerpts from Winston S. Churchill's *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, the reader is referred to *Life* magazine, March 19 and 26, April 2 and 9, October 29, November 5, 12, and 19, 1956.



PROGRAM I

THE BEGINNINGS OF ENGLAND

The history of England from the Norman invasion to the Twentieth Century is the history of a society which changes from the close-knit organization of the feudal order to the present individual freedom of choice in the economic, political, and religious spheres. The story is a bloody and vigorous one, characterized by the peculiar intelligence and individuality of the English people. It makes its stormy way through upheaval, revolution, persecution, and eventual adjustment, until tolerance and the era of personal liberty are reached, and the society which in the feudal centuries was based solidly on land ownership and patronage has given way to individual competition in a society based upon capitalism and democratic institutions.

English writers from the days of Chaucer and Shakespeare to those of today have not failed to vivify this history, in drama, poetry, and fiction. With what wit and imagination, and with how "austere" a conscience the novelists have written is best indicated by a comparison of their world with that of the historians. For this comparison, George Macaulay Trevelyan's *A Shortened History of England* and Winston S. Churchill's *The Birth of Britain* and *The New World* offer challenging material. For more comprehensive discussion by Trevelyan, the reader is referred to his *History of England* from which the *Shortened History* was taken.

The latter half of the Eleventh Century in England when the island suffered its last invasion by a foreign foe has been selected as a starting point for the novels used in this outline. Aspects of England's history prior to the Norman invasion are brilliantly pictured in the novels of Alfred Duggan and Henry Treece. Selected for reading is Bryher's *The Fourteenth of October*, a novel distinguished for the beauty and integrity with which the author recreates rural life in late Saxon England—a way of life which led directly to the defeat of the islanders at the battle of Hastings in 1066.

1. THE EARLIEST CENTURIES THROUGH THE NORMAN INVASION IN HISTORY

The Birth of Britain, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 1-165. Vol. I: *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 1-89.

Sum up what is known of the history of England prior to the reign of Alfred the Great. Discuss the character and genius of the Celt, the Saxon, and the Dane.

Even in the days of Rome, missionaries, in Churchill's words, "Planted the seed of . . . the problem of Church and State, which will grow until a thousand years later it almost rives the foundations of both asunder." Tell of this planting, of the choice of the Church of Rome at the Synod of Whitby, and of the Church's scholarship and increasing wealth and political power until, following the Norman Conquest, it "stood triumphant."

Discuss the unification of England under Alfred and his descendants, and point out the weaknesses of the newly-united kingdom. Note the beginning of the Norman connection and the growing ascendancy of the earls.

Up to this point the history is background material for the entire outline. For an appreciation of Bryher's novel, study carefully the history from the choice of Edward in 1042 to the battle of Hastings in 1066, together with other material on the late Saxon period.

Read selections from Churchill's enthralling description of the battle of Hastings, a battle decisive for the Normans, who could not only conquer, says Churchill, but rule, and through whom "Henceforward English history marched with that of races and lands south of the channel."

Discuss further the nature of William and his Normans. Tell of the clean sweep of their subjugation of the Saxons.

2. THE NORMAN INVASION IN FICTION

The Fourteenth of October, by Bryher.

Comment on the simple story of Bryher's novel as a vehicle for realizing the life and history of the period.

Does her picture of Saxon life in England prior to the Norman invasion correspond with that of the historians? Discuss her use of various fictional characters to illuminate aspects of Saxon life and character in this period: the role of the Church, for example, a power directed toward order and culture; the persistence of old superstitions and the enchantment of ancient wisdom; the dying memory of the great golden days before there were raids, when "the Earls" were men; England's sources of trade; the place of women; the startling insecurity of life and property; the dependence even in the face of invasion from abroad on Churchill's "rustics hurriedly summoned from the plough."

Do Bryher's characters live for you in a climate of historical reality? If so, is your impression due to her evocation not alone of the historical background but of the form and color of things seen, of the actual countryside, particularly in Cornwall, of its beauty, the flowers, scents, bees, the ancientness of the land, and the feel of impending doom? Read several of the quiet and beautiful passages.

Picture the Normans as Wulf saw them in their brutality. Was the toughness of their resistance to constant menace in line with Churchill's admiration for them as virile and fearless men?

Against the background of Churchill's description of Hastings, tell of the experiences of Wulf and his friends. Call attention to the care with which Bryher follows from afar the actual course of the battle, and to particularly effective passages descriptive of the valour, terror, and helplessness of these farmers turned warriors.

Churchill says that though the Saxon governing class was destroyed by the Normans, "the underlying structure of England and its peasant life were little changed by the shock of the invasion." Does Bryher give you in this book a living impression of at least one segment of a population that most fortunately survived the last actual invasion of English soil?

Additional Reading:

The Little Emperors, by Alfred Duggan.

The Great Captains, by Henry Treece.

Idylls of the King, by Alfred Tennyson.

Golden Warrior, by Hope Muntz.

PROGRAM II

THE ENGLAND OF FEUDALISM AND MAGNA CARTA

The pattern into which the Normans forced Saxon England was that of feudalism. Trevelyan says: "Feudalism is the characteristic institution of the Middle Ages; it implies a fixed and legal subordination of certain classes of society to certain others, to obtain civilized order at the expense of barbaric anarchy. . . . In this way the Dark Ages progressed into the Middle Ages, and barbarism grew into civilization—but decidedly not along the path of liberty and equality."

Sir Walter Scott's great romance, *Ivanhoe*, comes instantly to mind as an undying picture of feudal days. In interesting contrast is Alfred Duggan's *Leopards and Lilies*, a cheerfully cynical recreation of life in the days of Magna Carta. It is a great temptation to class as fiction Duggan's biography of Thomas à Becket, *My Life for My Sheep*. The dramatic story of the early friendship and later struggle between two strong and cranky men, the book draws fascinating portraits of Henry II and his Archbishop of Canterbury. It is an imaginative but historically accurate clarification of the fatal conflict between the two men over the prerogatives of Church and King.

1. FEUDALISM AND MAGNA CARTA IN HISTORY

The Birth of Britain, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 166-265.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 89-134.

My Life for My Sheep: A Biography of Thomas à Becket, by Alfred Duggan.

What in general does Trevelyan consider the achievements of the Middle Ages, those centuries "full of wolfish life and energy," and what the sins, in his opinion "vices not of decrepitude but of violent and wanton youth"?

Explain the feudal set-up in England, noting its contribution to the power of the King and his sheriffs, the status of the Saxons, the fate of the serf in both his good and bad fortune, and the increasing power and prestige of the Church.

For both present and future reference, explain the most important questions at issue between Henry II and Becket. Comment on the terror inspired in the English people and their King by the murder of Becket. Read descriptions of the lively pageantry of the day, and of Becket and Henry II; also Churchill's characterization of Henry.

Tell briefly of Richard I, the Lionhearted.

Discuss the conflict which developed under the Norman and Angevin rulers between the King and his Barons, culminating in John's abuse of

his powers, and describe the meeting on the meadow at Runnymede. Explain the intent of the Barons and the purely practical nature of the Charter as it was envisioned at the time.

Tell of John's death, the crowning of the boy King, the religious complexion of the King's party, and the measures taken to bring order out of chaos. Discuss some of the leading men in this period, notably Hubert de Burgh, and tell of "the Fair of Lincoln," and of Fawkes de Breauté and the siege and fall of Bedford Castle.

2. FEUDALISM AND CHIVALRY IN FICTION

Cavalcade of the English Novel, by Edward Wagenknecht, pp. 163-166.
Ivanhoe, by Sir Walter Scott.

List the qualifications Wagenknecht demands in the historical novelist and summarize his discussion of Scott's fitness.

Explain the manner in which Scott, having in mind the continuity of human experience, telescoped the centuries in *Ivanhoe*. Discuss his portrayal of the two races. Do you feel that he gives a fairly accurate impression of the contrast between the arrogant Normans and the homely Saxons, the latter vanquished but still distinguished, in Scott's words, by the "free spirit infused by their ancient institutions and laws"? Comment on typical characters.

Picture incidents typical of the feudal scene and society in which these people move: for example, the pageantry and brutality of the tournament, the abduction of Cedric and his party, the threatened torture of the Jew, the ordeal of Rebecca before the Churchmen.

Does it offend you that Scott felt free to confuse the manners of several centuries, or are you satisfied with the manner in which, in the words of C. A. Young, he "wedded the probability of history to the probability of romance," filling in an age on so grand a scale that his method is still today a model for best-sellers?

Or does the novel strike you as "a work of such fantastic character" (as Scott phrased it in commenting on the resuscitation of the Saxon Athelstane at the insistence of his publisher) that it is romantic fiction which draws color and excitement from history, rather than history revived in fiction? Whatever your opinion, are its scenes indelibly stamped in your imagination?

3. MAGNA CARTA IN FICTION

Leopards and Lilies, by Alfred Duggan.

Set the time and scene of this novel, characterize the Lady Margaret, and discuss some of the customs of the day which set the pattern of her life. Explain the sources of her second husband's wealth and power.

Sardonic as Duggan's touch is, is his drawing of this age based solidly in history? Consider aspects of his picture: for instance, the composition of armies and their arrogant lawlessness in the field; property, like that of Falkes, held "at the King's pleasure"; the universal resort to intrigue and indulgence in self-interest; the presence and influence of the Church in all walks of life, and the awe in which it

was involuntarily held with its saints, by even the most ruthless of men; the contempt for the populace.

Do Duggan's scenes live? Consider the raid on St. Alban's, the Tournament of Lincoln, the siege of the Castle of Bedford, the trial, and the hanging of the knights.

Are the historical characters true to history's picture of them? Hubert de Burgh, for example, and King John? Does the brief but wonderfully lively portrayal of the latter carry an impression of that restless energy which Churchill says was characteristic of the Plantagenet race and which in John was "raised to a furious pitch of instability"? Do you believe that Duggan's characterization of Falkes de Brealte, a greedy yet loyal adventurer, probably approximates the character of King John's chief mercenary, Fawkes de Breauté?

If you agree that in *The Fourteenth of October* Bryher wrote historical fiction akin to poetry, and that Scott in *Ivanhoe* wrote fiction wedded to pageantry, is this book of Duggan's a vignette of the times, a small but vivid design crowded with truthful detail and noisy with life? Does the "fantastic Charter" in which Lord Warin hoped the rebel Barons had finally overreached themselves seem of any more far-reaching import in the narrative than history says it appeared at the time?

Additional Reading:

Knight With Armour, by Alfred Duggan.

Devil's Brood, by Alfred Duggan.

The Life and Death of King John, by William Shakespeare.

The Talisman, by Sir Walter Scott.

Maid Marian, by Thomas Love Peacock.

PROGRAM III

FOURTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND AND THE PEASANTS' REVOLT

In the Fourteenth Century the peasants of England, their customs deranged by the Black Death, their sense of justice outraged by social abuses, broke into open rebellion, and the "rigid, time-enforced framework of mediaeval England trembled to its foundations." Trevelyan says that historians "cannot decide whether (the rebellion) helped or retarded the movement for the abolition of serfdom, which continued at much the same pace after 1381 as before. But the spirit that had prompted the rising was one of the chief reasons why serfdom died out in England, as it did not die out on the continent of Europe." The Revolt had been "a great incident, and its history throws a flood of light on the English folk of that day."

What the people of this Fourteenth Century, who lacked not "of hartes and corage," were really like was set down forever by Geoffrey Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales*. In these stories there is "a warm delight in character for its own sake," as Walter Allen points out, "and a compassionate realism in the observation of behavior." Combined with this delight and this realism is a shared relish in living that makes of *Canterbury Tales* a volume irresistible for this outline.

Facets of the history and character of these people are further illuminated in Edith Simon's *The Golden Hand*, an absorbing story of the building of a cathedral by a community whose fortunes reach a climax in the Peasants' Revolt.

From this point forward the reader will find Trevelyan's *Illustrated English Social History* invaluable for background material and illustrations.

1. FOURTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND AND THE PEASANTS' REVOLT IN HISTORY

The Birth of Britain, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 332-390.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 100-101; 164-182; 190-191.

Sum up very briefly the important events of the reigns of Edward III and Richard II.

Give attention to some of the forces at work in the Fourteenth Century to break down the old system of feudalism: the long range social consequences of the Hundred Years' War, for example; the far-reaching social and economic effects of the Black Death, notably the struggle

which developed between the master class and the villeins and free laborers; the opportunities offered by the wool trade, and the rise of the cloth industry; the arguments and influence of Wyclif and the Lollards, and of the poet Langland.

Discuss in detail the nature, events, and aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt.

Study carefully sections in the histories relating to the structure of society and to social customs and daily life.

Trace briefly the emergence of a native language.

2. FOURTEENTH CENTURY ENGLISHMEN

Canterbury Tales, by Geoffrey Chaucer. Prose translation by R. M. Lumiansky.

Explain the plan of *Canterbury Tales* and give some idea, with samples, of the nature and scope of the stories.

Trevelyan says that when "Chaucer and the late mediaeval ballad-makers at last found a tongue for the race, the first use to which they put it has recorded their joy in the birds and flowers, the woods and meadows." Set the mood of the tales by reading from the gay and loving descriptions of season and countryside.

Present a selected company of pilgrims in Chaucer's marvelous characterizations, particularly of Churchmen and of women, and discuss the reflection in them of the life of that day. Quote from their edifying discussions of morals, manners, etc.

Does the Fourteenth Century Englishman take on life for you in *Canterbury Tales*, and do you begin to live in this coarse and vigorous world which Chaucer himself so good-humouredly accepts? In fact, does not the book wonderfully reinforce history for you?

3. FOURTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND AND THE PEASANTS' REVOLT IN FICTION

The Golden Hand, by Edith Simon.

Give an idea of the ground covered by this book, point out the important centers of activity, and comment on the skill and accuracy with which historical material is woven into the texture of the story.

Explain the significance of the Hand, and tell of the building of the cathedral. Does the author leave with you a sense of the artistic superiority of the craftsmen, and of the space, grandeur, and permanence which mark the cathedrals of that day?

Characterize some of the leading lay characters. Are these people true to Trevelyan's picture, in marriage customs, for example, occupations and interests, the uncontrolled authority of parent over child? Is Luke convincing as a member of the mercantile class that was rising to take the place of feudal lords and Jewish money lenders?

Tell of some of the ideas which dominated the lives of these people: the general acceptance of the power of Jane for good or evil, Edwin's conviction that he had most grievously sinned and his sin must be expiated, Lord Hugh's conclusion that he was responsible for "the fair

edifice of order" in his domain, the community's acceptance of Luke's fate as punishment for the sin of all. Tell of the ceremony of death for lepers.

Discuss Lord Jerome, Prior Carlos, and Abbot Alfred in the contrast of personalities and of beliefs defining a priest's true duty to the people. In simplifying the assumptions of these men for our understanding, does the author succeed in conveying the subtlety and complexity of the thinking in which these assumptions were based?

Discuss the lives of the serfs, taking instances from among them of the effect of the duties, fines, penalties, and punishments which were their lot. Note the arrival of the Lollards, and comment on the particular incident which sparked the attack on the Manor. Is the suddenness and ferocity of the uprising, the peaceable return of the people to their usual occupations, and the lack of wholesale punishment accurate historically? Describe the sack of the Manor, the burning of obnoxious papers, and the slaughter in the cathedral.

H. Butterfield in an essay, *The Historical Novel*, says that "in the historical novel history and fiction can . . . interpenetrate. They can grow into one another, each making the other more powerful." Does this novel give you a much more immediate understanding of Fourteenth Century England than you get from the pages of history alone? Indeed, does this book recreate for you that urgent moment in the life of England when she had outgrown but not yet abandoned feudal systems characteristic of mediaeval days?

Additional Reading:

Chaucer's England and the Early Tudors, by G. M. Trevelyan.

Vol. I: *Illustrated English Social History*.

The Corner That Held Them, by Sylvia Townsend Warner.

Katherine, by Anya Seton.

PROGRAM IV

HENRY V AND THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT

For over three hundred years, following the Norman Kings and beginning with the reign of Henry II, England was ruled by the Plantagenets—a “strong race of warrior and statesmen kings,” Churchill calls them, “whose gifts and vices were upon the highest scale.” In the last century of their rule, these Plantagenets produced two monarchs, Henry V and Richard III, who were destined to become in the popular mind supreme representatives, the one of the gifts, the second of the vices, of their great line. Henry V, who has been called “the typical mediaeval hero,” was one of the greatest and best loved of the Plantagenets. Richard III, popular symbol of villainy, is one of history’s insoluble riddles. Each lived in a turbulent period of English history, and each has been immortalized by Shakespeare. To these two men and their times Chapters IV and V are devoted.

To comprehend fully the story of Henry V as Shakespeare tells it, it is necessary to read *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second*, the *First and Second Parts of King Henry the Fourth*, and *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*, consummate examples of the playwright’s genius in fixing in the imaginations of men Plantagenet grandeur and Plantagenet weakness (as opposed, it should be noted, to the villainy he fastened on Richard III). A. N. Maughan in her recent outstanding novel about Henry V, *Harry of Monmouth*, uses the tragic story of Richard II to motivate that of Henry V.

1. HENRY V AND THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT IN HISTORY

The Birth of Britain, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 377-412.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 150-156; 164-182.

Tell the story of Richard’s II’s tragic end.

Bearing in mind that it is impossible to separate the history of the young Harry who became Henry V from that of his father, Henry IV, explain why Churchill says the latter was “a constitutional King.” Make clear his kinship with those other fateful Plantagenets, Richard II, John of Gaunt, and Edmund Mortimer.

Describe the lawlessness of England at this time and its causes, reviewing briefly the earlier half of the Hundred Years’ War. Note the contrast between the French “feudal hosts” and the English armies. In recounting the rising of the Percies against the King, mention the battle of Shrewsbury, Harry’s part in it, and the death of Hotspur.

Harry, sixteen at Shrewsbury, was even younger when his father sent him to fight the Welsh. Review briefly the history of Wales and England through the time of Glendower, that "wonderful man," as Trevelyan calls him. Relate the story of the Lollard, Sir John Oldcastle, young Harry's boon companion.

Tell the romantic story of Henry V, King, characterizing him in Churchill's glowing words. Read aloud Churchill's account of the battle of Agincourt. When Churchill writes so stirringly, is he following the austere tradition of factual historical writing or is he recreating history in the living tradition of Shakespeare?

2. HENRY V IN SHAKESPEARE AND IN FICTION

The Birth of Britain, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 409-410.

The Tragedy of King Richard the Second; the First and Second Parts of King Henry the Fourth; and The Life of King Henry the Fifth, by William Shakespeare.

Harry of Monmouth, by A. N. Maughan.

Richard's personal tragedy in *Richard II* unfolds against the most fervent love of England that Shakespeare's genius could compass. As you tell the pitiful story of Richard's downfall, read aloud the most beautiful of these passages.

In *Henry V* it is English men, not English soil, the poet hymns. Discuss the events chosen for consideration in the play. Then follow the theme of patriotism as Shakespeare develops it: the heroic and royal bearing of Henry; the staunch and modest self-confidence of the English yeomen. Compare the vainglorious boasts of the French nobles and their contempt for their "camp lackeys and peasants" with Henry's "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers."

As you read this play, do you, with Pistol and the English people, "love the lovely bully"? Can you still distinguish the historical Henry and Shakespeare's?

In the earlier part of *Harry of Monmouth*, the author avoids comparison with the great scenes of Shakespeare's plays by reducing events to the emotional comprehension of the child Harry. Describe a few of these scenes. Compare the handling by Miss Maughan, by Shakespeare, and by the historians, of some of the incidents involving the grown Prince.

Discuss the omission from the novel of a character like Falstaff. Distinguish between the character of Oldcastle, the historical Lollard Miss Maughan uses, and that of Falstaff, the friend of Harry's youth in Shakespeare's play. Was Miss Maughan wise to avoid comparison with Shakespeare's greatest comic character?

A reviewer quarrels with Miss Maughan because she did not "make any attempt to suggest the thought and emotion of a vanished epoch." Do you agree? Or did you follow with pleasure the swift and dramatically sustained narrative? As an example of the author's narrative skill relate the story of Agincourt. Compare the worn, determined, and merciful warrior of the novel with the hero of Shakespeare's play.

In attributing to Henry a feeling of guilt for the murder of Richard

II, does Miss Maughan follow history? Does she draw on Shakespeare? Give instances from the novel of the effect on Henry's conduct of his feeling of guilt.

Compare Miss Maughan's handling of Henry's love of the French princess with that of Shakespeare. According to Churchill what was Henry's motive in marrying "the comely princess"?

The English historian, William Stubbs, says of Henry V: "No sovereign who ever reigned has won from contemporary writers such a singular unison of praise." Read aloud some of this "unison of praise" (Churchill, pp. 409-410). In what respects, if any, does Miss Maughan differ from Henry's contemporaries in the qualities attributed to him? Tell of some of his friendships and of his mercy towards his enemies. Recall the story of Owen Glendower.

Additional Reading:

Chaucer's England and the Early Tudors, by G. M. Trevelyan.
Vol. I: *Illustrated English Social History*.

PROGRAM V

RICHARD III AND THE WARS OF THE ROSES

King Richard III of England died on Bosworth Field in 1485, thus ending the rule of the House of Plantagenet and the famous Wars of the Roses in which the old nobility of England had largely cleared themselves out of the picture—"a bleeding operation," Trevelyan calls it, "performed by the nobility upon their own body." For his role in the intrigues of the day Richard had won, until recently, undying infamy. In the Sixteenth Century Shakespeare in *The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth* defined Richard, even then a legendary character, as an evil hunchback, and then, in *The Tragedy of King Richard the Third*, immortalized the characterization.

Over the years, however, Richard has had his defenders and recently writers have been taking a new look at him. While it may prove difficult to dislodge Shakespeare's villain, a good case is being made for Richard the human being. Patrick Carleton's novel, *Under the Hog*, a story about Richard and the Wars of the Roses, pictures a man and a monarch who bear little relation to Shakespeare's Richard, and in Paul Murray Kendall's absorbing biography, *Richard the Third*, Richard is again presented as a sympathetic figure.

Read in conjunction with the accounts of the historians the three interpretations by dramatist, biographer, and novelist, offer fascinating avenues for contemplation of the sources of popular belief and the uses to which a man may put his material.

1. RICHARD III AND THE WARS OF THE ROSES IN HISTORY

The Birth of Britain, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 413-500.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 178-184.

Richard the Third, by Paul Murray Kendall.

Fill in briefly the background of England and of the continent as the latter concerned England from the death of Henry of Agincourt in 1422 to the beginning of the Wars of the Roses in 1455.

Reviewing the argument advanced by each side in its claim to the throne, trace the course of the Wars of the Roses. Describe the ruthless and wholesale manner in which noble heads were cut off. In view of the unusual nature of the conflict, is the attitude of the masses of the English people understandable?

Refer to France's interest in continuing strife in England.

Characterize briefly: Henry VI; Margaret of Anjou; Edward IV;

Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick; Elizabeth Woodville; Clarence; Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond. Mention Churchill's reference to Jane Shore as beautiful and charming.

Note the grounds on which the historians say Richard based his claim, and tell the story of his seizure of the throne and of his reign. How do you judge Richard's motives as the restorer of England's older liberties? What was the attitude of the English people?

Characterize Richard as Churchill portrays him. Give attention to the stories of the Lords Rivers, Hastings, and Stanley, the Duke of Buckingham, Morton, and the unfortunate Collingbourne.

Study carefully Churchill's accounts of the battles of Barnet, Tewkesbury, and Bosworth, and his handling of the murder of Henry VI, the death of Clarence, Richard's marriage to Anne, and the murder of the two princes. Note that Trevelyan refers to Richard as "a King for whom the mass of his English subjects were ashamed to fight," while Churchill is more guarded in his opinion.

Explain Kendall's object and method in writing *Richard the Third*, and sum up his evaluation of Richard as man and ruler. Churchill says that in his own day Richard "told his own story with what facilities were available, and he was spontaneously and almost universally disbelieved. . . . It will take many ingenious books," he thinks, "to raise this issue (Richard's usurpation of the crown and the disappearance of the princes) to the dignity of a historical controversy." How effectively does Kendall raise the issue to such dignity?

2. RICHARD III AND THE WARS OF THE ROSES IN FICTION

The Tragedy of King Richard the Third, and Gloucester's soliloquy at the end of Act III, Scene II, and the whole of Act V of *The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth*, by William Shakespeare.

Under the Hog, by Patrick Carleton.

Read and discuss the self-revealing soliloquies of "hell's black intelligencer," Shakespeare's Richard. Could such lines fail to stamp upon the imagination the character of a king?

In contrast consider Carleton's Richard in *Under the Hog*. Sum up Richard's story as Carleton tells it. Although this Richard is akin to Kendall's portrayal rather than to those of Shakespeare and formal history, does Carleton consistently indicate Richard's responsibility in his version of the most disputed incidents—the murder of Henry VI, Richard's ascension to the throne, and the disappearance of the princes? Is the fictional characterization consistent?

Allowing for fictional license, comment on Carleton's attention to history: in following the course of known events; in picturing the attitude of the people, particularly those in the north of England; in portraying the parts played by Lords Rivers, Hastings, and Stanley, for instance, or by Buckingham, Morton, and Collingbourne; in descriptions of the battles; in his use of incident—for example, the death of Lord Wenlock. Incidentally, does the vivid picture of the unnamed armoured lord fleeing the battle of Barnet fix in your mind the similar death of the Kingmaker in that battle?

Do you feel that in elevating Richard, Carleton has perhaps failed to give full credit for acknowledged virtues to other participants—notably Edward IV, Queens Elizabeth and Margaret, Henry Tydder, and even Jane Shore?

Do you enjoy this type of fiction which grows out of history but in which the author resolves all the mysteries of character and action? With the opportunity afforded by Kendall to consider some of the evidence for yourself, and without regard to the literary values involved, who do you think has perhaps come closer to the truth of Richard's story, Shakespeare or Carleton? Acknowledged by each writer to have been a man of intellect and will, was Richard more aptly the novel's "kind Christian Prince" and "not crouch-backed either," or Shakespeare's villain?

Additional Reading:

The First Part of King Henry the Sixth and *The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth*, by William Shakespeare.

The Daughter of Time, by Josephine Tey (pseudonym for Elizabeth Mackintosh).

Saint Joan, by Bernard Shaw.

PROGRAM VI

HENRY VIII, THE REFORMATION AND THE RENAISSANCE

"After Bosworth," Trevelyan writes, "England wanted, not more adventures in shining armour, but peace, retrenchment and, above all, the enforcement of order. It was by putting these prosaic ideals onto a new institutional basis that Henry VII left England in a position to seize her great opportunities in the coming era."

The reign of this cautious, powerful, and thrifty founder of the Tudor dynasty ushered in the most glorious century of England's history, a century which saw the boundaries of man's intellect and of the physical world enlarged as never before nor since in Western history. The opening up of the vast New World, the religious toleration finally to be won as the result of the Reformation, the expanding intellectual, scientific, and cultural horizons of the Renaissance, mark three mighty transformations in the history of Western man. It is these transformations as they affected the English people under the two most powerful of the Tudors, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, which will be considered in this and the following chapter.

The Man on a Donkey, by Hilda Prescott, is ranked unanimously by critics among the finest of contemporary historical novels. For this chapter we are also fortunate in having Charles A. Brady's *Stage of Fools*. Whereas Hilda Prescott deals with tragedies of the religious conflict as they culminated in the Pilgrimage of Grace in northern England, Brady presents a "warmly understanding portrait" of the steadfast and ingratiating symbol of England's Renaissance, Sir Thomas More.

Highly recommended for additional background material on this period are Trevelyan's account of the closing of the monasteries in Volume I of his *Illustrated English Social History*, and Miss Prescott's biography, *Mary Tudor*.

1. HENRY VIII, THE REFORMATION AND THE RENAISSANCE IN HISTORY

The New World, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 3-101. Vol. II: *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 183-215; 246-248.

Trevelyan says: "The mediaeval system passed away, not by chance or by the whim of a King impatient to be divorced, but on account of

profound changes in the habits of the English people." List these changes.

Read descriptions of Henry VIII as a young man and in his older years, and discuss the qualities which enabled him to use to the advantage of himself and of England the energy and initiative of his subjects and "the peace, wealth and power" inherited from his canny father. Note his exceptionally fine education.

Trevelyan gives a brief and brilliant account of the Reformation during Henry's reign. Discuss the specific causes of this great revolution in England: the mounting anti-clericalism; Lutheranism and Luther's doctrine of "man's direct relation to God"; the growing force of nationalism; the New Learning and the accelerating use of the printing press to disseminate new ideas; the general distribution among the people of an English translation of the Bible.

Review briefly the history of the English Bible, with emphasis on Tyndale who, says Hilaire Belloc, "may properly be said to have created the English Bible."

Explain the part played in the Reformation by the humanists, by the religious attitudes and the King-worship of the English people, by Parliament, by Henry himself. Discuss Henry's struggle with the Church as it involved his desire for a son to succeed him. What were the issues at stake in his divorce from Catherine of Aragon?

Discuss the roles of Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell, Archbishop Cranmer, and, with particular care, Sir Thomas More, in the march of the Reformation and at the same time of the Renaissance. Add to this list of remarkable Englishmen those supreme figures in the intellectual and religious revolutions of the time—the Dutchman, Erasmus, and the German, Martin Luther.

Give an account of the closing of the monasteries, with attention to the Pilgrimage of Grace.

Mention briefly: the union of England and Wales, progress toward union with Ireland and Scotland, the substitution of the doctrine of balance of power for destructive continental wars, the beginnings of the Royal Navy, first discoveries in the New World.

Continue briefly the story of the Reformation through the reigns of Edward VI and Mary Tudor.

2. THE REFORMATION AND HENRY VIII IN FICTION

The Man on a Donkey, by H. F. M. Prescott.

Be sure to read the author's Note at the beginning of the book and the Historical Note at the end. Explain what Miss Prescott means by a chronicle. Attend closely those passages in the novel which she says are founded upon documentary evidence. Is there any discrepancy between these and the passages which are invented? Are the historical personages as well as the imagined ones convincing?

As you discuss these characters, does the King-worship described by Trevelyan come constantly to mind, in the general acquiescence, if not always to the will of the monarch, at least to the glamour of the Prince's personal power? Does the author attempt a full portrait of

Henry VIII, or is she presenting in the gross and cruel figure of the King a symbol of arbitrary will? Explain the roles of Henry's self-seeking ministers, Cromwell and Norfolk, in quelling the Pilgrimage of Grace.

In these "unquiet, scrambling times" the question of religion came closest to men's lives. Has the author made clear the different religious trends, the religious confusion of an era in transition from allegiance to the authority of the Pope to the period of individual decision in matters of religion? Tell of some of the figures which give meaning to the religious perplexities: the fanatic grasper after the New Learning, Gib Dawes; the man in the position of leadership who must choose amongst his loyalties, to the Church, to his Prince, to his friends, Lord Darcy; the innocent bystander caught up in the maelstrom of conflict and terror, young Julian Savage, Gentlewoman; and others among the many admirably drawn minor characters, among them the staunchly Roman Catholic and noble Queen Catherine and the Princess Mary.

Does the author's catholic tolerance for human frailty and indecision extend to the institutions of the Church? Has Gib Dawes cause for saying that "righteousness has become a mock and a scorn"? Give instances of the need for reformation. Note how the daily life of the nuns at Marrick Priory merits the criticism of the nunneries, which were no longer "refuges for the poor, or houses for women with a special call to the religious life," says Trevelyan in his *Illustrated English Social History*. Comment on the characterization of Christabel Cowper, Prioress, who was admired by all for her business proficiency, never for her religious devotion.

Tell of Malle's contact with the five principal persons of the novel and of the light this contact throws on their characters and beliefs. How are her visions responsible for the title of the book, and how do they weave the theme of the crucified Saviour into the story of Robert Aske, the Great Captain of the Pilgrimage?

The remarkable power and poignancy of the novel owe much to the story and character of Robert Aske. H. Maynard Smith in *Henry VIII and the Reformation* says that Robert Aske "had the single-mindedness of a saint and the moderation of a true statesman." Does Miss Prescott succeed in drawing such a character? By what means does she make us conscious of the saintliness and moderation of Robert Aske? Trace the steps by which he finally consents to treasonous agreement with Darcy on asking the help of the Emperor against King Henry.

Does Miss Prescott take into account the political factors which influenced both sides in the Pilgrimage of Grace, or does she hold her theme closely to religious issues as they affected the lives and emotions of individuals? Mark this particularly in the story of Lord Darcy.

3. SIR THOMAS MORE, THE RENAISSANCE, AND HENRY VIII IN FICTION

Stage of Fools, by Charles A. Brady.

Discuss Brady's approach to the story of Sir Thomas More. How effectively does he handle the crises of More's life, his trial and death, for example?

Are Brady's dramatizations of the facts of history as they touched upon More's fate convincing: Henry VIII's admiration and affection for More, Anne Boleyn's fascination for Henry and her hatred of More, Cromwell's ruthlessness?

Does More himself, with his "angelic wit and singular learning," live for you in this novel, a true exemplar of the Renaissance, "cognizant of his full stature of man"?

Discuss the means by which Brady gives shape to the Renaissance: in the warm friendship and delightful conversations of Erasmus and More, for example; in the delineation of such figures as Colet, Fisher, Holbein, Wyatt, Patenson; in the use of the writings of Erasmus, More, Machiavelli, Rabelais, and of legend, nursery rhyme, humour and poetry of the period. Read aloud some of the poetry quoted, especially Wyatt's beautiful poems to the faithless Anne Boleyn.

Wagenknecht in a review of *Stage of Fools* calls it a "serious novel with a great deal of sound straightforward history in it, which compares very favorably with the best work now being done in this difficult genre." Do you agree? The *Saturday Review of Literature* comments that Brady "regards the Reformation as not merely a religious but a social disaster." If you concur, cite instances to prove the contention. Or do you agree with the *New York Times* that Brady "succeeds in the doubly difficult task of blending truth with advocacy, and fact with fiction"?

Additional Reading:

Chaucer's England and the Early Tudors, by G. M. Trevelyan.

Vol. I: *Illustrated English Social History*.

The Famous History of the Life of King Henry VIII, by William Shakespeare.

Merchant of the Ruby, by Alice Harwood.

The Tudor Rose, by Margaret Campbell Barnes.

Warm Wind, West Wind, by Anne Irwin Matthew.

Anne Boleyn, by Evelyn Anthony.

Fanfare for Elizabeth, by Edith Sitwell.

My Lady of Cleves, by Margaret Campbell Barnes.

The Lily and the Leopards, by Alice Harwood.

Mary Tudor, by H. F. M. Prescott.

PROGRAM VII

THE ELIZABETHAN ERA

In a brilliant summary of the spirit and accomplishments of the England of Queen Elizabeth I, Trevelyan says: "Shakespeare chanced upon the best time and country in which to live, in order to exercise with least distraction and most encouragement the highest faculties of man. . . . His countrymen, not yet cramped to the service of machines, were craftsmen and creators at will. Their minds, set free from mediaeval trammels, were not yet caught by Puritan or other modern fanaticisms. . . . Large classes, freed as never before from poverty, felt the upspring of the spirit and expressed it in wit, music and song. The English language had touched its moment of fullest beauty and power. Peace and order at last prevailed in the land, even during the sea-war with Spain. Politics, so long a fear and oppression, and soon in other forms to be a fear and oppression again, were for a few decades simplified into service paid to a woman, who was to her subjects the symbol of their unity, prosperity and freedom."

"And during these same fruitful years of Elizabeth," he observes in a later paragraph, "the narrow seas, amid whose tempests English mariners had for centuries been trained, expanded into the oceans of the world, where romance and wealth were to be won by adventurous youth, trading and fighting along newly discovered shores. Young, light-hearted England . . . became conscious of herself as an island with an ocean destiny, glad after that Armada storm, to feel the safety and freedom that the guarded seas could give."

No novelist of a later period has recaptured this Merrie England of the Renaissance as did the poets of Elizabeth's own time. Charles Kingsley in *Westward Ho!* imparts the joyousness and daring of Elizabethan adventure upon the seas. In *Lady in Waiting* Rosemary Sutcliff, through the story of Sir Walter Raleigh's wife, achieves a telling characterization of the determined but frustrated colonizer of the New World. An historically accurate and perceptive account of Elizabeth—this woman who, as J. E. Neale in *Queen Elizabeth* says, "intoxicated Court and country and keyed her realm to the intensity of her own spirit"—is given by Josephine Delves-Broughton in *The Heart of a Queen*. Unfortunately, the book is out of print but is available in some libraries.

1. THE ELIZABETHAN ERA IN HISTORY

The New World, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 102-144.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 216-254.

Oxford Book of English Verse, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, editor.

How did the character and policy of Elizabeth contribute to the beginning of the modern world? Explain the continental entanglements, both political and religious, in which England was involved, notably through the marriages of Mary Tudor and Mary, Queen of Scots. Discuss the means Elizabeth employed to enable "still peace to grow."

Trace the story of the Reformation in England and in Scotland. Why did Scotland so easily become a part of Britain while Ireland never did? Tell of the symbolical roles played in this story by the beautiful, fascinating, wayward Mary and the indomitable Elizabeth, who early learned that "private affections and passions are not for Princes."

Explain the relationship of Lord Burghley, of Robert Cecil, and of Walsingham to Elizabeth, and tell the stories of Leicester and Essex.

Read aloud the quotation from Hakluyk (Trevelyan, p. 227). Give the reasons for the growth of England as a maritime power under Elizabeth and tell of her Merchant Adventurers and her glorious explorers and sea captains. Give attention to Sir Walter Raleigh, his mind "always open to whatever was marvelous and exciting."

How did Elizabeth's connivance with the piracies of her "privateers" prepare England for the struggle with Spain? What, besides "the lion heart" and "the supreme energy" of Elizabeth, enabled the English to defeat the Invincible Armada?

While the Renaissance in Italy was withering away, Trevelyan says, it "bloomed afresh in England, tended by poets who grafted it on English trees in the Forest of Arden." The writings of Shakespeare, Sidney, Spenser, Marlowe, and Raleigh, as well as religious and secular music were but the flowering of the freedom of spirit, the spirit of joy and high adventure, "perhaps irrecoverable," which blessed Elizabeth's reign. Call attention to the three chief elements of the English culture of the day and read aloud some of Shakespeare's lyrics, Sidney's and Raleigh's, a few of Marlowe's "mighty lines" or Spenser's.

2. THE ELIZABETHAN ERA IN FICTION

Westward Ho!, by Charles Kingsley.

Lady In Waiting, by Rosemary Sutcliff.

To the men of Devon, Trevelyan says, "the unmapped world beyond the ocean seemed an archipelago of fairy islands, each hiding some strange wonder of its own, each waiting to be discovered by some adventurous knight vowed to leave his bones far away or to come back rich and tell his tale in the tavern." Does Kingsley, in *Westward Ho!*, capture for you this sense of romantic adventure? Outline briefly this tall tale of sea roving and fighting, filling in the details of the story with accounts of the deeds of those famous men of Devon—Gilbert, Hawkins,

Grenville, Drake and Raleigh. Compare Kingsley's account of these men with Churchill's.

Do you think the chivalric attitude toward Elizabeth as symbol of England's "unity, prosperity and freedom" is that of the period?

Does Kingsley draw such characters as are described in Lord Howard of Effingham's reference to Elizabeth's seamen: "God send us to sea in such company together again, when need is"?

With the exception of Raleigh, the Devon men had the good fortune to die during the reign of Elizabeth. In telling the story of *Lady In Waiting* draw attention to the difference in the temper of England under the bold and farseeing Elizabeth and under the weak and vacillating James I. Does politics become a "fear and oppression" under this first of the Stuarts?

Does the vigorous recreation in *Westward Ho!* of the sea lives of the men of Devon reinforce for you Raleigh's longing for action in *Lady in Waiting*, first as he was kept by Elizabeth's side to serve as her Captain of the Guard and later during his imprisonment under James?

Discuss the brief but striking glimpses of Queen Elizabeth in *Lady In Waiting*. Does Miss Sutcliff succeed in creating the woman who fascinated not only her subjects but also the talented young men who flocked to her Court from all parts of her kingdom? Give instances of the monarch's power of patronage.

In her own unassuming style has Miss Sutcliff presented the Raleigh of tradition: a man of dynamic ambition and versatility, of poetic sensibility, of large dreams of England's plantings in the New World, of unconquerable spirit, yet tactless, greedy, headstrong, outspoken, "damnable proud," creating enemies who proved his ruin, and friends devoted unto death? Tell the story of the Raleighs' relationship to Essex, to Robert Cecil, to the wife of James I and the young Prince Henry, to Stucley and to Captains Kemys and King. Do you find the story of the young son, Wat, extremely interesting?

At no point in the book is the character of Raleigh more strikingly dramatized than in the trial scene. Describe this scene. Is the change of the people from hate to admiration as they recognize the essential honesty of Raleigh convincing? Is this change in the peoples' attitude true by historical accounts?

Is Raleigh's "prophetic vision of colonial Empire" made clear to you in *Lady in Waiting*?

Additional Reading:

The Age of Shakespeare and the Stuart Period, by G. M. Trevelyan.

Vol. II: *Illustrated English Social History*.

Heart of a Queen, by Josephine Delves-Broughton.

The Abbott, by Sir Walter Scott.

Golden Admiral, by F. Van Wyck Mason.

Kenilworth, by Sir Walter Scott.

Tudor Underground, by Denis Meadows.

My Lord Essex, by Olive Eckerson.

PROGRAM VIII

CAVALIER AND ROUNDHEAD

Trevelyan points out that in contrast to "the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the development of oceanic adventure," which had been world movements in which other countries took an equally active part, in the Stuart era "the English developed for themselves, without foreign participation or example, a system of Parliamentary government, local administration and freedom of speech and person, clean contrary to the prevailing tendencies on the continent." From this period of internal evolution, he says, the new Parliamentary England, "based on freedom in religion and politics," emerged. To gain this end England endured two civil wars, beheaded the Stuart Charles I, tried life under a Puritan Commonwealth and under the dictatorship of Oliver Cromwell, restored the Stuart Charles II to the throne, and then in a bloodless revolution in 1688 deposed James II and called over William of Orange and his wife, Mary, James's Protestant daughter.

Over this century of rebellion towers the figure of the Puritan Oliver Cromwell. Second in interest only to him are the stubborn Stuart kings. In *The Fortunes of Nigel* Sir Walter Scott has painted against a brawling London background a thoroughly humorous pen portrait of the Stuart, James I. In *Woodstock, or The Cavalier*, he presents a lively portrait of the young Charles II and an exceedingly interesting study of Oliver Cromwell of which John Buchan in his biography, *Sir Walter Scott*, remarks that if Cromwell "is not altogether the real man, he is nearer historical truth than any picture of him before Carlyle's".

The background of *Woodstock* is of notable interest. The manor of Woodstock, a royal seat from early times, was given in perpetuity to Sir Winston Churchill's ancestor, John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, and is today the site of Blenheim, a mansion erected for Marlborough by Parliament in recognition of his military services to England.

1. CAVALIER AND ROUNDHEAD IN HISTORY

The New World, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 147-334.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 255-312.

Explain the Stuart claim of divine hereditary right and autocratic power.

Tell of the accession of James I to the English throne, his ignorance of English ways, and his inept statesmanship, notably appeasement of Spain and the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh. Study his characterization by the historians. Note the corruption around the Court and the King's reliance on the Duke of Buckingham.

Relate in brief the story of the struggle of James I and Charles I with Parliament, the latter led by the "famous breed of men" from the manor-houses of England—Eliot, Hampden, and Pym, and the lawyer Coke, for example.

What, in Trevelyan's opinion, was the significance of the Long Parliament in the political history of the English-speaking races? What reasons does he give, other than leadership, for the ability of the House of Commons to assume the government of the country?

Describe the religious situation as it developed under the two kings. Note toleration of the Catholics and Laud's persecution of the Puritans. Tell of the later confusion in Parliament and the emergence of Independents (Congregationalists) and Presbyterians in addition to a variety of obscure sects.

Trace the course of the Civil Wars. Call attention to quotations in Churchill (p. 234) on the issues at stake and the division of sympathies throughout England. Note Churchill's remarks on the difference in causes and conditions of the Second Civil War from the first. To what does Trevelyan say the revulsion of feeling in favour of the King was largely due?

Discuss the conflict between Parliament and the Army, and the degrees of democracy represented in the "brew of hot Gospel and cold steel" which Churchill says such men as Goffe, the preaching colonel, offered in the doctrine of natural right and political equality.

Follow briefly Cromwell's career. In order to understand fully Everard's letter to Cromwell in *Woodstock* with reference to Cromwell's choice after the battle of Worcester, note carefully the situation of the Rump Parliament and "its gigantic sword," as Churchill names the Army. Call attention to Cromwell's lack of agreement with Parliament after he became Protector.

Compare the characterizations of Cromwell. From which historian do you get the clearer picture of him?

Tell the romantic story of Charles II's escape after the battle of Worcester, and discuss his character. Do you find in the histories a degree of admiration for certain aspects of his character?

2. CAVALIER AND ROUNDHEAD IN FICTION

Cavalcade of the English Novel, by Edward Wagenknecht, pp. 152-172.

The English Novel, by Walter Allen, pp. 126-136.

Woodstock, or The Cavalier and The Fortunes of Nigel, by Sir Walter Scott.

Explain the span of time covered by *Woodstock* and the importance of *Woodstock* itself as a symbol to Royalist and Roundhead. Sum up the plot. Comment on the effectiveness with which Scott fills in the

background and brings the reader up to date on the conflict, in the opening scene in the church, for example, the letter-writing scene, and the first scene between Wildrake and Cromwell.

Discuss aspects of *Woodstock* typical of the pattern developed by Scott: the romantic setting, the varied gallery of characters, the vein of comedy, even horseplay; the suspense, and the succession of dramatic episodes by which the plot develops.

John Buchan praises *Woodstock* for its "background of sagely conceived history. The figures," he says, "are no puppets drawn from fancy but true products of their times, historically as well as dramatically significant." Characterize some of these people. Are they truly "embedded," as Allen says, "in a context of tradition," and does Scott make history really live in them? Do Royalist traditions of culture and devotion to Church and King live again in the persons of the Lees? Is Wildrake the embodiment of the spirit of the Cavalier? Is Everard a convincing moderate? With him, are Holdenough, Trusty Tomkins, and merciful old Zerubbabel Robins figures typical of the diversity of character among Cromwell's followers? Do you get a feeling of the stark living advocated by the Roundheads?

As a background for Puritan austerity, discuss Scott's picture of social corruption during the reign of James I in *The Fortunes of Nigel*. Have you read anywhere in fiction a more animated portrait than that of "gentle King Jamie"? Do you agree with the reader who remarked that James was here certainly "done to a Scotch turn"? Is this an instance where character in history, even from the speaking pen of a Churchill, is far less vivid than the same character in the hands of a master novelist?

Describe the high-spirited part played in *Woodstock* by Charles II. Could such an adventure have fitted into the story of his escape as the historians tell it? Is Scott's analysis of the attractive features of his character, no less than his faults, in line with history's findings?

Discuss the portrait of Cromwell. Read from Scott's description of his person, and describe scenes revelatory of character: the scene in which Cromwell looks on the portrait of Charles I, for instance, or that in which Wildrake defies him, the scene of Cromwell's altercation with Holdenough, or the scenes at Woodstock.

Does this Cromwell of Scott's more nearly favor the man of "smoky soul" described by Churchill, or Trevelyan's "strong swimmer"? Is he far from being a mere fanatic? Can you discern bias on Scott's part?

Do you agree with some critics that Scott erred when he made his chief figures in *Woodstock* personages of the first historical importance? In the case of a magnificent leader like Cromwell, is actual history more gripping than fiction could ever be? Discuss.

Additional Reading:

The Age of Shakespeare and the Stuart Period, by G. M. Trevelyan.
Vol. II: *Illustrated English Social History*.

The Player's Boy, by Bryher.

The Privateer, by Gordon Daviot.

PROGRAM IX

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND

In its beginning the Eighteenth Century in England saw the transition from the uncertainties and turbulence of the Stuart days to the stability of the Hanoverian era; and in its ending, the beginning of the "headlong career" of the Industrial Revolution which would eventually recreate English society in terms we can most easily understand today. The transition completed, and evidence of the coming change not yet recognized, the gods, Trevelyan remarks in his *Illustrated English Social History*, mercifully gave mankind a "little moment of peace between the religious fanaticisms of the past and the fanaticisms of class and race that were speedily to arise and dominate time to come." In those years, 1740-1780, "we find," he thinks, "a generation of men wholly characteristic of the Eighteenth Century ethos, a society with a mental outlook of its own, self-poised, self-judged, and self-approved, freed from the disturbing passions of the past, and not yet troubled with anxieties about a very different future which was soon to be brought upon the scene by the Industrial and the French Revolutions."

To make this century a particularly fascinating one, round about 1700, Allen notes, the novel as we know it made its comparatively sudden appearance. Then in 1740 Richardson's *Pamela* was published, and "the first great flowering of the English novel" was under way. Of this flowering no fiction was finer than *The History of Tom Jones: A Foundling*, by Henry Fielding (1707-1754), a novel which through extreme good fortune is a story of life in that "little moment of peace" when the Eighteenth Century Englishman pursued his way, freeborn and content.

A century after Fielding William Makepeace Thackeray wrote his only deliberately historical novel, *Henry Esmond*, with the intent of recreating life in Queen Anne's age. Taken together, the two novels offer a broad vista well worth the time their study demands.

1. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND IN HISTORY

The New World, by Winston S. Churchill, pp. 335-410.

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 143; 311-379.

Henry Esmond can be appreciated only against the background of

the entire Stuart era; so, to round out the period, reading in history is resumed with the reign of Charles II.

Review briefly the violence of rival religious and political factions in England during Charles II's reign, and explain briefly Charles's very creditable colonial policy.

What was the Titus Oates' "Popish Plot"? How did the passions aroused by it ultimately play into the hands of the Court and contribute to the ascendancy of Louis XIV on the continent?

Comment on the road taken by James II as ruler, and point out the effect on England of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, of James's Declaration of Indulgence, and of the trial of the seven Bishops.

Describe the Revolution of 1688-1689, and discuss the invigorating effect of the Revolution Settlement. Explain the terms of the Act of Settlement of 1701.

Discuss very briefly the character and career of William of Orange and of Marlborough. Remark Marlborough's preference for the war of movement, and note Trevelyan's very interesting comparison of him to Oliver Cromwell.

Follow briefly the course of war on the continent through the brilliant victory at Blenheim to the Treaty of Utrecht.

Discuss the political effects of Queen Anne's change of favor from the Duchess of Marlborough to Mrs. Masham, and characterize Harley and St. John (Lord Bolingbroke). Tell the story of the plot to restore to the throne the so-called James III. Explain the origin and loyalties of the Tory and Whig parties.

What was the extent and influence of Jacobite sentiment during the reign of Anne? To what state had this sentiment fallen when Prince Charles Edward adventured into England in the reign of George II?

Explain the system of "amateur justice" which operated through the Justices of the Peace.

Study carefully references to English life in town and country during this century. Note the remarkable lack of class animosity, the high state of art and letters and the growing custom among the learned of writing in English instead of Latin, the low state of morals, and the "special function of the Eighteenth Century," in Trevelyan's words, "to diffuse common sense and reasonableness in life and thought, to civilize manners and to humanize conduct."

Mention men—writers, statesmen, artists, religious leaders—characteristic of the ages of Anne and the early Georges. Note Trevelyan's clever portrait of Sir Robert Walpole.

As background for this contented island society, point briefly to the continued building of the Empire abroad.

2. QUEEN ANNE'S ENGLAND IN FICTION

Cavalcade of the English Novel, by Edward Wagenknecht, pp. 275-276.

The English Novel, by Walter Allen, pp. 207-208.

The History of Henry Esmond, Esq., by William Makepeace Thackeray

How did Thackeray in *Henry Esmond* solve his technical problem as historical novelist?

Review the history of the Castlewood family, particularly in its connection with the Stuart Kings and the Jacobite cause. Are the various Castlewoods typical of the life of their time, even in the division in family loyalties during the Civil Wars? Characterize several of the most interesting of them. Do you agree that Beatrix is a superb characterization of an ambitious aristocrat? Is not Isabel Esmond, extraordinary though she is, at the same time a believable creation?

Discuss Thackeray's easy introduction of historical personages and the many deft characterizations of prominent men. Is the life of the day enhanced for you through this gallery? Is the influential but precarious literary world made more real to you through the introduction of men such as Steele, Addison, and Swift? Have you a clearer picture of Queen Anne and of the influence of favorites? Does it trouble you that the character of the young Stuart pretender and the story of his trip to London is not based in fact?

Do you get a lively picture of Queen Anne's Army, the opportunities it afforded as a career for young gentlemen, its effectiveness in the field, its intrigues and jealousies?

Discuss the close connection between the English Court and Army and St. Germain, as typified, for example, in the Duke of Berwick (illegitimate son, you recall, of the Duke of York, later James II, and Arabella Churchill). Can you now better comprehend the life of intrigue led by such men as St. John and the Duke of Marlborough?

This novel is a particularly fine example of the advantage to the reader of a mind well steeped in the history of the period. For example, consider the conversation concerning the Young Pretender between the drunken St. John and Esmond after the dinner at General Webb's. Does this conversation tax the reader's knowledge not only of the particular day but of the entire Stuart period? Is interest enhanced by a knowledge of coming events? Does the reference by a Jacobite to Oliver Cromwell's "glorious name" strike you as a particularly interesting one?

It is generally agreed that in *Henry Esmond* Thackeray "reconstructs the life of Queen Anne's London and Queen Anne's army with consummate skill; his mastery of its detail is complete." But Allen doubts whether *Esmond* succeeds in becoming a recreation. Wagenknecht thinks that Thackeray succeeds wonderfully well in conjuring up the century's atmosphere, while Pelham Edgar, in *The Art of the Novel*, says that *Esmond* "is such a model of perfection for the historic novelist as even Sir Walter Scott has not given us." With which of these critics do you agree?

3. HANOVERIAN ENGLAND IN FICTION

Cavalcade of the English Novel, by Edward Wagenknecht, pp. 58-68.

The English Novel, by Walter Allen, pp. 44-62.

The History of Tom Jones: A Foundling, by Henry Fielding.

What is Fielding's particular distinction in the history of the novel in England? Fill in his background sufficiently to indicate his broad acquaintance with the life of his times. Note Allen's discussion of his style.

Give an idea of the variety of scene, the enormous number of characters, and the tremendous wit and vitality of characterization, incident, and comment in *Tom Jones*. By what means does Fielding indicate the exact period covered in the narrative? Mention the few historical persons to whom he makes reference.

Discuss in their social setting several of the outstanding characters. What was the social status of the squire as landowner and what his authority and responsibility as justice? Give an example of Mr. Allworthy's judgments. Does Squire Western in certain aspects recall to mind Trevelyan's portrait of Sir Robert Walpole? Ultimately likeable, is Western still the personification of that tyrannical power which Allen says Fielding considered the canker of the age? Do you agree that the nature and outcome of Tom's career, and Fielding's freedom to create in him a "whole" character, are evidence of the temper of the age?

Discuss the life led by the women of different classes. Remark the relations between Western and Sophia, and between the Squire and that redoubtable feminist, his sister.

Picture the teeming life of road and inn. Are you impressed with the snobbery which permeates all classes, and at the same time with the easy relationships between classes? Are you impressed, too, by the casual acceptance of drunkenness, immorality, and other forms of vice? Is this at the same time both an aristocratic and a free world, in which the color and variety of popular speech are in contrast to the admirable dignity and courtesy of formal conversation? A world in which political and religious passions seem to have cooled? In fact, are these people pretty well satisfied with themselves and with England?

Can you recall any scenes in literature more hilarious than many in this book, and yet more revealing of customs, manners, and morals? Cite some of these scenes.

In *The Historical Novel and Other Essays*, Brander Matthews says: "The story-teller who deals honestly with his own time achieves, without taking thought, a fidelity simply impossible to the story-teller who deals with the past." Do you agree? Is there in *Tom Jones* a vitality and a sureness of characterization which recall *Canterbury Tales*, a stout rival and one also written out of sureness of knowledge?

Finally, as he reveals himself in this novel, is the author himself a subject for study as a representative of his age, in learning, critical faculties, common sense and reasonableness, and appeal to civilized instincts and conduct?

Additional Reading:

The Age of Shakespeare and the Stuart Period and The Eighteenth Century, by G. M. Trevelyan. Vols. II and III: *Illustrated English Social History*.

The Absentee, by Maria Edgeworth.

Barnaby Rudge, by Charles Dickens.

Emma, by Jane Austen.

The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews, and His Friend Mr. Abraham Adams, by Henry Fielding.

The Virginians, by William Makepeace Thackeray.

PROGRAM X

PERIOD OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

James Truslow Adams in *Empire on the Seven Seas* recalls that the English historian, Gibbon (1737-1794), established "the doctrine of society as a growing and developing organism and of history as not merely a series of disjointed events but as a flowing stream in which past, present and future are inevitably and inextricably linked together." Today, Gibbon's doctrine seems self-evident, for the significant story of the Nineteenth Century in England is that of the changes wrought by the Industrial Revolution which had its beginnings in the Eighteenth Century and the end of which the Twentieth Century has yet to see.

However, before she could give her attention to the Industrial Revolution—almost before she was fully aware of it—England had to devote twenty years to war with France. For this chapter, therefore, novels have been selected which show Englishmen at home and abroad during the wars, men and women as yet unconcerned with, because they were unconscious of, the quickening economic and social forces already at work in their land.

Among current novels, C. S. Forester's *Hornblower* series, concerning the life of an officer in the British Navy during the Napoleonic Wars, is as entertaining as it is accurately documented. *Ship of the Line*, a story of Hornblower's exploits in the Mediterranean, has been selected for reading. Amusingly, no less a novel than Jane Austen's *Persuasion* fills out the scene with a picture of the naval officer at home. Of Miss Austen's people it has been said that they are as much a part of England as every tree in the land.

Of life in London in this era, Thackeray's masterpiece, *Vanity Fair*, offers an authoritative picture in which history most expertly betrays itself through the background, experience, and personalities of the novel's extraordinary collection of characters. Since this novel covers the entire period through the Reform Bill of 1832, it serves a double purpose as excellent background for

1. PERIOD OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS IN HISTORY

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 398-441.

Discuss England's part in the Napoleonic Wars, notably the role played by the Navy, the significance of the Peninsular War, and the

victory at Waterloo. Compare qualities of leadership in Nelson and Wellington. Give reasons for the British people's greater love for Nelson. Speak of the neglect and harsh treatment of the British sailor.

Give some idea of the vastness of England's trade at the end of the Eighteenth Century, noting the importance of her position in India and of the East India Company.

Discuss the economic war waged by Napoleon, and explain the nature of England's retaliatory Orders in Council. When were the Orders rescinded? Mention other factors contributing to American sentiment which resulted in the War of 1812.

Discuss the social and economic effect of the wars on the English people. Which classes suffered more? Which thrived?

Study carefully all material on the life of the day, especially that of the more fortunate classes.

2. THE ROYAL NAVY AT HOME AND AT SEA IN FICTION

Cavalcade of the English Novel, by Edward Wagenknecht, pp. 142-151.

The English Novel, by Walter Allen, pp. 113-126.

Ship of the Line, by C. S. Forester.

Persuasion, by Jane Austen.

Tell in some detail the story of *Ship of the Line*, "a tale," says the *Boston Transcript*, "of the courage and endurance of the British seamen which from the beginning of naval warfare has made the British Navy the admiration of the world." Does the daring of Hornblower and his men follow the British tradition of intrepidity against seemingly impossible odds? As at Crécy, Agincourt, and Dunkirk?

Compare the promises in the printed appeal for enlistments with the realities as revealed throughout the novel. Give instances of the injustice and cruelty of press gangs and floggings, even under so merciful a captain as Hornblower.

Comment on the variety of Forester's choice of background for his officers: Leighton, Gerard, Bush, and Hornblower. Characterize Hornblower and describe his life and responsibilities aboard ship. Do certain of his characteristics call to mind similar ones of Nelson?

For *Persuasion*, Jane Austen chose the interval of peace in 1814 when Napoleon was imprisoned on Elba and she could have her seamen on land. Do you agree with Allen that "the reality of her world would not have been in any way intensified had she dragged in references to the Napoleonic Wars or to the industrial revolution"? "The war was in the newspapers," Trevelyan says, "but it scarcely entered the lives of the enjoying classes." Describe the life of the "enjoying classes" as Jane Austen portrays it, paying attention to those incidents which illustrate social conditions and usages: the dependent status of women; the idleness of the "lady"; the snobbish emphasis on elegance and wealth. Read aloud passages wittily satirizing snobbery in the persons of Sir Walter Elliott and his daughter Mary.

Note the sentiment toward sailors as it is expressed in the concluding lines of the novel. What would Hornblower have said in reply?

Or Bush? Characterize the naval officers, particularly in their relationships to the women they love. Discuss in detail the character of Captain Wentworth, who stands for "all that was most attractive" in the Navy man. Compare him with Captain Hornblower, whose life at sea fills in a background for Wentworth which Miss Austen never bothers to describe. Could Wentworth have handled the crises with which Hornblower was confronted?

Following Allen, explain in what sense Jane Austen is a "modern novelist" and at the same time "an eighteenth century moralist." Discuss her supreme achievement as a realist, keeping in mind that she wrote during the romantic era of Scott, Wordsworth and Byron.

3. THE CITY OF LONDON IN FICTION

Cavalcade of the English Novel, by Edward Wagenknecht, pp. 268-285.

The English Novel, by Walter Allen, pp. 198-207.

Vanity Fair, by William Makepeace Thackeray.

Give some idea of the scope of *Vanity Fair's* "marvelous panorama" of upper middle-class London life in the early 1800's, and discuss at length the main characters, placing each in his economic and social setting. Cite instances of Thackeray's use of historical happenings in their impact on the lives of these characters, and of his pertinent references to famous personages.

Note what Wagenknecht writes about the world whose special historian Thackeray became. Would you say the characters and scenes through which Thackeray brings to life this world of the new rich and the fading aristocracy are true to the period? Does the author's superb gift for satire bring home to you the vices and follies of the scene? Consider, for example, the hilarious accounts of snobbery; the figure of Jos Sedley, collector of Boggley Wollah, in the East India Company's Civil Service; the caricature of the education of a gentleman in the case of Georgie Osborne; the political incompetence of Sir Pitt Crawley, the younger; the career of the corrupt and arrogant noble, Lord Steyne (said to be a study of the 3rd Marquis of Hertford).

Compare the different farewell scenes before the battle of Waterloo. Note profound changes in the lives of the characters consequent on the English victory.

Do you agree that Becky Sharp is one of the greatest characters in fiction? Describe scenes typical of her experiences in the society of which she so longed to be a part. How does Thackeray create sympathy—if he does—for her?

Vividly realized as Becky is, however, is this book really a "dazzlingly brilliant" chapter in the history of well-to-do London? Is it one of the novels to which Trevelyan must have reference when he speaks of "contemporary impressions which have by the passage of years become historical documents of priceless value"?

Additional Reading:

The Eighteenth Century and *The Nineteenth Century*, by G. M. Trevelyan. Vols. III and IV: *Illustrated English Social History*.

Captain Horatio Hornblower, by C. S. Forester (In addition to *Ship of the Line*, contains *Beat to Quarters* and *Flying Colors*).

A Tale of Two Cities, by Charles Dickens.

The Trumpet Major, by Thomas Hardy.

Mr. Midshipman Easy and *Peter Simple*, by Captain Frederick Marryat.

Ride With Me, by T. B. Costain.

Mansfield Park, by Jane Austen.

PROGRAM XI

ENGLAND OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND THE FIRST REFORM BILL

Under the first three Georges England lost her first overseas empire and acquired a second. French Canada was conquered, the first settlement for convicts was established in Australia, and in India the power and prestige of the English Government was firmly implanted. At home the union of Britain and Ireland, though uneasy, was effected, and between the English and Scotch people came mutual acceptance. When Napoleon was defeated in 1815, England won for herself not only an overwhelmingly favorable position around the world, but also one hundred years of peace, prosperity, and security.

While abroad she continued to build her empire and her trade, at home she wrestled, says Trevelyan, with the "new social facts created by the Industrial Revolution. This was found to involve the admission first of the middle and then of the working class as partners (of the Whig and Tory aristocracies) in the control of the political machine." In the face of growing public demand, entrenched interests were forced gradually to give way, and the transition towards democracy was made without catastrophe through a series of reform bills, the first of which was passed in 1832.

The Nineteenth Century, like the Eighteenth, is portrayed by its own great writers. Novels by Charlotte Brontë and Charles Dickens have been selected for this chapter. Allen says that although Dickens was probably the greatest entertainer in the history of fiction, at the same time in a very special sense, Dickens was the expression of the conscience of his age more than any of his contemporaries. Certainly his novels, in their essence England her very self, were a potent influence in many important reforms of his day. *Bleak House* affords a never-to-be-forgotten picture of the period in which Dickens grew up and out of which came the First Reform Bill.

In *Shirley* Charlotte Brontë writes about problems created in a Yorkshire community by the introduction of machinery in the early years of the century. Although the subject is rather foreign to her usual genius, the book is a truthful and engrossing picture of a society.

1. THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND EARLY REFORM IN HISTORY

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 392-398; 405-411; 427-459.

What effect did the French Terror have on public opinion in England, especially with reference to the victims of the Industrial Revolution, to the poor, generally, as potential "Jacobins," and to the Reformers? What were the objectives of Pitt's Combination Acts? Describe the position of the working class at the turn of the century.

Review briefly the economic measures taken by Napoleon and in England and the consequent economic effects on various classes in England. While engaged in defeating Napoleon what did the authorities consider their duty in relation to starving men? Comment on the arbitrary powers of the Justices of the Peace.

Discuss in general the accompaniments of increasing industrialization. Note the expansion of the iron industry, the increase and shifts of population, and the continuing miserable condition of the industrial proletariat. How were women and children affected by the changes?

Refer to the enclosure movement and its effect on the poor as compared to benefits enjoyed by landlords and large tenant farmers. What was the "Speenhamland" system, and what were the results of its adoption in the southern and midland counties?

Note the growing cleavage between classes, the growth of Radicalism under such leaders as Cobbett, and the simultaneous belief in *laissez-faire*.

What events led to a change in public opinion around 1819? Mention "Peterloo," for example, the Queen's trial, and the despair of the agricultural workers. Tell of Peel's reforms and innovations.

What immediate circumstances generated the movement for Parliamentary Reform in 1830-1831? What in general were the provisions of the First Reform Bill? What were some of the immediate consequences which brought to an end "the ice-age of English institutional and corporate life"?

Again, study all data on the life of the day, particularly that of the new proletariat and of the very poor.

2. THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN FICTION

The English Novel, by Walter Allen, pp. 218-221.

Shirley, by Charlotte Brontë.

Miss Brontë says: "The period of which I write was an overshadowed one in British history, and especially in the history of the northern provinces." Follow her explanation of economic and social conditions, and describe in general the situation between the millowners and the weavers in Yorkshire.

Tell the story of Robert Moore as it involves his business and his relations with the weavers. Are his business background and his resentment of the Orders in Council and the war historically credible? What was his reaction to the threats and attacks of his workers, and what measures did he take to protect his property? Did other millowners sup-

port his stand—that “Yorkshire gentleman, par excellence,” Mr. Yorke, for example, and Mr. Sykes?

Discuss the position of the operatives. What was the argument of an honest worker such as William Farren? Was there any avenue of aid or redress open to the workers in this struggle “about money, and food, and life”? How did the Government feel about the matter?

Do you find a parallel to today in the Yorkshire community’s labeling of rebellious violent men as “Jacobins” and “Levellers,” and in the relentless attitude of Robert Moore towards the leaders from outside? What was the fate of these latter?

Is Miss Brontë’s use of historical figures, dates, and Government measures well calculated to fix the scene accurately in your mind?

Discuss the marvelous collection of women as they represent in their persons various manners and customs of the day and the growing rebellion in their ranks: those superior ladies, the Misses Nunnely and Sympon; the old maids; the former governess; Charlotte, in silent rebellion; Rose Yorke, resolved to live; and Shirley, definitely committed to assertion of “the rights of personality,” to borrow a phrase from Trevelyan.

What part does the Church take in all of this? What do the curates contribute, if anything, to public thinking on social questions? Discuss the character and opinions of that high Tory, Mr. Helstone. How did the community in general feel about the humanitarian efforts of Mr. Hall? Is the conflict between classes intensified by the distrust between the Church and the Dissenters? Describe the clash between Church and Dissenting columns of the rival school feasts on Whit-Tuesday. Comical as this scene is, is it almost shockingly significant in its economic and social implications?

3. ENGLAND OF THE FIRST REFORM BILL IN FICTION

Cavalcade of the English Novel, by Edward Wagenknecht, pp. 213-233.

The English Novel, by Walter Allen, pp. 178-197.

Bleak House, by Charles Dickens.

Give instances of how cleverly Dickens indicates the exact period of this novel: reference to the deceased George IV, for example, or to the imminence of passenger-carrying railroads in Lincolnshire.

Discuss the nature of this story, and the fury of the attack on the Court of Chancery. Describe the various backgrounds as they represent different levels of society, the luxurious country estate and city residence of the Dedlocks, the London tenement, the law courts and environs, and the iron country. Note the symbolism of the fog in the opening pages.

Discuss at some length characters as they relate to their own times: Lord Dedlock, aristocrat, with his vested interest in Parliament; Mrs. Jellyby, self-constituted missionary; Mrs. Pardiggle, distinguished by “rapacious benevolence”; Gridley, Miss Flite, and Richard Carstone; truly benevolent John Jarndyce; the lawyers; the Smallweeds; the evangelical Chadbands; Mr. Rouncewell of the new middle class; Jo, Guster, and the brickmasons; Krook, and the symbolism of his spontaneous combustion.

Examine the social attitudes of these people. How does Lord Dedlock regard the laboring class and such a man as Mr. Rouncewell? What is his opinion as to his own vested interest in three seats in Parliament as opposed to Mr. Rouncewell's right to run for one seat? How much responsibility does the public expect Government and the Church to take for Jo and the brickmakers? Do the poor seem to expect any consideration, or demand any?

Do you agree that the famous description in this novel of the party system has a "wonderful burlesque brilliance"? Quote from it.

Granting Dickens his sentimentality, do you find in this attack on vested interests of sloth, greed, and cruelty in society and government, evidence both of sound observation and a moral design? Does it surprise you that out of the *Bleak House* world came a demand for social reform and the right to wider representation in government?

Additional Reading:

The Nineteenth Century, by G. M. Trevelyan. Vol. IV: *Illustrated English Social History*.

Hard Times; *Little Dorrit*; *Nicholas Nickleby*; and *Oliver Twist*, by Charles Dickens.

Coningsby and *Sybil*, by Benjamin Disraeli.

Middlemarch, by George Eliot.

PROGRAM XII

THE VICTORIAN ERA

Hans Kohn, writing in the *New York Times*, says that when Disraeli died in 1881, a French newspaper saw in him "the staunchest champion of that non-exclusive Toryism which has known how to modify and transform itself daily, and which has enabled the aristocracy in England to remain liberal without ceasing to be conservative." Trevelyan, you recall, remarks that "the good genius of English politics has often retrieved apparently hopeless situations," notably the social situation created by the Industrial Revolution, when failure to make adjustments "would have led to a breakdown of the Parliamentary system and a war of classes."

Whether through the exercise of a native political genius or good fortune in the caliber of her leaders, almost alone of the Western powers and without relinquishing her Crown or her aristocracy, England made her adjustments peaceably in the Nineteenth Century, emerging into the Twentieth Century a democratic constitutional monarchy and the most powerful government in the world.

In the Twentieth Century, two world wars have drained the island's economy, the growth of nationalism has put a severe strain on the ties of Empire, and modern science and modern locomotion have destroyed the sea-shield behind which England came to power. Since the future alone will give perspective to the events of the last fifty years, the Victorian era which saw England at the peak of her prestige seems a fitting place to stop in this story of the island nation, a nation which has given to the world both a "priceless treasure of garnered poetry," and the "incomparable gift" of liberty, law, and self-government.

Considering the intellectual brilliance, the political intelligence, and the warmth and security of family life usually associated with the Victorian era, it seems too bad to end with a novel as relentless in its criticism as Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*. But *The Way We Live Now* is a prophetic dissection of English society midway of the Victorian period of transition from the old to the new society, and a compellingly brilliant study of the role of money in that society. Those who wish a happier note on which to end will find it in Trollope's other works, notably the delightful Barsetshire novels. For interesting back-

ground material the reader is referred to E. M. Forster's memoir, *Marianne Thornton: A Domestic Biography, 1797-1887*.

1. THE VICTORIAN ERA IN HISTORY

A Shortened History of England, by George Macaulay Trevelyan, pp. 459-504,

List the important events of Victoria's reign: repeal of the Corn Laws (note the immediate and long range results), commercial and industrial expansion, growth of the Empire, the Crimean and Boer Wars, further modernization of British institutions, social reforms, and extension of the franchise. Does this England come definitely into focus, providing a living sense of England's immediate tradition?

Discuss the ideas and contributions of some of the men who influenced the course of Victoria's reign: Peel, for example, who reconstituted a "Conservative" party out of the wreckage of the Tory party; or Lord Palmerston, "eminently suited for a period when everything was safe"; Lord John Russell and Henry Brougham; John Bright; Lord Durham, who "had the peculiar merit of regarding freedom as the means of preserving the Imperial connection"; Salisbury; and the two greatest, Gladstone and Disraeli, with special attention to their individual virtues as they faced each other in the rush of reform in the 1860's and 1870's.

What was Victoria's method of dealing with her ministers?

Discuss the influence of Florence Nightingale and of John Stuart Mill, and point out other movements of intellectual activity and social change that were stirring in the 1860's and 1870's. What movements and forces in the last two decades of the century "indicated that the social problem was not at its end but at its beginning, and might well in the coming century devour the other aspects of political life"?

Discuss Britain's policies and problems with reference to Empire countries, the results of which we are witnessing today. Note the benefits she brought with her, the problems in relation to color, the change of attitude in India, and the unrest in Ireland. Mention, too, the rise on the continent of the modern military monarchy of Prussia.

What was the state of British public opinion towards America in the period following the Civil War?

Consider the position which the Crown had reached by the end of the Century. In Trevelyan's opinion, "The Second British Empire is becoming an English-speaking League of Nations, officially united by the Crown." Discuss.

2. THE VICTORIAN ERA IN FICTION

Cavalcade of the English Novel, by Edward Wagenknecht, pp. 286-303.

The English Novel, by Walter Allen, pp. 229-239.

The Way We Live Now, by Anthony Trollope.

Note the aspects of society with which this novel deals, and mark the theme—the role of money in society.

Discuss the character of Melmotte and the reaction in general to

him and his methods. Point to the wide range of individual opinion—for example, the disgust of Roger Carbury, Lady Carbury's defense of "benevolent audacity," and Mrs. Hurtle's admiration for Melmotte as a man sufficiently powerful to rise above honesty.

Describe Melmotte's campaign. To what was his preferment by the Conservatives due? How well did his "friends" substitute for the lack of "professional politicians"? How did the dinner for the Emperor of China serve the socially and politically timid? How much respect did those on top have for the intelligence of the lower class voter? Was the man on the street actually turning in the 1870's to the Conservatives? Comment on the scenes in Parliament.

Characterize the two Americans. Is Fisker, in your opinion, true to the era of railroad expansion in America? Did the English in the mood of that day doubtless agree on the essential truth of the flamboyant portraits?

Discuss the character and aims of the chief English men and women who represent the literary, journalistic, and social worlds of London. Are you struck with the sudden newness of the social mixture in this ancient land? Do you agree that Trollope's portrayal of the role of money in the recomposition and life of this society is masterly? Do you find delightful the witty penetration into character? Don't neglect the really marvelous gallery of young men. Incidentally, are the young aristocrats equipped to survive in a competitive society?

Have the young women in this society benefitted from the new conception of the "potentiality and place in society of the trained and educated woman"? Observe the predicament of those unable to snare a suitable husband and for whom no marriage has been arranged.

Comment on the continuous wealth of revealing detail of life, character, and custom. For example, consider the family ties with India and the United States, the new wealth and nobility created by trade, the all but symbolic place of the horse in English life, the Bishop's easy optimism, the inheritance and sale of livings in the Church, the useless young men in Parliament, and so on, straight through the novel.

Do you agree that to modern readers this is a "comfortably mid-Victorian" novel in its distribution of rewards and punishments, and in its pervasive decency of outlook, embodied in Roger Carbury, and even, with all his sins upon his head, in the incomparable Lord Niddedale? But to the same reader, in this "sardonic, disillusioned panorama of Victorian society in the seventies," is the scene in many of its aspects almost startlingly familiar?

Additional Reading:

The Nineteenth Century, by G. M. Trevelyan. Vol. IV: *Illustrated English Social History*.

Marianne Thornton: A Domestic Biography, 1797-1887, by E. M. Forster.

Florence Nightingale, 1820-1910, by Cecil Woodham-Smith.

The Chronicles of Barseshire and Phineas Finn, by Anthony Trollope.

The Tontine, by Thomas B. Costain.

Dombey and Son; Great Expectations; and Our Mutual Friend, by Charles Dickens.

Scenes of Clerical Life, by George Eliot.

Morning Light, by H. M. Tomlinson.

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Prescott, H. F. M.	<i>Man on a Donkey</i> . 1952. (6)	Macmillan	5.00
Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur	<i>Oxford Book of English Verse</i> . 1953. (7)	Oxford	6.00
Scott, Sir Walter	<i>Fortunes of Nigel</i> . 1930. (8)	St. Martin's	1.75
Scott, Sir Walter	<i>Ivanhoe</i> . 1941. (2)	Dodd, Mead	3.25
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Thackeray, W. M.	<i>Vanity Fair</i> . 1943. (10)	Dodd, Mead	3.25
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|--------------------------------|---|------------------|
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| Barnes, M. C. | <i>Tudor Rose.</i> (6) | Macrae Smith |
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