Although forgotten by many now, John Richard Green was a bestselling historian in his day, one whose popularity rivaled Macaulay's. In the last quarter of the century, his *Short History of the English People*—the first serious work to give major emphasis to England's intellectual and social development—sold over 235,000 copies in England alone and enjoyed wide use as a school text. He owed his success to many of the same sources as Macaulay: to his own highly engaging style and compelling historical imagination, as well as to a burgeoning middle class audience eager to improve themselves and particularly receptive to his cultural confirmation of whiggish progress. Green's divided allegiances made his position more anomalous than Macaulay's, however. If the success of the *Short History* placed him in the front rank of popularizers, his intellectual sympathies as well as his personal friendships have traditionally identified him as a member of the "Oxford School" of historians, along with E. A. Freeman and William Stubbs, other pioneering medievalists who brought a new rigor and thoroughness to the study of their period. The fact that Green felt the need to legitimize himself as a serious historian by following the *Short History* with two more original and minutely documented studies of early England suggests the conscious pressures of his position. Ultimately, years of invalidism took their toll on the quality of his scholarship, and his early death cut short the
most promising late Victorian effort to bridge the gap between popular and professional expectations. Green’s career has interest as much for his efforts to accommodate the popularizing impulse of Victorian history to the increasingly incompatible demands of the new scholarship, as for his success in providing the middle classes with a Whig history of their own social, intellectual, and economic evolution.

Green grew up steeped in the history of his native Oxford, where he was born in 1837. He shook off the conservative influences of his childhood even sooner than Macaulay and Freeman, rebelling against his Tory, High Church family as early as 1850, when he was temporarily banished from his uncle’s house for ridiculing the uproar over “Papal Aggression.” The Whig sympathies of his prize essay condemning Charles I so alarmed his headmaster at the Magdalen College School that he recommended the boy be sent to a private tutor in 1852. Under his tutor’s supervision Green prepared to win an open scholarship at Jesus College, where he matriculated in 1855. His reaction to the newly established School of Law and Modern History confirmed the criticisms made by its adversaries on the Oxford Reform Commission. He found the study of law dull and rebelled against the expectation that the student should confine himself to those selected fragments of books that would “pay” in the schools. Scorning the competition for prizes on these terms, he instead pursued an eclectic study of eighteenth-century writers and settled for a pass in physical science. He might have continued indefinitely his boycott of historical study had not he made the acquaintance of A. P. Stanley, then professor of ecclesiastical history. Stanley offered Green an example of a scholar for whom work was not simply a matter of classes and fellowships, and under his influence Green soon resumed his studies. These bore their first fruit in a series of twenty-two colorful narrative sketches of Oxford life in the eighteenth century, which appeared in the *Oxford Chronicle* during 1859 and 1860. Although perhaps inspired by the contemporary popularity of Macaulay’s *History*, these articles show how early Green developed his own distinctively picturesque and anecdotal grasp of social history. They also illustrate his life-long conviction of the importance of municipal history in England’s past, for they intentionally tell the story of Oxford’s life as a town and not just as a university.

In “a fit of religious enthusiasm,” Green took orders in 1861; inspired by Christian Socialism, he deliberately chose to work in the squalid parishes of London’s East End for the next seven years. De-
spite its demands on his time and already fragile health, Green always felt that his ministry among the poor had been vital to his understanding of history, convincing him that due attention should be given to the social condition of the masses in any account of the past. During this same period his sympathies with nationalism were also developing. With his friend Boyd Dawkins he founded a short-lived Jesus College magazine in 1862 to explore the College’s roots in Welsh culture and history. Green’s historical interests gravitated toward the early and middle ages, and although projected histories of Somersetshire, Ireland, the Archbishops of Canterbury, and the Angevin Kings were never completed, a paper on Dunstan he read before the Somersetshire Archaeological Society in 1862 won him the attention of E. A. Freeman. The acquaintance blossomed into a warm friendship and scholarly camaraderie despite their differences in temperament and historical approach. Through Freeman’s intervention Green became a Saturday reviewer in the late sixties and early seventies, when the magazine was shaping educated opinion about “serious” history.

The strain of working late into the night turning out reviews and “middles” to defray mounting parish expenses eventually took its toll on Green’s consumptive constitution. By the end of 1869 he had already been advised that his chances for life were precarious. The forced termination of all parish duties was fortuitous, for it enabled Green to avoid that break with the Church his growing scepticism would soon have necessitated. He had from early years acknowledged the authority of science, believing at first that it might be used to aggrandize the authority of religion by clearing away false interpretations from “True Revelation.” He hoped to find the “faith of the future” in the union of a nondoctrinal “Mysticism” with freedom of thought and inquiry (LG, 80). He stretched the limits of Broad Church liberalism to their utmost in an effort to accommodate the spirit of rational inquiry to sincere belief, but instead he wound up marooned between the separate spheres of “intellectual credence” and “religious faith” (LG, 164). In 1867 he noted with regret that he had lost Stubbs’s confidence in “the old simple lesson that the world’s history led up to God” and had found nothing to replace it (LG, 176). He avoided breaking openly with Christianity by settling for an assurance that “formularies” no longer literally credible might still be honored because they “have . . . an ideal truth, embody a great doctrine, continue the chain of Christian tradition” (LG, 164). Like
Froude, Green exchanged the vocation of priest for that of historian, shifting his efforts from reconciling reason with dogma to the less controversial ground of historical interpretation. Green, however, sought no retreat from the perils of free thinking or from the antipathetic realities of the present. He not only approved the modern triumphs of liberalism but reconstructed history to justify them. As historian he transformed a gospel of Christian striving and conscience into a gospel of secular progress and social consciousness. If less explicitly providential than the interpretations of earlier historians, the national success story he told fulfilled the same romance patterns: the discovery and maturation of true identity, the struggle and triumph of the “good” cause.

The threat of death shadowed the remainder of Green’s life. He began work on the Short History in 1869, hoping that if he lived it would serve as an introduction to future studies and that ten years of research would not be wasted should he die shortly after its completion. Forced to protect his health by spending his winters away from England and English libraries and receiving little support even from his friends for his then unorthodox approach to social history, he often found the History discouraging work. But his efforts were more than rewarded when it became an overnight best-seller after its release in December of 1874. Its success freed Green from his financial worries, and a temporary arrest of his disease allowed him to hope that time remained for more substantial achievements to answer the critics who would brand him merely a popularizer. He continued his historical labors through the decade, enlarging the Short History into the four-volume History of the English People (1877-80), editing a historical reader for the schools, supervising a series of historical and literary primers, and publishing with his wife A Short Geography of the British Isles (1879). He went on to expand his account of England’s earliest days yet again in his most original work, The Making of England (1880). His desire to complete its sequel, The Conquest of England, kept him alive long after his doctors had given up hope, but he left the book to be finished and published posthumously by his wife after his death in 1883. To the end of his days Green remained an ardent liberal, deeply sympathetic with nationalistic movements in Europe and Ireland and driven by the desire to make real for his own people the evolution of their national identity and of the freedoms he believed were fundamental to it.
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In an early diary, Green accused himself of a dislike for “abstract thought” that tempted him to “subordinate general tendencies to particular events and principles to individuals” (LG, 104). He was perhaps too hard on himself, for what he later called his “impulse to try to connect things, to find the ‘why’ of things” (LG, 438) informed his “Herodotean” celebration of the particular with powerful explanatory continuities. Underpinning these continuities was his conventional Whig belief in the “unity” of western history in general and English history in particular. In his earliest writings, cyclical recurrence unified past and present. Just as infancy more closely resembled senility than did robust manhood, he argued, so too in the history of mankind analogous cultural phenomena seemed to recur at varying intervals (OS, 27-28). The nineteenth century had more in common with the moral spirit of the Renaissance than with that of the worldly eighteenth century and shared a greater intellectual sympathy with the age of Pericles than with that of Dunstan (OS, 233; LG, 176). However, the dominant pattern of Green’s thought lay not in the Carlylean alternation of epochs or in an Arnoldean comparison of cultures, and it was something more than a Whig celebration of political continuity. Green’s ultimate aim was to depict “the organic life of a nation as a whole” (LG, 427), to reconstruct the evolution not of the English constitution but of the English people. He made literal the metaphor of national identity used by Carlyle and Arnold. His sense of continuity, like the tools he brought to the task, was that of the geologist or archaeologist. He set out to retrieve as many artifacts of his culture as possible, to demarcate the significant strata in which they were deposited and to extrapolate from external evidence the internal harmonies that defined each stage of evolution.

National identity was for Green the central reality of history. His conception of national life went far beyond even Arnold’s moralized politics. “A State,” Green believed, “is accidental; it can be made or unmade; but a nation is something real which can be neither made nor destroyed” (LG, 391). Political decrees could no more establish national consciousness than they could a mountain or a river: things that were not artifacts but organisms, the product of forces sometimes violent but always working from within to modify, not to create. To Green the conventional stuff of history constituted but “the outer forms” of a people’s inner life, of that collective personality or state of mind that was central to his romantic sense of nationalism. He
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pointed to the French Revolution as proof that the "spiritual forces" sneered at by the philosophes were in fact "the deepest and strongest of realities" in political life, the mainspring from which the "outer phenomena" of change proceeded. For Green two intertwined strands of national consciousness—the aspirations for brotherhood and for liberty—lay at the heart of these "spiritual forces." He condemned Disraeli's foreign policy for its insensitivity to the nationalistic sympathies reshaping nineteenth-century Europe and took care to make his own histories "spiritual" biographies of national life.

Because they recorded the history of states rather than peoples, political documents could supplement and correct history, but they could never be history in Green's eyes (LG, 150). To explain the great impulses that determined national identity, the historian needed to base political history on social history in its widest sense. Green could not rest satisfied with the limited attention given to sociocultural detail along "the old traditional lines of English historians"—Gibbon, Hume, Macaulay; he became a crusader for nothing less than history that gave major weight to the moral, social, and intellectual development of the English people. Hence his manifesto in the introduction to the Short History:

Whatever the worth of the present work may be, I have striven throughout that it should never sink into a "drum and trumpet history." It is the reproach of historians that they have too often turned history into a mere record of the butchery of men by their fellow-men. . . . If some of the conventional figures of military and political history occupy in my pages less than the space usually given them, it is because I have had to find a place for figures little heeded in common history—the figures of the missionary, the poet, the printer, the merchant, and the philosopher.

Focusing on national identity became in effect Green's way of imposing the analytic insight of the "scientific" historian on the miscellaneousness of the antiquarian. Green shared with Freeman an early love of architectural history; nonetheless, he later ridiculed the pedantry of archaeological societies for setting aside "the real life of the people" for "fights over mouldings and endless discussions over conventual drains." He believed this same failure of "philosophic" insight prevented history's importance from being fully appreciated.

The Short History represented his attempt to "put facts on a philosophical basis" by showing political events to be "the outcome of
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social or religious currents of thought" (LG, 359). His scientific history was explicitly progressive: the historian escaped from "a mere bondage to details" by describing the moral, social, and intellectual "advance" of man.10

The beauty of Green's "philosophy" was that, like Carlyle's "science," it still guaranteed the primacy of the individual, the human, the suprarational. To Green, Freeman's exclusive attention to constitutional changes showed that he was not enough convinced of "the superiority of man in himself to all the outer circumstances that surround him."11 Political documents were merely the manifestation of that "inner life" determined by thought, feeling, spirit. To comprehend this inner life, the historian had to sympathize with the age, to value the smallest datum for the genuine insight it offered into human experience. If he had periodically to step back from the crowd to get the "general effect" of where they were headed, he had also to move and feel with them. Thus Green's historian could still indulge the antiquarian's love of detail for its own sake and the romantic's yearning for empathy without forfeiting his claims to be "philosophical."

Philosophical insight guaranteed the traditional moral dimension in history as well. Green agreed with William of Malmesbury that history was the chief part of ethics and that "no historical teaching can be really sound or effective which shrinks from recognizing the power of human lives in the past over human conduct in the present."12 He was as sceptical as Arnold of the value of strict impartiality or historicism, for either might subvert this didactic function. Criticizing Edith Thompson's School History of England, he argued that "there is no real impartiality in this avoidance of all expression of love for what is good and of hatred for what is evil in human conduct; and to avoid them, in fact, is to take the very soul out of history."13 In Green's own judgments, morality unequivocally outweighed political expediency. The "moral grandeur" of Alfred's life lifted him to the level of the world's greatest men despite the narrowness of his impact on world history, but Godwin's complete lack of integrity made it a misuse of terms to call him "great" no matter how important his contributions to English unity. Like Arnold, Green believed the historian who posed as a mere chronicler similarly shirked his duty. Value-free narration was as impossible as it was undesirable. A principle of selection and judgment necessarily governed which facts
were presented to readers, and to pretend, as Froude appeared to do, that readers were free to judge the facts for themselves was either disingenuous or simply irresponsible.\(^\text{14}\) Green proudly proclaimed his own point of view: he would go on “loving freedom” to the end (LG, 477). Focusing on national identity as the pulse of historical change was the logical fruition of his democratic sympathies. He opposed a “great man” theory of causation because he believed in the greater importance of “the people.” Hero-worship, in addition to blinding the historian to the moral failings of the men he would deify (witness Froude’s Henry or Freeman’s Godwin) also ignored the weight of \textit{Zeitgeist} in effecting change. Individuals still played a major role in Green’s histories, but he treated them as he expected the subjects of a projected series of biographical primers to be treated, as types of their time, representative men (LG, 249-50). His point in arguing that the thoughts of even the most original thinkers were but “the expression of the great tide of feeling which is sweeping them, like the world around them, unconsciously on” was not to make the \textit{Zeitgeist} all powerful as had Macaulay or Froude. Green stressed the power of these “tides of feeling” precisely because he considered them swelled by “great currents of popular sentiment.” His anonymous millions did not need the efforts of a Carlylean hero to marshal them into order; they in effect created the real order of history. They shaped the spiritual progress of mankind far more than they were shaped by it.\(^\text{15}\) The “spiritual forces” behind history were inherently more egalitarian for Green than for Carlyle, even if their purpose was the same: to make history morally meaningful by asserting the greater importance of mind and will over the material machinery of life.

Where Froude and Carlyle returned to the past to find principles for reordering the present and Macaulay to rejoice in disorder outgrown, Green affirmed constant principles of order unifying past and present. He sought to understand and to reconstruct the way the different layers of social, cultural, and political experience had formed that order. Notwithstanding their belief in underlying continuity, Carlyle and Macaulay both call attention to the disjunctures of history: to what had been lost, superseded, replaced, for better or worse. Green emphasizes the connectedness of past and present. He is always strain-ing for the resemblances that reveal the kernel of identity in the transformation of the features over time. Reading history becomes for him
a series of recognitions, of discerning the points at which the foreign becomes the familiar, the new the traditional.

The most obvious form this process took was in his extrapolation of the Whig view back before the thirteenth century. Along with Stubbs and Freeman, Green helped give scholarly credibility to the argument that representative democracy could claim the most ancient precedents, being implicit in the Teutonic institutions of the earliest "true" Englishmen. Although able to criticize Freeman for a "Teutonic fanaticism," Green was no less convinced that the Teutonic invasions of the fifth century wiped out the whole organization of Roman government and society along with the people governed by it. The basis of Teutonic society was the free landholder, its guiding principle representation. At the heart of this society was the moot, where the kinfolk, later the wise men, met to dispense justice, frame their laws, and choose leaders who in peace time remained narrowly bounded by the customs and advice of their people. Green, like other Whig medievalists, traced a direct line between these village moots and modern parliament, and between representative democracy and Victorian success. No wonder that in his eyes

it is with a reverence such as is stirred by the sight of the headwaters of some mighty river that one looks back to these village-moots of Friesland and Sleswick. It was here that England learned to be a "mother of Parliaments" . . . talk is persuasion, and persuasion is force, the one force which can sway freemen to deeds such as those which have made England what she is. The "talk" of the village moot, the strife and judgment of men giving freely their own rede and setting it as freely aside for what they learn to be the wiser rede of other men, is the groundwork of English history.

In the lineal descent of their institutions, Green's readers found proof that despite enormous change, they were "the same race still." It might be difficult to see the resemblance between the oak and the acorn, but the assurance of continuity between them guaranteed the stability and permanence of national identity.

Green's account included the other fixtures of the Whig view as well. He emphasized more heavily the fact that the degradation of the freeman in a government becoming increasingly feudal and oligarchical was what allowed the successful Danish conquests of the eleventh century, although he also believed that neither these nor the Norman Conquest severed the social and political continuity of the
English nation. He viewed the Great Charter as a reaffirmation rather than a manifesto of legal rights and dated modern political England from the reign of Edward I. He dispensed with York and Tudor challenges to parliamentary power in a more novel way, by labeling these reigns "The New Monarchy." The Tudor view of monarchical privilege "was the result, not of any gradual development, but of a simple revolution; and it was only by a revolution that the despotism of the New Monarchy was again done away" (SH, 303). The Long Parliament confirmed a historical truth as well as a legal one when it in effect returned English political development to the point where it had broken off, with the constitutional precedents of the Lancasters. Green's more democratic sympathies led him to assert that in England, "a reverence for the traditions of the past was made broad and living" by both "a deep conviction of abstract human right" and by "a practical sense of present necessities." Despite this unwhiggish enthusiasm for "abstract" rights, he still agreed that reliance on precedent, not theory, accounted for the stability of English government and that by supporting the natural unfolding of progress, the English had attained a supremacy destined to grant them "the primacy of the world" in future ages.

Green set his own stamp on the Whig view by tracing over this traditional Whig skeleton the more distinctive lineaments of "the people's" political advances. "In England, more than elsewhere," he reminded his readers, "constitutional progress has been the result of social development" (SH, iv). An early enthusiast for municipal history, he found the most significant role in this progress played by the urban middle classes. They emerge from his pages as the true custodians of English freedoms. Unlike their continental counterparts, English towns were coeval with the foundation of English society; the guild was an inevitable development of Teutonic life, the burgher the freeman within the walls. English municipal freedom, like national freedom, was insured by the necessities of kings and by the slow growth of wealth and popular spirit, rather than by the violent revolts necessary to wrest liberty from continental seigneurs (OS, 21). Far from deploring the growth of commercial wealth as had Froude, Green asserted that it had allowed towns of the eleventh century to buy back those freedoms that had passed from the people at large into the hands of the feudal nobility, and from them into the hands of the Norman kings (SH, 94). The men of the borough-mote and merchant guilds had thus done more than knights and barons to make England
what she is: "In the silent growth and elevation of the English people the boroughs led the way: unnoticed and despised by prelate and noble, they had alone preserved the full tradition of Teutonic liberty. The rights of self-government, of free speech in free meeting, of equal justice by one's equals, were brought safely across the ages of Norman tyranny by the traders and shop-keepers of the towns" (SH, 121).

Green was far from insensitive to the injustices provoked by class interest. Nonetheless, he found the urban middle classes defining the contours of virtually every significant stratum of English history. He documented far more fully than Macaulay the collective heroism of the middling orders. When he too sought a modern paradigm in Abbot Samson, he based it not on the Abbot's wise paternalism, but on his foresight in renewing the municipal liberties of Bury St. Edmond. In his eyes Magna Charta claimed no liberties not already won by those plain burghers whom the barons despised. The decisive factor in Simon de Montfort's rise to power was the "new democratic spirit" at work in the towns, where "the purely industrial classes" were eventually successful in challenging the wealthy merchants for control of municipal administration (SH, 178). The union of the baronage with the commerical classes in the thirteenth-century Commons prevented Parliament from being paralyzed by the mutual jealousies of the four orders or from becoming the mere instrument of an aristocratic caste (SH, 248). The moral power of the middling orders was no less decisive a force in encouraging political development. Puritanism drew its greatest strength from their support. Its greatest attraction lay in its (distinctly un-Carlylean) promotion of greater social equality (SH, 458-59). The Puritans' seventeenth-century triumph marked the point at which "national opinion" had become what it remained ever since: "the supreme irresistible force in English politics" (HEP, 4:116). Green, needless to say, approved this force as heartily as Carlyle condemned it. Green also appreciated the way these classes kept alive the "old piety" through ages of ecclesiastical abuse and neglect and saw real value in the Methodist revival of moral and philanthropic zeal that sprang from their midst in the late eighteenth century (SH, 707). In his eyes more than crass self-interest had brought men of business into conflict with Whig monopoly at this same time: their earnestness was outraged by bribery and corruption, their patriotism by the politics of personal gain, their sense of efficiency by government mismanagement (HEP, 4:283). Green tacitly invited his readers to see in the Reform Bills of the nineteenth century
the eventual triumph of this particular part of the English people; it was a moral as well as a political victory. Although no apologist for Philistinism, Green, like Macaulay, saw in the extension of the franchise a vindication of the inherent superiority of English political traditions. In the place of drums and trumpets he offered the Victorian middle classes a history of their own: a Whig view of the peaceful revolution which, through centuries of slow development, had finally brought them to power and seemed to identify their strengths and interests with the best qualities of the nation at large.

It would be misleading to suggest that this saga of political freedom constitutes all or even the most important part of national identity for Green. Freedom was for him what authority was for Froude and Carlyle: the central theme of his reading of history. The struggle of the English people to emerge as an independent nation and then to realize personal liberty in all its forms is the underlying pattern to which all else eventually relates. Green’s inquiry into cultural evidence is no mere appendage to his political account, but the warp in his weave of national identity. “The Universities,” “The English Towns” “The Friars,” “The New Learning” demarcate essential features in England’s progress toward its modern liberty of conscience, thought, and action. Green’s eye for detail was omnivorous but not indiscriminate. He remains the “philosophical” historian who views every datum he includes in relation to this maturation of English liberties.

Green reads domestic detail for lessons more egalitarian than Macaulay’s or Froude’s. He notes the ingenuity and beauty of the Roman villa, but also reminds his readers of the squalid huts of serfs that once adjoined their frescoed walls, offering a silent indictment of the “union of material wealth with social degradation that lay like a dark shadow over the Roman world” (M, 45). The sumptuary laws that to Froude demonstrate the moral restraint of the upper classes reveal to Green their selfish anxiety about the laborer’s and farmer’s progress in comfort and wealth; he notes with satisfaction that such laws could do little to stop this progress as wages continued to rise after the Plague (SH, 295). In the display of commercial wealth that Froude reads as a sign of moral decay, Green finds the origins of the “peculiarly English” conception of domestic comfort. The rise of the commercial classes during Elizabeth’s time improved the “mean appearance” of medieval towns with parapeted fronts, carved staircases, and quaint gables. The transition from medieval fortress to Elizabethan hall constituted an advance because it testified to the extinction of the
feudal character of the noblesse; gilded turrets replaced battlements
and Italian gardens replaced moats because comfort and refinement
attained a greater priority than defense. Green’s satisfaction with
these signs stems not from Macaulay’s relentlessly material standards
of judgment, still less from his contempt for barbarity overcome. For
one thing, to Green such architectural details are not relics of a world
superseded; “we still gaze with pleasure” (SH, 400) on those gables
and fretted fronts and in gazing possess them as something yet living.
Even where he can no longer see the evidence of earlier stages of civiliza­
tion, he affirms their contribution to present life and liberties. Once
assimilated into English identity, earlier modes of life cannot be re­
pudiated without denying identity itself.

From Green’s consideration of literature, education, and religion
emerges an analogous pattern of the gradual unifying and democra­
tizing of English culture. Because progress in England’s earliest days
was aided by the development of a national literature, Green takes
note of the “popular poetry” inspired by Ealdhelm (M, 337) and the
expansion and consolidation of the Chronicle under Alfred, both of
which helped unify national consciousness. Layamon’s English
expansion of “Brut” demands attention despite its worthlessness as
history because it shows that the language remained uncorrupted by
one hundred and fifty years of Norman and Angevin rule. Green
makes it symbolize the spirit of national resistance soon to triumph in
Magna Charta (SH, 147). He most emphasizes those forms of litera­
ture that illuminate the spirit of the age and gauge its intellectual
development. He finds in Cadmon “a type of the new grandeur,
death and fervor of tone which the German race was to give to the
religion of the East” (SH, 64). Shakespeare represents the last flower­
ing of the English Renaissance, Milton the “completest type of Puri­
tanism,” Dryden the reaction of the critical intellect against the Puri­
tan temper.

Like his predecessors, Green placed great value on the ability of
literature, especially popular literature, to “disentomb” the “com­
mon daily life of the past,” and urged his fellow historians down the
“bye-ways” of literature to learn how men had really lived (OS, 180).
But he is really more interested in the sociology of literary develop­
ment than in the lives these sources reflect. Literary evidence serves as
a barometer of intellectual advance. If devoid of literary value, the
homilies, grammars, and lesson books that poured out in the late
tenth century testified to a “quickening of educational zeal among the
people at large" (C, 298). Despite the "intellectual decay" of the fifteenth century, the popularity of compendia and abridgments showed that "literature was ceasing to be the possession of a purely intellectual class" (SH, 307). He attributes the impact of the Puritan Bible to the fact that at the time it was "the whole literature which was practically accessible to ordinary Englishmen"; it gave a loftiness to vulgar speech while it purified the temper of the whole nation.

Green traces the democratization of intellect even more directly in the history of university and Church. His analytical eye is trained on the social and political importance of religious institutions, not on the transcendent truths those symbols of spiritual health might have disclosed to Carlyle and Arnold. He finds the early Church significant because it poured a new spirit of manhood into a people crushed and degraded by Roman imperialism; it freed and invigorated man's moral and intellectual faculties and kept alive in its internal structure "the free democratic traditions of a world strangled by Caesarism." Its administrative hierarchy later helped unify warring tribes into a single nation (M, 311-12), and its parish structure preserved the governing principles of the village moot (C, 16). In sharp distinction to Carlyle, Green characteristically gives greater emphasis to the Church's role in subverting outworn authority than in conserving tradition. Ostensibly purely ecclesiastical bodies, the universities played as significant a role in threatening feudalism with their democratic organization as they did in challenging the narrowness of medieval doctrine with their spirit of intellectual inquiry. Not surprisingly, Green's version of the Reformation differs significantly from Froude's. The new religion is for both an outgrowth of the new learning, but Green sees the Renaissance spirit struggling to triumph in spite of the narrowness and anti-intellectualism of reformers like Luther. In his eyes Henry championed the reformed Church not because of a conversion to its truer faith but as a further instrument of his tyranny over "old English liberties." Nonetheless, "the new spirit of inquiry, the new freedom of thought and discussion" awakened by Henry's imposition of a new religion eventually helped to break the spell of "the New Monarchy" over popular imagination in spite of him (SH, 366).

In short, for Green England's political development is only the most prominent feature in a landscape contoured by intellectual, social, and religious forces. Each stratum has contributed to the profile of the whole. For the English people, progress had meant the transi-
tion from barbarism to civilization, from tribal jealousies to national unity, from oligarchy to democracy, from class privilege to class responsibility. It was made possible by the triumph of reason over superstition, self-determination over tyranny, public opinion over monarchical fiat. This victory of righteousness was no less inevitable and no less satisfying for being so thoroughly secularized. Green sought to demonstrate that the freedom of thought, the social justice, and the national identity he valued most highly in the present were the product of an organic development that affirmed these as deeply traditional and justified their continued advance in the future. He had gazed at the past with democratic eyes, and history had thrown back his own liberal image.

II

Green was more sensitive than earlier historians to the increasing strain between popular and professional historiography. Froude's wide popular success was a source of greater controversy to self-proclaimed professionals than to Froude himself. His assumptions, his talents, his conscious choices naturally aligned his priorities with those of the "literary" historians. Professional attacks bothered him, but not enough to make him question those priorities. To Green being a successful historian meant satisfying the expectations of both popular and professional audiences. His unconventional analyses of English history made this goal all the harder to achieve. It was a central concern of his career that his sociocultural syntheses would make history attractive to a wider audience and also gain legitimacy in the eyes of serious scholars. His situation was the opposite of Freeman's: Green's problem was to prove to professionals that popular history as he conceived it could be intellectually sound, Freeman's to overcome popular resistance to the ponderous detail of his scholarship.

The nature and scope of Green's research was determined by his sense of audience as much as by his increased emphasis on social and cultural history. Because the Short History and the History of the English People were aimed at "English readers of a general class" (SH, iv), Green eliminated footnotes in favor of chapter headnotes that briefly assessed the merits of the major secondary sources he had consulted. He also confined his research primarily to accounts in English. Although he hoped The Making of England and The Conquest of England would also appeal to a general audience, he intended these books to break new scholarly ground. The Making of
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England, for instance, demonstrates how archaeological and geological studies could be incorporated into the reconstruction of England's origins. The citations in both works give evidence that Green had read widely in specialized medieval scholarship. Nonetheless, these texts still draw almost exclusively from printed materials, even if some, like Bede, are used to furnish social evidence hitherto neglected. How Green might have extended his research had he lived is not clear; as things stand, however, there is little evidence in his work of the minute study of original sources that became a trademark of professionalism.

Green was a synthesizer by design. His desire to reach a large audience stemmed from his earnest belief in history's educational value, a value that could not be exploited fully so long as historical instruction remained so closely associated with dull primers and frivolous antiquarianism. In writing the Short History and the Short Geography, he was inspired in large part by the plight of students for whom a study that should awaken the sympathies and train the mind too often amounted to little more than "a dry rattle of names and dates" (LG, 303). As a Saturday reviewer, Green was a stern critic of the "bric-a-brac" histories of superficial popularizers; this made him all the more keenly aware of the needs of that growing middle class audience who "cry aloud for decent histories, and can't get 'em" (LG, 249), and all the more anxious to market his works at a price they could afford. As a general editor, he valued Macmillan's projected series of short histories as a chance "to get right notions into the heads of the Many-Folk, of Herr Omnes" (LG, 445) and was even willing to admit a few drums and trumpets provided they won people's attention and interest to more "peaceful" subjects (LG, 475).

Finding the right voice for his ideal narrative cost him no little effort in the Short History. His pursuit of readability ("the thing I care about" LG, 384) had its perils. When Freeman and others criticized early drafts of the book for being too much in the Saturday Review style, Green repeatedly rewrote large sections already stereotyped. Freeman still thought that Green had sacrificed too much of the "real stuff" of history to his "power of brilliant talkie-talkie." In later years Green himself admitted that earlier portions of the Short History were marred by a fatal tendency to "essayism": to fall into a series of vignettes and slur over the uninteresting parts (LG, 445). On the other hand, he also had to satisfy critics like George Grove of Macmillan's, who judged an early draft of chapter one "too heavy"
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for "the upper forms in schools and for general readers" (LG, 255). Green rewrote again to eliminate much of the detail he had packed so tightly. However, he stuck by his plan to replace the conventional political chronology with one based on social and cultural development—stuck by it despite criticism by Freeman and others that this made the narrative difficult to follow, especially for the beginning student.

Although Green's concern with style stemmed largely from his desire to attract a large audience, he too shared the romantic assumption that the power of mind, spirit, and emotion in history demanded a creative method able to do justice to them. "There are times," Green wrote, "when poetic insight is the truest philosophy of history" (LG, 148), times when the historian's ability to feel with the subject yielded a more profound understanding than could analytical shrewdness. His advice to Kate Norgate suggests what his own creative method was like:

When criticism has done its work comes the office of the imagination, and we dwell upon these names till they become real to us, real places, real battles, real men and women—and it is only when this reality has struck in upon us and we "see" that we can so describe, so represent that others see too . . . write when you feel they are real and life-like to you, do not be afraid of exaggeration or over-rhetoric (that is easily got rid of later on), but just strive after realisation and you will write history. (LG, 448-49)

Here are the familiar concerns with resuscitation and identification, with the constitutive power of the historian's vision.

Given the scantiness of legitimate historical sources for early history, like Arnold and Freeman Green turned to legends and traditions to serve the needs of insight and sympathy. Here too his advice to Norgate reveals his own approach. To "realize" the character of Fulc the Black, he wrote, "Help yourself by using the legends about him—telling them as legends, disproving their historical accuracy, if it be needful, but gathering from them the conception of character which after days formed of him, and using them as colour for your picture" (LG, 470). Green helps his reader to "see" Dunstan by coloring his own account with one such legendary detail. A brief digression into present tense restores to us one morning when, as Dunstan bends over his work, "his harp hung upon the wall sounds without mortal touch tones which the excited ears around frame into a joyous antiphon" (SH, 86-87). He similarly admits us into the Viking mind by contrast-
ing the warrior's dauntlessness at sea with his superstitions about the land: "The boldest shrank from the dark holts and pools that broke the desolate moorland, from the huge stones that turned into giants in the mists of nightfall . . . and from the fell shapes into which their excited fancy framed the mists at eventide, shapes of giant 'moor-steppers,' of elves and trolls, of Odin with his wind-cloak wrapped round him as he hurried over the waste" (C, 56).

Nevertheless, Green leaves no doubt that "excited fancy" produced such impressions. For all his eagerness to hold the reader's interest, he was as concerned as Arnold and Freeman to make clear the line between fact and fiction—perhaps more so, since he felt his credibility more vulnerable. When James Bryce suggested that he use the Norse sagas to supplement the meager sources for early England, Green refused, saying that they were "unhistorical," and that he couldn't appear to trust them or to mix up authentic history with what was possibly fable. Characteristically, he uses legendary evidence to establish the contemporary conception of historical figures or for sociological insights into the time. Alfred's traditional burning of the oat cakes, even "if nothing more than a tale, could never have been told of a man without humour," and is worth including for this insight (SH, 82). Carlyle would have used the miraculous return of Bishop Erkenwald's body to London to assess the age's capacity for hero-worship; Green recounts this story because it for the first time brings us face to face with the new burghers of the city, who struggled successfully against the religious houses for possession of the Bishop's remains (C, 455-56).

Green's most impressive examples of historical "seeing" involve his use of geological and archaeological detail to re-create a past. Like Arnold and Freeman, he was convinced that "History strikes its roots in Geography; for without a clear and vivid realization of the physical structure of a country the incidents of the life which men have lived in it can have no interest or meaning." Like Macaulay and Carlyle, Green considered on-site visits essential, as much to verify details as to relive famous events in his imagination. But particularly in his account of England's earliest days, geographical evidence is far more than an aid to memory or imagination. In the absence of written evidence adequate to restore the past, Green taught his audience to read the story of England's origins in the physical record. As a Times reviewer put it, to Green a single geographical fact became like a single
bone to Cuvier: it permitted the historical scientist to reconstruct the entire skeleton of a vanished organism.32

In the early pages of the *Making of England*, for instance, Green superimposes the terrain of ancient England over modern landmarks, noting how the distribution of wood and clearings controlled early settlement and determined the path of Saxon invasions (M, 8, 46). He gives a conventionally picturesque account of the “wild beauty” of Ebbsfleet, replete with landmarks that situate the modern reader on the scene. But he then goes on to use a detailed analysis of its terrain to confirm the tradition that this spot first felt the tread of English feet (M, 29-30). To Green, archaeological remains become so many clues to reading the mysteries of the past. The extension of Roman roads and towns tells how rapidly Britain was incorporated into the Empire; Camulodum’s size and massive walls argue for its prominence in East Saxon society. From details of recent excavations, Green extrapolates the wretched decline of the Yorkshire cave-dwellers, refugees from the English invaders. The few enameled brooches and dainty sword hilts of ivory and bronze caught up by the fleeing provincials stand in pathetic contrast to the silent chronicle of their degeneration: “A few charred bones show how hunger drove them to slay their horses for food; reddened pebbles mark the hour when the new vessels they wrought were too weak to stand the fire, and their meal was cooked by dropping heated stones into the pot” (M, 68). In Green’s hands even place names disclose the unfolding drama of civilization. Teutonic roots in village names corroborate the extermination of the Celt; the Comditch and Ayleswood that reflect the wild state of the land give way to the Knolton and Beaminster that record the spread of tunmoot and Church. Through an act of historical conjuration, “the birththroes of our national life” materialize from the dim territory formerly filled with “battles of kites and crows.” Even more concretely than Arnold, Green merges the land itself into a living historical record.

Green’s other triumph of historical vision lay in his realization of the daily reality of past worlds. His interest in domestic minutiae goes beyond Macaulay’s and Froude’s desire to particularize change with picturesque detail. His reverence for quotidian ritual goes beyond Carlyle’s attraction to the costumes of Tradition. Green makes the life of the people the imaginative as well as the intellectual center of his historical explanation. In his hands the customary, the routine, the
conventional emerge from the background to constitute the pattern of life itself; the focus closes in on "society" long enough to resolve its surface regularity into a myriad of concrete types. Green loves to enumerate the humble occupations that compose the common experience of the past. He lingers over the customary duties of the hayward, wood-ward, and bee-ward of Alfred's day (C, 330), over the spinster, ox-herd, cow-herd, and barn-man of the Saxon farm (M, 186-87). He notes with satisfaction the "characteristic figures" of mill and smith, hall and church, that prove Egcbert's world already recognizably English (C, 7). Green's social reality is literal and solid where Carlyle's is metaphorical and suggestive. Both value the anonymous routine of daily life, but where Carlyle prizes its silent obscurity as a sign of social health, Green wishes to feel "the quick pulse of popular life," to experience its robustness. There is something more distinctly Macaulayan in Green's proliferation of stereotypes in "Oxford During the Eighteenth Century." Employing a welter of detail from diaries, letters, newspapers, and incidental literature, Green raises up the crowded fabric of daily life: the coffee house lounger and the servitor, the "smart" and the freshman bumpkin, the belles who serve as the "toast" of the day; Oxford eating, drinking, sleeping and dressing, brawling in the streets and rhyming in the taverns. But if these types are exaggerated, they are never caricatured. Green senses too keenly the common humanity of the figures he creates to patronize them.

It is not always the familiarity of the past that Green stresses. The foreground of his eleventh-century Chester is recognizable enough: the "new commercial life" of the towns takes palpable shape in the sturdy burghers who tread their way among the piles of cheeses, bannock bread, and fish crates. But the motley crowd they confront is frankly exotic: the Dane who "strove in his northern tongue to draw buyers to his gang of slaves," the Welsh kerne wrapped in his blanket who "chattered as he might with the hardly less wild Cumbrian from the lands beyond the Ribble" (C, 443). Green's attraction to such scenes stems not from Macaulay's condescension to the barbaric but rather, as Burrow notes, from a real enthusiasm for frontier culture.35 Green's purpose in superimposing the Oxford of the thirteenth century on that of the nineteenth is not to stress the superiority of the present. Indeed, to understand that older world we must "dismiss from our minds all recollections" of the new. From the venerable colleges and stately walks, "history plunges us into the mean and filthy lanes of a medieval town." Hundreds of boys, clustered around
teachers as poor as themselves, take the place of the brightly colored train of doctors and Heads. The shock induced by this "stereoscopic" contrast leads us not to judge the past but to feel its reality more fully. Abandoning our modern preconceptions allows the thirteenth century to spring to life once more: "Now a mob of clerks plunges into the Jewry, and wipes off the memory of bills and bonds by sacking a Hebrew house or two. Now a tavern row between scholar and townsman widens into a general broil, and the academical bell of St. Mary's vies with the town bell of St. Martin's in clanging to arms" (SH, 159). For Green "the quick pulse of popular life" beats too exuberantly to allow condescension.

Works like the Short History and even the expanded History of the English People combined great fullness with great compression. Green had mastered the stylistic shorthand of the sketch—the firm outlines and few salient traits that projected the whole from a few parts. But what this style gained in vividness it often lost in subtlety and variety. To some readers the effect of reading the Short History was that of a "uniformity, sometimes almost a monotony, of picturesqueness; . . . we sometimes feel a fatigue like that which is experienced in turning over the pages of a picture-book." The description is apt. Green's accounts often have the simplicity, assertiveness, and unmediated emotional appeal of the story book. Bede's death, for instance, is made intentionally hagiographical. In his final hours, completing the translation of John's Gospel parallels the waning of his own life. The symbolism is transparent, the incremental repetitions deliberately elegiac, the pathos overt:

"There is still a chapter wanting," said the scribe, as the morning drew on, "and it is hard for thee to question thyself any longer." "It is easily done," said Baeda; "take thy pen and write quickly." Amid tears and farewells the day wore on to even-tide. "There is yet one sentence unwritten, dear master," said the boy. "Write it quickly," bade the dying man. "It is finished now," said the little scribe at last. "You speak truth," said the master; "all is finished now." (SH, 74)

Also typical is the way Green's elliptical brevity condenses Joan of Arc's martyrdom into prophetic melodrama: "Soon the flames reached her, the girl's head sank on her breast, there was one cry of 'Jesus!' 'We are lost' an English soldier muttered as the crowd broke up, 'we have burned a saint' " (SH, 298). Green's battle scenes possess the same compressed specificity and rapid pace. His brief account of Hastings drives forward with clipped, paralleled phrasing: "At three
the hill seemed won, at six the fight still raged around the standard. 
. . . As the sun went down, a shaft pierced Harold’s right eye.” He looks aside from the main thrust of the action only for the most picturesque traditions. Taillefer tosses his sword and chants the Song of Roland. William rallies the Breton troops: “‘I live!’, shouted William, as he tore off his helmet, ‘and by God’s help will conquer yet!’” (SH, 108-9). In a single page, Green concentrates an account Freeman lingered over for fifty. There is no time for elaboration or qualification; in the brisk assertiveness of relentless action, he necessarily sacrifices shading for the sake of dramatic outlines.

The weaknesses of this method become most apparent when applied to major characters. Green has a good eye and ear for the telling gestures and turns of phrase that can fix individuals in a single stroke. A few sentences from his version of Cromwell taking the mace from the table restore the man in all his imperious rectitude and blunt audacity:

“Come, come,” replied Cromwell, “we have had enough of this;” and, striding into the midst of the chamber, he clapped his hat on his head, and exclaimed, “I will put an end to your prating!” In the din that followed his voice was heard in broken sentences—“It is not fit that you should sit here any longer! You should give place to better men! You are no Parliament.” (SH, 564)

But this constant assertion of the typical leaves characters more vivid than complex. Green’s penchant for enumeration enriches his characterizations quantitatively more than qualitatively. His usual pattern includes a list of salient physical and intellectual traits, illustrated by a few representative actions and interspersed with the revelatory observations of contemporaries: “The very spirit of the sea-robbers” from whom William of Normandy had sprung
The tight rhythms of the paralleled phrases reinforce the sheer weight of particulars being piled up here. Sir Thomas More is similarly itemized. Holbein’s portrait captures “the inner soul of the man, his vivacity, his restless, all-devouring intellect, his keen and even reckless wit, the kindly, half-sad humour”; the New Learning seemed incarnate in “his gay talk, his winsomeness of manner, his reckless epigrams, his passionate love of music, his omnivorous reading, his paradoxical speculations, his jibes at monks, his schoolboy fervour of liberty” (SH, 326).

It is not that either man is caricatured. We see William’s humanity as well as his savagery; we are shown More’s stern inflexibility as well as his touching affection for his children’s pets and games. But the shades of personality that put both darks and lights into perspective are usually missing. The endless stream of dazzling specifics overbears rather than convinces. The rapid parallels that underline Elizabeth’s vanity and voluptuousness are the tools of the Macaulayean essayist and entai their drawbacks:

No adulation was too fulsome for her, no flattery of her beauty too gross. “To see her was heaven,” Hattan told her; “the lack of her was hell.” She would play with her rings, that her courtiers might note the delicacy of her hands; or dance a coranto, that the French ambassador, hidden dexterously behind a curtain, might report her sprightliness to his master. . . . Personal beauty in a man was a sure passport to her liking. She patted handsome young squires on the neck when they knelt to kiss her hand, and fondled her “sweet Robin,” Lord Leicester, in the face of the court. (SH, 376)

The temptation is always to reap the dramatic benefits of sensational detail before or instead of taking judicious measurement. Although Green usually does not succumb to Macaulay’s penchant for brittle paradox, characters for whom he lacks sympathy sometimes verge on caricature. He may admit that James I possessed much natural ability and learning, but it is “his big head, his slobbering tongue, his quilted clothes, his rickety legs, his goggle eyes . . . his gabble and rodomontade” (SH, 471) that stay in our memories. Once anatomized in this way, characters often struggle in vain to recover their integrity.

Green did strive for a deliberate balance in his characters. He objected to the hero-worship that lifted individuals “out of the sphere of human sympathies into a perfection that is simply uninteresting and unintelligible.” He was equally averse to the “herophobia” typical
of the Philistines, "your 'right-and-wrong,' your 'truth and falsehood' people," who would sooner reduce a William of Normandy to a melodrama villain than allow his mixture of greatness and inhumanity to upset their simplistic categories (LG, 247). Itemization was a middle ground, but too often it left personalities inventoried rather than integrated. Green's characters are vivid and memorable, but they seldom seem more than the sum of their parts. Their characteristic turns of phrase and action do not resonate with a Carlylean suggestiveness of the intangible; these traits are not metaphors for a more complex whole. But then, Green had consciously chosen the style of information and instruction, not of prophecy and divination. He brought a much warmer humanity to this style than did Macaulay, but that did not entirely compensate for the kinds of oversimplification, the sacrifice of depth to breadth, that it encouraged.

The controversy over Green's reputation was less fierce than it had been over Froude's, but it was more complex, at least in part because Green was himself more self-conscious about the conflicts involved in trying to satisfy two different readerships. Its scope and tone marked the Short History as primarily a popular work; for reviewers it exemplified the strengths and weaknesses of the entire genre. Mrs. Oliphant applauded Green for clearing away the "scaffolding" of sources and footnotes; the Short History's ability to trace the continuity of social life concealed within the "outer husk" of history made it for her "simply the ideal history we have been looking for." Its accessibility to a wider public made it more valuable to The Living Age than "many books making higher claims to research and science." The Athenaeum similarly complimented Green for his success in presenting "all the newest knowledge upon a very large section of history . . . in such a style that every one may read it with little effort." The Making of England and The Conquest of England possessed similar virtues for F. A. Paley.

On the other hand, the Athenaeum also complained that the Short History doled out ideas ready-made rather than encouraging independent thought and judgment. John Brewer's Tory hysteria over Green's supposedly revolutionary sympathies was uncharacteristically extreme, but his general complaint—that works like The Short History placed dangerous views in "the hands of the young and incautious"—was one frequently lodged against popular history. More typical was Brewer's suggestion that Green's desire for dramatic effect led him to invent unverifiable details. Green's most formida-
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ble critic, James Rowley, made similar claims about the “exaggerations as culpable as misstatements that Mr. Green has been betrayed into by his unconscionable rhetoric.” It was pure invention, Rowley argued, for Green’s Jenny Geddes actually to fell the preacher with her stool and for his bishops to fall to their knees at the deathbed of Charles II.  

More damaging was Rowley’s voluminous list of outright errors. Although he implied that these resulted from Green’s superficial preparation, most were minor mistakes that could have been corrected with an errata sheet. John Morley, who turned down Rowley’s letters when first submitted to the Fortnightly, correctly perceived that his object was less to avenge truth than to avenge Froude. Although Green had himself deplored Freeman’s attack on Froude, his close association with both the Saturday and with Freeman added to the glee with which critics pounced on the blunders of this more vulnerable member of “the Freeman school.” Even Green’s friends did not defend his reputation for accuracy in minute detail. His lack of verbal memory, the disruptive circumstances in which his books were composed, and the rapidity with which he revised them made many blunders inevitable. Green was aware of this and was grateful even to critics like Rowley for pointing out errors that could be removed in later editions. Although he was still not scrupulous enough with his corrections to satisfy S. R. Gardiner, Gardiner joined Stubbs and Henry Adams in confirming what Green himself believed of the Short History: that his mistakes did not undermine the cogency and soundness of his historical interpretations and that minute accuracy was impossible given the vast and comprehensive range of his books and the current state of specialized studies.

Nonetheless, in many ways the scope of Green’s work was the crux of the controversy. Freeman and James Bryce pointed to a more general problem than accuracy per se when they blamed Green for being too assertive about what could only be inferred or conjectured, especially in works like the Short History that afforded no space to discuss uncertainties. Stubbs was similarly dubious about how much success Green could achieve in synthesizing history for periods where the necessary specialized studies remained to be done. Green’s methodological choices were deliberate and made with full knowledge of how they challenged the prevailing assumptions of professional scholarship. He respected the efforts of men like Gardiner “to bring out the actual political facts and clear away loose talk.” So
much nonsense had passed under the name of "philosophies of history" that Green realized his own attempts to arrange facts on a philosophical basis might strike such men as "an attempt to bring the loose talk back again" (LG, 426). Despite his regret over the disapproval of the professionals, Green still intended his works to be an explicit protest against many of their assumptions about historical writing. He had long been averse to continental models for the new scholarship—to the tendency of French historians to limit themselves to the "étude" or specialized study, and to the exclusive concentration of German "pragmatic" historians on political documents. To Green the former approach smacked of "intellectual cowardice," the refusal to provide a comprehensive explanation of national life. The "pragmatic" approach, on the other hand, did not look below the level of documents to the individual will or national spirit that produced them; it was too objective, too impersonal, to seize the real dynamic of change. What allies Green with the "literary" historians is less the picturesqueness of his style than this belief in the need for didactic judgments by the historian and his acknowledgement of the primacy of will and spirit in the historical process.

Green tried to bridge the gap between popular and professional expectations more directly when he became involved in the early planning for England's first "purely Historical Review." Plans for such a publication first surfaced in conversations between Green, W. Hunt, and James Bryce in early 1867, and later included A. W. Ward. From the beginning Ward and Bryce wanted what Germany and France possessed, "a purely scientific organ of historical criticism," one whose character was to be scientific and not popular, and in which "literary tone" was to be subordinate to critical rigor (LG, 433). Green, on the other hand, advocated a more popular format, both because he felt material of broader interest would be necessary to "float" the serious scholarship in the commercial market and because he had high hopes for the didactic potential of such historical writing. Although his journal would have maintained the strictly scholarly nature of original essays and reviews, it would also have demanded literary excellence of all submissions and included articles of greater topical interest to the general reader: background histories of current issues, "philosophical" biographies of eminent contemporaries, a quarterly summary of European events. He admitted, however, that such a scheme would likely fall between two stools: too scientific for the general reader and too popular to win the support of
scientific scholars. The desire for commercial success would inevitably tend to make the review become more and more popular in tone and perhaps push it nearer to a distinct political line, moves sure to alienate serious writers still further. Green correctly perceived his own unsuitability as editor for such a review. Finally turning down Macmillan's offer of the post in 1876, he explained that he did not possess the confidence of historical scholars essential to such a position, and feared that he would be looked upon as a person imposed merely in the hope of securing a popular circulation. Moreover, he felt he would be able to pursue his particular approach to history more freely if not placed in official relation to writers so clearly unsympathetic to it (LG, 436).

It is no less true that Green felt keenly the criticism of those who refused to consider him a serious historian because of his popularizing and synthetic approach. He never expected the *Short History* to win him "historic fame" with the professionals, and in fact had continued his studies of the Angevin Kings while completing it in the hope of eventually winning their regard for his scholarly abilities in that way (LG, 258-59). Disparagement of the *Short History* as a mere popularizing of other people's ideas spurred him to write *The Making of England*. Only with that book's success did he note "the cessation at last of that attempt, which has been so steadily carried on for the last ten years, to drum me out of the world of historical scholars and set me among the 'picturesque compilers' " (LG, 482).

His scholarly efforts notwithstanding, Green's sympathies remained with "literary" historians, and he achieved his greatest successes as a popularizer. His greater narrative genius enabled him to go farther than either Stubbs or Freeman in rescuing early England from the hands of the antiquarians and romancers and making it a living reality for his audience. "Philosophical enough for scholars, and popular enough for schoolboys,"48 the *Short History* in particular was able to tap the widest possible segment of the later Victorian audience. According to Philip Gell, it survived the censure of the early professional school at Oxford, materially advancing the new popularity of historical study and widely influencing a whole generation of younger students: "It used to be said that when men leaving Oxford wished to improve their minds, if they were rich they traveled, and if they were poor they read Green's *Short History*."49 At once compendious and accessible, the *Short History* enjoyed success as a school text and was no less attractive to nonacademic audiences, including
the ever-increasing ranks of lower class readers newly educated at the Board schools and eager to gain useful knowledge.

Green's works struck many responsive chords in later Victorian thought. His drive for synthesis, if at odds with incipient specialization, nourished the still vital longing for a comprehensive "philosophical" ordering and control of facts. He expanded history of culture harmonized well with the more complex conception of nationalism developing in Europe. He offered convincing historical confirmation of the evolutionary concepts rapidly becoming commonplace in the mind of the time. If some found his liberalism a bit too enthusiastic, his version of the development of England's freedoms still enjoyed a wide appeal in the more egalitarian atmosphere of late Victorian society. Green moralized democracy even more thoroughly than Arnold. He had greater need to do so; deprived of its religious underpinnings in an increasingly sceptical age, ethical advance by itself was far too vulnerable a concept. Like Macaulay's, Green's story of temporal success served quasi-religious ends. He showed how evidence of political and social progress might satisfy his readers' longings to believe that the struggles of the race had made them better people, brought them to a more perfect world. Those many late Victorians troubled by orthodoxy and uneasy even with Carlyle's nondoctrinal mysticism could find in Green's secularized saga of continuous progress what the Times did: reassuring evidence that "in no chapter of the world's history is the truth of Hamlet's sentence more plainly proved than in that of England—'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will.' "

Green's role in late nineteenth-century scholarship remains a significant one. The idea of writing history as an integrated narrative of national civilization has become so commonplace that Green's achievement loses some of the impact it had at the time. In the competence and comprehensiveness of its account, the Short History broke new ground. Ironically, it was his very comprehensiveness and reorientation of historical priorities that distanced Green most significantly from the concerns of professional scholarship in his day. Specialization seemed increasingly necessary to achieve the minute accuracy of detail, the command of original sources, and the qualified judgments essential to professional standards. The breadth of Green's analyses demanded a level of generalization that made minute precision and qualification virtually impossible. To many serious scholars, his efforts to reach a popular audience with a readable narrative
further compromised the objectivity and restraint they felt were essential to historical truth. Green's inaccuracy undoubtedly gave support to their fears, even though more of his errors were caused by his own disadvantages in time, health, and memory than by his desire for rhetorical effect or the need to generalize.

Green's shortcomings should not detract from the importance of his efforts to bridge the gap between general and specialized audiences. He had in effect to become a crusader for an audience earlier historians had taken for granted. There was no way he could escape being controversial; his position by definition challenged assumptions crucially important in the formative stages of professional identity. In the view of Frederic Harrison, himself poised between popular and professional positions, Green had usefully counterbalanced the weight of the new scholarship. Harrison lamented in 1898 that

the historians of the present century, under the influence originally of Ranke in Germany, of Guizot in France, and Sir Henry Ellis and other editors of the Museum and Rolls records in England, have devoted themselves rather to original research than to eloquent narrative, to the study of special institutions and limited epochs, to the scientific probing of contemporary witnesses and punctilious precision of minute detail. The school of Freeman, Stubbs, Gardiner, and Bryce has quite displaced the taste of our grandfathers for artistic narrative and a glowing style. Where the older men thought of permanent literature, the new school is content with scientific research. Would that J. R. Green had lived out his life.

Few works of literary merit comparable to Green's succeeded in carving out a satisfactory middle ground between the rising tide of vulgarized history for the masses and the increasingly specialized literature of the professionals in the last quarter of the century. Few appealed so successfully to a large popular audience while building on such solid and extensive foundations. Few provided judgments of such genuine authority while avoiding the aridity and diffuseness that became the stereotype of much professional scholarship. Would that John Richard Green had lived out his life, if only to show whether it would have been possible to prevent the irreconcilability of popular and professional interests from becoming in many respects a self-fulfilling prophecy in the years to come.