Carlyle’s purpose of writing a book on Ireland was not to be fulfilled. He went thither. He travelled through the four provinces. After his return he jotted down a hurried account of his experiences; but that was all the contribution which he was able to make for the solution of a problem which he found at once too easy and too hopeless. Ireland is an enchanted country. There is a land ready, as any land ever was, to answer to cultivation. There is a people ready to cultivate it, to thrive, and cover the surface of it with happy, prosperous homes, if ruled, like other nations, by methods which suit their temperament. If the Anglo-Saxons had set about governing Ireland with the singleness of aim with which they govern India or build their own railways, a few seasons at any time would have seen the end of its misery and discontent. But the Anglo-Saxons have never approached Ireland in any such spirit. They have had the welfare of Ireland on their lips. In their hearts they have thought only of England’s welfare, or of what in some narrow prejudice they deemed to be such, of England’s religious interests, commercial interests, political interests. So it was when Henry II set up Popery there. So it was when Elizabeth set up the Protestant Establishment there. So it is now when the leaders of the English Liberals again destroy that Establishment to secure the Irish votes to their party in Parliament. The curse which has made that wretched island the world’s by-word is not in Ireland in
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itself, but in the inability of its conquerors to recognise that, if they take away a nation’s liberty, they may not use it as the plaything of their own selfishness or their own factions. For seven hundred years they have followed on the same lines: the principle the same, however opposite the action. As it was in the days of Strongbow, so it is to-day; and “healing measures,” ushered in no matter with what pomp of eloquence or parade of justice, remain, and will remain, a mockery. Carlyle soon saw how it was. To write on Ireland, as if a remedy could be found there, while the poisonous fountain still flowed at Westminster unpurified, would be labour vain as spinning ropes of moonshine. He noted down what he had seen, and then dismissed the unhappy subject from his mind; giving his manuscript to a friend as something of which he desired to hear no more for ever. It was published after his death, and the briefest summary of what to himself had no value is all that need concern us here. He left London on the 30th of June in a Dublin steamboat. He could sleep sound at sea, and therefore preferred “long sea” to land when the choice was offered him. Running past the Isle of Wight, he saw in the distance Sterlings’s house at Ventnor; he saw Plymouth, Falmouth, the Land’s End. Then, crossing St. George’s Channel, he came on the Irish coast at Wexford, where the chief scenes of the Rebellion of 1798 stand clear against the sky.

At Dublin he met Gavan Duffy again; stayed several days; saw various notabilities—Petrie, the antiquarian, among others whose high merit he at once recognised; declined an invitation from the Viceroy, and on the 8th (a Sunday), Dublin and the neighbourhood being done with, he started for the south.

Owing to the magic companionship of Mr. Duffy, he met and talked freely with priests and patriots. Lord Monteagle’s introductions secured him attention from the Anglo-Irish gentry. He was entertained at the Castle at Lis­more, saw Waterford, Youghal, Castlemartyr, and then Cork, where he encountered “one of the two sons of Adam” who, “some 15 years ago had . . . with Emerson of America” “encouraged poor bookseller Fraser, and didn’t discourage him, to go on with ‘Teufelsdröckh,’”
a priest, a Father O'Shea, to whom for this at least he was grateful.

Killarney was the next stage; beauty and squalor there, as everywhere, sadly linked to one another. Near Killarney he stayed with Sir William Beecher and his interesting wife; good people, but strong upholders of the Anglo-Irish Church, which, however great its merits otherwise, had made little of missionary work among the Catholic Celts. He wished well to all English institutions in Ireland, but he had a fixed conviction that the Anglo-Catholic Church at least, both there and everywhere, was unequal to its work.

Limerick, Clare, Lough Derg on the Shannon, Galway, Castlebar, Westport—these were the successive points of the journey. At Westport was a workhouse and "human swinery has here reached its acme: 30,000 paupers in this union, population supposed to be about 60,000. . . . Abomination of desolation; what can you make of it!" Thence, through the dreariest parts of Mayo, he drove on to Ballina, where he found Forster, of Rawdon, waiting for him—W. E. Forster, then young and earnest, and eager to master in Carlyle's company the enigma which he took in hand as Chief Secretary three years ago (1881, etc.), with what success the world by this time knows. Carlyle, at least, is not responsible for the failure, certain as mathematics, of the Irish Land Act. Forster perhaps discovered at the time that he would find little to suit him in Carlyle's views of the matter. They soon parted. Carlyle hastened on to Donegal to see a remarkable experiment which was then being attempted there. Lord George Hill was endeavouring to show at Gweedore that, with proper resources of intellect, energy, and money wisely expended, a section of Ireland could be lifted out of its misery even under the existing conditions of English administration.

His distinct conclusion was that this too, like all else of the kind, was building a house out of sand. He went to Gweedore; he stayed with Lord George; he saw all that he was doing or trying to do, and he perceived, with a clearness which the event has justified, that the persuasive charitable method of raising lost men out of the dirt and leading
them of their own accord into the ways that they should go, was, in Ireland at least, doomed to fail from the beginning.

It would be interesting to compare Carlyle's tour, or any modern tour, in Ireland, with Arthur Young's, something over a hundred years ago—before Grattan's constitution, the Volunteers, the glorious liberties of 1782, Catholic emancipation, and the rest that has followed. Carlyle found but one Lord George Hill hopelessly struggling with impossibilities; Arthur Young found not one, but many peers and gentlemen working effectively in the face of English discouragement: draining, planting, building, making large districts, now all "gone back to bog" again, habitable by human beings, and successfully accomplishing at least a part of the work which they were set to do. All that is not waste and wilderness in Ireland is really the work of these poor men.

From Gweedore to Derry was an easy journey. There his travels were to end; he was to find a steamer which would take him to Scotland. Five weeks had passed since he landed.

On the 7th, Carlyle was in his own land again, having left the "huge suppuration" to suppurate more and more till it burst, he feeling that any true speech upon it would be like speaking to deaf winds.

His wife had meanwhile gone to Scotland on her own account. She had spent three singularly interesting days at Haddington (which she has herself described), where she wandered like a returned spirit about the home of her childhood. She had gone thence to her relations at Auchtertool, in Fife, and was there staying when her husband was at Gweedore.

Carlyle stayed quiet at Scotsbrig, meditating on the break-down of the proposed Irish book, and uncertain what he should turn to instead. He had promised to join the Ashburtons in the course of the autumn at a Highland shooting-box. Shooting parties were out of his line altogether, but perhaps he did not object to seeing for once what such a thing was like. Scotsbrig, too, was not agreeing with him.

He remained there till the end of August, and then
started on his expedition. Glen Truim, to which he was bound, was in the far North, in Macpherson of Clunie's country. The railroad was yet unfinished, and the journey—long and tedious—had to be transacted by coach. He was going against the grain. Perhaps his wife thought that he would have done more wisely to decline. He stopped on the way at Auchtertool to see her; "had," he says, "a miserable enough hugger-mugger time. My own blame; none others' so much—saw that always."\(^9\) Certainly, as the event proved, he would have been better off out of the way of the "gunner bodies."\(^10\) If he was miserable in Fife, he was far from happy with his grand friends in Glen Truim.

The Ashburtons were as attentive to Carlyle's peculiarities as it was possible to be. No prince's confessor, in the ages of faith, could have more consideration shown him than he in this restricted mansion. The best apartment was made over to him as soon as it was vacant. A special dinner was arranged for him at his own hour. But he was out of his element. "Patientia! I have known now what Highland shooting-paradises are; and one experiment, I should think, will be about enough!"\(^11\)

Poor "shooting paradise"! It answered the purpose it was intended for. Work, even to the aristocracy, is exacting in these days. Pleasure is even more exacting; and unless they could rough it now and then in primitive fashion and artificial plainness of living, they would sink under the burden of their splendours and the weariness of their duties. Carlyle had no business in such a scene. He never fired off a gun in his life. He never lived in habitual luxury, and therefore could not enjoy the absence of common conveniences. He was out of humour with what he saw. He was out of humour with himself for being a part of it. Three weeks of solitude at Scotsbrig, to which he hastened to retreat, scarcely repaired his sufferings at Glen Truim.

The three months of holiday were thus spent—strange holidays. But a man carries his shadow clinging to him, and cannot part with it, except in a novel.\(^12\) He was now driven by accumulation of discontent to disburden his heart of its secretions. During the last two revolutionary years he had covered many sheets with his reflections. At the bottom of his whole nature lay abhorrence of falsehood. To
see facts as they actually were, and, if that was impossible, at least to desire to see them, to be sincere with his own soul, and to speak to others exactly what he himself believed, was to him the highest of all human duties. Therefore he detested cant with a perfect hatred. Cant was organised hypocrisy, the art of making things seem what they were not; an art so deadly that it killed the very souls of those who practised it, carrying them beyond the stage of conscious falsehood into a belief in their own illusions, and reducing them to the wretchedest of possible conditions, that of being sincerely insincere. With cant of this kind he saw all Europe, all America, overrun; but beyond all, his own England appeared to him to be drenched in cant—cant religious, cant political, cant moral, cant artistic, cant everywhere and in everything.

Religion, a religion that was true, meant a rule of conduct according to the law of God. Religion, as it existed in England, had become a thing of opinion, of emotion flowing over into benevolence as an imagined substitute for justice. Over the conduct of men in their ordinary business it had ceased to operate at all, and therefore, to Carlyle, it was a hollow appearance, a word without force or controlling power in it. Religion was obligation, a command which bound men to duty, as something which they were compelled to do under tremendous penalties. The modern world, even the religious part of it, had supposed that the grand aim was to abolish compulsion, to establish universal freedom, leaving each man to the light of his own conscience or his own will. Freedom—that was the word—the glorious birthright which, once realised, was to turn earth into paradise. And this was cant; and those who were loudest about it could not themselves believe it, but could only pretend to believe it. In a conditioned existence like ours, freedom was impossible. To the race as a race, the alternative was work or starvation—all were bound to work in their several ways; some must work or all would die; and the result of the boasted political liberty was an arrangement where the cunning or the strong appropriated the lion's share of the harvest without working, while the multitude lived on by toil, and toiled to get the means of living. That was the actual outcome of the doctrine of liberty, as
seen in existing society; nor in fact to any kind of man anywhere was freedom possible in the popular sense of the word. Each one of us was compassed round with restrictions on his personal will, and the wills even of the strongest were slaves to inclination. The serf whose visible fetters were struck off was a serf still under the law of nature. He might change his master, but a master he must have of some kind, or die; and to speak of "emancipation" in and by itself, as any mighty gain or step in progress, was the wildest of illusions. No "progress" would or could be made on the lines of Radicals or philanthropists. The "liberty," the only liberty, attainable by the multitude of ignorant mortals, was in being guided or else compelled by some one wiser than themselves. They gained nothing if they exchanged the bondage to man for bondage to the devil. It was assumed in the talk of the day that "emancipation" created manliness, self-respect, improvement of character. To Carlyle, who looked at facts, all this was wind. Those "grinders," for instance, whom he had seen in that Manchester cellar, earning high wages, that they might live merrily for a year or two, and die at the end of them—were they improved? Was freedom to kill themselves for drink such a blessed thing? Were they really better off than slaves who were at least as well cared for as their master's cattle? The cant on this subject enraged him. He, starting from the other pole, believing not in the rights of man, but in the duties of man, could see nothing in it but detestable selfishness disguised in the plumage of angels—a shameful substitute for the neglect of the human ties by which man was bound to man. "Facit indignatio versum [Indignation makes the verse]." Wrath with the things which he saw around him inspired the Roman poet; wrath drove Carlyle into writing the Latter-Day Pamphlets.

A paper on the Negro or Nigger question, properly the first of the Latter-Day Pamphlets, was Carlyle's declaration of war against modern Radicalism. Hitherto, though his orthodoxy was questionable, and Radicals had been glad to claim him as belonging to them; and if Radicalism meant an opinion that modern society required to be reconstituted from the root, he had been, was, and remained the most thoroughgoing of them all. His objection was to the cant
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of Radicalism; the philosophy of it, bred of "Philanthropic Liberalism and the Dismal Science," the purport of which was to cast the atoms of human society adrift, mocked with the name of liberty, to sink or swim as they could. Negro emancipation had been the special boast and glory of the new theory of universal happiness. The twenty millions of indemnity and the free West Indies had been chanted and celebrated for a quarter of a century from press and platform. Weekly, almost daily, the English newspapers were crowing over the Americans, flinging in their teeth the Declaration of Independence, blowing up in America itself a flame which was ripening towards a furious war, while the result of the experiment so far had been the material ruin of colonies once the most precious that we had, and the moral ruin of the blacks themselves, who were rotting away in sensuous idleness amidst the wrecks of the plantations. He was touching the shield with the point of his lance when he chose this sacredly sensitive subject for his first onslaught. He did not mean that the "Niggers" should have been kept as cattle, and sold as cattle at their owners' pleasure. He did mean that they ought to have been treated as human beings, for whose souls and bodies the whites were responsible; that they should have been placed in a position suited to their capacity, like that of the English serf under the Plantagenets; protected against ill-usage by law; attached to the soil; not allowed to be idle, but cared for themselves, their wives and their children, in health, in sickness, and in old age.

He said all this; but he said it fiercely, scornfully, in the tone which could least conciliate attention. Black Quashee and his friends were spattered with ridicule which stung the more from the justice of it.

I once asked Carlyle if he had ever thought of going into Parliament, for I knew that the opportunity must have been offered him. "Well," he said. "I did think of it at the time of the Latter-Day Pamphlets. I felt that nothing could prevent me from getting up in the House and saying all that." He was powerful, but he was not powerful enough to have discharged with his single voice the vast volume of conventional electricity with which the collective wisdom of the nation was, and remains, charged. It is better that his
thoughts should have been committed to enduring print, where they remain to be reviewed hereafter by the light of fact.

The article on the “Nigger question” gave, as might have been expected, universal offence. Many of his old admirers drew back after this, and “walked no more with him.” John Mill replied fiercely in the same magazine. They had long ceased to be intimate; they were henceforth “rent asunder,” not to be again united. Each went his own course; but neither Mill nor Carlyle forgot that they had once been friends, and each to the last spoke of the other with affectionate regret.

The Pamphlets commenced at the beginning of 1850, and went on month after month, each separately published, no magazine daring to become responsible for them. The first was on “The Present Time,” on the advent and prospects of Democracy. The revolutions of 1848 had been the bankruptcy of falsehood, “a universal tumbling of Impostors and of Impostures into the street!” The problem left before the world was how nations were hereafter to be governed. The English people imagined that it could be done by “suffrages” and the ballot-box; a system under which St. Paul and Judas Iscariot would each have an equal vote, and one would have as much power as the other. This was like saying that when a ship was going on a voyage round the world the crew were to be brought together to elect their own officers, and vote the course which was to be followed.

Unanimity on board ship:—yes, indeed, the ship’s crew may be very unanimous, which doubtless, for the time being, will be very comfortable to the ship’s crew, and to their Phantasm Captain if they have one: but if the tack they unanimously steer upon is guiding them into the belly of the Abyss, it will not profit them much!—Ships accordingly do not use the ballot-box at all; and they reject the Phantasm species of Captains: one wishes much some other Entities,—since all entities lie under the same rigorous set of laws,—could be brought to show as much wisdom, and sense at least of self-preservation, the first command of Nature.

The words in italics contain the essence of Carlyle’s teaching. If they are true, the inference is equally true that in Democracy there can be no finality. If the laws are fixed under which nations are allowed to prosper, men
fittest by capacity and experience to read those laws must be placed in command, and the ballot-box never will and never can select the fittest; it will select the sham fittest, or the unfittest. The suffrage, the right of every man to a voice in the selection of his rulers, was, and is, the first article of the Radical Magna Charta, the *articulus-stantis vel cadentis Reipublicae* [the article of the standing, or falling, republic], and is so accepted by every modern Liberal statesman. Carlyle met it with a denial as complete and scornful as Luther flung at Tetzel and his Indulgences—not, however, with the same approval from those whom he addressed. Luther found the grass dry and ready to kindle. The belief which Carlyle assailed was alive and green with hope and vigour.

The second pamphlet, on "Model Prisons," was as savage as the first. Society, conscious at heart that it was itself unjust, and did not mean to mend itself, was developing out of its uneasiness a universal "Scoundrel Protection" sentiment. Society was concluding that inequalities of condition were inevitable; that those who suffered under them, and rebelled, could not fairly be punished, but were to be looked upon as misguided brethren suffering under mental disorders, to be cured in moral hospitals, called by euphemism Houses of Correction. "Pity for human calamity," the pamphlet said, "is very beautiful; but the deep oblivion of the Law of Right and Wrong; this indiscriminate mashing-up of Right and Wrong into a patent treacle of the Philanthropic movement, is by no means beautiful at all."

Wishing to see the system at work with his own eyes, Carlyle had visited the Millbank Penitentiary. He found 1,200 prisoners, "notable murderesses among them," in airy apartments of perfect cleanliness, comfortably warmed and clothed, quietly, and not too severely, picking oakum; their diet, bread, soup, meat, all superlatively excellent. He saw a literary Chartist rebel in a private court, master of his own time and spiritual resources; and he felt that he himself, "so left with paper and ink, and all taxes and botherations shut-out from me, could have written such a Book as no reader will here ever get of me." He looked at felon after felon. He saw "ape-faces, imp-faces,
angry dog-faces, heavy sullen ox-faces; degraded under-foot perverse creatures, sons of indolence, greedy mutinous darkness.” To give the owners of such faces their “due” could be attempted only where there was an effort to give every one his due, and to be fair all round; and as this was not to be thought of, they were to be reclaimed by “the method of love.” “Hopeless forevermore such a project.” And these fine hospitals were maintained by rates levied on the honest outside, who were struggling to support themselves without becoming felons—“Rates on the poor servant of God and of Her Majesty, who still serves both in his way... to boil right soup for the Devil’s declared Elect!”

He did not expect that his protests would be attended to then, but in twenty years he thought there might be more agreement with him. This, like many other prophecies of his, has proved true. We hang and flog now with small outcry and small compunction. But the ferocity with which he struck right and left at honoured names, the contempt which he heaped on an amiable, if not a wise experiment, gave an impression of his own character as false as it was unpleasant. He was really the most tender-hearted of men. His savageness was but affection turned sour, and what he said was the opposite of what he did. Many a time I have remonstrated when I saw him give a shilling to some wretch with “Devil’s elect” on his forehead. “No doubt he is a son of Gehenna,” Carlyle would say; “but you can see it is very low water with him. This modern life hardens our hearts more than it should.”

On the Pamphlets rushed. The third was on Downing Street and Modern Government. Lord John Russell, I remember, plaintively spoke of it in the House of Commons. The fourth was on “The New Downing Street, such as it might and ought to become.” The fifth, on “Stump Oratory,” was perhaps the most important of the set, for it touched a problem of moment then, and now every day becoming of greater moment; for the necessary tendency of Democracy is to throw the power of the State into the hands of eloquent speakers, and eloquent speakers have never since the world began been wise statesmen. Carlyle had not read Aristotle’s Politics, but he had arrived in his
own road at Aristotle's conclusions. All forms of government, Aristotle says, are ruined by parasites and flatterers. The parasite of the monarch is the favourite who flatters his vanity and hides the truth from him. The parasite of a democracy is the orator; the people are his masters, and he rules by pleasing them. He dares not tell them unpleasant truths, lest he lose his popularity; he must call their passions emotions of justice, and their prejudices conclusions of reason. He dares not look facts in the face, and facts prove too strong for him. To the end of his life Carlyle thought with extreme anxiety on this subject, and, as will be seen, had more to say about it.

I need not follow the Pamphlets in detail. There were to have been twelve originally; one, I think, on the "Exodus from Houndsditch," for he occasionally reproached himself afterwards for over-ricetence on that subject. He was not likely to have been deterred by fear of giving offence. But the arguments against speaking out about it were always as present with him as the arguments for openness. Perhaps he concluded, on the whole, that the good which he might do would not outbalance the pain he would inflict. The series, at any rate, ended with the eighth—upon "Jesuitism," a word to which he gave a wider significance than technically belongs to it. England supposed that it had repudiated sufficiently Ignatius Loyola and the Company of Jesus; but, little as England knew it, Ignatius's peculiar doctrines had gone into its heart, and were pouring through all its veins and arteries. Jesuitism to Carlyle was the deliberate shutting of the eyes to truth; the deliberate insincerity which, if persisted in, becomes itself sincere. You choose to tell a lie because, for various reasons, it is convenient; you defend it with argument—till at length you are given over to believe it—and the religious side of your mind being thus penally paralysed; morality becomes talk and conscience becomes emotion; and your actual life has no authoritative guide left but personal selfishness. Thus, by the side of a profession of Christianity, England had adopted for a working creed Political Economy, which is the contradictory of Christianity, imagining that it could believe both together. Christianity tells us that we are not to care for the things of the earth. Political economy is con-
cerned with nothing else. Christianity says that the desire
to make money is the root of all evil. Political economy
says that the more each man struggles to “make money”
the better for the commonwealth. Christianity says that it
is the business of the magistrate to execute justice and
maintain truth. Political economy (or the system of gov-
ernment founded upon it) limits “justice” to the keeping
of the peace, declares that the magistrate has nothing to do
with maintaining truth, and that every man must be left
free to hold his own opinions and advance his own interests
in any way that he pleases, short of fraud and violence.

Jesuitism, or the art of finding reasons for whatever we
wish to believe, had enabled Englishmen to persuade them­selves that both these theories of life could be true at the
same time. They kept one for Sundays, the other for the
working days; and the practical moral code thus evolved,
Carlyle throws out in a wild freak of humour, comparable
only to the memorable epitaph on the famous Baron in
Sartor Resartus.23

[The Latter-Day Pamphlets were] written thirty-three
years ago, when political economy was our sovereign polit­
ical science. As the centre of gravity of political power
has changed, the science has changed along with it. States­
men have discovered that laissez-faire, though doubtless
true in a better state of existence, is inapplicable to our
imperfect planet. They have attempted, with Irish Land
Bills, etc., to regulate in some degree the distribution of
the hog’s wash, and will doubtless, as democracy extends,
do more in that direction. But when the Pamphlets ap­
peared, this and the other doctrines enunciated in them
were received with astonished indignation. “Carlyle taken
to whisky” was the popular impression; or perhaps he had
gone mad. Punch, the most friendly to him of all the
London periodicals, protested affectionately. The delin­
quent was brought up for trial before him, I think for injur­
ing his reputation. He was admonished, but stood impeni­
tent, and even “called the worthy magistrate (Mr. Punch)
a ‘windbag,’ a ‘serf of flunkeydom,’ and ‘an ape of the Dead
Sea.’ ”24 I suppose it was Thackeray who wrote this, or
some other kind friend, who feared, like Emerson, “that
the world would turn its back on him.”25 He was under
no illusion himself as to the effect which he was producing.

The outcry, curiously, had no effect on the sale of Carlyle's works. He had a certain public, slowly growing, which bought everything that he published. The praise of the newspapers never, he told me, sensibly increased the circulation; their blame never sensibly diminished it. His unknown disciples believed in him as a teacher whom they were to learn from, not to criticise. There were then about three thousand who bought his books. Now, who can say how many there are? He, for himself, had delivered his soul, and was comparatively at rest.

In the intervals between Carlyle's larger works, a discharge of spiritual bile was always necessary. Modern English life, and the opinions popularly current among men, were a constant provocation to him. The one object of everyone (a very few chosen souls excepted) seemed to be to make money, and with money increase his own idle luxury. The talk of people, whether written or spoken, was an extravagant and never-ceasing laudation of an age which was content to be so employed, as if the like of it had never been seen upon earth before. The thinkers in their closets, the politicians on platform or in Parliament, reviews and magazines, weekly newspapers and dailies, sang all the same note, that there had never since the world began been a time when the English part of mankind had been happier or better than they were then. They had only to be let alone, to have more and more liberty, and fix their eyes steadily on "increasing the quantity of attainable hog's wash," and there would be such a world as no philosophy had ever dreamt of. Something of this kind really was the prevalent creed thirty years ago, under the sudden increase of wealth which set in with railways and free trade; and to Carlyle it appeared a false creed throughout, from principle to inference. In his judgement the common weal of men and nations depended on their characters; and the road which we had to travel, if we were to make a good end, was the same as the Christian pilgrim had travelled on his way to the Celestial City, no primrose path thither having been yet made by God or man. The austerer virtues—manliness, thrift, simplicity, self-denial—were dispensed
FROUDE'S LIFE OF CARLYLE

with in the boasted progress. There was no demand for these, no need of them. The heaven aspired after was enjoyment, and the passport thither was only money. Let there be only money enough, and the gate lay open. He could not believe this doctrine. He abhorred it from the bottom of his soul. Such a heaven was no heaven for a man. The boasted prosperity would sooner or later be overtaken by "God's judgement." Especially he was angry when he saw men to whom nature had given talents lending themselves to this accursed persuasion; statesmen, theologians, philosophers composedly swimming with the stream, careless of truth, or with no longer any measure of truth except their own advantage. Some who had eyes were afraid to open them; others, and the most, had deliberately extinguished their eyes. They used their faculties only to dress the popular theories in plausible language, and were carried away by their own eloquence, till they actually believed what they were saying. Respect for fact they had none. Fact to them was the view of things conventionally received, or what the world and they together agreed to admit.

That the facts either of religion or politics were not such as bishops and statesmen represented them to be, was frightfully evident to Carlyle, and he could not be silent if he wished. Thus, after he had written The French Revolution, Chartism had to come out of him, and Past and Present, before he could settle to Cromwell. Cromwell done, the fierce acid had accumulated again and had been discharged in the Latter-Day Pamphlets—discharged, however, still imperfectly, for his whole soul was loaded with bilious indignation. Many an evening, about this time, I heard him flinging off the matter intended for the rest of the series which had been left unwritten, pouring out, for hours together, a torrent of sulphurous denunciation. No one could check him. If anyone tried contradiction, the cataract rose against the obstacle till it rushed over it and drowned it. But, in general, his listeners sate silent. The imagery, his wild play of humour, the immense knowledge always evident in the grotesque forms which it assumed, were in themselves so dazzling and so entertaining, that we lost the use of our own faculties till it was over. He did
not like making these displays, and avoided them when he could; but he was easily provoked, and when excited could not restrain himself. Whether he expected to make converts by the *Pamphlets*, I cannot say. His sentences, perhaps, fell here and there like seeds, and grew to something in minds that could receive them. In the general hostility, he was experiencing the invariable fate of all men who see what is coming before those who are about them see it; and he lived to see most of the unpalatable doctrines which the *Pamphlets* contained verified by painful experience and practically acted on.

In the midst of the storm which he had raised, he was surprised agreeably by an invitation to dine with Sir Robert Peel. He had liked Peel ever since he had met him at Lord Ashburton's. Peel, who had read his books, had been struck equally with him, and wished to know more of him. The dinner was in the second week of May. [Among the guests was the Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce.]

Carlyle had probably encountered the Bishop of Oxford before, at the Ashburtons; but this meeting at Sir Robert Peel's was the beginning of an intimacy which grew up between these singularly opposite men, who, in spite of differences, discovered that they thought, at bottom, on serious subjects, very much alike. The Bishop once told me he considered Carlyle a most eminently religious man. "Ah, Sam!" said Carlyle to me one day, "he is a very clever fellow; I do not hate him near as much as I fear I ought to do."

Once again, a few days later, Carlyle met Peel at a dinner at Bath House—"a real statesman" as he now discerned him to be.

Fresh and hearty; delicate, gentle, yet frank manners; a kindly man,—his reserve, as to all great or public matters, sits him quite naturally, and enhances your respect. A warm sense of fun, a vein really of genuine broad drollery looks thro' this "statesman" (such I really guess he is); the hopefullest feature I could clearly see in this last interview or the other. . . . At tea, talked to us, readily on slight hint from me, about Byron (Birron he called him), and their old schooldays—kindly reminiscences, agreeable to hear at first hand, tho' nothing new in them to us.\(^7\)

At Bath House also, this season, Carlyle was to meet
(though without an introduction) a man whom he regarded with freer admiration than he had learnt to feel even for Peel. He was tempted to a ball there, the first and last occasion on which he was ever present at such a scene. He was anxious to see the thing for once, and he saw along with it the hero of Waterloo.

By far the most interesting figure present was the old Duke of Wellington, who appeared between 12 and 1, and slowly glided thro' the rooms. Truly a beautiful old man; I had never seen till now how beautiful, and what an expression of graceful simplicity, veracity, and nobleness there is about the old hero when you see him close at hand. His very size had hitherto deceived me: he is a shortish slightish figure, about 5 feet 8; of good breadth however, and all muscle or bone—he is a shortish figure, about 5 feet 8; of good breadth however, and all muscle or bone—he is a shortish slightish figure, about 5 feet 8; of good breadth however, and all muscle or bone—his legs I think must be the short part of him, for certainly on horseback at least I have always taken him to be tall. Eyes beautiful light-blue, full of mild valour, with infinitely more faculty and geniality than I had fancied before. The face wholly gentle, wise, valiant and venerable; the voice too as I again heard, is *aquiline*, a clear, perfectly equable (uncracked, that is), and perhaps almost musical, but essentially tenor or almost treble voice. Eighty-two, I understand. He glided slowly along, slightly saluting this and the other; clean, clear fresh as the June Evening itself; till the silver-buckle of his stock vanished into the door of the next room (to make, I suppose, one round of the place), and I saw him no more. Except Dr. Chalmers I have not for many years seen so beautiful an old man.²⁸

In his early Radical days, Carlyle had spoken scornfully, as usual, of Peel and Wellington, not distinguishing them from the herd of average politicians. He was learning to know them better, to recognise better, perhaps, how great a man must essentially be who can accomplish anything good under the existing limitations. But the knowledge came too late to ripen into practical acquaintance. Wellington's sun was setting, Peel was actually gone in a few weeks from the dinner at Bath House, and Wellington had passed that singular eulogy upon him in the House of Lords—singular, but most instructive commentary on the political life of our days, as if Peel was the only public man of whom such a character could be given. "He had never known him tell a deliberate falsehood."

The last great English statesman—the last great constitutional statesman perhaps that England will ever have—died through a fall from his horse in the middle of this summer, 1850.
Wednesday morning Post reported “Sir Robert died last night” (I think about 9): *Eheu! Eheu!*

Great expressions of “national sorrow,” really a serious expression of regret in the public; an affectionate appreciation of this man, which he himself was far from being sure of or aware of while he lived. I myself have said nothing; hardly know what to think: feel only in general that I have now no definite hope of peaceful improvement for this country; that the one “Statesman” we had (or the least similitude of a statesman so far as I know or can guess) is suddenly snatched away from us.29

Great men die, like little men; “there is no difference,” and the world goes its way without them. Parliament was to “wriggle on” with no longer any Peel to guide; “the wen,” as Cobbett called London,30 was to double its already overgrown, monstrous bulk, and Carlyle had still thirty years before him to watch and shudder at its extending. But from this time he cared little about contemporary politics, which he regarded as beating the wind. What he himself was next to do was a problem to him which he did not see his way through. Some time or other he meant to write a *Life of Sterling*, but as yet he had not sufficient composure. Up to this time he had perhaps some hope or purpose of being employed actively in public life. All idea of this kind, if he ever seriously entertained it, had now vanished. As a writer of books, and as this only, he was to make his mark on his generation, but what book was to be written next was entirely vague to him. The house in Chelsea required paint and white-wash again—a process which, for everyone’s sake, it was desirable that he should not be present to witness. His friend, Mr. Redwood, again invited him to South Wales. He had been dreadfully “bored” there; but he was affected, too, by Redwood’s loyal attachment. He agreed to go to him for a week or two, and intended afterwards to make his way into Scotland.

On the way to Cardiff, he spent a night with Savage Landor, who was then living apart from his family in Bath.

Dinner was *elaborate*-simple; the brave Landor forced me to talk far too much, and we did very near a bottle of claret besides two glasses of sherry,—far too much liquor and excitement for a poor fellow like me! However, he was really stirring company; a proud, irascible, trenchant, yet generous veracious and very dignified old man. Quite a ducal or royal man, in the temper of him; reminded
me something of old Sterling, except that for Irish blarney, you must substitute a fund of Welsh choler.\textsuperscript{31}

Mr. Redwood was no longer at Llandough, but had moved to Boverton, a place at no great distance. Boverton was nearer to the sea, and the daily bathe could be effected without difficulty. The cocks, cuddies, etc., were as troublesome as usual, though perhaps less so than Carlyle's vivid anathemas on the poor creatures would lead one to suppose. His host entertained him with more honour than he would have paid to a prince or an archbishop, and Carlyle could not but be grateful.

Carlyle would have been the most perfect of guide-book writers. Nothing escaped his observation; and he never rested till he had learnt all that could be known about any place which he visited: first and foremost, the meaning of the name of it, if it was uncommon or suggestive. His daily letters to Chelsea were full of descriptions of the neighbourhood, all singularly vivid.

The house-cleaning at Chelsea was complicated by the misconduct of servants. Mrs. Carlyle was struggling in the midst of it all, happy that her husband was away, but wishing perhaps that he would show himself a little more appreciative of what she was undergoing. No one ever laid himself more open to being misunderstood in such matters than Carlyle did. He was the gratefullest of men, but, from a shy reluctance to speak of his feelings, he left his gratitude unuttered. He seemed to take whatever was done for him as a matter of course, and to growl if anything was not to his mind. It was only in his letters that he showed what was really in his heart.

He stayed three weeks at Boverton, and then gratefully took leave. "The good Redwood," as he called his host, died the year following, and he never saw him again. His route to Scotsbrig was, as usual, by the Liverpool and Annan steamer. The discomforts of his journey were not different from other people's in similar circumstances. It was the traveller who was different; and his miseries, comical as they sound, were real enough to so sensitive a sufferer. He sent a history of them to Chelsea on his arrival. "I am," he said, "a very unthankful, ill conditioned, bilious, wayward and heart-worn son of Adam, I do suspect!—Well, you shall hear
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all my complaints. . . . To whom can we complain, if not to one another, after all?”

He had reached Liverpool without misadventure. He had gone on board late in the evening. The night, as the vessel ran down the Mersey, was soft and beautiful. He walked and smoked for an hour on deck, and then went in search of his sleeping-place.

“This way the gents’ cabin, sir!” And in truth it was almost worth a little voyage to see such a cabin of gents; for never in all my travels had I seen the like before, nor probably shall again. The little crib of a place which I had glanced at two hours before, and found six beds in, had now developed itself, by hinge-shelves ([which in the day were parts of sofas]) and iron brackets into the practical sleeping-place of at least sixteen of the gent species; there they all lay, my crib the only empty one; a pile of clothes up to the very ceiling, and all round it, gent packed on gent, few inches between the nose of one gent and the nape of the other gent’s neck,—not a particle of air, all oriﬁces closed;—five or six of said gents already raging and snoring; and a smell—ach Gott, I suppose it must resemble that of the Slave-ships in the middle passage;—it was positively immoral to think of sleeping in such a receptacle of abominations.

He sought the deck again; but the night turned to rain, and the deck of a steamer in wet and darkness is not delightful, even in August: [he became] “a sublime spectacle of misfortune, appealing to Goody and Posterity.” When the vessel reached Annan, and “I got ﬂung out into the street,” the unfortunate “Jonah” could but address a silent word of thanks to the Merciful Power.

At Scotsbrig he could do as he liked—be silent from morning till night, wander about alone among the hills, see no one, and be nursed in mind and body by the kindest hands; but he was out of order in one as well as the other. The reaction after the Pamphlets was now telling upon him.

The evident uncertainty as to his future occupations which appears in his letters, taken with what he told me of his thoughts of public life at the time of his Pamphlets, conﬁrms me in my impression that he had nourished some practical hopes from those Pamphlets, and had imagined that he might perhaps be himself invited to assist in carrying out some of the changes which he had there insisted on. Such hopes, if he had formed them, he must have seen by this time were utterly groundless. Whatever improvements might be attempted, no statesman would ever call on him to take part in the process. To this, which was now a certainty, he had to
endeavour to adjust himself; but he was in low spirits—unusually low, even for him.

It was in this humour that Carlyle read *Alton Locke*, which Kingsley sent him. I well remember the gratification with which Kingsley showed me his approving criticism; and it speaks volumes for the merit of that book that at such a time Carlyle could take pleasure in it. Little did either of us then guess in what a depth of depression it had found him. The cloud lifted after a while; but these fits when they came were entirely disabling. Robust constitutional strength, which is half of it insensibility, was not among the gifts which Nature had bestowed on Carlyle. His strength was moral; it lay in an unalterable resolution to do what was right and to speak what was true—a strength nobly sufficient for the broad direction of his life and intellect, but leaving him a helpless victim of the small vexations which prey like mosquitoes on the nerves of unfortunate men of genius. Sometimes, indeed, by the help of Providence, his irritations neutralised one another. In his steady thrift, he had his clothes made for him in Annandale, the cloth bought at Dumfries and made up by an Ecclefechan tailor. His wardrobe required refitting before his return to London, and the need of attending to it proved an antidote to his present miseries.

With the end of September London and Cheyne Row came in sight again. The repairs were finished. At Scotsbrig, when the clothes had come in, he found himself "a distempered human soul, that had slept ill, and has been terribly dadded about of late! A phenomenon probably not quite unfamiliar to your observation." He had thought of a trip to Iona before going home, but the season was too far advanced. A short visit was to be managed to his friends in Cumberland. Then he would hasten back, and be as amiable as he could when he arrived. Mrs. Carlyle, in one of the saddest of her sad letters, had regretted that her company had become so useless to him. "Oh my Dear," he said, "if you could but cease being 'conscious' of what your company is to me;—the consciousness is all the malady in that: ah me, ah me! But that too will mend, if it please God." On the 27th of September he parted sorrowfully from his mother at Scotsbrig, after a wild midnight walk in wind and rain the evening before. Three days were given to the
Speddings at Keswick, and thence, on pressing invitation, he went to the Marshalls at Coniston, where he met the Tennysons, then lately married. Neither of these visits brought much comfort. Mr. Spedding had gone with the rest of the world in disapproving the Latter-Day Pamphlets. At the Marshalls’ he was prevented from sleeping by “poultry, children and flunkeys.”

He announced that he could not stay, that he must leave the next day, etc. Every attention was paid him. His room was changed. Not a sound was allowed to disturb him. He had a sound sleep, woke to find “a great alteration in me,” with the sun shining over lakes and mountains; and then he thought he would stay “another day, and still other days” if he were asked. But he had been so peremptory that his host thought it uncourteous to press him further, and then he discovered that he was not wanted, “nothing except the name of me which was already got.” Mr. Marshall himself accompanied him to the Windermere station, “forcing me to talk, which was small favour” ; and the express train swept him back to London. Men of genius are “kittle” [ticklish] guests, and, of all such, Carlyle was the “kittlest.”

His wife was at the Grange when he reached Cheyne Row. There was no one to receive him but her dog Nero, who after a moment’s doubt barked enthusiastic reception, and “the cat” who “sat reflective, without sign of the smallest emotion more or less.” He was obliged to Nero, he forgave the cat. He was delighted to be at home again. The improvements in the house called out his enthusiastic approbation. “O Goody,” he exclaimed, “incomparable Artist Goody! It is really a ‘series of glad surprises’; and this noble grate upstairs here:—all good and best, my bonny little Artistkin! Really it is clever and wise to a degree: and I admit it is pity you were not here to show it me yourself; but I shall find it all out too. Thank you, thank you, a thousand times.”

Mrs. Carlyle was distracted at his return in her own absence. She insisted that she must go to him at once; but she had been gaining strength at the Grange, and the Ashburtons begged her to stay on. Carlyle urged it too. With pretty delicacy he said, as if learning a lesson from her being away, “I shall know better than I ever did what the comfort to me
is of being received by you, when I arrive worn out, and you welcome me with your old smiles, and the light of a human fire and human home!" As she persisted that she must go back, he accepted Lady Ashburton's proposal that he should himself join his wife for a week or two before finally settling in for the winter; and it was not till the middle of October that they were together again in their own home.