Mid-Victorian Imperialists

British gentlemen and the empire of the mind

Edward Beasley

British Foreign and Colonial Policy

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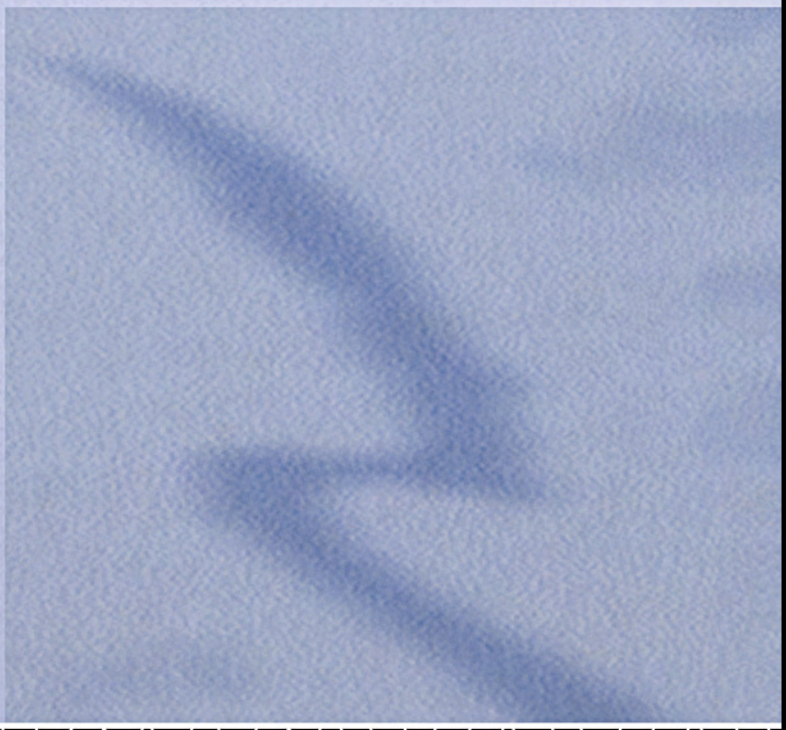

Mid-Victorian Imperialists

Throughout the nineteenth century the British Empire was the subject of much writing; floods of articles, books and government reports were produced about the areas under British control and the overall idea of imperialism. *Mid-Victorian Imperialists* investigates how the Victorians made sense of all the information regarding the Empire. It examines the writings of a collection of gentlemen who were amongst the first people to join the Colonial Society in 1868 and 1869. These men included imperial officials, leading settlers, British politicians and writers. Beasley looks at the common trends in their beliefs about the British Empire and how their thoughts changed during their lives, shedding light on how mid-Victorian theories of racial, cultural and political classification arose. The book focuses on the lives of particular men and their thoughts on empire to reveal how Victorian ideologies of imperialism came about.

Edward Beasley is a Lecturer in History at San Diego State University. He is the author of *Empire as the Triumph of Theory: Imperialism, Information and the Colonial Society of 1868* (Routledge 2004).

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To Rebecca Lea Hartmann Frey and Sarah Castille Frey

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General editor's preface

Lord Hugh Cecil, writing in the Edwardian period, suggested that the difference between the British Empire and those of the Americans or the French was that the British did not, even formally, believe in equality. This could be used to explain, or perhaps to excuse, the extraordinary range of administrative structures whereby the Empire by then was run. However, Cecil's purpose more particularly seems to have been to imply that a belief in equality carried with it an image of a particular and idealized society towards which colonized societies ought to be trending, giving to the organization of the American and French empires a teleological thrust absent from that of the more pragmatic British. In the end the Empire was a disparate collection of territories not, as was seemingly the case across the Channel, potential *départements* which might eventually be ripe for inclusion into metropolitan France.

But if, indeed, the British did not believe in equality this merely raises the question as to what they did believe in, and how whatever belief system they had shaped affected the way they approached the task of empire. This is, of course, a question which has been attempted before, not least in Robinson and Gallagher's explorations of the 'Official Mind' of empire. However, given the protean nature both of the Victorian empire, and of the careers of some of those who administered, it might be felt that thinking about empire needs to be explored on some broader basis.

What Edward Beasley attempts here is to do just that through examining the writings, official and unofficial, of an extraordinary collection of mid-Victorian gentlemen. Adventurers, administrators and MPs, or sometimes all three, on the face of it the only thing they had in common was that they were all amongst the first intake of members of the Colonial Society in 1868 and 1869. This collective biography, a companion volume to Dr Beasley's book *Empire as the Triumph of Theory*, also in this series, also reveals, however, common trends in these men's approach to empire.

Ironically, given Cecil's comments, in early life many of them had been very influenced by the writings of a Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, about equality and democracy, and not least by his *Democracy in America*. Such writings seemed to speak to the way in which the Empire was develop-ing in the early nineteenth century, and in particular to the centrality of the English-speaking colonies to the way in which the Empire was then conceived. The equality of which Tocqueville wrote was, however, rather different from that which Cecil discerned in American or French colonial management some 80 years later. Tocqueville wrote of the general 'equality of condition' he discerned in America, whilst recognizing that it could lead to very unequal outcomes.

In America this idea could itself become the governing principle of social order, seemingly hardening into the ideal which Cecil later disdained.

Cecil disdained it because he felt that it ensured that American and French colonial administrations were not differentiated to the needs of the different societies they ruled. Did Tocqueville have a different effect on the men considered here by Beasley? In the 1830s and 1840s some of them seem to have discerned, and welcomed, signs in the English-speaking colonies of the sturdy communities Tocqueville described. These colonies were, however, in the process of becoming self-governing. Instead of an empire focused upon societies which, if less aristocratic, were nevertheless still recognizably British in character, what was left was a range of territories whose one organizing principle seemed to be that they were part of the British Empire. By the 1850s and 1860s, and before in some of Beasley's case studies, insofar as Tocqueville provided ways of understanding the Empire, it was by racializing the differences between those parts which apparently could or could not govern themselves. The difficulty of providing a coherent organizing theme across such disparate space also, Beasley argues, meant that the 'Empire' itself became the only way that they could be understood. Quite what this empire was for, or how it should be organized, was not necessarily agreed and could, as Beasley shows, even prove a matter for inner debate for a figure like Sir Stafford Northcote. Nevertheless, what is clear is that Beasley's subjects increasingly through their careers thought in such abstractions as a way of understanding the different territories they explored or wrote about. The trope of empire also, in the process, became invested with qualities that would flesh it out and give it, at least notionally, some sort of civilizational purpose.

Tocqueville wrote in his preface to *Democracy in America* that 'it is the government alone that has inherited all the privileges of which families, guilds and individuals have been deprived' by the march of democracy. In a cohesive society a representative government could work in harmony with society. The British Empire in the mid-Victorian era was no such society; indeed, nor were many of its constituent parts. Some of the individuals considered here responded by looking to decentralize the Empire into smaller units, whilst others by the later nineteenth century instead saw the solution in the movement towards imperial federation. Both of these remedies were shaped by responses to Tocqueville. But the focus of both was on how the Empire was governed, and not on what sort of society it was trending towards.

In the process of the developments discussed by Beasley some familiar influences, such as Darwin, certainly come into play. And Darwinism does seem to have had some effect on how some of these figures were seeking to rethink their understanding of the Empire. But the key factor seems to be the difficulty of coming to terms with the fact and range of the Empire itself. In order to resolve this, for mid-Victorians, empire became a grand, and positive, abstraction into which the various subject peoples could somehow be fitted and governed.

Peter Catterall
16 September 2004

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Abbreviations

ADB	*Australian Dictionary of Biography*
Add. MS/Add. MSS	Additional Manuscript/Additional Manuscripts
AHLP	Austen Henry Layard Papers
BBA	British Biographical Archive
BL	British Library
C.S.	Colonial Society
CB	Companion of the Order of the Bath
CIE	Companion of the Indian Empire
CO	Colonial Office
Corresp.	Correspondence
Coun. Min.	Council Minutes
DCB	*Dictionary of Canadian Biography*
DD	Doctor of Divinity
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
edn	edition
EIC	East India Company
encl.	enclosure
fo., fos.	folio, folios
FRS	Fellow of the Royal Society
GCB	Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Bath
GCMG	Knight Grand Commander of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George.
GCSI	Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India
GP	Gladstone Papers
HMS	His Majesty's Ship/Her Majesty's Ship
IOLR	India Office Library and Records
JLP	John Lawrence Papers
KCB	Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath
KCMG	Knight Commander of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George
KP	Knight of Saint Patrick
MICE	Member of the Indian Corps of Engineers
Min.	Minutes

n	note
n.d.	no date
n.s.	new series
o.s.	old series
PP	Parliamentary Papers (‘Command Papers’)
PRCI	*Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute*
PRO	Public Record Office
RCS	Royal Commonwealth Society
RCSA	Royal Commonwealth Society Archives
RCSL	Royal Commonwealth Society Library
RGS	Royal Geographical Society
rev.	revised
ser.	series
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
TLS	*Times Literary Supplement*

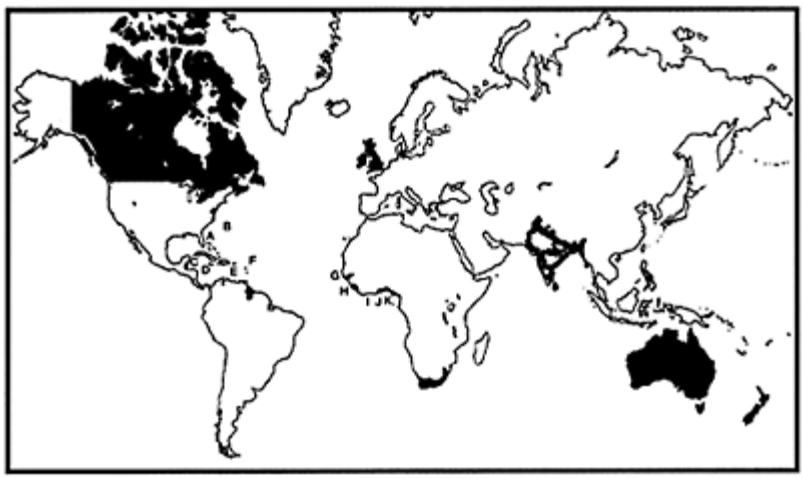

Figure 1 Major extra-European territories of the British Empire, 1868 (source: drawn by Jason Clark).

Key

A The Bahamas
B Bermuda
C British Honduras
D Jamaica
E Trinidad
F Windward and Leeward Islands
G The Gambia
H Sierra Leone
I Gold Coast forts
J Lagos
IS Niger delta forts and Lakoja Consulate

1
Introduction

> In reading the histories of nations, we find that, like individuals, they have their whims and their peculiarities; their seasons of excitement and recklessness; when they care not what they do. We find that whole communities suddenly fix their minds upon one object, and go mad in its pursuit; that millions of people become simultaneously impressed with one delusion, and run after it, till their attention is caught by some new folly more captivating than the first.
>
> Charles Mackay, *Memoirs of Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, 1852[1]

Victorian England was a teeming society. For its more fortunate men and women, life brimmed with industries and shops, popular entertainments and learned journals, the polished woods of the display cases in the new museums, the racks of news pouring in from foreign lands. Many of the 21 million people in Great Britain at mid-century—perhaps three million of mature years in the more comfortable classes[2]—had the time and the means to choose (if they wished) what they wanted to pay attention to, what strands to listen for in the rich cacophony of Victorian life. Should one learn Italian? Work for the poor? Take up marine biology? Follow Latin American business and politics? Or should one follow the history of the British Empire itself?

But despite all the teeming interests and opinions of Victorian England, a consensus emerged by the end of the century—the consensus to pay attention to a certain range of affairs that came under the term 'the British Empire'. The British would attempt to make a large part of the world conform to British expectations and the British will. They imposed their own shared intellectual categories on the rest of the world. These shared categories—such as 'England's mission', 'the white race', 'the natives', and such—were applied in place of that riot of individual perspectives that one might well expect to arise out of the ramifying interests of 21 million people living at the centre of the world system of trade and communication.

Recent scholarship, stemming from the work of P.J.Cain and A.G. Hopkins, has traced Victorian imperialism to its economic source. This was the unity of feeling between British investors and the men who ran the government. Because of this unity of feeling,

which Cain and Hopkins call ‘gentlemanly capitalism’, men in the government would work to make British overseas investments more secure.[3] Sometimes helping investors would mean exerting pressure on foreign governments; sometimes it meant exerting imperial control over what had been foreign territory.[4]

But I do not believe that the motivation behind everyone’s imperialism was economic. If there was a unity of feeling between investors and administrators over Great Britain’s economic activities on the world stage, there was also another unity of feeling—one regarding the role of the ‘British race’ in the sweep of world history—and this unity of feeling was shared by many gentlemen who had no obvious economic motivation.

And there may well have been other motivations for imperialism, too—political motivations, personal motivations, other kinds. How can they be judged? How can all the different motivations be reconciled with each other, and a balanced picture reached?

As I have shown in an earlier work, *Empire as the Triumph of Theory: Imperialism, Information, and the Colonial Society of 1868* (London: Routledge, 2004), one needs to look in depth at people’s lives and writings to see what the economic motivation or the racial motivation or any other motivation for imperialism really meant to each individual. If, for example, we have the idea that one motivation for imperial activity was the need to find employment for hereditary aristocrats, we might then note that the future prime minister, Lord Salisbury, had occupied the India Office early in his ministerial career. And so an hereditary aristocrat found imperial employment, apparently confirming our hypothesis about aristocrats and empire. But in fact a closer examination of Lord Salisbury himself revealed (as in my last book) that for much of his life what aristocracy meant to him was resisting democratization and modernization. And he believed that a key part of what must be resisted was the spread of British colonial settlement. Colonization, in his mind, was nothing more than the process by which the moneygrubbing and amoral elements of society—the democratic elements—spread more of their kind across the globe, destroying traditional societies and aristocracies and killing off native populations. He had taken over the Colonial Office because that is the cabinet post that his political superiors needed him to take. So Salisbury was no ordinary imperialist at all, no aristocrat looking out into the Empire for employment and deriving a pro-imperial point of view from that fact. And this lack of imperial careerism on his part was despite the fact that he was cash-poor from much of his early and mid-years, and had to work as a journalist.

Our general picture may well be true; that is, aristocrats may have looked at the Empire for employment, and this may have motivated their imperialism. Perhaps we could make a table of aristocrats with imperial jobs—and yet upon closer examination, as in the case of Salisbury, the inner workings of at least some aristocratic minds, and the different self-fashionings and self-understandings that they shared and that we do not, might make hay of the conclusions to be drawn from the fact that there was some association between aristocratic status and imperial employment. Association does not mean causation, much less any particular kind of causation—economic, psychological, or what have you—until that causation has been *shown* to have existed. In my last study, I looked at each of the members of the Colonial Society of 1868 individually—it was the first body designed to promote the overall empire as a single large category, and so it is a good place to look for the origins of a later and larger kind of imperialism. In looking at the aristocrats within the society, I did not find that Salisbury’s anti-imperialism was

typical. But what 'typical' is can be elusive; different aristocrats, when one looks at them closely, had their different ideological, economic, political, and other kinds of motivations for being interested in different subjects and different parts of the world—factors above and beyond what we could learn simply by identifying them as 'aristocrats'.

The question is whether any group of people that we might identify as being pro-imperial is really a coherent and valid group, when one looks closely at the lives and views of the people in it. In *Empire as the Triumph of Theory*, I looked at the validity of grouping the members of the 1868 Colonial Society into various possibly pro-imperial constituencies, not only aristocrats and officeholders, but also railway and telegraph engineers, bankers, businessmen, missionaries, travellers and writers. The least helpful, least internally coherent grouping turned out to be missionaries—there simply weren't more than a handful in the Society—and businessmen, who although they were numerous enough did not make a very coherent group. The 'businessmen' included people who were simply colonists out in the Empire, supporting themselves by participating in the economy in some way, and sharing neither the outlook nor the social position of major economic imperialists back in London—who by themselves were far fewer in number.

The category that fits the largest number of members the best was not 'businessman' or 'official' or 'traveller', but 'writer', a fact that surprised me early in my research. Indeed, what does it mean? As writers, many of the members of the Colonial Society of 1868 shared in the task of trying to organize and simplify the information flowing at so rapid a rate into Victorian England. Their need to simplify and classify had led them towards grand categories of thought like 'the British Empire'. And that helps to explain why they joined a pro-imperial society in 1868.

Lytton Strachey wrote that the history of Victorian England will never be written because we know too much about it.[5] What he might have added is that the Victorians knew too much about themselves. Like us—like any modern people—they were drowning in books and biographies, reminiscences, dozens of monthly journals and reams of government reports. Then there was the mail—which by the 1850s came 12 times daily in central London, several times per day in most of urban England, and once on Sunday.[6] One could have a whole correspondence in a day, as we can with e-mail. So there was plenty of incentive to cut down on all of this detail, to make sense of the world, to look for the underlying pattern and sweep of history so one could ignore most of the rest.

For many people, to categorize and generalize meant not only to make marginal annotations on the articles written by others but to write for oneself, to develop one's own categories. Doing so—writing continually, year after year—meant that a writer's fixed ideas might grow and deepen, while contrary evidence and messy details might not always be remembered so well down through the years as they had been early in one's career. This is the process that brought some men, those who began to write about some aspect of imperial affairs at some point early in their lives, to see the British Empire as a single, shining (if increasingly indistinct) vision, as they came to a position of outright imperialism.

If we are to understand this Victorian world of thinking and writing we must look, as Strachey did, at the stories of individuals, looking at their lives in the round, looking at the growth and change in their thought. People cannot be left in quickly sorted categories

according to something that they may have written in one year or another;[7] they need to be looked at as living, changing personalities. Their thoughts developed, and often in a parallel direction. From an early concern with specifics there grew generalizations, and out of the habit of generalizing about the world came a set of imperialistic opinions about it.

The thinking of Alexis de Tocqueville about the world-historical future of the Anglo-Saxon peoples provided a set of intellectual categories that ran through the thinking of a great many of the writers who so dominated the Colonial Society of 1868. Tocqueville focused on the advance of equality and democracy in the modern world, and especially in the English-speaking world (at least in his earlier works). It was in the 1830s and 1840s that the founders of the 1868 Colonial Society were reading Tocqueville, and it was then that they first began to pay attention to English colonies and to the kind of equality and democracy that tended to characterize them. It was in those decades that the idea of expanding the colonies to which British emigrants might go loomed large as a way of coping with the problem of poverty in England itself.

The founders further developed their ideas about the settlement empire when times got better and the need for emigration faded in the 1850s; by that point, the spread of self-government among the British settlement colonies seemed—to those British people who were paying attention—to augur a world of dozens of self-governing democratic states, each speaking English, and each combining English stability with something of the demo-cratic social character of the United States. Thus the founders of the Colonial Society of 1868 had moved away from some of their more specifically immigration-related imperial concerns, and they had moved towards even grander generalities related to the British Empire and its world-historical fate. But they generalized in other ways, too.

Their grander theories of world history and of the British role in it—theories developed by the 1850s and 1860s—were not much disturbed by mere events on the order of the Indian Mutiny of 1857–8 or the American Civil War of 1861–5. The thinking of the founders had risen above mere specifics, and in any case a native rebellion in India and a civil war in the North American republic did not disturb their vision of the grand destiny of the new Englands of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Southern Africa. Indeed, as I showed in *Empire as the Triumph of Theory*, the generality of the founders' thinking in the 1850s and 1860s led at least some of them all the way to an idea of extending this grand empire into the tropics, long before the Scramble for Africa became a popular cause.

Empire as the Triumph of Theory surveyed the whole membership and looked in depth at the main founders of the Colonial Society—thus the book established the overall picture that I have outlined here.

Mid-Victorian Imperialists goes further. It is common enough to claim that imperial themes ran through nineteenth-century British culture in a variety of important ways. But perhaps it is not common enough to look at the evidence to see whether those imperial themes were really present among one or another group of thinkers within Victorian society. This study looks at certain key groups of Colonial Society founders in greater depth than *Empire as the Triumph of Theory* could do in surveying all the members. Just what were the issues, running through the wider swathes of the Victorian world represented by these key groups of men, that were feeding the generalization and the

imperial thinking that *Empire as the Triumph of Theory* identifies as lying behind the Colonial Society of 1868?

For his part, Lytton Strachey looked at four Victorian individuals: Cardinal Manning, Thomas Arnold, Florence Nightingale and General Gordon. This book looks at four groups of Victorian writers in the Colonial Society—some famous people and some who were not famous at all. They all developed their own forms of imperialism, their world-wide and imperialistic categories of thought, in time to join the Colonial Society of 1868 in its first several months. Thus they were pioneers and not late-joiners of the imperial movement.

Some—writers all—were imperial officials, others were Australians, still others were English politicians, and then there were the archaeologists and ethnologists. Members of all but the last group led themselves towards imperialism by making ever-grander generalizations about the nature of the democratic, English-speaking world, often borrowing their categories from Alexis de Tocqueville. Members of the fourth group, although not so interested in Tocquevillean ideas about the fate of democracy, were interested in other global issues. They wondered how the British Empire fitted into a sequence of empires going back to Egypt and Sumeria, and how what was being learned about some cultures could be generalized into a complete world-wide picture of the human race.

The 'English-speaking world', the 'English race'—the temptation to think about collectivities rather than individuals is a powerful one, and once started it is hard to break away from. As each man went through life, his thinking tended more and more to the collective and the imperial, and this drew them together by 1868.

In sum, without a close examination of what these men wrote by that date about the empire in the settlement colonies and the tropics—and they wrote a great deal about both—one cannot get a good picture of how high the empire loomed in the minds of those mid-Victorian Englishmen who chose to think about it. Some were outright tropical imperialists. How prominent was the imperial theme in the different areas of Victorian culture that these men inhabited? And how did they take up the imperial theme and develop it further? This book examines these men in enough depth to help firm up our answers to these questions. These are questions that very recently have been given renewed prominence by the publication of Bernard Porter's *The Absent-Minded Imperialists* (2004), but they are also of permanent interest in the study of nineteenth-century England and its imperial activities.

Such questions about the prominence and fate of imperial thinking are also of interest when we step back to examine the categories that we use to think about the different societies of the world—when, that is, we examine how to do history and social science in a world where there is too much detail to master. We must generalize about other peoples, but how much generalization is too much, too imperial? As we will see by the end of the book, certain mid-Victorians wondered about exactly these issues. Is imperial thinking always a latent possibility, ready to spring up when we look at the rest of the globe and try to reduce it to some sensible pattern?

It is time to look at how the Victorians did it—how they examined and characterized their globalized world.

2
Arthur Mills, almanacs and despotism

The variety of the Empire

So what was the British Empire, what were the imperial concerns of the time, and where could the Victorians find out about all this?

The empire of the 1850s and 1860s included what was left of British North America after the peace with the United States in 1783; what was left of the British Caribbean after the sugar economy was ruined by the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in the 1830s; various bases like Gibraltar and Malta, left over from centuries of wars and struggles; the more recent anti-slave trade bases on the coast of West Africa; the southern tip of the same continent, taken as a base during the Napoleonic Wars but open to settlers and rapidly turning into a set of colonies; India, ruled until 1859 not by the British government but by the East India Company; and the very young colonies of Australia and New Zealand, with New Zealand coming under British rule only in 1840. Some of these places were governed by military commanders, some (such as Bermuda) by local governments hundreds of years old, and many were self-governing parliamentary democracies, nearly independent of Whitehall except in foreign policy, defence and native affairs. This state of near independence in many of the more developed colonies of settlement[1]—granted in response to the burning of the local parliament in Newfoundland in the year of revolution, 1848—was called ‘responsible government’, because each ministry was responsible to the lower house of the local parliament. The cabinet stood or fell by its votes in parliament, not by the favour of the local governor. By 1859, the world was girded with 11 of these English-speaking colonial democracies, each with its own ‘responsible government’, its own parliament, mace and speaker, a vibrant and contentious local press, and as often as not its own agenda of expansion and development.

Already, at the outset of responsible government, the local political agenda in these colonies was rather different from the policies coming out of the twelfth English-speaking parliamentary system, the one in London. There was no well-established aristocracy in the colonies, no House of Lords dating from the Middle Ages; as Tocqueville understood, democratic and equalitarian principles had freer rein than in the mother country. This contrast played itself out in a bewildering variety of issues that would confront

the contemporary observer of the colonial scene. Not least of them was the equalitarian opposition to the 'Wakefieldian' or 'Colonial Reform' system that Whitehall had imposed upon many of the newer colonies of settlement in the 1830s and 1840s. Following the thinking of the writer Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the rural lands of the colonies were sold for a 'sufficient price' to keep all but the richest emigrants off them. The idea was to bottle up the poorer settlers in English-style towns rather than letting them homestead out on the land as equalitarian back-woodsmen. Confined to the colonial cities, they would make up a class of tradesmen and servants—earning low wages, so that higher-class emigrants could afford decent servants. Too often, in colonies with cheap land, the tradesmen and servants simply set out on their own, Wakefield believed. With expensive rural land, he thought, one could replicate the whole of the English class system: great rural landlords employing agricultural labourers, middle-class townspeople and tradesmen employing their own servants, and the servants themselves. Thus, the lower classes of England's overcrowded cities could be sent out to the colonies; because such people seldom had any skills as farmers, they were best suited to being bottled up in cities anyway. And the 'sufficient price' that the government would charge for the rural lands would continually replenish the fund for bringing out new immigrants. Soon England's overcrowding and its social problems would be solved. These were Wakefield's views—and they were the land policy of the British Empire.[2]

The settlers themselves, once the system of responsible government was in place, were none too happy about being kept off the rich lands that surrounded them in order to lock up those lands under a new class of rural quasi-aristocrats. Not unrelated to that point of contention with the mother country was the fact that the settlers were far more ready to displace or kill the natives actually in possession of the land than Whitehall would countenance in this age of abolitionism and anti-slavery. Another bone of contention was simply that the colonists did not want convicts to be transported to their colonies, a practice that was continuing. And soon after the institution of responsible government new issues arose as areas of political contention *within* the colonies, such as financing the railways and other public works, and deciding who would control education—religious bodies or the state.

There was one compendium in particular to turn to if you wanted to understand or keep track of the questions arising from—and for that matter if you wanted to keep track of the bare extent of—this now partially self-governing, now global empire, which despite its self-governing territories also included many dozens of other, non-self-governing colonies, large and small, around the world. Published in 1856, the indispensable compendium was called *Colonial Constitutions: An outline of the Constitutional History and Existing Government of the British Dependencies; with schedules of the Orders in Council, Statutes, and Parliamentary Documents relating to Each Dependency.* It was written by a man named Arthur Mills.[3] The book was huge, full of the laws and statutes, imperial and local, that underlay British rule everywhere: from Heligoland (an island off northern Germany) to the Straits of Malacca—to the 11 self-governing English-speaking colonies. It was the reference work for private citizens and imperial officials alike. It was a great success.

Thus it is richly ironic that having written the book, and having mastered all the imperial detail—for how varied the colonies were!—Mills himself came to want something simpler for the Empire. By the time he joined the Colonial Society 12 years

later, Mills wanted to conquer the nonwhite peoples of the world—a generation before the Scramble for Africa. And he wanted to reconquer the self-governing colonies, too. Military 'despotism', he wrote, would unite all the different colonies into a neater and easier to understand system. All the colonies could be put into the same general category, and all the issues and all the information about them would be comparable from one place to another.

Mills the private observer

Arthur Mills had always liked things to be systematic. An Inner Templer, he had made his name in railway law, arguing for uniformity and central control in the development of the railway network. He also attacked local or parish taxation of railways within Great Britain. In an 1850 article, he argued that railway taxation ought to be centralized and parish authority over railways curtailed.[4] Half-jokingly this might be called 'railway imperialism'—but indeed it did mirror his belief in imperial centralization.

His interest in the Empire dated from the Hungry Forties. Mills was one of the few landlords to spend his own time and money sending his tenants to a better life overseas. Thus he rejected the easier alternative, which would have been to participate in any of the Wakefieldian emigration schemes that

already existed, and that were quite famous at the time. The Wakefieldian plan for large-scale, regulated emigration became the policy of the British Empire, but it did not become the policy of Arthur Mills. In 1845, on his own, Mills sent less than 20 emigrants from Warwickshire to found a settlement in Canada West. The project cost £500, which Mills lent to a yeoman on the spot to take care of the whole matter. (The man's name was Daniel Wakefield, no relation to Edward Gibbon Wakefield.)

After a year of Daniel Wakefield's reports home from the little forest settlement, grandly named 'Blenheim', Mills went to Canada to see the results for himself, and he went unannounced. At three o'clock in the morning Mr Wakefield found his patron, Mills, in bed where Mrs Wakefield was supposed to be. There was much surprise all round, but all was well, and Mills and Wakefield were able to go together to the Wesleyan chapel the next morning. Mills found the settlement rough but serviceable, and so he sent out some more emigrants. He seems to have sold his interest to Wakefield and the other settlers by the early 1850s, although he continued sending bibles and other considerations to the chapel in Blenheim as late as 1858. He did not see the burgeoning settlement again until a North American tour in 1881.[5]

The whole experience allowed Mills to present himself, by 1847, as a no-nonsense builder of the Empire, and—somehow—as the prophet of hard-edged Realpolitik. He wrote a 45-page pamphlet called *Systematic Colonization* (borrowing the term from Edward Gibbon Wakefield). Mills argued that the British people in general and the Colonial Secretary in particular did not take their colonies seriously enough. Mills's sarcasm came hot and heavy throughout the pamphlet. Indeed, this is his explanation for why he had not sent his ideas to the Colonial Office:

> I am unwilling to intrude my unauthoritative suggestions on an officer who is already supposed to be burdened with the affairs of one-fifth at least of this planet….
>
> An unfashionable interest in those countries which are destined to perpetuate the laws, language, and religion of my own, has induced me twice to visit with no official or professional pretext the new and unclassical continent of north America. I am quite aware that my travels are of no national importance.[6]

So the Empire was one-fifth of the planet, but only Mills really appreciated it. 'European exquisites'[7] might travel to Italy and Greece and work on perfecting their moustaches and billiard games,[8] he wrote, but he himself was far above all that. As he repeatedly pointed out, he had recently returned from the vast forests of the United States and Canada to find famine in Ireland, starvation in the Scottish Highlands, and appeals for the poor in London—a city that held far more people than all of British North America.[9] His conclusion was that there ought to be a centrally controlled, active 'systematic colonization' in which land was sold to solid citizens directly by the imperial government. It should not be sold through any of the different companies and settlement societies connected to Wakefield. Mills did not lay out what was wrong with the Wakefieldian plan—he did not even mention the man by name, despite Wakefield's contemporary fame. Mills merely pointed out that to date all large-scale British efforts to organize and promote colonization had been bungled, and much of the good land had gone to nefarious accumulators.[10]

The central government ought to step in and run things—just as he had argued that it ought to do with the railways. If this step were taken, it would not be too late to reunite Britain's 'imperial zollverein' through centralized and systematic colonization[11]—'a peaceful Christian colonization [of] those yet unalienated provinces'. The stakes were higher than one might imagine:

> I am too hopeful of the destinies of my country—too trusting in the energies of the few noble who may control them, to apply to her in thought or word the eloquent enunciations of the Hebrew prophet, who foretold the fate of the renowned city of the Eastern Seas. I cannot, however, forget that Tyre, and Carthage, and Constantinople, had once all, and perhaps more than all, the elements of material and commercial strength which are now possessed by any nation on earth.

But if the 'few noble' did not get busy, then the 'British empire…shall shrink, withered and powerless, within the narrow scopes of her island shores, and dwindle to the national unimportance of the Sicilies or San Marino'.[12]

There was a moral reason, too, why British colonization as everyone knew it—piecemeal colonization and settlement—had to be stopped and replaced by a programme of colonization centrally directed from Whitehall. Colonization as it then existed was a moral blight upon the landscape.

> In the valley of the Upper Mississippi, that last and most magnificent dwelling-place ever prepared by God for man's abode, the Anglo-Saxon colonist is rapidly repeopling the once happy hunting-grounds of a nobler race, whom his corrupt and treacherous civilization has poisoned.
>
> A type of human character at once more savage, selfish, and acute than any age or nation can present, may be recognized to-day in the enlightened and independent citizens of the Western States of the American Union.

'The extermination of native races by force or fraud' was going on under British control, too, and was changing the character of British subjects, as well: 'the Anglo-Saxon race everywhere has been worsened by colonization, and is now in the course of moral and political deterioration'. Far different would colonization be if it were centrally controlled—for it would be centrally controlled by noblemen, and supervised by nobility world-wide; no more would 'the prodigal son [graduate] in the boorish and sottish propensities in which he had previously matriculated'.[13]

How this was supposed to work, and where all the nobles who were to be sent out into the Empire were supposed to come from, he did not bother to explain, spending his time instead on heavy ironies on the subject of the moustaches of the governing class.

But how could Mills himself contribute to the systematization of the Empire? He was not himself a noble. But knowledge was already power in the 1850s, and it would seem that Mills decided to assemble what knowledge he could to undergird a new kind of imperial control. There are those who are called upon to rule, and there are those who are called upon to be their consultants. Mills would sum up the Empire in one book for the benefit of its governors. The book was called *Colonial Constitutions* and was published by John Murray in 1856. While a compendium like this had already been put together by Robert Montgomery Martin in 1843,[14] Martin's book was largely statistical. Arthur Mills made more out of his book than Martin did. Mills had been educated at Rugby under Arnold. He had too many ideas to try to fit them all into statistical tables. Thus, if Mills's *Colonial Constitutions* was not the first comprehensive survey of the Empire, it was the first to have more words than numbers.

Mills included the most important laws shaping the relations between local governments and Whitehall. He could not help noticing a trend as he wrote his way around the world: 'the gradual relaxation of Imperial authority over the Dependencies in matters to which these Public Documents relate, and the gradual progress of Colonial self-government'.[15]

When he was done he summed up what he had found. Writing 70 pages on earlier world empires, Mills worked up his reasons for why the British Empire ought to be retained. It had to be retained, he believed, if Great Britain were to remain a great power. Rome and every other empire had lost its possessions, and of the modern European powers only Britain still had the bulk of its colonies. And being a great power *was* the key reason for having an empire; in the face of criticism that the Empire was a financial drain on Britain, Mills could not pretend that the Empire made money.[16] British trade with the United States and Brazil was just as important as trade with Canada or Jamaica.

The Empire cost money to administer, just as the monarchy did—but it was just as important to retain as the monarchy was.[17] As with the monarchy, the economic reason for retaining it was far less important than the emotional and teleological reason:

> [T]o those who regard vast empires as created, and being permitted to exist and expand for some higher purpose than the gratification of ambition, or the exercise of State-craft, or the development of material wealth, the dismemberment of such empires seems nothing less than the disorganisation of a mighty machinery intended by God for the civilisation of mankind.[18]

Apparently, God worked through big organizations.

And yet there was a flaw in the Empire—that trend towards self-government that he could not help noticing when he put together the main body of the book. He noted that many of the colonies had too great a degree of self-government for communities that were so small, so new, so devoid of talent, and (sometimes, as in the cases of Victoria, Australia, and of Jamaica) so financially irresponsible. And yet people want to govern themselves; that is the way of the modern world. Against that background it was important that imperial authorities should design local institutions as well as possible, and then patiently let them work.[19] Here his historical introduction ended, and Mills went off into his nearly 400-page catalogue of what those institutions actually were.

But even then his work as a cataloguer was not yet finished. Mills went on to write *India in 1858; A Summary of the Existing Administration, Political Fiscal, and Judicial of British India; Together with the laws and Public Documents Relating Thereto, from the earliest to the present time.*[20] In his introduction to this book, Mills struck a particularly inappropriate note by stressing how the material that he was presenting was timeless. What did he mean? He had to admit that much of the book was out of date. He had begun compiling it before the Indian Mutiny. But even though the Mutiny would provoke a huge change in British laws and governing procedures in India, Mills wanted to get the book on the market as a reference to the old laws, rather than losing all his labour. He claimed that the British people needed to know more about India in order to reorganize it—and here was all they needed to know, conveniently digested from public returns and statutes—timeless as well as timely.[21]

The book was supposed to be about India, but still Mills knew that colonial self-government was the popular theme of the day:

> The cluster of affiliated States, which we call Colonies, and which are still proud to call themselves the subjects of our Queen, have been endowed for the most part with the powers of self-government, and promoted to a rank very little removed from that of independent principalities…. To ripen those communities to the earliest possible maturity, moral and material, to qualify them by all the means within the reach of the Parent State for self-government and eventual independence is now the universally admitted object and aim of our colonial policy.

The Indians themselves were not yet ready for self-government—but 'to raise them to this standard, regardless of any political consequences to ourselves, will be the foremost object of all who rightly apprehend the duties and responsibilities of imperial power'.[22] That was the typical Augustinianism of the mid-Victorian imperialists: Lord, make the Indians independent, but not yet. Still, we have to admit that Mills showed the courage of his convictions about Indian independence. He went on to say, in the middle of Britain's wars of reconquest, that 'an inglorious and unlovely subjection to be maintained by force, when the functions of the parent State are fulfilled, has no longer any charm for the Economist, the Philanthropist, or the Statesman'.

There was something bigger at stake than the fate of India. Mills repeated in almost the same words the grand abstract point of his last book. Once more the almanac-maker said what he thought the Empire was really for; the Empire, '(however it may have been used by man) was designed by GOD for the civilisation of mankind'.[23]

An official man

And Mills was now in a position to help frame the laws for a good portion of mankind. In 1857, the year before his Indian pamphlet, he entered parliament. He sat as a Conservative for Taunton (from 1857 to 1865, and he would sit for Exeter from 1873 to 1880). Then this publisher of digests made from government reports, a man who had been in parliament for only three years, wound up chairing an important investigative committee on colonial policy. It was the Committee on Colonial Defence of 1860 and 1861. Mills had moved from the drudgery of tracking down government statistics as a private citizen to the joy of writing a key report that was full of these statistics; people even called him 'Mr Chairman'.

But they also tried to control what he was saying. The idea for the committee itself seems to have been connected to a desire on the part of C.B. Adderley, MP, and his old friend at the War Office, John Robert Godley, to cut imperial expenditure—half to save money (Godley's passion) and half to make room for greater initiatives on the part of colonial governments. Adderley and Godley had both been followers of Wakefield, and they wanted the now-flourishing Wakefieldian settlements to have as much freedom of action as possible. Central colonial expenditures—and central control of the colonies—needed to be cut.

Adderley and Godley had been working in this direction for some time. Godley had served on an interdepartmental committee (requested by the War Office) to rationalize the system under which some colonies helped pay for their own defence and others did not. The report of this bureaucratic inquiry was not influential; it was seen as too doctrinaire—Godley's stamp was too plain, his cost-cutting too deep. A full parliamentary inquiry was needed.[24] Adderley and Godley did not want to set it up themselves for fear that it would not seem impartial. They recruited Mills to make the motion instead; they may have known that Mills believed in *centralizing* imperial control, in opposition to their own well-known views.[25] Then they tried to affect the outcome of the Mills Committee. And they were quite successful.

Usually writing from the War Office, Godley sent a series of inveigling letters to Adderley; Adderley, as Godley asked him to do, showed them to Mills. Godley argued

that most imperial garrisons be abandoned. British forces, he continued, were stretched too far to be defended against any determined European power. If Britain needed places like the Falklands, the Bahamas, St Helena, or Halifax, Nova Scotia, in time of war, they could probably be retaken—and if they could *not* be retaken, then they could not have been held in the first place. Either way, the troops stationed there in peacetime were a waste of money. The only *bases* (rather than ports) that were secure and thus worth keeping were Gibraltar and Malta. Colonists everywhere else could follow the example of Melbourne and build their own fortifications. The New Zealanders should show more martial spirit and defend themselves against the Maori, as the Americans had against the Indians, and pay for the war themselves. The colonists could also govern themselves without restriction in all civil matters.

They would also be paying for everything else on their own. Godley made special mention of the Civil Lists supporting each colony's British governor and British judges; the colonists should foot the bill if *they still wanted to have such officials.* Godley eventually had to admit that his superiors in the War Office were less keen than he was on implementing such a retrenchment.[26]

Yet this was the upshot of the Mills Committee report, finished after Godley's death in November 1861. Mills did moderate Godley's views somewhat. He was not persuaded that the imperial military shield ought to be taken apart where little money would be saved, and where the only object in removing it would be to increase the spirit of democratic self-reliance in the colony. Nor did he think that the colonies should have to pay for their own governors. But the report, adopted as policy by parliament, did look forward to the British government having to pay less and less for the defence of the self-governing colonies as the years went by.[27]

Soon Mills would change his mind—or rather he would recover his own mind. He wanted colonial military expenditures to be substantially increased. And he wanted a simple, uniform, easily digestible *general* policy for the Empire, one that he called 'despotism'.

His thinking went like this. For a quarter of a century, as he lamented in an 1866 article on the government of 'coloured races', no one had cared about the Empire. He singled out the followers of Wakefield—presumably including Godley and Adderley—for special obloquy: Yes, they had paid attention to the issue of self-government in certain places—but they always predicted that all the self-governing colonies, once their local elites were well and truly established, would indeed govern themselves. Their mistake was ignoring the fact that even in the self-governing colonies the natives still had to be contained with imperial troops. Now, what with native insurrections in New Zealand and the constitutional issues in Canada, colonies were back, native questions were to the fore, the newspapers were full of all this, and colonial secretaries in Her Majesty's government had to earn their keep by focusing on these issues.[28] The presence of the imperial troops in the colonies meant that the colonies themselves ought to be governed from the imperial centre.

Mills had a problem: How could you sit in London and think of yourself as imperial parent *after* the bigger colonies were governing themselves and had left the nest? The solution was to focus one's attention on the non-white races. If one could create general policies on how to deal with them, one could impose those policies on the whole empire, self-governing or not. This was the great challenge:

> How to raise from barbarism, or even to rescue from anarchy, the 'thousand ties nourished on strange religions and lawless slaveries' which we have gradually gathered under our rule—how to reconcile the conflicting claims of self-governing colonists, and of those rapidly perishing tribes whose territories they have practically confiscated—how to apportion equitably, as between ourselves and our dependencies, the powers to be exercised and the burden to be borne by each,—all these are responsibilities which, though it would be hard adequately to fulfil, it would ill become imperial England to evade.

Here was England's imperial mission.

> It is in realizing the vastness of the problems presented by the government of our Colonial Empire that we may rest out surest hope of their ultimate solution. Great Britain has undertaken a task to which, in whatever aspect it is regarded—moral political, or financial—the history of the world presents no parallel.

England's task, as Mills went on to say, was 'parental despotism'.[29]

True to form, Mills the almanac-writer cited numbers, showing how thin on the ground Britons were in India, where they governed so many. He also cited the opening pages of John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, on how despotism was the only way to govern 'barbarians' who for the time being could not improve themselves. He cited imperial administrators who had got it right—not Governor Eyre of Jamaica, who in a famous case in 1865 had acted murderously and 'barbarously' himself—but Raffles in Java and Colebrook in Ceylon. These men had governed firmly, but often through the agency of traditional native councils and tribal structures that they had reorganized and co-opted.[30] To work through these native structures was the rational way of promoting true self-governance among non-whites, Mills thought.

But why not just leave them alone in the first place? Mills did indeed ask himself that question, and he spent some time answering it. With European powers and European adventurers reaching as far as they did, a proactive native policy was needed; for Mills, the natives could not be left alone in the hands of the rapacious settlers, a point that he had made in parliament in connection with New Zealand affairs as early as 1864.[31] The British were not like the Spanish, who had been content to see native peoples disappear to disease and murder. Natives would not disappear, although their numbers might decline in some places—and so they had to be taken care of.

True humanitarianism dictated a hard-edged policy in dealing with both natives and settlers. Mills did not like it when 'imperial England played Lady Bountiful with Kaffirs',[32] 'for whatever doubts we may still entertain as to any possible *euthanasia* for the brown man [because of disease], all hopes of solving the problem of his preservation by a process of coddling and insulation from European contact will be assuredly abandoned' as failures.[33] Natives who were doomed to die off would do so; those who would survive could survive anything. Mills's views were very different from what they had been in 1847, when the point of a tighter central control over the Empire was to save natives and prevent the further moral decay of Anglo-Saxon settlers. Now, he thought,

even the Evangelical or Abolitionist urge to bring humanitarian uplift to natives in protected reservation lands, the approach in Canada and parts of South Africa, was so much impractical mollycoddling. Referring to the already infamous practice of giving smallpoxinfested blankets to the New England Indians,[34] he wrote that 'the "presents" to the Red Indians have notoriously been media for conveying the virus of a degrading civilization. The same may be said of all the bounties which have been wasted on native races in all portions of the empire.'

So they could not be left alone; they could not be helped directly; could they be helped indirectly, through preparing them for self-government? No: Mills was not one of 'those who have faith in negro empires and republics'; and he cited Haiti for evidence of what could go wrong (he did not mention that other powers had cut Haiti off from trade).[35] Well, what about overlordship through treaties, such as the Treaty of Waitangi (the 1840 treaty with the Maori about which he said a good deal)? Treaties would not do, either; agreements with natives were silly diplomatic exercises, mere 'pretexts for oppression on the one side and insurrection on the other'.

Add the way responsible governments complicated the native policy of the Empire, and what was to be done with the mess? For the answer, Mills repeated a phrase that he used earlier in the article: 'parental despotism', pure and simple—that was the way to govern 'coloured peoples', or maybe even the whole empire, including the settlement colonies.[36]

Where self-government for whites existed in colonies which had large non-white populations—which would be almost all of them—it ought to be withdrawn, as had just happened in Jamaica, and as might happen elsewhere in the Caribbean and in Bermuda. Of course, the New Zealand colonists should continue to govern themselves and pay for an ever-greater share of their own defence.[37] But in those self-governing colonies which had a native problem, New Zealand among them, the division between military and civilian authority ought to be erased. There would be self-government in New Zealand, yes, but it would really be a self-military-government by a *British* commander on the spot. Mills correctly pointed out areas of tension between the civilian governor and the general commanding the troops in New Zealand, tension arising from their dual authority. So dual authority ought to be abolished, and all power concentrated in an imperial military officer in command of the imperial troops. In support of his view, Mills asserted, correctly, that the combined position of secretary of state for war and the colonies had only recently been abolished in Whitehall—in 1854 (the combined secretaryship had originated in the Napoleonic era when Henry Dundas, one of the secretaries of state for war, took an increasing interest in the military position of the colonies).

In arguing for the introduction of direct military control in troubled colonies, along with the fusion of military and civilian power, Mills was asking for a huge expansion in the military element controlling even the self-governing parts of the Empire. This was a view completely opposed to the policy of pulling back and saving money which Godley had urged on him in 1861. Mills had let all his appreciation for detail lead him to the one policy that could stand above all the messy local details—a policy of denying the autonomy of different peoples and different places for the sake of enforcing a one-size-fits-all plan for the exercise of imperial power. This almanac-writer was too close to detail and too eager to escape from it. He wanted to erect a despotic imperialism over the

non-whites, and to extend this principle of despotism to every white colony with a non-white population.

He was fully conscious of what he was saying. In the essay on the governance of non-whites that we have been following, he attempted to spell out some consequences and anticipate some objections. No provision to extend colonial powers of self-government in native affairs *or in any other way*, Mills thought, should be contemplated—and certainly not as a way of mollifying colonials so that they would be friendly on their day of total independence. Such was Lord Bury's proposal in *The Exodus of the Western Nations*, wrote Mills, and it was not a good proposal.[38] There was no reason to plan that far ahead. Perhaps colonial independence would not come at all for the settlement colonies, and they would remain alongside the more truly autocratic non-white colonies.

Mills assured the reader that Britain had no selfish or vainglorious interest in possessing colonies—It is not for the sake of tribute, or glory, or commerce, or in any interest that can properly be called "Imperial" that we retain our colonies.'[39] If Her Majesty's government could up and pull out of all of them, a penny could be cut from the income tax: 'But as these blessings would be purchased at the cost of our national honour, it is not very likely that we shall thus attempt to cut the knot which we have not *[sic]* the patience or the ingenuity to unravel.'[40] So he was not after glory, but national honour, a fine distinction. The self-governing colonies had assumed that Britain would always defend them, however 'wisely or unwisely we have conceded [self-government] to them'. 'National honour' demanded that Great Britain do no less—but in a unified colonial system run by the military.[41]

Mills thought that everyone should move to a more general conception of the Empire, and indeed help pull the Empire together into bigger and bigger units. He was happy that Adderley, on whose 1865 West African Committee he served, had recommended pooling the imperial outposts in that region.[42] The year before, he was thrilled at the newly confederated— and thus bigger and simpler—North American provinces. He began an article on Canadian Confederation with a metaphor about the great fashion for amalgamation in business and in most every other walk of life. 'Amalgamation is the order of the day, the great process by which capitalists of all classes are doubling their profits and defying their competitors.'[43] But even more general, more amalgamated ideas of the Empire—like Canadian Confederation itself—were needed, he said.

In sum, Mills did not miss a trick in foreseeing (or fore-embodying) the New Imperialism of the late nineteenth century. He saw and shared the pride, the belief in tropical autocracy, the racism, the love of the general imperial category. We can take our leave of him by noting the two predictions that, characteristically, he got wrong—the two elements of his imperialism and love of centralization that would not be widely shared even by the end of the century. First, he was sure that a truly responsible government would be too unwieldy if it were coupled with a federal system. Power in the newly federated Canada would have to be centralized if the country was not to break apart as the US had done, he felt.[44]

Things did not turn out this way, and the Canadian Confederation became looser in the late nineteenth century (in part because of decisions made by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in London).

Mills also predicted, just as wrongly, that Canada's provinces and the different Australasian colonial governments, too, would fade away under the federal and the

general imperial umbrellas, leaving only the local municipal institutions that corresponded to those within England.[45] So Mills believed that popularly run towns would coexist contentedly as isolated units under a system of imperial autocracy. There would be central control over the military and over native affairs covering what had once been the colonies of which the towns had been a part. Apparently the colonists would never try to get their regional governments back again. They would never try for self-government and national development. But that is what they already had. The colonies were *already* bustling, self-governing little regional states, jealous of their ability to govern themselves in almost everything save foreign policy and defence; they were already busy pursuing their own national lives; they already had their own local press and their own local club life. These were the people whose governments—above the town level—were to fade way and be replaced by the military authority of the nearest British commander out in the countryside looking for natives! Mills, the barrister and almanac-writer, would have had no trouble seeing the reality of the situation had he been looking for it. By the late 1860s, however, he was less concerned with the reality of the decentralized world than with his own theories about how to centralize it over again, or for the first time.

3
The man who ran the Empire

The man with the most information to manage was not in fact Arthur Mills, writer and MP, but Herman Merivale—prolific journalist, sometime professor of political economy at Oxford, and permanent undersecretary of state at the Colonial Office and then at the India Office. In turning to the very cultured Merivale, we are more in the world of sweetness and light than we were with Mills, and closer to the real centre of power.

In his early years Herman Merivale, born in 1806, would take walks with his father, setting out from Bloomsbury across the open country to Hampstead and Highgate to visit the great and good.[1] John Herman Merivale, the father, practised as a barrister, but he was also a poet, an antiquarian and a translator. His publications ranged from *Merivale's Report of Cases in the High Court of Chancery* to a volume of translations from the poetry of Schiller. He also published three volumes mixing his own poems with translations from the Greek, the Latin, the French and the Italian. Lord Byron, an acquaintance, believed that John Herman Merivale's poetry was at least skilful and worth while.[2]

The whole family shared in the happy life of the mind. Charles Merivale, Herman Merivale's younger brother, would achieve fame as an historian of the Roman Empire, but he wrote on a number of other topics besides. Charles, Herman and the other children re-enacted Roman history around what the grown-ups took for sights of Bloomsbury—but Herman added another layer of meaning to the local geography. For him, the Seven Hills of Rome would sometimes disappear in favour of scenes of Africa from the pages of Mungo Park.[3]

After Harrow (where his paternal grandfather had been headmaster), Merivale went to Oriel College in 1823, where he thrived. In 1825 he won a scholarship to Trinity. During vacations he and his father would take more of their walks, on at least one occasion stopping for a long conversation with Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Highgate.[4]

Meanwhile some new imperial prospects had opened before the Merivale family. A relation—the brother of Herman's paternal grandmother—was a retired West India merchant living in Bath. He died, and his money came to John Herman Merivale, freeing him from having to practise in Lincoln's Inn quite everyday. So family life in Bloomsbury became sweeter yet. At about the same time, Herman's brother Charles received from another distant relative the offer of a writership in the East India Company in 1824. He would have to leave Harrow, and indeed England, to take up the appointment. He could not decide whether to do so, and the question of whether he would

take it remained an open one in the family for the next two years. Still, Charles attended the East India Company's Haileybury College, studying Indian languages. He learned history and political economy under the famous Thomas Malthus, whom he remembered as full of dire theories, kindly manners and the driest of lectures, plain strings of facts to memorize.[5]

Charles Merivale would finally decline the Indian appointment, leaving Haileybury because he coveted the life that Herman was living by this time, in a real university. And in the words of their father, the understanding all the while was 'that Herman's health precludes him from even a thought of its acceptance' should Charles finally decline the position. Herman Merivale had for a few years an ailment that seems appropriate to a scholar: 'a tendency to fullness of blood in the head'.[6]

But the understanding of the father was not at first the understanding of the son. If his brother could not go to India, then Herman wanted to. Herman had been extremely keen on his brother going. It seemed to him that life in the Indian Civil Service was so much more certain than 'trust[ing] to the chances of succeeding here in England'. And if his brother did not want to go—and Charles came to think of India as an unpleasant exile[7]—then he, Herman, would be happy to go instead. To that end, Herman wrote to his father on the day he heard that his brother would not take up the appointment. Herman told his father that his going would mean he would no longer be dependent on the family. And if he was not well in two years, India would make him well: 'that change of air and occupation would effect everything'.[8]

For the 18-year-old Herman Merivale, then, the British Empire—or more correctly some portion of it—offered the means for making one's way in the world. If the young man is the father of the old, there may have been some link between these dreams of a safe career in the Indian Civil Service and his later activities. The Indian Civil Service career was well marked out, with studies and examinations followed by a lifetime of working up the bureaucratic grades. Life in England, in very stark contrast, would mean the young man making his way through anonymous little jobs for several years at least. At every turn a job—a legal case—would come to its conclusion, and Herman could well foresee the continual horror of such moments of uncertainty and freedom before the next bit of employment came his way. To how many university students does a life in the civil service, in school teaching, or in academe seem a haven when compared to the uncertainties of journalism or small business, with the continual need to find new subjects or new clients?

Meanwhile his father believed that India was a place for parents to send their sons when they did not care what happened to them—how indolent or corrupt they might become—so long as they left the country.[9] Facing this sort of fatherly scepticism, Herman had made an alternative plan while Charles was trying to make up his mind about India. Herman would go off and explore America, provided he could get a fellowship.[10] In fact he did not get there, but his father must have been pleased with the idea.

Instead, Herman settled back down to his happy life at Oxford. Soon he was looking forward to taking his own pupils. Among them would be Henry (later Cardinal) Manning, then an Evangelical, who was to be a lifetime friend.[11] And soon Herman Merivale went on to Lincoln's Inn.[12]

Indeed, he grew up. He saw that people do get by somehow, even without the comfortable berth of the Indian Civil Service. An imperial career is what Herman Merivale escaped *from* when better things opened up. He took a 1st class degree in classical honours and was then elected a fellow of Balliol. He was called to the bar in 1832, practising on the Western Circuit.

Soon Merivale also found another source of income. When his fellowship ended in 1834 he began writing for the major journals. He needed to in order to support himself and his young family.[13] After leaving Oxford he had married a young lady named Caroline (there were so many by that name in the family that she became known as 'Herman-Caroline', and who knows what she thought of it).[14] Journalism of this kind came easily for Herman. Very soon he was writing on Socrates and on the history of Italy, and he was approached by the *Edinburgh Review* for an article on Henri de Saint-Simon, who was bringing forth a religion of socialism in France.[15] This article appears to have been Merivale's first thrust into political economy.

It has to be said that this fairly young man, just 31, was named to his five-year term (1837–42) as Drummond Professor of Political Economy at Oxford less because of any long association with the subject of political economy on his part and rather more because he was the candidate of the liberal (anti-Tractarian) interest, the party to which he had lent his pen both before and after leaving the university.[16] But he did not do the chair any harm by filling it. Some of the colonial articles that he wrote while professor almost induced Thomas Arnold, for one, to move to the colonies.[17] Merivale was soon a star.

And yet despite flying so high, he would settle down in middle age to years of anonymous imperial paperwork. He took up his first full-time position in the Colonial Office in 1847, when he was 40—it was then that 'he gave up ambition for a certainty', as his son recalled.[18] Herman Merivale had been recommended by the permanent secretary, James Stephen, who was eager to retire.[19] In the following year, Merivale became permanent secretary, heading the staff of the Colonial Office until 1860. In that year, he became permanent secretary of the India Office—where only one fraction of his duties made him John Stuart Mill's successor in regulating the native princes.

He died in 1874. By then he had been for 27 years the key figure, overseeing first the colonies outside India and then India itself. Even at the time, people were puzzled by his move from work that might have led him to literary fame into a bureaucratic post where he would have to keep to the background, turning down even a knighthood, although he remained unusually active in writing for the great journals for the rest of his life.[20] These articles were of course anonymous.

Merivale's change from public sage to private bureaucrat was indeed an odd one. *The Economist*, in his obituary, marked how far he had come:

> It is so long since Mr. Merivale wrote anything on Political Economy, and his time has meanwhile been so much occupied with official and literary labour, that it is hardly known to the general public that he was one of the most acute and best-read political economists of his time.[21]

What had the Empire meant to him when he made the change? And what did it come to mean to him in the three decades afterward?

Professor Merivale

It was from the time of his professorship that Merivale's real association with the Empire, as well as with economics, can be dated.

The first lectures that the young professor gave centred on Ireland, as well they might have done as the 1830s gave way to the 1840s. Irish affairs had taken a turn for the even worse. Ireland was a Roman Catholic country where Roman Catholics had not been able to own land until 1782, and where there was always a surplus of landless labour. And the landlords had compounded the situation. They could multiply the votes that they controlled by carpeting their land with as many tenants as possible, each only barely able to scrape by. Then, after 1824, with the rise in nationalism associated with Daniel O'Connell, landlords could no longer control those votes (especially after several reforms of the local franchise). So the landlords turned their tenants off the land to wander and starve in their multitudes. Much land then lay fallow; most was cultivated far more efficiently than before by a few tenants, some of them Protestants brought in from England.

Protestants and Catholics alike told Alexis de Tocqueville, who visited Ireland in 1835, that fallow land could be taken from its owners and given to the poor. They also agreed that an Irish Poor Law, if one could be passed, would erect a system of poor relief that could force the landlords to compete for the loyalty of their tenants; the idea was that after paying their rents the tenants would have to be left with enough money to live decently, or they would pay nothing at all and go on relief.[22]

But there was resistance to any possible reform. Even many of the Irish agreed with O'Connell that state relief was un-Christian, reducing as it did the opportunities for the operation of charity.[23] And there was much concern that any measure of state-controlled poor relief would simply increase the number of paupers by giving them a financial incentive to stay poor. It was this view that drove Merivale during the course of his five lectures on Ireland in 1837 and 1838[24] to reject any sort of poor relief as impractical. (Tocqueville's own reflections on Ireland, which I have relied upon here, would not be published for many years.)

On similarly mathematical grounds, Merivale also rejected any major scheme of emigration to the colonies—it would take too many ships. Emigration at public expense had been recommended as the best course by the commissioners of inquiry and by Colonel Torrens alike, Merivale admitted, but he could not see the logic: Canada and the United States would not need very many more people once the hard work of felling trees and clearing stones was completed.[25] Besides, 'The removal of considerably more than half the population appears, indeed, rather an heroic remedy for the distresses of any country.'[26]

But perhaps heroics were needed, even a decade before the Potato Famine. Instead Merivale was concerned about the details. Emigrant ships to North America carried people one way and timber the other, he wrote; and did the British Isles need ten times the timber?[27] (According to Tocqueville the British Isles did indeed need the timber; most of the houses that he saw in Ireland were mud huts without even a hole in the roof for smoke, making them inferior, he said, to the architecture of the Iroquois.[28])

So was there hope? The last of Merivale's Irish lectures concluded that probably there was not. Any relief effort, any change in taxation or duty, or any measure of agricultural

reform would mean a deformation of the free market, and thus greater misery in the end. This is not the Merivale who would one day, as we shall see, interfere mightily with the free market of the whole empire in order to engineer a change in the labour supply of the West Indies.

And even the young *laissez-faire* professor had had his doubts earlier in the course of his lectures. Some emigration might be a good idea.[29] More important is the hint contained in the first sentence of the first lecture, that 'cottier tenancy' is the key to understanding Ireland. And if understanding, then changing? Merivale soon explained what he meant by different kinds of tenancy. It was chiefly in Great Britain, he claimed, that the soil was cultivated by capitalists who pay rent to landlords and in turn employ labourers. Most of the world (or those parts that he said he knew enough about to classify) was occupied by peasants—whom he defined as those who occupy the ground they till. The various systems of peasant tenancy were: (1) small proprietors, as in most of France, Switzerland, Italy and America; (2) the *ryot* system, named after 'a class of peasants in our Indian dependencies', in which the sovereign is the landlord of his whole dominion, receiving a fixed share and leaving the peasant only enough to survive, as in most ancient oriental countries; (3) the *métayer* system, similar to the *ryot* system, except the landlord is a private party, not the sovereign, and the country has emerged from oriental-style despotism; (4) 'the system of labour or serf rents'; and (5) 'the cottier system, or that under which the peasant tenant pays his rent in money'. In Ireland, Merivale added, the tenant usually has no lease, so his recompense (in effect his wages) will be depressed by the uncertainty and changes of his tenancy.[30]

So was the answer to Ireland's problem one simple word—leases? Again, Merivale was not so sanguine by the end of the fifth lecture, although he still held out some hope that a legislative change to allow the Poor Law guardians in Ireland to mortgage the poor rates, as the English Poor Law guardians could do, might allow Irish localities to mount small emigration programmes (the Irish Poor Law under which Irish guardians were appointed was passed after Tocqueville's visit).[31] But Merivale was not a friend of the Irish Poor Law as a whole; it was an interference in the economy. If there was hope for Ireland, it lay with minds that could make the fine legal distinctions that we have seen between the English landlord—tenant—labourer system, the *métayer* landlord—tenant—labourer system, and the (Irish) cottier landlord-tenant-labourer system (for Ireland usually had great tenants subleasing the land to the poor). The solution lay in fine, rather obscure legal changes to be drafted by anonymous functionaries in London—changes in the laws governing leaseholding, changes in the fiduciary responsibilities of Irish Poor Law guardians, small changes in emigrant shipping arrangements.

This sort of thinking also suggested a solution of another kind. If all the reforms that were conceivable for Ireland did not amount to much, then turning to look at the larger world with its great variety of tenancy laws could take one's mind off the too-specific, too-depressing focus on Ireland itself. Having finished his Irish lectures, Merivale began to deliver his more general and more famous lectures on the Empire as a whole.

Merivale and his *Colonization and the Colonies*

The series of lectures that Merivale delivered at Oxford in 1839, 1840 and 1841 would be the making of his career. They came, he later wrote, 'at a time when public attention had been rather suddenly and strongly directed to the subjects which they [the lectures] embrace'.[32] The lectures were soon published, and they were reissued in an expanded edition in 1861.

If Merivale was to deal with the subject of the colonies, straightaway he had to deal with the influence of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Wakefieldianism was significant enough that Merivale had to spend much of Lectures XII–XVI examining and rejecting it. In the 1861 revision of his lectures, Merivale would dismiss the pretensions of the Wakefieldians that their ideas about emigration, settlement controls and reinvestment of the land payments in further emigration were in any way a 'scientific' system; for Merivale, emigration and well-balanced colonial investment was no more than 'a sound practical rule of action'.[33] As he said in the original lecture in 1839, he simply did not believe that Wakefieldianism as a self-financing emigration programme designed to export the English class system would perform either financially or socially to Wakefield's expectations.[34] After all, Merivale pointed out, at the heart of Wakefieldianism was a contradiction between colonial self-government and the continued imperial control over empty lands, the control necessary to keep the colonists from settling on them and spreading out away from the towns.[35]

So Edward Gibbon Wakefield was not the main intellectual master with whom Merivale was in dialogue; there was someone else haunting his arguments, and that was Alexis de Tocqueville.

As we will see, Merivale showed his preference for a Tocquevillean way of thinking in many ways. Besides, Tocqueville was simply so famous that he could not be omitted from the lectures. Even Merivale's own son, Herman Charles Merivale, hardly the serious type (he would one day lose all of his father's papers in dashing away from the bailiffs), had gone to visit Tocqueville.[36]

What did Tocqueville's thought consist of? Alexis de Tocqueville had toured the United States in 1831 and 1832, and had published the two halves of his *Democracy in America* in 1835 and 1840. He knew that the *demos* with its numbers must someday rule all of the world, for the elites could not hold out forever. But must democracy bring with it anarchy and tyranny, as it had in the France of Robespierre and Napoleon? Tocqueville looked to the United States so that he might identify the factors behind America's ability to unite democracy and stability, which Revolutionary France had failed to do.

What Tocqueville found was that America's participatory institutions constituted a school without walls. The key institutions in which the Americans learned their lessons in self-control were these: local governments, political and other clubs, a free press, and juries. All of these institutions gave Americans the personal and intellectual experiences required to make them fit to run these very institutions themselves, and the democratic government as a whole. In living under and operating their own institutions, Americans continually learned self-reliance and compromise, and they learned how to balance

centralization with local control. In America the primal forces of democracy and social equality were made to coexist with some measure of personal freedom.

That was where the stability of American democracy came from. But what were democracy's cultural effects? What room would there be in the new democratic world of rule by the barely educated masses—whether in the New World or in France—for the values, the mores and the manners so dear to a young French aristocrat? Would world democracy be compatible with the continuation of culture as he knew it? Tocqueville's method of inquiry into these sociological questions was itself quite impressive. He balanced specific observations with insightful generalizations; one was not allowed to run away with the other. Tocqueville produced a finely judged analysis of the effects of political democracy and social equality on everything from the psychology of Roman Catholic priests in America to the nature of American girlhood and womanhood—to the forms of historywriting in democratic as opposed to aristocratic societies.[37]

England, too, had juries and a free press, and local institutions and a plethora of political clubs—and in Tocqueville's view these elements in English culture were moderated and polished by the persistent aristocratic element that the United States did not possess. And so English readers tended to be very pleased by the book. *Democracy in America* was a wonderful success in England. The book was soon on the reading list at Oxford and Cambridge, and on everyone's tongue.[38] John Stuart Mill reviewed it enthusiastically, calling it 'the beginning of a new era in the scientific study of politics'.[39] But not everyone based his or her admiration for the book on the careful methodology and the insightful but controlled generalizations that so appealed to Mill. Many people simply liked the fact that Tocqueville pointed to a roughness in American society, and to the dangers inherent in the 'tyranny of the majority'. Others, of more interest to us, took their pleasure from the book in a different way. The role that America played in *Democracy in America* strengthened their own belief that English-speaking culture constituted the main thrust of world history. So where Tocqueville was chiefly interested in the future of democracy and culture in France and in Europe as a whole, certain Englishmen turned to Tocqueville for his predictions about the future of the English-speaking societies overseas, including those still under the Crown—these were societies that Tocqueville himself had not analysed.

In his colonial lectures, Herman Merivale did just this. He followed Tocqueville a considerable distance intellectually. He, too, looked at the forces of democracy and social equality (as well as economic development) in self-governing overseas societies. *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies* is mainly concerned with how those societies would work. It is concerned with the political economy of settlement colonies in a Tocquevillean world of overseas democracies—and not with dominion over non-whites. 'The native races' are mentioned briefly, but only in the context of how the colonists treat them.[40]

In Merivale's theory of colonization, then, a central concern was the relationship between the conditions of labour in a colony (that is, its degree of social equality) and the possibility of self-government there. If a colony is to survive, Merivale wrote, it cannot forever depend on attracting the surplus labour of the mother country. To grow, the colony must either become feudal (and probably slaveholding), or solve its social and labour-supply problems in the only other way possible, through an unlimited growth in equality and the money-making spirit. An advanced European inequality was not possible

because of the abundance of land. The only *European* country that has a surplus of land, Norway, was the only one where feudalism and the hereditary principle had been destroyed.

This, for Merivale, is 'pre-eminently…the condition of British North America and the United States'.[41] Although the United States had cities and centres of manufacturing or slaveholding that were large enough for the development of local oligarchies, 'these are at present altogether kept under by the democratic spirit of the mass of the community'.[42] Merivale believed that Wakefield was quite wrong to suggest that an aristocracy could be set up in such a place. The effects of social equality would be felt in the manners, the morals, the schools, the very cast of mind of democratic citizens of the colonies—not least in the United States.

Delivering such a lecture in 1841, Merivale could hardly ignore the currency of these ideas:

> The effects of this natural equality of ranks on the genius of a people has been the theme of numberless political writers, and have been ably traced of late years by those who have observed the experiment on a greater scale than any former age had witnessed.[43]

Yet Merivale was already retouching the Tocquevillean picture in some small but characteristic ways. He was far more sure than Tocqueville that equality was absent (rather than merely suppressed) in the major countries of Europe.[44] Merivale was also more likely to stress in his key formulations the importance for the new world of the democratic heritage of the British Isles. Tocqueville would acknowledge this point only in part, since other nations' emigrants also knew of freedom, and emigrants from England had established a slave system in the American South.[45]

Merivale even followed Tocqueville into admonition—democracy in the new societies abroad might become *too* democratic, too money-grubbing and materialistic, too strongly divided between rich and poor, and perhaps too enamoured of the example of the largest democratic society, the United States, which had gone furthest down the democratic road. Yet as Tocqueville did, Merivale suggested that the same democratic conditions might save American society; the energy and the domestic and moral strength of the people would alleviate, although never cure, democracy's ills. In a direct borrowing from Tocqueville, the Oxford lecturer foresaw a democratic society that excludes 'the gentleman' but makes a better life 'for the great mass of mankind'. Merivale asserts that in comparison with England's own colonies, rough and coarse as they may be, England would not come out ahead.[46] Again,

> It is a common saying, that such a [democratic] country is no place for a gentleman; and certainly it cannot be congenial to the habits of the artificial class, the joint produce of feudalism and wealth, so called among ourselves. It does not follow that, all things being taken into consideration, it is not best for the great mass of mankind; the best, I mean, considering man not merely as a creature born to eat and drink, and keep himself warm,—but considering him from as high a point of view as the most exalted philosophy requires.[47]

In Tocqueville's final conclusion to *Democracy in America* (published the year before Merivale gave his lecture), the same point is made, albeit with a more religious air:

> It is natural to suppose that not the particular prosperity of the few, but the greater well-being of all, is most pleasing in the sight of the Creator and preserver of men. What seems to me decay is thus in His eyes progress; what pains me is acceptable to Him. Equality may be less elevated, but it is more just, and in its justice lies its greatness and its beauty.[48]

That was the exalted view.

But what did it mean in the nearer term? Merivale's thinking, again taken from his Oxford lectures, went like this. If a policy of good governance could be tried in the Wakefieldian colonies, then social levelling in them might at least be delayed—and in any case the experiment should prove interesting.[49] This was the policy that he would pursue in his years in government. Colonies should be set free to govern themselves. Each would have a popular party continually demanding more democracy and more independence, '[a]nd to all this must be added, as we have seen, the example of the United States, ever present and fructifying in the imaginations of colonial reformers in every corner of the world'.[50] Ties between mother country and the colonies would become looser, especially if the supply of new emigrants from the mother country were to decrease. Eventually, perhaps, only the tie of the Crown would remain. Rome had seen the same developments. In the end,

> Rome herself was looked up to with reverence, not with jealousy; as the fountain of laws, order, and civilization, but no longer as imposing them on a conquered world. And the Roman Empire subsisted inviolate to the last,—torn asunder from foreign violence, but never divided from within.

One wonders what Merivale's brother Charles, historian of Rome, made of that. But Herman Merivale wasn't through:

> On such conditions as these—and assuredly, if not on these, then on none—may we not conceive England as retaining the seat of the chief executive authority, the prescriptive reverence of her station, the superiority belonging to her vast inherited wealth, and as the commercial metropolis of the world; and united, by these ties only, with a hundred nations,—not unconnected, like those which yielded to the spear of the Roman, but her own children owning one faith and one language? May we not figure to ourselves, scattered thick as stars over the surface of this earth, communities of citizens owning the name of Britons, bound by allegiance to a British sovereign, and uniting heart and hand in maintaining the supremacy of Britain on every shore where her unconquered flag can reach?[51]

And the British Empire, as a general category, could hardly be grander than that. Merivale had missed the French accent in Tocqueville, the concern for French democracy, and had run away with the concern for English-speaking settlements.

Merivale at work in the 1850s

By the 1861 edition *of Lectures on Colonization and Colonies*, when Merivale added prefaces to many of the lectures, the experiment of self-government was well underway, and as permanent undersecretary of state for the colonies, he was in charge of it. Or was he? The self-governing colonies no longer had every act of their legislatures formally confirmed in London; Her Majesty's government simply reserved the right, on Merivale's 1854 suggestion, to disallow what they wanted to. After that year, the imperial government reviewed colonial laws for numerous technicalities and for conflicts with laws elsewhere, not least in England but also in other colonies; and yet the home government was left well out of many interesting questions.[52]

Much work would remain for the centre, but most of it was technical, legal, boring—to anyone save a gifted lawyer like Merivale. For example, there were all his detailed legal drafts connected to shifting the repayment of settlement companies and other creditors from the aegis of colonial governors to that of the newly responsible legislatures—a huge tangle of minutiae, trusteeship law, compound interest, shares of colonial imposts, sinking funds, and so on.[53] Merivale was in the middle of all that, and with his legal mind he was master of every clause and detail. And yet all the while his actions were advice and not really actions at all. He was working under an ever-changing cast of ministers, whom he often quipped that he spent half his time training.[54] Meanwhile, he was testifying before parliamentary committees, corresponding with governors, with colonial legislatures, with London agents, and with unofficial plenipotentiaries like C.B.Adderley.[55] The colonies were growing up, and Merivale was the family attorney—taking orders, giving advice, knowing all the details.

Thus he had come to know the members of the family in all their variety, as the 1861 Preface showed:

> [S]o strangely various are the circumstances of colonial societies, and, it must be added, so powerful is that taste for piecemeal legislation, so instinctive that dislike to systems and uniformity, which have ever characterized the political mind of England, that of the fifty dependencies turned colonies, perhaps no two (unless the exception is to be found in a few old-fashioned West India islands) possess an identical constitution of the legislature.[56]

And yet if decades of intimate familiarity with the diverse legal positions and structures of each colony kept Merivale from the last measure of overgeneralization even in 1861, he nevertheless wanted to find some pattern. At the very least, he needed one if he was to give his reissued lectures a focus and a hook for the reader.

And he did find his pattern: the world-wide advance of democracy—now even more prevalent a theme than in the first edition of the lectures. Democracy in the larger

colonies could never be diluted by any oligarchic principle—by instituting some local House of Notables, for example—since although a democratic community may change in many ways, it will never become less democratic. 'Left alone, the usages of a colony necessarily shape themselves into a democracy.'[57] In colonies too small for a full British constitution, permanent officials can head the departments, but there could still be a responsible set of three or four local ministers-without-portfolio over them.[58] Thus, for all their diversity, the colonies did in Merivale's view have a common democratic fate and a common political future; or rather two common futures—one for the large colonies and a not very dissimilar future for the small ones.

Still, this Tocquevillean world-view only covered English-speaking colonists. The South American peoples, by contrast, did not have the character traits to make the democratic experiment or to profit from it—they did not have the British traits, the 'habit[s] of thought and feeling', as Merivale put it, that were essential for keeping a democracy going and keeping a people politically successful, as the example of the United States showed.[59] No more Tocquevillean a point could be imagined. But pointing to America's success in this way was a strange thing to do in 1861, at the beginning of the United States Civil War. The fact that Merivale made it anyway shows that he was not reacting to the current newspapers, but summing up what he had made of the masses of reports, regulations and laws that had come across his desk over the years.

For the English-speaking colonies that could profit from the democratic experiment, then the next step after the establishment of local self-government was

> the establishment of municipal institutions. It was long ago pointed out—and never so well as by De Tocqueville,—that the peculiar political advantage, which above all others enabled the founders of the American Union to establish and consolidate that commonwealth, was the antecedent existence of local self-government.[60]

Among the remaining British colonies, only Upper Canada had proper local government. Thus Merivale went on to examine the peculiarities of the different colonies that he says had prevented the establishment of town governments—or that, in the case of the sugar-and-slave islands, set back the progress of the local governments that did exist.[61] So was Tocqueville the most appropriate guide to conditions in the British colonies after all, if local government was rare or nonexistent in most of them? The problem did not bother Merivale. He went on to cite Tocqueville very frequently in the next few pages. If the Empire did not match Tocqueville's thoughts, then for Merivale the Empire must be changed.

Such a change would not be automatic. It would require thought and effort:

> 'Je pense', says the same profound thinker I have already cited, 'que dans le siècles démocratiques qui vont s'ouvrir, l'independance individuelle et les libertes locales seront toujours un produit de l'art. La centralisation sera la gouvernement naturelle.'[62]
>
> I think…that in the coming democratic centuries, individual freedom and local [government] prerogatives will always be the product of artifice. Centralization will be the natural [form of] government.

And who was the chief artificer of the laws and administrative policies of the British Empire for much of the 1840s and 1850s? None other than Herman Merivale. He had turned away from the doctrinaire *laissez-faire* position of his Irish lectures. If no real intervention could be made in the Irish economy, much more could be done in the political lives of the colonies. It was Merivale who would be the lawgiver, trying to erect the detailed protections for individual freedom and local government that Tocqueville had in mind. It was he at the centre who resisted centralization. And now, thanks to Tocqueville, he had a theory of British action in the world that was more convincing and more stirring than *laissez-faire*.

Merivale on non-whites

As the family attorney for the growing colonies, Merivale involved himself not only in issues of self-government but also in attempts to get land from native peoples. He was most involved in the more legalistic land-grabs on the part of the colonies. (The family lawyer was not usually consulted when the children planned outright crimes.) A key theatre was New Zealand. In 1857, the New Zealanders wanted to buy Maori land rights as quickly as possible, concentrating on tribal rather than individual land titles (a European distinction that Merivale endorsed). When pressed on whether Great Britain ought to loan money to the New Zealand government in order to deprive natives of a form of title recognized by the British government itself in the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, and only now becoming valuable, Merivale demurred:

> I do not quite understand it in that way myself. The impression upon my mind is that the colonists are moved, not by any wish to deprive the Natives of land which it is desirable that they should keep or enjoy, but by the feeling, that so long as the tribes, with large tribal rights as it were, stand between the settlements and their expansion inland, so long must there be opposition of interests and wishes between the natives and the whites; and that this state of things is mainly caused by this country having recognised this tribal right.[63]

In other words, the colonists had no wish to remove the natives from land ‘which it is desirable’ that they should have; which, quite wonderfully, did not happen to be land that the Europeans wanted. Merivale the bureaucrat, the lawyer, had made a wonderful distinction without even a hint of a difference. The upshot was that the non-whites should be made to go.[64]

Meanwhile, those non-whites whose land, however undesirable in itself, would make a good stop-over between the colonies of settlement might as well have their land annexed too. This Merivale decided in 1859 in the case of the Fijians, albeit after some legal hemming and hawing. His chief at the Colonial Office—and friend and frequent dinner guest—Bulwer-Lytton (also a founder of the Colonial Society, and rather more Romantic in temperament), was by contrast enthusiastic about annexing the islands.[65]

Merivale’s thinking also followed another path towards racism, one connected to West Indian policy. In order to win support for their cause, the abolitionists had argued that

slavery was the less efficient system—that free sugar would be cheaper than slave sugar. But in fact abolition in the 1830s had raised the price of sugar. Abolition had been a more noble and a more self-sacrificing act on the part of the British Empire than even the abolitionists had found it politic to admit.[66] The problem, as modern analysis has shown, was that slavery *was* a more efficient way to run plantations for the European market.[67]

How, then, could one construct a stable economic system upon the ruins of slavery? Many of the freedmen and women of the islands did live comfortably in their first decade of freedom. They produced a great deal of sugar for the British market—until the removal of tariffs on non-British (that is, slave-grown) sugar in 1846. Slave-grown sugar flooded into Britain, driving out the more expensive British West Indian sugar. The economy of the West Indies crashed. Hundreds of plantations were abandoned.[68]

Faced with the problem of finding a future for the former slaves, Merivale's first response was that the Empire would be better off without the West Indies at all.[69] The problem in the West Indies, in Merivale's view in the original *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies* (even before free trade and the collapse of the sugar plantations), was that the Caribbean had a permanent labour shortage that could not be filled by white emigration from Great Britain.[70] So the economic well-being of the West Indies could not be guaranteed. But what did he mean by saying that there was a *shortage* of labour in a region that had vast numbers of underemployed freedmen? This was his reasoning: The black people were refusing to work in the white economy in just the way the whites wanted them to. They were growing food for themselves instead of getting jobs on plantations. In Merivale's way of thinking, the islands fell into three broad groups: where there was open land to settle on, the freed slaves would leave the plantations in droves; where, as in Jamaica, open land did exist, but it was less plentiful and less desirable, fewer ex-slaves would go; and where there was no surplus land, as in Barbados, former slaves would stay put, sugar would be grown well, and everyone, including the former slaves, would have a higher standard of living.

And so he reduced the people of the West Indies to one-dimensional economic beings whose desire to live in one place or another was determined by a single dimension of economic motivation—the amount of open land on the island in question. While Merivale's knowledge of imperial legislation and the varying land laws of each colony—his London-based knowledge—was impressive, his knowledge of local social and cultural conditions in the Caribbean was less so. As Michel-Rolph Trouillot has shown in the case of Dominica, the broad distinctions between islands with different ratios between land and labour supply—for Trouillot, the predictions of 'the Merivale paradigm'—need modifying when one turns from the macroeconomic comparison of the different islands to microeconomic or cultural explorations of individual islands, or parts of islands.[71] Sometimes people have their own, noneconomic reason for leaving home, or for staying put—as Herman Merivale and his brother Charles had when they were young. In dealing with people the details of whose lives he had no sympathy for—people whose family structures, whose personal desires, and whose local politics he really did not know anything about—Merivale continued his development towards a more abstract, more comprehensive idea of the Empire. He was extending his vision of the Empire from the colonies of settlement to the colonies of domination.

By his 1861 emendations to the lectures, when he could look back on the better part of two decades in the Colonial Office, a black population was *ipso facto* a social problem.

Free blacks would not choose to work, a problem as much of character as of economics. Too often they would simply choose to live a comfortable life on nature's bounty. (Tocqueville had discounted this possibility.[72]) As a political economist and imperial administrator, Merivale was horrified by the thought of all that underemployment and lost trade, and of so many people choosing to act as something other than economic men and women. His belief that the poor would no longer work hard enough if their lot were improved was far from new, as Tocqueville had observed in another context:

> The notorious poverty of the country-folk gave rise to theories little calculated to allay it. If people are too well off, Richelieu wrote in his *Political Testament*, 'they are apt to become unmanageable'. Views as extreme as this were not current in the eighteenth century but it was still thought that without the necessity of eating his daily bread, the peasant would not do a stroke of work; that pauperism was the only cure for idleness. I have heard just the same ideas put forward as regards the Negroes in our colonies; indeed, this opinion is so frequent in the minds of rulers that most economists feel called upon to rebut it.[73]

Economists rebutted it, said Tocqueville, yet Merivale the economist did not—although he did credit the emancipated West Indians with creating an orderly society almost free from crime.[74]

In his original lectures, Merivale had maintained that the West Indians needed the competition from new immigrant labour to jolt them out of their indolence and into paid employment.[75] After two Select Committees reported on the subject, African labourers were recruited for the West Indies starting in the early 1840s (despite the distastefulness of seeming to replicate the transatlantic slave trade); Indian labourers were taken in the 1850s, after few Africans had proved willing to go.[76] This was also Merivale's policy in the Colonial Office, and as the years went by he was increasingly willing to have the new labourers indentured even before they landed.[77] His attempt to import new workers so as to drive down West Indian wages and make the people work harder was to be dismissed in Thomas Carlyle's infamous essay *The Nigger Question'*, if some black people were lazy, more would be even lazier, just more crowded together. The result would be a 'Black Ireland'. While Carlyle would not have baulked at the simple re-enslavement of the population who were already there, under some name other than that of slavery,[78] Merivale was not so crudely racist; but he too was imbued with the idea that people should not be allowed to turn away from imperial needs to produce only what pleased themselves. In an 1849 essay, Merivale (ever the cultured journalist) accused Goethe himself of the kind of 'selfishness', the insidious preference for private life over public duty, that Carlyle found in the West Indian labourers. Whether the West Indians had read either Goethe or Carlyle, or were as capable of fine feeling as Merivale was when he sat down to write for the great journals, Merivale did not think to ask.[79] In any case, he went on with his policy of driving down their wages. *Laissezfaire* was a memory. Merivale had become a social engineer, bringing coolies from one side of the world in order to manipulate the price of labour on the other side.

If West Indian labour costs declined far enough, in Merivale's view, then the products of the West Indies would be price-competitive with the products of slave economies—

thereby proving to the world the economic inferiority of slavery.[80] Perhaps, we might think, the lesson would have been more convincing if the emancipated West Indies had known long-term prosperity *without* the injection of coolies to drive down wages. So had abolition indeed made economic sense or was it a moral act of economic self-denial? In the original edition, Merivale had argued both sides. He could not admit that freedom cost money and was worth the price.

As the years went by, Merivale's policy of African and coolie immigration did not work out very well in practice, as petitions sent to London about the first free African labourers in the West Indies soon made clear.[81] Merivale's 1860 emendation to the original West Indian lecture was unrepentant, but not unfeeling:

> How far the great mass of the population are physically and morally better off than in the times of slavery is a question not easily answered…. There seem, however, to be signs of a slow, but steady, formation of a middle class of inhabitants, chiefly coloured, independent of manual labour, and occupied in various branches of commercial industry; and this is perhaps the most favourable feature in the general condition of these colonies.[82]

He had to admit that little good had come of the immigration policy, except on islands where there was a labour shortage and not a glut. At best, the coolies enlarged the market for the black traders to sell to.[83] Few emigrants came each year (in all, about 190,000 from 1834 to 1865, half of them from India, adding themselves to a population of at least 570,000 in 1830). Those who did come tended to work where they wanted to, rather than on the sugar plantations that wanted them; not until the 1850s were they indentured before they arrived.[84] By 1861 he could see that 'in everything but the compulsion and the cruelty, the immigration trade is but a repetition of the slave trade'.[85]

The labour importation policies of the 1840s and 1850s were a sort of multi-racial Wakefieldianism—the attempt to create a colonial working class (and with it the whole class structure) by keeping the workers in their places in the cash economy. They would be kept at work through (1) the prevention of homesteading and (2) the continual importation of new workers to keep wages down. As early as 1848, Merivale had noted that black labourers would go off to homesteads in the wilderness just as white labourers would, rather than staying in the towns as a working class.[86] But in the 1860 Appendix to his original slavery lecture, written long after coolie labour had plainly failed to expand the economies of the West Indies, Merivale had no new policy to suggest. In trying to frame a solution to the social problems of the West Indies, he refused to turn from economics to local administration, to the details of microeconomic bargaining—to West Indian *politics*. Politics did not suggest itself as a category pertaining to black people. One simply had to manipulate the economy paternally, technically, and at the general and imperial level, and hope the blacks would benefit—benefit from lowered wages and increasing proletarianization. Black people as black people, not as the citizens of one or another Caribbean society with its own unique set of social and cultural conditions, would not work cheaply enough unless they were forced to, any more than the Irish would. They were a general category. They were a problem.

And what of brown people, for whom the Empire had none of the special concern that it owed to former slaves?[87] North American Indians and Maori alike did not figure in the

kind of macroeconomic management that Merivale had in mind for West Indian blacks; they posed a more general problem for the advance of the Empire that Merivale had in mind.

In his Oxford lectures, Merivale had been all for keeping the natives under strong central imperial protection,[88] yet he asserted that in the long run 'amalgamation, by some means or the other, is the only possible Euthanasia of savage communities'. Whatever he meant by amalgamation or euthanasia—he referred to social mingling with whites, the interbreeding of white and brown, and the creation of a servant class—he was probably right that all this was better than extermination at the hands of frontiersmen.[89] But it was not better than trying to set things up so that Indians could live in peace, without 'amalgamation', without 'Euthanasia', without murder, on their own. And yet once in office, Merivale turned away even from this half-hearted idea of 'amalgamation'. By 1858, he denied that there was any measure of imperial responsibility for defending those Indians remaining aloof from white society. Rather than leaving Indians in the special care of Whitehall, he maintained, the imperial government should give the Canadian colonists much more responsibility for native affairs. Whitehall would look in from the distance and make sure the Indians were not betrayed—but it would not look in very often.[90]

Previously, British policymakers had assumed that the Canadians would be no more humane than the Americans were; in all details touching native affairs, the colonists had to submit to supervision from Whitehall. This supervision had been reasonably effective.[91] Now, under Merivale's strong influence, the (non-Hudson's Bay Company) Canadians were indeed given more responsibility for native affairs in 1860. Merivale simply wanted the natives off their lands. As David McNab has shown, he had written as much in 1843, early in his bureaucratic period.[92] In 1858 Merivale reiterated this view regarding the land claims of the mixed-race French and Indian people, the Métis, who had settled around Winnipeg.[93] These non-whites were in the way of the glorious English-speaking commonwealths of the future—in the way of something of the order of the 'Great Australian Republic' that he had once predicted.[94] That the Métis had already occupied that land as farmers and settlers did not matter; they were in the way.

In his Oxford lectures, Merivale had argued at length that natives were not dying off on their own because of some mysterious force but were dying because they were being killed or displaced: 'We are then not their predestined murderers, but called to assume the station of their preservers. If we neglect the call, we do so in defiance of the express and intelligible indications afforded us by Providence.' Yet he insisted that the natives were so few in number when compared to Anglo-Saxons that they would dissolve away in the competition with whites, unless they were specially protected by the whites—set up on farms, Christianized, civilized.[95] But as the years went by, such a policy would have conflicted with colonial self-government. Pursuing *that* grand object—under the control of legal artificers like himself—turned out to be a far more important project than saving the natives.

Merivale at the India Office

In 1860, the year before the revised edition of *Lectures on Colonization and the Colonies* came out, Merivale had left the Colonial Office. He was getting out at the right time. The task of administering that empire had changed. The colonies already had their own responsible governments—and the Colonial Office, under Merivale, had already worked out how to deal with the colonial governments in their new form. The self-governing empire into which Merivale had put all of his technical expertise no longer needed to be governed so minutely from London, and it no longer needed to keep Merivale on retainer there.

Herman Merivale, in 1860, became the second person to serve as permanent secretary of the India Office. It was founded two years before on the abolition of the East India Company and the Board of Control (the bodies which had long administered India—Merivale and the Colonial Office had had no role in them). It was quite a change for Merivale. Everything had turned around. Now it was he who was governing the country from which the West Indian coolies had come, not the places to which they were being sent (sometimes voluntarily and sometimes not).[96]

Other things had turned around, too. Merivale, who had long pondered controlling the former slaves of the West Indies through labour management, was now the highest-ranking permanent official governing a land where there weren't any former slaves. Instead, there were millions of *current* slaves. The British freed them on paper in 1861 (of course, Merivale had a hand in this), when slaveholding was made a criminal offence in India; yet the British authorities did not rescue the vast majority of slaves who were made hereditary debt-labourers after abolition. Their debt-bondage was put on secure footing by the Workmen's Breach of Contract Act (1859), under which labourers had to pay off their whole bond, and their parents' bond, and their parents' parents' bond, back however many generations, before they ever could be freed.[97] For the first time, Merivale was helping to administer slavery.

But Merivale's discomfort must have gone even further than that. In so many ways he was a fish out of water. Back in the Colonial Office, he had wanted to ignore North American Indians and the land rights of Maori in the name of European settlers, but there were few European settlers in India. He had wanted to use his technical knowledge to help foster the English-speaking governments of a Tocquevillean future—that is, a future predicated upon the social equality insisted upon by the *demos*. No such government seemed to lay in store for the Indians, with their caste system; nor did Merivale have the technical knowledge to help with one anyway. After the revolution of 1857–8, the technicalities that mattered were the myriad Hindu and Moslem land and labour practices that underlay the power of the Indian elites through whom the British had decided to rule.[98] Merivale may once have characterized Indian land rental systems in comparison to those in the rest of the world, but he did not know that much about the detail of Indian life.

He tried corresponding with the law member of the governor-general's council, Sir Henry Sumner Maine. He also took over all of the India Office's legal work himself, with general but not universal success in understanding it.[99] But the legal details were not

enough to satisfy Merivale or to make him feel connected to his new position, for which on various occasions he admitted feeling unqualified.[100] He had wanted to participate in the great general thrust forward of democracy, English-speaking civilization, and social equality (for whites), a huge but simple goal; now he was the superintendent of an ancient civilization marked by its inequality, its internal divisions and, in the British view (certainly in John Stuart Mill's), its anti-progressive stasis.[101] Even in relatively narrower questions, Merivale could sometimes find himself in a topsy-turvy world. He was a political economist, but he was faced with an Indian government that believed—as he would himself believe by 1870—that export duties fell entirely on India's foreign customers and not at all on Indian workers or producers.[102]

It was in his letters to officials in India that Merivale most fully revealed the tenor of his views about the country. He told the soon-to-retire governor of Bombay, Sir George Clerk (who had been Merivale's own predecessor, the first-ever permanent undersecretary of state for India), that anyone taking up that governorship

> will have his first difficulties with the new Legislative Council. My own notion on that subject, founded of course in general experience picked up in dealing with other communities and in general ignorance of India, and so far very defective: has been, throughout, this: that the local legislative council might be extremely useful in [some] ways: first, in aiding in mere local or municipal government: secondly, in furnishing something for people to talk and write about.[103]

Yes, Merivale was full of 'general experience' coupled with a 'general ignorance of India'. Against that background, what was Merivale for all his pretence of general knowledge of 'communities' outside India actually saying in this passage? He was saying that local and municipal institutions were good in themselves, and got people talking and thinking about their own affairs.

The councils in Bombay and elsewhere were being set up under a measure that Merivale had helped to frame, the Indian Councils Act of 1861. Indians would hear about the 'really important' central government only at a distance, so that its controversies would pale beside the more immediate local issues. In the national council, the viceroy's council, there were only to be between six and twelve members, at least half of whom were to be non-officials, and thus most likely Indians.[104] Under this plan 'therefore, publicity, and considerable freedom of question and debate, were to be discouraged in the central, encouraged in the local legislatures. Such I say were my own ideas…'[105] These ideas had been watered down by compromise, but their Tocquevillean aspect remains clear enough in Merivale's brief description: the focus on *municipal* institutions and on the education of the populace that comes from making those institutions work.

There was at the time more of an opportunity to try such experiments in political economy in India because, unusually, the British Indian authorities were popular in England just then—Indian securities were doing well. But Merivale wondered what would happen if the financial picture should change. Wouldn't military expenses on the border increase from time to time, something that he remembered happening in the Cape of Good Hope? And was not the way of getting rent from the Indian peasants, Merivale the connoisseur of rent schemes asked, doomed in the end?[106] By asking these questions,

Merivale showed just what the assumptions were that he was bringing to the subcontinent that he was to govern for the rest of his life—and never see. His assumptions came from his experience of the rest of the Empire and not of India. In the letter to Clerk, Merivale turned to the subject that was consuming most of his attention, which was not India: it was the imminent outbreak of war in the United States. The North was fighting not only against slavery, he thought, but against a disintegration of the Union into 'something resembling Spanish America'. South Africa, too, would federate in time. Federation was the way of the future.

Merivale's own self-confessed ignorance of the details of key Indian issues, set alongside his desire to ratify British annexations of Indian territory in the name of good government, meant that he let himself be guided more by what he called 'public expediency' than by law (he admitted this in 1863).[107] Expediency seemed to be his *only* guiding principle; Merivale had no other principle to hold onto because he was out of his depth. As he admitted to his friends, the more detailed questions of Indian affairs amused him in their randomness and sometime impenetrability.[108] But expediency did not really please him.

No doubt a good way to master his new brief was to publish something on it. After all, Merivale was still the prize student, still the London gentle-man looking for intellectual occupation. But all of his articles continued to be on non-Indian subjects, even though his journalistic output of one or two substantial (and anonymous) articles in the quarterlies each year while he was in the Colonial Office went up to three or four as soon as he went to the India Office.[109] But he did begin writing books about India—or rather he began finishing other people's. His books in this period were large biographies of Indian officials, biographies begun by authors who had died without completing them. Merivale finished a life of the Indian officer Sir Henry Lawrence, who had died in the Mutiny, and whose biographer himself had died in 1868.[110] In 1867 Merivale had finished someone else's posthumous work, a life of a more obstreperous Indian official, Sir Philip Francis. But what most excited him about Francis's life would have nothing to do with India; Merivale helped to confirm the by then half-century-old identification of Francis as the author of the letters of Junius.[111]

After he went to the India Office, Merivale also wrote a good measure of original work under his own name (on top of what he published anonymously in the quarterlies)—again, it had nothing to do with India. But some of it did say more about the development of his imperialism. This was the period when he reissued his *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies* with the new chapter appendices that we have already looked at. In addition he read a speech on the purpose of empire at the Statistical Society in October 1862. His point was unrelated to India and entirely old hat for him; namely, how Britain might be hurt by separating from colonies that, if independent, might not take so many of her emigrants—and they might not be able to go to the United States either. Even if the Union survived, years would pass before the United States could attract the 100,000 or so British emigrants that it had taken in before the war. The settlement colonies were 'a vital safety valve'. India had nothing to do with emigration, or with any other part of the permanent undersecretary of state for India's address.[112]

In 1865, Merivale broke more deeply with the usual anonymity of bureaucrats (as well as that of Victorian periodical writers) by publishing 13 articles in a signed book, *Historical Studies*.[113] Some of the essays were appearing for the first time. None of them

was about India. Included were essays about Pompeian art, the personality of St Paul, English and continental battlefields, and the geography and history of Cornwall. Most of these essays were based upon Merivale's visits to the different sites—he was a very busy permanent undersecretary of state. This was a man of catholic and urbane interests, a friend to literature, and a friend of another civil servant who wrote all of the time—Anthony Trollope. Trollope named one of his sons 'Henry Merivale', probably after Herman's brother John, but Herman Merivale himself and Anthony Trollope were also long-time friends.[114]

In accord with such a life, *Historical Studies* was so much a generalist's work that it had no theme; the only one that Merivale claimed for it pertained exclusively to the first section, 'On Some Precursors of the French Revolution'.[115] Tocqueville comes up only occasionally even in the pieces in this section, but Merivale's attempt to find the intellectual continuities between pre- and post-revolutionary Europe may well owe something to *L'ancien regime et la revolution française*, published only a few years before.

More revealing is the sixth and last piece in the book's French Revolution section, a curious essay called 'Benjamin Franklin and Joseph de Maistre: A Dialogue of the Dead'. The dead were playing tricks on Merivale, for the shade of Franklin is in fact none other than that of the more recently deceased Tocqueville. De Maistre wanted to put society back together after the French Revolution by somehow rebuilding a wide popular consensus on the legitimacy of civil authority and the Roman Catholic Church—a church that was not widely popular in Protestant England.[116] Merivale's Franklin, by contrast, is made to talk of the inevitable growth of democracy, and how happiness for the masses is better than the aristocratic happiness of the few—Tocqueville's conclusion in *Democracy in America*, and as we have seen Merivale's, too, in *Colonization and the Colonies.*

The context of the remarks of 'Franklin' is the *ancien regime* in France, but it could be far wider:' "The effect of this kind of society…appears to be the depressing multitudes below the savage state, in order that a few may be raised above it."'[117] But if not exactly that, then what was going on in large parts of the British Empire? What was the effect of Merivale's attempt to save the economy of the West Indies for the benefit of the planters and the British consumer—his policy of getting affordable sugar out of black people who had to be pauperized if they were to be kept working? What was the effect of the whole policy of Merivale's India Office, in the exaltation of the traditional landlords of India and the pauperization or even the dept-bondage enslavement of tens of millions of people—in conditions at least as bad as those of pre-Revolutionary France, as Merivale makes Franklin describe them?

Merivale maintained, although he seemed unconscious of the fact, one key distinction. There are people whose pauperization is worth writing about, and there are people whose pauperization passes far beneath any notice; and the difference between them is their skin colour. The interests of the Empire overrode their rights. Merivale—or his version of Franklin—believed that even if a people wants to be free, and

> [w]hen the desire for separation is notoriously deliberate, and no mere popular passion of the hour, the majority are then justified in resisting it in one case only; namely when the separation would diminish their own security, and thus interfere with their prosperity. No mere lust of empire,

> no mere exultation, however excusable in itself, in the grandeur and extent of a dominion, will authorise the shedding of blood for its maintenance…. I cannot imagine that there is any great difficulty in assigning respectively their real merits to the great movements of this description which have from time to time agitated portions of the civilised world.[118]

'Exultation' in empire, as the same passage makes clear, was excusable, Merivale thought. Rebellion was justified only for people who lived 'in portions of the civilised world', and only where the military interest of the imperial power was not at stake. The American Revolution was justified, the Secession of the Confederate States of America was not (it presaged the fragmentation and loss of independence and prosperity of the North); this was all the context that Merivale provided. The rebellion in India did not come up at all. Nor was there 'any great difficulty' in developing these general conclusions.

Merivale was set in his opinions—in his own 'exultation' of empire. Little could shake his faith in the general imperial policies that he had carried out as an official, nor could the American Civil War shake his faith in the guiding principle that America was the pattern for the future.[119] He kept his eye on the non-slaveholding, self-governing, overseas societies whose laws he had helped to frame, the societies whose administration had provided him with the bulk of his career. He took the generalities derived from these areas and applied them—without much confidence, and without much anguish—to native affairs and to the Indian Empire.

He was a cultured author, and yet there was something missing. He never allowed either his administrative work—his love of detail and his confidence in argument—or his more generalized ideas about the future of the British world to be called into question by any intellectual awareness of, say, ethnological theories on the methodology and possibility of making general statements about humanity out of the kind of evidence that crossed his desk at the Colonial Office. *That* was a level of culture, or merely a level of self-questioning, that we will have to turn to others to find.

4
Frederic Rogers and the 'transcendental expectation'

Sir Frederic Rogers, 2nd Bart., 1st Baron Blachford (1871), went from an Oxford fellowship to staff positions at the Colonial Office, including permanent secretary; he was Merivale's successor. And he was Merivale's superior when it came to understanding the effects of general imperial trends on individual human communities.

A Londoner born at Marylebone in 1811, Rogers was at Eton with Gladstone, to whom he would always be close, and Arthur Henry Hallam. At Oxford, he took a double first in classics and mathematics, and became a scholar of Oriel. As a Tractarian, he was a close friend of Hurrell Froude and especially of John Henry Newman. Even after Newman had given up teaching anyone else, as his conversion approached, he kept Rogers on. They spent their evenings together and consulted each other on most things. They did stop seeing each other after the conversion itself, but they maintained an extensive correspondence nonetheless. And they resumed visiting each other again in the 1860s, remaining close friends for the rest of their lives. The old cardinal, who survived his Anglican friend by about a month, wrote in his letter of condolence to Lady Blachford (Mrs Rogers) that her husband had been his closest friend in Oxford.[1]

Yet despite all the evenings with Newman in Oxford back in the Oxford days, another world beckoned to the young Rogers. He left Oxford for longer and longer periods to study law in London. He was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1837. After he returned to London permanently in 1842, he wrote leaders for *The Times* and he helped to found the *Guardian* (a church weekly). Only then did he begin his career in the bureaucracy, becoming a registrar of joint-stock companies through the good offices of Gladstone.[2] Next Rogers became a commissioner of lands and emigration. Here he began the series of colonial appointments that would lead to his service as permanent undersecretary of state for the colonies from 1860 to 1871.

In his contribution to an 1854 pamphlet for young men aspiring to a career in the bureaucracy, Rogers considered the education that future officials would need in the age of professionalization and voluminous paper-work. He recommended to young men the study of modern history in English, a discipline in which students could weigh sources and contradictions from the outset. Because of the paucity and, moreover, the difficulty of the classical texts, the traditional education in classics was, he thought, a less appropriate preparation for the ramifying paperwork of the nineteenth century, although the study of classical languages did instil a useful accuracy of mind.[3]

In this advice, the bureaucrat summed up the kind of life that he had led, the life of paperwork. He had to sort out the contradictory reports home from all sides in fierce little colonial controversies. And when he could he looked for the larger, the more *imperial* patterns among them, the kind of generalizing and theory-making that he wanted from young bureaucrats.

When Rogers entered government, he did indeed seem to be a specialist in reconciling different concepts or patterns of the Empire. For one thing, he took on more than one job. Rogers had been appointed assistant undersecretary at the Colonial Office and at the same time the third emigration commissioner, where he worked in a different building.[4] His duties made for quite a stretch. His position in the Colonial Office required him to face down the continual and self-righteous interventions of the Colonial Reformers—the followers of Wakefield—while his position as emigration commissioner required him to work with them on their assisted emigration schemes, and to oversee the corps of half-pay naval officers who inspected conditions in emigrant ships. Rogers's dual position, a government economy measure,[5] was disliked by James Stephen, Merivale's immediate predecessor as permanent undersecretary for the colonies.

The precocity and even the insecurity of Rogers's position in 1846 was a matter for gossip at the highest level in other government departments.[6] Rogers was a high-flyer, entering the civil service like one of today's lobbyists or consultants rather than starting out the way John Stuart Mill did, as a clerk. And at the same time that Rogers was holding his strange double position in Whitehall, he was working for the *Guardian*, which he had helped to found in January 1846; he had resigned his Oriel fellowship and had stopped working for *The Times* only the year before.[7]

Although Stephen behaved civilly towards Rogers, even telling him on his first day in the office (late in May 1846) that he looked on him as a possible successor,[8] Rogers was not making the best of impressions. Rogers never knew it, but Stephen's comment that Rogers might be his successor was made in spite and disgust; Stephen, an evangelical, did not like the young Tractarian. The colonial secretary, Gladstone, seems to have hired Rogers in the first instance because the two men shared an interest in something far removed from the duties or concerns of a possible successor for James Stephen—namely, the episcopacy. Indeed, Rogers's surviving correspondence with his friend Gladstone is mostly about the dear topic of colonial bishoprics, although occasionally they branched out to discuss Canadian clergy reserves—and on rare occasions secular English politics.[9] These years saw the high water mark of Rogers's involvement with the High Church missionary press.[10]

Stephen heartily disliked Gladstone, colonial secretary from December 1845 to July 1846, almost as much as he did Rogers. Stephen found them both—and Gladstone above all, strange as this may seem in light of Gladstone's later achievements—to be poor workers who were unqualified for their positions, and who were moreover thoroughly unpleasant, in some part because of their Wakefieldian sympathies.[11] In our search for the origins of the imperial ideas and assumptions of Frederic Rogers, we can say at least that the young Rogers was by no means the protégé of James Stephen, its long-time permanent undersecretary of state.

The government of which Gladstone was a part went out of office in June 1846. The new colonial secretary, Lord Grey, was underwhelmed by Rogers as Stephen described him. Grey wrote to Rogers to say as much. The letter reached Rogers while he was on a

steamer nearing Genoa a few days before Christmas in the same year—a location that did not say much for his industry. Grey told Rogers that he did not have 'that peculiar aptitude for dealing with large masses of business' that might be expected in a future undersecretary of state. (This was exactly that talent for paperwork and abstract thought that Rogers himself would one day commend to young clerks, and that he thought they could cultivate by studying modern English history.) Grey worried that Rogers had taken his current jobs on the understanding that he would succeed Stephen, so Grey had a counter-offer: £1,500 *per annum* to serve as secretary to the governor of Malta. 'The uncomfortable part of the matter is that I am afraid it is in the nature of an intimation from Lord Grey that he would be glad to get rid of me', Rogers wrote.[12] *Touché.* In any case, Rogers weighed up both sides of the question. More pay and less work in a better climate sounded good, but he would be too far away from 'higher preferment in England'. There was only one thing to do—consult Gladstone.[13]

Rogers did not go to Malta in 1846, and the silence of the records suggests that he took his official duties more seriously thereafter.[14] He found that he had a free hand, if he wanted to exercise it, in a vast area of policy. He later recalled that he and the two more experienced emigration commissioners were responsible

> (1) for checking all the abuses which went on in private passenger ships, particularly such as carried Irish emigrants—and fever with them—to America; (2) for conducting in our own ships a large but intermittent emigration to Australia; (3) for doing the same for the black emigration to the West Indies; [and] (4) for the examination (to the satisfaction of the Colonial Office) of the innumerable projects of emigration and land-take which were produced by the colonisation mania of the day.[15]

Here Rogers was tying together the continual need to push black people into the plantations of the Caribbean, where they kept dying off; the sudden need to promote Irish emigration to America, a small increase in which was recommended by a House of Lords inquiry into the Irish famine;[16] and the tail end of the Colonial Reform emigration schemes. Rogers was always good at summary and abstraction, but apart from any such talent on his part most of these movements of people across the globe might have run together in his mind during the course of daily business. Rogers was a central figure in arranging shipping to this or that part of an empire that he must have seen as a whole unit. He also sent people to the United States, which as far as emigration arrangements went seems to have been a functional part of the British Empire.[17] He dealt every day with the real details of Wakefieldian Colonial Reform, and with the question of how to attract and find real places for emigrants. He was far closer to the ground than most anyone else in a senior position in Whitehall.

Rogers was at last removed from London in 1857. His protector, Gladstone, had left Palmerston's cabinet over Crimean War policy in 1855.[18] Soon Rogers was sent packing. He was appointed assistant estates commissioner in the West Indies, far away from London. In the West Indies, Rogers's task was to sell some of the encumbered estates in that perennially depressed region, and to help show how an emancipated population bolstered by cheap labour from India or China could be as much of an economic success as the slaveholding American South.[19]

Rogers was allowed to come back to Europe in 1858, but not to England. He was sent to Paris to negotiate with Napoleon Ill's colonial minister, his cousin Prince Napoleon, again on the issue of cheap labour in the Caribbean. As the prince went on his honeymoon, Rogers cooled his heels in Paris for some weeks. The negotiations, when they finally began, concerned British moral objections to an increase in the importation of black labourers into the French colonies. Meanwhile, the Colonial Office, and the Colonial Lands and Emigration Commission itself, pushed for greater and better organized coolie emigration into the *British* West Indies.[20] The whole matter fed Rogers's natural scepticism, at least as he recalled it some years later:

> The English nation, while its own interests are not very visibly and gravely concerned, has a strong vein of philanthropy, but it is in regard to negro slavery that this feeling has taken so hold of the people, and is so powerfully organised as to become a political influence…. At any rate Lord Palmerston, then Premier, and Lord Clarendon, then at the Foreign Office, suggested to the French that, if they would give up their African emigration, they might be allowed to take coolies from India on the same terms *(mutatis mutandis)* as those on which they were taken to the English colonies. Neither the India Office, nor the Colonial Office, much liked this arrangement, because it appeared probable that, since we had not been more than able to protect the coolies in our own colonies, we would be less than able to protect them in those of France; and so the evil of quasi-slavery might exist, the responsibility of it merely being transferred from the Foreign Office (which was bound to protect the Africans) to us, or rather to the India Office, which was bound to protect the Indians.[21]

Whitehall, at least in the person of the sceptical Rogers, was trying to protect everybody, and decide the fate of the whole globe; but better Whitehall's ministrations than Palmerston's trade in so-called coolies. That in any case is what Rogers argued, having acquired during his involvement in all of this some further experience in transglobal administration.

By this point, Rogers clearly knew his colonial business. In 1860, with the coolie labour issue still fresh in his mind, and indeed less than one year after Palmerston had come back into office (bringing none other than William Ewart Gladstone with him as chancellor of the exchequer), Rogers was made the permanent secretary at the Colonial Office, whose minister was at that time the Duke of Newcastle. Rogers took over as chief bureaucrat in one of the more extensive, even planet-wide administrative machines in the 10,000 years of human history. What price did he have to pay? Mainly this: he ceased to be an emigration commissioner and had to move into the Colonial Office full-time, in the condemned and leaky Nos 13 and 14 Downing Street.

Rogers's experiences in the West Indies and in Paris deciding the fate of black and brown peoples may have broadened his idea of empire, but crucially these experiences had not turned him into a tropical imperialist of the later kind. In 1863, Rogers was quite wary of the kind of economic imperialism that European penetration of the tropics had made possible. What worried him seemed to be the Colonial Office budget. Regarding

the possibility of coal mining on the island of Labuan (a British base off the northern coast of Borneo), he wrote that

> we are of course desirous first that the Compy. *[sic]* should have at least fair play for working its mines there, (wh. of course if worked wd. be a convenience for commerce)—secondly that the experiment ought to be tried, really as well as nominally, at the risk & cost of the Compy. and in no degree at the risk or cost of the govt. My own Impression is that the Compy. will be obliged continually to ask fresh concessions from us.

Indeed, the company had 'been guilty of some sharp practice with regard to the Sultan of Borneo'. But the affairs of Borneo itself were of no interest to the Colonial Office, Rogers stressed, and Labuan was for its own sake hardly more interesting, although it at least was a part of the Empire.[22] He never did approve of imperial expansion in the tropics, and as W.D.McIntyre has shown, little of it was tried until his retirement in 1871.[23]

Rogers preferred the more familiar settlement colonies, but here he had a problem as permanent undersecretary. The settlement colonies now governed themselves, and since Indian administration was never the responsibility of the Colonial Office, Rogers had chiefly the minutiae of West Indian government plus the occasional crisis elsewhere to deal with. By contrast, Stephen had spent his career administering the settlement colonies *before* they achieved self-government. Herman Merivale, coming between Stephen and Rogers, had the engaging work of arranging all the self-government schemes himself, albeit with Rogers's help as legal adviser. Then in 1860 Merivale decamped to run the India Office. Rogers, with self-government in place in so many colonies, was the first permanent undersecretary of state for the colonies who had to *find* something to do.

His solution was to shower an unwelcome level of attention on the settlement empire anyway.[24] To some extent, the Colonial Office did have to make sure that the increasing volume of colonial legislation was in conformance with British constitutional law or empire-wide military policy.[25] And where settlers wanted protection from natives, as in the North Island of New Zealand, Rogers often had the opportunity of helping to determine the extent and direction of imperial involvement; usually he pushed for a more humane native policy on the part of the settlers themselves. That way, the colonists would not be constantly running back to tug on the military apron strings of Whitehall every time they provoked the natives to attack them.[26]

Yet in most self-governing colonies, most of the time, the job of the Colonial Office ought to have been nothing more than the routine vetting of colonial laws against imperial ones. Quite often Rogers chafed under these constraints. He tried with whatever success to monitor emigration, the conditions affecting it, and how the colonies ran their bureaucracies, their economies, and their societies.[27] When Florence Nightingale sent Rogers word of the New York Emigrant Hospital in 1865, commending to him what the New Yorkers were doing, he was able to tell her that the Office was 'stirring the hospital question (especially with regard to Lunatic asylums) throughout the colonies. Prisons will come next.'[28] Or so he might have wished. Missing the slight tone of irony in his description of this Herculean programme of reform, she took him at his word, sending him news of a colonial hospital that needed fixing up. He parried, responding that 'the

state of the Sydney Lunatic Hospital is a disgrace to a rich community—but with these Responsible Govts. nothing can be done from home, except to enquire and to try to shame them'.[29]

When Canadian confederation was mooted in the mid-1860s, Rogers was at last able to involve himself more deeply in the affairs of a settlement colony. But otherwise he had plenty of time to reorganize the deck chairs. When he took over the Colonial Office, he divided the duties geographically, himself taking Australasia, the West Indies, and colonies in the East (such as Labuan), along with all the legal work, and giving Africa, the Mediterranean and North America to T.F.Elliot, who also got the convict and military briefs (Elliot had been the senior emigration commissioner when Rogers first received Colonial Office employment).[30]

In December 1868, several months after joining the Colonial Society, Rogers once more reorganized the higher job descriptions in the Colonial Office. Now he abandoned geography entirely, giving himself 'all the top, and others all the bottom (this is a rude way of saying it) instead of dividing the world between us'.[31] What he kept, therefore, were the questions involving the whole empire taken as a single general category. That meant constitutional questions plus the occasional local crisis—and constitutional questions would arise chiefly in places that were governing themselves. After his retirement in 1871, Rogers was able to range even further. He slipped immediately into the role of elder statesman. The ever-helpful Gladstone, now prime minister, had him ennobled—making Rogers the first permanent secretary from any department to enter the Lords without going into politics first.

If Rogers's changing administrative duties in his last years in the Colonial Office showed an ever broader and more theoretical conception of the Empire on his part, this broadening conception was also clear from his occasional statements of policy. He moved away from the views that he held when he was Colonial Office legal adviser in the early 1850s. In that period, Rogers wanted a form of self-government that would limit democracy. He tried to frame colonial institutions in which the democratic principle would be counterbalanced with some kind of executive council or an American-style senate. By the late 1850s he had changed his mind. He still wanted to limit democracy. Australian events, however, had made him sceptical about whether any such limitation would be accepted by the colonists themselves.[32]

By 1855, he had decided that social divisions within the Australian colonies were too narrow to support any elitist counterbalance to democracy, even in the form of oversight from Whitehall:

> Till lately I have been at work on…the largest question I have had yet, being little less than a Legislative Declaration of Independence on the part of the Australian colonies. The successive Secretaries of State have been bidding for popularity with them by offering to let them have their own way. And in professed pursuance of these offers they (New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia) have sent home laws which may be shortly described as placing the administration of the colony in a Ministry dependent on the representative assembly, and abolishing the Queen's right of disallowing Colonial Acts. What remains to complete colonial independence except command of the land and sea forces I don't quite

> see. I shall be interested to see what comes of it. It is a great pity that, give as much as you will, you can't please the colonists with anything short of complete independence, so that it is not easy to see how you are to accomplish what we are, I suppose, all looking to—the eventual parting company on good terms.[33]

The more Rogers worked on the laws that the colonies sent back to White hall, the more he came to regard colonial independence as inevitable. But as yet he was not happy about it; thus his belittling tone.

By the 1860s, when the Confederation of Canada came suddenly in view, Rogers had come to think of the democratic tendency in even more general, more theoretical, and more world-historical terms, often predicated upon the American experience—for evidence that Tocqueville was right about the spread of American-style social equality and democracy came before the Colonial Office every day. Sometimes Rogers could even seem enthusiastic about the spread of colonial self-government, of equality, and of democracy as general phenomena. He wrote to Carnarvon, his chief, that England was too 'republican' to long remain the centre of an empire, and the settlement colonies would inevitably have their independence in any case.[34]

In the 1880s, Rogers looked back on this period:

> Lord Grey was possessed with the idea that it was practicable to give representative institutions, and then to stop without giving responsible government—something like the English Constitution under Elizabeth and the Stuarts. He did not understand either the vigorous independence of an Anglo-Saxon community or the weakness of an executive which represents a democracy. So events took their own course, and left his theories behind.[35]

England had already gone through the same democratic developments, Rogers came to believe, although the process had taken centuries. Grey ought to have seen that it was happening more quickly in the colonies. (Grey was the colonial secretary who seems to have been most interested in Tocqueville's thought; in 1858 he published something on that subject.[36])

Perhaps the hindsight of Rogers was clearer than his vision had been some 20 years before. In the 1880s, he went on to claim that he had *always* believed in furthering self-government, and that he had always worked towards amicable declarations of independence on the part of the colonies.[37] But as he put the matter in 1865, allowing Canada 'to be taken from us in fear of consequences to ourselves in the way of war and taxation, would be one of those ungenerous chicken-hearted proceedings which somehow or other bring their own punishments in the long run, indicate the declining spirit of a nation'.[38] And yet Canada would go its own way:

> Nothing can be more provoking than to be obliged (if we are obliged) to fight the United States in the place and manner which are most disadvantageous to ourselves, for a colony which is no good to us and has no real care for us. Yet somehow I would not wish England to refrain

> from doing so; for England would not be great, courageous, successful England if she did.

If he was not quite 'chicken-hearted', he was not quite hearty, either.

As these words make clear, Rogers did indeed think about 'the spirit of a nation' and the greatness of 'courageous, successful' England. And yet his imperial pride was tempered by thoughts about how an imperial (or national) character required perhaps centuries of development; meanwhile there was the inevitable approach of democracy in the settlement colonies before they had time to mature. It also occurred to him that democracy was on the rise in Europe—first of all in Great Britain itself, which had had more time to prepare itself.

These very Tocquevillean ideas were unusual in the Colonial Office.[39]

He had also developed other interesting generalizations by his later years. He thought the movement to federate the Empire in the 1870s was unwise because a world-wide alliance of English-speaking countries would behave immorally.[40] By 1885 the continued prominence of the idea of imperial federation prompted him to write that

> The notion of a great Anglo-Saxon alliance, not formed with a specific object, as to arrest the superiority of some overgrown power or immoral principle…seems to me likely…if it should last long enough, to degenerate into a successful or unsuccessful contrivance for bullying the rest of the world. To contend for such an alliance on the grounds that Anglo-Saxons—the great exterminators of aborigines in the temperate zones—would, when confederated, set a new and exceptional example of justice and humanity, seems to me a somewhat transcendental expectation.[41]

An avalanche of information about self-governing colonies, the democratic-minded settlers living in them, and the natives who were living there too, had crossed the desk of Frederic Rogers over the years. He had found the grand trends within all that information—namely, the spread of the Empire and of democracy—without losing sight of the specifics, the individuals victimized along the way. Seeing the grand trends without losing sight of the specifics was exactly the skill that he looked for in prospective employees. He consciously and deliberately thought about the need to summarize and generalize. He did not go into the process blindly, and he did not lose himself—or his sense of the real individuals involved—in the course of carrying it out.

5
Letters from Australia, Part I

The citizens

> I do not think that the history of the world presents an instance of a more disgraceful forgetfulness of the distinctions between right and wrong, than is supplied by your cavalier annual distribution of the proceeds of the sale of your town allotments, your water frontages, and desirable agricultural sections, without the bestowal of one thought upon the original possessors of all this valuable property. It is quite probable that it may be our lot to be an instrument in the hand of Providence for the extermination of this race; but we ought to take care that this sorrowful, even while necessary, act shall be performed with due solemnity, and with a compassionate consideration for the poor creature doomed to so pitiable a fate.
>
> Edward Wilson, *Rambles at the Antipodes*, 1859[1]

Edward Wilson, the proprietor of the pro-democratic Melbourne *Argus*, knew exactly what was going on in the mistreatment of the Aborigine and in the process of self-deception on the part of the whites. But then he turned his attention away from the people of Australia and towards the birds. He founded the Victoria branch of the Acclimatisation Society, one of its more active extra-European branches. He introduced the sparrow to Australia, and he introduced many other birds besides. Then he moved to the right politically, sold the paper, and moved to England, where the sparrows needed no intervention.[2]

By contrast, one of the more frequent contributors to Wilson's *Argus*, William Westgarth, kept his mind on the human rather than the ornithological expansion of England.

Indeed, there was more than one way to generalize—to achieve, as Wilson had put it, 'the forgetfulness of the distinctions'. People who lived in Australia—including Westgarth and some others whom we will look at in this chapter—often tried to make sense of the Australia colonies intellectually, to generalize about them, and to fit the

Australian experience into an English universe. In doing so, they began thinking about the Empire as a whole.

William Westgarth and continual revision

And that is what William Westgarth did in his many pamphlets and books. Westgarth, the son of the surveyor-general of customs for Scotland, was a young trader from Edinburgh, educated in that city and at Newcastle, but never at university. He went to Australia in 1840, when he was 25, having been sent out by the Leith shipping company for which he had been working for several years.

He was to become involved in every major political and economic question in Melbourne, from the improvement of the port and the foundation of the gas company in the 1840s to questions of emigration and bimetallism in the 1870s. He even chaired the inquiry into the 1854 miners' insurrection at Eureka, a key event in Australian history. He championed the popular cause of resisting convict transportation (transportation was abolished in New South Wales in 1853 and in Van Diemen's Land in 1854, although it continued longer in Western Australia).[3] In the legislature he opposed the conservative and antidemocratic interests.[4] He was even in favour of an elected governor.

To the conservative opposition he argued that no one needed to be afraid of extending democracy in Australia, for Australian democracy would not lead to anarchy. The standard of living in the colony was so high that almost everyone had a stake in social peace; and to *keep* the standard of living that high West-garth helped to institute the tariff.[5] Amidst his many writing projects and after some initial setbacks, Westgarth also became a prosperous trader with his own firm. He was a founder of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce.

Westgarth settled back in England in 1857. After a few years he had become a stockbroker concerned in loans to Australian governments and firms. He then founded the London Chamber of Commerce in 1881.[6]

Westgarth's earliest works were full of numbers and tables. He has been described as early Victoria's 'one man statistics bureau'.[7] But he delighted in facts as well as figures. In one early piece, he classified the animal life—and he could not resist mentioning the rumours of alligator bones. A settler named Daniel Mackinnon had questioned the Aborigines about them.[8] Were there alligators in Australia as in the Old World?

Beyond the animals, Westgarth also tried to fit the people who were originally in Australia into Old World categories. Were the Aborigines people just like Europeans? The old question from the days of de las Casas in the first New World—did the non-whites belong in the category of humanity?—came up again in this newest new world in the Pacific.

In his early writings, Westgarth was not yet confident enough in his categorizations to say where the Australians fitted in relation to everyone else, but only what must become of them:

> These rude but interesting races are now being gradually dislodged from their original locations, by the progressive advance of European and American colonization. They either become utterly extinct by death, or are

> intermixed with and disappear among other tribes; the character and language of the race being utterly lost.[9]

All that was clear was that the Aborigines were part of a world-wide category of the doomed. 'Men of science' throughout the colonial world, West-garth wrote, were turning their attention to native affairs while there was still time.[10] They were writing down 'some accurate description and statistics of the less civilised portion of mankind'. The colonies were one large field of exploration, at least in anthropology.

Soon Westgarth was ready to devote a whole pamphlet to the Aborigines, who had rated merely a section here and there in his earlier works. In *A Report on the Condition, Capabilities, and Prospects, of the Australian Aborigines* in 1846, he argued that except for those few people living in missions, the Aborigines ought to be left to themselves. The Aborigines seemed to be dying out no matter what.[11] Continuing to spend money on them did not seem necessary; much less was there any reason to quibble with how much of the money went to the commissioners and how much to the Aborigines, as some people had begun to do.[12]

After yet another pamphlet of tables and facts about Australia in general,[13] Westgarth was ready to make his debut as the author of a thick book—to move from statistics and facts to theory. The title of this 1848 book shows something of the world-system building that Westgarth would later indulge in. The title was, in full, *Australia Felix; or, a historical and descriptive account of the settlement of Port Phillip, New South Wales, including full particulars of the manners and conditions of the aboriginal natives, with observations on emigration, on the system of transportation, and on colonial policy.*[14]

His major work, this book deserves some close attention. It spares no details. Westgarth ranged from technical matters such as the drying up of Australia's interior lakes—which he thinks was due to European disturbance of the ground cover, both from farming and from wagon-ruts[15]—to more fetching passages, showing the charm of his corner of the Empire, and the feel of the warm wind blowing across your skin as you live the outdoor life:

> [T]he dryness and genial warmth of the air afford an almost uninterrupted daily access to the open country; and there appears in the general buoyancy of the population a degree of enjoyment of existence far beyond what is usually exhibited in the duller climes of the Fatherland.
>
> In a region so favourable to health, most of the complaints with which the colonists are affected may be attributed to their continuance in habits which are suited only to the colder temperatures of Britain, or which at least are there less injurious in their effects than in the warmer atmosphere of Australia. The copious use of strong drink and the excess of animal food of the richest description bring on various individual diseases, dyspepsia, premature decay of the teeth, and affections *[sic]* of the brain.[16]

In *Australia Felix*, Westgarth began to look with a more theoretical bent at the Aborigines, three years after (as we saw) he first wrote about them. Now he began to put them into the universal story of mankind. He started by assuming a universal human adaptability. The peoples of the world became adapted to their geographical

environments, he asserted. Yet if the climate of south-eastern Australia was so healthful and European, he asked, why were the Aborigines who had been living in it so unhealthy and *non*-European? And non-European they were. Their language (one language, he thought, though it varied from place to place) made them 'labour in the expression of the least complication of ideas'. His evidence was a small table that he made up to show that Australian word-order was different from English. That was indeed his only criterion for labelling the Australian languages 'belaboured'. He does not seem to have been a scholar of German, Latin, Greek, or what have you, all with their own ideas of word-order or lack thereof; or perhaps he thought these languages belaboured, too.

Westgarth went on to say that the Aborigines had a small but caseinflected vocabulary, obviously so different from and inferior to English.[17] (Did he even recall Latin, *the* language of few words and many declensions?) For Westgarth, then, 'primitive' meant 'different than at home'.

The Aborigines were physically different, too, despite the similarity of their environment to the nicer parts of Europe. Like Central African women, he said, aboriginal women lived so close to nature that they experienced little pain in childbirth, and went back to work a few hours later.[18] This closeness to nature gave the Aborigines their extraordinary senses. But it also brought infanticide: 'Undoubtedly the origin of a practice which appears to be so generally and somewhat systematically pursued, is to be traced to the precarious circumstances of aboriginal existence, and the wandering habits of this wretched population.'[19]

While Westgarth would have liked to believe that cannibalism was a transitory and unusual thing, new evidence forced him to admit that the Australian Aborigines practised it regularly.[20] Yet even cannibals had what might be described as religious, social and political institutions, as West-garth went some distance to argue. These institutions were rudimentary, and they did not mean what they did in civilized nations, but 'under a general system of nomenclature' such elements could be identified in Australia as well as in England.[21] So he thought that general comparisons between Englishmen and Aborigines were possible.

Seen in the context of the whole of the English-speaking world, he argued, there were general and global imperial processes going on in Australia both for good and ill. No one person was responsible for the general viciousness that he admitted was directed against the Aborigines:

> The history of British occupation forms in this as in other instances a darkly shaded picture. It is the usual rapacity of power over weakness, and the unfailing result of the presence of civilized men among rude and simple barbarians…. We can only urge, by way of justification for our unceremonious intrusion, that a vast territory like Australia, hitherto appropriated to a handful of the rudest savages, is now being transformed into a scene of tremendous industry, the future seat for millions of our fellow-countrymen, and the dawn of a great and interesting empire.[22]

There was no hope for the Aborigines. They could not be tamed, and the whites might as well take over the land. Those Aborigines who had been educated fell back into their earlier mental habits and laziness—for proximity to whites soon stripped away all else

from the natives, such as their 'aboriginal ferocity and distrust'.[23] Missionary efforts, too, were 'completely without benefit'.[24] Westgarth recognized that '[t]he greatest atrocities of the blacks are in general far less heinous than the deliberate cruelty of the whites'.[25] But there was no redress. The Aborigines had been made British subjects and had been given a legal equality that they did not understand and could not make use of—although he admitted that this equality was fatally compromised by an official ban on their giving evidence in court.[26]

Why were the British superior, the Aborigines so immutably inferior?

> Pliability of mind, and a ready adaption of habits to suit and take advantage of varying circumstances of outward condition, conspicuously distinguish the civilized from the savage man. A crowded and varied scene of society, brought about by the fertility of the soil or by accidents of migration and intercourse, may have induced these qualities.

The key requirement for social progress is not individual freedom, as Mill would have it, but geography:

> The Australian, however, has been suited to the circumstances in which he happens to be placed. His country is limited in variety of adaptations; in geographical position he is removed from the great stream of intercourse that flows among the more advanced populations of the islands and countries to the northward; the scope of his mind is proportionally narrowed; and the according faculties, stamped throughout successive generations, cannot be immediately changed by his introduction to a new scene.[27]

The Aborigines could not change fast enough: 'The Australian native refuses to proceed.'[28] The British, for their part, would not sink into barbarism even though they would be living in the same geographical area responsible for Aboriginal savagery. Their cultural geography would be different than the one shaping the Australians—and not least, Westgarth must have assumed, because the new Australians would maintain the cultural and economic ties to the larger empire. The English-speaking peoples were encountering and supplanting such peoples around the world, as Westgarth underlined by discussing James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans* (or, for Westgarth, the Mohegans). The perspective of the larger Europeanized world is shot through Westgarth's analysis, and its complexity and size undergird the status of its inhabitants as civilized men and women.

And on that subject—self-governing English-speakers—Westgarth, associate of the Melbourne *Argus* and leading citizen, had a great deal to say. We need to turn from Westgarth's views on Aborigines to his views on colonial self-government.

In the first place, Westgarth resented the Wakefieldian land policy, under which the poorer people were concentrated in towns through government action to inflate the price of rural land. Westgarth held that Wakefield's theories of self-supporting, densely concentrated immigration were not suited to a place with so much wonderful land to spread through as 'Australia Felix' had.[29] And yet despite the Wakefieldian system, the

colony was flourishing, and not just economically. Free people from all regions of the UK and from many other places were meeting together in Australia, so 'the social intercourse will perhaps be found, by the newly arrived emigrant, of a much more expansive and intellectual character than is to be met with in any town of the same extent in the mother country'. Another result was 'almost perfect religious toleration'.[30] But the most conspicuous feature of Australian society was the loyalty to Britain, and the interest in British news.[31]

Both the mother country and its Australian colonies were only parts of a larger entity: 'A vast colonial empire is gradually rising up in Britain's name in almost every habitable corner of the earth', he announced.[32] Not all of the Various offshoots' were colonies of settlement. There were great opportunities for imperial growth in the tropics:

> It seems a noble experiment, not strange in our colonial annals, and one that may yet come into extensive operation, and be deemed not unworthy of the highest ranks of our society, for persons of enterprise and substance to engage in expeditions equipped with all the requisites suitable for a small colony, to be found on favourable locations in the vast world of the Eastern Indies or Polynesia. Here is a new scene of undeveloped resources…. A system of forbearance towards the aboriginal natives would, in the great majority of cases, lead to their profitable occupation in collecting the natural produce of the country towards the formation of an export. The results of a colonizing experiment on this principle would shed a new and more cheering light over the hitherto dark picture of British colonization.[33]

Rajah Brooke was doing a great job along these lines, Westgarth thought.

And here in 1848 Westgarth had reached as generalizing and as world-wide an imperialism as one could wish. He went on to stress with pride that five million settlers lived in the 45 British colonies (along with millions of natives), and to point out all their wonderful commerce with the home country. Administrative changes were possible; the colonies might be asked to contribute to imperial defence, for example, rather than being so great a cost to the British taxpayer.[34] But considerations like this should not obscure the glory of the Empire when viewed together, in one grand sweep:

> Searching after their own interests, the colonists at the same time spread abroad the language and the race, and the civilisation of their country. This is the glory of a nation, an ambition on the part of Britain to which she has willingly sacrificed her treasures and the lives of her people. Her colonies are now scattered across the surface of the globe. When established and in full career, they exist as separate communities, but connected with the parent state by the mutual advantages of language, manners, and institutions, and superintended by a direct emanation from the parent government.[35]

The colonies did not need to be represented in the Imperial Legislature, or be subject to every kind of British domestic taxation; the colonies needed instead their own self-

government within imperial bonds, according to 'progress of commerce and civilisation'.[36]

There Westgarth's great book ended—the first time he wrote it. In the next few decades, Westgarth went back and forth to England a number of times, passing and re-passing much of the world. He used the journey not so much to rewrite *Australia Felix* as to write it afresh, big book after big book, all covering the same themes of Australian development and the grand imperial future.

Because he had explained his views so fully in *Australia Felix,* we need only to review some of the more interesting changes that he rang upon them in his later works. The first, a large tome called *Australia; late Australia Felix*…, came out in 1853. In the same year he also produced a 96-page pamphlet for the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce.[37]

Westgarth did not leave a great deal of time to develop his thinking between the books. In *Australia; late Australia Felix,* he moved beyond the original *Australia Felix* of five years before mainly in pointing out that the British Empire covered a wide variety of colonies and possessions, some merely military outposts; and that legislating for so various an empire was nothing like so good as letting the more mature communities within it legislate for themselves.[38] Self-government would come because '"[t]here is an essentially democratic spirit which actuates the large mass of the community"'—here Westgarth was quoting one of Governor Denison's minutes home from Van Diemen's Land back in 1848.[39] But Westgarth maintained that '[i]mperial liberality will not have the effect of diminishing the attachment of colonists to the land of their origin, or of reducing in their estimation the attractive status of British citizenship, or the dignity and greatness of their common country'.[40]

Step by step, a bit in this tome and a bit in that, Westgarth's themes and the geographical range and world-historical significance of the empire that he had in mind kept broadening. In an 1853 pamphlet, he began making North American comparisons,[41] and he entitled an 1857 work *Victoria and the Australian Gold mines in 1857; with some note of the overland route from Australia, vîa Suez,* which calls to mind vast swathes of the world between the homeland and the English-speaking Antipodes.[42] Westgarth was indeed laying intellectual claim to all that territory. He liked touring Buddhist cultural sites of Ceylon, he reported, and he thought that he could fit them into a world-wide pattern: 'it was not difficult to see, with our Mexican, Egyptian, and Assyrian experience, that the [Ceylonese] pictures represented histories'.[43] Well, perhaps. Meanwhile, Africans fit into the overall picture at a lower level, along with people he might have known better: 'The two great territories of Africa and Australia,' he wrote, 'while they furnish us with the lowest specimens of humanity, are both equally remarkable for the solid unindented form of their coast line.'

Society, not geography, would keep the whites civilized where geography had kept the blacks from accepting civilization:

> Future generations will have the opportunity that is denied to us, of comparing the effects of these peculiar countries, after an adequate interval, upon their new Anglo-Saxon occupants. They make their start with advantages which their predecessors never enjoyed, and with that establishment of constitution that may resist the sinister proportion of surrounding influences.[44]

So the whites would most likely remain civilized because they had a social constitution, a connection to the rest of the English-speaking world, that would keep them from isolation and decay.[45] The democratized society of Australia was 'the general goal, whether near or far off, of our British people…in this railway age of progress'.[46]

But there was a danger that white civilization would be eroded by the presence of Chinese workers. If there were too many Chinese, Australia would not be a free society but at best a well-policed despotism.[47] Such an Australia was to be avoided. For that reason, Chinese immigrants should not be encouraged or imported: 'I regard our Chinese visitation as threatening our moral and intellectual greatness, and the darkest spot that has yet come upon the colonial horizon.'[48] He had seen the Chinese before:

> Swarming like ants, they soon made the place 'too hot' for the antagonistic white race, who, if not defeated by the disappearance of the water which the numerous Chinamen rapidly absorb in their washing opera-tions, assert that they are routed by the smells and spectacle they would rather leave at a distance.[49]

Furthermore,

> [s]omewhat of an American difficulty looms upon our future; for although a Chinaman has more intelligence than a Negro, his people are perhaps more obstinately anti-European. Like an indigestible in the system of the colony, they will turn up to-morrow, and an age hence, just as they appear to-day.[50]

The extraordinary thing about this is simply that the Chinese are at such a point of stasis that they will neither degenerate nor improve in the Australian climate; they will always be there.[51]

A permanent racial underclass was possible in many parts of the Empire. In Aden and Northern Australia, he wrote, racially divided but prosperous societies were inevitable and would be permanent. The whites would not work outdoors in such a climate; nor perhaps would they stay in the area permanently, bringing up their children there; Westgarth does intimate that the whites in such places would stay white.[52] It would seem that blacks were doomed to decline, the 'indigestible' Chinese were static, and white people were mutable. Whites might suffer degradation, but most likely they would maintain their character because of their level of social interaction with the larger world.

The grand finale of the book was set atop one of the Great Pyramids—just one of the regular sights on what was now for him the routine voyage between England and Australia. The first time Westgarth had passed by the pyramids, four years before, he was not very impressed. Now he actually got next to them and climbed one, a democratic man scaling the monument to a king:

> The civilisation of ancient Egypt, as deduced from its gigantic monuments, must be regarded in a very qualified light. It represents a vast command of human labour, the long familiar use or abuse of which has given at once the massive scale and the admired simplicity of design. The

> combination is totally opposed to the utilitarian tendencies of these modern times, and to that democratic spirit which induces the people to appropriate to themselves a very sensible share of those comforts which their industry formally heaped exclusively upon their kings and nobility.[53]

The Tocquevillean element in Westgarth's next volume was stronger still, but the book in question, *Australia: Its Rise, Progress, and Present Condition* (1861),[54] was not entirely Westgarth's. He put it together out of the articles 'Australia' and 'Australasia' in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, articles of which he had written only certain parts. Still, the final product features frequent discussions of the democratic character of society, of the need for an upper house to moderate but not contain democracy in Victoria, and of the connection in that colony and elsewhere between democracy and social equality—Tocqueville's key theme.[55] Westgarth thought that the Chinese problem had worsened since his 1857 book, with the Chinese themselves being attacked by rioters in the self-governing parts of Australia.[56] But the main blot on Australia's democratic future was not the Chinese in Victoria and the other self-governing Australian colonies, but the whole racial situation in the tropical two-fifths of the continent, where non-whites (whether Chinese or otherwise) had to supply the labour. This slave-like system would contaminate Australia. The Australian tropics ought to be left out of a future 'United States of Australia' and attached instead to a tropical colony ruled directly by the Crown.[57] Slavery and countries called 'The United States' were much in the news in 1861.

In the first pages of the next version of the book, published in 1864—and the last version that we will have to look at—Westgarth boasted that 'he had now four times over written the history of Victoria' without once looking at one of his older versions while writing his newer.[58] There is still no mention of Tocqueville by name, but the analysis of the democratic tendency in Australia and the United States is now highly Tocquevillean. West-garth grounds the end of this book on assertions by Lord Grey, who named Tocqueville and quoted him extensively.[59] And Westgarth tries a long and complicated Tocquevillean analysis of the effects of democracy upon language. Now that Australia was self-governing, he wrote, its language would become more American; that is, more appropriate to a country of commoners and materialists.[60] This is all to take place in a wonderful empire of *[a]bout fifty different societies and governments, scattered over every habitable latitude of the world, each of them contributing its part to the vast commerce of the empire, and many of them governing themselves by codes of laws'.[61]

So by 1868, where had Westgarth's thinking brought him? The amazing scale and detail of life on earth as it revealed itself to the Victorians called for some equally grand explanation—whether one focused on Galapagos finches or on the colonies of settlement. By 1848, Westgarth had developed a vision of the Empire encompassing both the social development of the settlement colonies and the economic development of the many different tropical areas (including northern Australia) where, he believed, whites would extract work from non-whites.

He also came to support more political unity within the Empire. As late as 1852, he had resisted even the discussion of federation *within* Australia, for it would negate self-government. Yet by the 1880s, Westgarth would support Imperial Federation, designed to bind together the Empire with formal institutions, such as an imperial cabinet.[62] The scale

of the Empire that he cared about had grown. After sailing back and forth across it, he had moved to London. Perhaps the Empire looked different from there.

And yet he missed his former life. From his office in the London Chamber of Commerce and in a number of essays, Westgarth pushed in the 1880s to rebuild Central London using unearned increment financing. His idea was to remake the capital so that the poor had a healthier and more open environment, reminiscent of the wide open spaces and fresh air that he had celebrated in the Antipodes. Westgarth died in London in 1889 during a severe case of pleurisy; he fell out of an attic window in a mad search for fresh air.

Some littler Westgarths

Westgarth himself did not exercise much intellectual influence, although one future founder of the Colonial Society referred his relatives in England to a Westgarth volume for the maps it contained.[63] The similarities between Westgarth's thinking and the thinking of other Australians did not come about because he influenced them, but because they responded as he did to the situation around them. They travelled back and forth to Great Britain, developing the larger view. They made an attempt to graft Australia into a narrative of English and world history, and to envision a future of colonial democratic equality immune from mob rule. And in writing and publishing books, they convinced themselves that they were the vanguard of the new society that they heralded; they were so far above being members of the mob that they could turn around and analyse it in a Tocquevillean way.

And so Westgarth's books were rewritten, their authorship re-enacted, by men such as Alphabetical Foster, as his fellow Australians called him. John Leslie Fitzgerald Vesey Foster-Vesey-Fitzgerald, to give him his full name, born in 1818, moved to Australia as a young man. At first his life was less grand, his behaviour less well composed than his name. He lived for a time as a squatter. Once, after a business dispute, he horsewhipped a man *and his steed;* one fancies that at least the horse was used to that kind of treatment. Some years later Foster went home to Ireland. As his entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* points out, it was with those qualifications, only one conviction for assault, and a disdain for his fellow colonists, that he applied for and received an official position over them, going out to Australia again in 1853 as colonial secretary of Victoria. Now respectable, he retired to England on shouldering some of the blame for the massacre at Eureka Stockade.[64]

Foster's one book was almost as interesting as his career. Called *The New Colony of Victoria, Formerly Port Phillip: Together with Some Account of the Other Australian Colonies,* it was written in Ireland at the beginning of the 1850s. At the outset Foster invoked Napoleon on the importance of 'ships, colonies, and commerce'—and Foster added that the greatest of these was colonies, for it brought with it the other two.[65] Foster promised

> to shew the advantages which may accrue to Great Britain from a judicious system of colonization; and to point out what we consider to be

> her bounden duty in availing herself of the commanding position in which Divine Providence has placed her.[66]

Apparently covering the globe, this general paean to empire went rather beyond describing or even boosting Australia, supposedly the subject of the book. He was generalizing—but Foster even provided a generalized explanation for his own habit of generalization. Australian conversation was sharper and more interesting than conversation elsewhere, he said, since people could discuss the weather and scenery of their different routes around the world: 'such men have also been more or less forced to use their minds' and see a variety of people and places as they travelled across the world.[67]

Being such a man himself, he was—like Westgarth—prone to making up generalizations about the world racial picture: It seems a law of Nature that uncivilized man should disappear before the superior races/ This had been demonstrated on Pacific Islands. The atrocity stories that one heard about how the whites had treated the Aborigines (and vice versa) had some basis in fact, but had been blown out of proportion. In any case these occurrences belonged to the past: 'the best feeling now generally prevails'. Foster could not investigate the subject of Aborigines any further in this book of less than a hundred pages, he said, so that his last word on these people was an example of character assassination through parallepsis—'the limits of [the book] preclude allusion to any facts respecting their [the Aborigines'] habits of infanticide, etc.'[68]

'The limits' of the book did not preclude him from including another example of generalization on an imperial scale. Posterity would 'wonder at the glory and power of that race which has already encircled the world within its grasp, diffusing its language, civilization, and religion from pole to pole'.[69]

Foster wrote nothing else of consequence, only a few letters trying to justify his position in a financial claim.[70] He did help to draft the 1853 constitution in New South Wales, using an upper house to safeguard the power of the rich as against the gold miners.[71] But we cannot watch Foster's ideas developing over the years; he did not write enough to make this possible. He simply fits into the mosaic of abstraction-loving colonials making sweeping generalizations about the world-historical roles of colonies like theirs, of the British Empire as a whole, and of the non-white populations of the temperate and tropical zones who needed domination.

Sir Charles Nicholson, a medical doctor, was at various times a pastoralist, speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Council, and founder of the Colonial Society. In 1859 he became the first Australian baronet. The outline of his career suggests that he got on with people better than Foster did. He also had a greater and much happier range of interests. Would imperial generalities appeal as strongly to a man like that as they would to the more solitary, more brooding type—the Foster type?

Born in 1808, he had gone to Australia in 1834, after Oxford and an 1833 Edinburgh MD. He settled on property belonging to his uncle. He went on to assemble his own lands and to profit greatly from the subdivision of Sydney.[72]

In early Sydney, he shared in the general worry about Aboriginal attacks on the road to Port Phillip, signing an 1838 letter demanding that the government act.[73] Yet once the world of metropolitan Australia was safe from roadside attack, Nicholson was able largely to ignore the existence of the natives and live a more genteel life. He was

appointed to the legislature in 1843, having lost an election for a seat on the Sydney Corporation in 1842 to a less-elevated and more populist candidate.[74] Nicholson took a deep interest in cultural institutions, becoming the founder and first vice-provost of Sydney University, and a supporter of the school system. In founding the university, he was especially fond of designing its Gothic buildings, choosing a mace, petitioning for a coat of arms, and so on, and he stood for an anti-egalitarian and classical curriculum.[75] At various times Nicholson was president of Sydney's School of Arts and vice-president of the Australian Philosophical Society; he cofounded the latter in 1850, frequently lecturing on natural history.[76] He collected Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan and Roman antiquities for the university, and the pursuit of these collections took more and more of his time in later years.

Politically, Nicholson was in favour of self-government. To him, this meant getting New South Wales out from under the Whitehall-imposed Wakefieldian limits on the sale of land—limits designed to keep the poor out of the countryside and in the towns, working for wages and replicating the stratified social structure of England.[77] It also meant adopting a universal rather than a £10 pound franchise, so that employers could line up the votes of all their employees. With these reforms and the educational advances that he also promoted, colonists could rise to the top more readily than they could at home, where Nicholson admitted in 1852 that he himself would have been 'a unit in twenty-six millions of my fellow beings, impotent for any design to benefit the race to which [he] belonged'. In a democratic and well-educated colony, on the other hand, every individual of quality could affect the course of events 'ages hence'.[78]

Besides his desire for better laws, he also wanted better immigrants. It would be good, as Nicholson wrote in a letter to the emigration organizer Sir Charles Trevelyan in 1853, if more of the emigrants were close-knit families from the Scottish Highlands: Their sluggish and listless habits will, I believe, accord very well with the monotonous and indolent life of a shepherd: whilst the tie of families might for a time counteract the impulse so universally felt to go to the gold-diggings.'[79]

The immigrants who arrived over the next several years did not prove 'monotonous and indolent' enough for Nicholson's taste, it would seem. By 1860, he thought that democracy had gone altogether too far in New South Wales, the leading men having been driven out of the legislature by publicans.[80] Nicholson was ready to move on. After Queensland separated from New South Wales in 1859, Nicholson became (in 1860) the president of the new northern colony's upper house. He was lured north by the new governor to help thwart the popular will.

Having done so, he resigned within the year, and with his recent baronetcy and an ample fortune to sustain him, he moved back to England in 1862.[81] He was soon intervening with the colonial secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, to extend British organized government over the squatters of northern Australia, whether by extending the borders of Queensland or South Australia or creating a new colony.[82]

By then he had already begun to examine the world-historical importance of the colonies as a whole. As Nicholson said at an Australian dinner held in London in 1858, Australia, England and many other places besides were all a part of the same 'glorious empire'. And a wonderfully united empire it was! The Australian colonies stood in the same relation to England, he said, that Latin America had stood to 'Old Spain'. But the Australian colonies would always remain a part of the British Empire, while most of

Spain's colonies had proved eager to break away. This came from the wonderful way that England treated her colonies, so unlike the way that Spain had treated hers.[83]

At about the time of his service in Queensland, Nicholson began to work out an even bigger world-historical context for the British Empire. He did so through his collecting activities, inspired by his travels back and forth through the areas that lay between England and the Antipodes. Passing through Cairo, he once bought some oblong blocks that 'contain[ed] a hieroglyphic name that can only be read as that of Moses'. Intrigued, he began many years of buying inscription stones 'of no use to anyone but myself. Indeed, many of the stones were fated to be of no use to anyone else at all, ever again, since Nicholson liked to get together with some of his 'geological friends' and grind up the inscriptions in a hunt for micro-organisms.[84] The question was this: how old was man, and how old was the earth? With this question in mind, and with a university that needed antiquities of kinds not suitable for grinding, Nicholson wound up corresponding with an Armenian scholar and engineer, Hék Hékhékyan Bey, former director of the Mehemet Ali's Polytechnic School in Egypt. Nicholson would sometimes rendezvous with Hékhékyan Bey in a London curiosity shop that sold 'Nile mud specimens'.[85]

Nicholson went on to publish a number of pamphlets and articles on Egyptology, although they were not earth-shaking in their findings. He did help establish that Akhenaten's sun-worship was a native Egyptian development, not as had been thought the sign of a raid by a southern race or faction. And yet Nicholson himself still held to nineteenth-century racial essentialism in describing the 'disk-worshippers' as 'the innovating and heretical race'—as though races had their religious views and people (who could change their minds) did not.[86] Indeed, Nicholson's importance to archaeology should not be exaggerated. He did not even know Sir Austen Henry Layard, discoverer of Nineveh and lion of society, when he wrote to Layard at the Foreign Office on behalf of a friend.[87]

In November 1863, Nicholson spoke to the Society of Arts on his real area of expertise, Australia. He had developed a better way to present his ideas than by calling upon simple contrast between England and Spain. The history of modern colonization may seem prosaic, he began, but only if you forget that the institutions that make life civilized and pleasant in Europe grew up over a period of 2,000 years since the ancient Egyptian world with which he had made himself familiar. It is wonderful how Australian colonists have gone out of their way to create these institutions in one human lifetime. Indeed, it was only 30 years since Melbourne was a small collection of huts. Now it was a fine city with fine architecture—much better, Nicholson believed, than any in America that he had ever heard of. Really the colonists were heroes for accomplishing so much, and even for taking on the task in the first place. He admitted that they had been lucky in having no effective opposition from the Aborigines, who were hardly now to be seen, except in Queensland. The Aborigines had overreacted to the white presence—and the whites had overreacted in turn to Aboriginal attacks, wiping out guilty and innocent alike. Those few Aborigines who remained were in any case mentally no more than children, and must be treated accordingly.

Now that the foundations of the colony had been laid, anyone in England could go and buy an estate and a future—or go to the gold fields—or start a business. Australia needed people like that. However, the liberal arts graduates and professionals who used to flood the continent had proved not to be so necessary. (So much for his own university.)

Australia was a frontier society through and through. Thus, he said, its one major flaw was its overdemocracy. But as he argued in his closing words, over-democracy was made up for by the heartiness and equality of the people and of the society they had made. Such was his conclusion, as (although he did not say so) it had also been Tocqueville's.

His audience at the Society of Arts that night commented at length on emigration, on the cotton picture during and after the war in America, on gold and on wool. Yet Nicholson's survey of colonial society and his long opening section on the glories of the social institutions that had been built by living men—instead of through the several thousand years of European history—went uncommented upon by the largely non-colonist audience.[88] He wanted to put Australia into a world-historical frame. They wanted to talk about the price of wool. He did not seem to mind, for he took the long view, the Egyptologist's view.

Westgarth and the other Australians had clear ideas about the importance of democratic English society around the world. None questioned the salience of 'democracy' as a broad general category, a major phenomenon at the heart of England's place in the world. And none questioned the size of the Empire, or its importance in the sweep of world history. Nor did they seem to mind, even in the 1840s and 1850s, extending the idea of empire into the tropics. Sailing back and forth to Great Britain had given them the larger view.

6
Letters from Australia, Part II

The governor and the end of the world

And then there were the officials who were posted to Australia for years at a time. The most notable example is Lieutenant-General Sir William Thomas Denison, KCB, FRS, army engineer and colonial governor by profession, scientist and anthropologist by avocation. His colonial experiences taught him a great deal, converting him from a careful and cultured sceptic into an ambitious theorist—of a kind that will have to be seen to be believed.

Denison and the self-government of whites

Born in 1804 and son of an MP, Denison was educated at Eton and the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. After three years in the Ordnance Survey, he was commissioned into the Royal Engineers in 1826, where he worked on the Trigonometrical Survey of Great Britain. He then served in Canada from 1827 to 1830, helping to construct the Rideau Canal. The Institute of Civil Engineers gave him the Telford medal for his work in this period on the strength of American timbers.

Having gathered his data about the different woods, he wanted to be able to see scientific data from further afield. While teaching at Chatham in 1837, he wrote to the Royal Society to propose that the Royal Engineers serving around the globe should make periodical reports on the natural history, geography and population statistics of the countries where they were stationed. He also seconded a proposal by Alexander von Humboldt to set up a world-wide network of magnetic observatories; to this end, Denison himself wanted training instruments purchased for Chatham.[1] Nothing came of these ideas for collating imperial information, for they cost money. After a short posting at Bermuda, Denison went back to England in 1842. He taught once again at Chatham for a time, and then took charge of the works at the Woolwich dockyard.

This was to be his last engineering position until he served on a committee on waterways in his retirement. In 1846, he was appointed lieutenant-governor of Van Diemen's Land (the island that was soon to be renamed Tasmania). The British government had asked the Royal Engineers for a candidate, and Denison had been selected—he neither applied for the posting nor demurred from it. The travel expenses for

himself, his family and his substantial library were paid for by the Colonial Office, but otherwise he served with no pay, going into debt.[2]

Denison's main charge in Tasmania was to restore discipline among the convicts—thus the desire for a military man. But convicts and freemen alike found Denison an unprepossessing figure physically. He was prone to fits in which he would collapse in the street, requiring rescue by passers-by.[3]

An even more serious problem was his clash with the politicians. Denison strongly supported continuing the transportation of convicts to Tasmania—something the colonists hated. He even had a hand in framing this policy. Before he had left for his post, he wanted to survey the best information about where he was going, so he sat in the Colonial Office reading the despatches. Then he reduced his observations to a set of proposals, only to receive his own proposals back again as his official instructions. In other words, Governor Denison had been ordered—by himself—to continue with transportation. Nothing that he would see in Tasmania would change his mind. Indeed, he expected the New South Wales gold strike to draw away free labour, making transportation all the more vital for Tasmania's economy.[4]

If collapsing in fits and supporting the transportation of convicts were not enough to make Denison unpopular, there were also some unresolved questions brought up by the behaviour of the previous governor, who had interfered with the supreme court. Denison attempted to interfere further; he was reversed both in court decisions and in the memo from Herman Merivale that settled the matter.[5] Denison did make some friendships in the colony, but they were mostly in his own official circle, as with Andrew Clarke, his assistant in the early Tasmanian years, later an officer and politician in Victoria and a future founder of the Colonial Society.

Indeed, it is hard to imagine how Denison could have made himself less popular. From the Colonial Office point of view, however, he had done a good job with the convicts and he deserved promotion. In 1854, he was moved to Sydney to become governor of New South Wales.[6] There he continued to be as strong a governor as he could, even though he oversaw the transition to responsible government. William Westgarth was not the only person whom we have looked at who developed strong opinions about him in these years, taking umbrage at Denison's not at all hidden belief that convict transportation made for a better colonial labour market than did completely free labour.[7] Still, Denison's new governorship was far less eventful or full of conflict than his tenure in Van Diemen's Land had been.

Finally, after six years on the Australian mainland, Denison would leave behind the democratic hubbub, the petitions and politicians of the self-governing colonies. From 1860 to 1866, he was governor of the Madras Presidency, serving for several months in 1863 as acting governor-general of India. He had left the world of self-government far behind, and in India he opposed legislative councils and the recruitment of Indians to the civil service.

As early as his administration in Tasmania, Denison incorporated Tocquevillean themes in his reports and policies. He compared English-speaking countries; he weighed the democratic and equalitarian aspects of society:

> The broad plain of equality, as in America, receives the whole community, and although there are many who would gladly avail

> themselves of any opportunity of raising themselves above the general level, yet here, as in America, any attempt to do so would be frustrated by the jealousy of the remainder of the community.[8]

So a nominated council or a new colonial nobility was not a good long-term solution to the problem of immoderate democracy. English experiences at home were no guide, for Denison like Tocqueville stuck closely to informed judgement rather than uninformed generalization:

> Your Lordship can hardly form an idea of the character of population of these colonies.
>
> It is usual to assume that colonies are off-shoots from the parent stock, containing in themselves the germs of all elements of which society in the mother country is composed.
>
> This can only be said of any colony with many reservations, but it cannot be said of these colonies with any appearance of justice or truth.[9]

Note that Denison, who as we have seen had been in Canada and Bermuda at the height of Tocqueville's fame, could already discuss what could be said of society 'in any colony' in general, and of his own in particular—and yet check himself from going too far.

How then should colonial democracy be moderated, if not by the creation of an aristocracy?: 'There is an essentially democratic spirit which actuates the large mass of the colony; and it is with the view to check the development of this spirit, of preventing its coming into operation, that I would suggest the formation of an Upper Chamber.'[10] How such a chamber would function, and how it would be composed, he said that he did not care about. What matters here is Denison's attempt while in Tocquevillean Tasmania not merely to moderate but in his own words to check the spirit of democracy, 'preventing its coming into operation'. And sensing this resolve on his part, the citizens of Tasmania made his life as lieutenant-governor a difficult one. He did not succeed in endowing all denominations, in saving and extending transportation, in creating a large standing army. All these plans he advocated, using arguments that, as earlier scholars have recognized, seemed to come straight out of Tocqueville, except for the anti-democratic purpose to which they were put.[11]

When in 1853 he was ordered to help draft a plan for responsible government in Tasmania, he cooperated. He still found the idea of setting up any such government in a small colony with no political parties to be ridiculous.[12] Still, he cooperated. His less than enthusiastic but nonetheless real participation allowed him to shape the outcome; the document included provisions for an upper house of property-holders, graduates and professionals.[13] But he would not see responsible government in operation in the colony in which he had helped to plan it.

When Denison moved to New South Wales in 1854, he started with a clean slate—and some real power, for responsible government would not come officially until 24 November 1855, with elections in April 1856 and the first meeting of the new parliament the next month. In the meantime, who was in charge, the ministry or Denison? The situation was murky. Merivale thought that Denison kept control of his colony better than

the other governors in a similar state of limbo. The governor successfully resisted the new ministry's attempt to swamp the upper house with its own nominees, whom he mostly rejected. Here he was well within his powers. He also instituted a procedure by which the cabinet showed him (and the rest of the executive council) their proposals before laying them before the legislature. This prevented conflict between government and governor, especially on technical points, and the system lasted long after Denison's tenure as governor. But at first Denison seemed to be under the illusion that he would be able to control the colony through the executive council in this way, using the council to vet most anything the cabinet might do and helping to stabilize each cabinet in turn. While the executive council did vet legislative proposals, the politicians achieved a near-autonomy for ministers within a system of collective cabinet responsibility. The colonial ministries came and went very quickly, while Denison as governor and leader of the council could only shake his head. All he had was the limited but important power that accrued to him from his long tenure and his knowledge of the more detailed business of government. He could not make proposals in the executive council, even if he could shape opinion there.[14]

One of the more interesting proposals about which Denison would have had his say in council was the idea of Edward Deas Thomson, sometime chief minister, to create a new executive department to unite all of learning. The department would have brought together education, whether secular, Protestant or Catholic, along with all the other cultural, scientific and literary institutions of the colony, including Sydney University. They would all form a single administrative structure. The idea was that most of these institutions received the largest share of their financing from the government in any case. In fact no department of education was actually established until 1880, and even then it was nothing like so ambitious; by then, nationalizing the whole of the cultural sector down to each literary society and orphan school seemed beyond the supervisory or financial abilities of the colonial authorities.[15] Nor did so total an amalgamation appeal to the religious and cultural leaders who would have lost their independence of action. But the proposal reflected something of Denison's spirit. In every settlement colony that Denison governed, he worked hard to improve or expand the cultural sector or the school system, so that educated colonists out in the bush would not produce illiterate children and let society collapse; he would rather have a school system that raised taxes upon the rural poor and on top of that offended religious sensibilities than watch learning and science die out.[16]

If the government of New South Wales could not undertake such a cultural programme officially, and could or would not unite all the schools and cultural institutions into a single government department, Governor Denison could promote the cultural sector unofficially. As his real power waned—he would tell his sister that under the new system he was 'powerless to do good or prevent evil'[17]—he seems to have understood that he could best moderate and civilize the colony by promoting the kind of civil institutions that Tocqueville had identified as a counterbalance to central authority. Unlike his practice in Tasmania, Denison actually mixed with the people over whose government he presided. He got to know them. True, most of the time Denison mixed with the reasonably well educated, but he also attended the Mechanics Institute, himself addressing it on 'Machinery' (1856) and 'Land Surveying' (1857).

Throughout his career, indeed, he cultivated intellectual pursuits, both in himself and in his colonies. His first interest seems to have been astronomy, and he continually promoted colonial observatories; he had founded his first observatory as a young professor at Chatham—back when he was suggesting that the Royal Engineers collect reports on the world's natural history and human demography. Even back then, his vision of astronomy was grounded on the earth—he thought that having an official astronomer in each colony would be useful for raising the tone of colonial society.[18] Denison also played a major part in revitalizing the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land in 1849, although he does not seem to have addressed this body as he would address the various organizations in New South Wales. But with his greater popularity in his new colony, he could accomplish more. In May 1856, the month in which responsible government came into operation, Governor Denison founded the 'Philosophical Society'. He was working with the remains of an earlier unsuccessful association, the 'Australian Philosophical Society' of 1850, one of whose cofounders was another early member of the Colonial Society of 1868, Dr Charles Nicholson. Unlike Nicholson, Denison made his new Philosophical Society a success. It became the ancestor of the Royal Society of New South Wales.[19] There was now a place where the governor of the colony could give an address on the rotation of the moon and make a social occasion of it. But he also had a social purpose, the cultivation of the people, above and beyond the beauty of teaching them about the moon for its own sake.

Two years later, in 1858, Denison founded the Philosophical Society's journal, the *Sydney Magazine of Science and Art*. In the first number, he contributed 'A Brief Outline on the Development of the Railway System in England, with Suggestions as to its Application to the Colony of New South Wales'. Because of difference in the weight of Canadian and Australian products (agricultural produce versus gold and wool), he stressed that his calculations as to volume of traffic did *not* prove that because a railroad might work in a new area of Canada, it would also work in New South Wales—again, Denison balanced his imperial perspective with an engineer's carefulness over detail and difference. His attempt to mathematicize the cost of carriage by alternative modes of transport anticipated aspects of modern Anglo-American economics, a field of inquiry founded in part by William Stanley Jevons, to whom we owe the idea of 'final' or 'marginal utility'; Jevons was converted to social science by his stay in New South Wales under Denison's governorship. (Jevons joined Denison's Philosophical Society in June 1856, one month after its foundation.[20]) Yet for us the significance of Denison's thinking is not any possible effect on Jevons but how it showed the theoretical bent in Denison himself—just as Denison's minutes in Tasmania had been full of necessary details, to be sure, but had also included discussions of the theory of democracy.

And the theory of democracy, pure, simple and unconnected to railways, was a subject that Denison had by no means forgotten about. The people of a colony judged everything for themselves as individuals, Denison saw, as Tocqueville had seen the Americans doing. Tocqueville had explained that people in a democracy, where the opinion of no one individual was more important than that of any other, would each theorize in abstract ways based upon their own individual experiences, rather than basing their opinions upon the received wisdom passed down through society (or down through the generations) from those more fortunate than themselves.[21] Late in 1856, Denison explained the colonial situation in this way, describing the reason why it was so hard to get the

colonists to focus on certain concrete proposals that he had made to the Philosophical Society on the prosaic subject of irrigation:

> Abstract questions, that is questions which do not admit of any positive answer, are readily entertained, because each man gives the result of his own narrow and limited experiences, and reasons upon it; making up for the want of the elements of thought, by the obstinacy with which he maintains his opinions, formed, as they are, probably, on incorrect premises, or on false inferences from correct premises.[22]

The key power that Denison still had was to give advice—and, ever the Tocquevillean, what he advised the legislature to do was to set up a system of local governments outside Sydney. This measure would create a more experienced and more mature political class, and remove many details of governance from the overly politicized centre. Denison's opening address to the inaugural session of the New South Wales legislature at the beginning of responsible government was devoted largely to his proposal for the erection of town governments—mainly as schools of democracy. The legislature agreed with the speech and then ignored the proposal. They had no inten-tion of spending that kind of money on new governmental machinery.[23] Denison was no longer in a position to warp the politics of the colony to his own will. He had been able to do so in Tasmania in 1853, when he successfully proposed to the members of the legislative council (one-third of them named by himself) that they should found a system of local governments there as another pillar of the constitution.[24] Now in responsibly governed New South Wales a few years later his proposals were lost in the hubbub.

Denison on the general categories of race and humanity

A final area where responsible government rendered Denison 'powerless to do good or prevent evil' was in the way the settlers treated the natives. In 1860, Denison wrote some governor-to-governor advice to Gore Browne in New Zealand, suggesting that unless Gore Browne changed course, events would develop 'which, if backed up by England, would in a short time annihilate the Maori race, and permit the occupation by the white man of the rich land yet in native hands, upon which for years past greedy and longing eyes have been cast'. The Maori were British subjects with legitimate grievances and institutions.[25] As Denison wrote to Sir Roderick Murchison at the same time, referring to the dispossession of both the South Africans and the Maori:

> [T]he white man wants the land, and finds the means of dispossessing the native holder according to white law: the coloured man resists in the mode prescribed to him by his own customs, and is termed a rebel, a savage, and his mode of action designated as barbarous, heathenish, etc.[26]

Denison was no newcomer to the issue of Aboriginal rights. He had been in Tasmania little more than a year when he entertained almost the entire black population of the island at a Christmas garden party. His wife summarized the native issue in her journal:

> You probably know that when the English began to settle in this country, all the convicts and wretches we brought with us, to say nothing of the free inhabitants, who, I believe, were nearly as bad, were by no means particular as to their behaviour to the unfortunate aborigines. The consequence of this was, that mutual hostilities were continually carried on, till the English put an end to them by capturing all the natives (except some few who are still supposed to be lingering in the unknown western parts of the island), and conveying them to Flinders Island…where they appointed people to take care of them. But the poor creatures were not happy there; they pined for their own country, which, I believe, can just be seen from Flinders Island; and besides, they were not always well or judiciously treated by the people who had the charge of them. When we came here, therefore, [Denison] very soon determined on bringing them back again.[27]

By then they numbered only 14 men, 22 women, ten children, and 'four or five others…to a certain extent, trained to English habits'. One of the men was blind and another was retarded. There was opposition to Denison's plan of bringing them back—so Denison proposed to have them at parties from time to time, to show everyone how harmless, how 'perfectly inoffensive' they were. So the plan was humanity through official entertainment! But in the meantime, their children were to be taken from them (supposedly with the parents' consent) and put into the Orphan School in Hobart; the occasion for the first garden party was that the whole group, the whole people, were coming to town to see where the children would be 'trained into civilised and Christian beings', as Lady Denison put it.[28]

The garden party was a success. Lady Denison reported that the blacks came last, sat at their own table, ate a tremendous amount, and used their knives and forks almost without incident. After the meal, the natives played on a swing and the white guests watched them, adults and children together. The whites stayed just this side of turning into a mob as they tried to catch closer and closer glimpses.[29] But while the party was a success the policy was not. The removal of the children was another cause for heart-break. The last of the native Tasmanians, the now famous Truganini, died in 1876.

Of course, the fact that many of the natives had been hunted down and killed like animals long before the Denisons arrived in the colony, and the population already reduced by 90 per cent, is not down to the Denisons. Sir William Denison, indeed, can hardly be said to have had a native policy at all when the number of natives in his colony was four dozen, and his main contribution was to repatriate them and sign them up for the same separation from their children that a substantial portion of the English upper classes imposed on themselves. If his wife's views are any guide—and Denison included them verbatim in his autobiography—then it was less a native policy that he developed in Tasmania than a conviction that it was vital to have *some* native policy to restrain the greedier elements of the white population, long before things got so bad as in Tasmania. Thus his 1860 advice to Gore Browne.

That is one conclusion that Denison may have drawn from his experience with the native Tasmanians. There may have been another. The policy of taking the children away to raise them as Christians assumed that saving the natives was possible. That is, what

was killing the Tasmanians was a combination of their own traditional lifestyle and the hostility towards it of the whites. There was nothing fatal in simply being Tasmanian, or in simply being black. The blacks were people, and you could have them to your Christmas party and receive visits from them again and again.[30] This is not the same view that we saw that Westgarth had developed over the years: that the black races were dying out; that the yellow or brown races were in stasis; and that the white race was vital and subject to change, whether it be improvement or decay. If, *pace* Westgarth, the blacks were part of the same continuum of humanity, sitting at a separate table but at the same party (like the field labourers at Christmas fêtes in England), then what does that tell us about the nature of man? Patron of scientific institutions, Denison was already keeping his eyes open on that point; in a few years, he would publish a book on the subject.

Governor Denison visited the Tasmanians' camp at Oyster Cove in January 1849. He watched the rope athletics of the women, 100 feet up trees, although he made one woman come down from a rotten branch that, ever the engineer, he did not think up to the job (again, he had won a prize for his investigations into the strength of different kinds of wood). Also, as he wrote to his mother, 'I showed them a camera obscura, with which some appeared to be pleased, but not to the extent to which they thought they would.' More to the point: 'All the anticipations of evil to arise from the presence of the blacks have proved fallacious. I give them ample rations, and they are well content to stay at home and eat, instead of roaming in the bush at the risk of being starved or shot.'[31]

In contrast, the starving and shooting were still going on in New South Wales when Denison got there in 1854. Nonetheless, the great days of the mass slaughter of blacks, and the government's energetic attempt to stop it by hanging white farmers, had passed. The farmers had turned to poisoning, for which it was harder to apprehend or prosecute them. Nor was the government trying so hard any more. Two of Denison's predecessors as governor, Gipp and Fitzroy, had allowed the native protection agencies, founded in the 1830s, to starve for funds, and the Native Police (partly Aboriginal) had sunk into the role of goon squad, removing blacks from wherever the white farmers might choose to go.

As R.H.W.Reece has pointed out, the whites killed kangaroos without a second thought, the Aborigines killed sheep in the same way, and in turn the white shepherds killed the Aborigines.[32] And there wasn't much, given responsible government, that Denison could do about it, if indeed he was aware of exactly what was going on; it would continue well into the twentieth century. Just what did Denison know? Much of his travelling was to gold districts; much of his attention on engineering and railways.[33] Men tally, if not physically, he was much further away from the Aborigines than he had been in Tasmania; there were no partly Aboriginal garden parties, no camera obscura demonstrations. In the very different world of New South Wales, Denison was as we have seen mixing with and trying to improve the colonists, and not (as in Tasmania, where the whites hated him) the natives.

So the murders may have passed him by, but the question of the fate of human communities did not. He simply did not pursue it in connection with the Australian Aborigines. Instead, it was Pitcairn Islanders who came up—a small community like the Tasmanians, where a bit of governmental social engineering on Denison's part could have large and obvious results. Denison told his brother that in transplanting the Pitcairners to Norfolk Island

> [W]e are going to put them on an island provided with cattle, which they have never seen, sheep of which they know not the use, machinery, such as mills, etc., of the application of which they can have no conception. It would be a curious and interesting occupation to watch the development of the ideas under these novel circumstances.[34]
>
> I am afraid that their simplicity will wear away fast under the operation of the new influences brought to bear on them. I have, however, done my best to isolate them, by directing the officers who are going down in charge of the vessel, and who will locate them in their individual allotments, to divide the whole island (which contains but 10,000 acres) among the families, with the exception of about 500 acres for public purposes, and 200 for church and schools; so as to leave no room for other settlers. I should like to visit them myself; and shall ask for permission to do so when I send home the statement of the mode in which I have dealt with them.[35]

Denison was indeed making an 'experiment' in human cultural development, and that was his own word.[36] He concluded the same letter with an account of the Convocation and first conferral of degrees at the University of Sydney. In these different spheres, he was playing the agent of progress.

Where progress was possible, so was degeneration. Westgarth had worried about the degeneration of whites several generations in the future. Denison told Henry Labouchere of a less precipitous degeneration already in progress:

> I have been very much struck by the torpor and listlessness which characterises a large portion of the people of this colony. I have remarked on this to some persons, and have heard it attributed sometimes to the effects of climate, sometimes to want of means for educations; none, however, attempted to deny the fact; and it is one which is exercising a very baneful influence upon all classes.[37]

Climate was *not* the main cause:

> That climate may have a little to do with it is possible, it may act upon the body in making it more inert, and this may react upon the mind; but the character of the education which has been given to the children, coupled with the expressed and acknowledged wishes of the parents to return to England, are, to my mind, the main causes of the evil.[38]

For Denison, unlike Westgarth, education and not pigmentation was the key to human mutability. Thus the social problems of New South Wales had two identifiable causes, neither of them racial. One was social: the fact that so many leading citizens were planning to go back to England. The other factor had to do with the nature of education and opinion in the colony: namely, the focus on forms or abstractions over substance. Denison had in mind such groundless abstractions as responsible government and the secret ballot. Because of the focus on forms,

> attention is turned from the real practical questions in which the colony is deeply interested,—from education,—from extension of the means of communication,—from improvement of the country and development of its resources, and is centred upon matters which had better be left in abeyance.[39]

Denison the engineer and wood-characterizer still wanted to stay close to tangible facts.

Denison's new world

Then by 1859 the world changed. Darwin and Wallace had presented a quite new explanation for animal and, by extension, human development. But what of those like Denison who believed in the unity of mankind and the mutability not of the human race but of its cultures? And that was not the only shock for Governor Denison. There was also the Indian Mutiny of 1857–8. What then of men who believed in the unquestioned rule of whites?

Denison began with the conviction, born of his visits to Norfolk Island, that the *non-whites* were constitutionally capable of work. Their lack of education led to their listlessness, especially when they had enough food and there was no cash economy to encourage labour.[40] That is, Denison still believed in one human race, albeit a human race that was exposed to different conditions in different places. But speculations on this topic were taking up more of his time. When he was not journeying to and from Norfolk Island, he was maintaining his correspondence with the Norfolk Islanders—reminding them when to plant orange trees and so forth. The matter took up much of his attention, while he claimed that the frequent turnover of ministers in Sydney was a matter of indifference to him.[41] When he was not following the affairs of Norfolk Island, he spent an increasing amount of time in Australia on fishing trips and mountain vacations with his two little girls. Australian politics no longer fascinated him.

One thing that did was the war in India. He had to dispatch troops from Australia to China; he went on to propose permanent empire-wide transfers, using sepoys in the rest of the Empire to free up British troops for use in India, and recruiting South African impoverished 'Kafir tribes' for Indian duty, since they would never develop any sympathies for either Moslems or Hindus.[42]

But beyond this imperial great gamesmanship something else was new: The first hints—but as yet only hints—of a new kind of racial vocabulary. One hint was in this last comment on Kaffirs, and on how in one way (that of never taking sides in India) they would never change. Another hint came in a letter to Roderick Murchison in the spring of 1858 on the good old subject of Norfolk Island:

> The…experiment will be a curious one…[W]e shall lack the stimulus to activity of mind and body which competition gives, and we shall have to work with an indifferent national tool: the Tahitian element prevails to too large an extent.[43]

Again, it is only a hint. While this last element seems racialist, it is predicated upon Tahitian nationality, not the Tahitian race or any other such abstraction. That what Denison is referring to is still nationality and not race is clear because elsewhere in the letter Denison goes out of his way to make fun of the theory of race itself. In doing so, he made one of his rare references to the Aborigines of the colony that he was governing:

> The rainy weather last year tempted a tribe or family of natives from the west side of the continent to push eastward. They came across in nine months, are said to be without *any hair*, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, who saw one of them, reported him to be absolutely without hair. It is said to be a practice with the natives, when the vermin get troublesome, to singe themselves, but the Commissioner was cognisant of this practice, and affirmed that the man had not been singed, but had merely a little down instead of hair. I had a letter some time ago from an American, asking me to furnish him with specimens of the hair, or, as he termed it, the 'Pile', of the different tribes of natives, as he was working out a theory as to the action of race upon the character of the hair. How would he class those who had no hair? among the pachydermata?[44]

Denison had little confidence in racial categories. He did on rare occasions—two years later, for example, in 1860—use the word 'race', but only to describe such national personifications as 'the Norman' (who stole the land of the 'Angle', 'the Saxon' and 'the Briton') and 'the Englishman' (who was, he said, now stealing the land of 'the Caffre' and 'the Maori').[45]

For Denison, geology was a more respectable field than Victorian racialism; one could identify and classify the rocks of the world, not the races. Denison was in frequent correspondence with Roderick Murchison, the leading figure in Victorian geology; from these letters it is clear that Denison kept close tabs upon the fossils and geological layers being found on the Australian continent. Did species change? Did the finding of sea fossils above the waterline imply that the land around Sydney harbour might still be rising, and that the harbour might be ruined in the foreseeable future?[46] These are some of the questions that Denison monitored, drawing on the same rich world of empire-wide Victorian observational science that Darwin drew from in the 20 years that he was assembling *The Origin of Species*. In corresponding with the leading lights in scientific London, and on the other hand in being himself an amateur of nature during his journeys to the countryside—or across Sydney Harbour—Denison was embodying a certain idea of intellectual agency, agency as opposed to passivity. He believed in figuring things out for himself. Denison captured something of what he was after in advice that he gave to a young lieutenant at war in New Zealand. He sent the young man instructions on how to preserve biological specimens, and advice on how some study of 'Geology, Zoology, Botany, etc., etc', would, with a four or five pound 'student's microscope', enable him to listen with intelligent interest to the conversation of those more advanced than himself'.[47]

And 'listening with intelligent interest to the conversation' soon meant, for Denison, coming to terms with Darwin—and a higher level of abstraction, the theory of evolution by natural selection, than Denison had ever dealt with before. Denison first mentions Darwin in some letters to his sister in the autumn of 1860. He had read a review in the

Quarterly, and had heard some lectures on the topic at his scientific institution, lectures given by a pupil of Robert Owen; the lecturer had rejected the idea that separately classified species could develop into one another. Having heard this lecture, Denison was not impressed by Darwin. 'The mistake of Darwin and Co.', he wrote,

> consists in their speculating upon *hypotheses*, that is, upon bare possibilities; and as God is *omnipotent*, it is in no way *impossible* that He might have decided that man should have originated from a turnip, by some process of development. In order, however, to get even the merest shadow of a *probability* for the upper stages of the system of transmutation, all principle of classification must be set aside, all the homologies of class with class must be disregarded, and, when this has been done, we are left without a single tittle of *evidence* that there has ever been even a tendency to such development.[48]

What this seems to mean is that the families of species as defined in Denison's idea of science are real, and are not human impositions upon nature. There can be no inter-species development across them; categories are immutable and no new categories can ever develop. Thus, to preserve categorization, species-to-species development must also be rejected. An underlying assumption in what Denison was saying was that evolution would have worked upon the current range of species, turning them into one another—he ignored the idea that evolution had worked on a succession of preceding forms branching out down through the ages.

What is interesting about Denison's attitude here is not simply that he was against Darwinism; many people were. No, the key point about Denison in 1860 is that his reaction to Darwinism made him adopt and espouse something previously foreign to his intellectual makeup, the idea that biological categories *and human racial categories among them* are immutable and *ipso facto* real, rather than human impositions to be tested and tried in each case, as he had tested and tried out the ability of the Pitcairners to adapt to Norfolk Island. Just after the statement quoted above, Denison went on to bring in human groups as examples of the truth and immutability of categories. All the while he still refused to characterize these human groups as *racial*.

> There is a various curious paper…which…ends by tracing the peculiarities which distinguish the Roman Catholics from the Protestants to peculiarities of race. The connection between the Buddhist system, as developed in Thibet…and its, I may almost say, identity with the monastic system is very well put; reference is also made to the marked line which divides Protestant from Catholic in Europe, which line is almost coincident with that which separates the Celt from the Teuton. I wonder, if we were to ask Darwin to apply his principle of development to the case, which of the two he would consider to be nearest the primitive turnip? Are we improvements upon the Buddhists? are the Protestants a higher type of animal than the Catholics, or vice versâ?[49]

Again, apparently taking his Darwin at second or third hand, Denison has missed Darwin's introduction of a historical tree of diverging forms, in which one *current* form does not lead into another.

From this point, Denison would take racial essentialism further than his younger self could possibly have imagined. Once so careful about evidence and so dismissive of colonial attempts to make grand theories, Denison would come to embrace the largest possible theoretical statements about the human world.

Denison in India

The same letter in which Denison first mentions Darwin is also the first in which he mentions his appointment as governor of Madras. In New South Wales he had served out the usual term for a governor. The responsible legislature was acting no more responsibly than it ever had, Denison thought. Now he would get away from all of that to a colony that he could actually *govern*'. 'I look forward with great pleasure to the idea of having something to do.' He was going to govern non-whites. Still, as he stressed, he would have wished to have had the choice of a colony where he could have kept his children with him, but he took the appointment all the same.[50] Like the non-whites of Tasmania, he was going to be separated from his children. There would be no more camping trips with his young daughters. Now he would be a harder man.

But he did get a chance to govern, to make real decisions. For one thing, he supervised the expansion of one irrigated area from 500,000 acres to 1 million. He reviewed schemes for whole new harbours. Denison was operating on a grander scale than he ever could in New South Wales, much less in a New South Wales under responsible government.[51]

And he could not ignore the natives, as he had in New South Wales—although he could make the deliberate decision of excluding them. Two years into his appointment, he rejected the idea of native participation on councils in the army, and in his own council (not that he was much fonder of the English councillors who were already his official advisers). Why ask the natives for advice on governing a country that they had lost to the English, who in turn had spilled their blood to keep it?[52] But that was only the beginning of the development of his thinking about Indians as a race. Within three years of his appointment, Denison had developed a total contempt for the Indians, and it would seem a total contempt for the whole way that he himself had looked at humanity and its cultures up to that point. In a letter to Roderick Murchison, Denison repudiated the idea—once so dear to him—that education could change people, whether white colonists or Polynesian Norfolk Islanders or black Tasmanians:

> Your Hindoo friend may be an exception, may have an unfeigned love of the truth, may even have been a martyr of this love; but you may depend upon it, if that be the case—which by the way I very much doubt—he is a phoenix, more rare by far than a black swan. I do not put the least faith in the statement that they were, at one time, a truthloving people, and have been made liars by oppression; the character is bred in the bone and is indelible.[53]

Education could do little or nothing with such people, who perversely insisted upon maintaining their own culture:

> The worst feature in our relationship with the inhabitants of India is our incapacity to act upon them in such a way as to modify their views, or to introduce any beneficial change of principle or practice. We are teaching them English, but their object in learning it is to get a place under the Government. They, as a body, get little or no benefit from their knowledge of English, they do not read our books, and they have a literature of their own.[54]

Denison, now a believer in a Eurocentric hierarchy of races, had no hope that the Indians could ever govern themselves. To give the Indians free institutions, in the hope that they someday would come to understand how to operate those institutions,

> would be about as wise as it would be to put the father's coat upon the child, in anticipation of the time when he would grow up into it. That time will *never* arrive in India. You will never be able to give the Hindoo the feelings and character of the Englishman; he belongs to a different race.[55]

He even repudiated the idea, which he had held in relation to New Zealand and which he had expressed in his letter to Governor Gore Brown in 1860, that whatever the natives represented in the history of mankind, their institutions and land tenure ought to be respected:

> You would not give to the French people English institutions; at all events, if you were to do so, experience shows that they would not comprehend them or work them out. Much less could you venture to give the semi-savage (for, with all the talk about Indian civilisation, the Hindoo is but an agricultural savage rather than a hunting one) institutions based upon the principle that each man is capable of judging correctly of his wants, and of the means of supplying these.[56]

That he had advised doing so in the case of the Maori he did on occasion remember, but he did not seem to notice (or admit) the contradiction.[57]

By 1865, nearer the end of his tour in India, he had become a colour racist of almost the worst kind, and he had this to say of views such as those which he had once espoused:

> All talk of educating them, of fitting them for liberty, of teaching them to govern themselves, is veriest twaddle. I wonder how the people who, upon the strength of affinities of language, insist upon the identity of the Hindoo and the Englishman, account for the colour of the Hindoo, and other physical differences? The Hindoo is darker than the red Indian, and in many cases nearly as black as the African; his skin does not blister as ours does…. In fact he is physically adapted to the climate just as the

> animals are, and by the same agency, which is *not* that of climate, but of something beyond and above it.[58]

There it is—the different races of man are like different animals; they cannot adapt, even to climate; they were created by God (and not by evolution) as they are now; and the free institutions of the English are wholly unsuited to most of them.

Indeed, Denison had become a colour racist *of almost* the worst kind—but at least he was still against slavery. He was incensed that the French were continuing to use their coolie labourers from India as virtual slaves when they were only allowed coolies (at great cost to British India) in order to forestall a French return to the slave trade. Denison had not forgotten that in New South Wales he had had to struggle to end the French practice of kidnapping Solomon Islanders.[59]

But if Denison saw no excuse for slavery in 1865, the year it ended in the English-speaking world, neither was there any excuse for treating the Indians at all generously or equally. They were born dishonest as a race, and nothing could change them. Although English education had given the Indians 'an accuracy of information which they could not hope to attain except through the medium of our schools', and although the schools had convinced some of the Indians that worshipping Brahma and Krishna was 'a piece of folly', still the effect of schooling from 'a moral point of view…is *Nif*. Indeed, it made Indians disbelieve in a religion to which they still had to conform for caste reasons, 'so they were now hypocrites, *in addition* to being cowards and liars as the rest of their countrymen'.[60] With this picture of the people he was governing, and having only unwillingly presided over responsible government in New South Wales, Denison did everything he could to block the appointment or advancement of untrustworthy Indians—that is, all Indians—in their own civil service and army.

Denison wanted to resist all concepts that smacked of Darwinism, and any possibility that one kind of person or animal could turn into another—despite all his Norfolk Island 'experiments' and his other early speculations. The word 'Darwin' comes up again and again in his Indian correspondence. Halfway through his Indian tenure, Denison simply asserted that Darwin was a fantasist who asked for belief despite having not the tiniest bit of positive evidence for his theories. In Denison's mind, Darwin had pegged everything in his thinking on a total lack of *refuting* evidence. Denison's assertion that Darwin had not gathered any evidence, that *The Origin of Species* contained no evidence at all, strongly suggests that he had never thumbed through the book, much less read it.[61] But Denison had an intellect too strong and full of curiosity to long maintain such a position. He had to develop his own theory of where the varieties of mankind had come from, something to believe in above and beyond merely disbelieving in Darwinism. He had to find the pattern behind everything.

By 1864, he had it. He corresponded for a while with a polygenist archaeologist in Vienna, a Dr Schertzer, and in formulating his objections to Schertzer's views, he developed his own full-blown monogenist theory. One wonders what Dr Schertzer thought of what the governor came up with. Denison's theory was based upon mathematics. Specifically, he reasoned backward from population growth in industrial England, cutting it in half to reach a pre-industrial doubling rate of once every 100 years. He then corrected for the Flood, plus various '[f]amines, pestilences, wars, the weeping destruction of nations by the Jews, by the Eastern kings, by the Romans, by Atila, etc'.

His conclusion, which he sent to Murchison, was that Lyell's and Bunsen's ideas about the earth being 20,000 years old or more were way off. If the world had been here for 20,000 years, 'we should be puzzled to find standing room for the present population'. No, the mathematical progression of the world's population showed, when it was traced backward, that the biblical chronology of an earth only a few thousand years old was quite correct.[62] By this reasoning Denison did at least convince himself of monogenesis rather than polygenesis, for three or four sites of human creation would triple or quadruple the population above what Denison knew it to be.[63]

Denison could use this kind of statistical reasoning to solve other intellectual problems as well. Bishop Colenso had argued that the biblical account of the Israelites in the Sinai exaggerated their number, because nothing like so many people could find their fuel or other necessities in the desert. But in fact, Denison argued, the Sinai was much more pleasant in patriarchal times, for his numerical sequences showed that man changes the environment rather quickly; the biblical account of the number of Israelites in the Sinai was literally true. And so Denison came to another conclusion: if humans could change the environment of the Sinai so drastically in the several thousand years since it had sustained all the Israelites, then the desolate parts of India might be reclaimed even more quickly. Where there was jungle in the Madras Presidency, there was rain. The rain followed the jungle and not (as most people thought) the jungle following the rain. This meant that the duty of the Indian government ought to be to encourage rain by planting large swathes of forest. (Denison may have hit upon something here.[64]) The desolation of a great part of the East, Palestine, Edom, Assyria, etc., may, I think, be traced to the causes which are now in operation in India, and which I wish to neutralise.'[65]

And how much further could Denison push this train of thought? Well, with some help from Thomas Malthus he could predict the Second Coming:

> I wonder whether the men who are rummaging after the dry bones of the past ever dream of speculating as to the future of the world…. We hear of calculations as to the quantity of coal, and whether there will be sufficient to last our time; but, even in these, it strikes me that the speculators leave out one principal element in the calculation—namely, the number of people who burn the coal…. Malthus stated, and very correctly, that the tendency of population is to increase in a more rapid ratio than the means of substinence; and a little industry bestowed upon working out the results of this startling fact would have led to much the same conclusion that I have arrived at from an analysis of the statistical tables—namely that the old hypothesis that the world is about to last about 6,000 years, is by no means an improbable one.[66]

This is a wonderful mixture of environmental awareness, eschatological speculation and statistical fallacy. It relieves man, it relieves the British Empire of the need to worry very much about how long human institutions will continue. The answer is not very much longer. According to Archbishop Ussher, the world had begun in 4004 BC. In Denison's view, that left very approximately a century and a half before the world would end—which would be about the year 2000, 6,000 years after it had begun. Whether or not the Indians were still capable of cultural progress in the mid-nineteenth century, or whether

on the other hand their climate and social institutions had stripped them of the ability to change—questions that Denison had gone back and forth on[67]—in any case real progress for India was out of the question, for the Indians could not progress fast enough before the end of the world. Therefore Denison maintained that any thought of educating the natives and leading them forward into self-government is 'twaddle' that forgets differences in skin colour that are as good as permanent.

If the imminent arrival of the end of the world had implications for the history of India, it had just as many for the history of England. Because of population growth and colonization, England and its empire and all modern social improvements had hastened the end of the world by filling it up all the faster (although in accordance with God's foreknowledge). Again, he wrote to Murchison:

> Men increase in a geometrical ratio, and every step of progress in social life; every check which improvement in morals imposes upon the gratification of our passions; every invention which makes war more expensive; every improvement in medical science (by the way, medicine is not a science, but an art) which adds up to security from the effects of disease; every step taken by sanitary commissioners—each and all of these accelerate the rate of increase of the population…. The result will, of course, be that our present 1,200 millions will become 2,400 millions; the 24 become 48; the 48, 96, with increasing rapidity; the world will be replenished and subdued, and *then* shall the end be. I am afraid that the end will come before any more of Darwin's species will have time to develop themselves.[68]

In Tasmania and New South Wales, Denison had helped to build new countries; in India he helped to increase farm production on hundreds of thousands of acres. But the Empire that he had helped to build was not simply of world-historical significance. No, it was of central cosmological and eschatological importance. It had hastened the end of the world.

Denison's opposition to training Indians for self-government has been noted by other scholars.[69] What must be added is the perspective that comes from going beyond what Denison said in his official despatches and looking at his unofficial writings. His belief that the Indians could not be groomed for self-government was not some racist, statist, *predictable* position on the part of an interchangeable British official. His view was not simply racist, although he had come to believe in the immutability of skin colour and in the biological inheritance of cultural forms.[70] Instead his view was that the Indians would not have time enough to develop the habits of self-governance because of the imminence of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Theories don't get much grander, nor generalizations about human events and cultures much broader than that. To get himself started down this adventurous chain of reasoning, all Denison had needed to do was to adopt the short and biblical view of the length of human history that he had reached through his mathematical reasoning about the rate of population growth; and this reasoning he adopted, it seems, simply to have an easier time disputing Darwin on whether the slow process of evolution was conceivable, and in disputing the polygenism of his friend Dr Schertzer of Vienna. Having gone that far, as we have seen, the Denison who had for years had such a careful mind, such a scientific

mind, and who had once condemned the unwarranted generalizations of the colonists, developed some unwarranted generalizations of his own. Darwinian speciation was impossible because time was too short. And a rearrangement of power within the British Empire was impossible, too, because there was not enough time before the end of the world to modify the biological differentiation among the races.

Man had started from a single creation, Denison wrote. Then the Australian Aborigines and the Western Europeans and the peoples of the Madras Presidency all went their own ways—and at this late date in the cosmic cycle there was no time for anything more in the nature of the improvement of the natives. When challenged on this very point by Murchison, who argued for polygenesis—for if humanity came from a single stock, too much time would be required for blacks to change into whites, or whites into blacks—Denison responded that change has sometimes been accelerated by interbreeding. He denied any change stemming from adaptation to climate, and he just as strongly denied the possibility of change by education. The change into white, black and the rest had come sometime, but all change has ended long ago: French Canadians are French and would never become Americans; more tellingly, modern 'Hindoos' are identical to those 'in Alexander's time'. All possibility of human change had ended in the remote past.[71]

In sum, the shift in Denison's thinking between his anti-racist years in Tasmania and New South Wales and his *post-Origin of Species* years in India was astonishing. He went from careful, explicitly anti-racist, and openminded Tocquevillean analysis, in which he examined the effects of different social conditions upon a common human stock, to a general, global and cosmological theory of imperial destiny, predicated upon the immutability of racial differences. The extraordinary thing is how his intellectual changes were embodied in the letters that (along with extracts from Lady Denison's journal) made up the bulk of Denison's only thick book, the two-volume *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* published in 1870. How was Denison trying to portray himself? Honestly enough, it would seem. He included letters that showed wildly different points of view. Perhaps it was for this reason that he pointed out in his preface that letters show who one was more honestly than one's reminiscences could ever do[72]—he understood that people do change and he was including the letters that marked his own changes. He had said as much to Murchison in the autumn of 1867, when he began the project.[73] Denison finished his preface and presumably the book in November 1869, more than a year after he joined the Colonial Society's council on 8 September 1868.

With such wildly different letters, the book does at least reflect his peculiar views with some honesty. So do two short works that he turned his attention to as his active career came to a close. In *An Attempt to Approximate the Antiquity of Man by Induction from Well Established Facts,* the first of these pamphlets, he added more statistical detail.[74] Then he took the theme of population-doubling rather further in an 1870 lecture on colonization. By then he was firmly ensconced as a trustee of the Colonial Society, and he was ready to adopt some novel ideas about the profitability of imperial investments. Denison pointed out that in the Australian colonies and in others like them, the amount of 'capital' would quadruple while the population would only double, since Europe could not contain all the investment pouring out of Britain. After 56 years, the capital invested in Australia would have been multiplied by 16.[75] The Empire was a wonderful thing!

Denison died in 1871, in apparent peace with God. All mankind was one, he had told the YMCA in an 1868 speech. The true Church was all the churches put together, including such nondenominational organizations such as the YMCA itself, all equally serving man.[76] Their work, the work of the whole Church, could best be seen in colonies. Since there are no traditional classes or parties in the colonies, 'there are no social heart-burnings to mar the effect of that equality before God which is the essence of a Christian faith'.[77] But now that equality was a purely white one. He had once resisted democratic equality and white racism alike. Now that he had given in to grand theories, he embraced both.

7
The variety of Englishmen and their empires, Part I

Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton

What did the Empire mean to men who were not long-time imperial bureaucrats, like Merivale and Rogers, nor residents of Australia in one capacity or another, like Westgarth and Denison? In trying to understand the broader mass of Englishmen—those who might have framed some Romantic vision of the reach of British settlement, shipping, telegraphs, parlour chairs, scientific instruments or what have you, entirely in their own minds—there is no reason not to start with Edward Bulwer-Lytton. He was as much a Romantic as anybody.

It would take not one chapter but several large volumes to explore fully the thinking and career of Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer-Lytton, first Baron Lytton (1866). There was the young man who carried on a flirtation with Lady Caroline Lamb, and then decamped to write love poems, break hearts, and fight duels (two of them) in the Paris of the 1820s. There was the Bulwer-Lytton who—as a radical and hyperkinetic member of parliament—helped to pass the Great Reform Bill of 1832. There was the Bulwer-Lytton whose shift from Liberal to Tory was occasioned in large part—as he explained with wonderful openness in an 1851 pamphlet—by the death of his mother in 1843 and his inheritance of her property. Then there was the Bulwer-Lytton who had his estranged wife committed for seizing the platform and denouncing him as he was re-elected to parliament. At the same time he was serving as colonial secretary under Lord Derby, and he scuttled Canadian Confederation for a decade for no reason that anyone could understand.[1] And there was the Bulwer-Lytton who, in 1863, turned down the throne of Greece because the country had a 'horrible travesty of a free European constitution; its subjects profoundly orientalized, corruption universal'—not up to his standards at all.[2] Then there was Bulwer-Lytton who was the author of 27 novels, eight plays, 13 volumes of poetry, 17 volumes of non-fiction, history and essays, and most of the contents of volumes 31 through 68 of the *New Monthly Magazine*, making 140 volumes of collected works in his lifetime, not counting his posthumously collected poems and speeches. (And then there were the commonplace books, by themselves almost as extensive as his published writings.) This literary Bulwer-Lytton was a sufficient master of languages not only to translate Schiller but—yes indeed—to write 'It was a dark and stormy night'. Yet

because some nights are moonlit, even through the thunderstorms, what is so wrong with that?

Bulwer-Lytton's was one of those daunting Victorian careers of massive authorship that somehow existed alongside a heavy engagement in national politics and—in his case—periods of professional whist playing. In order to better understand his part in constructing imperial generalizations from the bustle of the Victorian world, we need to dip into his extraordinary life story at four points: first, when he planned a two-volume work of social criticism called *England and the English*, analysing the democratic and aristocratic elements in English life (it was published in 1833, before Tocqueville had ever been heard of); second, when he wrote *The Caxtons*, a novel featuring early Victorian England's most famous depiction of colonial life; third, when he served as colonial secretary for one year in the late 1850s; and fourth, the late 1860s when he fought against the second great reform bill, entered the Lords, joined the Colonial Society, and wrote a fantasy of the future entitled *The Coming Race*.

The prospectus for England and the English

Bulwer-Lytton was born in about 1803 to a well-established family. His family could also be eccentric. Thus the several-year delay in having him baptized; he went through life without precisely knowing his own age. His maternal grandfather was a scholar of Latin and Greek, and a man whose Hebrew and other 'oriental languages' were reputed to be the best of his generation after those of Sir William Jones. Yet the grandfather's sole literary production was a Hebrew drama that he burned after he could find no one capable of acting in it. He might have spent his time in other, more profitable pursuits, for at his death when Bulwer-Lytton was seven (or so), the family library had to be sold and three of the four ranges of Knebworth House pulled down to suit the reduced circumstances.

Bulwer-Lytton's father was a general, and not particularly notable or affectionate. He seemed to resent his third son, Edward. The first two sons would have their own properties because of entail; the third would have the far grander Knebworth through his mother—far grander, that is, before three-quarters was pulled down.[3]

Bulwer-Lytton's education began at that very event, when the seven-year-old asked his mother whether she did not feel overwhelmed by the departed glory of the family's history. She responded that it was time to send him to school. He did horribly. Then he was placed with private tutors until he went to Cambridge, when he was already publishing books of poetry.

At university, the pattern of storm and stress only intensified. Bulwer-Lytton's first love died of a broken heart around 1823, separated from him and having been forced to marry someone else; she had written to Bulwer-Lytton from her deathbed, promising eternal devotion. In her promise she sealed Bulwer-Lytton's fate as a suffering Romantic. He looked back on the incident as the source of 'the unsocial and shrinking temper that has sicklied over my mind'.[4]

However that may be, his 'shrinking temper' did not keep him from frenzied activity and a sufficient fondness for female company. After the friendships and debates of Cambridge, and the duels and dalliances of Paris, he returned to England in 1826 and prepared to marry. But now that his father was dead, Bulwer-Lytton found himself with only £200 per year, plus all the money in the world from the Lytton side—but every

penny of that was still controlled by his mother. And then in 1827 he married a woman she disliked, Rosina Doyle Wheeler. Without his mother's financial assistance, the couple had very little money to start on. Edward Bulwer-Lytton began earning his living, turning out novels, plays, and a huge quantity of journalism. By 1829, mother and son were reconciled, with the restoration of his £1,000 per annum allowance—until she actually met her daughter-in-law and behaved so uncivilly that Edward refused to take any more of his mother's money.

Meanwhile, the working journalist joined John Stuart Mill's youthful debating circle. He was elected to parliament in 1831, becoming friends with the younger Disraeli. Disraeli was not yet in parliament, and as yet the two men would agree on nothing politically because of Bulwer-Lytton's radicalism. But this friendship would be central to Bulwer-Lytton's eventual cabinet career. Bulwer-Lytton's and Disraeli's closeness should not be doubted even though Bulwer-Lytton explained it astrologically—indeed, he worked at astrology throughout his life. (Astrology had been made illegal as a form of fraud in 1824, and so Bulwer-Lytton refused to sponsor astrological societies publicly, but he was willing to testify in a case of libel brought by an astrologer in 1863.[5])

Happiness for Bulwer-Lytton and Rosina was short-lived; perhaps it was not in the stars. In 1833 the marriage had begun to deteriorate,[6] with a legal separation following in 1836 and the children being taken from Rosina two years later. She began to attack her husband in novels of her own. He had not been faithful or easy to live with, with his romantic penchant for emotional drama—one is tempted to refer to his dark and stormy nights. For the rest of their lives, Bulwer-Lytton would persecute his wife with as much vehemence as she persecuted him. When he had her committed in 1858, she had herself released three weeks later. She expressed her mortification at this experience in a further succession of novels and other writings.[7]

England and the English was a Romantic production, as was the rest of Bulwer-Lytton's life. It grew out of his undergraduate interests. At Cambridge, Bulwer-Lytton had intervened to save the honour of the British system of government in a Union debate over whether America or Britain had the better institutions. The subject of British institutions was one on which he was to spend some time. He focused much of his reading and com-monplace-book writing on English history and a concern for the common people.[8] Indeed, he produced a several-thousand-word prospectus *of a History of the British Public*, the prospectus was published after his death.

The main idea of the prospectus was a 'Distinction between Public and People'. The Public was the minority—sometimes the barons, sometimes the clergy, later the Middle Class—and it was also the main actor in history, often in power struggles against the king. Bulwer-Lytton's initial headings, in paragraph form, went on this way: 'Fault of popular Parties, to go with the Public, and penetrate the People. Astonishing fact that, after a thousand years since the Conquest, no education for people, no law for people.'[9] The book would be a history of the Public: 'From time to time I shall pause in this task to contrast the steady silent progress of the People with the fickle changes and noisy follies of its unworthy representative, the Public.'[10]

Freedom in England had been the result of the many successful revolutions in the northern climes. There, the People faced starvation when taxes were too high and the government unworthy. Famine was less likely in the Mediterranean climates, so the People there were less desperate and had allowed despotism to continue. But above and

beyond the unforgiving climate, English liberty had another, more particular cause—the presence of religious dissidents, the nonconformists who demanded liberty but whose moral foundation moderated the excesses to which democracy would otherwise be prone. Much of this is highly reminiscent of Tocqueville, who numbered religion among the factors that lent stability to America's democracy. For Bulwer-Lytton,

> [d]emocracy may or may not be a bad form of government, but it is not necessarily subversive of religion, of property, or of the recognised conditions of existing civilisation. Socialism, Communism, Owenism, Fourierism, and all the other social sects which have branched out of the common root of Infidelity, would certainly annihilate the foundations of existing States, whatever else they might reconstruct upon the ruins of them. Dissent in England counteracts this tendency.[11]

Bulwer-Lytton also planned to discuss the social *mores*—as Tocqueville would term them—that kept English society running along democratic lines. As Tocqueville would write that American society was itself a school for democracy, Bulwer-Lytton would say the same thing about English society:

> independently of schools, Education in this country proceeds from the example of home, the example and habits of those amongst whom the generations are born…. As the child grows up, and enters upon life, Life itself becomes the Voluntary Teacher.[12]

From there proceed the English characteristics of industry, fortitude, domestic affection, respect for the law and respect for established religion.

What then could be done for the long-excluded People? They were already well informed about mechanics and other practical subjects (as Tocqueville would find the Americans to be), but they lacked education. For this there were two remedies: (1) cheaper popular books and (2) the foundation of popular literary institutes for discussions and lectures. Galleries should also be kept open longer, and more writers put on the civil list. (Did Bulwer-Lytton—already a published poet as an undergraduate—have anyone particular in mind for support?) Suitably improved, the people would then need to be given equal opportunities with the scions of the aristocratic Public—through the abolition of entail and the imposition of universal taxation upon land to support the poor. Ireland would need more strenuous measures of improvement, from new crops and industries to Industrial schools, plus dividing the land into districts and holding each district responsible for putting down the crime in its area.[13]

It seems that many of the themes and visions of the future that Tocqueville would so brilliantly express had also occurred to at least one other young aristocrat in the 1820s. (The prospectus was written in 1824.) When Bulwer-Lytton came to write *England and the English* almost ten years later, after he had written several novels, his analysis of English society had not changed very much. Family life was still the foundation of society. So it had been for the Romantic undergraduate mourning his lost love, and so it was now that he actually had children and a still-functioning marriage.

The key difference in the later version is the central role that popular literature had come to play. As Standish Meacham has shown, while *England and the English* does resemble both *Democracy in America* and Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, it is far more concerned than they were with the social effects of literature. Thus it more closely resembles Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age* and a later work, Emerson's *English Traits*.[14] And if the theme is more literary than Tocqueville's, so too is the technique. Like Tocqueville, Bulwer-Lytton included information from personal observations, conversations and government reports. Yet Bulwer-Lytton also moved towards the novelistic form in creating illustrative characters (as Meacham points out, they are not quite ideal types in the Weberian sense) such as 'William Muscle' and 'Samuel Square'.

The Caxtons

Novelists personalize the places and the theories that they run across. In 1849, after the Hungry Forties, the year of Revolution, and the high tide of interest in Wakefieldian emigration, Bulwer-Lytton published *The Caxtons*, his nineteenth novel (the first having been published in 1827, when he and his bride first needed the money). Given the difficulties in his own marriage and in England as a whole, perhaps the mother country was no longer the perfect school for family life and democratic stability. The last three chapters of *The Caxtons* are therefore set in wholesome Australia, where the main character redeems himself.

In short, Bulwer-Lytton took the themes of family and stability that were so important in *England and the English* and turned them into a fully (rather than only partially) fictional form. In moving the picture of family and stability to the colonies, he was employing a generalized ideal, for he had never been there.

He chose to move away from specificity in other ways, too—not to abandon the particular, but to de-emphasize it. No longer did he strive for the *melange* of forced and excessive emotionalism, exotic colour, nostalgia and anachronism that had marked the historical novels up to that point.[15] As he noted at the time, he had to change his whole technique and orientation as a novelist in order to pursue the family theme—however confident he was about his ability to do so:

> The art employed in *The Caxtons* is a very simple one, and within reach of all. It is just that of creating agreeable emotions…. Now to do this, we have only to abandon attempts at many subtle and deep emotions, which produce uneasiness and pain, and see that the smile is without sarcasm and the tears without bitterness. That is one branch of art and rarely fails to be popular. Of course there are other and higher branches of art, in the cultivation of which popularity may be very doubtful. But one does not always want to be popular.[16]

A noble sentiment, that last comment, but it did not mask that the whole point was that Bulwer-Lytton *did* now want to be popular. For more than a decade his novels had been historical or fantastic, and rather difficult. With *The Caxtons* and its two sequels, *My Novel* (1853) and *What Will He Do With It?* (1856), he turned to realism and the contemporary world. These novels also introduced into his work, as his comments

suggested, a light, affectionate and non-satirical tone.[17] Bulwer-Lytton had moved from trying to express the heights of Romantic emotion to something simpler and calmer, the 'expression of a something that comes home to the greatest number of hearts and souls'.

Bulwer-Lytton had written to the editors of *Blackwood's Magazine*, in which his novels appeared first in serialization, that while a novel ought to adhere to its plan, the writer must nonetheless lose himself in the details and complexities of life.[18] The job of the novelist was therefore to record in fiction this organic and complex reality, rather than any abstractly derived and simplified system. So he was well aware of the danger of over-generalization and over-simplification, but in the case of *The Caxtons* he seems to have made a deliberate choice to omit detail and to create an idealized and over-generalized colonial world. There is no depiction of India, where the second most important male character dies fighting for England. This young man's time in India is reported by other characters, never shown directly. Nor is there any real depiction of Australia itself, where both of the main characters go in order to turn their lives around. The first discussion of Australia simply tells us that the hero has indeed reached the continent, with no indication of where and how he arrived or what he did to establish himself. Presumably he arrived in a port city, but no kind of city is alluded to at this point in the book. The countryside *is* described—but in purely literary and Romantic terms, with no specifics: 'see the pastures, Arcadian with sheep in the hundreds and thousands—Thyrsis and Menalcas would have had hard labour to count them, and small time, I fear for singing songs about Daphne. But alas! Daphne's are rare: no nymphs with garlands and crooks trip over these pastures.'19 Bulwer-Lytton brought up the classical comparisons only to deny them, but by taking so long in saying what Australia *is not* he managed to avoid saying what Australia *is*, besides a projection of the ideal. Some times he accomplished this denial of specificity within a line or two: 'Night in Australia! How impossible to describe its beauty! Heaven seems, in that new world, so much nearer to earth!'[20] Only when the hero has sold up his cattle run and joined his Uncle Jack—a shady land-speculator—do we hear about specific places. The hero found his 'Uncle Jack residing near Adelaide, in a very handsome villa, with all the signs and appurtenances of colonial opulence'—but what the signs were or what the appurtenances looked like Bulwer-Lytton does not go on to say. Uncle Jack was, however, 'assisting in the foundation of Port Phillip'.[21]

The hero stays in featureless Adelaide a little while longer and then leaves Australia for England—the Antipodes having done their job in reforming him and repairing his fortunes in but a few years. In taking his leave of Australia, our hero indulges in a fine exhortation (the novel is in the first person). Here Bulwer-Lytton shows despite himself that what you lack in specificity you can make up for in enthusiasm:

> Adieu, thou beautiful land! Canaan of the exiles, and Ararat to many a shattered Ark! Fair cradle of a race for whom the unbounded heritage of a future, that no sage can conjecture, no prophet divine, lies afar in the golden promise-light of Time!—destined, perchance, of the sins and sorrows of a civilization struggling with its own elements of decay, to renew the youth of the world, and transmit the great Soul of England through the cycles of Infinite Change.

All of the book's climatic descriptions, as well as a poem that Bulwer-Lytton includes on the 'soft ways of heaven, air, and sea, 'Which open all their pores to thee….', share another feature. Despite hardly ever mentioning any specific place within Australia, these descriptions of the continent get footnoted. The footnotes refer to 'Cowley on *Town and Country'*, *'Sidney's Australian Handbook'*, and 'a MS letter to the author from Mr. George Bladen Wilkinson, author of *South Australia'*[22] Bulwer-Lytton wanted his details to be accurate for his newly literate readers; thus his unusual technique of using footnotes in novels, and not just in *The Caxtons*. And yet in this novel all that he was using the footnotes for was to back up the wildest generaliza-tions about climate and landscape. When he shifted to imperial settings, Bulwer-Lytton did not know enough about his subject to be concrete, but he wanted to seem concrete anyway. He wanted to paint a convincing picture of the wholesome family life that he imagined in Australia—for he could no longer convince himself that family life was still healthy in over-crowded, money-grubbing England.

Colonial secretary

And then in 1858 he got to run the Empire. The question of how general impressions or policies could be balanced with specific evidence about specific places—how plan could be balanced with detail—were still very much in his mind. He had written to the editor of *Blackwood's* about this issue in relation to the writing of novels; now he spoke to his subordinates about it, in regard to the running of the Colonial Office. Referring to Bulwer-Lytton's tenure as colonial secretary, and Lord Carnarvon's tenure as his deputy, the permanent undersecretary of state, Sir Frederic Rogers, wrote that

> [b]oth [Lord Carnarvon] and Sir Edward [Lytton] work very hard, Sir E. writes perfect volumes by way of minutes, and then tells me that he learnt two great maxims in life, one to write as little as possible and the other to say as little as possible![23]

And this ironic scene with the prolific novelist disclaiming logorrhoea rather nicely sums up Bulwer-Lytton's way of embracing the world. Both in novels and in office, he knew that there was a limit to detail and a danger in generalization, but he also knew that he had to indulge in a large measure of both—detail and generalization—in order to balance verisimilitude with some kind of understandable plan.[24]

His achievements in the Colonial Office were not that impressive.[25] Of course, as colonial secretary he had to deal with seemingly random pieces of business. He tried to protect coolie labourers in the West Indies, and to stop the high mortality on the ships that took them there.[26] He sent Gladstone on a fact-finding mission to the Ionian Islands, where Bowen had been. He helped, perhaps more enthusiastically, to create the new colony of British Columbia—employing some grand parliamentary language on the future of the country. The arrangements for British Columbia gave Bulwer-Lytton some amusing opportunities that as a hard-working and romantic individual he seized—he was able to go back and forth with Queen Victoria on the name of the new capital, and he

took the opportunity to pick all by himself the books for the Royal Engineer's camp library, later used as the core of the public library in New Westminster.[27]

He looked for what patterns he could find. Showing once again that he knew the difference between generalizations and details, he explained that Godley's idea that a colony like British Columbia needed no troops, while quite sound as a theory dealing with 'wooden puppets', would not do for real people—much less those living so close to the United States that they could simply join it if threatened. Bulwer-Lytton made sure there were troops in British Columbia, as well as a more significant naval presence than the navy had in mind.[28] And he tried to fight the money interest that he thought was on the ascendant in England. Entirely on his own initiative, he started and would not let go of a struggle with the Hudson's Bay Company. He cancelled their agreements and proclamations despite clear legal advice to the contrary. In his view, he was furthering clean and open public affairs as against base capitalist interests of the kind he detested at home. Bulwer-Lytton demanded many things of the Hudson's Bay Company; in fact the law prevailed. The controversy that he continually stirred up achieved little, except for the termination of the Company's exclusive trading privileges.[29]

All in all, Bulwer-Lytton's achievements in his year as colonial secretary did not add up to very much. But if we look at his time in the Colonial Office in another way, looking not at what he did but at what he refused to do—looking at the measures that he resisted and the policy initiatives that he worked hard to frustrate and overturn—we will see some major activities on his part, and in them we will see a pattern connected to some of the central concerns that he had at this time. But first, just what were those concerns?

In the midst of all of his Colonial Office business, great and small, in November 1858 Bulwer-Lytton, who was always a hypochondriac, tried to resign for reasons of health. Disraeli, who headed the government in the Commons under Derby in the Lords, replied:

> I am entirely knocked up by your letter, received on my early return from Knowsley.
>
> I have no opinion of Dr Reed, or of any Doctors. In the course of my life I have received fifty letters from physicians like that which you enclosed to me, and which I return. Had I attended to them, I should not be here, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in robust health.
>
> Men of our temperament, at our time of life, ought not to require Doctors.[30]

Bulwer-Lytton might have expected more sympathy from his old friend and fellow author when he claimed to be out of nervous energy. He had been in the cabinet for less than a year, but it was a year when he had also had his wife put into a mental home. As Lord Blake has put it: 'His health, never good and possibly not improved by his habit of smoking a pipe six feet long and consuming seven cigars between bedtime and breakfast, began to deteriorate.'[31] But for Disraeli, Bulwer-Lytton's nervous complaint was 'not organic or natural, and must be the result of some quacking'. More important than the colonial secretary's health, in Disraeli's mind, was the health of Lord Derby's minority Tory government, soon to attempt a Reform Bill: 'Whatever your illness may be, your secession will be a paralytic stroke to the Ministry. The retirement of the most insignificant would be serious now.'

Indeed Bulwer-Lytton did stay on until the end of the ministry in May, after its parliamentary and electoral defeat. But he was not happy. Outwardly he supported the government's policies. Indeed, he made an in several ways anguished speech in favour of the Reform Bill. Now very deaf, Bulwer-Lytton could not control the level of his voice, which ranged from the inaudibly soft to the uncomfortably loud. As a whole, the speech was a brilliant if strange and histrionic performance, as Disraeli reported it to Queen Victoria.[32] But despite making such a laboured and even heroic intervention in favour of the government bill, privately Bulwer-Lytton had another view of it. On the day that Derby and Disraeli decided to call an election on the issue of reform, Bulwer-Lytton wrote to Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, his parliamentary private secretary (and another Colonial Society founder):

> Remember my words. From this day dates a change that in a few years will alter the whole face of England. From this day the extreme Liberals are united; the great towns will be banded for Democracy, and Democracy in England is as sure as that we are in this room. Nothing like this day since Charles I did much the same as we are doing.[33]

Thus, it was at this time of emotional collapse and official work prolonged beyond what he thought he could bear that Bulwer-Lytton seems to have moved away from the idea in *England and the English*—and expressed more popularly in *The Caxtons*—that what kept England from the worst of democracy was a special kind of fellow-feeling and family values. Now it seemed to him that England could rely on no such thing. Instead, the democracy that one could see in America and elsewhere was a foretaste of what England could expect in her decline. Democracy had gone too far for him. The only question, but it was a burning question, was how to manage democracy's arrival. The author of *England and the English* had come to appreciate the fear motivating Tocqueville's researches, although he did not mention Tocqueville by name.

Once the government had fallen, Bulwer-Lytton opposed reform for the rest of his life.[34] As he wrote to another friend in 1860, England had made a mistake—not in removing Charles I, but in giving the people too much power in the aftermath. Now, Bulwer-Lytton said, England was making the same mistake again, giving the people so much power that demagoguery would be inevitable:

> [T]hese views of mine are not limited to a past period in history which I could pass over lightly, but they link themselves to future contingencies and permanent policy. They are consonant to a theory I have held for a great many years, viz.:—1st, that while popular evolutions usually commence in the faults of the Govt., yet when they arrive at a certain point, they are liable to be, in much, robbed of their legitimate fruits by the violence of the popular party; that a revolution of force and blood can nearly always be prevented by a compromise, when the popular party are uppermost; and that, if they disdain this and go further, a reaction is sure to follow, which throws back liberty.[35]

But perhaps in the colonies it was not too late to preserve the family feeling and the smaller scale of society—the factors that could moderate the advance of democracy. And so, as colonial secretary, Bulwer-Lytton worked very hard to defeat Canadian Confederation, a process that was already well advanced through its planning and consultation stages when he arrived at the Colonial Office.

First, it must be understood that Bulwer-Lytton was the colonial secretary most in favour of leaving self-governing colonies alone, even to the extent of letting them go their own way in divorce and family law, and thus allowing them to fall out of conformity with British legal practice. He put the matter this way: 'Private and domestic relations such as divorce, etc., should be left as much as possible to the communities which had formed their own politics and know their own social grievances.'[36] Colonial self-government of this kind was his overall policy in areas far beyond family law; Bulwer-Lytton was not merely dreaming of colonial divorce procedures that he would have loved to apply to his own hated wife. As in *The Caxtons*, he projected an ideal of family life onto the settlement empire of his imagination. He envisioned colonial families, not large colonial nations. Thus, while Bulwer-Lytton was nonetheless in favour of colonial self-government, he did not want self-government to act on too large a scale, such as that of colonial federations. He even went so far as to try to replace Governor Grey of the Cape of Good Hope for defying his instructions and working towards federation in Southern Africa.[37]

There was hope even for the democracy of the United States, if it could transform itself into a set of governments that were on a more manageable scale. He generally supported the cause of the north during the US Civil War, but he did very much dislike the size and federal character of the United States. In 1861, he would express his hope that the American federation would break up into at least four pieces within a couple of generations, 'with happy results to the safety of Europe and the development of American civilization'. If the population and wealth of the United States had continued to fill 'all the vast continent of America', sending fleets out from several seaboards, then the United States would grow too big for the government to have any real control 'over a populace exceedingly venturous and excitable'. Had the United States stayed together, 'then America would have hung over Europe like a gathering and destructive thunder cloud. No single kingdom in Europe could have been strong enough to maintain itself against a nation that consolidated the gigantic resources of a quarter of the globe.'[38]

As Bulwer-Lytton had written in the *Quarterly Review* in 1856, the arguments over the Mosquito Coast that the British were having with 'our quick and impressionable kinsmen' in the United States—arguments which ought, in Bulwer-Lytton's view, to have been met and refuted by the British side, rather than being allowed to stand unanswered—'prove[d] the extreme danger of suffering one-sided evidence to be placed at the disposal of a democratic government, whenever it serves its purpose to mislead the judgment and arouse the passions of a democracy'.[39] So for Bulwer-Lytton it seemed to be in the nature of democracies to indulge such 'passions'. The solution that he went on to suggest in 1861, as we saw, was not the abandonment of democracy but the development of smaller democratic countries.

Proper discussion was vital in any well-functioning democracy, as the extreme length and complexity of Bulwer-Lytton's own article on the Mosquito Coast controversy, the article that we have been reviewing, may have been meant to demonstrate. We will not

follow every detail of it. As with most political affairs, he said, the truth is 'to be hunted out through a mass of dry correspondence or historical detail, and arranged by a patience and acumen which are not to be expected from an ordinary reader' (or writer). It took him fully 50 pages to lay out all his evidence in the *Quarterly Review*. (His brother, Sir Henry Bulwer, had been Ambassador to Washington from 1849 to 1852, and knew a great deal about the matter.)

What the world needed were small-scale democracies where affairs could be judged dispassionately and details sifted through by men who could handle them, and who would not generalize and jump to their conclusions too quickly. In large-scale democracies, demagoguery would crowd out the detailed discussions of the *Quarterly Review*. Not only would each democratic society have a smaller, more rational populace, but with smaller democracies less damage would be done because of the democratic whims of any one people. For Bulwer-Lytton, as for Tocqueville, nothing could be done to avoid the democratic future, but democracy as it advanced could be channelled into directions that were more rather than less compatible with civility and decency.

Because large democracies were unwieldy, and out of scale with the proper arena of human life, Bulwer-Lytton rejected colonial federation in South Africa, and he was enthusiastic about dividing Queensland from New South Wales, hurrying the bill along as much as possible, and wanting to issue the papers of separation before the bill was passed.[40] And he applied the same principle to British North America.

Bulwer-Lytton's refusal to accept the confederation talks organized by the government of the Colony of Canada (today's Ontario and Quebec) has been studied many times.[41] However, his reasoning usually remains in the dark. He explained himself in a minute addressed to his cabinet colleagues in November 1858, but his explanation seems to lack force, and it has failed to convince later scholars of his candour. He simply claimed that confederation was a policy of a single party in one colony, while the other parties (including the formidable Opposition) had not expressed a view about it, and neither had any of the political parties or governments in the Maritime colonies that would be federated with Canada. If the Colonial Office were to ask the legislatures of the affected colonies for their views, the Office would seem to be promoting a plan to change the whole of the Empire for the benefit of the government of the day in only one colony. If the British government did need to canvass Canadian opinion on the question, Bulwer-Lytton said he could do it quietly, 'tacitly', through the governors. Otherwise,

> [i]f the British Government were to take a pronounced course either way, it would thus appear to side with one party, be exposed to the assaults of the other, and by participating in the contest of rival politicians, it would lose the character of a calm and impartial arbiter, by which, should the demand for Federation ever become general, it might hereafter dictate conditions with more authority and ease in proportion as the rival jealousies of the Provinces, and the inherent difficulties of their union became felt by the colonists themselves.[42]

It seems that the secret of British influence in the self-governing Canadas was not to try to use it. Doing so would tip Britain's hat and reduce British influence in the future. And the reason to maintain all possible influence, or so it would seem from the passage we

just examined, was so that if Federation became a popular idea, Great Britain could help the Canadians to see that under a federated government the regions would lose their special legislative initiatives, giving up too large a measure of effective independence—'the inherent difficulties of their union'.

All this was addressed to a cabinet that was (in November 1858) very busy preparing a reform bill of which Bulwer-Lytton disapproved. But he was *pretending* to approve of it, all the while in the very same days that he was trying to resign from the cabinet on grounds of ill health. He did attend the cabinet meetings—voting to make the reform bill more and not less sweeping in its expansion of the franchise.[43] Perhaps he simply wanted a bill that was less likely to pass. This was the intense moment, when he was writing letter after letter to Disraeli on the severity of his illness, at which Bulwer-Lytton addressed his minute to the cabinet on why he was against Canadian Confederation. In that minute, as we have seen, he was not saying all that he could about the unavoidability of demagoguery in large democracies—was Disraeli's own behaviour an example of such demagoguery?—but Bulwer-Lytton was making it clear that he was against allowing smaller colonial democracies to unite into larger ones.

Because of the reform proposals of the government of which he was a part, as we saw him tell Drummond Wolff, familial and careful government in English society, all that in *England and the English* had kept uncontrolled democracy at bay, was already under attack. And it was under attack in each of the proposals to federate certain colonies. He worked to defend it in Canada. In the case of England itself, he was not sure that unbridled democracy *could* be contained. Already it had gone too far.

The Coming Race

Bulwer-Lytton left active politics soon after leaving the Colonial Office; never again would he be in the quandary of dissent and dissimulation that he had survived as a cabinet minister during the Reform phase of the Derby—Disraeli ministry. Keeping his seat in parliament, he intervened chiefly to speak against reform. Otherwise he kept to the world of literature. He was created first Baron Lytton in 1866. Because his hearing had deteriorated further, he never spoke in the House of Lords, often staying at his country house.[44]

He wrote more in the Caxton cycle, plus historical poems and fantasy novels. He travelled on the continent. He agreed to be president of the Archaeological Society in 1869.[45] His decline was coming quickly, but he still sometimes took part in London society, meeting the Earl of Albemarle, whom he found very pleasant, in June 1868, and perhaps finding out something about the plans on the part of the earl's son for a Colonial Society—whose first meeting was two weeks away.[46] At the Athenaeum, he would eat at a table headed by a Mr Heywood, whose other guests included Herman Merivale; Anthony Trollope; Austen Henry Layard, the archaeologist and Foreign Office official; Count Strzlecki, the Australian explorer; and Sir Edmund Head, whose federation plans for Canada Bulwer-Lytton had interrupted a decade before.[47] Bulwer-Lytton was living a calm life of reading and friendship.

One of the last books that he was to complete, begun about a year after he joined the Colonial Society, was a departure from anything that he had written before. It was a science fiction utopia about an underground people who had utter economic, political,

sexual and religious equality and liberty. All of their advantages came to them because of their mastery of a mechanical force called Vril. That Vril sounds like 'virile' or Virility' is probably no accident. Vril was a physical force akin to electricity or nuclear energy;[48] it operated in the Vril-ya's bodies as well as in their machines.

While Bulwer-Lytton explored the theme of Vril as best he could, his main focus was on the contrast between the underground world and the world of the nineteenth century. Where England with its industry had steamed ahead of the rest of the above-ground world before the Vril-ya appeared, now England was as far behind the Vril-ya in the mastery of physical force as the Amazonians were behind the English. The workshop of the world, and thus its rulers, would now be the Vril-ya. Bulwer-Lytton entitled the book *The Coming Race*.

A good proportion of the social and moral improvements dreamt of in the England of the 1860s—where democracy and equality threatened to get out of control, in Bulwer-Lytton's view—were realized and satirized in the book:

> It would be, then, utterly impossible to deny that the state of existence among the Vril-ya is thus, as a whole, immeasurably more felicitous than that of the super-terrestrial races, and, realising the dreams of our most sanguine philanthropists, almost approaches to a poet's conception of some angelical order. And yet, if you would take a thousand of the best and most philosophical beings you could find in London, Paris, Berlin, New York, and even Boston, and place them as citizens in this beatified community, my belief is, that in less than a year they would either die of *ennui*, or attempt some revolution by which they would militate against the good of the community, and be burnt into cinders at the request of the Tur [chief magistrate].[49]

The Darwinian or at least Malthusian idea of life as a struggle now permeated his thought. Although the Vril-ya live in a stasis that is as hard to identify with as Dante's *Paradiso*, or most any other depiction of heaven, they too trace their mental and physical well-being to a Darwinian struggle enacted back before they mastered the power of Vril: 'wherever goes on that early process of civilisation, by which life is made a struggle…we invariably find this result—viz., since in that competition a vast number must perish, nature selects for preservation only the strongest specimens'.[50]

For Bulwer-Lytton, the nature of that struggle or process of evolution was not species-centred or individually centred, but racially centred—with the English race coming out on top in the real world, the Vril-ya in the novel. The American hero, having lectured the Vril-ya on the inevitable improvement of the human race because of the onrush of American-style technological discovery and social equality, later comes to a different conclusion about who might really dominate the future.[51] The ultra-technological, ultra-equal Vril-ya will not just dominate but exterminate the humans.[52]

Why? The Vril-ya, although there are literally billions of them living in a largely honeycombed earth, reside in small, non-confederated communities that act like families, with no more than 30,000 people. Surplus Vril-ya go and create new little commonwealths, built from scratch as fully functional communities, with full-sized and fully decorated public buildings. When one of these new colonies of Vril-ya gets too

close to an industrial democracy of non-Vril-using underground people—whom the Vril-ya think of 'as Negroes are thought of in New York'—the non-Vril industrial democracy, feeling threatened by the Vril but also feeling confident in having a population of hundreds of millions, attacks the small town of Vril-ya—which sends out two or three children with Vril-wands to completely exterminate the whole attacking nation. This opens up more land for Vril settlement.

And yet all this, so reminiscent of European behaviour (except for the children with functional wands), is only part of the reason for Vril success. By itself this passive-aggressive imperialism is not the reason that they will one day dominate the upper world. Nor is the reason their pattern of unconfederated, Rousseauean small towns and the social unity and family feeling that having towns of this size brings. Indeed, the hero says that he has no 'wish to represent the commonwealths of the Vril-ya as an ideal form of political society, to the attainment of which our own efforts should be directed'. Nor is the Vril-ya's mastery of the Vril force itself the main reason for the inevitable Vril-ya takeover. The Vril-ya say that humans could one day master it as they themselves had done, perhaps in a few generations. No, the Vril-ya's long-term advantage is racial. For Bulwer-Lytton, race now inhered in a stock of people *despite* changes in the cultural or physical characteristics—such as the bodily mastery of Vril—through which one would think the races were defined. The lesser (above ground) peoples could not hope to achieve much by copying any particular characteristics of the greater (below-ground) people. A race was a more general category than any specific criterion by which it might be defined (or refuted); this is Kwame Anthony Appiah's 'intrinsic racism', as opposed to the 'extrinsic racism' that admits testing against the observable characteristics of the supposed racial group.[53]

Racial character meant inner moral character; it may once have been malleable, but for dozens of centuries it had been fixed. 'We are all formed by custom,' Bulwer-Lytton has one of the Vril-ya say, adding that 'even the difference of our race from the savage'—the savage underground-dwellers who did not use Vril, or have the specialized nerve system to feel and control its power[54]—'is but the transmitted continuance of custom, which becomes, through hereditary descent, part and parcel of our nature'.[55] Bulwer-Lytton's human hero endorses this view, explaining why the lesser peoples of his above-ground world could not change themselves into the greater Vril-ya by changing their institutions or habits:

> On the contrary, it is because we have so combined, throughout the series of ages, the elements which compose human character, that it would be utterly impossible for us to adopt the modes of life, to or to reconcile our passions to the modes of thought, among the Vril-ya,—that I arrived at the conviction that this people—though originally not only of our human race, but, as it seems to me clear by the roots of their language, descended from the same ancestors as the great Aryan family, from which in varied streams have flowed the dominant civilisation of the world;…had yet now developed into a unique species with which it was impossible that any community in the upper world could amalgamate, and if they ever emerged from these nether recesses into the light of day, they would,

> according to their own traditional persuasions of their ultimate identity, destroy and replace our existent varieties of man.[56]

In our upper world, by analogy, races had come about after languages, but were now indelible. Aryans were inevitably on top, and lower races, as this former colonial secretary knew, were being exterminated in Australia and elsewhere. The races could not come back together again, nor could they live next to each other.

By the time of *The Coming Race,* Bulwer-Lytton's views on human progress had changed since his time as colonial secretary a decade before. Back then, there was no generalized racial element in his thinking. Much less had there been anything like it in his earlier books, such as *England and the English* and *The Caxtons;* they do not conceive of rulership over anyone beyond romanticized English settlers. Now, however, Bulwer-Lytton could write a book that he summed up this way: 'The only important point to keep in view is the Darwinian proposition that a coming race is destined to supplant our races.'[57] Since *The Caxtons,* the United States had become once more a single continental power (in 1865). The United Kingdom had enacted a second major reform bill (in 1867). The chance to make decent, balanced, familial societies had been lost. Now there was no avoiding the age of the overgrown mass democracy. And so the world would be dominated by races and the struggle between races.

In *The Coming Race,* both the hero and the technologically and scientifically superior Vril-ya mock Darwinian thinking *per se*. Long in the past, the Vrilya had their own Darwin, their own discoverer of evolution by natural selection. The resulting controversy turned into a terrible 1,000-year war between those Vril-ya who thought that they were but a few generations removed from evolving from frogs—and, on the other side, those Vril-ya who thought instead that their race was but a few generations from evolving *into* frogs, the smoother and therefore more perfect form. After the war and devastation the Vril-ya gave up thinking about the whole matter, although they continued to represent their greatest ancient philosopher's grandfather as a full-blooded frog, and the philosopher himself as rather greenish.[58] The point is that Bulwer-Lytton could mock physical evolution; what was at stake, for him, in the struggle between *human* races was not some change in physical form but the supplanting or extermination of groups marked by a low and unchanging level of moral development at the hands of groups whose fixed moral character was somehow higher or better.

By June 1871 he reflected on the *successe d'estime* of *The Coming Race:*

> I don't think people have caught on or are likely to catch on to the leading idea of the book, which is this:—Assuming that all the various ideas of philosophical reformers could be united and practically realised, the result would be firstly, a race that must be fatal to ourselves…. Secondly, the realisation of these ideas would produce a society which we would find extremely dull, and in which the current equality would prohibit greatness.[59]

And there it is, the familiar Tocquevillean apprehension of a world of justice, equality and boring mediocrity that would supplant the world of aristocratic grace. To this picture, Bulwer-Lytton has added a special post-Darwinian English twist, a racialist twist. His

movement away from embracing the democratic settlement empire as the locus of the best expression of English values, as in *The Caxtons*, was complete, for family feeling could not be relied upon—he now saw that there would be too much democratic social equality even in the colonies, as there was in England itself.

The wider empire that he now perceived was the scene not of family feeling—and honest, detailed and thoughtful political contention—but of the almost animal struggle between races. And in that world struggle it was the industrial people who had the Vril, as well as the flat democratic sameness that industry had produced. Disillusioned by the advance of democracy in England, Bulwer-Lytton fled from the detailed work that he had once done in analysing and depicting democratic societies, with all their conflicting but ideally rational forces. He created an idealized democratic world out of the English colonies. Disillusioned with that in turn, he escaped to an even less detailed, more racist, and more imperialistic vision of what the world had become.

8
The variety of Englishmen and their empires, Part II

Edward Bulwer-Lytton is exemplary, but his odd combination of Romance, politics, literature and celebrity may not have been representative. As a prolific writer, he may have had more information to survey than less-driven men, and more of a feel for the need to manage detail, or to flee from it. But what of these 'lesser' men? Did their thinking also move towards imperialistic generalizations?

Stephen Cave: politics and the moral quandary

Stephen Cave, MP, was from the first largely concerned with extending to North America and the Caribbean his ideas of morality—namely, that slavery ought to be abolished, and that those who were emancipated deserved better than lives of labour and oppression, lives that were barely distinguishable from the slavery from which they had been freed.

Born in 1820, Cave was a barrister with an Oxford MA. A Conservative, he entered parliament only in 1859, but he had political interests all along. From 1846 to 1848, as a newly qualified barrister, he toured America looking for liberty and England's future, and observing all the social phenomena he could find. Yet instead of writing a general book as Tocqueville had done, he focused on what for him was the key theme, American slavery, and on Britain's part in failing to end it. He called his 34-page pamphlet *A Few Words, on the Encouragement Given to Slavery and the Slave Trade, by Recent Measures, and Chiefly by the Sugar Bill of 1846*.[1]

Free sugar had been exposed to the competition of slave sugar from America and Brazil. We have seen how hard Merivale worked to try to drive down the cost of free sugar by driving down wages on British sugar islands. Cave, merely a new barrister getting his start on the Western Circuit, could not take the active part in the affair that Merivale could. But he could make his views very clear on the policy of free trade, which brought slave sugar to the British market:

> The writer of these few pages spent a portion of the years 1846–7–8 in the United States of America, and amongst the Tropical Possessions of Great Britain, and other nations. During this time he saw with pain the character

> of his country impaired in the eyes of foreigners; the affection of her Colonial subjects alienated; and the cause of humanity in general injured by her changeable policy. He has, in consequence, been induced to add his feeble protest to those which have already appeared; conscious, however, that in the present state of public opinion, this is little more than a declaration of adherence to a defeated, and unpopular party.[2]

Cave was coming out as an abolitionist—and as an adherent of the discredited policy of protectionism. He had no stake in adhering to free trade as policy or as principle. He wanted to use trade laws to ban slave sugar. He did not care about what was efficient, only about what was right: 'Expediency has, of late years, too often taken the place of rectitude in the councils of the nation.' For Cave the greatest matters were at stake: It remains to be shewn whether, by an amended policy, we shall endeavour to deserve the favour and protection of heaven; or, by obstinate perseverance in an opposite course, continue to presume on its forbearance.'[3]

Cave went on to debate slavery chapter and verse from the Bible so as to refute the pro-slavery arguments that he had heard in the American South and elsewhere.[4] Then having taken care of the biblical arguments, he moved on to point out the way slavery degraded people—it was *not* merely a way of using people who were *already* degraded, and who were fit for nothing else. He discussed various educated Africans, among them the new president of Liberia. The argument that Haiti shows that blacks cannot govern themselves 'is, in fact, as an argument, utterly worthless', for the country was unprepared for freedom. Nor could much better in the way of self-government be expected from the recently freed slaves in the French and Danish colonies.[5]

Indeed, 'Evils that have taken root in past centuries cannot be eradicated in a few short years.' Cave was sure that imperial rule over non-whites or formerly enslaved populations would be necessary for some time to come:

> Many generations passed before the Saxon thrall was transformed into the English yeoman. Many, before the polished nations of modern Europe emerged from the barbarian hordes of Teutonic invaders. It is as reasonable to wonder, that the one or two descents which alone remove nearly every negro in the islands, and continent of North America from his African ancestors, have not produced the elevated skull of the Caucasian race, as to expect in the same limited period, the mental characteristics of high civilization.[6]

It seems that Cave was as confused about what characteristics were and were not inherited as were most other nineteenth-century amateurs who thought about the topic at all. He was just as willing as they were to assume that whatever cultural or economic characteristics that might set England apart from other nations were somehow inheritable through the bloodlines of the English 'race'. Freedom would bring more cultivated black individuals, as he had argued a few pages before and as the passage that we are looking at repeats, but the inherited civilizational characteristics of black people *en masse* would keep them from forming an intelligent and free populace for the foreseeable future. Note too the closing teleological flourish: Cave was suggesting that before blacks could govern

themselves, their skulls would have to become the same as European ones. He was conceding ground to the many racialist theories that he must have heard in America.

But in any case, the disaster of Haiti was no excuse for keeping people in slavery. Cave maintained that slavery was simply wrong, and that you could not expect most recently freed blacks to do very well in running a country under the best of conditions—which Haiti was not.

After positing a continuing white role in ruling emancipated blacks, Cave went on to compare the different slave and free social systems of the New World. Here, he tried to refute the long-established argument that the slavery of the Latin countries, in particular, was a more humane way to treat a working class than was the wage slavery that characterized labour within England itself. To refute this claim, Cave relied upon the published testimony of various observers of the different slave systems of the New World, and also personal testimony that he obtained from an American who had travelled in Puerto Rico.

As Cave presented it, the Brazilians continued to employ a number of horrible tortures, and the Americans did too. 'The American, the loudest advocate of freedom and the rights of man, is most jealous of any participation in those advantages by the negro race.' While conditions in Virginia were horrible, 'the Americans taunt us with the superior condition of their slaves to our labourers'. That there might be any truth behind that remark was due to the overcrowding of England, not the superiority of slavery over freedom: 'Admitting the negro to be physically better off, would the English peasant change situations with him for all the comforts and luxuries offered?'[7]

This was a key question. Of course, Cave was merely trying to play devil's advocate in order to refute the pro-slavery position. But indeed in later years Cave's concern for emancipation abroad, and for the continuing role of the British government in ruling former slaves for their own good, would be joined by an apparently new concern in his life—the conditions of factory workers, the unemployed, and the criminal element within Great Britain. Here was an admirable case for generalizing one's categories.

But that was still in the future. The products of the slave regions, most notably sugar, should not have been allowed into England at all, Cave maintained, much less having been allowed in on the same tariff as sugar grown by free men. Buying slave sugar was no better than buying stolen goods, and then saying that if you had not bought them, others would have.[8] On top of everything else, opening the British market to slave sugar drove down the price of the free version, thus increasing the suffering of the emancipated blacks. In other words, the British government was now encouraging the slave system that they 'once, not so long ago, stigmatized, almost unanimously, as a crime most foul and unnatural'.[9] England's rulers had been 'blinded by visions of universal wealth poured into the lap of our happy country: of the poor at length ceasing out of the land'.[10]

He did not think much of the idea of using coolie labour to drive down the wages of the free blacks:

> With some [statesmen], it is to be feared, reduction of wages by the master, rather than increased comfort to the labourer, was the final cause. But those statesmen whose motives were pure and disinterested, are surely not now to be told that the end cannot sanctify the means, that it is not

> lawful to do evil that good may come, to increase the misery of the negro, in hopes of bettering the lot of Englishmen.[11]

What hope was there of abolishing slavery, then? 'Dark, indeed, are the prospects', he lamented. There was only one power on earth that might have achieved his great advance for humanity: 'England, with her immense colonial empire', might have excluded all slave products 'without wanting a single luxury'. The prospect of England using its immense reach in this way excited him even in his despair: 'How different might have been the result had we been true to ourselves, consistent in our measures!' The Empire could have accomplished great things if it had proper leadership. 'Heaven would have crowned her efforts with success: her character would have been high, and stainless, her position, as the champion of liberty, grander than any in history.'[12] What little hope he had he pinned on a Romantic vision of the size and power of the British Empire.

Having argued against any claim that slave sugar was a boon for the English poor, in subsequent years Cave went on to try to develop real answers to the problems of crime and poverty in England. His second publication, *Prevention or Reformation: The Duty of the State or Individuals?; with some account of a reformatory institution,* came in 1856, with its author identified not only as Stephen Cave, barrister-at-law, but also as the honorary secretary of the 'West London Preventive and Reformative Institution', 237 Euston Road. Yes, Cave took a very direct step indeed to fight crime in England—he opened his own prison.

In *Prevention or Reformation,* Cave describes how he saw men who were chained to a bench for 20 years or more in a prison in Spoleto in 1854.[13] What was wanted instead were institutions of reform and work for young men—just so long as the products of their labour could make the institution profitable *without* competing with the handiwork of free men (any more, we might add, than he thought that slave sugar should compete with free). In America such prisons as Sing Sing were quite profitable. So was his own institution in the Euston Road. It was also quite humane. One boy who ran away—to India—wrote back to say that he wished that he had stayed.

Cave made many of the same points in an 1857 address to a Birmingham meeting of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, an address that he also brought out as a pamphlet—it was published by the firm of Ridgway, but like his 1856 pamphlet it was actually printed at Cave's prison, presumably by unfree hands.[14] What was new in Cave's 1857 treatment of the subject was an even more imperial context. Now he was using examples not only from England and America, but from Australia and India. Also, there should be no ticket-of-leave system (or probation) of releasing men early and then checking on whether they had been reformed; the ticket-of-leave removed the certainty of punishment and made men into 'liars and hypocrites'. Most criminals were good actors, like the mutineers in India—another imperial comparison.[15]

In the discussion which followed Cave's paper, Matthew Marsh, MP, another future founder of the Colonial Society, and a former MP in New South Wales, claimed that the ticket-of-leave had worked well in that country—where there was enough space to put released convicts out on their own.[16] Cave disagreed with Marsh. According to Cave, reformatories should set each man or boy a certain amount of work to do, not a sentence of any particular length. This should be an alternative to a traditional prison sentence, and available to all prisoners who might like to choose it.[17] (Cave and Marsh had their

exchange at an organization entirely dedicated to helping gentlemen find some general pattern in their experiences. The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science was in existence from 1857 to 1886; it fell apart when its individual subject-area 'sections' were outpaced by newer, free-standing, more specialized bodies.[18])

When Cave entered parliament in 1859 (for Shoreham), he was soon made chair of the West India Committee. As such, he turned his attention to Africa and the further suppression of the slave trade. It was in 1861 that he brought out his next published work, a collection of his most recent writings and speeches on this issue, including speeches from *Hansard*.[19] It showed that by 1856, the year of his first prison pamphlet, the question of what to do about slave labour in the Americas had already led him to reconsider his opposition to the use of coolies. The British government had refused to allow emigration from China to Cuba and Peru because the coolies who were sent there might be subject to labour abuses. Yet Cave, acting for the West India Committee, asked the government to reconsider this policy, since the coolies, whatever the abuses they might suffer, would be competing with and driving out slave labour.[20]

In the 1861 volume, Cave also included his 1859 address to the Bradford meeting of the Social Science Association, where he began by 'confessing [his] opinion to be that, economically, the emancipation of the slaves has not hitherto been so successful as its great and benevolent originators could have desired'.[21] Since the British people had not made the choice to buy sugar only from free sources instead of slave sources, Cave would help engineer an economic solution, an imperial solution that was very hard to distinguish from Merivale's—he would use coolie labour to make free sugar more price-competitive. Once he had seen a continuing imperial role chiefly in administering blacks for however many generations that it took for them to become ready for self-government; now he also wanted squadrons off the coast of West Africa and coolies imported from China.[22]

Yet despite these grandly imperial plans, Cave had not lost his moralistic side. Even in 1859, in the Bradford speech, he was still less than comfortable with all the social engineering. To his condemnation of slavery he added some general moral pronouncements that might well have rebounded back upon him in his moments of self-doubt about the coolie system:

> It is clear that man is seldom fit to have uncontrolled power over man. Such power has overturned the reason of ancient Roman Emperors and of modern despots, whose acts of insane tyranny can be only accounted for on this supposition; and well authenticated accounts of slaveholders, especially of delicate and highly civilized females, can be explained in no other way.[23]

Cave would not let the subject die. Within a few years, and in the context of abolition in the United States, he would continue his moral reevaluation, coming to reject the Indian and Chinese coolie immigration into the Caribbean that he had championed—albeit for so brief a period. Why, he asked in parliament, was African blood more important than the Indian or Chinese blood that would be lost through the coolie system? He continued to support *uncoerced* immigration into the Caribbean, but he had no illusions that the general coolie emigration system could be described in that way.[24]

Clearly he could not make up his mind. On the one hand, he did not want the free blacks to suffer; on the other he did not want to sacrifice the coolies on the altar of the blacks. He worked to facilitate coolie emigration to the West Indies, but at other times he rejected the policy. At least he was not indifferent. He strove for the moral centre, but he could never reconcile his two positions on the coolies; reconciling them would be impossible. But there was another intellectual move that he could make. Is it too much to suggest that in joining the Colonial Society and its council in June 1868, in pursuing his political career off the West India Committee, and in attending meetings of the Social Science Association and the Society of Antiquaries, he could move in imperial intellectual circles without having to confront these specific questions with any specificity?[25] He could associate himself with other men who supported, as he did, the general and global mission of the British Empire—without having to make up his mind precisely what that mission was, and whether or not it involved the intercontinental shipment of coolie labour.

He had once taken refuge in the hope that the British Empire was big enough, in every sense, to turn away from slave sugar. Now perhaps the Empire itself was a big enough subject to help lift him out of his moral quandary.

The Empire and the Irish politician: Chichester Fortescue

Someone who would not let himself get swamped in detail and irresolution the way Cave did was Chichester Fortescue, 1st Baron Carlingford (1874). He had a fine ability to manage information, and to find pattern and meaning in what he saw. On one level he understood the specifics and the qualifications and the limitations of the Empire, while on another level, stepping back from the specifics, he could speak to a more general audience in more general and more grandly imperialistic terms. Stepping back from the details and trying to take in the whole empire meant adopting the rhetoric of grandeur.

Fortescue came from an old Irish family, and he was the son of a member of the last Irish House of Commons. Born in 1823, educated privately and at Christ Church, Oxford, he won prizes in the humanities and took his BA in 1845 and his MA in 1847. He entered parliament for Louth, as a Liberal. He was on the side of the angels, working for Jewish emancipation and struggling against the anti-Catholic laws that had been passed after the 'papal aggression'—the restoration of the Roman Catholic episcopal hierarchy in England in 1851. Still working against those laws, he became a junior Lord of the Treasury from 1854 to 1855, next serving as the junior minister at the Colonial Office from June 1857 to March 1858.

Fortescue was again undersecretary of state for the colonies from June 1859 to November 1865. (In 1862, he changed his surname to Parkinson-Fortescue, in accordance with the will of his maternal aunt's husband, who left his estate to Fortescue.) In the Colonial Office, he applied a careful and humanitarian habit of mind to the affairs of the colonies. He made theory and fact speak to one another. For one thing, he saw the danger in Godley's advice to the Mills Committee that the colonies ought to be left to defend themselves; Fortescue referred to the proposal 'as the very exaggeration of theory on a practical question'.[26] He also worked to make sure that settlers in Natal could not ride roughshod over the legal rights of the natives; he thought that representative institutions,

however fine the idea, had been granted prematurely to 'a small white population' preoccupied by the natives around them.[27]

From November 1865 to June 1866, in the Russell Ministry that ended in that month, Parkinson-Fortescue was chief secretary for Ireland, and proposed his first Irish land bill—it was lost in the crisis over Reform that brought the government down. He was back as chief secretary for Ireland during Gladstone's great government, organized in December 1868, although he asked to be made colonial secretary;[28] he had joined the Colonial Society a few months before.

Fortescue moved towards generalization in the sense that he became ever more interested in the wider colonial empire over the years—but he never lost sight of the need to test his theories against detail and experience, and his Irish background helped with this.

Exclusion from power, Fortescue wrote in *Christian Profession not a Test of Citizenship* in 1849, takes its toll upon the minds of the excluded class:

> Let us not forget that the members of an excluded religious community are actually cut off from those advantages, physical, intellectual, and moral, which are our boast, and which so largely contribute to the superiority which we claim over less fortunate nations. But an excluded class in a free country is more to be pitied than a nation deprived of self-government…. [M]en in a free country, disfranchised on account of their creed, are far worse off: they are awake to their own condition—they know that the government of their country deprives them of blessings enjoyed by all around them—of the best objects of ambition, of the strongest incentives to exertion, of self-respect, and of the noblest pursuits of man. An authority which treats them thus, inevitably loses its claims upon their respect, and so far as this is the case, degradation of character is the result.[29]

Thus, the exercise of democratic rights makes one fit to exercise them further, and their non-exercise makes one unfit. This is reminiscent of Tocqueville's awareness that societies are made up of living and growing (or stagnating) individuals, individuals who affect society while at the same time being affected by it. Following this Tocquevillean train of thought still further, Fortescue noticed that the poor can be atomized and isolated from each other—completely degraded. If people must be excluded from the pale of the constitution, it would be healthier if the excluded were a coherent, self-aware class, such as those excluded because of their religion. However, he was quick to add that 'I cannot admit, for a moment, the supposition made above, viz.: that the exclusion of a minority on religious grounds does really promote the true interests of the majority', even by making sure that the excluded poor have a coherent sense of joint self-interest.[30] The powers that be will themselves be diminished in their own unjust exercise of power:

> A Spanish Prince will suffer no unbelieving Jew to pollute the 'national Christianity' of Spain, and straightaway the first shadows of succeeding darkness settle on the land: French monarchs pay the penalty of their catholic zeal in bloody wars and the loss of their worthiest subjects: an

> English queen prefers uniformity to justice, and a glorious reign is troubled by disaffected subjects: Anglo-Irish protestants enjoy a monopoly of political power at the price of submission to English tyranny. So true is it that 'we cannot do wrong without suffering wrong'.[31]

Fortescue's Liberalism, ranging as it did from the self-development of groups exercising their democratic rights to this latest point worthy of John Stuart Mill, that tyranny reduces the freedom and even the mental abilities of the tyrant as well as the tyrant's subjects, had brought him to this strong denunciation of Britain's history in Ireland, staining as it did even the story of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. These sentiments came from a future two-time Irish secretary.[32]

And yet he was not even now so liberal as to put all cultures and traditions on an even competitive footing in the free market of ideas: 'The public policy of a Jewish or any non-Christian state', he thought, 'would be inferior to that of a Christian country—less humane, less just, less wise.' Indeed, 'most of us will find on reflection that our actions and opinions are largely affected by a certain social code, which is apparently independent of the religion we profess or the Church to which we belong. But this code is, in fact, a faint and somewhat distorted copy of Christianity.' One might extend the analysis to think about people who did not fit into Christian societies. Jews did fit; they had the same moral code and the same experience of generation after generation of civilization, and they ought to be allowed to vote—that was the point of Fortescue's pamphlet. But what of people who were not Christians, nor non-believing meta-Christians like Edward Gibbon, nor Jews? What if some of the subject peoples in the Empire came to live in Great Britain? Should exotic peoples with exotic religions also be allowed to vote?

> The question, however, is, it must be allowed, not likely to arise. There is, probably, no religion in the world, Judaism excepted, which could acquire or keep a footing in a Christian country. And if we suppose, for argument's sake, a Mahometan, or pagan community established in England, its members would probably be so inferior or so distinct from Englishmen in manners, intelligence, and moral character, as to make political amalgamation impossible.[33]

In manners such people would be inferior, but also in intelligence—because their minds had not developed in Britain, in the British pattern of the interplay between individual and community. Yet

> imagine at any time any body of [such] persons within this nation in the position of the British Jews, speaking our language, sharing our manners, influenced by our public opinion, rivalling us in mental attainments—and both justice and policy would make them our fellow citizens, whether their religious title were Turk, Pagan, or Parsee. In fact, the consequence to which by emancipating the Jews, we shall stand committed, is simply this—'Religious Profession not the test of Citizenship.'[34]

The exclusion of such people from the constitution, taking 'away from mankind the motives which prompt them to cultivate their faculties'—was responsible for the decline in morals in India under British rule, Fortescue wrote.

Fortescue never wanted to be chief secretary for Ireland, neither in 1865, when he wanted instead to become secretary of state for the colonies, nor in 1868, when as we have seen he wanted the same thing, but was again made chief secretary. Similarly, he had wanted to be undersecretary of the colonies in 1857—that time getting his wish.[35] He seemed to love the variety of his duties at the Colonial Office. He was able to intervene around the world. He worked, for example, towards making Lagos a centre of British influence without its becoming a centre of British occupation. He thought that it was no business of the British government to entice emigrants to places where they did not want to go, either in Africa or in the settlement empire.[36] This was a noble sentiment, and he had others. He took the lead in maintaining and expanding the British role in West Africa so as to prevent a resurgence of the slave trade under British control.[37] He worked for Maori rights by trying to pass a bill to ascertain Maori land laws and make sure that real estate transactions were in accordance with them; without adequate support from Lord Palmerston, the bill died on the expiration of the parliamentary session in August 1860.[38] Fortescue did succeed in sending Sir George Grey back for another term as governor of New Zealand in 1861. Grey was to deal honestly with the Maori, or so Fortescue hoped, whereas the previous governor had been unable to break free from the policies advocated by the white settlers.[39]

On another front, in 1863 he became the fourth husband of the great hostess Lady Waldegrave—who chose him over the Duke of Newcastle, his superior at the Colonial Office.[40] The Duke's resulting enmity was what prevented Fortescue from becoming colonial secretary himself. Having been undersecretary since 1859, Fortescue was a rising star. He served as acting colonial secretary in 1860, when the Duke of Newcastle was in North America, and Fortescue handled ever more of the Colonial Office business as Newcastle's health declined in 1863 and 1864. When Newcastle resigned in 1864, he did not let Fortescue succeed him.[41]

Lady Waldegrave was probably worth the duke's displeasure. And beyond that, there was no one whom Fortescue did not meet at the glittering soirees of his new wife, and he got along with everyone famously. By the early days of the Colonial Society, he was contributing to such gilded projects as the *Miscellanies of the Philobiblion Society*, where he wrote on Shelley's *Declaration of Rights*—abstract rights coming again into Fortescue's career. Other contributions came from Tocqueville's close friend Richard Monckton Milnes, the archaeologist and Foreign Office official Austen Henry Layard, Lord Dufferin, and the historians J.A.Froude and the newly ennobled Lord Acton.[42] In the 1860s Lady Waldegrave's husband was able to amuse himself with everyone from Mrs Abraham Lincoln's medium to Henry Reeve (Tocqueville's translator and *The Times* editorial writer) to the 3rd Baron Stanley, HM attaché at Constantinople, who tried to convert Parkinson-Fortescue to Islam.[43] There were so many conversations, so many pleasant scenes. There was the time, for an example from even before Parkinson-Fortescue's marriage, when 'Lord Stratford de Redcliffe read aloud Tennyson's new book, the Idylls, all sitting in the tent. He was quite overcome, & went away in tears, handing the book to Monckton Milnes.'[44] It was Parkinson-Fortescue who wrote all this

down in his letters and other papers. He was at the centre of everything—hearing it, smiling, judging what he heard, and passing the port with great steadiness.

At the inaugural dinner of the Colonial Society in March 1869, and in the presence of the American ambassador, Parkinson-Fortescue would give voice to the imperial generalizations that he too had come to share at the centre of society—and at the centre of social and administrative information:

> The only rival of the parliament which sits at Westminster is the great body which sits in Washington. That model has been followed by all the representative institutions which cover the soil of America, and which culminate in the Congress of the United States; and that model has been followed even more faithfully, and more literally according to our British ideas in the Parliaments which now, I rejoice to say, rule over all the colonies, properly so called, of British origin and British race in every corner of the world.[45]

Parkinson-Fortescue was fully aware of the tragedy of Ireland, he was fully aware of the degradation of the Irish people that he had so carefully analysed in a published work, and he was fully aware of the racial conflicts in South Africa and in New Zealand that he tried to address at the Colonial Office; and at the same time there was in his mind this larger category and shining vision of the ‘British race’. He saw no contradiction, for when he was speaking about the Empire as a whole at a formal dinner he was speaking on an altogether higher and more general plane. When the specifics receded, the Empire as a whole smelled sweet.

9
Generalizing about humanity

Lord Carnarvon

Nineteenth-century British anthropological thinking became what it did because, after 1815, Great Britain had too many naval officers. Some busied themselves by sailing about and exploring the world. They gathered voluminous amounts of new evidence about the earth and its peoples. They caused an intellectual revolution.

All the new detail exploded the older generalizations about mankind. The old postulates that had been popular in the Enlightenment—postulates on the order of 'the Noble Savage' or 'the Social Contract'—fell by the wayside. Now it was possible to study the real peoples of the world instead of studying philosophical abstractions. Describing the early nineteenth century, J.W.Burrow writes that

> one central flaw in the older position was always emphasised: the impossibility of generalising about human nature in face of its apparently limitless diversity, whether revealed by history or geography. This recognition of diversity posed considerable problems, at least to those not already committed to Comptism or some other philosophy of history. If propositions about human nature and human wants could not be formulated to stand as major premises in moral and political arguments, what was to become of the dream of a science of morals and politics deduced from such propositions?[1]

Victorian anthropologists were faced with this limitless variety of the world. They were left to cast about from one generalization about humanity to another, trying to make the human world comprehensible without oversimplifying it. But they could not seem to generalize *together*, around a common set of categories or assumptions. So off they went to write their books—at each other, past each other, and sometimes wide of any recognizable intellectual mark at all.[2]

Back in the Enlightenment itself, Dr Johnson had shown one way out of the confusion—to do in-depth research into a single culture whose language and customs you would take the time to understand; meanwhile, you would give up on world-wide generalizations about cultures whose languages you didn't know. As Boswell put it:

> April 3 [1776]…. I gave [Dr Johnson] an account of a conversation that had passed between myself and Captain Cook… I told him that while I was with the Captain, I catched the enthusiasm of curiosity and adventure, and felt a strong inclination to go with him on his next voyage. JOHNSON. 'Well, Sir, a man *does* feel so, till he considers how very little he can learn from such voyages'. BOSWELL. 'But one is carried away with the general grand and indistinct notion of A VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD'. JOHNSON. 'Yes, Sir, but a man is to guard himself against taking a thing in general'.

Boswell was quick to convert himself to Dr Johnson's position, elaborating on how difficult actually learning about an alien culture really is:

> I said I was certain that a great part of what we are told by the travellers to the South Sea must be conjecture, because they had not enough of the language of those countries to understand so much as they have related. Objects falling under the observation of the senses might be clearly known; but every thing intellectual, every thing abstract—politicks, morals, and religion, must be darkly guessed at. Dr Johnson was of the same opinion.[3]

A few generations of just that kind of Baconian fact-gathering was what was needed before much generalization about mankind was possible.

What happened instead over the course of the nineteenth century was that anthropologists wanted to see the fruits of their work in their own lifetimes, to establish generalizations themselves—rather than merely gathering data for thinkers a century later. Anthropology therefore went through its different phases. The mid-Victorians—including certain founders of the Colonial Society—confused themselves with possible generalizations about the human species and its history. Then the late Victorians found a generalization that they could share, the idea that contemporary non-European societies were examples of the different developmental stages that Europe itself had already gone through. This was 'social evolutionism'—the conviction that there was a single developmental path for all societies, a path along which Europe had travelled the farthest.

J.W.Burrow, a British historian, and George W.Stocking, an American anthropologist, although they do not agree on everything,[4] have between them done a fine job of mapping out in great detail how the mid-Victorians went from confusion to social evolutionism. We do not need to follow the debate here, except to understand just how confused the analytical categories were. In the mid-nineteenth century even the definition of the disciplines was unfixed. There was as yet no hard distinction between 'ethnology' and 'anthropology'. More clearly marked off was the field of archaeology. A separate Archaeological Society had split off from the Society of Antiquaries in 1843, and the Archaeological *Institute* had split off from the 1843 group in 1846; both were interested chiefly in the remains of medieval Britain. Still, the meaning of all three terms, 'ethnology', 'anthropology' and 'archaeology' was new and in flux—especially so in the 1840s and 1850s, though somewhat less so by the 1860s.

The post-Darwinian, social evolutionist consensus began to emerge when the controversial Anthropological Society of London (whose members boasted that the Society kept penises) began to see a decline in its membership, and its wilder leaders began to lose influence. Then James Hunt, its founder, died in 1869. This made possible the reunion of this group, oriented towards physical evidence, and the more philologically oriented Ethnological Society, from which Hunt and his friends had split in 1863; the two organizations came together as 'The Anthropological Society of Great Britain' in 1871, the year that Darwin's *The Descent of Man* was published. Having come back together institutionally, the fields of physical anthropology and ethnology soon found broad enough agreement on how to come together intellectually. They moved beyond their confusion over whether to study bones or bilabial consonants, and over whether there were many human species (the main anthropological view) or only one (the main philological view). Now in the aftermath of 1871 there was peace—built on social evolution, the principle of imposing evolutionary or developmental stages on the cultures of the world. Here was a position of intellectual clarity (albeit one that later generations would find artificial).[5] Now the focus shifted to professional scholarship rather than amateur speculation.[6]

But in our period, the mid-nineteenth century, intellectual professionalization was still in the future. There was still room for the enthusiast who was willing to build his own private theories.

A Lord Carnarvon without a curse

Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, fourth Earl of Carnarvon, was a key midVictorian figure whose interest in learning about the past—sometimes through archaeological digs, sometimes through ethnological interviews—could lead him to think about the place of the British Empire in the succession of world empires. Carnarvon's archaeological ideas continually fed into his imperial thinking, and his imperial thinking fed back into his archaeological categorizations. And yet he always let his imperial ideas run a bit further out of control, a bit further ahead of the evidence, and to become a bit more general, than his more carefully considered archaeological ideas.

Archaeology and travel-writing ran in the family. Our Lord Carnarvon would be the father of the fifth earl, whose own interest in archaeology would bring him the curse of King Tut. The *third* Earl Carnarvon, well known for his fierce opposition to the Reform Bill and all other kinds of reform, was the author of the occasional book about his travels. So it was that his son Henry, the fourth earl, born in 1831, was taken to the Ottoman Empire when he was eight to see the coronation of the sultan.

He also had a conventional education in England. A member of Pop at Eton, he left school at Christmas, 1848, for Oxford. He succeeded to his earldom in his first year there. Near the end of his time at university, he met Hormuzd Rassam, who was in Oxford to show the latest items from the Nimrud excavations in Mesopotamia. Carnarvon took a first in classics and a third in mathematics (the second-best double-honours degree of that year). Then he began his Grand Tour—only as it happened he went rather further than usual, and to stranger places.

In 1853, the young Lord Carnarvon set off with a friend, a courier, and an interpreter, for Damascus, Mosul, Trebizond and Baghdad. Along the way, he kept noting examples of Turkish misrule and the inevitability of European involvement in Ottoman affairs.[7] Thus, on 27 February 1853, eight months before the outbreak of the Crimean War, he wrote:

> The Turkish Government seems entirely worn out, the officers and functionaries are entirely corrupt, justice exists only in name, and morally, physically, and intellectually, the Ottoman Empire is degenerate. Yet, seeing all this, our government, hitherto, has given no support to our Consuls and Envoys in the East in their plans and proposals, and with every means and element of success in our grasp, we are being outmanoeuvred by the unprincipled agents of foreign governments.[8]

Perhaps his wish that the British man-on-the-spot could leave principle behind and plot with the rest of the foreign diplomats was little more than the posturing of a recent undergraduate. Certainly it was the recent undergraduate in him that made him boast in his diary that he had been reading Gibbon, Walter Scott, Horace and a small amount of Arabic 'across the plains of Northern Syria'—and that he therefore missed really *active* reading.[9]

In any case, observing the Ottomans and reading Walter Scott was not the main reason for the trip. The goal was always Mosul, which Carnarvon persisted in calling by the ancient name of 'Nineveh'. This is what Austen Henry Layard called the city that he had discovered under the modern town of Nimrud. As it finally came into sight, Carnarvon recorded that he could behold 'the site of the world's earliest Empire, the country of Nimrod, of Sennecherib, and of Sardanapaulus'. He was already a romanticist of the ancient empires or he would not have gone on the trip.

Carnarvon was received by the British consul, Christian Rassam, brother of the Hormuzd Rassam whom Carnarvon had met some months before. Over the years, Layard and the Rassams played host to a number of future founders of the Colonial Society who came to Nimrud to see the diggings[10]—another of them was Lord Bury, the Colonial Society's founder. But for now it was Carnarvon's turn: 'It was long', he wrote in his journal his first night there, 'before I composed myself to sleep, so much was my imagina-tion crossed by visions of palaces, of pomps and triumphs, and kings and cities which Abraham himself perhaps had seen and admired.'[11]

Soon Carnarvon found a hint of his own research subject, not something buried in the sand but something that was easier to get at—the culture of the people living on top of it. With Consul Rassam's help, Carnarvon went to a New Year's Feast of the Yezidis, otherwise called the 'Devil Worshippers'. They had earned this moniker because they would not curse the devil, worshipping as they did both the good, Ormuzd, and the evil, Ahriman or Shaitan. They were in fact Zoroastrians, using the forms of Zoroastrian religious names that come from Middle Persian (Pahlavi).[12] Carnarvon was not shown their Holy of Holies, a seven-branched candlestick—only Layard and Rassam had seen this, in consideration of the protection arranged for the Yezidis through Layard's friend and patron, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, HM ambassador to the Sublime Porte. The

Yezidis *did* show Carnarvon the cuneiforms and bas-reliefs that marked, or so they told him, Sennecherib's invasion of Judaea—just the kind of thing he had come to see.

Later, alongside Rassam, Carnarvon reviewed the workers (ninety or so of them) returning from the Nimrud diggings. When they began to go wild in town, Rassam and Carnarvon rushed in to restrain them through some wellselected punches. (Archaeology had its active moments, requiring the direct projection of British power.) Then (leaving their sick interpreter behind with Rassam) Carnarvon and his companion went on to Baghdad, where they stayed at the consulate with Colonel Rawlinson—Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, Indian Army, HM consul at Baghdad, first translator of *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, future founder of the Colonial Society, and a subject of Chapter 10 of this book.[13]

Of Babylon, Carnarvon wrote:

> The range of the setting sun shone brightly on it, and as it stood alone by itself, the only object in the surrounding plain, the ruins perhaps of man's earliest work and crime since the flood, my mind wandered away to a thousand imaginations of patriarchal times—of the mighty hunter before the Lord, who had probably lived and ruled here, and of the age when angels walked with man.[14]

'The mighty hunter before the Lord' was the Nimrod of Genesis 10, builder of the Tower of Babel. His transgression—'man's earliest work and crime'—was to try to organize a unified mankind with a single language into building a tower to heaven.[15] The British, with their world-empire and worldlanguage, would seem to have been his successors.

Of course, the Babylonians were punished with a now familiar confusion of peoples and languages. For Carnarvon, British scholarship in the Ottoman Empire was now beginning to clear away that confusion, and soon British power would be able to replace the confusion of the Ottoman state. The British Empire had its several roles in the main sequence of world empires. And those roles included influencing Near Eastern events and adding to world scholarship.

Carnarvon could help with both. An hereditary legislator who could look forward to taking a place in high politics, he could also do his part for learning. While on his Grand Tour, Carnarvon may not have had time for excavations, but he could add to the body of European knowledge about the human past in another way, through interviews with living non-European peoples—ethnology rather than archaeology. However, the Yezidis, so particularly fond of Layard and Rassam, were not in the end the best subjects for him. He knew the most about the Druses, with whom he had talked on his way to Mosul. Thus it was they and not the Yezidis who would be the subject of his first major book: *Recollections of the Druses of Lebanon, and notes on their religion*, brought out by John Murray in 1860.[16]

Carnarvon in politics

The book would appear almost a decade after his journey. In the interim, Carnarvon was a busy man, taking his seat in the House of Lords and beginning his political career. He

continued to show concern for the smaller peoples of the Ottoman Empire, such as the Nestorians and the Kurds, whom he got to know on his way home from Mosul; he could not help from noticing that they lived in poverty in areas where certain ancient empires had extended irrigation and plenty.[17] This idea of a succession of ancient empires, some beneficial and some detrimental to the local communities that they controlled, would not leave him. He continued to think of English history as part of that succession of imperial histories, putting English history into its imperial context.

Carnarvon made his maiden speech in the Lords early in 1854, and rather auspiciously it was to second the Throne Speech for the Aberdeen government. In his comments, Carnarvon expressed his pride in British prosperity over the 40 years of peace since 1815, and in the growth of British power in India and China. He also mentioned, although only in passing, some pride in the growth of British North America and Australasia. British advance in these areas was due to the 'moral predominance' of her commercial policy, that of free trade.[18] It made the British nation strong. And his main concern was indeed this one, the health of the British nation, and especially the English county. It was the only issue that he asked about before he would agree to second the speech at all. That is, he wanted reassurance from the prime minister that any reform bill would contain guarantees 'to preserve those interests which are agricultural and of a mixed nature from being overbalanced by or being unduly subordinated to the mercantile…constituencies'.[19] The macrocosm of the Empire depended upon the microcosm of the local community. Each was guaranteed by the other. It will be recalled that the Ottomans could not keep the local communities of their empire as prosperous as they had been under earlier empires. The British Empire could.

As he put it in a speech on the local history of Hampshire:

> [A]s by a general law human affections grow in intensity just as you reduce the circle of their operations, so historians have truly pointed out that small states are the happiest, large states the most powerful and prosperous. Our constitution, practically adapting itself to this double principle, gives us all the social happiness of the small state, and the power and prosperity which result from living under one great and undivided government. Whilst it upholds the unity of the whole, it also maintains the vitality of each distinct part.[20]

In another speech to a local body, this one to the Reading Mechanics' Institute in 1856, Carnarvon went on to point out how the local social units of England were its defence against communism and other forms of the tyranny of the majority: 'Uniformity, whether in the most democratic or despotic states, is a narrow-minded and soul-enslaving tyranny'; by contrast, a social variety gave life to a country.[21] Local institutions—such as the one that he was speaking to—were the key to the character and the health of the larger empire of which they were a part.[22] And this had always been the case. Carnarvon could trace the history of such local institutions back, as he went on to do at considerable length for the Reading Mechanics, to Nimrod and the Assyrians. From Nimrod, domesticity continued through the Rosicrucians and the Knights of Malta. On Malta the British flag now flew, he trusted, 'never to descend'. Malta, too, was a local unit contributing to the current empire, the British Empire, along with all the beloved local

features of Berkshire and Hampshire.[23] Carnarvon was putting together a chain of imperial glory whose latest link was England itself. And the criterion by which he was judging empires was the health and continuity of their network of local communities—a focus that would warm the heart of Bulwer-Lytton.

The Colonial Office

Bruce Knox has argued that it was Carnarvon's 1858–9 service in the Colonial Office, where he was indeed Bulwer-Lytton's parliamentary undersecretary, that marked his first interest in empire—especially since Bulwer-Lytton was soon ill and Carnarvon did most of the work.[24] While this argument captures the importance of what Carnarvon was doing at the Colonial Office in this period, as we have seen Carnarvon was already interested in empire in general and the British Empire in particular when he went to the Colonial Office—and indeed when he went to the Middle East when he was a young man, dreaming as he had of older empires back to Nimrud and planning for a succession by Great Britain to Ottoman imperial power.

Undersecretary of State Carnarvon's take on the more practical colonial questions of the day is clearest in the matter of the abortive annexation of Fiji. The Fijian king owed a debt to the United States, and to escape it he proposed that the British Crown assume sovereignty. British cotton interests, joined by some anti-slavery philanthropists, pushed for annexation. Merivale, the permanent undersecretary, thought that Fiji would be a desirable acquisition. But Carnarvon disagreed, as C.C.Eldridge has shown, on the grounds that accepting Fiji was a 'desperate undertaking' that would lead to international complications.[25] Carnarvon was not in favour of adding trouble spots to the Empire's collection of healthy localities. He worried that any French 'quarrel with an English missionary in the South Sea Islands would suffice for a war in the English Channel'.[26]

Carnarvon would long try to avoid entangling the British Empire in any of these 'international complications', any annexations. A deputation from the Royal Colonial Society itself in 1873 failed to convince him, when he was himself secretary of state for the colonies, to annex New Guinea. Eventually he could resist no longer. In 1874 he authorized the annexation of Fiji in order to bring order to anarchy and stamp out kidnapping.[27] (Carnarvon became colonial secretary in his own right in July 1866, and he served until March 1867. He was colonial secretary again from 1874 to 1878—when because of his desire for a South African federation he involved England in what were a number of very embarrassing complications connected to the annexation of the Transvaal.[28] Later he was a stalwart member of the Imperial Federation League, and he served as Irish secretary from 1885 to 1886.)

Another recurrent theme of Carnarvon's various stints in colonial administration was his friendliness towards proposed federations, whether Canadian, Australian, South African, or—two years after the Colonial Society was founded—West Indian.[29] Undersecretary of State Carnarvon would seem to have been at the outset less hostile than were the other men in the Colonial Office to Lord Grey's insubordinate attempt to federate the South African colonies in the late 1850s.[30] As colonial secretary a decade later, Carnarvon would shepherd the plans of others into a fully realized Canadian Confederation, just before the foundation of the colonial society itself. Edward Cardwell,

the Colonial Secretary who preceded him, had set the process in motion, but it was Carnarvon (along with his deputy, Adderley) who received the Canadian delegates in London, and it was Carnarvon who was 'anxious' not to miss the opportunity to confederate Canada under whatever terms the delegates came up with.

Indeed, Carnarvon's only specific concern as to what the bill would look like was to make sure that the new central government should be strengthened 'against the excessive powers or the encroachments of the local administration'.[31] Yet he would push in this direction only with the consent of the Canadian delegates.[32] His overarching goal from his first days as colonial secretary was not this strengthening of the confederal power, but simply Canadian Confederation itself. Confederation, Carnarvon believed, would advance the monarchical principle and the unity of the Empire, while the growth of the United States—into Canadian territory—clearly would not. Confederation would create that combination of local and large government that his reply to the 1854 Throne Speech had identified as England's special strength. He did not push for confederation in Australia, which he knew to be unpopular there.

And yet while he tended to support confederations, he did not want self-governing colonies to have control over their own native populations; when the natives had been provoked to attack—always by the colonists—it would be the British government and not the colonists themselves that would have to spend money to pacify the country, as had been the case both in New Zealand and in Natal.[33]

There was one other notably consistent aspect of his colonial policy, at least in the years after the Colonial Defence Enquiry of 1862—the one chaired by Arthur Mills. From then on, Carnarvon would maintain the position that most colonies, both large and small, should help to pay for their own defence.[34]

Carnarvon's record in the Colonial Office was one of resisting annexation, encouraging the kind of regional federations that would marry the strengths of local government with the strengths of an empire, and trying to make sure that Great Britain did not become overcommitted in local disputes. All of these themes—and a general and consistent pride in the Empire—were present not only in his official behaviour, but also in his writings and speeches going back to his early travel journal. His colonial ideas and his private speeches and writings on English local history—and soon enough on archaeology—were all of a piece.

Carnarvon on archaeology

Within months of leaving his position as undersecretary of state, Carnarvon had the occasion to define archaeology, and to detail what sort of progress or improvement in knowledge could be expected from the human sciences in general. The result was *The Archaeology of Berkshire, an Address delivered at the Archaeological Association at Newbury, September 12, 1859.*[35]

He gave this address as temporary president of this local body. Carnarvon only lived on the edge of the county of Berkshire, and he claimed that he had not long studied its archaeology. Still, he could see that much basic work still needed to be done—in topography, for example, to map out what might one day be excavated.[36] But there were also other kinds of archaeological tasks waiting to be completed. The definition of

archaeology that Carnarvon put forward was rather broad, covering ethnology, and it would be reflected in the nature of the book that he was finally about to prepare on the Druses. He stressed

> [t]hose local traditions and legends, sometimes too little considered by county-historians, but which are the most precious heirlooms of Archaeology, because in an especial degree they breathe the life and the habits, the thoughts and the faith of our ancestors, are year by year perishing from amongst us….
>
> Antiquities resolve themselves into two classes: 1st, the local traditions and legends to which I have alluded; 2nd, the visible and material monuments of the past, and especially the ruins in stone and mortar.[37]

By including folklore within archaeology, Carnarvon was uniting the readily accessible study of the English past—reached as much through folklore as through monuments—with the archaeology of remote or exotic regions, where new ancient wonders'could still be dug out of the sands.

Archaeological findings about England itself could be disseminated through the pages of *Notes and Queries* and the *Archaeological Journal*, and reach a wider public, Carnarvon believed. The body of opinion in favour of preserving the past, both in words and in bricks and mortar, had grown satisfyingly in the last 20 years. This trend would be reinforced by England's general spirit of conservatism.[38]

Carnarvon went on to review sites associated with Arthur (whom he identified as probably mythical), and then to review Berkshire history down to the seventeenth century. But in closing Carnarvon worked himself up into a new paean to archaeology. The field is not dilettantism, nor is it a focus on the 'chaff of literature'. It is, on the other hand,

> a study which in itself constitutes one of the distinctive differences that contrast an old with a new country—a study which sheds some gleams of romance and poetry over a practical and perhaps a somewhat hard age, which has chronicled many a legend and ballad.[39]

Old countries, whether under Ottoman or British rule, were interesting; new countries, which presumably would include the British colonial settlements that he had helped to rule, were nothing like so romantic in their appeal. As he had said before the Wiltshire and Hampshire Educational Society in 1856, well before he had entered the Colonial Office, the very landscape of old countries, England chief among them, showed something 'that has not been the work of a day', something that speaks of the work over generations of a free people with 'wise institutions', but above all something that speaks of the reverence for the traditionary past 'which has characterized and ennobled our race'.[40] Speaking before the same body a year later—again, before he entered the Colonial Office—he made clear that this romantic England included those overseas parts of its empire that had been connected to the British landscape at home by centuries of individual ties:

> Charles II had several points of connexion with this county. At Portsmouth he was married to Catherine of Braganza, who, neglected as she was in her life, yet brought the richest dowry that ever king received—the town and island of Bombay, the germ of that great Indian empire which, under a longer succession of civil and military abilities than most countries can show, has grown into an overshadowing greatness, illustrated by ten-thousand acts of devotion, and—alas that I should say it!—cemented even within the last few months by English blood.[41]

For Carnarvon, the Empire was important in large part because it already had been important, back in a more picturesque time.

Archaeology, by which he meant social and material history,[42] was the record of great empires of which the British Empire was now the latest. It united the recent and local to the remote and imperial. And so he came to the question of how to manage all the detail. For all its grand sweep, archaeology was also the story of human individuals, and not a story of climatic or other factors that might be thought, wrong-headedly, to compromise human agency.[43] To pay proper attention to all those individuals required a tremendous amount of detailed research. So while Carnarvon told the archaeological meeting at Berkshire that he would be happy to be someone who could write himself into immortality, like Herodotus or Thucydides, that was not his fate. He said that he was happy instead to count himself among the assemblers of the material that another historian might use sometime in the future.[44]

As A.Bowdoin van Riper has shown, Carnarvon was not alone in defining archaeology in this way. As others did, he rejected theorization in favour of the Baconian gathering of facts—and facts about historical rather than prehistoric or transhistorical time. This was a typical position for people interested in English local archaeology up until the 1860s.[45] Lord Bury, the founder of the Colonial Society, had a similarly Baconian view of archaeology. Bury, however, thought the period of fact-gathering had come to an end and that a period of theorizing about the now sufficiently large store of facts had arrived—with the publication of his own book.[46] Carnarvon was more modest.

The Druses of Lebanon and the Ottomans

It was with the same modesty that Carnarvon brought out his book on the Druses in 1860. He maintained that his visit of almost eight years before was too short to allow him to study for himself ‘questions of domestic and political economy’; instead he offered ‘personal reflections’, ‘general impressions’, ‘notes’.[47] As ‘the Oriental world has drawn nearer to our Western one, in each successive step of Oriental decay and revolution’, Carnarvon had not been able to forget ‘the history and faith of that singular race, which has now for 800 years maintained its independence and nationality, religious and political, under the name of the Druses of Mount Lebanon’.[48] If ‘race’ was now a category in his ethnology, nonetheless it does not seem to have meant biological uniformity in a more modern sense. It meant instead exactly what he said it did in the passage just quoted—namely, a historically, religiously, nationally and politically contingent group identity.

Carnarvon stuck to his guns, refusing to mistake his brief tour of Lebanon for an experience that would allow for world-wide generalizations about the nature of man. Even at the end of the book, he maintained that '[w]ith the incomplete information at our disposal, it would be premature to discuss the present position, hazardous to speculate on the destinies, of the Druse people'. But there was one sphere, one scale, on which he could not keep himself from making predictions—either now, when he was a self-conscious amateur archaeologist, or eight years before, as a newly minted Bachelor of Arts (and earl). And that scale was the imperial one. He could not foretell the future of the Druses, whom he had interviewed in depth, but he could see the future of a larger group of people among whom his interviews had only brushed the surface: the Ottomans. Now, as well as eight years before, he supposed that predicting the future of the Druses was just possible, after careful research; but predicting the future of the Ottoman Empire as a whole was comparative child's play:

> Four centuries of unbroken misrule and abused dominion are hastening the accomplishment of ancient prophecies, the predictions of historians, and the prayers of Eastern Christendom…. [T]he blaze of Turkish sovereignty, which once dazzled and appalled Europe, is fast passing into total darkness. From the very walls of St. Sophia the form of the 'Mother of God', daubed by the whitewash of Mahomet II., is starting from the concealment of 400 years to vindicate the traditions of a Christian empire, and possibly by her presence to presage a revival of the conflict, not only between races but between creeds.[49]

Turkey ought never to have been treated as an equal by the Western powers, who had mistakenly conferred 'the highest honours of Christian knighthood on the representative of Mahound'.[50]

So it would seem that there are Christian countries and non-Christian ones, and the latter may sometimes need to be carved up, as did the Ottoman state—whose very existence was 'an enigma before which modern statesmanship is perplexed, and…a knot which probably the sword alone will loosen'. The 'minor fortunes of the Druses' would depend on the successor state, subject to careful British and other foreign intervention.[51] What Carnarvon had in mind, then, was an indirect imperialism.

To a degree, he thought, Europe's imperium was already in effect; Carnarvon was sure that Druse behaviour towards their social or religious enemies was already being moderated by their knowledge—shared with him 'in conversations which even at the distance of several years I can recall'—'of the policy and feelings of the great powers of Europe' towards religious mas sacre.[52] And in any case the Druses had not picked their quarrel with their enemies, the Maronites, and bore no more than an equal responsibility for it, as other travellers had noted, and as Carnarvon could quote British parliamentary papers to confirm 'if it were necessary'.[53]

Thus when Carnarvon was discussing the Druses in particular, he was more careful with his evidence, and at the same time more ready to claim expert knowledge for himself on the ground of his interviews. Having made his main claim about Druse religious policy, he then went on to cite the books of other travellers like himself, English and continental, using them as support for his own contemporary observations as well as

for historical background ranging back hundreds of years.[54] Yet when discussing larger, imperial-level societies—such as that 'enigma' that needed to be carved up—Carnarvon was willing to make grand claims about empires as a whole. He hedged his imperial generalizations with 'perhaps', but he made the generalizations anyway.

Sometimes this level of generalization got rather wild. He posited, for example, that the spirit of rebellion against the white West which had begun in India in the Mutiny had spread throughout the East; thus the recent disorder among some of the less-civilized Druse tribes. News of the Mutiny and what it represented had spread, he believed, by means of a mystical Eastern counterpart to that great Western advance of the 1850s, the telegraph:

> No great moral or religious movement can be confined to the country where it is first born, and through all ages—sometimes by a subtle and almost mysterious agency—the spark of intelligence has flashed along the electric chain by which the nations of the East are darkly bound to one another.

And then, in a footnote, he chased evidence for mystical communication to Central America, the South Seas and the Druids:

> We have often had illustrations of the strange power of communication which some of the races, that we think or call uncivilised, can wield. In the Sikh war there are instances where the tidings of victory or defeat anticipated the arrival of any public or private letter; in the late Indian mutiny, information, though exaggerated, of General Windham's repulse at Cawnpore reached the Indians of Honduras and the Maoris of New Zealand in a manner which was very curious.
>
> In speculating on the method and reason of such interchange of intelligence in very early times, Mr. G.Higgins has some interesting remarks on the possible communication between the Druids of Britain and those of India.[55]

So the 'Easterners' had their own stories and means of communication, not so different from Carnarvon's own definition of archaeology as folklore.[56]

Still, for Carnarvon, not enough ethnological evidence had been gathered to really undergird the scientific bona fides of any such thesis about human nature, about world-wide human jungle-telegraphs, or about some conflict between the whole of the West and the whole of the East. So while he continued for a moment to speculate on there being more in the conflict between the Druses and the Maronites than met they eye—namely 'the continuous action of races and religions upon each other' all across Eurasia, 'if not in some fulfillment of natural law, at least in obedience to a distant impulse'—he nonetheless concluded that whether this was so or not so 'it would be premature to conjecture'. 'The materials', he continued, 'from which a just conclusion could be drawn are wanting.'[57] He had drawn back to the idea that archaeology/ethnology needed to stand down from theorizing and gather its material.

Speculations were understandable in the meantime, but speculations they remained. Yet if Carnarvon backed down here, nowhere did he back down from his firm predictions about the fall of the Ottoman Empire. On this intermediate scale alone, a scale larger than Druse society and smaller than 'the East' of the mystical telegraph and anti-Western plot, firm second-hand knowledge seems to have been available and the speculations built upon it seem to have been conclusive. The scale on which one could predict world history was that of the Ottoman Empire. And so while Britain did not want territorial expansion in Ottoman territories, neither should Britain so divorce itself from Ottoman affairs as to accept the persecution of the Druses at the hands of the pro-French Maronites. Much less should Britain accept any territorial expansion on the part of the French, who were now sending troops into Lebanon.[58] This was the book's conclusion—not centring anymore on archaeology or ethnology, but on the relationships among two multi-ethnic empires on the territory of a third.

Carnarvon in the late 1860s

Carnarvon's most notable response to the influx of information when he was colonial secretary in the mid-1860s was what turned out to be a multi-year reorganization of the Colonial Office along geographical lines.[59] Carnarvon was still the self-defined archaeologist, interested in pulling together information from diverse human societies. Now he focused the attentions of the Office on monitoring those more exotic societies—rather than on monitoring the settlement colonies, those 'new societies' that seemed so much less romantic and interesting in his 1859 archaeological speech in Berkshire—and which in any case were now governing themselves. Although Carnarvon resigned the Colonial Office in March 1867 over Disraeli's reform plans, the permanent undersecretary, Sir Frederic Rogers, would add to the reorganization of the office by abandoning geography in 1868, as we saw in Chapter 4, and keeping all the general imperial questions for himself, thus going even further than Carnarvon planned.

For Carnarvon's ideas about how to interpret the world were still developing. Having left the position of secretary of state, Carnarvon published the journals from his father's journey to Greece and Turkey in 1839.[60] He wrote a 25-page preface for the book. He admitted that 'much of the ground—at least in Turkey—that the writer then traversed, has since become familiar to English travellers, so also much of the interest which in 1839 might have attached to the record of such a journey, is by the necessity of the case destroyed in 1869'. However, relatively few travellers had visited the Morea in Greece, even in recent years, so that his father's words on that region retained their freshness as reportage.[61]

But still Carnarvon had not finished with the issue of what to do with observations of society made by someone else, and how to add lessons drawn from them to one's own science of the social world. How could social observations best be arranged to build up among the learned community validly—and interestingly? Carnarvon did not let these matters pass silently, any more than he had in his presidential address in Berkshire:

> The task, simple as it may seem, of extracting, condensing, collating, and of connecting the occasionally disjointed details by comments or

> explanations of my own, has not been altogether without difficulty; but the faults, whatever they are, which must be noticed in the following page, must be placed solely to my account. Had the writer of these Journals lived and thought fit to publish them, they would have seen the light as a far more highly finished composition than the fragmentary and rough-hewn materials at my command—setting aside all question of personal ability—render possible, consistently with accuracy.[62]

Again there was the old problem, the seeming artificiality of generalizing from 'disjointed' details.

Carnarvon did suppress whatever seemed too fragmentary. He also omitted whatever general information that was available from the works of other English travellers, although he retained all of his father's political observations. All in all, he was 'satisfied with the substantial accuracy of the facts of conversations recorded in these Journals'.[63] He included, he said, a great deal of his father's more picturesque descriptions, since landscape and material culture were so important; thus, especially when dealing with the land of Greece, 'a writer is justified in departing from the ordinary and prudent rule of saying too little rather than too much'. Here 'writing too much' verged on the kind of archaeology that Carnarvon had described years before, encompassing reports on 'the state of the roads, the number of the villages, the general character of the woods, the corn, and even the natural vegetation'.[64]

In Carnarvon's view, two themes that would allow comparison with other parts of the world emerged from his father's observation of the human cultures at work in this picturesque landscape. Less important for him was the first: the low position occupied by women, similar in its details to what they had suffered in southern Italy.[65] The other theme was what had happened to Greece after its 1839 revolution, even quite soon after the revolution. After the glory days of any revolution, there would come days of frustration. '[M]any of the illusions which had gilded the earlier stages of that war, had already given place to disappointed hopes and mortified ambition' when his father visited, Carnarvon wrote.

The low character of post-revolutionary Greek politics had not gone unnoticed in England. Greek nationalism had gone out of fashion there because, for 30 years, Carnarvon explained, Great Britain and the other European powers had given the Greek state every measure of political and financial assistance, only to see the Greek politicians waste every opportunity. The economy foundered. The government kept changing. The Greeks loved education, but too many of them had too much education for the state of their society, making them malcontents; many starved as government clerks rather than really working for a living.

The professional politicians of Athens stood in contrast to 'the more honest and less sophisticated public mind of the people', 66 and also to British imperial rule in the Ionian Islands (about which Carnarvon knew something, having helped to supervise Gladstone's almost proconsular 1858–9 visit there to reform the administration).[67] At the local level, the Greeks were competent; at the imperial level, the British were competent; at the intermediate level, the national level, the Greeks were not competent.

Implicitly, the lesson was the same as it had been in his book on the Druses—that some measure of English guidance, if at all possible without the extension of formal

control, was necessary if these interesting Middle Eastern cultures were to avoid getting buffeted in Europe's Great Power rivalries. And to help provide this guidance, the English had to explore the local, rural society of Greece through archaeology/ethnology, and then publish their results as Carnarvon had published his own, and was now publishing his father's.

Simply put, some amount of imperial control, potential or real, was an inextricable part of Carnarvon's observations of Middle Eastern peoples. If Carnarvon the archaeologist wanted to defer judgement on the world until another few generations of facts had come in, Carnarvon the once-and-future colonial secretary did not give himself that luxury. He was self-aware of the way he was judging the Greeks, noting that '[a]s a Greek said with some truth to Mr [Nassau] Senior, "between our faults and your exaggeration of them, we are despised for what we are, and hated and feared for what we hope to be"'. But Carnarvon was also critical and privileged. He noted that '[t]heir [the Greeks'] faults are indeed so many, and of so irritating a kind, especially as now by their obstinacy and self-conceit they have almost embroiled Europe in war, that we are perhaps tempted in our estimate of their character to do them less than justice'.[68] His conclusions were these: that the Greek people when abroad were like the Jews, industrious, honest and creative; that Greece was becoming more populous and more full of roads and towns, but was not improving in these areas or in others quite fast enough. A long period of stable growth under a monarch would be best; but Greece, although 'unprepared' for constitutional government when it was instituted there, had been so caught by the democratic spirit that muddling through was the best that could be hoped for the country.[69]

He remained, again, the privileged and patronizing observer. Thus

> modern thought in England, and the whole course of our higher education, are too closely interwoven with every association, great and small, of Greece to allow us ever to be indifferent to her fate. Our debt of gratitude to her in all that concerns the advance and culture of the human mind is so measureless, that we shall always follow her fortunes with an interest and sympathy which may sometimes seem to be hardly justified by the conduct of her people.[70]

Carnarvon and imperialism

In his views on contemporary Greek democracy, the Carnarvon of the late 1860s had reached a kind of three-level analysis. At the bottom was the local ethnic group, which could be explored archaeologically or ethnologically, and which had to be healthy if the larger state were to remain viable. The Greeks needed to do more to make their countryside prosperous. Larger in scale were the nation-states, such as independent Greece itself, and along with them the super-national non-European states, such as the Ottoman Empire. These larger units usually had their problems, not least a decadent public discourse carried on by unrepresentative elites incapable of leading the people quickly enough towards Western political and material improvement. The elites were too far from the people, unlike the elites in local communities—but as elites they were not

elite enough, being insufficiently cosmopolitan. These medium-scale states were also subject to getting caught up—and getting hurt—in the affairs of the larger European superpowers. At the top of the scale were those superpowers themselves. And among the superpowers England was special, being the only power where Carnarvon saw the depth of opinion and travel-writing that would allow the elite to understand and look after the interests of national and sub-national peoples such as the Greeks and the Druses. It would seem that well-educated Britons could manage all the information and detail that stood behind good government—a view that Carnarvon would seem to have embodied in publishing the books that he did.

And now, having considered Greek national life, Carnarvon was more sure than ever that the best thing for *British* colonists would be if they were to confederate and form larger, more cosmopolitan units, forming that larger, less provincial public opinion that Carnarvon attributed to England alone. He made the point quite clearly when he introduced the British North America Act, confederating Canada, in the House of Lords in 1867:

> English institutions, as we all know, need to be of a certain size. Public opinion is the basis of Parliamentary life; and the first condition of public opinion is that it should move in no contracted circle. It would not be difficult to show that almost in proportion to its narrowness Colonial Governments have been subject to disturbing influences.

Not only will the newly confederated Canada have a larger pool of men and material to draw from, but also

> just as the sphere of action is enlarged, the vestry element will be discarded, large questions will be discussed with the gravity which belongs to them, men will rise to a full sense of their position as members of a great Parliament, and will transmit their own sense of increased responsibility and self-respect through Parliament and the Government to the main body of the people.[71]

Using the St Lawrence and the new Intercolonial Railroad, Canada could develop the communications, the trade and the townscapes to be a real country, with mature but not overweening local governments.[72] Canada should be able to develop in peace. He told the Lords that war between Canada and the United States,

> between men of a common race and language, and in many respects of common institutions, would be an unnatural and detestable conflict, which would entail upon each incalculable injuries, and perhaps throw back for years the course of civilization and human prosperity.[73]

This progress of 'civilization'—as seen in the improvement and filling up of the land—was always Carnarvon's main way to measure the state of a country.[74]

Down through the years, Carnarvon has applied this test of material advancement to the different periods of Berkshire history, to the state of the Morea, and now to British

North America and the United States to boot. Then, as president of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science in September 1868, he applied it to the whole of England, reviewing the highs and lows of Victorian sewerage, schooling, and so on. He measured modern achievements against a background of local conditions in empires that stretched from the ancient Near East to Rome to Great Britain itself.[75]

And where could civilized rule come from in the modern age? Where once it had been the Anglo-Saxon race that had undergone 'subjugation', and on whom material advances had been imposed, as Carnarvon pointed out in the *Quarterly Review* in July 1867, now it was the turn of others to undergo this process at the hands of the British.[76]

At the 1862 exhibition (held on what would become the site of the Natural History Museum), England and her empire were able to marshal the wonderful variety of products and fashions and techniques of this huge and diverse world—even if, as Carnarvon pointed out, no one person could understand what was happening:

> Now looking into the multiplication and division into which industry and science have passed, we feel almost at times a sense of bewilderment, and we are only conscious of some great and indefinite advance. The feeling is one very much akin to that which I think must have crossed the minds of everyone who entered the Exhibition this year,—a dim sense of a vast number of trades and industries and sciences represented, but an extreme difficulty in allocating them, as it were, and arranging them under their separate heads, or even of instituting in your mind anything like a comparison with regard to them.[77]

Facts and theories and inventions abounded in the modern world, but as Carnarvon stressed in this passage as in so many others, the general laws that united the discoveries in the different fields still lay hidden. The answer was more fact-gathering, more inductive reasoning, more engagement in the world on the part of men like himself, with all that implied—including imperial control.[78] Then some day the nature of the world and of man would become clearer.

As we have seen, however, by the late 1860s he had come to believe that the underlying pattern of the modern world was indeed a little bit clearer—a world-wide empire that was bringing a civilizing subjection to the non-white areas of the world, just as it was bringing the guidance of the cosmopolitan imperial elite to the more provincial white areas, such as Greece and Canada; their elites were not up to the job in the way the British elite was.

It is not an unrelated point that in the age before the growth of professional academic fields, the main students of these fields—whether we want to call them ethnologists or anthropologists or simply political travelwriters—were in point of origin and self-identification English gentlemen. And from one point of view—probably Lord Carnarvon's—the most distinguished and disinterested of these gentlemen, and the most fit for rule, were men of the aristocratic vein. They were also the most travelled and the best schooled, the most leisured and best read, the best able to bring out books, and the most likely to find themselves in a political position where they indeed had the task of surveying and running the whole empire and all its constituent peoples. Up to this point, Carnarvon himself might agree. But would he agree that all of this—the privileged

position of sitting in London and judging the affairs of the larger non-European states, and engineering the futures of the smaller extra-European ethnic groups—may have had some effect on whether men like himself could keep to the Baconian project of plain fact-gathering that they themselves had recommended, or whether on the other hand they would begin to indulge in more imperialistic generalizations at some point in their lives?

10
Rawlinson, Northcote and the imperialism of information management

Sir Henry Rawlinson, the archaeologist who deciphered the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and then went on to become involved in the government of India, and Sir Stafford Northcote, secretary of state for India, came to opposing conclusions about the severity of the Russian threat to the subcontinent, and about the direction of British imperial policy more generally. The root of their disagreement lay in how they categorized information in different ways.

And to say that each man was, in the first instance, managing and categorizing information about the cultures of the world is not merely a way of putting things. Both men came to the governance of India after they had developed an expertise in archaeology. Both men had taken a keen interest in the then central archaeological and anthropological question of how to adduce general propositions about mankind from the myriad human details that were being uncovered around the world. As we will see, Rawlinson was the most distinguished archaeologist in the Colonial Society. Northcote, for his part, was more interested in the nature and methodology of archaeology than in actually doing it. Still, he had published a number of articles on the subject. Then, informed by his own theories of archaeological methodology, he focused his tenure at the India Office on how the information that flowed through it might be better categorized and better understood. Where Rawlinson's scholarship on the extent of ancient empires led him to urge the expansion of British control across Central Asia, Northcote proposed breaking up the Indian Empire so that local information could stay local, and so that it could be acted upon by officials who were close to the ground.

Sir Henry Rawlinson: the intersection of archaeology and imperialism

Born in 1810, Henry Creswicke Rawlinson was appointed a cadet in the army of the East India Company, and so he left for India at age seventeen; he would never go to university. But he happened to sail on the same ship as the governor of Bombay, Sir John Malcolm. Malcolm was an Oriental scholar, and he tutored the young Rawlinson on the way. This turned out to be a good beginning for Rawlinson's career, which would centre on linguistics and scholarship.

In his five years in Bombay, the young Rawlinson made tremendous progress in languages, especially Persian, studying even its antique versions. Thus he was seconded to the Persian army from 1833 to 1839, helping to consolidate British influence on the shah's government. In this period Rawlinson was also writing the first of his very detailed geographical works on Persia and its environs. He published articles in *the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, and the Society gave him its Gold Medal in 1839. Over the years he would write many other geographical articles, some of them also published as books.

When relations with the shah deteriorated in 1838, Rawlinson rode 750 miles in 150 hours to warn of the presence of a Russian national. Serving as political agent at Kandahar from 1840 to 1843, mostly during the First Afghan War (1839–42), he raised a native regiment and materially helped the British side. From 1843 to 1849, he was the EICs political agent in Turkish Arabia, and turning down much higher positions he arranged to be posted British consul at Baghdad, a position that he took up in 1844.

Baghdad was the perfect place for Rawlinson to pursue his scholarship on the ancient world. While stationed there, he was able to copy enough multilingual inscriptions, with the help of some of the more agile local boys whom he employed as climbers, to translate two of the three languages of the Babylonian and Persian Empires. Old Persian fell first, in part because the inscriptions that he was working from contained—and he recognized that they contained—the names Darius and Xerxes, and he was able to work from there. It took seven years, from 1839 to 1846. Other scholars contributed some insights, and a man in Ireland independently announced his own decipherment of Persian in 1846, but by that time much of Rawlinson's work had been published in *the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.

If there was any doubt as to Rawlinson's abilities in linguistics, they were put to rest when he deciphered Akkadian, the language of the Babylonian Empire. His achievement was not merely to read cuneiform—although he was the first person to do so in nearly two millennia. He did not merely decipher *a* language written in cuneiform, but the oldest Semitic language written in cuneiform. Rawlinson began working on Akkadian in 1847 and finished two years later, publishing his major findings in 1851. Then he went on to translate a number of Akkadian texts, sometimes working on them in his tent in the Persian desert in the rain. He became the first modern person to read the *Epic of Gilgamesh*—he guessed correctly that the 12 divisions of the poem corresponded to the 12 signs of the zodiac. While we have other matters to look at, we should not dismiss too quickly the care, the detail and the insight of Rawlinson's linguistic achievements.[1]

Meanwhile his political career as British agent in the area went on apace, producing a vast correspondence with Layard's patron Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the British ambassador at Constantinople. For 30 years Rawlinson was to be a central player in what was called the 'Great Game'—the game whose object was to combat French and Russian influence in Afghanistan and thus to safeguard British India.

What is of interest is how Rawlinson went from writing on linguistics and geography, with their barrage of facts, to writing something far more thematic and imperialistic. A later part of the story is how he extended his newly generalized ideas of empire to encompass areas beyond the Middle East. Three of his works illustrate these changes: The geographical report in which, in 1838, he first set out to make original contributions in archaeology; his 1854 *Notes on the Early History of Babylonia*, in which he put the

past together as series of empires; and a cluster of articles that he wrote in the mid-1860s on British relations with Russia.

We shall take them up in turn. Rawlinson's 91-page 'Notes on a March from Zoháb to Khúzistán, at the Foot of Zagros, along the mountains to Khúzistán (Susiana), and from thence through the province of Luristan in Kirmánsháh, in the year 1836' began with several dozen pages of geographical detail on the mountains, plains, towns and ruins along the route. From the beginning of the article it was clear that Rawlinson could cite classical and Arabic geographers and historians. Using his knowledge of Persian inscriptions he could match—or try to match—what he was seeing to the details that his authorities gave. But the result was page after page of interminable detail.

The idea of there being simply one thing after another to report, although in the most learned manner possible—but with no attempt to adduce a theme or to make a point—seems typical of the volume in which Rawlinson's piece appeared, the 1839 (or ninth) volume of *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* (Rawlinson's paper was read out to the Society by Lord Palmerston in the absence of Rawlinson himself, in two parts in January 1838). The 1839 volume *of the Journal* began with a long series of instructions to Hormuzd Rassam and others on what to see and where to go on their next expedition, and stretched to a note by Charles Darwin on reports of icebergs carrying boulders.[2] But what could one do with all this information? One could retrace the route and improve the last report, as Rawlinson was improving upon the reports of a certain Major Chesney and others. But who else would read all of this besides his fellow explorers? Presumably there were some homebound members of the RGS who, perhaps, would read all of this material energetically. But, considered as an intellectual question, why *should* they read it? What would they get out of doing so? What could people who had never travelled to Persia *make* of this flow of information? These questions did not seem to concern the writers and thinkers in the Royal Geographical Society. They do not seem to have had any objection to confining themselves to the gathering of information for a few generations before ever trying to interpret the pattern of the world—the task that we saw Lord Carnarvon recommending to his fellow archaeologists.

Rawlinson himself, however, did try to make more of the details of his report than it would seem on first glance. He did try to find a pattern. About a third of the way into his material, he broke into an introduction, albeit a much delayed one:

> The series of valleys which extend along the great chain of Zagros to the confines of Susiana, and are divided by a line of parallel ridges from the plains of Assyria, form one of the least known, and at the same time one of the most interesting countries of the east. Here was the original seat of the Elamites, when they migrated from Babylon; and from hence they spread their conquests over Susiana, and to the adjoining districts to the eastward, which thus assumed the title of Elyamis. The Elymaeans, are distinctly specified by Strabo, in numerous passages, as inhabiting along Mount Zagros, on the southern confines of Media, and overhanging Babylonia and Susiana. The most ancient name of the country appears to have been the plain of Arioch, from which the king of the Elymaeans came to the assistance of the Assyrian monarch at Nineveh. His capital

> seems to have been the very city of Zarnah, the ruins of which I have just described.[3]

Yes, his real subject was not geography but ancient ruins. He was attempting to construct the history of the region from its landmarks. Hundreds of times he cited place names and other bits of vocabulary to attempt to show some connection to similar names from the classics or the Bible. In addition, he employed ethnography, interviewing local people to try to find out the traditions and terms associated with physical objects.

Rawlinson might have done better to insert his introduction about half as far into the text, 15 pages in. There is where he first ran across the kind of inscriptions whose decipherment would make his name, not in geography but in Assyriology. About seven miles south of a mountain called Sar-Tak, he wrote,

> is a tablet sculptured upon the face of the rock, exhibiting the same device as is often seen on the Babylonian cylinders. A figure, clothed in a short tunic and armed with a strong bow in his left hand, a dagger in his right, and an axe in his girdle, tramples upon a prostate foe of pygmy dimensions…and the tablet is closed with a cuneiform inscription divided into three compartments of four lines each, and written perpendicularly in the complicated Babylonian character, which I had never before seen, except upon bricks and cylinders. The tablet is of miniature dimensions, being only of 2 feet in height and 5 in breadth; the execution is also rude, and the inscription, of which I have a copy, appears to be unfinished. I believe there is no relic of a similar nature existing in Persia, but it is chiefly interesting as tending to fix the era of the neighbouring town of Húrin.[4]

Elsewhere he would see the remains of a wall like a line of mounds, like the buildings of Nineveh and Babylon, and I conclude it, therefore, to have been the work of the Chaldean ages'.[5]

He would find still more cuneiform before his journey was over:

> There are only two tablets at Bísitún,—the one now nearly destroyed, which contains a mutilated Greek inscription, declaring it to be the work of Gotarzes; the other a Persepolitan sculpture, which is adorned with nearly 1,000 lines of Cuneiform writing, exhibiting the religious vows of Darius Hystapses, after his return from the destruction of Babylon.[6]

This was indeed the inscription that, copied, he would take with him and use in deciphering ancient Persian, the first of his two greatest contributions to philology. It would also be the basis for his second major decipherment, Akkadian, when he finally found a boy who could climb up and write down the third part.

At about this point Rawlinson simply turned his article away from geography:

> I have thus noticed, I believe, all the interesting matters of geography which fell under my own observation, or with which I became

> incidentally acquainted during my travels in Susiana and Elymais. I will now state the impressions that I have derived from them in regard to the ancient history and comparative geography of these provinces.[7]

Then he went on to tell the history of the provinces in question, with ample attention to the sites that illustrated it—sites reviewed in order of march earlier in his paper, now reviewed in chronological order.

But Rawlinson was no mere scholar. He was also the agent of a powerful imperial government. Witness his explanation of how he had been able to complete his scholarly journey. Along the way he met with the khan of a group that had killed two Englishmen some years before for not repeating the Islamic articles of faith. The current khan was surprisingly well informed on 'eastern politics', but showed the same religious bigotry:

> and I should recommend any European traveller visiting the province of Pushtikúh, in order to examine its remarkable antiquities, to appear in the meanest guise, and live entirely among the wandering I'liyát, who are mostly 'All Iláhís, and are equally ignorant and indifferent on all matters of religion. In my own case, of course, I had nothing to apprehend, as I was marching at the head of a regiment.[8]

Being head of a regiment was probably enough, although he said that he felt afraid when he was with certain local people that anything less than a regiment would not be sufficient.

It did not escape Rawlinson's attention that empire was very much a current phenomenon in this region; it was not confined to the remote past.

Again, all of this appeared in an article read to a learned audience in January 1838. By embracing argument and chronology, Rawlinson was moving into the discipline of history, even if he went on thinking of himself as a geographer nonetheless. In his later works he would usually go in chronological order, and he would usually put his theme in the introduction rather than halfway through.

But beyond embracing introductions and chronology, he still had one more step to take before he settled on a methodology.

Rawlinson wrote two papers that were read to the Royal Geographical Society in 1839. They were about two parts of his journey to 'Atropatenian Ecbatana'. The first paper was of the old school; it was full of geographical details and little else.[9] The second was very different. It had a thematic introduction—coming, yes, at the very beginning. Besides announcing a theme, the introduction also announced a method. In this paper—and from then on, as it turned out—Rawlinson's chronologies were to run backward. In his 'attempt to identify the position, and to illustrate the history of Media Atropatene', he would begin with the Islamic period, move to the Byzantines, and then:

> afterwards the fortunes of the city through the flourishing ages of the Roman and Greek empires: and thus finally to arrive at the dark period of the Median dynasty, where fable is intermixed with history, and glimmerings of truth can only be elicited by careful and minute analysis. And this line of argument, if less agreeable in character, is at any rate

> more consonant with the true principles of critical enquiry than the course which is usually adopted, of following down the stream of time from antiquity to modern days; for in the one case we commence our reasonings in doubt and darkness…and thus, when we at last descend to the more tangible field of certain and direct elaboration, our inferences are still affected by the obscurity of our early researches; whilst in the other we set out from a fixed base of direct and well-established proof.[10]

Going backwards in this way is, therefore, far more than an attempt by Rawlinson to organize his writing (and in later years his whole research programme). As he explicitly said, going backwards was a method designed to build up a structure of truths about the past through a succession of proofs. He would put in what was necessary for the argument. Thus he would keep the geographical details from building up and becoming overwhelming—and as he mentioned, calling each other into question and bringing uncertainty to the whole of one's researches.

In going chronologically backward through a series of proofs about the past, Rawlinson was doing history rather differently than many historians would. That is, his goal was not that of pursuing historical enquiries and proofs *within* the perspective provided by chronology and context—where the facts and the story when taken together embody some measure of balance and verisimilitude beyond what could be conveyed by the isolated or disembodied thesis statement. Rawlinson was more of the social scientist, trying to build up individual statements of universal truth apart from context. The various ancient periods that Rawlinson dealt with were not studied for themselves, to understand the past as it really was. They were studied for what they might do to help stave off objections to the argument about still earlier ages.

Of course, we are following Rawlinson's *life forwards*, with, one hopes, some measure of context and perspective. Moving across the period of the Afghan War and then, over the course of the 1840s, his breakthrough work on Old Persian and Akkadian, we can go forward to 1844, when he had himself posted to Baghdad. At that point his publications increased. He published his own discoveries and he published editions of the cuneiform texts found by others, including his new friend Layard.[11] Layard's discoveries (made between 1845 and 1851) were encouraged by Rawlinson in frequent letters, despite later friction between the two men.

Rawlinson's second publication in this period, a 29-page address entitled *Outline of the History of Assyria, as collected from inscriptions discovered by Austin Henry Layard, Esq., in the Ruins of Nineveh*,[12] published in 1852, began with the famous image of Rawlinson himself working 'in great haste, amid torrents of rain, in a little tent upon the mound of Nineveh, without any aids beyond a pocket Bible, a note-book of inscriptions, and a tolerably retentive memory'—this comes from a letter of Rawlinson's written at Nineveh earlier in that year. In making sure that the quotation appeared, Rawlinson showed that he lagged behind no one in the arena of self-promotion—even in a book on work that as the very title pointed out had been done by Layard. Yet in promoting himself in this way Rawlinson cannot be said to have been guilty of empty bombast. He was brilliant; he had deciphered two major languages; he had shown a genius for teasing patterns out of seemingly impenetrable details. And if Layard was now the one finding the physical objects, it was Rawlinson who was trying to make sense of them.

What Rawlinson was trying to do intellectually in this period was to fit the recent discoveries into a biblical chronology that he was coming to see was too recent. That much was clear in his correspondence with Layard from the mid-1840s on, as well as in Rawlinson's own 1854 work, his *Notes on the Early History of Babylonia*.[13] That is,

> [T]he successive discoveries which I have made in the history of ancient Assyria…have pretty well established the fact that an independent empire was first established on the Upper Tigris in the thirteenth century, B.C.They have furnished what may be considered an almost complete list of Assyrian kings from the above-named period to the destruction of Nineveh in B.C. 625, and they have further made us acquainted with the general history of Western Asia, during this interval of above seven centuries.
>
> I now propose to state the results of my researches into the anteAssyrian period, and to show that an inquiry which aims at the illustration of history from the local monuments, may be legitimately extended in Babylonia to the patriarchal ages. As it is now generally admitted that there is no sacred chronology beyond the time of Solomon, I shall not attempt to prove the antiquity of the Chaldees on scriptural authority, by fixing the period of the Exodus of Abraham. Still less shall I pretend to trace back the years of the patriarchal genealogies to the era of Nimrod, and thus obtain a date for the building of Babylon.[14]

But despite all these protestations about what he *could not* do, what he, Henry Rawlinson above all other scholars, *was* doing—even in this very passage—was putting together the history and the sequence of empires in the Near East.

But the earliest chronology was still sketchy. Rawlinson's frequent changes of mind on basic questions and chronologies caused friction with Layard. Rawlinson once criticized Layard in public for making a chronological claim whose source was Rawlinson himself but a few months before.[15] Since even his own chronological claims turned out to be so unstable, in time Rawlinson tried a new tack. He began looking for a different kind of pattern. He turned, however hesitantly, away from chronology and towards 'race' or ethnicity as the structure for his analysis. Thus, the Bible's

> incidental mention of 'Ur of the Chaldees', as the primitive seat of the Jewish race, supplies a not less important item of ethnic information; but to build a chronological structure on such a foundation, would be to abuse scripture, rather than to use it.

That is, if he couldn't prove sequence, he thought he could prove racial identity. And not just for the Jews. Rawlinson also took great pains to establish that Nimrod was a Scythian.[16] Indeed, the migrating Scythians were the stock of all mid-Eastern and southern European peoples, he said.[17]

Rawlinson's main scholarly concern, once he had deciphered his ancient languages, was taking the myriad texts and clues and finding a general (and soon pre-biblical)

pattern within which the chronology of the ancient empires—and, a bit later on in his career, the identity of the ancient races—could be understood.[18]

Meanwhile, in his diplomatic post he was constantly thinking about the fate of more modern empires. So Rawlinson managed to keep one eye focused on extending the historical chronology and the pre-chronological ethnic picture back further and further into the Mesopotamian past, and the other eye focused on extending British influence in the Mesopotamian present.

Rawlinson returned to England in 1855. He became a Crown director of the East India Company. This was during the Crimean War, and he advised the War Office on such matters as the danger of Russian attacks in the wintertime.[19] In 1858, he tried to begin a political career, becoming Liberal MP for Reigate, but later in the same year he decided to leave the House of Commons to become a member of the council of the first secretary of state for India (after the abolition of the EIC and the assumption of direct government control over the subcontinent). Then almost as quickly Rawlinson left the Council of India on being appointed minister to Persia in 1859 (when he was made a major-general).

Rawlinson had been appointed by the first secretary of state for India, the Conservative Lord Stanley, and he had been given to understand that his appointment would be accompanied by an upgrading of the importance of the Persian ambassadorship within the India Office and in Persia. He arrived in Tehran in December 1859, only to find in short order that his Mission had been transferred from the India Office to the Foreign Office. The Liberal foreign secretary, Lord John Russell, did not want Rawlinson to pursue the strong, pro-Persian policy, after all—for fear of antagonizing Russia. Rawlinson, although a Liberal himself, promptly resigned and went back to England.[20]

And yet during this short period in Tehran, Rawlinson did have the time to engage in some fine and very lengthy conversations with the Persian monarch, Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar, a scholar who was more than impressed that it was Rawlinson, the man who had unlocked Old Persian literature, who had been appointed British ambassador. Yet Rawlinson rejected the shah's many ideas for administrative and agricultural reform, stressing again and again only one point—the only reform that mattered would be for the shah to work through a prime minister, on the British model, a prime minister whom Rawlinson tried to pick.[21] All in all, Rawlinson does not seem to have thought deeply about democratic theory or the appropriateness of different constitutions to differently constituted societies. The shah's many worthwhile ideas were not the one perfect idea that Rawlinson was looking for. His knowledge of Persian culture did not seem to get in the way of his attempts to spread the British version of culture in defiance of local opinion.

Rawlinson's return to England in 1860 was permanent, save for the occasional visit to the East. By the mid-1860s, he was publishing articles on the Great Game.[22] Careful never to profit from the Empire financially, and thus to lose his aura of impartiality and expertise,[23] he developed his own *non*-financial, patriotic imperialism, based upon the need to resist the Russian threat. He reinvented himself as the leading expert on all things Central Asian, all things in or conceivably threatened by extra-European Russia.

In 'The Russians in Central Asia', published in 1865, Rawlinson complained that the great excitement, the great fear of Russian encroachment which had accompanied the first Afghan War in the late 1830s was gone. Now the public were 'await[ing] the inevitable contact of the two empires [the English and Russian] with supreme

indifference'. But that indifference was misplaced—war had to come eventually. English and Russian territory, formerly separated by half of a continent between the Caucasus and the Sutlej river in India, faced each other across 'a mere narrow strip of territory, a few hundred miles across, occupied either by tribes torn by internecine warfare or nationalities in the last stage of decrepitude, and traversed by military routes in all directions'.[24] Imperial conflict was inevitable; had there not always been empires in conflict in that region, going back far into the historical record that he, Rawlinson, had translated?

Rawlinson had detected a new pattern—a constant mortal threat from Russia—and he would never let go of it. It was true that ever since the 1830s, both the English and the Russian sides had pushed forward in Afghanistan. In this article, Rawlinson detailed the 30-year history of the twists and turns of great power diplomacy and agitation in the region. Rawlinson admitted that the Russians had a simple explanation for their behaviour in Central Asia, but he did not believe what they said. Their explanation, contained in the Gortchakoff Circular of 1864, was that a creeping frontier results whenever a more modern society borders a semisettled one. In such a situation, there is no one along the border for the more civilized society to have stable relations with. The civilized power will continually have to intervene for humanitarian reasons in the quarrels of the uncivilized peoples. The border of the more civilized power will have to grow continually, taking in more and more of the formerly independent areas.[25] This was the Russian explanation that Rawlinson quoted, and something like this process has also been identified on the borders of nineteenth-century South Africa, the United States, and elsewhere. The 'reluctant imperialism' along the South African frontier was famously explored—and given that name—by John S.Galbraith.

Rawlinson rejected this innocent explanation for Russian behaviour. In his archaeological work, he had moved from the knotty issues of chronology, change and small-scale events, and had moved on to exploring the unchanging character of races. He knew the Russian character. Whatever good the Russians may have done by their interventions, such as fighting the Central Asian slave trade, they were following a nefarious, centuries-old imperial plan.[26] Russian leaders were of a piece.

But as Rawlinson might be asked by sceptics, Why not leave them to it? Why should the British counter any Russian plan with one of their own? Why should there be a *British* Empire in Central Asia? To fight such horrid indifference on the part of the British government and public, Rawlinson mustered every argument he could. For example, he argued that Central Asia would be a better consumer of British goods if its tariffs on them were lower.[27] Surely he could not have expected to sell very much there.

We have already seen Rawlinson refer to the 'decrepitude' of native governments, another good reason for taking them over. He also made it clear that England would do a better and more sincere job at freeing slaves than Russia was doing. And still there were more reasons why England ought to take action. A Russian invasion of India was less to be feared than Russian cultivation of Central Asia, which would out-compete the Indian Empire[28]—again, he seems to have ignored population density, or the lack thereof.

In the nearer term, while the British promotion of Uzbek 'native feeling' and national independence would help to make for stability, thus frustrating the Russians, this 'humane' policy was impracticable because it would not give England the same freedom of action in annexing territory that Russia enjoyed. He wanted Great Britain to annex as

much as possible. Russia had 'no right—except the right of the strongest' to its annexations, while Great Britain's annexations, such as that of Bhutan, should not upset Russian public opinion at all—not in the way that Russia's aggression continually upset the people of India. '[T]he duty of England', then, was to do whatever needed to be done, including annexation, to keep the Russians back. Besides, he concluded, empires, like fortresses, needed 'outworks'.[29]

Despite this smokescreen of detail, the real reason that England should pursue a forward policy in Central Asia was that Rawlinson had set his mind to it.

Rawlinson sat in the Commons again from 1865 to 1868, again as a Liberal (for Frome). His imperialism grew ever more general. For example, he spoke in favour of the Abyssinian Expedition in 1867. By then he was wrapping himself in the imperial flag:

> What, sir, then, can have been the causes that have led to all this hesitation on our part, that lead us still to hesitate—we, whose boast it has ever been hitherto, that an Englishman, like the old *civis Romanus,* could roam through the world covered by the national aegis, and secured by it against injury and wrong?[30]

Indeed, Rawlinson set himself up as the expert on all the lands that Russia might want, but whose nominal independence England ought to guarantee and direct—all the way to China—plus Ethiopia and wherever else he turned his mind to.[31]

He also tried to make use of his by now very high position in the Royal Geographical Society. He made a number of attempts to arrange for expeditions into Central Asia and for government subsidies for these expeditions.[32] (One Foreign Office official whom he kept approaching to this end was Layard, whose life had taken him out of archaeology and into administration.[33]) Rawlinson also helped to arrange geographical lectures to keep the subject of Central Asia before the public eye. Although Rawlinson was Sir Roderick Murchison's chosen successor as head of the Royal Geographical Society, he could not stop himself from angering Murchison, a great friend (and geological explorer) of Russia, by turning all the Society's meetings on Central Asian exploration into Rawlinsonian screeds on the Russian menace. Murchison responded in his 1865 presidential address that the idea that Russia was a threat to India was 'baseless and visionary'. Rawlinson continued anyway. On occasion he also used the Royal Geographical Society's meetings to push for British imperial thrusts into East Africa.[34]

As we have seen, Rawlinson returned to London, where he turned himself from an expert on the specifics of cuneiform and Persian into a spokesman for more general causes, such as expanding British imperial control and resisting a many-centuries-long Russian advance. In his archaeology he had moved from geographical details to chronological arguments and then, in his last archaeological works, to racial generalities; in his imperialism, he had moved from active political engagement with the emergent details out on the ground to sitting in London, far away and shouting 'The Russians are coming!'[35] He was reading the unchanging racial character of the Russians into certain modern affairs better explained by the detailed story of the dynamics of the Russian Central Asian frontier. In moving from the specifics of his youth into the more self-confident and wider-ranging pronouncements of middle age, he had a good deal in common with the other more Tocquevillean members of the Colonial Society.

Standing down from parliament, Rawlinson then served again on the Council of India from 1868 until his death in 1895. He was twice president of the Royal Geographical Society in the 1870s, and was a director for life of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1862, later serving as that body's president. Having been made a CBE in 1844, he was created baronet in 1891.[36] He was the most established of hotheads.

The anti-Rawlinson: Sir Stafford Northcote on being 'saddled' with India

Rawlinson took his Russian essays from the mid-1860s and reprinted them, with new material, as *England and Russia in the East: A Series of Papers on the Political and Geographical Condition of Central Asia*, a nearly 400-page tome that he published in 1875.[37] It sold well, and it confirmed his reputation for expertise. It also attracted the allegation that in his obvious desire to make the best possible case against Russia he had misused his position on the Council of India to publish documents that should have remained secret. Yet no action was taken against him, largely because of the reaction of the secretary of state for India, Lord Salisbury: 'To have a neighbour going around saying you are hot-tempered and a crack shot can do some good.'[38] That is, if Rawlinson had alarmed the Russians, perhaps it was better for England if they stayed alarmed. Certainly Rawlinson's book was read in Russia, and it may well have helped to restrain Russian behaviour, if there was any Russian behaviour that needed restraining.

Perhaps the question that ought to have been asked was not whether Rawlinson had misused documents, but who had given him access to them in the first place? Who was responsible for putting this irascible man back on the Council of India? The answer is that it was the same man who had been responsible for promoting Rawlinson and Rawlinson's views on at least one other occasion—Sir Stafford Northcote, politician, and *aficionado* of the archaeology of Great Britain.[39] He did not have a deep personal relationship with Rawlinson. It would seem that Northcote, always fond of his studies, simply wanted to help the career of the great decipherer of Old Persian and Babylonian, and a stalwart officer of the Royal Geographical Society. But later he might have regretted it.

Stafford Henry Northcote was born in 1818 to an established family that was connected, on his mother's side, to the East India Company. He did only moderately well at Eton. He tried unsuccessfully for a university scholarship, went to a crammers, and finally got his scholarship; he came second to Arthur Hugh Clough. It was then that he came into his own academically. A Balliol man, Northcote took a first in classics and a third in mathematics late in November 1839, the second highest double-honours degree of his year. He did not try for a fellowship, going to the Inner Temple in 1840. But he would not be called to the bar until 1847—for something else had come up, something that was the making of his career, and that was undoubtedly an education in itself. In 1842 Northcote became private secretary to William Ewart Gladstone, a position that he retained for ten years.

Gladstone was a protean force. For Northcote the work was heavy, the detail immense. The two men worked together in the cause of free trade, with Gladstone initially vice-president of the Board of Trade. Northcote was legal adviser to the board from 1845 to

1850. He still acted as Gladstone's private secretary even after Gladstone had resigned from the government over its grant to the Roman Catholic college in Ireland, the Maynooth grant, in 1845. After that point, there was talk that Northcote's combination of duties for Gladstone (now a private member) and for the Board of Trade was impossible, although it continued for some time. Northcote himself admitted that one of the duties of a private secretary was to be on the spot to receive visitors, which he himself was too busy at the Board of Trade to do for Gladstone.[40]

Yet he was still acting on Gladstone's behalf. In 1847, Northcote published a pamphlet defending one of Gladstone's actions when he was colonial secretary (late December 1845 to early July 1846). Gladstone had dismissed Sir Eardley Wilmot, governor of Tasmania, because of unfounded rumours about his character. Northcote did little more than repeat the already discredited accusations against the late governor, saying that they seemed credible to Gladstone at the time. What may be significant about this little colonial tempest over which Northcote first entered print is how closely attached Northcote was to Gladstone; he was willing to make weak apologies for him in public.[41] But the colonial context also seems significant, given what was to come.

In 1849 Northcote published his first real book, an influential but anonymous history of the navigation laws in 83 pages.[42] The navigation laws served to make trade as free as possible, he argued, and thus they made for peace.[43] This happy modern system had been adopted as a way out of the mess that had resulted from the loss of the American colonies. When America became a foreign territory, the old navigation laws, still in effect, excluded the new country.[44] The Americans responded by erecting a protectionism of their own. Northcote paused to note how much injury had been caused to different British colonies before trade between them and the United States was opened up in the 1830s. From then on, under the system that was current when Northcote was writing, trade had grown freer and freer. Still, protectionist stipulations existed throughout British law, including complex and unwieldy provisions for reciprocity—often working to the disadvantage of British West Indian possessions.[45] The solution for Britain herself and for the colonies whose growth might be stunted by anything less than free competition and free trade was the complete revamping of the navigation laws—free trade itself.[46]

Northcote was a lover of free trade and a man aware of the variety of colonial interests and products. Therefore he was a good choice to serve (from early 1850) as a commissioner of the Great Exhibition set for 1851. He became friends with Prince Albert and got a CB for his detailed work. In the same year of 1850, however, his father and grandfather grew ill, and Northcote considered retreating to the country to take care of the family and the estate. This was the period of his life in which as Gladstone's long-time secretary he could expect a place in parliament—something that he had in mind when he took the secretaryship in the first place.[47] But now he wrote to a friend that he would be better off staying in the country than standing for parliament, for he did 'not abound in ideas'. He could always go into parliament a number of years later, when he could represent country life once he had learned it in detail, as he had learned government business in detail.[48]

Then within a few days of each other, both the ill father and the ill grandfather died. Now a baronet but bereft, Northcote was overcome—and the doctors discovered that he had a weak heart. He was ordered to rest until the following year.

It was only then, after his period of recovery, that Northcote first made his attempt to enter parliament, trying for selection in various constituencies and making a published address to the voters of Exeter, promising to work to uphold and extend free trade but also to maintain the Conservative administration against 'the headlong progress of democracy'.[49] In fact he was not adopted as a candidate for any seat, but his political career refused to die. After the election, Northcote was appointed to a variety of government reform commissions. It was on one of them, before he ever sat in the Commons, that Northcote made his most famous contribution to English history: working with Sir Charles Trevelyan, he prepared the report on a permanent civil service. Both the 1854 report and the administrative reforms that it inspired (namely competitive examinations and central recruitment for the home departments, and regular evaluations throughout one's career) bear the joint name 'Northcote—Trevelyan'.[50]

But then what was to become of Northcote himself when his commission work began to wind down? He spent more than a year taking elocution lessons from a professional actor, who helped him slow down his speech and seem less excited, if no less full of details. Then in 1855 he finally entered parliament for a seat suggested by Gladstone and controlled by Lord Ward. This was not a long-term solution. Uncomfortable with the inevitable attempt by Ward to control his vote, he stood for another seat after the next dissolution and was defeated. Out of parliament from 1857 to 1858, Northcote stood for Stamford. But this marked a tremendous shift in Northcote's life. The seat at Stamford was not Gladstone's suggestion but Disraeli's. Northcote prevailed, and came into the brief Derby government as financial secretary to the Treasury.[51]

Gladstone's former private secretary had now become Disraeli's confidant. It was not that he had left Gladstone, but that Gladstone had left him. Northcote had not moved to the left with Gladstone and the other Peelites who joined with the Liberals in the early 1850s. Northcote had hoped that the free trade Peelites would be able to take over the Conservative Party rather than join with its enemies. But he would long remain Gladstone's friend, even as a trusted cabinet minister in the opposite party. The two men would continue to have a number of points in common, including a deep religious commitment of the High Church kind—until this subject too began to divide them when Gladstone moved even further left on trying to abolish the Church rates, and his friendship with Northcote became a thing of the past.[52]

Very soon new fields opened up for Northcote in the Conservative Party, even though the Liberals were back in power. Northcote quickly developed an expertise in financial policy, making very careful and detailed speeches criticizing the chancellor of the exchequer, none other than William Ewart Gladstone. Indeed, Northcote went on to publish a large and influential book on the matter of government budgets, *Twenty Years of Financial Policy: A Summary of the Chief Financial Measures passed between 1842 and 1861, with a Table of Budgets*,[53] in 1862; it was soon on the syllabus at Haileybury, the East India Company's training college.[54] Northcote's real interests as revealed in this book lay in the minutiae of government finance and not in the finances of the Empire. The book has whole chapters on the fiscal measures that went along with the Crimean War, which ended in 1857, but very little on the Indian Mutiny of 1857–8, much less on any other issue of colonial or imperial finance.

Not long before writing his big book on financial policy, Northcote wrote a number of other detailed books and government reports—for his commission work had yet to come

to its close. He and Trevelyan had served on eight other administrative reform commissions while they were doing their great civil service report in 1853 and 1854, commissions charged with reforming the Science and Art Department, the Office of Works, and the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission, among other things. This committee work carried on well into Northcote's parliamentary career. Each of these efforts produced a report, largely written by Northcote and Trevelyan themselves.[55]

By the early 1860s, and having gone through all of that, Northcote had developed his own ideas about how to manage the flood of information presenting itself to the educated or the public man. In the early 1850s, when he was considering civil service reform, he had stressed that the men who would prevail under a policy of recruitment by examination would mostly be university graduates. Such candidates would have learned careful thinking from the classics, and from the experience of going through university they would have learned how to handle people.[56]

Thus, categorization and judgement would seem to have mattered more to the future bureaucrat—or at least to Northcote—than did mastery of abstruse facts. But from the Great Exhibition—and his part in preparing it—to his 1862 tome on financial policy, the facts kept pouring in. One could start with university-tutored detachment, but could one retain it? And if so, how could one find the right categories to use in simplifying the world?

These were exactly the questions that Northcote took up in his inaugural address as president of the British Archaeological Association in 1861.[57] A proud native of Devonshire, he was happy to welcome the delegates to Exeter and begin his year as president. He had the job as president of their society mostly because he was a local notable. Still, he said, he had found in archaeology the academic field whose ways of knowing and then of questioning knowledge most nearly matched those that he employed at the centre of the information flowing into Victorian London.

Early in his remarks, Northcote said that he would not address the archaeologists as though he knew their subject as well as they did—that would be like the sophist who lectured Hannibal on war. And yet

> [i]t does not require that we should be very deep archaeologists ourselves to enjoy an archaeological gathering like the present. The truth is, that this science is one of the most natural, and, I think I may say, the most rational, that men can engage in. We are naturally curious to know how it is that we find ourselves in the position in which we are…. We find that we have stepped into a rich inheritance, like the people of Israel who entered into a land full of treasures which they had not collected. We find that our forefathers have collected for us that which adds to the enjoyment and interest of life; and beyond that, we find ourselves continually adding to, and improving and advancing upon, that which they have left us.

Then Northcote went on to echo Mill's *On Liberty* in distinguishing between civilizations based upon their rate of change in recent times. In China, archaeology would show that things were much the same as in the past. In 'Nineveh and Babylon and Asia Minor', archaeology showed that things were much worse than they used to be; in England,

archaeology attested to 'the history of human progress'. In English archaeology, it was therefore the more recent material that was the most interesting.[58]

Thus, archaeological evidence could be marshalled to demonstrate the lead that England had over the rest of the world. But Northcote went on to be far more specific than this in confronting the question of how to make sense out of all the detail of the world. He doubted Carnarvon's belief that there needed to be several more generations of evidence-gathering before enough of it could be marshalled to settle such important questions as that of human unity. Northcote was less focused on settling a single question than enjoying whatever archaeology had to offer. He saw the two phases of evidence-gathering and theory-forming as continual and intertwined. *Evidence* that was brought together could be used to test older theories or as the grounds for making new ones. *Theories* that were brought together would test each other, and would suggest new avenues of research into more evidence. The more that people continually pushed forward this process of amassing evidence and educing theories, the more wonderful the results would be:

> [A]rchaeology is of all studies the one which seems to me the best described by Shakespeare's saying that
>
> 'Trifles Light as air may be confirmation strong As proofs of holy writ' *[sic]*.
>
> You may find any number of small points each insignificant, apparently absurd, if you take it by itself, yet if you put them together, compare them, collate them with what has been discovered in other parts of the country, they produce, by degrees, first doubt, then suspicion, and then a moral certainty which almost amounts to the strength of demonstration. One would be glad that all these things should be recorded; that theories, however absurd in themselves, should be put forward and discussed, and everything that can be brought forward to support these theories be brought forth and stated, in order to determine what is really valuable and true.

Northcote went on to praise archaeology as a way of training the mind, praising it in terms similar to those that he had used years before to describe the value of classics and a university education:

> [A]rchaeology may be made a very fine and noble training for the intellectual powers and for the judgment of man…you have to combine such different qualities in order to make a perfect archaeologist. You require not only a great amount of knowledge; that, I am aware, is essential, with a great amount of industry, necessary in all studies, but you require a combination of imagination and of judgment, of enthusiasm and scepticism.

There needed to be archaeological 'poets' to theorize and archaeological critics to judge the theories:

> I do not believe you ever make discoveries, unless you make them with a view to some theory. A man lays down a theory, as Polwhele laid down his theory that we [in Devonshire] had a Phoenician origin; and in order to make out his theory he collected with great enthusiasm every kind of proof he could accumulate, some very weak and shallow no doubt, but others, having, perhaps, something in them…. In that way you get facts together; and then you want to bring to bear upon them critical scepticism, blowing to the winds those which do not bear investigation. But if you had criticism only you would never discover anything. Invention and discovery after all are very closely related; but you want to discover, you do not want to invent, and the great danger is lest discovery should run into invention, because some habits of mind will no doubt lead persons from one to the other.[59]

Just so: 'some habits of mind' will lead from discovery to invention, specifics into generalities.

Theory, then, was what was to be pursued; facts were to be gathered to serve theories, or sometimes to preserve folktales or other data for later theorists. There were so many facts that one would not usually gather them for their own sake, only as a part *of ad hoc* theories. What the non-archaeologists could do was save the evidence and start a local museum. That way, Devon's material heritage would not all get snapped up by the great institutions of London. And Devon deserved no less. It was long the home of origin of brave colonists.[60]

Colonization both ancient and modern was indeed one of the key themes that Northcote used to try to bring archaeology to life. To judge from his examples, colonization, emigration and freedom were indeed the main ideas around which facts might be gathered in Devonshire.

Northcote had come a long way since 1850. In that year he had considered giving up politics because he preferred specifics to general ideas, in which (as we have seen) he said that he did 'not abound'. By now, ideas about the importance of general categories and the place of theory certainly did occupy some part of his mind. He seemed to feel intellectually at home in the world.

In their violent actions in China, certain British men-on-the-spot had gone beyond international law, British government policy, and substantial sectors of British opinion. In 1864, Northcote shared his thoughts on these Chinese events with his new but now life-long friend Disraeli. At least events were turning out all right. Northcote gave thanks for the character of such men as General Gordon, for otherwise Great Britain would have taken over China as Clive and Hastings had taken over India in the century before: the men on the spot would have 'saddled us with a new India'—or, as Northcote went on to kid Disraeli in Disraeli's own vocabulary, they would have 'added a fresh and considerable jewel' to the Empire.

Despite the teasing between the two men, it is clear that Northcote was less than enthusiastic not only about the prospect of empire in China but about the reality of empire in India, the empire with which Britain was indeed 'saddled'.[61] In a subsequent letter, Northcote asked Disraeli for a conference to settle the party's policy on just what Great Britain's policies in the East ought to be—so that parliament did not have to

quibble about first principles, but could move on to discuss how to implement them. It was in this letter that Northcote first mentioned Great Britain's 'imperial policy':

> What we are asked to do [in Parliament] is to lay down the outlines of an imperial policy in the extreme East, for what we may decide upon in China cannot fail greatly to affect our future course in Japan also; and it strikes me that it is at once of paramount importance to England that those outlines should now be firmly traced, and of very great importance to ourselves as a party, that we should show ourselves capable of tracing them.

But what sort of imperial policy did Northcote have in mind, given how deeply certain British officers had already interfered in the internal affairs of China?

> Individually, I should be disposed to condemn the policy which has led to the present state of things; but I see no reason why we should be severe upon it…. It would, I think, well become us to take our stand on general grounds, to let bygones be bygones, except for the sake of the lessons they teach us, and to call upon Parliament to lay down now a clear and intelligible of strict non-intervention in the domestic troubles of Asiatic, as well as of European and American nations.

Indeed, what Northcote wanted for simplifying all the foreign and imperial affairs that parliament was called upon to decide was a clear, simple policy of non-imperialism:

> We ought not to forget that thoughtful men are becoming alarmed at the magnitude of our empire, and at the danger lest the pulsations of the heart should not be strong enough for the size of the frame. Neither ought we to forget the lesson which the growth of our Indian Empire should have taught us of the certain consequences of intermeddling with the domestic concerns of semi-civilized or Asio-civilized (if I may coin such a word) nations.

One danger was the extension of imperial control, but another was a coarsening of the soul. It was

> the risk we run in encouraging the strange buccaneering spirit, which is as characteristic of Englishmen now as in the days of Elizabeth, and which is compounded of love of gain, love of adventure, love of fighting, a certain kind of religious feeling, and a dominant conviction of the superiority of the English race to all foreigners, of whatsoever nation or colour.

Northcote went on to complain that there were Englishmen who would go anywhere in the world to trade, and then expect the British government to protect them. All this ought to be discussed outside parliament, so the government of the day (Palmerston's) could not 'bluster through with an appeal to the British lion'.[62]

Northcote re-entered the cabinet in 1866, becoming president of the Board of Trade when the Conservatives came back in. Heading the Board was a good fit for a man whose latest book was a nearly 400-page tome on govern ment finance. But having reached a senior cabinet position, he could then be put to work wherever else the government needed him. Early in the next year, therefore, when Lord Cranborne (soon to be Lord Salisbury) resigned as secretary of state for India, Northcote replaced him. Thus Northcote served as India secretary—the man personally 'saddled' with India—at the time of the foundation of the Colonial Society, and until the Gladstone government took office in December 1868. Suddenly he was faced with a world, or in reality a subcontinent, full of unfamiliar Indian and imperial details. He had no background in them beyond the ungrounded, abstract, but clearly anti-imperialist opinions that he had shared with Disraeli in 1864. (Did Disraeli, chancellor of the exchequer and leader of the government in the House of Commons, remember what Northcote had written on the value of the subcontinent to England, and did he have a quiet chuckle when recommending to Lord Derby Northcote's appointment as Indian secretary?)

Another hard-working, detail-loving barrister, Herman Merivale, retreated into generalities for the first few years that *he* was plunged into the India Office, almost ten years before. But now we are concerned with Northcote. Armed with his life-long bent for bureaucratic detail, with his archaeological or social scientific appreciation of theory and generalization as a way to organize knowledge, and with his newly developed anti-imperialistic generalizations, prompted it would seem by his distaste for all the confusing and embarrassing Chinese details being brought before the House of Commons, how did Northcote handle the India Office?

Where he could, he simply applied to India what he had learned in England. In trying to make sure that men in judicial employment had legal training, instead of transferring into the judiciary from other parts of the Indian administration, Northcote was keeping faith with his own published remarks on the educational qualifications of prospective civil servants in the British home departments.[63] And given the books that he had written, he held his own in matters of budgets and trade.[64]

Also, as former president of the British Archaeological Association, he must have taken some satisfaction in seeing that one of the first matters on which he wrote to the viceroy, Sir John Lawrence, the matter of the need to preserve Indian antiquities, produced not only an order from the viceroy to that effect, but a corps of professional and amateur photographers who were sent out to record the buildings of India, with the negatives and two copies of each photograph going to the India Office.[65] (In a case of intellectual convergence, a photographic record like this for *English* monuments and buildings was suggested by Carnarvon in his Berkshire address in 1859. Suddenly there was the consciousness of so much threatened archaeological information that it had simply to be documented first and sorted out later.)

But of course there were areas of the Indian experience for which Northcote was less well prepared than he was in civil service reform and archaeology. On some of these new issues he wound up taking surprising stands. There was the question of allowing government irrigation projects that would enable Indian farmers to settle new land. Taking the advice of those around him, Northcote forbade this, since irrigation would have to be paid for by an increase in taxes—an increase that no one would pay. The Indian landlords would not accept revaluation, and the English in India would accept no

taxes upon themselves to pay for irrigation or anything else. Besides, Northcote suspected that many of the proposed irrigation projects were unneeded speculations in well-watered areas, and less wise either as investments or as a means of famine prevention than investing in railroads that could move grain across the country.[66] For banning large irrigation projects, the India Office was attacked by Colonial Society founder Thomas Briggs, who argued in favour of economic development and famine prevention in India and—Wakefield and his idea of locking away land be damned—in all the rest of the Empire.[67] The whole matter was one of the largest questions facing Northcote, and how to buy out, bail out, or cooperate with various private irrigation schemes took up much of his time at the India Office.[68]

Perhaps an even larger question was that of the annexation of native territories to the British Crown, especially in Mysore, where the royal family needed to adopt an heir. Usually the lack of a native heir of the body was an excuse for a British takeover. Guided by the public statements of his predecessor, Lord Cranborne (soon to be Lord Salisbury), Northcote opposed annexation in Mysore. He also opposed the viceroy's attempts at economic warfare against independent Burma.[69] Because of the support of Cranborne, Northcote did not have to work out his own position on this point. In continuing with the policy of opposing the eventual annexation of Mysore, however, Northcote faced the strong opposition of most of the old hands on the Council of India. He also faced the opposition of someone not currently on the Council, but an MP, Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson—a man who as we have seen wanted India to expand all the way into Central Asia.[70]

Northcote also opposed as too dangerous an expedition into Central Asia that a certain Mr Hayward was trying to make under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society, and which Rawlinson tried to arrange with Northcote.[71] And yet Rawlinson so impressed Northcote in their dealings together and in his apparent expertise that Northcote was soon wishing for 'a man of Rawlinson's calibre' to send to negotiate with the Persians.[72] Rawlinson in the meantime submitted to Northcote a detailed memorandum on how to handle a particular Afghan leader, Shir Ali. Although Northcote rejected the idea of a forward policy in Afghanistan, he did arrange for Shir Ali to be given a subsidy by the Indian government.[73] Not long after receiving the memorandum, Northcote slated Rawlinson for an upcoming vacancy on the Council of India, the secretary of state for India's advisory cabinet.[74]

On the Council, Rawlinson was one of the Northcote's allies in restarting the harbour works in Karachi, largely for the strategic, anti-Russian reasons so dear to Rawlinson's heart.[75] For his part, Northcote supported Rawlinson's recommendation that the recent Persian request for British military advisers should be accepted.[76] But the two men were bound to wind up on the same side on occasion in the seething world of proposals and counterproposals and dissents and letters that flowed back and forth between Indian officials, the councils (one in India and one in London), and the India Office itself. A tremendous number of voices were being heard from. When framing proposals to give the viceroy of India greater independence from his advisers, Northcote pointed out that nothing could 'be more embarrassing'

> than the sort of letters we regularly occasionally receive from the Government of India…transmitting to us minutes by different members of

> Council, and saying that our colleague Mr. Maine thinks one thing, and our colleague Sir H.Durand another, and the Governor-General, perhaps a third? When these come to be discussed in our own Council there is a similar diversity of opinion, and, in the absence of any clear expression on the part of the Government of India, and of any overruling power (where money is concerned) on the part of the Secretary of State, it is very much a matter of hap-hazard *[sic]* what decision is

Northcote told parliament that the secretary of state for India, usually with no Indian background,

> is called upon to superintend and control the governors of an enormous empire at the other side of the world, upon thousands of details, embracing every class of business. He is at once charged with military duties, financial duties, with the duties of home administration, with foreign affairs, with judicial affairs, with the management of great railways, and other public works.[78]

Amidst all this messy business where anything could happen, Rawlinson and Northcote often took opposite sides on key issues of policy. In his cover letter for a confidential paper on Central Asian policy, Northcote not only rejected as un-English the Rawlinsonian idea of switching back and forth in playing local favourites among Afghan tribal leaders but also rejected the occupation of Herat (which Rawlinson wanted), the building of strategic railway lines (which Rawlinson also wanted), and the whole premise (in which Rawlinson strongly believed) that Russia was plotting against Great Britain—which in turn had to engage in counterplots if India was to be secure. All Northcote thought necessary was making sure that the Indian government agent in Kabul had enough money to give presents all round, 'without mixing himself up in Affgan *[sic]* politics'.[79] Northcote favoured an open agreement with Russia over Afghanistan, not least to stop 'intriguers' like Rawlinson from continually roiling things up:

> I do not think we have much to fear from a Russian invasion of India, but I apprehend some inconvenience from the constant agitation of the subject among the Natives. The idea that Russia is advancing, that we are afraid of her and unable to arrest her, and that we shall ultimately succumb to her, is not a wholesome one, and intriguers of all sorts are sure to make the most of it. An Agreement with Russia, even if we could not rely on her keeping it, might have a tranquillizing effect.[80]

Indeed, Northcote's were a safe pair of hands. He thought about what he knew and how he knew it—and although he knew that he was confused about what to do in India, he could spot people like Rawlinson whose certainty was a case of special pleading.

But Northcote needed new categories, new generalizations, to understand what he was about in India. He needed to figure out why Britain was in India in the first place. After all, some of the business that he had to deal with was not just mismanaged but bewildering and absurd. In the Abyssinian Expedition, he was called upon to send Indian

forces under Lord Napier to East Africa to rescue British and other foreign prisoners being held by Emperor Theodore. Northcote played his part, accepting the decision to intervene reached by the cabinet of which he was a member, and doing his duty in the special session of parliament called to pay for the war. But privately he believed that such men as Layard (then parliamentary undersecretary of state at the Foreign Office) had mismanaged the whole thing. Drafting contradictory instructions, they had sent to Abyssinia envoy after envoy, most of whom Theodore had taken prisoner. The whole matter, including the captivity of the foreigners, had been dragging on for more than four years.

One can understand Northcote's reluctance to involve Indian troops in this tangled affair. All that Northcote, a former president of the British Archaeological Association, really supported or wanted to pay attention to, as his letters show, was Sir Roderick Murchison's plan to send scientists into Abyssinia along with Napier. (The Napier expedition was indeed a success of a kind, with Theodore killing himself and not the prisoners.)[81]

Northcote recognized the popular interest in the Abyssinian campaign as an imperial adventure, but he also recognized that the popular memory of the whole affair would fade away in a year or so. Nor did this fact bother him.[82] He never did develop any interest in spreading British control beyond India, whether in Abyssinia itself or elsewhere. Northcote was cool about the need to hand knighthoods out to the kings of Nepal or Siam; even where something was to be said for one of these knighthoods, he did not want the government accused of 'aggrandizement'—as it had been over the Abyssinian campaign.[83] Keeping in mind the Indian government's treaty obligations to the anti-slavery sultan of Zanzibar—and the fact that the Royal Navy was not sufficiently active in the Persian Gulf to provide security to the trade of India and its allies—Northcote was more or less in favour of the re-establishment of a small naval force under Indian control; the Indian navy had been abolished in 1861. But he was not very enthusiastic about this, either, and he was hardly perturbed when nothing came of the matter.[84]

Surely British domination in India was for something more than dispatching geologists into the highlands of East Africa and maintaining good relations with the sultan of Zanzibar? Might there be some thematic organizing purpose under the mass of Indian administrative detail? Northcote considered the question in another letter to the viceroy:

> On what principles is India to be administered? Is it to be governed on English or on Indian principles? Are we to endeavour to impress our own character on the people, or to adapt our institutions to their characters, and, it may be, to their weaknesses? Are we to centralize or localize? These are not easy questions to answer, or perhaps I should say, they are questions which it is easy to answer either way.[85]

This was an honest enquiry on Northcote's part. He was grappling with real philosophical questions. Yet nowhere did he mention, even rhetorically, the possibility that England did not belong in India. Nowhere did he ask the second part of this question, 'How are we to govern India, if we are to govern India at all?'

But let us follow him a little further in his answer to the first part of this question, when he was pondering the ends to which England governed India. He added that '[i]t seems natural to say—A Christian nation, a nation professing what it believes to be the highest form of civilisation, ought to apply itself to christianise and civilise those who have been committed to its charge'.[86] Where England

> has obtained a certain foothold in that portion of the empire where the English capital is situated [Bombay], and from that vantage-ground it can best proceed to assimilate the rest of India to its ideas. It may apply itself to the development of education, the improvement of law, the introduction of a European tone into the institutions of the metropolitan presidency, and may trust to the gradual extension of the influence of the metropolitan element to the rest of the country.

But having said that much, Northcote makes it clear that this sort of Christianization cannot be adopted as general policy, because of the kind of country that England is:

> I am not sure that if England were the reverse of what she is, this might not be the right policy. But it would require an iron will to carry it into effect…. You must be prepared to find that, in order to accomplish a benevolent purpose, you would have to do many things extremely disagreeable to the objects of your benevolence; that you would have to improve a good many of them off the face of the earth, and that your means would often come to be very unworthy of your ends.

The improvement of a good many native peoples 'off the face of the earth' is exactly what was happening in the settlement colonies, with the removal of native peoples, but to his credit Northcote rejected any such thing for India. Besides, the various British officials and councils involved in Indian governance, plus parliament and the press, could never maintain so stalwart a policy.

So, since all this was impracticable, what was the Empire for?

> I look, therefore, to the opposite policy: that of localising our administration as much as possible, and adapting it to the wants and prejudices of each district, introducing our own ideas with great caution and forbearance…. For this purpose, decentralise.[87]

This would help cut down 'the mass of detail' that higher authorities had to deal with—but it did not make a good rationale for keeping the Empire together.[88]

If Northcote did not go beyond questioning the *purpose* of the British Empire in India to question the *existence* of the Empire, he did go far enough in this passage to question the idea of India' itself. As we have seen, he went on to suggest that the different parts of the subcontinent be treated almost as separate colonies, and with more participation by the natives in their own governance. Ever the government budget maker, he worked out the split in revenues and expenditures between the presidency governments and what would be left at the pan-India level.

This indeed was Northcote's official will as secretary of state for India. Perhaps it was predictable that the viceroy and the majority of the London-based Council of India, including Rawlinson, rejected all such reform, even the split between the general Indian government and the government of the Presidency of Bombay. Northcote was out of office before he could try to bring it about despite them.[89]

And yet by no means had he lost his reputation as a safe pair of hands. The Tories left office in December 1868, but it was to Northcote that the Hudson's Bay Company turned in selecting a new chairman, one who would arrange for the transfer of its lands to the newly united Canadian people.[90] Once he had accomplished this, Northcote visited both India and Canada in order to see for himself the places that he had run.[91]

In later Conservative governments, Northcote would serve as chancellor of the exchequer and in most of the other major offices of state. All the while, he was to remain broadly against imperial adventures. He wanted to reject the purchase of the Suez Canal in 1875 as likely to lead to the expansion of British territory, and soon after he stood against British adventures in Afghanistan. Nonetheless he defended these policies in public as a member of the Tory governments that supported them, and he served the Empire as Irish secretary. Northcote was created Earl of Iddesleigh in 1885. He died two years later.

Northcote never brought himself to question the existence of such very useful generalizations as 'the British Empire' or 'colonization', at least in our period. And of course he did join the Colonial Society, which was dedicated to the Empire writ large. But as we have also seen, he thought carefully about the management of detail, both in archaeology and in government. He could also examine pregnant generalizations, asking what the Indian Empire' was for all the while that he was in charge of it, and planning to reorganize it into smaller units. He rejected the idea of taking the imperial mission too far, of 'doing many things extremely disagreeable to the objects of your benevolence; [so] that you would have to improve a good many of them off the face of the earth'. Instead he advocated a more local kind of administration, not entirely in the imperial spirit of generalization—but it would have allowed for the better management of the details flowing into Whitehall.

11
Conclusion

> [I]n periods of equality, as compared to ages of aristocracy, causes of… accidental nature are infinitely more various, better hidden, more complex, less powerful, and hence less easy to sort out and trace, whereas the historian of an aristocratic age has simply to analyse the particular action of one man or of a few men and amid the general mass of events.
>
> In the former case the historian is soon tired of such a labour. Lost in a labyrinth, unable to see or explain individual influences, he ends by denying that they exist. He prefers to talk about the nature of races, the physical character of the country, or the spirit of civilization. That shortens his labours and satisfies the reader better at less cost…and while indulging [historians'] capacity for laziness, gives them a reputation for profundity.
>
> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

We have looked at men—from Arthur Mills to William Denison and Edward Bulwer-Lytton—who began with some interest in democracy and the English-speaking colonies. Then they went on to develop a broader and more general idea about the nature and extent of the British Empire. Some made this intellectual move as early as the 1840s, as Mills and William Westgarth did; others took longer. Either way, they moved so far away from their intellectual point of origin—democracy—that they were able to derive for themselves a racialist programme of tropical conquest and domination. They had discovered a general and world-wide British imperialism in which the colonies of settlement faded into the background. The intellectual category of 'the British Empire' that had once taken in the Tocquevillean societies of Australasia or North America had metastasized into something much larger, comparatively featureless, and almost unrecognizable.

The imperialism of the anthropological members of the Colonial Society did not develop from generalizations about English-speaking overseas democracies. But it did develop from generalizations nonetheless. In their different ways, Carnarvon, Rawlinson and Northcote moved from the narrower and more exact studies of their youth to the

larger experience of the world that characterizes middle age. With that larger experience came a greater need to find some simple categories to make sense of it all. Carnarvon and Rawlinson took off and ran with the category of 'the Empire'. Northcote was more circumspect, questioning whether information about India should be pooled at the level of the overall government of the subcontinent, or whether the government of India ought to be broken up and localized so that officials could understand the information that they were presented with; but while he questioned the organization and even the purpose of the Indian Empire, he did not question the overall existence of the British Empire itself. This acceptance of the grand category was a far cry from the focus upon detail and nothing but detail that Northcote had professed when, as a younger man, he was reluctant to stand for parliament. He had thought himself unready for parliament because he was unready to make general conclusions about the world.

Even as secretary of state for India, Northcote certainly resisted the last measure of overgeneralization, as did Frederic Rogers in the Colonial Office. Both men kept their categories in mind as ways of organizing facts, but they kept the categories and the facts in dialogue, each giving meaning to the other, and each constantly called into question by the other. Northcote and Rogers did not flee from the continual need to question categories and organize new facts—they did not flee *to* the grandiose generalizations and simplifications of men like Mills and Denison, and even of Herman Merivale and Bulwer-Lytton.

Generalization came from the fundamental problem that many Victorians had in trying to make sense of all the information flowing about at the apex of the world's first industrial world-system. Victorian generalization was one face of Victorian modernity, the search for meaning within multiplicity. One outcome of that search was (and is) to impose imperial categories on the world.

I hope that I have supplemented a picture of 'the official mind' of the Empire, to quote a famous phrase[1]—the collective wisdom at any one time of the bureaucrats and administrators and politicians—with some illustrations of the unofficial mind—people thinking for themselves about what they knew or thought they knew of the world, even when they were not officials. There were indeed many unofficial minds—and even then each of these individual minds was no fixed point; individuals grew and changed for reasons of their own.

I do not agree with Clive Dewey that a few great ideas or 'mentalities'—such as enthusiasm for empire—have lives of their own, 'invading our minds' and leaving us 'puppets dancing on intellectual strings'.[2] Individuals enjoy a large enough measure of free will in a world of this size; you can pay attention to what you want to. While there may be a number of important superstructures of ideas or of social phenomena sitting behind the epiphenomena of this world, there is, as Geoffrey Hawthorn argues, no *overall* superstructure to determine the focus of one's studies.[3] People can pick and chose what they will spend their time on out of the myriad things that life happens to bring forward. The founders of the Colonial Society picked certain topics to pursue. They were *individually* reacting to and trying to categorize the richly detailed information flowing into Victorian England. Their categories broadened and became imperial in scope. Their imperialism became interwoven into many other areas of their lives, and it can best be understood only when one looks at the larger context of their lives.

To try to make sense of the world, to categorize, means to forget differences, as Jorge Luis Borges reminds us.[4] We, like the men whom we have been studying, should only go so far in drawing a general lesson from the details before us. But we can go *some* distance in making a generalization or two out of the experience of these men, if we do not completely forget the differences embodied in their different stories.

Their lives can show us something worth while, for we are still living in the modern world of information flow—and of the global application of national power—that the Victorians pioneered. We have not moved beyond the need to balance the facts that we have about other peoples in the world with our theories about such peoples—the facts leading to more theories, the theories leading us to look for more facts, in a process of continual learning and thought. This was the balanced kind of intellectual advance that Northcote suggested for archaeology. Of course it is especially hard when a powerful country has a strong sense of its own general place in world history, but a weak sense of the people who are far away, people whose specific circumstances and individual life stories are hard to apprehend. In such a case it is relatively easy for the powerful country to develop some grandly imperial intellectual categories, to leave aside the facts that might cast some doubt upon these categories, and to come into conflict with the faraway peoples in question.

Notes

1
Introduction

1 Taken from the preface to Charles Mackay, *Memoirs of Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds* [1841], 2nd edn (London: Richard Bentley, 1852; reprint [2 vols in 1], New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1932), p. xix.

2 If about 21 per cent of the total population were in the upper and middle classes, they would have numbered about 4.2 million in 1851, of whom something over two-thirds had reached their mid-teenage years and could follow their own interests. See K.Theodore Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation: 1846–1886*, The New Oxford History of England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 33–4; and B.R.Mitchell and Phyllis Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), pp. 12–13.

3 P.J.Cain and A.G.Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688–1914* (London and New York: Longman, 1993). See also Raymond E. Dumett (ed.), *Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Imperialism: The New Debate on Empire* (Longman: London and New York: 1999).

4 See C.C.Eldridge, *England's Mission: The Imperial Idea in the Age of Gladstone and Disraeli, 1868–1880* (London: Macmillan, 1973); D.K.Fieldhouse, *Economics and Empire: 1830–1914*, rev. edn (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984).

5 Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* [1918] (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, 1969), p. vii.

6 Charles Dickens, *Dickens's Dictionary of London*, 6th edn (London: Macmillan and Co., 1884), pp. 200–2.

7 Throughout, I am trying to avoid the footsteps of C.A.Bodelson, author of *Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism* (Copenhagen: Gyldendatske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag, 1924; reprint, London: Heinemann, 1960). Bodelson did not examine the careers or the other writings of the people he quoted. Instead, he skipped from quotation to quotation and person to person. The thick description of individuals will take more time than the Bodelson model of reducing individuals to isolated quotations, but it will have the compensating advantage of reflecting reality more faithfully. Bodelson was wrong to treat each thinker as a fixed point. They grew and changed, and there were common and significant patterns to the way they changed.

2
Arthur Mills, almanacs and despotism

1 By 1856, they were Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, 'Canada' (a union of today's southern Ontario and southern Quebec), New Zealand as a

whole, and the Australian colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. Queensland achieved this status on being separated from New South Wales in 1859. Once Canada was confederated (in 1867) and Prince Edward Island joined the federation (in 1873), the number of self-governing North American 'responsible governments' dropped to two—namely, Canada itself and Newfoundland (not a part of Canada until 1949). The Cape of Good Hope had refused responsible government in the first round, since the local elite did not want to accept financial responsibility for defending themselves against the Africans; responsible government began there in 1872. See John Ward: *Colonial Self-Government: The British Experience, 1759–1856* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976); idem, 'The Responsible Government Question in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, *1851–1856*', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 63 (March 1978), pp. 221–47; and idem, *Earl Grey and the Australian Colonies, 1846–1857: A Study of Self-Government and Self-Interest* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1958).

2 Edward Gibbon Wakefield, A *Letter from Sydney* [1829] (London: J.M.Dent & Sons, 1929), pp. 192–7; idem, *England and America: A Comparison of the Social and Political State of Both Nations* [1833] (New York: Harper & Bros., 1834; reprint, New York: Augustus M.Kelley, 1967), pp. 71–4, 260–331; Wilbur S. Shepperson, 'Agrarian Aspects of Early Victorian Emigration to North America', *Canadian Historical Review* 33, 3 (Sept. 1952), pp. 254–64.

3 Arthur Mills, *Colonial Constitutions: An outline of the Constitutional History and Existing Government of the British Dependencies; with schedules of the Orders in Council, Statutes, and Parliamentary Documents relating to Each Dependency* (London: John Murray, 1856).

4 R.W.Kostal, *Law and English Railway Capitalism 1825–1875* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 247–8.

5 Paul Knaplund, 'Arthur Mills' Experiment in Colonization', *Canadian Historical Review* 34, 2 (June 1953), pp. 139–50.

6 Arthur Mills, *Systematic Colonization* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1847), p. 3.

7 Ibid., p. 4.

8 Ibid., p. 46.

9 Ibid., pp. 4–5.

10 Ibid., pp. 7–8, 15–16.

11 Ibid., p. 12.

12 Ibid., pp. 40–1.

13 Ibid., pp. 43–6.

14 Robert Montgomery Martin, *History of the Colonies of the British Empire in the West Indies, South America, North America, Asia, Australasia, Africa, and Europe; comprising the Area, Agriculture, Commerce, Manufactures, Shipping, Custom Duties, Population, Education, Religion, Crime, Government, Finances, Laws, Military Defence, Cultivated and Waste Lands, Emigration, Rates of Wages, Prices of Provisions, Banks, Coins, Staple Products, Stock, Moveable and Immoveable Property, Public Companies, &c. of Each Colony; with the Charters and Engraved Seals* (London: Wm. H.Allen and Co., 1843). Martin had simply compiled the data sent to the Colonial Office annually since about 1828 (Martin, *History of the Colonies*, pp. iii–v), data sent as a part of the new enthusiasm for statistical and administrative efficiency manifested in the second phase of the Liverpool government; for this Benthamite phenomenon, see Asa Briggs, *The Age of Improvement, 1783–1867*, rev. edn (London: Longman, 1979), pp. 222–5. Martin went beyond statistics in his preface, pointing out that: 'The statements contained in the following pages constitute the most extraordinary record of a Colonial Empire that man ever witnessed—an empire which has been the growth of ages, yet is still in its infancy, and on whose extension and improvement, so far as human judgment can predict, depends the happiness of the world'—Martin, *History of the Colonies*, p.v.

15 Mills, *Colonial Constitutions*, pp. viii–ix.

16 Ibid., pp. xxv–xxxi.
17 Ibid., pp. xxxix–xlvii.
18 Ibid., p. xlviii.
19 Ibid., pp. liv–lviii.
20 Published in London by John Murray in 1858.
21 Arthur Mills, *India in 1858; A Summary of the Existing Administration, Political, Fiscal, and Judicial of British India; Together with the laws and Public Documents Relating Thereto, from the earliest to the present time* (London: John Murray, 1858), pp. x–xii.
22 Ibid., pp. x–xi.
23 Ibid., p. xi.
24 The background is reviewed in Donald C.Gordon, *The Dominion Partnership in Imperial Defense, 1870–1914* (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965), pp. 1–12.
25 Godley to Adderley, 3 June 1860, given in Charles Bowyer Adderley (ed.), *Extracts from Letters of John Robert Godley to C.B.Adderley* (London: Savill and Edwards, 1863), p. 288.
26 Godley to Adderley, 12 June and 26 Oct. 1860, and 23 April, 4 June, 12 June, 1 July and 5 Aug. 1861, given in Adderley, *Extracts from Letters of Godley*, pp. 289, 294, 299–303. On emigration, see Godley to Adderley, 16 Dec. 1860, 298; in his early years in the War Office, Godley had still believed in the (eventual) financial viability of the Wakefieldian settlements in New Zealand—Godley to Adderley, 30 Nov. 1855, pp. 237–48. See also Robert Livingstone Schuyler, 'The Recall of the Legions: A Phase in the Decentralization of the British Empire', *American Historical Review* 26, 1 (Oct. 1920), pp. 18–36.
27 B.A.Knox, 'The Concept of Empire in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Ideas in the Colonial Defence Inquiries of 1859–1861', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 15, 3 (May 1987), pp. 242–63; Gordon, *The Dominion Partnership*, pp. 13–22; W.P.Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 6–9
28 Arthur Mills, 'Colonial Policy in the Government of Coloured Races', *North British Review* XLIV o.s. and V n.s. (1866), pp. 388–9.
29 Ibid., pp. 393–4.
30 Ibid., pp. 392–3, 395, 397.
31 Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age*, p. 302.
32 Mills, 'Colonial Policy in the Government of Coloured Races', pp. 398–400.
33 Ibid., pp. 400–1.
34 This was one feature of eighteenth-century extermination efforts against American Indians. See Bernhard Knollenberg, 'General Amherst and Germ Warfare', *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 41, 3 (Dec. 1954), pp. 489–94.
35 Mills, 'Colonial Policy in the Government of Coloured Races', pp. 395–6.
36 Ibid., pp. 401–4.
37 Ibid., pp. 405–8.
38 Ibid., pp. 408–9.
39 Ibid., p. 409.
40 Ibid., p. 393.
41 Ibid., p. 409.
42 Ibid., p. 388.
43 Arthur Mills, 'The British North American Federation', *Edinburgh Review* CXXI (1865), pp. 180–99 at p. 181. He did not cover amalgamation in the Church in this article; that subject he saved for another article: idem, 'The Church in South Africa', in George Henry Sumner (ed.), *Principles at Stake: Essays on Church Questions of the Day*, 2nd edn (London: John Murray, 1868), pp. 203–27.
44 Mills, 'The British North American Federation', pp. 194–7.
45 Ibid., pp. 193, 196–7.

3
The man who ran the Empire

1 Charles Merivale, *Autobiography of Dean Merivale, with Selections from His Correspondence,* Judith Ann Merivale (ed.) (London: Edward Arnold, 1899), pp. 5, 8–9.
2 John Herman Merivale, *Poems Original and Translated,* Romantic Context: Poetry: Significant Minor Poetry, 1789–1830, intro. by Donald H.Reiman, 2 vols in 1 [1838] (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1978), I, pp. vii–viii.
3 Charles Merivale, *Autobiography,* pp. 6, 11.
4 Edward H.A.Koch, *Leaves from the Diary of a Literary Amateur: John Herman Merivale, 1819–1844* (Hampstead: Priory Press, 1911), p. 29.
5 Charles Merivale, *Autobiography,* p. 43.
6 Diary of John Herman Merivale, 31 Oct. 1824, given in Anna W.Merivale, *Family Memorials* (Exeter: Printed for private circulation by Thomas Upward, 1884), p. 252.
7 Charles Merivale, *Autobiography,* p. 41.
8 Herman Merivale to his father, 31 Oct. 1824, given in Anna W.Merivale, *Family Memorials,* p. 253 n.
9 John Herman Merivale to Charles Drury, [?] June 1826, given in Anna W. Merivale, *Family Memorials,* pp. 273–4.
10 Diary of John Herman Merivale, 21 Dec. 1824, given in Anna W.Merivale, *Family Memorials,* p. 255.
11 Edmund Sheridan Purcell, *The Life of Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, 2* vols (London: Macmillan, 1896), pp. 1, 33–4, 44–5.
12 Diary of John Herman Merivale, 26 July 1827, given in Anna W.Merivale, *Family Memorials,* p. 281.
13 Obituary for Herman Merivale, *Pall Mall Gazette,* 9 Feb. 1874, reprinted in Charles Merivale, 'Herman Merivale', pp. 2–3—itself reprinted from the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature, and Art* 16 (1884), pp. 570–80.
14 Diary of John Herman Merivale, 25 Jan. 1843, given in Anna W.Merivale, *Family Memorials,* p. 357.
15 Ibid., 1 Jan. 1831, p. 300.
16 Avril Harvey, 'Herman Merivale, the Colonial Office, and the Australian Colonies, 1848–1860', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 60, 2 (June 1974), pp. 89–104.
17 Thomas Arnold to T.S.Pasley, Bart., 10 Feb. 1838, given in Arthur Penryhn Stanley, *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold, DD,* 2 vols in 1 (New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1877), II, pp. 105–6.
18 Herman Charles Merivale, *Bar, Stage, and Platform: Autobiographic Memories* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1902), pp. 65–7.
19 John M.Ward, 'The Retirement of a Titan: James Stephen, 1847–1850', *Journal of Modern History* 31, 3 (Sept. 1959), pp. 189–99, at p. 194.
20 Charles Merivale, 'Herman Merivale', p. 6.
21 *The Economist,* 14 Feb. 1874, given in Charles Merivale, 'Herman Merivale', p. 8.
22 Emmet Larkin (trans, and ed.), *Alexis de Tocqueville's Journey in Ireland, July-August, 1835* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1990), pp. 22–3, 26–30, 40 and 51–2; for resistance to a poor law, p. 94.
23 Ibid., pp. 20n.2, 22.
24 Herman Merivale, *Five Lectures on the Principles of a Legislative Provision for the Poor in Ireland* (London: Charles Knight, 1838).
25 Ibid., p. 71.
26 Ibid., p. 67.
27 Ibid., p. 70.

28 Tocqueville to the Countess Grancey, quoted in Larkin, *Alexis de Tocqueville's Journey in Ireland*, p. 7.
29 Herman Merivale, *Five Lectures* 1838, p. 73.
30 Ibid., pp. 4–5.
31 Ibid., pp. 74–85.
32 Herman Merivale, *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies*, 2nd edn [1861], 2 vols in 1, Reprints of Economic Classics (New York: Augustus M.Kelley, 1967), p. v.
33 Ibid., p. 470. For the investment context, see the 1839–41 section just before—pp. 464–5.
34 Ibid., pp. 179–87.
35 Merivale's sensitivity to this contradiction in Colonial Reform was noted by Harvey, 'Herman Merivale, the Colonial Office, and the Australian Colonies', p. 99; citing Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, p. 433, and the relevant 1861 note, p. 435.
36 Herman Charles Merivale, *Bar, Stage, and Platform*, p. 12.
37 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* [1835–40], George Lawrence (trans.), J.P.Mayer (ed.), Perennial Library (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), pp. 449, 493–6, 590–4.
38 Seymour Drescher, *Tocqueville and England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Uni-versity Press, 1964), pp. 55, 217–20.
39 John Stuart Mill, 'Democracy in America', *Edinburgh Review* 72 (Oct. 1840), pp. 1–47, at pp. 2–3.
40 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. X.
41 Ibid., Lect. XXII, pp. 613–15.
42 Ibid., p. 615.
43 Ibid., p. 617.
44 Ibid., p. 614.
45 Ibid., p. 618; Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. 32–6.
46 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. XXII, pp. 619–21.
47 Ibid., Lect. XXII, pp. 620–1.
48 Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, p. 704.
49 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. XXII, p. 622.
50 Ibid., Lect. XXII, pp. 624–5.
51 Ibid., Lect. XXII, pp. 624, 633–4.
52 D.B.Swinfen, *Imperial Control of Colonial Legislation, 1813–1865: A Study of British Policy Towards Colonial Legislative Powers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 33–42. In 1856, Merivale radically simplified and reduced the role of other government departments in reviewing colonial Acts that only doubtfully touched on their jurisdiction—ibid., p. 19. For the kinds of laws still disallowed in Merivale's period, see especially pp. 70–1, 109–11, 147–61. Unlike Gladstone and Adderley, who did not want the Colonial Office to have any general veto power over colonial legislation, Merivale did not think it was practical to codify which laws might be disallowed and which might not—see Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria, 1851–1861* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1963), pp. 198, 310.
53 See, for example, B.A.Knox, '"care is more important than haste": Imperial Policy and the Creation of Queensland, 1856–9', *Historical Studies (Australia and New Zealand)* 17, 66 (April 1976), pp. 64–83.
54 Herman Charles Merivale, *Bar, Stage, and Platform*, p. 4.
55 See Merivale's testimony on a possible loan and the involvement of all these personages in it—Adderley among them—in PP, *Report from the Select Committee on New Zealand*, No. 171 (1857), pp. 1–13. The Colonial Office had gone first and furthest in transferring a real measure of responsibility from the politicians to the permanent officials—Brian L.Blakeley, *The Colonial Office, 1868–1892* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1972), pp. 4–6.
56 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. XXII, 1861 Appendix, p. 639.

57 Ibid., p. 647.
58 This modified system was being tried in Barbados by Governor Francis Hincks. Merivale believed that the fact that Hincks was a Canadian helped him to understand the democratic underpinnings of the sugar island that he governed. Ibid., p. 651.
59 Ibid., pp. 658–61.
60 Ibid., p. 651.
61 Ibid., pp. 652–3.
62 Tocqueville, given in ibid., p. 654.
63 PP, *Report from the Select Committee on New Zealand*, No. 171 (1857), pp. 10–11.
64 Even Tocqueville had looked at the Algerian Arabs in just this fashion; they were the one people whom he portrayed in a racist way, inconvenient as they were for France's one remaining attempt to found a settlement colony in the Anglo-American style. He was nonetheless an abolitionist. See Jennifer Pitts (ed. and trans.), *Alexis de Tocqueville: Writings on Empire and Slavery* (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).
65 John M.Ward, *British Policy in the South Pacific (1786–1893)* (Sydney: Australasian Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd, 1976), pp. 134–5, 187–9; Ethel M.Drus, 'The Colonial Office and the Annexation of Fiji', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 32, 4th ser. (1950), pp. 87–110; for Merivale's friendship with Bulwer-Lytton, see Herman Charles Merivale, *Bar, Stage, and Platform*, pp. 33–4, 45.
66 The story of how the abolitionists had got into the position of arguing that freedom was *economically* as well as morally superior to slavery is traced in Seymour Drescher, 'Free Labour vs. Slave Labour: The British and Caribbean Cases', in Stanley L.Engerman (ed.), *Terms of Labour: Slavery, Serfdom, and Free Labour* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 50–86.
67 See four short papers in Robert W.Fogel, Ralph A.Gallantine and Richard L. Manning (eds), *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery—Evidence and Methods* (New York: W.W.Norton & Company, 1992): Gerald Friedman, 'The Decline Theory of West Indian Emancipation', pp. 163–4; idem, 'The Profitability of West Indian Properties', pp. 165–6; Robert William Fogel, 'The Profitability of Sugar Production under Apprenticeship', pp. 166–8; and Nathaniel T.Wilcox, 'British Sugar Demand, West Indian Production, and the "Decline" Theory of West Indian Emancipation, 1790–1850', pp. 168–90. See also Steven B.Webb, 'Saints or Cynics: A Statistical Analysis of Parliament's Decision for Emancipation in 1833', in Robert William Fogel and Stanley L.Engerman (eds), *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery—Conditions of Slave Life and the Transition to Freedom: Technical Papers, Vol. 2* (New York: W.W.Norton & Company, 1992), pp. 571–86; and Tom L.Franzmann, 'Antislavery and Political Economy in the Early Victorian House of Commons: A Research Note on "Capitalist Hegemony", *Journal of Social History* 27, 3 (Spring 1994), pp. 579–93.
To turn from the cliometric evidence to a more humanistic case that slavery was economically vigorous in the West Indies during the abolitionist movement, see Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), pp. 142–9, 156–67. Drescher concedes that the British slave system *was* in economic difficulty after about 1814, but only because of the rigidities in the labour supply on each island after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807; a generation would have to pass before the slave populations of the West Indies could develop the proper sex ratios to become self-sustaining, since inter-island slave trading was forbidden. Alternatively, the British could have adopted the most economically efficient course open to them—the reintroduction of the slave trade itself. This they refused to consider on *moral* grounds.
The controversy over just this point—that of whether abolitionism was essentially a noble movement, or whether on the other hand a hypothetical economic decline in slavery gave the abolitionists an ulterior motive—is too voluminous to cite in full. It goes back to the work of Reginald Coupland in the 1920s and 1930s (arguing for the nobility of the abolitionists) and

Eric Williams in the 1940s (arguing, based upon the earlier [1928] work of Lowell Ragatz, that the abolition of the trade in 1807 and emancipation itself in 1833 happened because slavery was in economic decline). See Barbara L.Solow and Stanley L.Engerman (eds), *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams*, Studies in Interdisciplinary History, Robert I.Rotberg and Theodore K.Rabb (eds) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

68 For a précis, see W.A.Green, 'Was British Emancipation a Success?: The Abolitionist Perspective', in. *Abolition and its Aftermath: The Historical Context, 1790–1916* (London: Frank Cass, 1985), pp. 183–202.

69 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. XXII, 1861 Appendix, p. 675.

70 Whether it did or not has yet to be established, as is pointed out in Woodville K.Marshall, *The Post Slavery Labour Problem Revisited*, The 1990 Elsa Goveia Memorial Lecture (Mona, Kingston, Jamaica: Department of History, University of the West Indies, 1991), pp. 10–11.

71 Michel-Rolph Trouillot, 'Beyond and Below the Merivale Paradigm: Dominica's First 100 Days of Freedom', in *The Lesser Antilles in the Age of European Expansion*, Robert L.Paquette and Stanley L.Engerman (eds) (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), pp. 305–23; see also Marshall, *The Post-Slavery Labour Problem Revisited*, pp. 3–7.

72 Alexis de Tocqueville, 'Report on Abolition to the Chamber of Deputies, 6 June 1839', in Seymour Drescher (ed.), *Tocqueville and Beaumont on Social Reform* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 98–113; and idem, 'On the Emancipation of Slaves', also in Drescher, pp. 136–73.

73 Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* [1856], trans, by Stuart Gilbert (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1955), p. 128.

74 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. XI, p. 331.

75 Merivale's views, in ibid., pp. 321–3.

76 William A.Green, 'Emancipation to Indenture: A Question of Imperial Morality', *Journal of British Studies* 22, 2 (Spring 1983), pp. 98–121; on foreign jibes about Britain's apparent return to slave trading, see Johnson U.J.Asiegbu, *Slavery and the Politics of Liberation, 1787–1861: A Study of Liberated African Emigration Policy and British Anti-Slavery Policy* (New York: Africana Publishing Corporation, 1969), pp. 48–63; on the continuities of labour market manipulation between the immediate post-emancipation period and early twentieth-century Southern Africa, see J.M.Mackenzie, 'Colonial Labour Policy and Rhodesia', *Rhodesian Journal of Economics* 8, 1 (March 1974), pp. 1–15.

77 See Edgar L.Erickson, 'The Introduction of East Indian Coolies into the British West Indies', *Journal of Modern History* 6, 2 (June 1934), pp. 127–46; Graham Knox, 'British Colonial Policy and the Problems of Establishing a Free Society in Jamaica, 1838–1865', *Caribbean Studies* 2, 4 (Jan. 1963), pp. 3–13; William A.Green, 'The West Indies and British South African Policy in the Nineteenth Century—A Comparative Comment', *Journal of African History* 15, 2 (1974), pp. 247–59; idem, 'Emancipation to Indenture', pp. 98–121; idem, 'The West Indies and Indentured Labour Migration—The Jamaican Experience', in Kay Saunders (ed.), *Indentured Labour in the British Empire 1834–1920* (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 1–41; B.A.Knox, 'The Queen's Letter of 1865 and British Policy towards Emancipation and Indentured Labour in the West Indies, 1830–1865', *Historical Journal* 29, 2 (1986), pp. 345–67; and Eric Richards, 'Emigration to the New Worlds: Migration Systems in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 41, 3 (1995), pp. 391–407.

78 Thomas R.August (ed.), *Thomas Carlyle: 'The Nigger Question'/John Stuart Mill: 'The Negro Question'* (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1971), pp. 7, 31.

79 [Herman Merivale], 'Voltaire, Rousseau, and Göthe', *Edinburgh Review* 1849, reprinted in idem, *Historical Studies* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1865).

80 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. XI, pp. 331–2. Even in the original lectures he maintained that slavery was inferior. Ibid., pp. 305, 308–9.
81 Asiegbu, *Slavery and the Politics of Liberation*, pp. 40–7.
82 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. XI, 1860 Appendix, p. 337.
83 Ibid., pp. 344, 346.
84 William A.Green, *British Slave Emancipation: The Sugar Colonies and the Great Experiment, 1830–1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 13, 262–93; Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas, 1830–1920* (London: Oxford University Press, for the Institute of Race Relations, 1974), pp. 1, 80–7, 96.
85 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lecture XI, 1860 Appendix, p. 347.
86 Marginal note in Merivale to Hawes, 1 Feb. 1848, enclosed in Charles Grey to Earl Grey, 21 Dec. 1847, CO 137/303 no. 123, cited in Thomas C.Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labour, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), pp. 199–200.
87 On the duty to freed slaves, see Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lect. XXII, 1861 Appendix, pp. 661–76.
88 David McNab, 'Herman Merivale and the Native Question, 1837–1861', *Albion* 9, 4 (Winter 1977), pp. 359–84.
89 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lecture XVIII, p. 511.
90 David McNab, 'Herman Merivale and Colonial Office Indian Policy in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 1, 2 (1981), pp. 277–302; for *a précis* of Merivale's Oxford lectures on these subjects, see idem, 'Herman Merivale and the Native Question', pp. 359–84; see also Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age*, pp. 120–1.
91 On the South African issue, see McNab, 'Herman Merivale and the Native Question'. See also idem, 'The Colonial Office and the Prairies in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Prairie Forum* 3, 1 (1978), pp. 21–38. McNab underplays what Merivale was willing to do to most natives, most of the time.
92 Herman Merivale, 'Mexico and the Great Western Prairies', *Edinburgh Review* 78 (1843), pp. 185–8, given in McNab, 'Herman Merivale and Colonial Office Indian Policy', p. 292. See also McNab, 'The Colonial Office and the Prairies'.
93 Herman Merivale, CO 6/27 fos. 261–2, quoted in McNab, 'Herman Merivale and Colonial Office Indian Policy', p. 290.
94 Herman Merivale, 23 March 1849 (Grey of Howick Papers), 'Report on Committee of the Privy Council (Australian Legislatures)', cited in Harvey, 'Herman Merivale, the Colonial Office, and the Australian Colonies', p. 101.
95 Herman Merivale, *Colonization and the Colonies*, Lecture XIX, pp. 540–53.
96 Donovan Williams, *The India Office, 1858–1869* Vishvesharanand Ideological Research Series 76 (Hoshiarpur, India: Vishvesharanand Vedic Research Institute, 1983), pp. 352–4; P.C.Emmer, 'The Great Escape: The Migration of Female Indentured Servants from British India to Suriname, 1873–1916', in David Richardson (ed.), *Abolition and its Aftermath: The Historical Context, 1790–1916* (London: Frank Cass, 1985), pp. 244–66.
97 Tanika Sarkar, 'Bondage in the Colonial Context', in *Chains of Servitude: Bondage and Slavery in India*, Utsa Patnaik and Manjari Dingwaney (eds) (Madras: Sangam Books, 1985), pp. 97–126. The question of whether the Act really changed how debtors were treated is raised in Dharma Kumar, 'Colonialism, Bondage, and Caste in British India', in *Breaking the Chains: Slavery, Bondage, and Emancipation in Modern Africa and Asia*, Martin Klein (ed.) (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), pp. 122–30 at pp. 122–3. Some earlier British attempts to rein in slavery in India—without telling the slaves of their improved legal status—are detailed in Howard Temperley, 'The Delegalization of Slavery in British India', in *After Slavery: Emancipation and its Discontents*, Howard Temperley (ed.), Studies in

Slave and Post-Slave Societies and Cultures (London and Portland, Oreg.: Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 169–87.

98 Sarkar, 'Bondage In Colonial Context'; Manjari Dingwaney, 'Unredeemed Promises: The Law and Servitude', in *Chains of Servitude: Bondage and Slavery in India*, pp. 283–387.

99 Williams, *The India Office*, pp. 91–2, 112, 263–6, 369, 460–1.

100 Ibid., pp. 114, 290, 414.

101 John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* [1859] (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974), p. 69.

102 S.Ambirajan, *Classical Political Economy and British Policy in India*, Cambridge South Asian Studies 21 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 206–7.

103 Herman Merivale to Sir George Russell Clerk, 3 Jan. 1862, Clerk MSS, IOLR, MSS Eur D.538/2, fos. 199–202.

104 Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 3rd edn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 245–6.

105 Herman Merivale to Sir George Russell Clerk, 3 Jan. 1862, Clerk MSS, IOLR, MSS Eur D.538/2, fos. 199–202.

106 Ibid.

107 Donovan Williams, 'The Adoption Despatch of 16 April 1867: Its Origins and Significance', in Donovan Williams and E.Daniel Potts (eds), *Essays in Indian History in Honour of Cuthbert Collin Davies*, pp. 222–43 (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1972), at pp. 228, 231.

108 Herman Merivale to Austen Henry Layard at the Foreign Office, 22 April [1862?], AHLP vol. CLXXIII, BL Add. MS 39103, fos. 430–1.

109 Merivale's official workload in his new position was lighter than it had been at the Colonial Office—although he still worked harder than almost anyone else, as his successor at the India Office (and cousin) Sir Lewis Mallet would discover when he tried to measure himself against his cousin's output. Williams, *The India Office*, p. 112; Harvey, 'Herman Merivale, the Colonial Office, and the Australian Colonies', p. 96. For the details of the relationship between Merivale and Mallet, see Herman Charles Merivale, *Bar, Stage, and Platform*, pp. 75, 107–8.

110 Herbert B.Edwards and Herman Merivale, *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence* (New York: Macmillan, 1873).

111 Joseph Parkes, *Memoirs of Sir Philip Francis, KCB, with Correspondence and Jour-nals*, Completed and edited by Herman Merivale, 2 vols (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1867); Herman Merivale, 'A Few Words on Junius and Marat', in idem, *Historical Studies*, pp. 186–203; idem, 'The Last Phase in the Junius Controversy', *Cornhill Magazine* 23 (1871), pp. 668–87; Alvar Ellegård, *Who Was Junius?* [1962] (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), pp. 69–70.

112 Herman Merivale, 'On the Utility of Colonies as Fields for Emigration', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* 25 (1862), pp. 491–6, 537.

113 Published in London by Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green in 1865.

114 Anthony Trollope, *An Autobiography* [1883] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 54; N.John Hall, *Trollope: A Biography* (Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 95–6.

115 Herman Merivale, *Historical Studies*, p. vii.

116 E.D.Watt, 'The English Image of Joseph de Maistre: Some Unfinished Business', *European Studies Review* 4, 3 (July 1974), pp. 239–59.

117 Herman Merivale, *Historical Studies*, p. 210.

118 Ibid., p. 220.

119 Merivale would always believe that the war had been about abolishing slavery, and that the victory of the North was on balance a good thing. Henry Taylor to Herman Merivale, [?] February 1870; and Herman Merivale to Taylor, 11 Feb. 1870; both excerpted in Henry Taylor, *Autobiography of Henry Taylor, 1800–1875*, 2 vols (London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1885), II, pp. 230–4.

4
Frederic Rogers and the ‘transcendental expectation’

1 Nor did Rogers ever try to hide their friendship, publishing in 1845, when Newman was on the verge of conversion, a pamphlet defending the character of his tutor in very warm words, and at a time when not many people would so; see Frederic Rogers, *Short Appeal to Members of Convocation on the Proposed Censure on No. 90*, dated 8 Feb. 1845; quoted in R.W.Church, *The Oxford Movement: Twelve Years, 1833–1845* (London: Macmillan, 1891), p. 332. For the dim view that Rogers himself had taken of Newman’s (strongly Romanist) Tract 90, see Marvin R.O’Connell, *The Oxford Conspirators: A History of the Oxford Movement, 1833–1845* (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 320, 340, 378–80; and for the long outburst by other men against Newman, see pp. 327–39, 406–7. Decades later, near the end of their lives, the retired bureaucrat and the old cardinal were still of much comfort to each other; see George Eden Marindin (ed.), *Letters of Frederic Lord Blachford, Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, 1860–1871* (London: John Murray, 1896), p. 441; and David Hopkinson, ‘Some Anglican Friends of Cardinal Newman’, *Downside Review* 104, 335 (April 1986), p. 132.

2 Warwick P.N.Tyler, ‘Sir Frederic Rogers, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, 1860–1871’ (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, Durham, N.C., 1963) p. 20.

3 F.Rogers, S.Northcote, Roundell Palmer, W.H.Tinney, W.Palmer, Christopher Childs and John Gidley, *Suggestions Respecting the Conditions under which University Education may be made more Available for Clerks in Government Offices, for Barristers, for Solicitors* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1854), pp. 73–82.

4 Rogers had an office in the condemned building housing the Colonial Office in Downing Street, but he spent more of his time at the Emigration Commission, located in a private house across St James’s Park in what is now part of Queen Anne’s Gate, a house rented at the creation of the Commission in 1840 when the Crown owned no building in London with room for the commissioners. Fred H.Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission* (Philadelphia: University Press of Pennsylvania, 1931), pp. 59–60, 70, 75. The Commission was at No. 9 Park Street. Later in Rogers’s tenure, it expanded into No. 15, and still later it was consolidated into a single, larger house, No. 8. For the renaming of Park Street in 1873, see Ben Weinreb and Christopher Hibbert, *The London Encyclopaedia* (London: Macmillan, 1983), p. 628.

5 See B.A.Knox, ‘The Provision of Legal Advice, and Colonial Office Reorganization, 1866–7’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 35 (1962), pp. 178–97. On the original duties of the emigration commissioners, see Oliver MacDonagh, ‘Emigration and the State, 1833–1855: An Essay in Administrative History’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5, 5th ser. (1955), pp. 133–59; and Peter Dunkely, ‘Emigration and the State, 1803–1842: The Nineteenth-Centur Revolution in Government Reconsidered’, *Historical Journal* 23, 2 (1980), pp. 353–80.

6 Sir Stafford Northcote at the Board of Trade to Gladstone, 9 July and 15 October 1846, GP vol. CXXXI, BL Add. MS. 44216, fos. 41–2, 47–51.

7 Marindin, *Letters of Blachford*, pp. 116–19

8 Rogers at the Colonial Office to Miss Rogers, 28 May 1846, given in ibid., pp. 130–1.

9 These letters were concentrated in 1840 and 1841 and 1869 and 1870. GP vol. XXII, BL Add. MS 44107. On the Clergy Reserves, see Rogers at the Colonial Office to Gladstone, 22 Jan. 1869, GP vol. DXXIV, BL Add. MS. 44609, fos. 11–12.

10 Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, Its Men, and Its Work*, 3 vols (London: Church Missionary Society 1899), I, p. 402, II, p. 90. Rogers does not seem to have been a member of the CMS, despite his association with people who were.

11 See T.Barron and K.J.Cable, 'The Diary of James Stephen, 1846', *Historical Studies (Australia and New Zealand)* 13, 52 (April 1969), pp. 503–19; and Ward, 'Retirement of a Titan'.
12 Rogers, off Genoa, to his mother, 20 Dec. 1846, given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford,* pp. 131–2.
13 Ibid.
14 He did consult with Gladstone about Grey's judgement of unsuitability, and in his letter to Gladstone he included Grey's original letter—Rogers to Gladstone, 30 Dec. 1846, GP vol. XXII, BL Add. MS. 44107, fos. 239–53. Gladstone's reply is not recorded.
15 Marindin, *Letters of Blachford,* p. 117.
16 PP, *Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Colonization from Ireland; Together with the Minutes of Evidence,* Vol. 2, No. 200 (1847), p. iv.
17 In the annual reports of Rogers's office, emigration to the United States did not receive a section heading of its own, while each part of the British Empire did. However, the United States was included in all of the more detailed tables of emigrants, carriers and destinations. PP, *Seventh General Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners,* No. 809 (1847). See Hitchins, *Colonial Land and Emigration Commission,* pp. 69–71, 82.
18 Rogers had written to Gladstone more than once to express his fervent approval of Gladstone's anti-war line. Rogers to Gladstone, 15 Aug. 1855 and 12 Oct. 1855, given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford,* p. 159.
19 This line of reasoning in the Colonial Office and among the colonial land and emigration commissioners is very well explored in Knox, 'Queen's Letter'.
20 For this Parisian affair, see John W.Cell, *British Colonial Administration in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 263–9, 272–3.
21 Given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford,* pp. 170–1.
22 Rogers to Austin Henry Layard, 14 Feb. 1863, AHLP vol. CLXXV, BL Add. MS 39105, fos. 38–40.
23 W.David McIntyre, *The Imperial Frontier in the Tropics: A Study of British Colo-nial Policy in West Africa, Malaya, and the South Pacific in the Age of Gladstone and Disraeli* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 6–7.
24 Swinfen, *Imperial Control of Colonial Legislation,* pp. 115–16, 150–1.
25 Ibid., pp. 58–9. The attention that Rogers had to give to such matters, and the general question of how far the writ of the colonial legislatures ran, is apparent in the minutes cited in Frederick Madden (ed.), with David Fieldhouse, *Settler Self-Government: The Development of Representative and Responsible Government,* Vol. 4 of *Select Documents on the Constitutional History of the British Empire and Common-wealth* (New York, Westport (Conn.) and London: Greenwood Press, 1990).
26 Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age,* pp. 265, 283.
27 On the emergence of these two issues (the protection of freed slaves and the supervision of responsible governments) as the two main foci of the Colonial Office's attentions, see Helen Taft Manning, 'Who Ran the British Empire, 1850–1850?', *Journal of British Studies* 5 (1965), p. 88.
28 Rogers to Nightingale, 15 April 1865, Nightingale Papers, vol. LXI, BL Add. MS. 45799, fos. 92–3.
29 Rogers to Nightingale, 15 Aug. 1865, Nightingale Papers, vol. LXI, BL Add. MS. 45799, fos. 132–3.
30 Rogers to Miss Rogers, 4 May 1860, given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford,* p. 226. Until executing this reorganization, Rogers had been stretched too thin between his legal duties and his more general work—Blakeley, *Colonial Office,* p. 16.
31 Rogers to Miss S.Rogers, 20 Dec. 1868, given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford,* pp. 275–6. For an analysis of the workload of the Colonial Office, and the staffing questions that may

have fed into the different ways Rogers organized things during his undersecretary ship, see Blakeley, *Colonial Office*, pp. 16–17.
32 Cell, *British Colonial Administration*, pp. 146–9-
33 Rogers to R.W.Church, 15 Sept. 1855, given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford*, pp. 157–8.
34 Rogers to Carnarvon, 5 Oct. 1866, cited in Knox, 'Provision of Legal Advice'.
35 Marindin, *Letters of Blachford*, pp. 296–8.
36 Cell, *British Colonial Administration*, pp. 88–9.
37 Marindin, *Letters of Blachford*, pp. 299–300.
38 Taylor, *Autobiography*, II, p. 241.
39 John W.Cell does see Tocquevillean elements in the Colonial Office attitudes of the 1860s, but not so many of them—Cell, *British Colonial Administration*, pp. 88–92, 119–21.
40 David M.L.Farr, *The Colonial Office and Canada, 1867–1887* (Toronto: University of Toronto, Press, 1955), pp. 39–40.
41 Rogers in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 19 January 1885, as quoted in Farr, *The Colonial Office and Canada*, pp. 40–1.

5
Letters from Australia, Part I: the citizens

1 Edward Wilson, *Rambles at the Antipodes: A Series of Sketches of Moreton Bay, New Zealand, The Murray River, and South Australia, and the Overland Route* (London: W.H.Smith and Son, 1859), pp. 25–6.
2 Ibid., iii–iv; Stuart Maclntyre, *A Colonial Liberalism: The Lost World of Three Victorian Visionaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 13, 25–30, 56–7; Edward Wilson, *An Enquiry into the Principles of Representation: A reprint of several letters and leading articles from the* Argus *newspaper* (Melbourne: William Fairfax and Co., 1857); for the context in which Wilson made his views known, see Serle, *The Golden Age*, p. 275. On the 'English' sparrows that Wilson found living in the rafters in Ceylon and took to Australia, see Wilson, *Rambles at the Antipodes*, p. 129; on Wilson's role in the Acclimatisation Society, see Christopher Lever, *They Dined on Eland: The Story of the Acclimatisation Societies* (London: Quiller Press, 1992), pp. 31, 37, 41–2, 75, 107–9.
3 Charles Stuart Blackton, The Australasian League, 1851–1854', *Pacific Historical Review* 8 (1939), pp. 385–400 at pp. 390–1.
4 This has been noted and demonstrated by others. See Cliff Cumming, 'Scots Radicals in Port Phillip, 1838–1851', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 37, 3 (1991), pp. 434–47.
5 *ADB;* Serle, *The Golden Age*, pp. 173, 176, 211, 253, 377; Ward, *Earl Grey and the Australian Colonies*, p. 253.
6 *ABD;* David Dunstan, *Governing the Metropolis: Politics, Technology, and Change in a Victorian City: Melbourne 1850–1891* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1984), pp. 128, 155, 183–4; Michael Roe, *Quest for Authority in Eastern Australia, 1835–1851* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965), pp. 159–61; C.P. Billot, *The Life and Times of John Pascoe Fawkner* (Melbourne: Hyland House, 1985), pp. 293–4; idem, *Melbourne: An Annotated Bibliography to 1850* (Geelong, Victoria, Australia: Rippleside Press, 1970), pp. 66–8; George Nadel, *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 23, 252–3.
7 Crauford D.W.Goodwin, *Economic Enquiry in Australia*, Duke University Commonwealth-Studies Center Publication 24 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1966), p. 468. Westgarth's reports were semi-annual productions for his clients; the last came in 1846—

J.A.La Nauze, *Political Economy in Australia: Historical Studies* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1949), p. 14, n. 3.

8 Westgarth, *Commercial, Statistical, and General Report on the District of Port Phillip, New South Wales, for the Half Year ended 31st of July, 1845* ([Melbourne?]: S.Goode, Courier Office, n.d. [1845?], pp. 9, 38.

9 Ibid., p. 40.

10 Ibid., pp. 30–2.

11 William Westgarth, *A Report on the Condition, Capabilities, and Prospects, of the Australian Aborigines* (Melbourne: William Clarke, at the Herald Office, 1846). The explicit use of Darwin to bolster the idea that there was a struggle of races, and that the losers should be left to die out according to *laissez-faire,* seems to have entered print—at least in the colony of Victoria—in 1863, but to have taken off a decade later. See Crauford D.Goodwin, 'Evolution in Australian Social Thought', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 25, 3 (July—Sept. 1964), pp. 393–416.

12 Westgarth, *Commercial, Statistical, and General Report…1845.*

13 William Westgarth, *A Report, Commercial, Statistical, and General, of the District of Port Phillip, New South Wales, for the Half-Year ended 31st July, 1846* (Melbourne: Wm. Clarke, Printer, Herald Office, Little Collins-Street, 1846), pp. 48, n. 48, 55–7.

14 William Westgarth, *Australia Felix; or, a historical and descriptive account of the settlement of Port Phillip, New South Wales, including full particulars of the manners and conditions of the aboriginal natives, with observations on emigration, on the system of transportation, and on colonial policy* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd; London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1848).

15 Ibid., pp. 36–7.

16 Ibid., p. 41.

17 Ibid., pp. 50–1.

18 Ibid., p. 62.

19 Ibid., p. 59.

20 Ibid., pp. 57–8, 74.

21 Ibid., p. 86.

22 Ibid., p. 97.

23 Ibid., pp. 107, 118–19.

24 Ibid., p. 114.

25 Ibid., p. 106. Westgarth was hardly the only Australian colonist with this opinion, although another widely held view was that Aborigines were not people. See Henry Reynolds, 'Racial Thought in Early Colonial Australia', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 22, 1 (April 1974), pp. 45–53.

26 Westgarth, *Australia Felix,* pp. 111–12.

27 Ibid., p. 120.

28 Ibid., pp. 120–2.

29 Ibid., pp. 328–9.

30 Ibid., p. 285.

31 Ibid., p. 286.

32 Ibid., p. 301.

33 Ibid., pp. 303–4.

34 Ibid., pp. 358–60.

35 Ibid., pp. 372–3.

36 Ibid., p. 374.

37 William Westgarth, *Victoria; late Australia Felix; or Port Phillip District of New South Wales; being an historical and descriptive account of the Colony and its Gold Mines* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd; London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1853)—see p. iii for the shipboard composition of the book; [William Westgarth], *Reports on the Condition and*

Progress of the Colony of Victoria since the Discovery of the Gold-fields (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1853).
38 Westgarth, *Victoria; late Australia Felix,* pp. 278–9.
39 Ibid., p. 335.
40 Ibid., p. 339.
41 [Westgarth], *Reports on the Condition and Progress of the Colony of Victoria since the Discovery of the Gold-fields,* pp. 9–13, 31–3.
42 William Westgarth, *Victoria and the Australian Gold mines in 1857; with some note of the overland route from Australia, vîa Suez* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1857).
43 Ibid., p. 403.
44 Ibid., pp. 23–4.
45 Few writers on race went this far. Most of the literature on racial change and acclimatization post-dated Westgarth. However, in a book that went through various editions around 1820, *The influence of tropical climates on European constitutions: being a treatise on the principal diseases incidental to Europeans in the East and West Indies, Mediterranean, and Coast of Africa*, James Johnson had considered but then denied the proposition that Europeans in the tropics would turn black, since they had clothes and houses to shield them from the sun. Arthur S. Thompson published articles in various Indian medical journals in the early 1840s arguing that Europeans in India would indeed become degenerate and change colour, basing his ideas upon European death rates in India. See David N.Livingston, 'Human Acclimatization: Perspectives on a Contested Field of Inquiry in Science, Medicine, and Geography', *History of Science* 25 (1987), pp. 359–94. There is no evidence that Westgarth knew of either Johnson or Thompson.
46 Westgarth, *Victoria and the Australian Gold mines in 1857,* pp. 240–1, 267–70, 288–9, 326–7.
47 Ibid., p. 361.
48 Ibid., p. 71.
49 Ibid., p. 61.
50 Ibid., p. 71.
51 Westgarth had expressed the same anti-Chinese sentiments in the colonial legislature and in the Melbourne *Argus*, starting in 1854 at the latest—Kathryn Cronin, *Colonial Casualties: Chinese in Early Victoria* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1982), pp. 43, 79.
52 Westgarth, *Victoria and the Australian Gold mines in 1857,* pp. 361–2.
53 Ibid., pp. 438–47.
54 William Westgarth, *Australia: Its Rise, Progress, and Present Condition* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1861).
55 Ibid., pp. xiii, xxiii–xxx, 73, 84–8, 208–12.
56 Ibid., pp. v—vi.
57 Ibid., pp. 91–2. Westgarth's opinion was not universally shared. The Australian colonies wanted the rest of the continent for themselves. Westgarth ignored the opportunity to suppress an argument to that effect when he brought out his edition of John Davis, *Tracks of McKinlay and Party Across Australia; edited from Mr. Davis's manuscript journal, with an introductory view of the recent Australian explorations of McDougall Stuart, Burke and Wills, Landsborough, etc., by William Westgarth* (London: Sampson, Low, Son & Co., 1863), p. 66.
58 William Westgarth, *The Colony of Victoria: Its history, commerce, and gold mining; its social and political institutions; down to the end of 1863* (London: Sampson Low, Son and Marston, 1864), p. v.
59 Westgarth, *The Colony of Victoria,* pp. 483–4.
60 Ibid., pp. 457–63.
61 Ibid., p. 465.

62 William Westgarth, *Half a Century of Australian Progress: A personal retrospect* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1889); Australasian League Conference, *Sessional Papers etc. etc. of the Australasian League Conference, held in Hobart Town and Launceston, Van Diemen's Land, in the months of April and May, 1852* (Tasmania: Australasian League Conference, 1852), pp. 15–18.
63 H.C.E.Childers to his mother, 25 Feb. 1851, quoted in Spencer Childers, *The Life and Correspondence of the Rt. Hon. Hugh C.E.Childers*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1901), I, p. 36.
64 *ADB;* The 'massacre', the violent end to the 1854 miners' strike, remains the bloodiest conflict among whites in Australia's domestic history. The death toll was five soldiers and 24 miners—C.M.H.Clark, *A History of Australia:* Vol. 4, *The Earth Abideth Forever, 1851–1888* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1978), pp. 77–9.
65 John Fitzgerald Leslie Foster, *The New Colony of Victoria, Formerly Port Phillip; together with Some Account of the Other Australian Colonies* (London: Trelawny Saunders, 1851), p. 2.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid., pp. 74–5.
68 Ibid., pp. 22–4.
69 Ibid., p. 34.
70 As colonial secretary, he spent a great deal on public works, receiving much of the blame in the ensuing financial crisis; he resigned in December 1854, eventually losing much of his remaining salary despite the governor's promise of compensation, or so he argued in print. Foster returned to England in 1857. In 1867, he revisited New South Wales to try (unsuccessfully) for his compensation.
71 *ADB;* Serle, *The Golden Age*, pp. 146–51, 159–60, 188–90.
72 Noel F.Learmonth, *The Portland Bay Settlement: Being a History of Portland, Victoria, from 1800 to 1851* (Melbourne: Historical Committee of Portland, 1934), pp. 275–6; Michael Cannon and Ian MacFarlane (eds), *Historical Records of Victoria* (Melbourne University Press, 1988), V, p. 254, VI, p. 392.
73 Philip G.King *et al.*, to Sir George Gipps, 8 June 1838, given in Cannon and MacFarlane (eds), *Historical Records of Victoria*, Vol. 2 A, pp. 349–51.
74 Philip Mennell, *The Dictionary of Australasian Biography from the Inauguration of Responsible Government down to the Present Time (1855–1892)* (London: Hutchison & Co., 1892); *DNB;* F.A.Larcombe, *A History of Local Government in New South* Wales: Vol. 1, The *Origin of Local Government in New South Wales, 1831–1858* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1973), p. 91; Roe, *Quest for Authority*, p. 83.
75 Geoffrey Partington, *The Australian Nation: Its British and Irish Roots*, new edn (New Brunswick, N.J., and London: Transaction Publishers, 1997), pp. 169–70; J.B.Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales, 1848–1884* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), pp. 10–12, 182–5. For Nicholson's role in school administration, see Arthur McMartin, *Public Servants and Patronage: The Foundation and Rise of the New South Wales Public Service, 1786–1859* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1983), pp. 240–1; and Martin Sullivan, 'Charles Nicholson, the State, and Education in Nineteenth-century Queensland', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 33, 33 (1987), pp. 209–23.
76 Nadel, *Australia's Colonial Culture*, pp. 123, 135; Ann Mozley Moyal (ed.), *Scientists in Nineteenth-Century Australia: A Documentary History* (Melbourne: Cassell Australia, 1976), p. 108.
77 Charles Nicholson to W.E.Gladstone, 1 May 1851, GP vol. CCCLXXXII, BL Add. MS 44567, fos. 71–2; printed (from an 1852 PP) in Kenneth N.Bell and W.P.Morrell (eds), *Select Documents in British Colonial Policy, 1831–1860* [1928] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 137–40.

78 Roe, *Quest for Authority*, p. 55; Hirst, *Strange Birth*, pp. 10, 28–9, 99–100; Charles Nicholson to Archibald Cuninhame, 29 Feb. 1852, quoted in Sullivan, 'Charles Nicholson, the State, and Education', p. 214.
79 Sir Charles Nicholson to C.E.Trevelyan, 20 Nov. 1852, quoted in Malcolm D. Prentis, 'The Emigrants of the Highland and Island Emigration Society, 1852–1857', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 69, 1 (June 1983), pp. 39–47.
80 Peter Loveday, 'The Legislative Council in New South Wales, 1856–1870', *Historical Studies (Australia and New Zealand)* 11, 44 (April 1965), pp. 481–98 at p. 483.
81 Mennell, *Dictionary of Australasian Biography*, George Shaw, '"Filched from us…": The Loss of Universal Manhood Suffrage in Queensland, 1859–1863', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 26, 3 (1980), pp. 370–85, esp. p. 376.
82 R.Duncan, 'The Annexation of the Northern Territory to South Australia', *Historical Studies (Australian and New Zealand)* 6, 22 (May 1954), pp. 135–49.
83 Charles Nicholson *et al.*, *Speeches Delivered at the Australian Anniversary Dinner* (London: Richardson Brothers, 1858), pp. 8, 15.
84 Charles Nicholson to Joseph Hékhékyan Bey, 30 Nov. [1862?], Hékhékyan Papers, Vol. XVI, BL Add. MS 37463, fos. 231–3.
85 Charles Nicholson, 'On the Disk-Worshippers of Memphis', offprint from *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature of the United Kingdom* 10, 2nd ser. (1868), p. 3.
86 Charles Nicholson, 'On Some Funereal Hieroglyphic Inscriptions Found at Memphis', *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature of the United Kingdom* 8, 2nd ser. (1866), pp. 308–25; and idem, 'On the Disk-Worshippers of Memphis', pp. 7–8, 12.
87 The man with whom Nicholson was concerned was an Egyptologist who had recently been posted as a consular judge at Shanghai, and wanted to trade positions with another new consular judge with no interest in Egyptology who had been posted to Alexandria—Charles Nicholson to Austen Henry Layard, 31 August 1867, AHLP Vol. XXX**,** BL Add. MS 38960, fos. 51–3.
88 Charles Nicholson, 'The Australian Colonies, Their Condition, Resources, and *Prospects Journal of the Society of Arts* 12 (27 Nov. 1863), pp. 20–30.

6

Letters from Australia, Part II: the governor and the end of the world

1 Matthew Edney, *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843* (Chicago, 111.: University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 280.
2 *DNB, ADB;* Cell, *British Colonial Administration*, pp. 54, 57.
3 Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania:* Vol. 1, *Van Diemen's Land from the Earliest Times to 1855* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 441; Clark, *History of Australia*, III, 361–3.
4 William Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, 2 vols (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1870), I, p. 2; Grey to Denison, 27 April 1848; Denison to Grey, 14 July 1851, both quoted in Bell and Morrell, *Select Documents*, pp. 301–5, 315–17; Robson, *History of Tasmania*, I, pp. 483–506; W.P.Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Age of Peel and Russell* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), pp. 410–16, 421.
5 The matter was settled so that judicial review on the part of the Tasmanian court was held to be valid under the statutes that had brought about the institutions of Tasmania; that is, the colonial court had its full power as a British superior court, while the acts of a colonial government were the product of a subordinate power not equal to that of the Imperial Legislature—see Swinfen, *Imperial Control of Colonial Legislation, 46–1.*

6 At the same time, he also became governor-in-chief of the Australian colonies, a powerless position that he retained until 1861. He opposed the title and with it any federation of the Australian colonies, for he believed that the colonies ought to be governed separately, and on his advice the title was allowed to expire. B.A. Knox, 'The Rise of Colonial Federation as an Object of British Policy, 1850–1870', *Journal of British Studies* 11, 1 (November 1971), pp. 92–112, esp. 99–100; Denison to Sir George Grey, 18 Nov. 1854, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, pp. 261–3.
7 Australasian League Conference, *Sessional Papers, 1852*, pp. 5, 27.
8 Despatch of Lieut.-Gov. W.Denison of Van Diemen's Land to Lord Grey, 15 August 1848, given in PP, *Papers relative to the proposed alterations in the constitution of the Australian Colonies*, No. 1074, Vol. XXXV (1849), pp. 30–1.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Roe, *Quest for Authority*, pp. 55–6.
12 Robson, *History of Tasmania*, I, pp. 510–11.
13 Ibid., pp. 522–6; Ward, 'Responsible Government Question', pp. 241–3.
14 McMartin, *Public Servants and Patronage*, pp. 251–60; for the Merivale comment, see p. 255 n. 14; Loveday, The Legislative Council', pp. 487–8; Denison to Labouchere, 5 April 1858, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, 434–5; Cell, *British Colonial Administration*, pp. 175, 179–81; A.W.Martin, *Parliament Factions and Parties: The First Thirty Years of Responsible Government in New South Wales* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966), pp. 106–9.
15 McMartin, *Publsic Servants and Patronage*, pp. 268–9.
16 Robson, *History of Tasmania*, I, pp. 459–62; Denison at Sydney to Sir Roderick Murchison, and Denison to the Bishop of Newcastle, 18 May 1855, both given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, pp. 309–12.
17 Denison to his sister, Lady Charlotte Denison, 5 Nov. 1860, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, pp. 494–7.
18 See Denison to Admiral Beaufort, 5 February 1849, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, pp. 105–8.
19 Denison to Col. Harness, 20 April 1857, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, pp. 380–1; Nadel, *Australia's Colonial Culture*, p. 135; La Nauze, *Political Economy in Australia*, p. 28; Moyal, *Scientists in Nineteenth-Century Australia*, pp. 108–9; Robson, *History of Tasmania*, I, p. 445.
20 Goodwin, *Economic Enquiry*, pp. 281–6, 615.
21 Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. 429–30, 437–41.
22 Denison to Labouchere, 18 Nov. 1856, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, pp. 370–2.
23 Larcombe, *Origin of Local Government*, pp. 352–4.
24 Robson, *History of Tasmania*, I, pp. 516–18.
25 Denison to Gore Browne, 16 May 1860, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, II, pp. 13–18; see also Denison to Warburton, 12 March 1864, in ibid., II, pp. 332–3.
26 Denison to Murchison, [n.d.] April 1860, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, pp. 479–80. Denison had begun corresponding with Murchison in 1855, on the occasion of a Royal Geographical Society expedition into the Australian interior—Robert A.Stafford, *Scientist of Empire: Sir Roderick Murchison, Scientific Exploration, and Victorian Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 44.
27 Lady Denison's Journal, 20 Dec. 1847, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, pp. 66–7.
28 Ibid., I, pp. 67–8.
29 Ibid., 27 Dec. 1847, I, pp. 68–72.
30 Ibid., 31 Jan. 1841, I, p. 80.

31 Denison to his mother, 18 Jan. 1849, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 103–5.
32 R.H.W.Reece, *Aborigines and Colonists: Aborigines and Colonial Society in New South Wales in the 1830s and 1840s* (Sydney University Press, 1974), pp. 213–15.
33 Denison to his mother, 30 Dec. 1855; and Denison to Murchison, 23 Jan. 1856, both given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 323–30.
34 Denison to J.E.Denison, 16 Feb. 1856, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 337–9.
35 Ibid.
36 In later years—Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, p. 425. And Denison did go to Norfolk Island, more than once—Denison to the Rev. G.Nobbs, 19 Jan. 1859, and Denison to Murchison, 6 Nov. 1857, both given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 418–28.
37 Denison to Henry Labouchere, 4 March 1856, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, 339–42.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., I, p. 414.
41 Denison to his mother, 29 Aug. 1856, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 367–8.
42 Denison to Henry Labouchere, Denison to Earl Canning, both 5 April 1858, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 434–8.
43 Denison to Roderick Murchison, 3 May 1858, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 439–40.
44 Ibid.
45 Denison to Murchison, [n.d.] April 1860, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 479–80.
46 Denison to Murchison, 4 Sept. 1858, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 444–5.
47 Denison to Lieutenant Warburton, 6 June 1860, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 482–4.
48 Denison to Lady Charlotte Denison, 5 Nov. 1860, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 494–7.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.; Denison to Sir Charles Wood, 15 Nov. 1860, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* I, pp. 502–3.
51 Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* II, pp. 84–5.
52 Denison to Sir George Russel Clerk, 18 Oct. 1862, Clerk Papers, IOLR D.538/3.
53 Denison to Murchison, 8 March 1864, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* II, pp. 333–4.
54 Denison to Murchison, 8 April 1863, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* II, pp. 234–5.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid.
57 Denison to Captain Warburton, 12 March 1864, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* II, pp. 332–3.
58 Denison to Murchison, 30 May 1865, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life,* II, pp. 392–4.
59 Denison to Sir Charles Wood, 20 Oct. 1865, Wood Papers, IOLR MSS F.78/87/5&6, fos. 65–6.
60 Denison to Sir Charles Wood, 5 April 1865, Wood Papers, MSS F.78/87/5&6, fos. 23–6-see fo. 25.

61 Denison to Murchison, 10 June 1863, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, II, pp. 238–9.
62 Denison to Murchison, 29 July 1864, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, II, pp. 347–50.
63 Ibid.
64 Denison was reflecting a British concern with Indian forest management that dated back to the early 1850s—see Gregory Barton, 'Keepers of the Jungle: Environmental Management in British India, 1855–1900', *Historian* 62, 3 (Spring 2000), pp. 557–74.
65 Denison to Murchison, 29 July 1864, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, II, pp. 347–50.
66 Denison to Murchison, 30 May 1865, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, II, pp. 392–4.
67 Denison to Murchison, 8 March 1864, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, II, pp. 333–4.
68 Denison to Murchison, 30 May 1865, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, II, pp. 392–4.
69 E.D.Steele, *Palmerston and Liberalism, 1855–1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 336–9, 347.
70 William Denison, 'On the Permanence of Type in the Human Race', *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*, 23 March 1869, pp. 194–9
71 Denison to Murchison, 23 July 1865, given in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, II, pp. 400–2.
72 Denison, *Varieties of Vice-regal Life*, I, p. viii.
73 Denison to Murchison, 10 Aug. 1867, Murchison Papers, BL Add. MS 46126, fos. 37–8; Denison to Murchison, 19 August 1867, Murchison Papers, BL Add. MS 46126, fos. 39–40.
74 William Denison, *An Attempt to Approximate the Antiquity of Man by Induction from Well Established Facts* (Madras: J.Higginbotham, 1865), p. 2. In addition to his late pamphlets, in the late 1830s and early 1840s Denison had been the first editor of the 'Professional Papers of the Royal Engineers', bringing out eight volumes—Whitworth Porter, *History of the Corps of Royal Engineers, 2* vols (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889), II, p. 467.
75 William Denison, *Two Lectures on Colonization* (Richmond: Hiscoke and Son, 1870), p. 9.
76 William Denison, *A Church, A Social Institution* (London: Alfred W.Bennett, 1868), pp. 3–4.
77 Ibid., p. 28. Denison retired to England to contemplate the larger questions of empire in his memoirs and in other works. From 1868 on, he headed a Royal Commission on river pollution, travelling about the country and collecting health statistics. Although long absent from the country by the time he retired, he was well-enough connected in England when he got back. One of his brothers was bishop of Salisbury, another was archdeacon of Taunton, and the third was Speaker of the House of Commons from 1857 to 1872.

7
The variety of Englishmen and their empires, Part I: Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton

1 Their son, the future first Earl of Lytton, equally estranged from his mother, was a minor poet and the British minister to Lisbon at the time of his father's death in 1873, and would serve as viceroy of India from 1876 to 1880.
2 Robert Blake, 'Bulwer-Lytton', *Cornhill* 1077 (Autumn 1993), pp. 67–76 at p. 73.
3 Michael Sadleir, *Bulwer and his Wife: A Panorama, 1803–1836*, new edn (London: Constable: 1933), pp. 18–19.

4 Edward Robert Bulwer-Lytton [1st Earl of Lytton], *The Life, Letters, and Literary Remains of Edward Bulwer-Lytton. Lord Lytton, 2* vols (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co., 1883), I, p. 228.
5 The last three paragraphs rely heavily upon the *DNB* and E.R.Bulwer-Lytton, *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains.* For astrology, see Patrick Curry, *A Confusion of Prophets: Victorian and Edwardian Astrology* (London: Collins and Brown, 1992), pp. 38–41, 72, 75, 95–6.
6 There is a handy chronological table of their marital quarrels in Sadleir, *Bulwer and His Wife,* p. xviii. See also Victor Bulwer-Lytton [2nd Earl of Lytton], *The Life of Edward Bulwer, First Lord Lytton,* 2 vols (London: Macmillan and Co., 1913), I, pp. 253–80.
7 See Rosina Bulwer Lytton, *A Blighted Life: A True Story,* intro. by Marie Mulvery Roberts [1880] (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1994)—see especially the introduction by Roberts, pp. xv–xxxiv. Note that Edward Bulwer-Lytton used the hyphen while his wife did not. See also Sadleir, *Bulwer and his Wife,* pp. 395–410.
8 Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life,* I, pp. 248–9
9 Ibid., I, p. 261.
10 Ibid., I, p. 262.
11 Ibid., I, p. 264. As an undergraduate, Bulwer-Lytton had visited Owen, heard his plans, and seen his schools and pupils—I, pp. 301–3.
12 Ibid., I, pp. 301–3.
13 Ibid., I, pp. 265–7.
14 Standish Meacham, in Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *England and the English* [1833], Standish Meacham (ed.), Classics of British Historical Literature (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. ix—x.
15 On the character of Bulwer-Lytton's historical novels, see Richard Jenkyns, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), pp. 84–6; and Clare A.Simmons, *Reversing the Conquest: History and Myth in Nineteenth-Century British Literature* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990), pp. 156, 160–5.
16 Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life,* II, p. 205.
17 See Allan Conrad Christensen, *Edward Bulwer-Lytton: The Fiction of New Regions* (Athens, G.: University of Georgia Press, 1976), pp. 137–69. More derivative but with some insights on Bulwer-Lytton's attempt to depict the pleasantness of normal life is James L.Campbell, Sr, *Edward Bulwer-Lytton* (Boston, Mass.: Twayne Publishers, 1986), pp. 91–108.
18 Christensen, *Bulwer-Lytton,* 141.
19 Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *The Caxtons: A Family Picture* [1849] (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1888), p. 384 (Part 17, Chapter 1). Because of the immense number of the collected editions of Bulwer-Lytton's novels, many of them without proper publication information or even a date of publication, reference will be given to chapter numbers, which seem to be stable across editions.
20 Ibid., p. 394 (Part 17, Chapter 2).
21 Ibid., p. 400 (Part 17, Chapter 4).
22 Ibid., pp. 408–10 (Part 18, Chapter 1); Bulwer-Lytton included footnotes in his historical novels, too, and apologized for not including more of them—see Jenkyns, *Victorians and Ancient Greece,* pp. 83–4. The most famous of the sources that Bulwer-Lytton footnoted here, and the most important for his view of the colonies, was *Sidney's,* the work of Samuel Sidney, born in 1813. Sidney's imagined Australia—for Sidney was never there—was explicitly Arcadian and Olde English. See Coral Lansbury, *Arcady in Australia: The Evocation of Australia in Nineteenth-Century English Literature* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1970), pp. 60–80, 87–8.
23 Frederic Rogers to Miss Rogers, 8 Nov. 1858, given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford, p.* 182.
24 His approach as colonial secretary was not exactly the same as it would have been ten years before, when he wrote *The Caxtons,* despite the attempt of scholars to illustrate his colonial

views back at the time of *The Caxtons* with his letter of instruction to Sir George Bowen on appointing him governor of Queensland in 1859 (29 April 1859).
As Allen Christensen has shown, the Caxton novels posit a society that is an organic whole to be governed carefully, and always in accordance with local feeling—and this picture is a key part of Bulwer-Lytton's letter to Bowen. Christensen, *Bulwer-Lytton,* pp. 138–9; Lansbury, *Arcady in Australia,* pp. 80–1; the letter from Bulwer-Lytton to Bowen, 29 April 1859, is given in Victor Lytton, *Life,* II, pp. 284–8. But most of the Bowen letter reflects not so much *The Caxtons*—where as we have seen the colonial ideas were entirely derivative and general, despite the novel's rich and detailed humanity *when depicting English society*—but the new colonial picture of self-government as seen from the Colonial Office in the late 1850s. See Bulwer-Lytton to George Bowen, 29 April 1859, given in Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life,* II, pp. 285–8. All of Bulwer-Lytton's advice came straight from the new environment of the Colonial Office under Merivale and then Rogers, and reflected the world of responsible government ushered in by Lord Grey. The new colonial secretary had no reason to disagree with the benevolent rules of thumb that he was passing along to Bowen, and as a novelist he simply put them rather well.

25 Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life,* II, p. 280.

26 Tinker, *A New System of Slavery,* pp. 49, 88, 163.

27 Ged Martin, The Naming of British Columbia', *Albion* 10, 3 (Fall 1978), pp. 257–63; Madge Wolfenden, 'Books and Libraries in Fur-Trading and Colonial Days', *British Columbia Historical Journal* 11 (1947), pp. 159–86; for a sidelight on Bulwer-Lytton as the man who sent the engineers out to make a road up the Fraser, see Donald Sage, 'Gold Rush Days along the Fraser River', *Pacific North-west Quarterly* 44, 4 (Oct. 1953), pp. 161–5.

28 Minute by Bulwer-Lytton, 19 March 1859, CO 323/255, fo. 23, quoted in Knox, 'Concept of Empire'; Barry M.Gough, *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810–1914: A Study of British Maritime Ascendancy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1971), pp. 140–2.

29 John S.Galbraith, *The Hudson's Bay Company as an Imperial Factor, 1821–1869* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957), pp. 304–5, 349–53.

30 Disraeli to Bulwer-Lytton, 20 Dec. 1858, given in Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life,* II, 298–9. Although Disraeli knew that Bulwer-Lytton's health was indeed bad, he also may have suspected that Bulwer-Lytton was angling for a peerage to get out of active politics. On first being asked to enter the Colonial Office when the government came to power in February 1858, Bulwer-Lytton had said that he could not be confident of winning re-election in order to serve; Derby and Disraeli did not offer Bulwer-Lytton the peerage that he may have wanted and instead gave the Colonial Office to Derby's son, Lord Stanley. When Lord Stanley left the position the next year, Bulwer-Lytton was asked again, and won his by-election—Angus Hawkins, *Parliament, Party, and the Art of Politics in Britain, 1855–59* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1987), pp. 112–13. The phrase 'men of our temperament' when used of a fellow author even more prolific than Disraeli himself seems to point to Disraeli's famous, far less justifiable application of a similar phrase to Queen Victoria on the publication of her first volume of journals: 'We authors, ma'am…' But here Disraeli's 'men of our temperament' does point to something real, to the kind of Victorian personality that could publish novels, sit in the cabinet, and carry on in society all at once.

31 Blake, 'Bulwer-Lytton'.

32 Robert Blake, *Disraeli* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1967), p. 401.

33 Bulwer-Lytton to Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, 1 April 1859, given in Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life,* I, p. 308.

34 Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life,* II, pp. 315–20.

35 Edward Bulwer-Lytton to John Forster, 1860 (no more specific date cited, but most likely early July of that year), given in Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life,* II, 328–30.

36 Swinfen, *Imperial Control of Colonial Legislation,* p. 71.

37 F.Darrell Munsell, *The Unfortunate Duke: Henry Pelham, 5th Duke of Newcastle, 1811–1864* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1985), p. 267; Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age*, pp. 112–13, 119. Since Sir John Lawrence refused to take the job, Grey still occupied it when Lytton and the Tories left office in 1859.
38 Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Address to the Agricultural Society of Hertford, 25 September 1861, quoted in Thomas E.Harris, *The Trent Affair* (Indianapolis and Kansas City: Bowen-Merrill Company, 1896), p. 27.
39 [Edward Bulwer-Lytton], 'The Disputes with America', *Quarterly Review* 94 (1856), pp. 235–86.
40 Knox, '"care is more important than haste'".
41 John S.Galbraith, 'The Hudson's Bay Company Under Fire, 1847–62', *Canadian Historical Review* 30, 1 (March 1949), pp. 322–35; idem, *Hudson's Bay Company*, pp. 304, 349; B.A.Knox, 'Conservative Imperialism 1858–1874: Bulwer Lytton, Lord Carnarvon, and Canadian Confederation', *International Historical Review* 6, 3 (Aug. 1984), 333–57. Knox argues from Colonial Office records that Bulwer-Lytton does not seem to have had any *a priori* objection to federation, merely to Sir Edmund Head's surprising public adoption of a poorly framed federal proposal. This view is supported by Ged Martin, 'Launching Canadian Confederation: Means to Ends, 1836–1864', *Historical Journal* 27, 3 (1984), pp. 575–602; and W.L.Morton, *The Critical Years: The Union of British North America, 1857–1873* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964), pp. 61–4, 68–70. But we have seen from nonofficial sources that Bulwer-Lytton was no fan of federation. Furthermore, in his official capacity he had rejected it in southern Africa. In another article, 'The Rise of Colonial Federation as an Object of British Policy', Knox cites an unsent draft letter from Bulwer-Lytton to Lord Derby in 1858 (see pp. 100–1). The letter, in suggesting a future Canadian Confederation, may or may not embrace that possibility on its own merits—it may simply embrace the expedient of keeping the Canadian colonies from joining the United States. It was indeed the American Civil War that gave the fillip to Colonial Office support for Canadian Confederation. For more general British support for North American federation down through the years, see Ged Martin, 'An Imperial Idea and Its Friends: Canadian Confederation and the British', in Gordon Martel (ed.), *Studies in Imperial British History: Essays in Honour of A.P.Thornton* (New York: St Martin's, 1986), pp. 49–94.
42 Given in Reginald G.Trotter, 'The British Government and the Proposal of Federation in 1858', *Canadian Historical Review* 14, 3 (Sept. 1933): pp. 285–92.
43 W.F.Monypenny and G.E.Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beacons-field*, 6 vols (New York: Macmillan, 1910–20), II, pp. 1588–92.
44 Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life*, II, pp. 370–1.
45 Bulwer-Lytton to his son, 6 July 1869, quoted in ibid., II, p. 454.
46 Bulwer-Lytton to Lady Sherbourne, 13 June 1868, given in ibid., II, pp. 449–50.
47 Henry Drummond Wolff, *Rambling Recollections*, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1908), II, pp. 28–30.
48 Christensen, *Bulwer-Lytton*, pp. 178–9.
49 Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race* [1871] (Santa Barbara, Calif: Wood-bridge Press, 1989), p. 118 (Chapter 26).
50 Ibid., p. 52 (Chapter 15).
51 Ibid., pp. 19–20 (Chapter 7).
52 Ibid., p. 119 (Chapter 26).
53 Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 12–15.
54 Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race*, pp. 57–8 (Chapter 16).
55 Ibid., p. 94 (Chapter 23).
56 Ibid., p. 119 (Chapter 26).

57 Bulwer-Lytton to John Forster, 15 March 1870, given in Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life*, II, pp. 464–5.
58 Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race*, pp. 60–3 (Chapter 16).
59 Victor Bulwer-Lytton, *Life*, II, p. 468.

8
The variety of Englishmen and their empires, Part II

1 Stephen Cave, *A Few Words, on the Encouragement Given to Slavery and the Slave Trade, by Recent Measures, and Chiefly by the Sugar Bill of 1846* (London: John Murray, 1849).
2 Ibid., p. 1.
3 Ibid., p. 3.
4 Ibid., pp. 4–5.
5 Ibid., pp. 8–9.
6 Ibid., p. 10.
7 Ibid., p. 15.
8 Ibid., pp. 11n.1, 20.
9 Ibid., pp. 21–3.
10 Ibid., pp. 27–8.
11 Ibid., pp. 28.
12 Ibid., pp. 30–1.
13 Stephen Cave, *Prevention or Reformation: The Duty of the State or Individuals?; with some account of a reformatory institution* (London: James Ridgway, 1856), pp. 3–4.
14 Stephen Cave, *On the Distinctive Principles of Punishment and Reformation* (London: James Ridgway, 1857).
15 Ibid., pp. v, 4–7.
16 Marsh had quit the legislature in Sydney to move back to London and live at the Oxford and Cambridge Club, the object being to influence Australian events better than he could in Australia. He also wrote statistically detailed and often well-regarded letters to Colonial Office officials. See G.P.Shaw, 'The "Tangled Web" of Separation', *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 29, 2 (1983), pp. 245–61 (see pp. 250–1); Knox,' "care is more important than haste"'.
17 Cave, *On the Distinctive Principles of Punishment and Reformation*, pp. 10–14.
18 It was founded by Lord Brougham, and as B.Rodgers has detailed, it had 139 members of its General Committee, including Edwin Chadwick, Charles Kingsley, John Stuart Mill, John Ruskin and James Kay-Shut tie worth. Mill soon dropped out, and the other great names tended to frequent the sections or 'Departments' of the annual meeting that dealt with Public Health, Jurisprudence and Amendment of Law, Education and Economy and Trade. The 'Punishment and Reformation' Department that Cave attended could boast few if any great names and was composed instead of more 'practical workers', as Rodgers puts it. B.Rodgers, The Social Science Association, 1857–1886', *The Manchester School of Economic and Social Studies* 20, 3 (Sept. 1952), pp. 283–310 at 284–5.
19 Stephen Cave, *Papers Relating to Free Labour and the Slave Trade; with a corrected Report of the Debate in the House of Commons, on the 26th of February 1861, upon Resolutions proposed by Mr. Cave, the Chairman of the West India Committee, for more effective suppression of the African Slave-trade* (London: Robert Barclay, 1861).
20 Ibid., p. 5.
21 Ibid., p. 7.

22 See Stephen Cave in the House of Commons, 8 March 1860, given in Cave, *Papers Relating to Free Labour and the Slave Trade*, pp. 14–16, as well as the correspondence given in the rest of the pamphlet.
23 Ibid., p. 8.
24 Asiegbu, *Slavery and the Politics of Liberation*, p. 60
25 Early in 1868, Northcote, as Indian secretary, offered Cave a five-year appointment as financial member of the viceroy's Council of India after Childers refused the appointment, but Cave does not seem to have seriously considered accepting—Stafford Northcote to Viceroy Sir John Lawrence, 25 Jan. 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F. 90/29, fos. 18–21. On 10 July 1868, however, he became paymas-ter-general, a non-imperial post, serving until the end of the Conservative government in December. Later he was to go on a mission to Egypt and become a director of the Bank of England. Cave would serve as vice-president of the Colonial Society from 1872 until his death in 1880.
26 *Hansard* CLXI (5 March 1861), col. 1407, quoted in Knox, 'Concept of Empire', p. 255.
27 Benjamin Kline, *Genesis of Apartheid: British African Policy in the Colony of Natal, 1845–1893* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1988), p. 42.
28 Journal of Lord Kimberley, 10 Dec. 1868, given in Ethel Drus (ed.), 'A Journal of Events During the First Gladstone Ministry, 1868–1874, by John, First Earl of Kimberley', *Camden Miscellany* 21,2, 3rd ser. (1958), p. 1.
29 Chichester Fortescue, *Christian Profession not the Test of Citizenship. An Essay for the Day* (London: James Ridgway, 1849), pp. 7–8.
30 Ibid., pp. 11–15.
31 Ibid., p. 15.
32 Fortescue's diary, 12 June 1861, given in Osbert Wyndham Hewett (ed.), *'…and Mr. Fortescue': A Selection from the Diaries from 1851–1862 of Chichester Fortescue, Lord Carlingford, K.P.* (London: John Murray, 1958), p. 180.
33 Ibid., p. 25.
34 Ibid.
35 Kimberley's Journal, 10 Dec. 1868, given in Drus (ed.), 'Journal of… Kimberley', p. 1; Fortescue's diary, 5 May 1857 and 12 June 1861, given in Hewett, *'…and Mr. Fortescue'*, pp. 105, 180.
36 This was in 1864—Hitchins, *Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, p. 300.
37 J.D.Hargreaves, *Prelude to the Partition of West Africa* (London: Macmillan, 1963), pp. 61, 73–5, 83.
38 Rogers to Lady Rogers, n.d. [20 Aug. 1860], given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford*, pp. 229–30.
39 Fortescue's diary, 4 and 28 May 1861, given in Hewitt, *'…and Mr. Fortescue'*, p. 179.
40 Ibid., p. 278.
41 Ibid., p. 237.
42 Philobiblion Society, *Miscellanies of the Philobiblion Society*, 12 (London: Printed by Whittingham and Wilkins, 1868–9).
43 Fortescue's diary, 20 Feb. 1852, 4 March 1854, 10 and 12 Oct. 1853, given in Hewitt,*'…and Mr. Fortescue'*, pp. 30, 65, 55.
44 Fortescue's diary, 31 July 1859, given in ibid., p. 152.
45 Royal Colonial Institute, *Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute, 1869* (London, 1869), p. 30.

9
Generalizing about humanity: Lord Carnarvon

1 J.W.Burrow, ‘Evolution and Anthropology in the 1860’s: The Anthropological Society of London, 1863–71’, *Victorian Studies* 7, 2 (Dec. 1963), pp. 137–54 at p. 139. A similar appreciation of the early- to mid-Victorian desire to build up systematic positive knowledge in the human sciences, rather than to go on phi-losophizing about abstractions, appears in Walter E.Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830–1870* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1957), pp. 33–5, 94–6, 110–16; one might also recall that gathering and tabulating evidence about social questions was the *raison d’être* of the Statistical Society, founded in 1834—see Philip Abrams, *The Origins of British Sociology: 1834–1914* (Chicago, 111.: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 10–17; this gathering of evidence was in deliberate opposition to the abstractions of David Ricardo—see Lawrence Goldman, ‘The Origins of British “Social Science”: Political Economy, Natural Science, and Statistics, 1830–1835’, *Historical Journal* 26, 3 (1983), pp. 587–616 at pp. 594–9, 608–12. For comments on another early Victorian who tried to develop the intellectual tools to dig herself out from under the avalanche of anthropological information, namely Harriet Martineau, see Christopher Herbert, *Culture and Anomie: Ethnographic Imagination in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, 111.: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 194; and Sarah Winter, ‘Mental Culture: Liberal Pedagogy and the Emergence of Ethnographic Knowledge’, *Victorian Studies* 41, 3 (Spring 1998), pp. 427–54 at pp. 442–3. The early-Victorian shift from using subjective informants to using bureaucratically gathered statistics in ruling and policing India is detailed in C.A.Bayley, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)—see esp. pp. 142–3, 220–1.

2 See also Susan Faye Cannon, *Science in Culture: The Early Victorian Period* (New York: Dawson and Science History Publications, 1978), which manages within a few pages (239–45) to mention the naval officers, cite and back up John Burrow, and note the rise of the statistical societies in the social sciences as the sign of an attempt to move beyond abstract philosophical reasoning. However, Cannon notes all this towards the end of her book, which despite the title is almost entirely *pre*-Victorian, and she notes it as a set of areas for future research. On p. 251, she briefly returns to the issue of the early nineteenth-century empire, discussing the cornucopia of trigonometric readings, scientific samples, and other data sent in by colonial servants and military officials throughout the world, so that the UK-based scientists who received this information found themselves at the centre of a scientific empire. Readers of *The Origin of Species* will remember the provenance of many of Darwin’s examples and scientific correspondence.

The call to research the imperial web of scientific data is also made in James A.Secord, ‘King of Siluria: Roderick Murchison and the Imperial Theme in Nineteenth-Century British Geology’, *Victorian Studies* 25, 4 (Summer 1982), pp. 413–42 at pp. 429–30 and 430 n. 38; and is referred to in idem, *Controversy in Victorian Geology* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 8, 123–4. For an overview of imperial science, see Robert A.Stafford, ‘Scientific Exploration and Empire’, in Andrew Porter (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire:* Vol. IV, *The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 294–319. But it was not just the scientists whose world was being expanded by all the information. See John M.Mackenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation, and British Imperialism*, Studies in Imperialism (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 29–33; idem, ‘Hunting and the Natural World in Juvenile Literature’, in *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, Studies in Imperialism, Jeffrey Richards (ed.)

(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 144–72; Lever, *They Dined on Eland;* and Ray Desmond, *The India Museum, 1801–1879*, India Office Library and Records (London: HMSO, 1982). Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1993), is fascinating, but it deals mostly with *the fin de siècle* and the early twentieth century; seldom (but thought-provoking) are its visits to the period before 1870—see pp. 53–6 for one example.

3 James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* [1791] (New York: Alfred A.Knopf, 1992), II, p. 5.

4 For the institutional history of the field in our period, the key work is George W.Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987). Burrow, 'Evolution and Anthropology in the 1860's', and idem, *Evolution and Society: A Study in Victorian Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), remain valuable. Much of the material in the next several paragraphs has been drawn from Stocking (Chapter 7) and from Burrow. Where they disagree, it seems to be because Stocking is more familiar with the later anthropological schools, while Burrow is more familiar with the background of English social thought in fields other than anthropology (see Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, pp. xii, 294–301).

5 Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, pp. 254–64, 269–72; Burrow, 'Evolution and Anthropology'; idem, *Evolution and Society*, pp. 117–27, 247–53.

6 Ronald Rainger, 'Race, Politics, and Science: The Anthropological Society of London in the 1860s', *Victorian Studies* 22, 1 (Autumn 1968), pp. 51–70; George W.Stocking, 'What's in a Name? The Origins of the Royal Anthropological Institute (1837–71)', *Man* 6, 3, new ser. (Sept. 1971), pp. 369–90.

7 Arthur Hardinge, *The Life of Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, Fourth Earl of Carnarvon, 1831–1890*, Elizabeth Countess of Carnarvon (ed.), 3 vols (Oxford: Humphrey Milford for Oxford University Press, 1925), I, pp. 7–13, 31–41.

8 Carnarvon's Eastern Diary, 27 February 1853, given in Hardinge, *Life of Carnarvon,* I, p. 51.

9 Hardinge, *Life of Carnarvon*, I, p. 53.

10 The real Nineveh lay under part of Mosul itself. What Layard called Nineveh, underneath Nimrud, is now known to be another ancient city, Calah. A.Kirk Grayson, 'Nineveh', *Anchor Bible Dictionary, 6* vols, David Noel Freedman (ed.) (New York: Doubleday, 1992), IV, pp. 1118–19; idem, 'Calah', *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, I, pp. 807–8.

11 Carnarvon's Eastern Diary, 13 April 1853, given in Hardinge, *Life of Carnarvon*, I, pp. 56–7.

12 These names were simplified from the Old East Persian Zoroastrian originals, Old East Persian being very close to Sanskrit. Mary Boyce, 'Zoroaster, Zoroastrianism', *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols, David Noel Freedman (ed.) (New York: Doubleday, 1992), VI, pp. 1168–74.

13 Hardinge, *Life of Carnarvon*, I, pp. 58–60.

14 Carnarvon's Eastern Diary, 27 April 1853, given in Hardinge, *Life of Carnarvon*, I, p. 60.

15 This was the man whom the Bible associates with Calah; thus its medieval renaming as Nimrud. Peter Machinest, 'Nimrod', *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols, David Noel Freedman (ed.) (New York: Doubleday, 1992), IV, pp. 1116–18.

16 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], *Recollections of the Druses of Lebanon, and notes on their religion* (London: John Murray, 1860).

17 Hardinge, *Life of Carnarvon*, I, pp. 60–2; Henry Howard Molyneux [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'The Present Condition of the Turkish Empire in Asia: An Address to the Newbery Literary and Scientific Institution, March 31, 1855', in idem, *Essays, Addresses, and Translations*, Robert Herbert (ed.), 3 vols (London: Henry Frowde, 1896), I, pp. 150–81.

18 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'Speech in Moving the Address in Reply to the Queen's Speech, 1854', excerpted in idem, *Speeches on Canadian Affairs*, Robert Herbert (ed.) (London: John Murray, 1902), pp. 8–9.

19 Carnarvon to Aberdeen, 13 Jan. 1854, Aberdeen Papers, vol. CCXIV, BL Add. MS 43252, fos. 56–8.
20 Herbert, 'The Later History of Hampshire', in idem, *Essays, Addresses, and Translations,* I, p. 77.
21 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'Introductory Address to the Reading Mechanics' Institute', in idem, *Essays, Addresses, and Translations,* I, pp. 131–2.
22 Ibid., I, pp. 124–5.
23 Ibid., I, pp. 134–9, 143, 152–7.
24 B.A.Knox, 'The Earl of Carnarvon, Empire, and Imperialism, 185 5–90', Journal *of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 26, 2 (May 1998), pp. 48–66—for Carnarvon before he became a key spokesman for imperialism in the 1870s, see pp. 49–52.
25 C.C.Eldridge, 'The Imperialism of the "Little England Era": The Question of the Annexation of the Fiji Islands, 1858–1861', *New Zealand Journal of History* 1, 2 (1967), pp. 173–4.
26 Ward, *British Policy in the South Pacific,* p. 188.
27 Drus, 'The Colonial Office and the Annexation of Fiji', pp. 87, 105–10.
28 *Eldridge, England's Mission,* pp. 185, 191–6.
29 For the latter, see Morrell, *British Colonial Administration in the Mid-Victorian Age,* p. 446.
30 Ibid., pp. 110–11, 115–17.
31 Carnarvon to Cardwell, 19 July 1866, PRO 30/48/40, fos. 35–6; see also Carnarvon to Cardwell, 14 July 1866, PRO 30/48/40, fo. 25; 16 July, PRO 30/48/40, fo. 26; 28 July, PRO 30/48/40, fos. 95–6; and Cardwell to Carnarvon, 20 July 1866, and Carnarvon to Cardwell, 21 July 186, PRO 30/48/40, fos. 39–42.
32 Carnarvon to Cardwell, 20 July 1866, PRO 30/48/40, fos. 43–4.
33 Despatch from Carnarvon to Gore-Browne, 18 May 1859, PP 1860, pp. xlvii, given in Bell and Morrell, *Select Documents,* p. 592; Minute by Carnarvon on Sir George Grey's Despatch, CO 48/390, given in ibid., pp. 191–4.
34 Knox, 'The Rise of Colonial Federation as an Object of British Policy', pp. 98, 107–8, 111; idem, 'Conservative Imperialism', pp. 343–54; Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age,* pp. 150–1.
35 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], *The Archaeology of Berkshire, an Address delivered at the Archaeological Association at Newbury, September 12, 1859* (London: John Murray, 1859).
36 Ibid., p. 3.
37 Ibid., pp. 8–9.
38 Ibid., pp. 10–11.
39 Ibid., p. 44.
40 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'The Early History of Hampshire', in idem, *Essays, Addresses, and Translations,* I, p. 20.
41 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'The Later History of Hampshire', in idem, *Essays, Addresses, and Translations,* I, pp. 72–3.
42 Ibid., pp. 45–6.
43 Herbert, *Archaeology of Berkshire,* p. 47.
44 Ibid., p. 58.
45 A.Bowdoin van Riper, *Men Among the Mammoths: Victorian Science and the Discovery of Human Prehistory,* Science and its Conceptual Foundations, David Hull (ed.) (Chicago, 111. and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 28–43.
46 William Coutts Keppel, Lord Bury [7th Earl of Albemarle], *The Exodus of the Western Nations,* 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1865), I, p. 8: 'A great change has of late come over both readers and writers of history. As in other sciences isolated facts must be patiently accumulated before generalization is attempted, so in the science of history there was necessarily a period during which facts were stored up without comment.'
47 Herbert, *Druses,* p. iii.

48 Ibid., pp. 1–2.
49 Ibid., pp. 106–7.
50 Ibid., p. 108.
51 Ibid., pp. 108–9.
52 Ibid., p. 113.
53 Ibid., p. 109n.
54 Ibid., pp. 112n. and 122n.
55 Ibid., p. 115 and p. 115 n.
56 The idea of mystical Eastern communication networks was also a part of what C.A.Bayley has called 'information panics'—panics on the part of the British Raj. See Bayley, *Empire and Information*, pp. 143–9.
57 Herbert, *Druses*, pp. 115–16.
58 Ibid., pp. 120–1. The Druses and the Maronites had fought together with the Turks, the British and the Austrians against the Pasha of Egypt in 1841, and ever since the Maronites had been the clients of the French, while the Druses were more or less the clients of the English—Shakeeb Salih, The British-Druze Connection and the Druses Rising of 1896 in the Hawran', *Middle Eastern Studies* 13, 2 (May 1977), pp. 251–7.
59 Frederic Rogers to Lady Rogers, 4 July 1866, given in Marindin, *Letters of Blachford*, p. 265; Knox, 'Provision of Legal Advice', pp. 179, 184–5, 191–2.
60 Henry John George Molyneux Herbert [3rd Earl of Carnarvon], *Reminiscences of Athens and the Morea: Extracts from a Journal of Travels in Greece in 1839*, Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon] (ed.) (London: John Murray, 1869).
61 Ibid., pp. vi–vii.
62 Ibid., p. x.
63 Ibid., pp. xiv–xv.
64 Ibid., p. xi.
65 Ibid., p. xv.
66 Ibid., xvii.
67 Ibid., pp. vi–xxi. For Carnarvon's involvement in the Ionian issue, see the Carnarvon Papers, Vol. XXVIII, BL Add. MS 60783. Having taken the Ionian Islands from France in the Napoleonic era, Great Britain gave them to Greece in 1864.
68 Herbert [3rd Earl of Carnarvon], *Reminiscences*, pp. xxii–xxiii.
69 Ibid., pp. xxiii–xxviii. In publishing these comments, Carnarvon was helping to construct a set of ideas, emerging in the 1860s, about independent Greece as a childish nation that had yet to grow up, and that ought to submit to the tutelage of mature nations like England—see Rodanthi Tzanelli, 'Experiments on Puerile Nations, or the Impossibility of Surpassing Your Father: The Case of the Anglo-Greek Dialogue', *National Identities* 6, 2 (2004), pp. 107–21. What was special about Carnarvon's contribution was the care that he took to distinguish the childish leaders at the centre of Greek national life from the wise peasants of the different parts of the Greek countryside.
70 Herbert [3rd Earl of Carnarvon], *Reminiscences*, p. xxix.
71 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], *Speech on the Confederation of the British North American Provinces* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1867), pp. 22–3.
72 Ibid., pp. 9, 19–20.
73 Ibid., p. 21.
74 As it had been in 1855: Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'The Present Condition of the Turkish Empire in Asia', in *Essays, Addresses, and Translations*, I, pp. 150–81.
75 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'Address on Social Science', in idem, *Essays, Addresses, and Translations*, II, pp. 169–217.
76 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'Mr Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest', in idem, *Essays, Addresses, and Translations*, I, pp. 194–7, 235.

77 Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert [4th Earl of Carnarvon], 'Address to the Newbury Literary Institute' [1862], in idem, *Essays, Addresses, and Translations,* II, pp. 325–6.
78 Ibid., pp. 328–9.

10
Rawlinson, Northcote and the imperialism of information management

1 See the introduction to N.K.Sandars (ed. and trans.), *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), pp. 9–10.
2 Royal Geographical Society, 'Instructions of the Council of the Royal Geographical Society of London addressed to the Leaders of the Expedition for Exploring in Kurdistan', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London 9* (1839), pp. xii—xxi; Charles Darwin, 'Note on a Rock seen on an Iceberg at 61° South Latitude', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 9 (1839), pp. 528–9.
3 Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, 'Notes on a March from Zoháb to Khúzistán, at the Foot of Zagros, along the mountains to Khúzistán (Susiana), and from thence through the province of Luristan in Kirmánsháh, in the year 1836', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 9 (1839), pp. 26–116—see pp. 46–7.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., p. 38.
6 Ibid., p. 113.
7 Ibid., p. 84.
8 Ibid., p. 52.
9 Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, 'Notes on a Journey from Tabriz, Through Persian Kurdistan, to the Ruins of Takhti-Soleiman, and from Thence by Zenjan and Tarom, to Gilan, in October and November 1838; With a Memoir on the Site of Atropatenian *Ecbatana', Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 10 (1840), pp. 1–64.
10 Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, 'Memoir on the Site of Atropatenian Ecbatana', *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 10 (1840), pp. 65–158 at p. 65.
11 Not separately noted below are Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, *A Commentary on the Cuneiform Inscriptions of Babylonia and Assyria', including readings of the inscription of the Nimrud Obelisk, and a brief notice of the ancient kings of Nineveh and Babylon* (London: John W.Parker, 1850); idem, *Memorandum on the Publication of the Cuneiform Inscriptions* (London: [British Museum], 1855—this is a four-page memorandum, rather than the usual short book.
12 Published in London by John W.Parker and Son in 1852.
13 Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, *Notes on the Early History of Babylonia* (London: John W.Parker and Son, 1854).
14 Ibid., p. 1.
15 This was in 1850. Gordon Waterford, *Layard of Nineveh* (1963; New York: Frederick R.Praeger, 1968), pp. 201–2. Neither man was especially easy to get along with. In 1846, Layard assaulted a senior Moslem cleric in Mosul and Consul Rawlinson had to deal with the matter from Baghdad (pp. 143–4).
16 Rawlinson, *Notes on the Early History of Babylonia,* pp. 12–16.
17 Ibid., p. 20.
18 See Rawlinson to Layard, 2 April and 11 June 1845, AHLP vol. XLVI, BL Add. MS 38976, fos. 158–9, 188–90, and much of the rest of the volume. Their work in these years, as Rawlinson moved towards deciphering the Babylonian language and Layard moved towards his discovery of a Babylonian library, is jointly chronicled in Seton Lloyd, *Foundations in the Dust: A Story of Mesopotamian Exploration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947);

although the lies told by the British Museum's E.W.Budge about Layard's supposed ignorance need to be corrected by another source, such as Waterford, *Layard of Nineveh*, and the substantial introductory material in Austen Henry Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, H.W.F.Saggs (ed.) [1851] (New York: Fredrick A.Praeger, 1970).

19 Edmond Fitzmaurice, *The Life of Granville George Leveson Gower, Second Earl Granville, KG, 1815–1891, 2* vols (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1905), I, p. 138.

20 A.P.Thornton, 'British Policy in Persia, 1858–1890, Part 1', *English Historical Review* 69, 273 (Oct. 1954), pp. 554–79; Mikhail Volodarsky, 'Persia and the Great Powers, 1856–1869', *Middle Eastern Studies* 19, 1 (Jan. 1983), pp. 75–92 at pp. 81–3.

21 Abbas Amanat, *Pivot of the Universe: Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar and the Iranian Monarchy, 1831–1896* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 369–75; Denis Wright, *The English Amongst the Persians During the Qajar Period, 1787–1921* (London: Heinemann, 1977), pp. 36–7.

22 [Henry Creswicke Rawlinson], 'The Russians in Central Asia', *Quarterly Review* CXVIII (1865), pp. 529–81; [idem], 'Central Asia', *Quarterly Review* CXX (1866), pp. 461–503.

23 In 1855 he refused to help Layard organize the Imperial Ottoman Bank; Rawlinson also refused as a matter of principle to become a corporate director or to make any other kind of profit out of his position and his expertise, so jealous was he of his name and his position as a statesman. Waterford, *Layard of Nineveh*, pp. 278, 281, 293; George Rawlinson, *A Memoir of Major-General Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1898), pp. 302–3.

24 [Rawlinson], 'The Russians in Central Asia', p. 532.

25 Ibid., p. 547; A.P.Thornton, 'The Reopening of the Central Asian Question, 1864–9', *History* n.s. 141, 142, 143 (Feb.-Oct. 1956), pp. 122–36—see pp. 127, 129–30.

26 [Rawlinson], 'The Russians in Central Asia', pp. 530, 550.

27 Ibid., pp. 533–4. This was not Rawlinson's first attempt to further British commerce. He was involved some years before in removing Ottoman objections to a British concern's attempts at putting a steamer service on the Tigris and Euphrates. Halford Lancaster Hoskins, *British Routes to India* [1928} (New York: Octagon Books, 1966), p. 425.

28 [Rawlinson], 'The Russians in Central Asia', p. 573.

29 Ibid., pp. 578–81.

30 George Rawlinson, *Memoir of Henry Rawlinson*, p. 249.

31 [Rawlinson], 'Central Asia', pp. 461–4.

32 Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, *Sir Henry Rawlinson on the Overland Telegraph to India* (London: John Murray, 1861). This pamphlet is based upon a talk that Rawlinson gave to the Royal Geographical Society.

33 Rawlinson to Layard, 16 May 1863, AHLP vol. CLXXXVI, BL Add. MS 39106, fos. 72–3.

34 Thornton, 'Reopening of the Central Asian Question', p. 131; Stafford, *Scientist of Empire*, pp. 122–3.

35 For more on Rawlinson as one of the prophets of Russian-related doom, see G.J. Adler, 'The Key to India? Britain and the Heart problem, 1830–1863—Part II', *Middle Eastern Studies* 10, 3 (Oct. 1974), pp. 287–384; and for a later period, John Lowe Duthie, 'Pressure from Within: The "Forward" Group in the India Office During Gladstone's First Ministry', *Journal of Asian History* 15, 1 (1981), pp. 36–72.

36 George Rawlinson, *Memoir of Henry Rawlinson*, pp. 21–6, 142–59, 307–31, 334–7; *DNB; BBA;* Robert A.Huttenback, 'Kashmir and the "Great Game" in the Pamirs, 1860–1880', in Roger D.Long (ed.), *The Man on the Spot: Essays on British Empire History*, Contributions in Comparative Colonial Studies, 31 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1995), pp. 141–59 (this article deals mostly with the period after 1868); Williams, *The India Office*, pp. 23, 186, 189, 229; Wright, *English Amongst the Persians*, pp. 22–5, 155–7; John Lowe Duthie, 'Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson and the Art of Great Gamesmanship', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 11, 3 (May 1983), pp. 253–74; Mikhail Volodarsky, 'Persia and the

Great Powers', pp. 75–92; Thornton, 'British Policy in Persia', pp. 554–79; Richard I.Caplice, 'Languages (Akkadian)', in David Noel Freedman (ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, *6* vols (New York: Doubleday, 1992), VI, pp. 1168–74; Gernot L.Windfuhr, 'Languages (Iran)', in Freedman, *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, IV, pp. 217–20; and Jerrold S.Cooper, 'Cuneiform', in Freedman, *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, I, pp. 1212–18.

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38 Duthie, 'Rawlinson and the Art of Great Gamesmanship', p. 266.

39 Ibid., pp. 256–60.

40 Northcote to Gladstone, 16 June 1846, GP vol. CXXXI, BL Add. MS 44216, fos. 39–40.

41 Stafford Northcote, *The Case of Sir Eardley Wilmot, considered in a letter to a friend*, 2nd edn (London: W.H.Dalton, 1847); James Francis Hogan, *The Gladstone Colony: An Unwritten Chapter of Australian History* (London: T.Fisher Unwin, 1898), pp. 160–9.

42 [Stafford Northcote], *A Short Review of the Navigation Laws of England, from the earliest times, to which are added a note on the present state of the law and an account of the acts and parts of acts proposed to be repealed by the bill now before Parliament* (London: James Ridgway, 1849).

43 So he said in an 1847 memorandum in the Iddesleigh Papers, BL Add. MS 50043, fo. 12, quoted in Jack Gaston, 'The Free Trade Diplomacy Debate and the Victorian European Common Market Initiative', *Canadian Journal of History* 22 (April 1987), pp. 59–82 at pp. 64–5. See also [Northcote], *Navigation Laws*, pp. 1–2.

44 According to Northcote, Pitt attempted to put American shipping on the same level as British shipping, but the bill went out with Pitt's government, and his successors simply gave the right to regulate American trade to the Crown, on whatever terms it saw fit. The order that was drawn up contemplated the importation of certain American goods, but not in American ships.

45 [Northcote], *Navigation Laws*, pp. 20–44.

46 Ibid., pp. 50–4.

47 Andrew Lang, *Life, Letters, and Diaries of Sir Stafford Northcote, First Earl of Iddesleigh*, 2 vols (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1890), I, p. 57.

48 Northcote to Thomas Farrer, 13 Feb. 1850, given in Lang, *Life of Northcote*, I, pp. 83–7. His own impression in this letter seems to have been that in his time in London he had learned politics in detail but not politics in general. In a youthful letter soon after he became Gladstone's secretary, Northcote had indeed considered studying political economy in the abstract, starting with Aristotle and including the political economy of colonization, among other things, but the pressure of the handling Mr Gladstone's minutiae seems to have driven most thoughts of generalization and philosophy out of his mind—Lang, *Life of Northcote*, I, pp. 67–8. Years later, Northcote was able to cite Mill's *Principles of Political Economy*, but on a technical point regarding Sunday trading—I, p. 118.

49 Ibid., I, p. 97.

50 J.B.Conacher, *The Aberdeen Coalition: 1852–1855: A Study in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Party Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 313–17; PP, *Report on the Organisation of the Permanent Civil Service, together with a letter from the Rev. B.Jowett*, No. 1713 (1854); PP, *Papers on the Reorganisation of the Civil Service*, No. 1870 (1854–5).

51 Lang, *Life of Northcote*, I, pp. 106–7, 141–55.

52 Conacher, *Aberdeen Coalition*, pp. 7–8, 50–1; Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, III, p. 482; J.P.Ellens, *Religious Routes to Gladstonian Liberalism: The Church Rate Conflict in England and Wales, 1832–1868* (University Park, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), pp. 216–17, 230, 245–6.

53 Published in London by Saunders, Otley and Co.

54 Lang, *Life of Northcote*, I, pp. 164–77, 189–98; Ambirajan, *Classical Political Economy*, p. 13.

55 Conacher, *Aberdeen Coalition,* p. 314. Northcote also served on the Public Schools Commission, which looked at the nine great schools and argued that their endowments ought to be used to found a national system; the commission met 127 times from 1862 to 1864 before finally producing its (doomed) report. There was also his work on committees within the Commons, namely Public Accounts, Irish Taxation, and Schools of Art. Lang, *Life of Northcote,* I, pp. 205, 210.
56 Northcote to Rogers, 22 Feb. 1854, given in Rogers *et al., Suggestions Respecting Clerks, pp.* 83–5.
57 Stafford Northcote, *Inaugural Address Delivered at the Congress in Exeter* ([London?]: British Archaeological Association, 1861)—a 21-page pamphlet.
58 Ibid., pp. 3–5.
59 Ibid., pp. 10–11.
60 Ibid., pp. 16–21.
61 Disraeli to Gladstone, 14 February 1864, quoted in Lang, *Life of Northcote,* I, p. 213.
62 Disraeli to Gladstone, 18 February 1864, given in Lang, *Life of Northcote,* I, pp. 213–19.
63 Northcote to Lawrence, 30 April 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 83–7, specifically fo. 85; 8 May 1868, fos. 89–92, specifically fo. 89; 13 Aug. 1868, fos. 165–8, specifically fos. 165–6; B.B.Misra, *The Bureaucracy in India: An Historical Account of Development up to 1947* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 108–9, 191–2; Williams, *The India Office,* pp. 166–8, 306–7; Thomas R.Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt: India, 1857–1870* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 274–6.
64 Williams, *The India Office,* p. 159.
65 The India Museum had set up a photography department a few years before. Desmond, *India Museum,* pp. 112–16.
66 Metcalf, *Aftermath of Revolt,* pp. 246–7; Lang, *Life of Northcote,* I, pp. 273–4, 289–90; Northcote to Napier, 16 May 1867, given in Lang, *Life of Northcote,* I, 292–4; on Northcote's attempt to tax the Anglo-Indian population, on his successor Argyll's support of the measure, and on how the money was needed only for irrigation and railroads, the rest of the Indian budget showing a surplus, see Argyll to Gladstone, 28 Jan. and 4 Feb. 1869, GP vol. XVI, BL Add. MS 44101, fos. 5–10, 15–16.
67 Thomas Briggs, *Proposal for an Indian Policy under the New Reform Parliament, read at a meeting of the East India Association, Feb. 1st, 1868 IT he Development of the Dormant Wealth of the British Colonies and Foreign Possessions, read at the Social Science Congress, Birmingham, October 6th, 1868* (London: W.W.Head, 1868).
68 Northcote to Lawrence, 9 Jan. 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 10–13, specifically 11–12; 9 Feb. 1868, fos. 31–6, specifically fos. 31–3; 6 Mar. 1868, fos. 51–2; 26 Mar. 1868, fos. 57–62, specifically fo. 59; 30 April 1868, fos. 83–7, specifically fo. 86; 6 Nov. 1868, fos. 195–6, specifically fo. 195.
69 Northcote to Lawrence, 21 Aug. 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 169–72; Williams, *The India Office,* pp. 41–2; Metcalf, *Aftermath of Revolt,* pp. 232–5; SarDesai, *British Trade and Expansion in Southeast Asia, 1830–1914* (Columbus, Mo: South Asia Books, 1977), p. 136.
70 Williams, 'The Adoption Despatch', pp. 239–41; idem, *The India Office,* pp. 232–6.
71 Northcote to Lawrence, 12 June 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 105–11, specifically fos. 107–8.
72 Northcote to Lawrence, 2 July 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 129–32, especially fo. 131.
73 George Rawlinson, *Memoir of Henry Rawlinson,* pp. 258–60 and 258 n.1. Rawlinson wrote the memorandum in late July 1868.
74 Northcote to Lawrence, 13 Aug. 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 165–8, especially fo. 168; 30 Sept. 1868, fos. 181–4, specifically fo. 182.
75 Williams, *The India Office,* pp. 446–9.

76 Duthie, 'The "Forward" Group', p. 41.
77 Northcote to Lawrence, 9 Jan. 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 10–13. See also Northcote to Lawrence, 12 Feb. 1868, fos. 37–40.
78 Northcote in the House of Commons, 23 April 1868, quoted in Lang, *Life of Northcote*, I, p. 271.
79 Northcote to Lawrence, 2 July 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 129–32, specifically fo. 129; see also 17 Sept. 1868, fos. 175–6.
80 PP, 'Papers Related to Central Asian Policy', Confidential Print 8713 (1867), p. 1. In the Commons in July 1869, Northcote maintained that no such approach was necessary; he argued that England did not need any Central Asian Policy, only an Indian Policy, for Britain had enough on her hands already—Thornton, 'Reopening of the "Central Asian Question'".
81 Williams, *The India Office*, 196–7; J.R.Hooker, 'The Foreign Office and the "Abyssinian Captives"', *Journal of African History* 11, 2 (1961), pp. 245–58; Nini Rodgers, 'The Abyssinian Expedition of 1867–1868: Disraeli's Imperialism or James Murray's War?', *Historical Journal* 27, 1 (1984), pp. 129–49 at pp. 138–9, 142–9; Cornelius J.Jaenen, 'Theodore II and British Intervention in Ethiopia', *Canadian Journal of History* 1, 2 (1966), pp. 26–56 at pp. 40–53; Clements R.Markham, *A History of the Abyssinian Expedition, with a chapter containing an account of the mission and captivity of Mr. Rassam and his companions, by Lieutenant W.F.Prideaux, Bombay Staff Corps* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1869), pp. 90–127; Northcote to Layard, 11 Feb. and 14 March 1868, AHLP BL Add. MS 38955, fos. 53 and 87–8; Coghlan to Layard, 23 Jan., 8 Feb., 10 Feb. and 24 Feb. 1865, AHLP BL Add. MS 39113, fos. 72–3, 181, 202, 310–11; Coghlan to Layard, 22 June and 24 June 1865 (with enclosed draft of a letter from Coghlan to *The Times*), AHLP BL Add. MS 39115, fos. 430–1, 458–60. For the scientific element, Northcote to Murchison, 8 August 1867, Murchison Papers, BL Add. MS 46125, fos. 277–8; W.H.Benthall at the India Office, writing for Northcote, to Murchison, Murchison Papers, BL Add. MS 46127, fos. 153–4. Turning Napier's expedition into a scientific affair became a subject of open public discussion long after Northcote showed his enthusiasm for it; the key occasion was a meeting on all that Napier's expedition might accomplish, a meeting held by the Royal Geographical Society in November. Northcote attended. Rawlinson, who spoke, attracted some criticism for suggesting the seizure of Ethiopia's Red Sea Ports; Murchison himself was criticized for making Northcote sit through this and other politically tendentious speeches. The meeting and its aftermath are detailed in Stafford, *Scientist of Empire*, pp. 184–5.
82 Northcote to Lawrence, 1 Aug. 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 155–60—see fos. 156–7.
83 Northcote to Lawrence, 9 Feb. 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 31–6, esp. fo. 36; 13 Aug. 1868, fos. 165–8, specifically fo. 166.
84 Northcote to Lawrence, 12 June 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 105–11, specifically fos. 108–10; 13 Aug. 1868, fos. 165–8, specifically fo. 167; 6 Nov. 1868, fos. 195–6, specifically fo. 196.
85 Northcote to Lawrence, 15 Aug. 1867, given in Lang, *Life of Northcote*, I, p. 279.
86 Ibid., I, pp. 279–80.
87 Ibid., 1, pp. 280–1.
88 Northcote to Lawrence, 9 Feb. 1868, JLP IOLR MSS Eur. F.90/29, fos. 31–6—see fo. 34.
89 Lang, *Life of Northcote*, I, pp. 281–3. See also other letters and papers on decentralization, pp. 283–9.
90 Galbraith, *Hudson's Bay Company*, pp. 421–6.
91 [Stafford Northcote], *Diaries of the First Earl of Iddesleigh* (Private Circulation, 1907).

11
Conclusion

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V Thesis

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