"This is not so much a history, as an epic poem; and notwithstanding, or even in consequence of this, the truest of histories" (Seigel, 52). So began J. S. Mill's enthusiastic notice of *The French Revolution* just two months after its appearance in May of 1837. For the first time, a work appeared with the name "Thomas Carlyle" on the title page; he was now an author, an authority. Mill's early notice set the tone for the enthusiastic reviews that followed, including those by Thackeray in the *Times*, Thomas Anstey in the *Dublin Review*, John Heraud in *Fraser's*, and John Forster in the *Examiner*; even reviewers who did not approve of *The French Revolution* acknowledged that Carlyle was someone to be reckoned with. By 1840, he had been discussed in all the major reviews—the *Edinburgh, Quarterly, London and Westminster*, and *Dublin Reviews*—the latter three publishing extensive, omnibus reviews of his collected works. With this success, his publishers rushed out new editions of *Sartor Resartus*, his collected essays, and his translation of *Wilhelm Meister*. Satisfied that the book was admired and confident that he had finally found an audience, Carlyle felt at last that he had been granted authority to speak (*CL*, 9:272; see 311, 316, 328, 335).

The elite of London society—"Ladies this and Ladies that . . . old men of four score; men middle-aged with fine steel-grey heads; young men of the Universities, of the Law professions"—now came to hear him lecture (*CL*, 10:94). He was introduced to leaders of the Whig aristocracy, including Lord and Lady Holland, Lord Morpeth, Lord and Lady Harriet Baring, as well as Thomas Spring Rice, the chancellor of the Exchequer (*CL*, 9:335, 10:28, 66, 11:19, 38, 40, 130, 12:80, 104; Kaplan, 257). He also made the rounds of London's intellectual and artistic circles, encountering the likes of Henry Hallam,
William Whewell, Alfred de Vigny, Charles Babbage, Daniel Webster, William Gladstone, William Charles Macready, Charles Dickens, Geraldine Jewsbury, and Alfred Tennyson. He was in demand not only as a guest at dinner parties, but as a supporter of public causes like the copyright bill, the penny post, and the founding of the London library (CME, 4:205–7; CL, 10:79–81; Christianson, “Universal Penny Postage”; Kaplan, 262–63). And now that he had succeeded in literature and no longer had need of them, the academic posts he had sought in vain were offered to him.

Having been granted authority, he wished to use it to author a new social order. The French Revolution had been an inverse epic—not the belief, but the unbelief—of his culture. He now sought to author an epic that expressed belief and would restore authority to English society. The theme of “past and present” that dominated his writings during this period was the natural outcome of his attempt to create an epic out of the history of the past that would function as the mythic expression of belief for the present. Throughout the next decade he returned again and again to Cromwell and the Puritan era, while at the same time he was persistently drawn to the problems of the present day. Out of this dual concern, he shaped a new genre of social criticism that found its finest expression, naturally enough, in Past and Present.

Carlyle responded to the severe economic hardships Britain suffered between 1838 and 1850 with his most important works of social criticism. The first of the series of economic recessions that were to keep England in economic and political turmoil until the end of the 1840s began in 1837, almost at the same time he finished The French Revolution. Although The French Revolution depicted the failure of the French to author a constitution and become epic, it created an English audience that was willing to listen to Carlyle. Carlyle now sought to shape this audience, which was as yet the unheroic product of the era of revolution, into an epic nation. He wrote Chartism and Past and Present toward the beginning of this epoch, when he had the greatest confidence in his ability to use his writing to effect this change. “The Negro Question” and Latter-Day Pamphlets, written at the end of the period when he had lost his confidence, brought his reputation to the nadir of his writing career. Throughout this period, he was absorbed in the history of the Puritan era. From December 1838, when he began reading up on the Protectorate, until the denouement of the
Squire papers controversy in December 1849, Cromwell dominated Carlyle's thoughts and writings as he sought, unsuccessfully, to create his English epic.

From Literature to Polity

Carlyle had once hoped that literature would constitute belief that would in turn constitute social order, but, having found that the search for belief endlessly defers closure, he began to shift his focus from literature to politics, from discovering the author of a myth to discovering political authority. In shifting from novel to history, from the question of individual faith to the problem of social belief, he had steadily become more interested in problems of polity rather than of literature. In the 1820s, when he was neglecting history in favor of literature, he was indifferent to politics, and in the early 1830s he continued to hold himself apart from the political issues of the day, professing indifference to the elections that followed the Reform Bill in 1832, 1834, and 1835 (CL, 6:284, 7:197, 8:20). He did favor reform—after the first reform bill in 1831 was defeated he wondered whether it was his "duty" to speak out rather than "stand aloof"—but he had little faith in the kind of reform sought by the Whig establishment (TNB, 203; see CL, 6:52). Indeed, he regarded the onset of the recession in 1837 as a sign that the Reform Bill had failed. In The French Revolution, which he completed that year, he had adopted a more political orientation toward the problem of authority than he had in Sartor Resartus. For the first time, he became interested in the outcome of the elections, and by the early 1840s he was willing to acknowledge that his "nature was Political" (CL, 9:277; NL, 1:282).

In the spring of 1838, when the Chartist movement began, Carlyle conceived the idea of writing a "Discourse on the Working Classes" (CL, 10:15). Convinced that it was his duty to "address . . . English fellow-men on the condition of men in England," he continued for the next year to contemplate how to formulate his thoughts (CL, 10:224, n. 14; see 11:104, 218, 235). While the Chartists were meeting in London to petition Parliament in the spring of 1839, he was lecturing in Portman Square on revolutions in modern Europe. Carlyle considered Chartism the latest rebirth of the revolution; the material of Chartism, he wrote, exists "in the hearts of all our working population, and would
right gladly body itself in any promising shape; but Chartism begins to seem unpromising. What to do with it? Yes, there is the question. Europe has been struggling to give some answer, very audibly since the year 1789" (CL, 11:160–61). He was not interested in the Chartists' proposals for electoral reform, but he felt that Chartism manifested genuine social problems which could not be ignored. When, in August, Parliament rejected the Chartist petition, he felt compelled to demonstrate the importance of the movement. He immediately set to work, completing his long essay in three months.

Carlyle wanted to address this discourse to those who were most likely to provide a solution to England's problems, but he was uncertain who that would be. If English society was fragmented, as he claimed it was, he had to determine which segment of society to address. As did his fellow citizens, he tended to see the divisions in English society in terms of the existing parliamentary parties. In deciding who might best lead England and whom he should therefore address, he felt he must decide among the speculative radicals, the Whigs, and the Tories.

Although he had written for periodicals associated with all three parties, Carlyle was most intimately connected with the Whigs. He was a friend of Francis Jeffrey who, as editor of the Edinburgh Review, published his first major reviews, but he had always been considered something of a maverick by its Whig readership, and soon after Jeffrey passed the editorship on to Macvey Napier in 1829, Carlyle's relationship with the Edinburgh ended. At the same time, Carlyle was becoming increasingly suspicious of the utilitarian bent of Whig reform, and he had no sympathy for the Enlightenment ideals of Lord Melbourne, who became prime minister in 1834. His disenchantment became complete in the later 1830s, when the complacent Whig majority began to oppose further reform. Since his essay would make them his principal target and he had little hope of changing their policies, he made no attempt to address them or to seek a Whig vehicle for his thoughts. More likely vehicles for his essay on Chartism were the respectable Tory Quarterly Review—he was now avoiding the "fat glar [mud] of Fraser's Toryism"—and the "unfruitful rubbish-mound of Mill's Radicalism" (CL, 9:76).

For a time, Carlyle had some hope that the Whigs' allies, the speculative radicals, might be converted into a more satisfactory reform party (CL, 5:280; see 11:222). Yet his feelings toward the radicals were even more sharply divided than his feelings about the Whigs. In the
early 1830s, he frequently identified himself, like Teufelsdrockh, as a radical, and as late as 1837 he insisted that he was still radical, only averse to Benthamite "Formulism" (CL, 6:154, 183, 9:338). It was just that there was no "right Radicalism" (CL, 9:256). Comparing the radicals to the philosophe-inspired Girondins, he found in both "Formalism, hidebound Pedantry, superficiality, narrowness, barrenness" as well as the same "cold clean-washed patronising talk about 'the masses'" (CL, 9:69; see 187, 294; FR, 1:33). Unable to accept their insistence on rational utility as the basis for law and government, he hoped at first to convert them from speculative to "mystical" radicalism. For a time he even thought that he might found a "mystico-radical school" by becoming editor of the new radical journal (CL, 5:338, 6:72, 7:80–81, 218). But Mill and his friends were too committed to Benthamite principles to award the editorship to a man who detested the principle of utility, and Carlyle was not even given the opportunity to contribute to the London and Westminster Review until 1837 (Kaplan, 215). Nonetheless, because he shared with the radicals a desire for reform and because he still hoped to influence them, Carlyle approached Mill with his project of writing on Chartism when he first conceived it in 1838. But when Mill refused to listen to his criticisms of the radicals' project, Carlyle concluded that he could not write for the London and Westminster.

Instead, he wrote to John Gibson Lockhart, proposing an article for the Quarterly Review. It appeared that the Tories were about to regain power, and Carlyle wanted to provide them with a political program. When he became dissatisfied with Whig policies, he began to reconsider his antipathy to the Tories, whom he had been happy to see turned out in 1832 (CL, 6:307). His desire for a hierarchical social order made the principle of the aristocracy appealing to him even though he had little respect for the existing peerage. Since his views on the working class differed "intensely from those of the speculating radicals, intensely from those of the Whigs," he now found that "the better class of the Conservatives were on the whole the persons to whom it were hopefulest and in many ways fittest to address [him]self," that by "addressing" them, he could "awaken [them] to quite a new sense of their duties" (CL, 11:104, 12:11; see 117). Yet, with the exception of the romantic Tory Richard Monckton Milnes, Carlyle had no friends in the Tory party, and they were not about to be told what to do by a writer who had a long association with the
Whigs and radicals. When Lockhart turned down his proposal, he had no choice but to issue *Chartism* as a pamphlet at his own expense (see also Richardson).

**Chartism and the Rhetoric of Partisanship**

Carlyle’s attempt to find a place for *Chartism* in the political reviews reveals the extent to which he conceived his discussion of the condition of England in terms of the analyses and solutions offered by the dominant political parties. He still hoped to awaken the Tories to their duty, but by publishing on his own he was free to write an essay “equally astonishing to Girondin Radicals, Donothing Aristocrat Conservatives, and Unbelieving Dilettante Whigs” (*CL*, 11:218; see 226, 10:104, 111, 117). Although the style of *Chartism* is distinctively Carlylean, Carlyle confined himself to the discourse of Parliament and the political reviews, the discourse of political economy rather than the ethical discourse of quasi-religious belief. Of course, Carlyle wanted to reshape and extend the boundaries of political discourse as well as to reshape the parties. If he had wanted to make the radicals mystics, he wanted to make the Tories radical (since the parties themselves were unstable at this period, undergoing major transformation, this aim was not as unrealistic as it may first appear). He was happy to find that the first notices of *Chartism*, in the Whig *Morning Chronicle* and the Tory *Spectator*, recognized his new Toryism, what the radical Tail’s *Edinburgh Review* called “radical Toryism” (*CL*, 12:3–4; Seigel, 165).

From the beginning, Carlyle intended to attack the utilitarian principles embodied in reform legislation like the Poor Law of 1834, and *Chartism* continues an argument with Mill on this question that began in their correspondence concerning it. When Carlyle informed Mill that his essay would criticize the New Poor Law, Mill had defended the law by citing the improved condition of the working class. Carlyle replied that under present circumstances “it is a bitter mockery to talk of ‘improvement’” (*CL*, 10:15). Carlyle saw this as a key issue in the radical position, claiming, a year later, that Mill had refused to publish his essay unless he “would come to the conclusion that their situation was gradually improving!” (*CL*, 11:117; see 12:11). In *Chartism*, Carlyle adapted his reply to Mill to attack the “cruel mockery” of the principles underlying radical reform legislation (*CME*, 4:142).
Yet although it attacks the utilitarians, Chartism employs the utilitarian mode of argument. For example, Carlyle argued that the condition of the working class was growing worse, rather than improving, because a growing labor pool and the displacement of labor by machinery were steadily reducing the value of labor and ruining living conditions (CME, 4:141). Instead of questioning the validity of classical economics, this argument uses one of its basic principles—the effect of the supply of labor on wages—to attack the arguments of the radicals. Similarly, Carlyle criticized the New Poor Law not because it dehumanized poor relief (he approved of several of the radicals' innovations, including centralized administration and the principle of encouraging work), but because it erroneously assumed that work was available for all able-bodied individuals, once again an issue of supply and demand. Although he did occasionally set aside the plain style of rational argument and made affective appeals to the reader, he used these appeals only to heighten his argument, not to undermine utilitarian discourse (e.g., CME, 4:141-42).

The rhetorical strategy of Chartism is most limiting when it comes to articulating solutions. While it effectively attacks laissez-faire, it is much less successful in envisioning the new social order. Indeed, because the critique of utilitarianism, which was implicit rather than explicit, overwhelms the discussion of the need for authority, reviewers tended to miss it. Focusing instead on Carlyle's more specific proposals for a national system of education to improve the condition of the working class and a national program for emigration to reduce the size of the labor pool, they were quick to criticize his solutions as vague, impractical, even unoriginal. On the last count, at least, they were justified; both programs had been debated in Parliament for years. Carlyle's support for these programs—which he regarded as ways in which the government could assert its authority—demonstrates the extent to which the arguments of Chartism were dictated by the parameters of parliamentary debate. (When Carlyle repeated these proposals in Past and Present, he was to stress that they were only examples of what an authoritative government might attempt to do, not solutions in themselves.) His attraction to the old aristocracy, the existing Tory party, raises the same questions. He was not unaware that, as Lady Sydney Morgan pointed out, the same Tory aristocracy that had just a few months earlier staged the absurd Eglinton tourna-
ment hardly seemed likely to be converted to radicalism (29). Chartism itself concludes with the complaint that instead of providing the leadership England needed, the aristocracy was busy preserving game (CL, 4:204).

Carlyle did not achieve a vision of the recovery of authority in Chartism because he confined himself to a discourse that he considered part of the problem. Chartism, like The French Revolution, criticizes the endless speech-making of parliaments, but rather than providing an alternative to parliamentary discourse it reinforces the terms of the parliamentary debate (see CME, 4:168; CL, 11:43). Furthermore, Carlyle only gets as far as "gird[ing]" himself "up for actual doing"; his discourse neither acts on the English people nor shows them how to act (CME, 4:190; see P. Rosenberg, 138). Like the discourse of the Girondins and radicals, the discourse of Chartism is effective in undermining the status quo but does not enable one to envision a new social order. No wonder that the Monthly Chronicle found Carlyle's "creed . . . without hope—his labour without progression" (107).

The "Hero as King" and the Idyll as Theocracy

Carlyle continued to seek a literary form through which he could envision and represent the recuperation of authority. Even as the first reviews of Chartism were appearing, he was looking forward to a new series of lectures that would give him the opportunity to formulate a theory of the cyclical rise and fall of social authority. While his previous lectures had for the most part reworked older material, he would for the first time use his lectures to work out an idea that would be worth "promulgat[ing] . . . farther" as a book (CL, 12:184). With On Heroes and Hero-Worship, Carlyle shifted the locus of authority from the realm of literature to the realm of politics, a shift manifested in a last-minute change in the order of the lectures. He initially planned to end the series with a lecture on Burns, but sometime between April 11, when he began writing notes for the lectures, and May 5, when the lectures began, he altered his plan and decided to conclude with a lecture on Cromwell and Napoleon (CL, 12:103, 115, 128). In addition to demonstrating the importance he would give to the hero as king, this change indicates that, as Carlyle himself admitted, the lectures were "not so much historic as didactic" (CL, 12:94).
We must read them not as a history of authority, but as a history of Carlyle's own attempt to envision a new form of authority.

Through the figure of the hero, Carlyle attempted to resolve the tension between transcendence and history. The hero is simultaneously transcendental, in that he always embodies the same transcendental authority, and historical, in that the embodiment belongs to a specific time, place, and culture. While all eleven figures discussed in the lectures are heroes—that is, possess transcendental authority—their authority takes six different historical forms: the hero as divinity, prophet, poet, priest, man of letters, and king. At times, the dual nature of the hero amounts to a contradiction rather than a resolution of the tension between historical and transcendental authority. When Carlyle argues that all the heroes are "originally of one stuff" and that Mirabeau could have been a poet and Burns a politician, he tends to deprive them of their historical specificity (43, 79). By contrast, the historicity of the individual heroic types puts into question his assertion that, since the hero transcends history, any hero could appear in any era. Carlyle attempts to resolve the tension between transcendence and history through the form of On Heroes. The four heroes following the hero as divinity become enmeshed in their historical era, and, by the time the hero as man of letters appears, transcendental authority has nearly disappeared. The final lecture, on the hero as king, attempts to escape history and recuperate authority by circling back to the first, the hero as divinity.10

The hero as divinity has a privileged position in the sequence of heroes. Whereas the other heroes manifest divinity in human form, Odin represents unmediated transcendental authority itself. The embodiment of both religious and political authority, he can create an aboriginal language through which belief becomes social order. He is, in effect, the God of Genesis creating the Garden of Eden.

Only Odin can be the originary creator; the succeeding heroes belong to the postlapsarian era. The Odin-like qualities that these later heroes possess increasingly become submerged in their historical roles. They must first destroy the remains of the historical mediations through which authority had been transmitted in the preceding era and then recreate society out of the remains of these mediations. But, like the French during the revolution, they have difficulty in shifting from destruction to creation. Mahomet the iconoclast, rather than
Odin, is the model for the succeeding heroes (120, 132–33, 199–200). (In “The Hero as Poet,” Mahomet appears nine times, Odin only once; in “The Hero as Priest,” Luther is compared to Odin once but to Mahomet several times.) If Mahomet can still create a theocracy, Knox fails to do so, the hero as priest “revers[ing]” the work of previous heroes who have “buil[t] . . . Religions” (151–52, 116). While Carlyle wants to argue that each hero fully recovers the authority of his predecessor, that time and history do not make a difference, he cannot avoid noticing that his lectures represent the steady diminishment of authority: “The Hero taken as Divinity; the Hero taken as Prophet; then next the Hero taken only as Poet: does it not look as if our estimate of the Great Man, epoch after epoch, were continually diminishing? We take him first for a god, then for one god-inspired; and now in the next stage of it, his most miraculous word gains from us only the recognition that he is a Poet, beautiful verse-maker, man of genius, or such like!” (84). The latter heroes inaugurate the revolutionary era of destruction.

By the time we reach the man of letters, the hero is completely enmeshed in history and revolution, his transcendental authority diminished almost to nothing. While the hero as divinity is no longer possible, the man of letters had never been possible before; he belongs to history, not to all times (154). In “The Hero as Man of Letters,” we can see Carlyle revising the representation of the literary man that he had borrowed from Fichte twenty years earlier. Although he begins by repeating Fichte’s idea that the man of letters manifests a “divine idea,” the remainder of the lecture demonstrates that he no longer believes in the authority of the writer. Whereas the hero as poet, the Dante or Shakespeare, could create an epic for an era of belief, Johnson, Rousseau, and Burns belong to a century dominated by unbelief. Johnson and Rousseau both produce gospels, but Johnson’s “Gospel . . . of Moral Prudence” is so firmly embedded in history that it is already dead by Carlyle’s time, and Rousseau’s “evangel” has produced unbelief, the opposite of social order (182). Carlyle’s original intention to conclude with a lecture on Burns, a figure with whom he closely identified, indicates that he may have been planning a more optimistic representation of the man of letters. But instead of portraying the man of letters as the savior of the modern era, the lecture portrays him as a symptom of its problems. Burns, like Rousseau and Johnson, seeks authority and does not find it; he attempts to shape the world
but is shaped by it (158). The man of letters is not a hero in the same sense that his predecessors were; he is a mere “Half-Hero” (171).

If Carlyle had wished to portray the modern man of letters as possessor of transcendental authority, as at least the equivalent of the hero as poet, he could have chosen Goethe as his exemplar. In fact, the choice was so obvious that he felt compelled to explain the exclusion of Goethe at the outset of the lecture. Yet his stated reason, that Goethe was too little known to be understood in England, is odd, to say the least, coming from the man who had done so much to make Goethe known there. The exclusion of Goethe suggests that Carlyle had lost faith in Goethe’s authority, particularly in his ability to create a new social order through his art. Johnson, Rousseau, and Burns, he seems to say, represent all that the man of letters can really achieve.

That Carlyle should discover in the hero as king the figure who recovers the transcendental authority of the hero as divinity is just as surprising as his exclusion of Goethe in “The Hero as Man of Letters.” In *The French Revolution*, he had demonstrated that monarchy, at least feudal monarchy, was dead, but, although both Cromwell and Napoleon ruled nations, neither was, strictly speaking, a “king.” Carlyle chose them to represent, not feudal monarchy, but the reinvention of kingship in the era of revolution. In effect, the hero as lawmaker supplants the hero as culture-maker, the wielder of the sword, the wielder of words.

The hero as king is “a kind of God” who recovers the transcendental authority of the hero as divinity and the lost transcendental idyll. But in order to recover this “ideal country,” this “perfect state” of theocracy, the king must escape the mediations of history that have encumbered his predecessors (198, 197). Instead of manifesting the transcendental in writing, he must put it directly into action. The sequence of heroes from Odin to the men of letters are all authors whose writing projects manifest their diminishing authority. Odin is literally the first man of letters, creating an alphabet with which to record mythology (27–28). Mahomet writes the Koran, which Carlyle had equated in “On Biography” with foundational cultural myths like the Bible and the *Iliad*. Dante and Shakespeare record the spiritual and secular epics of their culture, Christianity and chivalry, in *The Divine Comedy* and the *Henriad*. But Luther can do no more than translate the Bible, a mythus that is already losing its authority; and, while Johnson, Rousseau, and Burns produce “letters”—one thinks especially of Johnson’s dictionary—they are incapable of creating myth or
epic. Cromwell and Napoleon break the pattern. With them the hero becomes an actor, not a writer. Neither Cromwell, who puts an end to the parliamentary speech-making that endlessly defers creation of his theocracy, nor Napoleon, who puts an end to the Terror, mediates the transcendental ideal through a finite text; both translate it directly into the social order through action (229—34).

The movement from man of letters or religious leader to king or political leader manifests not only a shift from writing to action, but a shift from the priority of belief that informs social order to the priority of law that enforces social order. The first three lectures portray eras in which belief creates a social order, the eras of paganism, Islam, and Christianity. The last three lectures portray eras in which revolution prevents the creation of social order. Luther and Knox attempt to establish a new theocracy but fail because they have destroyed the authority of the pope (199—200). The medieval theocracy in which the religious authority of the pope took precedence over the secular authority of kings—represented by the submission of Emperor Henry IV to Pope Hildebrand at Canossa, Henry acknowledging that “the world [i.e., Henry as king] could have no legitimate control in things spiritual”—was no longer viable in an era of revolution (HL, 74; see HHW, 152). In the “Hero as King,” royal authority subsumes religious authority; the king with “something of the Pontiff in him,” rather than the pope, will put the spiritual into practice as “head of the Church” (199). Britain needs more than Knox the priest, Carlyle decides; it needs Cromwell the king (CL, 12:15c).

Yet while the people obey the hero as divinity because they believe in what he says, they obey the hero as king because he compels them by “weight and force” (231). Carlyle would have it that the king’s actions manifest his transcendental authority—that the hero as king is not fundamentally different from the hero as divinity, since all heroes reveal the divine law—but it turns out that we do not know how to recognize this authority (230, 234). “It is a fearful business,” he concludes, “that of having your Able-man to seek, and not knowing in what manner to proceed about it!” (199). Carlyle calls for hero-worship, but he cannot show us how to find or recognize a hero.

On Heroes and Hero-Worship elides these difficulties in its culminating vision of the recovery of authority by the hero as king who recovers the domain of unmediated belief and returns us to the prelapsarian idyll of the hero as divinity. In this regard, at least, On Heroes succeeds where Chartism had failed, enabling Carlyle to imagine a new class of
leaders, modern heroes, who would play a central role in his new epic for modern England. At the same time, however, the figure of the hero as king, which would dominate his writings for the rest of his life, marks the limits and underlies the failure of his social vision.

Cromwell Past and Present

Another way to explain the anachronism of concluding *On Heroes and Hero-Worship* with Cromwell is to say that Carlyle did not consider Cromwell part of the past but a hero for the present. Since the end of 1838 he had been considering whether the Puritan era might be the subject of his next book, presenting his first public defense of Cromwell in his lectures on modern revolutions in the spring of 1839, and then concluding the lectures on heroes with Cromwell the following year (*CL*, 11:246). Immediately after completing those lectures, he began reading extensively about the civil wars and Cromwell, whom he now regarded as the “last (King) Könning of England” (*CL*, 14:8, n. 4). He wanted to do more than write a history, however; he wanted quite literally to bring Cromwell back to life, to “save a hero for [his] country.” Convinced that “the one hope of help” for his “own poor generation . . . consisted in the possibility of new Cromwells and new Puritans,” he “pray[ed] daily for a new Oliver” (*RWE*, 328; *CL*, 14:184; see 210). The Puritan revolution was incomplete because the settlement of 1660 had turned back the clock and restored the old social order. Carlyle sought to complete the revolution in his own era by restoring Cromwell’s reputation and encouraging the emergence of a Cromwellian hero.

To achieve this goal, Carlyle needed to create a “new [literary] form from centre to surface” that would make epic history reshape the present as well as reflect the past (*LL*, 1:300). Since he regarded history as epic—what the present believes to be true—history was as much concerned with the present as with the past. The problem was that, just as the Puritan revolution had been suspended by the settlement of 1660, so the making of the English epic had been suspended by the failure of English authors. England had the material for an epic history, Carlyle lamented, but English literature had failed to speak “what the gods were pleased to act”; instead of an epic or Bible, it had produced only a “Collins’s Peerage and the illegible torpedo rubbish mounds” of dry-as-dust histories (*Fielding and Tarr*, 18). Just as
he hoped to inspire the emergence of a new Cromwell, so he hoped that his history of the Puritan revolution would provide an epic for the nineteenth century. The “seventeenth” century is “worthless,” he concluded, “except precisely in so far as it can be made the nineteenth” (RWE, 328).18

Yet Carlyle did not succeed in creating the “new form” he needed. “No work I ever tried gets on worse with me than this of Cromwell,” he wrote. “I know not for my life in what way to take it up, how to get into the heart of it, what on earth to do with it. For many months I have lain at it beleaguering it; literally girdling in all sides; watching if on any side there might be found admittance into it” (fol. 95 and v.). He complained repeatedly that it was “impossible” to discover the reality of Puritan history beneath the documentary “rubbish mounds” it had left behind (CL, 14:229; see LL, 1:299, 360; RWE, 350).19 Although he wanted to believe that Cromwell could still live for the present, he discovered that his hero was locked away in the inaccessible past and often complained that the Puritan revolution could not be made as interesting as the French Revolution because it was not, like the latter, still alive in the minds of his contemporaries (CL, 11:15, 12:305, 14:8; Fielding and Tarr, 16).20

Between 1839, when he began working on Cromwell, and 1844, when he decided merely to edit Cromwell’s letters and speeches, Carlyle continued unsuccessfully to seek a literary form that would merge past and present.21 He tried to create scenes like the “Procession” in The French Revolution, to find a structural nucleus for the history in a list of “Moments” and a dramatic scenario, even to write “rhyme,” but none of these attempts made Cromwell come alive (Forster, fols. 93, 105 v., 154; LL, 1:299).22 The difficulties manifest themselves in a brief passage that literally attempts to revive Cromwell as a ghost speaking, like the ghost of Hamlet’s father, to the modern-day sons of England: “Not Christ’s Gospel now, and a Godly Ministry; but the People’s Charter and Free Trade in Corn. My Poor beloved countrymen,—alas, Priests have become chimerical, and your Lords . . . do stick the stubble ground with dry bushes in preservation of their partridges” (Fielding and Tarr, 16). Instead of uniting the centuries, however, Cromwell’s seventeenth-century syntax jars against the incongruous nineteenth-century vocabulary, sounding ridiculous rather than portentous. Part of Carlyle’s problem was that, whereas The French Revolution had been dominated by speech, he intended the book on Cromwell to be dominated by action. At one point, he attempted to emphasize action by
casting the history in the form of an epic drama in twelve acts. Yet, although King Charles's flight, like the “Night of Spurs” in *The French Revolution*, provided “a dramatic scene,” on the whole he found that the history of the civil wars contained “no action” and was “not dramatic” (9–10). Cromwell’s battles would provide action, but not of a very dramatic or symbolic kind, and, in the end, nearly half of the scenario dramatizes squabbles between Cromwell and Parliament, exactly what Carlyle wanted to avoid.

Already in 1841, as he saw England slipping into the worst economic recession of the century, Carlyle was becoming discouraged with his failure to make any progress on Cromwell. In May of 1842, as he journeyed to and from Scotland, he was struck by the sight of idle factories in Manchester and disturbed by his encounters with impoverished farm laborers (*CL*, 14:178, 183–84). When the Tories finally regained power in 1841, he had predicted that Peel would quickly abrogate the Corn Laws, but Peel was slow to act (*CL*, 13:139). In the spring of 1842, Parliament once again refused to receive a Chartist petition, and that summer riots and disturbances spread throughout the country, even into his native Annandale (*CL*, 14:214). Carlyle concluded that England needed a “very different sort” of prime minister, “a new Oliver” (*CL*, 14:184; see 24, 39, 224).

In August, on the anniversary of Peterloo, Carlyle noted, there was a workers’ insurrection in Manchester (Bliss, 152). Five days later, noting that the insurrection was still going on, he informed Jane Carlyle that he was “writing, writing; God knows at what precisely” (Bliss, 153). He had begun *Past and Present*. Determined to use the past to address the nation on the subject of this crisis, he abandoned Cromwell and the seventeenth century in favor of Abbot Samson and the twelfth. While visiting sites associated with Cromwell that autumn, he saw in the contrast between the St. Ives workhouse and the nearby ruins of the abbey of St. Edmund the relationship between past and present he had been seeking to illustrate. After trying to write about Cromwell for more than three years without success, he completed *Past and Present*, his most powerful piece of social criticism, in just a few months.

While the use of the past in *Past and Present* was to provide him with the vision of an alternative society that had been lacking in *Chartism*, Carlyle also needed to determine how to address his audience. By addressing existing political parties in *Chartism*, he had confined himself
to the factional politics of the present. In *Past and Present* he turned to England’s ruling classes, the aristocratic landowners and middle-class industrialists themselves, rather than to the parties that represented them in Parliament. While *Chartism* sought to create radical Tories, *Past and Present* would attempt to transform wealthy industrialists into captains of industry.

This strategy evolved in dialogue with the critics of *Chartism*, particularly William Sewell in the *Quarterly Review* and Herman Merivale in the *Edinburgh Review*. Although Sewell and Carlyle had little in common, each found something to like about the other.\(^{27}\) Carlyle had little respect for Sewell’s Pusey-inspired faith in the Church of England, but he preferred Sewell’s belief in a dead religion to Merivale’s radical “atheism” (*CL*, 12:282; see 292). For Carlyle, Merivale’s insistence that government intervention could not eliminate hunger was tantamount to arguing that since “starvation and misery among the poorer classes is perpetual and eternal . . . all good Government consists in uniting of the monied classes to keep down that one miserable class, and make the pigs *die without squealing*” (*CL*, 12:204; see 206, 264, 282, 291–92).\(^{28}\) Carlyle would borrow Sewell’s theological discourse to counter the bloodless reasoning of Merivale’s utilitarianism and to provide an ethical center for his analysis of contemporary society.

At the same time, Carlyle did not intend to address the Tories again; instead, he envisioned a governing class that would combine the hierarchical leadership and religious faith of the Tories with the Whig Radicals’ industry and drive for reform. Rather than appealing to politicians, he would appeal to industrialists, demanding that they make principles of justice the foundation of their business practices: “we must have industrial *barons*, of a quite new suitable sort; workers *lovingly* related to their taskmasters,—related in God . . . not related in Mammon alone! This will be the real aristocracy” (*CL*, 13:317). Carlyle wrote this to James Garth Marshall of the Marshall family that had already been influenced by his writings and had attempted to implement some of his principles at Temple Mill. In Carlyle’s letters to Marshall, which are clearly intended to inspire Marshall to become a captain of industry, we can see Carlyle beginning to envision the principal audience of *Past and Present*. In men like Marshall and the Quaker manufacturer mentioned in Chadwick’s report for the Poor Law Commission, Carlyle thought he saw the “beginning of a real Industrial *Baronhood*” (*CL*, 13:325).\(^{29}\)

In 1842 when he began *Past and Present*, Carlyle had every reason
to believe that his analyses and solutions would be taken seriously; his reputation had never been greater, and his authority was already being used to support calls for reform. The previous October, he learned that the editor of the *Manchester Times* had reprinted his description of the riots that had touched off the French Revolution as a “Plea for the Poor” (*CL*, 13:278). Later that autumn, in the conclusion of his essay on *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, he made his first public attempt to make the past speak to the present when he ironically compared the “divine right” of country squires—the staunchest defenders of the Corn Laws—to profit at the expense of the poor to the divine right of kings (*CME*, 4:259). The satirical passage was taken up by the newspapers and widely reprinted under the title “The Divine Right of Squires.” Carlyle was clearly pleased that a “word of [his]” might “help to relieve the world from an unsupportable oppression” (*CL*, 14:7). He was also pleased when his sister asked if he were going to be made “king.” Although he replied that there was no “danger” of that eventuality, he had, in fact, long enjoyed imagining what he would do if “they were to make [him] Cromwell of it all” (*CL*, 14:47).\(^{30}\) He knew he could not be made king, but he could at least use his words to inspire another to become the new Cromwell.

### Past and Present: Epic as Action

The form of *Past and Present* has two functions, to bring the past into the present—to recover the lost idyll—and to convert its audience—to represent the audience’s movement from the present into a future that recuperates the past. *Past and Present* does not simply analyze the condition of England, it *represents* that condition by depicting the various factions that make up English society in much the same way that *The French Revolution* had dramatized the voices of conflicting factions. Through dialogue between the prophetic author and the factions dividing English society, Carlyle imagines the conversion of his contemporaries and the emergence of a new era. In order to represent the audience’s movement from the present into the future, he divides *Past and Present* into visions of how an idyllic monastery was recovered by an “Ancient Monk” in the past, an analysis of the conditions facing “The Modern Worker” in the present, and a “Horoscope” of the future. In the process, *Past and Present* transforms epic as myth
or text into epic as fertile nation, enabling Carlyle to imagine the recuperation of the lost idyll but also introducing the authoritarianism that was to become predominant in *Latter-Day Pamphlets* and *Frederick the Great*.

A new voice reflecting Carlyle’s heightened sense of authority dominates the dialogues of *Past and Present*. Neither the Editor of *Sartor Resartus* nor Teufelsdröckh presumes to claim that what he says is “A God’s-message,” that “It is Fact, speaking once more, in miraculous thunder-voice, from out of the centre of the world.” Like the prophet, this speaker claims to bear a “God’s message” and threatens divine retribution: “Behold, ye shall grow wiser, or ye shall die!” (34). For the first time, the persona of the Carlylean narrator fully assumes the role of prophet who can speak with the transcendental authority of “Fact,” “Nature,” “the Universe,” “Nature’s eternal law,” “the Heavens,” or “the Highest God” (34; 160–61, 184, 187; 182, 217; 221; 269; 279, 281).

The prophetic narrator of *Past and Present* addresses his audience as if he were delivering a sermon. The narrator of *Chartism* had been a variation on the editorial voice of the political reviews for which Carlyle originally intended it. Its dominant tone is that of the disembodied voice of reason rather than Carlyle at his most characteristic: “A witty statesman said, you might prove anything by figures. We have looked into various statistic works, Statistic-Society Reports, Poor-Law Reports, Reports and Pamphlets not a few, with a sedulous eye to this question of the Working Classes and their general condition in England; we grieve to say, with as good as no result whatever” (*CME*, 4:124). Typically, this speaker does not address his audience as if he were speaking to it directly, but the narrator of *Past and Present*, seeking an immediate relationship with the members of his audience, addresses them as “brothers”: “O brother, can it be needful now, at this late epoch of experience, after eighteen centuries of Christian preaching for one thing, to remind thee of such a fact; which all manner of Mahometans, old Pagan Romans, Jews, Scythians and heathen Greeks . . . have managed at one time to see into; nay which thou thyself, till ‘red-tape’ strangled the inner life of thee, hadst once some inkling of: That there is justice here below; and even, at bottom, that there is nothing else but justice!” (*PP*, 14). The archaic diction of the passage—with its echoes of the King James Bible—is not the language of the respectable political review but of the pulpit. *Past and Present*
does not address its appeal to members of Parliament but seeks a broader constituency of middle- and upper-class readers, for many of whom the ethical discourse of the Bible remained as powerful as the discourse of political economy.

But although Carlyle thunders like a prophet, he does not wish to isolate himself from his congregation as Irving had done, and so he imagines dialogues between himself and his audience. As in *The French Revolution*, where he represented the conflicting voices of revolutionary factions, he creates a range of personae, personifications, and types who represent all sides of the debate about the condition of England. But, whereas in *The French Revolution* he could only apostrophize historical actors whose actions were already fixed in the past, in *Past and Present* he could hope to shape the future actions of his audience. This enabled him to organize *Past and Present* as a dialectical narrative through which he shapes his audience into a new class responsible for the salvation of England. In addition to adopting the role of the prophet, he represents himself as an observer with a unique, but not necessarily transcendental, perspective, as Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, Gottfried Sauerteig, a picturesque tourist who visits the St. Ives workhouse, and a newspaper reporter for the *Houndsditch Indicator*. Ranged against him are the sausage-maker Bobus Higgins of Houndsditch, the landlord of Castle-Rackrent, the industrial Firm of Plugson, Hunks and Company in St. Dolly Undershot, Pandarus Dogdraught, Aristides Rigmarole Esq. of the Destructive Party, the Hon. Alcides Dolittle of the Conservative Party, black Quashee, Haiti Duke of Marmalade, the merchant Sam Slick, Mecenas Twiddledee, and the continental newspaper editors Blusterowski, Colacorde and company.31 Carlyle’s use of dramatized discussion suggests that his audience is not being coerced by a superior power, but persuaded by the truths he reveals to them. These dialogues constitute a metanarrative in which Carlyle’s readers, initially opposed to him, eventually come to understand and believe him, narrator and audience merging in the concluding vision of social union.

In book 1 of *Past and Present*, entitled “Proem,” Carlyle reads the symbols and signs of the times in order to create a mythic framework for his analysis of the condition of England. As in *The French Revolution*, the titles of the chapters—“Midas,” “The Sphinx,” “Manchester Insurrection,” “Morrison’s Pill,” and so on—emphasize symbolic interpretation rather than systematic inquiry. The opening paragraph,
for example, makes the same argument as the opening paragraph of *Chartism*; but whereas *Chartism* simply states a thesis and elaborates it analytically, *Past and Present* elaborates it mythically by comparing England to Midas, “full of wealth . . . yet . . . dying of inanition” (7). Furthermore, by focusing on the sudden loss “of unabated bounty,” Carlyle not only begins to create a vision of the problems that beset England, he also foretells the resolution in which bounty is restored. From the beginning, *Past and Present* promises to use the vision of past “bounty” in order to imagine a bountiful future.32

In the first half of book 1, Carlyle represents his audience as “idle reader[s] of Newspapers” who might misread the signs of the times, but he is more concerned to demonstrate a correct reading than to attack his audience for its obtuseness (9). In order to enlighten his audience about the condition of England, he attempts to give voice to the mute working class, what the actions of the striking workers in Manchester and the Stockport mother and father who killed their children so they could collect burial insurance “think and hint” (10).33 The debate begins when Carlyle’s audience asks, in response to his claim that the working class is demanding action from them: “What is to be done, what would you have us do?” (28). The concluding chapters of book 1 elaborate his reply to this question through dialogues between his avatars and representatives of his audience. By creating, in the ignorant “Bobus Higgins, Sausage-maker on the great scale,” a comic caricature of the more fatuous elements of the middle class, he is able to attack its narrow views of social reform while avoiding a personal attack on his readers (35). Furthermore, by articulating this attack through his fictional avatars, Gottfried Sauerteig and a reporter for the *Houndsditch Indicator*, Carlyle avoids the appearance that he is judging Bobus himself. This strategy enables him to concur in his own voice with Bobus’s demand for an “aristocracy of talent” while broadening the demand to encompass revolutionary reform, a “radical universal alteration of your regimen and way of life” (28; see 41; Landow, *Elegant Jeremiahs*, 53–62). Creation of an aristocracy of talent will not mean the establishment of a meritocracy that will better serve Bobus’s middle class, he suggests, but a transformation of Bobuses into a “whole world of Heroes.” To the reader’s question, “What is to be done,” his ultimate response is that we must become “hero-worshippers”; we must discover a hero who will lead us into the promised land.
Book 2, "The Ancient Monk," represents one such revolutionary transformation as it was wrought by the heroic Abbot Samson. Samson's twelfth-century monastery, like English society of the nineteenth century, had lost sight of its original ideals and fallen into decay. The narrative of "The Ancient Monk" represents the recuperation of the lost idyll established by the ideals of St. Edmund three centuries before the arrival of Samson, the familiar circular narrative of the journey from idyll to exile and back again. This narrative sequence is, in turn, the model for the sequence of books 2–4. From the history of Abbot Samson, Carlyle shapes a vision of heroes who can reform their own society, or at least perhaps their factories, as Samson had reformed his twelfth-century monastery.

Carlyle's intention of bringing Cromwell back to life in the nineteenth century reveals itself in his representation of Samson as hero. He regarded Cromwell and Samson as similar men, his first writings on Samson appearing in the pages of his Cromwell manuscripts and Cromwell appearing throughout Past and Present. The revolutions of Samson and Cromwell, unlike the French Revolution, transform society from above rather than from below, transmitting change downward through the hierarchy. Samson is not himself a king, but, like a king, he is not popularly elected. Furthermore, his appointment is authorized by the king, who plays a major role in selecting him to reside at the apex of the monastery's hierarchy. The reestablishment of the monastic hierarchy enables Samson to refurbish and revitalize the monastery.

Book 3, "The Modern Worker," represents the anarchic present through contentious dialogues between the narrator and his contemporaries. The dialogue form does not play an important role in book 2, presumably because the monks, even though they do not like all that Samson does, share a common system of belief and therefore have no need to argue with one another. The sequence of idyll/exile/idyll becomes the sequence of silence (no need for dialogue)/speech and dialogue/silence. The example of book 2 suggests that the dialogues of book 3 aim ultimately to move from conflict to unity, from speech to silence in book 4.

Because Carlyle uses the dialogues of book 3 to develop his critique of liberal democracy, he does not attempt to be even-handed in his representation of the opposition. Spokesmen for the aristocracy and middle class, for example, expose the weaknesses of their positions in the process of defending them and are readily refuted.
by the transcendental voices of "Nature" and the "Law" (e.g., 172–73, 193, 214). At the same time, because Carlyle's audience does not have the vision to understand England's plight, it remains polarized against him, unwilling to accept the solutions he offers. Throughout book 3, this tension between the narrator and the audience remains unchanged and appears to be irremediable. In *Chartism* this situation undermined Carlyle's attempts to envision the future; the ignorance of his audience could only lead to more ignorance, to more anarchy. The form of *Past and Present*, however, enables him to confine present-day anarchy to book 3 so that it does not contaminate his representation of the past or the future.

Carlyle's analysis of the condition of England also differs from that in *Chartism*, centering here on the ethical void created by the destruction of religious faith. At the center of the medieval world of Abbot Samson is the religious belief that forms the basis of the social order. At the center of his own world, Carlyle finds negation of belief, and from the negation of belief follows the negation of social order. He portrays the anarchy of democratic political institutions and the irresponsibility of laissez-faire economics, along with atheism, as absences or negations that make social order impossible. Rather than criticizing middle-class democracy on its own terms, Carlyle insists that democracy is the product of the "atheism" that has dominated English government since the restoration of 1660 (140–43, 149, 169). Similarly, he argues that the cash nexus of laissez-faire economics is "kin to Atheism," finding "Heart-Atheism," for example, in the empty symbol of the "huge lath-and-plaster hat" paraded through the streets of London to advertise a hat manufacturer (215, 148–50, 144). The utilitarians, and even his more orthodox contemporaries, Carlyle insists, are wrong to think that the problems of the socioeconomic order can be solved in isolation from the transcendental order.

The atheism discussed in *Past and Present*, then, is not so much a theological question as a question of moral order. Carlyle deplores the argument that economy determines the fundamental social order because it suggests that economy is morally neutral, driven by self-interest without respect to social values or a sense of social responsibility. He responds that government operating on the "No-God hypothesis" cannot infuse justice and truth into the social order. The "moral-sense" that makes individuals just and honest will not arise from within the socioeconomic order, but must be infused from above in the form of religious belief. "Money" has destroyed the "moral-
sense,” he concludes, turning “masses of mankind” into “egoists” who “cut [themselves] with triumphant completeness forever loose from [their employees], by paying down certain shillings and pounds” (194, 189).

Whereas government, the realm of the political, ought to be the means whereby the transcendental moral order is infused into the chaos of human society, democracy merely institutionalizes the social anarchy of laissez-faire economics (see 89–90, 153, 214–18). When the market is left “free” to regulate itself, the wealthy exploit their economic “might” with no more sense of moral obligation than “Buccaniers and Chactaws”; it is democracy, not monarchy, that validates the “Law of the Stronger” (26; see 191ff.). Laissez-faire offers only the very limited “freedom” to seek the best work, a freedom that becomes in times of dearth merely the “Liberty to die by starvation” (211). Furthermore, because this freedom forces laborers to compete with one another for work, it produces profound “social isolation”: it “is to live miserable we know not why; to work sore and yet gain nothing; to be heart-worn, weary, yet isolated, unrelated . . . to die slowly all our life long, imprisoned in a deaf, dead, Infinite Injustice” (218, 210).

The intransigence of the parties with whom Carlyle debates the condition of England question in book 3 represents the fundamental self-interestedness of individuals who lack the “moral-sense” as well as the divisive social fragmentation that follows from this social condition; in book 4, “Horoscope,” Carlyle’s audience experiences the conversion he had called for in book 1, constituting itself as the captains of industry. They now acknowledge the narrator’s transcendental authority and become once again believers in the transcendental order. The resulting unity of narrator and audience represents the recovery of social cohesion that is the precondition for recovering the transcendental idyll. Taking up its place in the new social hierarchy, the audience, too, becomes an authority and begins to govern justly and to create an idyllic England.

Past and Present calls on all elements of society to seek reform but specifically envisions the leaders of the reform movement as the industrial middle class transformed into captains of industry. In book 4, Carlyle represents the industrialists who had earlier sought to justify their exploitation of the poor as discovering their moral self-degradation and the need for a domain of value: “I am encircled with squalor, with hunger, rage, and sooty desperation. . . . What good is it? My five hundred scalps hang here in my wigwam: would to Heaven
I had sought something else than the scalps; would to Heaven I had been a Christian Fighter, not a Chactaw one! . . . I will try for something other, or account my life a tragical futility!” (290–91). Thus the “moral-sense” is transmitted through the prophetic narrator of Past and Present to the new captains of industry, transcendental authority moving downward and outward, converting anarchy into a new social order. The dialogues of book 4 consequently pit reformed captains of industry against unreformed Bobuses rather than Carlyle against his contemporaries (291). Instead of defending the status quo, the speakers for this new class seek to reform England, prodding the government to act, rejecting the claims of vested interests, and denouncing the belief that “there is nothing but vulturous hunger, for fine wines, valet reputation and gilt carriages” (268; see 257, 262, 267). Just as Teufelsdröckh discovers that his vocation is to “Be no longer a Chaos, but a World,” to create “Light,” so these “Workers” are commanded to “let light be,” to create a “green flowery World” that recovers the idyll of “unabated bounty” lost to enchantment in the opening paragraph of Past and Present (SR, 197; PP, 293–94, 7).

Past and Present succeeds where Chartism had failed because it does not attempt to frame its argument within the discourse of political economy but employs the rhetoric of religion to create an opposing discourse of value. Rather than simply providing a critique of contemporary society, Carlyle is able to create a vision of an alternative social order. He understood that his audience had allowed its religious beliefs to be separated from its everyday life in the world of industry, and Past and Present was his most effective piece of social criticism precisely because it created a powerful and relatively coherent ethical discourse that drew on the religious rhetoric with which his audience was familiar and applied it to the circumstances of their everyday lives.

Yet Past and Present only partially succeeds in reuniting the domains of religion and economy, for it envisions an escape from the commercial world into the transcendental idyll. It succeeds in part by making ethical discourse more powerful than the discourse of economy, but it remains powerful only in its visionary mode. At those moments when Carlyle presents his vision as a social and historical process, he turns to political force rather than religious belief in order to achieve the transcendental idyll.

Past and Present privileges material production over cultural production, the “done Work” over the “spoken Word” (160). Whereas in
Carlyle’s earlier writings cultural myths had been the means through which action was infused with a transcendental moral order, now belief becomes posterior to, an efflorescence of, activity directed by the transcendent. The “old Epics” written on paper are no “longer possible,” so the English epic must be “written on the Earth’s surface” (293, 159; see 176; CME, 4:171-72). When Carlyle refers ambiguously to “[t]his English Land,” the connotations of nation and culture elide with the connotations of physical land and agriculture (134). Instead of an expression of belief that transfuses the world and makes it an idyll, the idyll is a product of labor that literally builds a “green flowery world.” Only through labor, he wrote elsewhere, could one find “salvation” (Faulkner, 157).

Throughout Past and Present and Carlyle’s later writings, land reclamation and agriculture are the privileged forms of labor, coterminous with the aboriginal creative act, God’s creation of the world in Genesis (esp. Gen. 1:9-11). The parallel with Genesis suggests that labor as creative activity continues the process through which the material world is infused with the transcendental order (see PP, 134-35). In the chapter entitled “Labour,” Carlyle typically represents work as the transformation of a “pestilential swamp” where land and water mingle in “a green fruitful meadow with its clear-flowing stream” (197). These metaphors imply that the productions of agricultural labor—arable land—are permanent, while the productions of cultural labor—religious or literary texts—are ephemeral.

Carlyle’s representations of the “Captain of Industry” owe a great deal to his enthusiasm for the men who were leading “poor starving drudges” out to found new colonies, to settle new lands (CL, 9:395). His support for emigration and colonization projects in Chartism and Past and Present is intimately linked to his vision of creation as the colonization of wasteland. Drawing on his depiction of creative work as bridge-building, he describes emigration as a “bridge” to the new world, a bridge that functions as a link between the earthly and the transcendental (PP, 263; see CL, 9:97). His writings distinguish two types of emigration, the transformation of wasteland into a paradise and the discovery of an El Dorado at the end of one’s journey. The former is preferable because the process of seeking the idyll, labor, creates the idyll, whereas, in the latter case, the process of journeying only serves to defer achievement of that goal. Teufelsdrockh, like Goethe’s Lothario, discovers that the search for the already achieved idyll never ends because one journeys endlessly from one illusory idyll
to another. Discovering that their “America” is “here or nowhere,” both turn to the creation of the idyll by working at “the duty which is nearest” (SR, 196; see WM, 2:11). Carlyle, who was increasingly inclined to associate writing with the endless search for the established El Dorado, contemplated going out himself to produce “bread” in one of the “waste places of . . . [the] Earth” rather than continuing the fruitless labor of writing (CL, 9:395; see 6:372–73, 8:14).36

However, Carlyle’s depiction of the physical struggle of laborers who work to make land arable becomes subtly transformed into an argument for physically coercing laborers to engage in this activity. The shift from cultural to agricultural production in Past and Present, like the shift from belief to the law, entails a transition from compelling belief to compelling obedience. So long as Carlyle employs the metaphor of battle only to depict the struggle of the nation as a whole to create social order, it does not imply coercion or compulsion, but when he treats it more literally as the conquest of new lands, he begins to legitimate imperialist suppression and the very commercial motivations he intended to exclude.37 Captains of industry not only turn wasteland into fertile pasture, but may force others to join them in the task (267). As Carlyle's metaphors make clear, he conceives of the captains of industry primarily as military captains fighting “the one true war” against social “anarchy” (271; see 270–72). Like critics of the new order from Coleridge to Tennyson, he insists that the apparent prosperity of the nation conceals the negation of a just social order, the reality of social warfare in which commerce cries, “Peace, Peace, where there is no Peace.”38 In this role, they fight not only against the primordial chaos of the land but the anarchy of humanity, “Organizing Labour” in order to subdue the “bewildering mob” into “a firm regimented mass” (272). The captain is a “Brave Sea-captain” like Christopher Columbus who “sternly repress[es]” his mutinous crew in order to discover an idyllic America, or an architect (recall the masonry metaphor) like Christopher Wren who organizes “mutinous masons and Irish hodmen” (199, 198; emphasis added). In the final analysis, the captain of industry does not resemble the medieval cleric Abbot Samson so much as the Puritan general Oliver Cromwell, whom Carlyle was to call “a strong great Captain” (OCLS, 4:173). One can see in retrospect that even Samson’s success depended on the use of force; rowdy knights and recalcitrant monks obeyed him not because they shared his beliefs, but because he threatened them with “bolts” of “excommunication” (PP, 104).
Samson and the captains must use coercion because they, like the heroes who succeed Odin, are belated. Although Samson is a man of action, a builder of churches, he cannot duplicate the creative act of St. Edmund whose “Ideal . . . raised a Monastery”; he does not create a new idyll, he merely rebuilds an existing one (61, 63, 121). St. Edmund belongs to the “Beginnings,” the timeless era before history began; by the time Samson arrives, the ideal that St. Edmund initially realized is buried under three centuries of history (131–36). Samson pulls the monastery back toward its beginnings, but he cannot fully escape history. The belated hero, unable to compel belief, must use force to compel obedience.

Carlyle represents through Samson his own feelings of belatedness, his anxiety that he can achieve nothing. Samson can at least build churches; Carlyle can only write books. Although Samson seems to spend more time building churches than religious faith, he at least shares his faith with the monks he guides. Carlyle can only imagine a communal ethos in his vision of the future; for the moment, there is no shared belief. Furthermore, he is uncertain about his power to shape the future. On the one hand, he imagines that, by becoming “an actual instead of a virtual Priesthood,” men of letters can play a role in the recovery of belief; on the other hand, the future he imagines is one in which one must give up writing and begin to act (289). While he is struggling to make writing a form of action, to prod his contemporaries into creating the future envisioned in the conclusion of Past and Present, he is aware that his book can only represent, not produce, that revolutionary change: “[I]t were fond imagination to expect that any preaching of mine could abate Mammonism; that Bobus of Houndsditch will love his guineas less, or his poor soul more, for any preaching of mine!” (290). Carlyle fears that instead of producing action, Past and Present might only be deferring it. Paradoxically, the idyll in which one rests from labor can only be created by labor. Like Samson, who can never completely recover the idyll he seeks to restore and so can never “rest,” Carlyle needs to “work to keep [his] heart at rest” (PP, 103; LL. 1:182; emphasis added). Although he persistently advises his readers to give up writing and frequently speaks of giving it up himself, his own writings compel him to continue, each word calling for the production of another: “There seems no use in living,” he wrote his brother, “if it be not writing, or preparing to write” (CL, 11:163).
In early 1844, when Carlyle determined on the expedient of editing Cromwell’s letters and speeches and abandoned his attempt to write a history, he persisted in his intention of making *Oliver Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches* a rewriting of *The French Revolution* in which revolution would recover rather than destroy authority. In *The French Revolution*, the narrative of increasing anarchy undermined the narrative in which the revolutionaries were striving to create a new social order by writing a constitution; in *Oliver Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches*, Carlyle attempted, without success, to make the narrative in which Cromwell produces order dominate the narrative of increasing anarchy. The *Letters and Speeches* also persists with the dual purpose of rehabilitating Cromwell’s reputation and bringing him back to life to reform nineteenth-century England; yet, while an edition of letters and speeches did succeed in altering the public’s perception of Cromwell, it worked against the aim of bringing him back to life (see Frith, I:xxxiii; Abbott, 173–74). The Cromwell whose reputation Carlyle restored remained the Cromwell of the past.

The idea that the Puritans had sought to create a theocratic idyll dominated Carlyle’s conception of the Puritan revolution from the beginning of his studies. Whereas the French Revolution had been the unleashing of anarchic forces that destroy the law, the Puritan revolution was the “attempt to bring the Divine Law of the Bible into actual practice in men’s affairs on the Earth” (*OCLS*, 2:169). “The Theocracy which John Knox in his pulpit might dream of as a ‘devout imagination,’” Carlyle wrote in *On Heroes and Hero-Worship*, Cromwell “dared to consider as capable of being realised” (226). The French Revolution was led by atheists who sought to establish democracy according to the gospel of Jean-Jacques Rousseau; the Puritan revolution was led by believers who sought to create a theocracy according to the gospel of Jesus Christ (*OCLS*, 1:266). The Puritans sought the ideal union of church and state, making the polity an “emblem” of the transcendental, so “That England should all become a Church” (1:82). Or, as he put it in one manuscript, “Church and State are Theory and Practice. Church is our Theorem of the invisible Eternity, wherein all that we name world in our earthly dialects, all from royal mantles to tinkers’ aprons, seems but as an emblematic shadow” (*HS*, 275–76; see also *OCLS*, 1:81–82, 3:73–74, 308).
Cromwell, the king that Mirabeau might have been, possesses the authority to create this theocratic idyll. He shares with James Carlyle the ability to build and create, to speak and act meaningfully. Whereas the French fail in the attempt to "build" a new society by writing a constitution, Cromwell, an Orphic "melodious Worker" who makes "the stones, rocks, and big blocks dance into figures, into domed cities," successfully "build[ds] together" a Puritan society (2:226–27, 4:207). Instead of making a constitution like the French, the Puritans let "search be made, Whether there is any King, Könning, Can-ning, or Supremely Able-Man that you can fall in with" (3:81). Cromwell is a "Tower" and his inauguration the "topstone"—recall the toppling "top-paper" of the failed French constitution—of the new social order (4:196, 124). Convinced that Cromwell's "practical contact with the Highest was a fact," Carlyle insists throughout the Letters and Speeches that his every action—his victories in battle, the execution of Charles I, even the massacres at Drogheda and Wexford—was a manifestation of the divine will: "From Naseby downwards, God, in the battle-whirlwind, seemed to speak and witness very audibly" (1:395, n. 1; see 1:148, 336, 412, 2:52, 3:46; NL, 1:314).

Yet the Puritan revolution follows the same course as the French Revolution, and Carlyle cannot help comparing them. Like the French, the English feel imprisoned, "pent within old limits" of "untrue Forms," and so rebel against and execute a king who is a "Solecism Incarnate" (HS, 268–69; HHW, 205; FR, 1:22; see OCLS, 2:245). Having destroyed royal authority, they inevitably become "sansculottic" and anarchic (e.g., OCLS, 3:224; see 1:290–91). In revolutionary France every man feels he is a king; in England there is danger of "every man making himself a Minister and Preacher" (FR, 3:40; OCLS, 3:120). The Barebones Parliament is England's "Assembly of Notables," the First Protectorate Parliament, like the Constituent Assembly, becomes occupied with "Constitution-building," and the "Agreement of the People" is little more than a "Bentham-Sieyes Constitution" (OCLS, 3:41, 156, 2:29; see 25). This era, too, is a "Paper Age," producing "tons of printed paper" (1:290). Instead of being united in Cromwell's theocracy, the nation is fragmented and thrown into civil war, a "Babel" of conflicting parties in which "Every man's hand" is "against his brother" (4:86, 3:108). Just as the last two volumes of The French Revolution depict the French nation drawn into the vortices of anarchy, so the latter two-thirds of Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches de-
picts England threatened by “Abysses” and “black chaotic whirlwinds,” the “Hydra” of anarchy proving just as indestructible as sansculottism (1:318, 3:224, 260).

If Cromwell succeeds in creating order, he does so not by founding order on a shared set of beliefs but by employing force. Carlyle argues that the people obey Cromwell’s orders because they believe he is right, but he frequently finds himself justifying Cromwell’s arbitrary use of power (e.g., 3:40, 4:15–18). He argues, for example, that Cromwell is right to “repress” the Scots and “bind” them “in tight manacles” because they are creating anarchic “confusion” (2:170). But England is so far from consensus that Cromwell not only “coerce[s]” royalists and levelers, he even “eject[s]” Puritan ministers who dissent from his views (3:201). Far from creating a paradisal theocracy in which social order reflects transcendental justice, Cromwell must struggle merely to keep the lid on anarchy.

In this regard, Cromwell resembles Dr. Francia, the Paraguayan dictator that Carlyle had defended in an essay written shortly after he completed Past and Present in 1843 and while he was still having difficulties with the Cromwell project. His representation of Francia transforms the career of the man of letters into that of the king by shifting the emphasis from culture and belief to power and the law. Like Carlyle, Francia contemplates a religious vocation, develops hypochondria (a trait shared with Cromwell as well), enters the university, is influenced by the philosophes, quarrels with his father, and shifts his studies to the law. When, soon after the French Revolution, a rebellion tumbles Paraguay into anarchy, he establishes himself as “king” in order to restore social order and ensure that justice is done (CME, 4:305). Placing a high value on work, like all of Carlyle’s heroes, Francia orders the capital city to be rebuilt. Yet Francia’s success is clearly indebted to the harsh measures he employs to repress the populace. Anticipating his defense of Cromwell’s Irish massacres, Carlyle endeavors to explain away Francia’s “reign of terror” as a “reign of rigour,” but the scaffold Francia raises to warn the people of the cost of disobedience both reminds us that the French “reign of Terror” employed the same menace and reveals that the people must be coerced (CME, 4:302). Carlyle makes no pretense that Francia compels belief; he admires him only because he restores order (see Collmer, Weaver).

Because only Cromwell’s personal power sustains the Protector-
ate, it cannot survive in his absence. Like Francia and the French, he does not create a cultural consensus that produces order but merely represses disorder. Consequently, with his death, England soon falls “into Kinglessness, what we call Anarchy” (4:183; see 173). Rather than providing an alternative to the French Revolution, the Puritan revolution, as Carlyle himself acknowledges, inaugurated the era of revolutionary anarchy that would not end until the process initiated by Cromwell was complete.40

Carlyle made a hero of Cromwell by choosing a form, the edition of letters and speeches, that privileges Cromwell's voice, allowing it to dominate and silence the competing voices of revolution. Cromwell remains a hero for Carlyle because he at least made an attempt to create a theocratic idyll and because he managed to hold off anarchy so long as he lived. Whereas the anarchy of the French Revolution had been characterized by the multiple voices of the revolutionary factions, Carlyle's conception of the Puritan era called for the subsumption of the multifarious voices of the seventeenth century into the single voice of Cromwell, a Cromwell Carlyle hoped to invoke in order to restore unity to the fragmented culture of his own century.

The narrative technique of Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches reflects this monologic vision of Puritan culture. Whereas The French Revolution had used the first-person plural to represent the variety of historical actors, and Carlyle's Cromwell manuscripts sometimes suggest the possibility of using lively “dialogues,” nothing like this appears in the final text of the Letters and Speeches.41 When Carlyle does use the first-person technique, it almost invariably represents the privileged voices of Cromwell or the Puritans; instead of representing a debate among competing factions, it asserts the dominance of the Puritan ethos and manifests the identification between Carlyle and Cromwell.42

The letters and speeches format also reinforces Carlyle's contention that Cromwell's language, like James Carlyle's, had “a meaning in it” (2:53). Carlyle's insistence that Cromwell's every word had value led him to include every letter no matter how trivial, even to accept as genuine the forgeries of William Squire (see Ryals). The narrator of The French Revolution had to interpret dry-as-dust documents, to decide which provided clues to the meaning of the revolution and which were mere waste paper. The narrator of Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches needs only to put Cromwell's letters and speeches in order,
since Cromwell's meaningful words require no interpretation. Carlyle forsakes the role of historical interpreter and becomes a mere "Pious Editor," even subordinating his own words by having them printed in smaller type than that used for Cromwell's letters and speeches.43

Yet Carlyle seems to grow increasingly restless in the role of hero-worshipping editor, and we soon find him drawing our attention from Cromwell's words to his own. Carlyle's commentaries are meant to provide a narrative context that links together the sequence of letters; it is therefore necessarily subordinate to them. Through about one-sixth of the work he stays with this plan, but then he suddenly breaks in to request that the reader defer reading Cromwell's letters in order to read an "Extract from a work still in Manuscript" (1:258). The work Carlyle quotes is, of course, his own abandoned history of the civil wars. The extract is immediately set apart from the preceding narrative by its vivid metaphor and lively syntax, its playfulness (e.g., a pun on "Divines" and "Dry-Vines"), and its representation of the voices of "London City" and "the Army." It functions as a metacommentary that focuses on Carlyle's own concerns rather than glossing Cromwell's texts. From this point forward, Carlyle's distinctive voice begins to emerge, and passages like this one appear with increasing frequency (e.g., 1:264–65, 2:226–27, 3:70–72, 83–84, 111, n. 1).

Carlyle's increasing discomfort with the role of editor becomes most conspicuous in his handling of Cromwell's speeches. The first half of the work is fairly equally divided between Cromwell's letters, which are usually less than a page long, and Carlyle's linking narrative. The speeches, many of which run to thirty or forty pages, threaten to silence Carlyle for long stretches of time in the latter half of the book, but he finds a means to introduce himself even in the midst of them. In his introduction to the second speech, he advises us that in order to make the speeches more accessible to his modern audience he has "with reluctance, admitted from the latest of the Commentators a few annotations" (3:105). The latest of the Commentators is, once again, Carlyle. What is most striking about these "annotations" is that they do not appear as footnotes but as comments interpolated within the texts of the speeches. Although square brackets set them off from the text, the comments are emphatically italicized. Whereas the use of reduced-size type subordinated his commentary to the letters, this typographical convention makes every comment stand out on the page.
Since the comments appear in the body of the text, the reader can hardly ignore them; instead of making us pay greater attention to Cromwell, they keep drawing our attention to the narrator. The interpolations are in part a means to bring the speeches to life by creating the fiction of an audience listening to and observing Cromwell in the here and now. The most common are audience reactions, cries of "Hear!" "Yea!" "Alas!" "So!" and "Hum-m-m!"; others function as stage directions, describing the gestures and emotions of the crowd and Cromwell himself—one, for example, depicts him "looking up, with a mournful toss of the head" (3:124; see 106–26). Yet the reader cannot but be aware that if Cromwell seems to come to life it is not through his own words—which remain dry and wooden—but through the words Carlyle has added to the text of his speeches. Only about a third of the interpolations are genuine glosses that might help the reader understand what Cromwell is saying, and even these often displace Cromwell's statements rather than simply explain them. These interpolations frequently interrupt Cromwell in mid-sentence, a practice hardly calculated to help us follow the course of his arguments (e.g., 3:113–14, 115–16, 119). Finally, Carlyle's admiration for Cromwell and his insistence that his speech is "meaningful" does not prevent him from losing patience at times with his hobbyhorses—"The justifying of the Spanish War is a great point with his Highness!"—or making fun of his more awkward locutions—"I am a man standing in the Place I am in [Clearly, your Highness]" (3:277, 4:58; see 3:118–19). Rather than encouraging readers to worship at the feet of the Puritan hero, such comments invite them to assume a position of bemused detachment, of the nineteenth century condescending to the seventeenth.

Carlyle has another difficulty in his efforts to make Cromwell's career a living epic. In The French Revolution, as in Past and Present, he had discovered the fundamental belief of the era by interpreting its everyday activities, but although his manuscripts represent him as seeking a symbolic structure for the history, the Letters and Speeches are almost totally devoid of symbolic interpretation. In part, Carlyle's difficulties arose because his thesis differed from that of The French Revolution. In the latter, symbols proliferated in proportion to the diversity of human activities, but in the history of the Puritans Carlyle sought symbols that manifested the unified divine will. The divine will was manifested in battle; yet, apart from Cromwell's assertion that
this was so, the history of the battles themselves contained nothing to distinguish them from the battles of any other war. Carlyle could find no symbolic episodes like the mutiny at Nancy or the storming of the Bastille.

The one episode that seemed to possess some symbolic resonance was the episode of Jenny Geddes, and Carlyle attempted on several occasions to elaborate it into a central episode of his history. The episode revolved around the legend that the pious Jenny Geddes had flung a stool at the dean of St. Giles when Archbishop Laud attempted to introduce the Anglican prayer book into the services of the Church of Scotland. Carlyle's manuscripts suggest that he wanted to portray this incident, which, according to the story, set off riots throughout Edinburgh, as the "first stroke in an infinite bout" that "spread . . . over Edinburgh, over broad Scotland at large" and was symbolic of "latter strokes" like those which beheaded Charles I (CL, 1:36, 13:74; HS, 10). As early as February 1839, when he first began his Cromwell studies, Carlyle had depicted Geddes as an epic "heroine," first the Iphigenia, then the Helen of the civil wars (CL, 11:36; OCLS, 1:97). But he soon found that no document contemporary with the Edinburgh riot mentioned Geddes, indeed, that the legend had not appeared until several decades after the event; its unique mythic potential derived from the fact that it really was myth, that there was little historical basis for it. In the end, Carlyle relegated it to a brief passage in the introduction to the Letters and Speeches (1:96–97). He could not risk founding his epic on an event that might never have taken place; but neither could he discover any historical event that offered the same symbolic potential.

Carlyle's decision simply to edit the letters and speeches signaled his abandonment of the search for the symbolic; indeed, the letters and speeches format worked against the discovery of the symbolic. Whereas the narrator-editors of Sartor Resartus, The French Revolution, and Past and Present feel free to subordinate chronology in order to arrange material symbolically, the strict chronological arrangement of the letters and speeches limits the pious Editor's ability to discover symbols or present the history of the civil wars in symbolic terms. Confining himself to the events of Cromwell's career as exhibited in the letters, he is forced to exclude potentially symbolic material. For example, in The French Revolution, Carlyle devotes an entire book, about fifty pages, to the trial and execution of Louis XVI, while the trial
and execution of Charles I in the *Letters and Speeches* merits only half a dozen pages. His manuscripts, especially *Historical Sketches*, are rich in the kind of anecdotal history in which he liked to read the signs of the times—Guy Fawkes's gunpowder plot, duelling, the burning of the playhouse in Drury Lane, the Book of Sports, and so on—but he finally excluded almost all this material because he could not find a way to relate it to the life of Cromwell. Whereas Carlyle's earlier works had built up complex vocabularies of imagery, trope, and allusion through which to convey his symbolic reading of events (for example, the clothing imagery and the fictional framework of *Sartor Resartus*; the imagery of the vortex and fire, the Homeric allusions, and the personifications of *The French Revolution*; the figure of the Irish widow, the contrast between the monastery of St. Edmund and the St. Ives workhouse, and the image of the "cash-nexus" in *Past and Present*), *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* simply lacks a coherent system of signs through which to present a symbolic reading of the civil wars.

Carlyle closely identified the Puritans and the Scottish rebels with his own ancestors and had long regarded them as spiritual "fathers" (e.g., 1:80, 3:211, 4:208). His attempt to recuperate the idyll of Puritanism was yet another attempt to recover the idyll lost with the death of his father and to author a new myth for the nineteenth century. Like the Fifth Monarchists, he longed for an apocalyptic "Monarchy of Jesus Christ," and, like Smelfungus in the *Historical Sketches*, he hoped to "restore" the past in such a way that it would "never . . . be lost more" (*OCLS*, 3:113; *HS*, 38). Having taken as his goal nothing less than the completion of the revolution Cromwell had begun, he could not but feel that he had failed.

Carlyle complained in the introduction to the *Letters and Speeches* that, while the English people had consummated the "epic" act of "Choosing their King," the history of English heroism remained unuttered, imprisoned in the "labyrinth . . . that we call Human History" (4:37, 1:7). Yet, like his literary predecessors, Carlyle also failed to transform the "dead indescribable Cromwelliad" into a "living Iliad" (1:5). In part, he failed because he could not bring himself to believe in a "dialect" as "obsolete" as Odin's and Dante's; Puritanism, he concluded, was not a "Complete Theory of this immense Universe; no, only a part thereof!" (2:53, 4:184). In part, he failed because his researches demonstrated that Cromwell's theocratic idyll had never existed, that contrary to escaping time and history, Cromwell and the
Puritans had inaugurated the era of revolution. The irony of the *Letters and Speeches* is that it consists entirely of written documents, of Cromwell’s words; like Teufelsdröckh, Samson, and Carlyle himself, Cromwell speaks endlessly but earns no rest other than the rest of death (3:107, 124). In the three years following the publication of *Cromwell*, Carlyle’s remaining hope that he might create a Cromwell to bring order and justice to England faded away. The powerlessness of writing never seemed more apparent. When Cromwell could not persuade the opposition to agree with him, he could use force to keep them in order; when Carlyle failed to persuade his contemporaries to accept a new Cromwell, the only force he could resort to was the force of angry words.

From the “Irish Question” to “The Nigger Question”

When Carlyle finished seeing the first edition of *Oliver Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches* through the press in August 1845, it seemed for a short while that he had indeed succeeded in bringing Cromwell to life. Carlyle had almost certainly been thinking of his own time when he wrote in the *Letters and Speeches* that “to them, and to us, there can only one thing be done: search be made, Whether there is any King, König, Canning, or Supremely Able-Man that you can fall in with” (2:286). Peel now seemed ready to fill that role by abrogating the Corn Laws in fulfillment of the prophecy Carlyle had made in 1841. But the politics of the nineteenth century would not permit Peel to make himself either king or lord protector, and just six months after finishing *Cromwell*, Carlyle felt that he must act on his own to release “imprisoned” heroism (see *LDP*, 335).

To reinforce the symbolic relationship between Peel and Cromwell and to encourage Peel to emulate Cromwell, Carlyle sent him a copy of the second edition of the *Letters and Speeches* in May 1846, the month the Corn Laws were repealed. The letter that accompanied his book encouraged Peel to assume the role of hero, to act forcefully rather than waste his time with parliamentary speech-making (*LL*, 1:402–3; see Seigel, “Carlyle and Peel”). Carlyle would have liked to see Peel deal with Parliament as Cromwell had. In spite of their loyalty to Cromwell and the Puritan cause, Cromwell’s parliaments, not unlike the reform parliaments of the 1840s, proved unable to act because they
became enmeshed in debate. Instead of arguing with his deadlocked parliaments, Cromwell took action, simply dissolving them (3:194, 4:179–80). Yet Peel could not even maintain discipline in his own party, let alone dissolve Parliament and rule England through major-generals. On the contrary, repeal of the Corn Laws brought a swift end to his ministry and virtually ended his political career. Although Carlyle hoped that Peel would return to power, an aim that _Latter-Day Pamphlets_ was partly intended to effect, he could not help but see in Peel’s fall the rejection of his own political program.

Carlyle soon discovered that, although readers were impressed and persuaded by his representation of the seventeenth-century Cromwell, they had no desire for a Cromwell of their own. Robert Vaughn’s notice in the _British Quarterly Review_ was typical. He praised Carlyle’s scholarly ability and was persuaded that Cromwell’s religious piety was sincere, but he disparaged Carlyle’s “endless lamentation over modern degeneracy” as well as “his prostrate adoration before the real or imaginary greatness of bygone days,” and treated the attempt to make Cromwell live for the nineteenth century—for Carlyle the sole purpose of the book—as an irrelevant deviation from history (Seigel, _Critical Heritage_, 271). Carlyle concluded that “Nobody on the whole ‘believes my report.’ The friendliest reviewers, I can see, regard me as a wonderful athlete, a ropedancer whose perilous somersets it is worth sixpence . . . to see; or at most I seem to them a desperate half mad, if usefullish fireman, rushing along the ridge tiles in a frightful manner to quench the burning chimney. Not one of them all can or will do the least to help me” (LL, 1:452–53). The public now respected Cromwell, but, as he was to reflect bitterly in “Hudson’s Statue,” it did not worship him.

If, in the absence of Peel, Carlyle were to play the role of Cromwell, he would need once again to seek a means of turning writing into action. The rhetoric he employed in “The Negro/Nigger Question” and _Latter-Day Pamphlets_ seeks to coerce and attack rather than persuade and convert his audience. In the process of developing this rhetoric, he also transformed what was originally a plan for a sympathetic analysis of the “Irish Question” into the antagonistic “Negro/Nigger Question” and the apocalyptic _Latter-Day Pamphlets_.

The “Irish Question,” particularly the issue of repeal of the union between England and Ireland, was a major issue in the 1840s. From the time of _Sartor Resartus_, in which he represented the poor as Irish
peasants, to 1848, when he lamented the influx of indigents driven out of Ireland by irresponsible landlords, Carlyle had considered the condition of Ireland a key to understanding the condition of England (SR, 283–84; Marrs, 668). In spite of the fact that he held the Irish aristocracy responsible for the poverty of Ireland, he opposed the repeal of the union of England and Ireland that would pave the way for Irish self-determination. As usual, he forged a position between the two parties. In 1845, he had become acquainted with several leaders of the Young Ireland movement, visiting them in Ireland in 1846. In 1849, he offended the government, which also opposed repeal, by touring Ireland with Gavan Duffy, an Irish nationalist who remained his lifelong friend. But, during the same tour, he privately depicted Duffy's associates as “canaille” (Bliss, 250). At first he argued, as he had in Past and Present, that the problem was not essentially political or economic, but moral: “For it is want of sense and honesty, not want of potatoes, that we now suffer under,” he wrote in 1847, “all the yearly potatoes of the British Empire are supposed to be worth some 20, or 25 or 30 millions; and all the yearly harvest of the British Empire . . . must be between 200 and 300 millions:—a Nation, one would say, that reaped such a harvest (good all of it, except the potatoes) last year, and had so many Manchester and other big Workshops going,—this Nation should not die for the loss of a few potatoes, if it had ‘sense and honesty’ in it!” Yet he had lost hope that he could convert his contemporaries and restore to them the “moral sense” he had called for in Past and Present.

During 1846–47, Carlyle prepared himself to write a book on Ireland, but it was not until the revolutions of 1848 that he finally set to work in earnest. No sooner had he heard the news of the first uprising on the Continent than he returned to his journal after a long period of silence to set down four possible writing projects, three of which were concerned with the condition of England: “Ireland: Spiritual Sketches,” which would examine the misery of Ireland in terms of its spiritual history; “Exodus from Houndsditch,” on the need to rid England of its old clothes (Houndsditch was the district where used clothing was sold), particularly institutional Christianity; and “The Scavenger Age,” on the need to clean the metaphoric gutters of England as the “indispensable beginning of all” reform (LL, 1:455; Kaplan, 332). In March, he rejoiced to hear of the revolution in France, responding with jubilant letters to his friends and a newspaper article on the de-
throned Louis-Philippe. At home, the Irish nationalists attempted an uprising, and Chartism, preparing its third and final petition, threatened violence. This time, he hoped, revolution, having completed the destruction of outworn authority, would discover a new Cromwell who would prove that the “righteous gods do still rule this earth.”

In April and May, he wrote a series of articles on Ireland that shocked and offended not only his Irish acquaintances but his old friend John Stuart Mill (see Tarr, “Carlyle and Henry M'Cormac”). He argued that repeal of the union of England and Ireland was another instance of the government abdicating its responsibility to govern, that what was needed was not less government but better government. No one could have been surprised that he opposed repeal; his arguments against it are entirely consistent with his previous writings. But what his friends were probably not prepared for was the tone of the articles, the strenuousness with which he insisted that “Eternal law,” the “Law of the Universe,” “the laws of fact,” and “the inexorable gods” had decreed the unity of England and Ireland and laid upon England a “terrible job of labour,” to create order in Ireland (Shepherd, 2:379, 380, 381, 383, 377).

Putting his paternalism at the service of imperialism, he argued that the Irish must either “become British,” or—and here he certainly had his defense of Cromwell at Drogheda in mind—become “extinct; cut off by the inexorable gods” (383).

Mill immediately recognized the “new phasis” of Carlyle’s writings. Whereas Carlyle had previously placed the blame for England’s problems on the aristocracy, he now was arguing that the aristocracy alone could solve these problems: “Instead of telling of the sins and errors of England, and warning her of ‘wrath to come,’ as he has been wont to do, he preaches the divine Messiahship of England.” Mill also recognized that Carlyle longed for a Cromwell to fill the messianic role, but objected that Lord Russell was no Cromwell and that the same England that had mismanaged the governing of Ireland for centuries seemed unlikely to succeed any better now (Newspaper Writings, 1096, 1098–99).

Mill could not have been expected to realize that Carlyle was calling for the return of Peel.

However, Carlyle’s last remaining hope that the breakdown of government would permit a new Cromwell to emerge was crushed when it became clear in the summer of 1848 that the revolutions had failed. The French had replaced Louis Philippe not with a hero but with a conventional government. The crisis in Britain had not even been suf-
ficient to unseat Russell, let alone provide an opening for Peel. Rather than heeding the demand for reform, Russell simply suppressed the opposition, jailing the Irish rebels, including Carlyle's friend Gavan Duffy, and the leaders of the Chartists.

In the spring of 1849, Carlyle decided that his ideas "might perhaps get nearer to some way of utterance if [he] were looking face to face upon the ruin and wretchedness that [was] prevalent" in Ireland (LL, 1:491). Although he had never been more desperate to address the problems of his era, he still could not decide how to approach them. As early as 1846, he was complaining, "I am at the bottom, and nothing is yet said!" and, three years later, that "a Book is sticking in my heart, which cannot get itself written at all; and till that be written there is no hope of peace or benefit for me anywhere" (Marrs, 635; Duffy, 135). He had produced a great deal of manuscript and the series of newspaper articles, but the feeling that he was getting nowhere oppressed him so much that he felt as if he had been utterly idle (LL, 1:436–37, 452; LMSB, 282; RWE, 437; Faulkner, 168, 169, 170). Yet although he felt that he "ought to go and . . . must go" to Ireland, he anticipated that he would not "find much new knowledge" there (LL, 1:491; see NL, 2:70). His anticipation was fulfilled, perhaps even desired. Although he considered Ireland "the notablest of all spots in the world at present," he found himself upon his return "farther from speech on any subject than ever" and never wrote the book on Ireland (Duffy, 135; RWE, 455).

The surviving manuscripts reveal Carlyle's inability to imagine constructive approaches to England's problems. While he had initially intended to analyze the Irish Question in terms of religious belief—in a series of "spiritual sketches"—he kept turning to the old problems: laissez-faire political and economic policy. He no longer could persuade himself that religious belief alone, or literature, would solve England's problems, and concluded that "Plugson," whom he had imagined converting in Past and Present, had gained "almost no insight into the laws of this universe whatever" ("Rakes," fol. 12). "The Negro Question" and Latter-Day Pamphlets manifest Carlyle's despair at being unable to effect any meaningful change.

In November of 1849, still worried that what he had written thus far was "wrongish, every word" of it, but feeling that he needed to "give vent to" himself, Carlyle decided to proceed with publication of a series of pamphlets (LL, 2:24; NL, 2:86). Serial publication allowed
him to go ahead with publication at a time when he still had not worked out a complete plan of the work. His original plan to publish twelve pamphlets suggests an attempt to give the work an epic structure, but although the desire to write a new epic was there, the vision was lacking. Even as he wrote the sixth pamphlet he still had no plan for a conclusion, and he abandoned the project after completing only eight.\textsuperscript{56} Whereas \textit{Past and Present} had moved toward a conclusion in which Carlyle imagined and represented the conversion of his audience, \textit{Latter-Day Pamphlets} never reached a conclusion. Instead of attempting to create a community of fellow believers—as he had sought to do when he moved to London in 1834—he went on the attack against his contemporaries for failing to understand him. In part, he was angry because they had not understood the real message of \textit{Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches}; in part, he was venting on his audience his frustration at his inability to achieve something with his writing. He saw himself beset by a public that was determined to cause him pain and to keep him from writing, the only means he possessed “to defend [him]self against the world without, and keep it from overwhelming [him], as it often threatens to do” (LL, 1:476–77). “I mean to hurt nobody, I,” he wrote a few months later, “and the hurt that others (involuntarily for most part) do me is incalculable. . . . It seems as if all things were combining against me to hinder any book or free deliverance of myself I might have in view at present” (LL, 1:483–84).

In the \textit{Latter-Day Pamphlets}, the speaker is not the prophet warning his audience of the day of reckoning to come, but the divine scourge itself, “rag[ing]” and “growl[ing]” at his audience, and running verbal “red-hot poker[s]” through its cherished beliefs (LDP, 315, 21; NL, 2:85).\textsuperscript{57}

Whereas Carlyle represents the audience of \textit{Past and Present} as morally inadequate but capable of discovering moral truth, he represents the audience of \textit{Latter-Day Pamphlets} as permanently blinded, fools and “blockheads” (e.g., 265). In \textit{Past and Present}, he creates at least the semblance of debate between his avatars and his audience; in \textit{Latter-Day Pamphlets} he tends to cut off debate. While he employs once again a wide range of fictional personae, his handling of Quashee, the Duke of Trumps, the Hon. Hickory Buckskin, Duncan M'Pastehorn, Friend Heavyside, and Gathercoal is far more satirical and heavy-handed than the use of Plugson of Undershot or Friend Prudence in \textit{Past and Present}. The Carlyle of \textit{Latter-Day Pamphlets} hopes that “one
in the thousand” will “see . . . what [he] see[s]” and “forgive” him for berating them, but he is never able to envision this moment as he had in *Past and Present*; he has despaired of converting Plugson (296). Although he reintroduces the captains of industry as an incipient aristocracy in the first pamphlet, he no longer addresses, or manifests any faith in, a specific class in which he hopes to find converts (35; see 24). Rather than imagining the industrial middle class as leaders who will reshape society, he imagines that some higher authority will have to “force” them “to coöperate” with the state and its “public Captains” (166).

The rhetorical strategy of these works is to test his audience in order to discover whether they belong to the elect and to drive away unbelievers. The altered relationship between Carlyle and his audience can be observed in “The Nigger Question,” which he framed as a discourse delivered before a philanthropic audience dedicated to the abolition of slavery, the “UNIVERSAL ABOLITION-OF-PAIN ASSOCIATION.” This speech is punctuated with representations of audience reactions modeled on the simulated audience responses Carlyle had interpolated into Cromwell’s speeches. In the resulting metanarrative, the audience of the fictional speaker dwindles steadily until only a “small remnant”—suggestive of the “saving remnant of Israel”—remains to give assent to his doctrines (see August 21, 33).58 If this is a reflection of Carlyle’s recognition that “The Negro Question” and *Latter-Day Pamphlets* had driven away many of his faithful readers, it also reveals something about the technique of these works, in which the speaker does not seek to convert but to test his audience, to discover the saving remnant.

Unable to convert his contemporaries, Carlyle cut himself off from them, leaving himself a “minority of one” (*CME*, 4:348; see *HHW*, 61). In “dissent from all the world,” he insisted that he could no longer be identified with or accepted by conventional parties, sects, and institutions, even the literary vehicles in which he had so often appeared (*LL*, 2:24). While in the 1830s he had been frustrated when editors refused to accept his writings, he now proudly claimed that “There is no Newspaper that can stand my articles, no single Newspaper that they would not blow the bottom out of in a short while!” (*LL*, 1:470).59 Where he had once hoped to astonish all parties, he now wanted to alienate them: “All the twaddling sects of the country, from Swedenborgians to Jesuits, have for the last ten years been laying claim to ‘T. Carlyle,’ each for itself; and now they will all find that said ‘T.’
belongs to a sect of his own, which is worthy of instant damnation” (NL, 1:86–87). With *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, which cuts off speakers and allows only Carlyle’s own personae to speak, Carlyle locked himself up once more in a world even more isolated than Craigenputtoch.

Carlyle’s self-enclosure manifests itself in *Latter-Day Pamphlets* in the reduction of the dialogue between the narrator and the many factions of English society to a dialogue with himself. The principal audience is the prime minister—Carlyle frequently addresses “your Lordship”—yet the prime minister he imagines is ultimately himself. *Latter-Day Pamphlets* envisions a prime minister modeled on Cromwell who will reform “Downing Street” and regiment the nation. In addressing and dramatizing the prime minister, Carlyle has in mind three figures: the incumbent Russell, his predecessor Peel, and himself. He addresses several appeals to Russell, but he has no desire to reform him. Russell, he claims, has donned the “battle-harness” of Cromwell but does not really intend to do battle against anarchy and will never be capable of governing (123). Russell should be turned out in favor of “the one likely man or possible man to reform” Downing Street, “King” Peel (92; see 97). Peel would reestablish hierarchy by animating “intelligent circles” of followers through whom he would transmit his plans for reform and establish social order. But, although Carlyle appears to sustain some hope that Peel will return to office, his representation of the Cromwellian prime minister has less to do with Peel’s parliamentary initiatives than with his own fantasies about what he would do if “they were to make [him] Cromwell of it all” (CL, 14:47).

Although *Latter-Day Pamphlets* is overtly an argument for making Peel prime minister, it is more subtly an argument for a prime minister modeled on the Carlylean persona. Carlyle’s identification with Burns and his lament that the man of letters does not have a more active career available to him, together with his argument that men like Burns, who are “born king[s] of men” should not be excluded from governing merely because they come from the “lowest and broadest stratum of Society,” become arguments in favor of his own eligibility for public office (118). The speech by the prime minister that concludes the first pamphlet, “The Present Time,” could never have been uttered by Russell or Peel; it belongs entirely to the Carlyle who indulges throughout the *Pamphlets* in imagining what he would do if he “had a commonwealth to reform or to govern” (58). Not surprisingly, a good deal of Cromwell is infused into this persona. When the prime
A number of critics have argued convincingly that, while Carlyle's social analyses remain much the same in *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, his rhetoric has changed (LaValley, 279–86; Levine, “Use and Abuse,” 117–23; Goldberg, “A Universal 'howl,'” 138). Yet it would be wrong to stop with an analysis of the rhetoric of these works. Although in many regards Carlyle’s arguments do remain the same, their emphasis has shifted in significant ways. What made and makes these works offensive is that changes in the nature of his analyses of freedom, of the necessity of work, and of social responsibility shift the blame for social problems from the ruling classes to the working class, and in the process resort to racial stereotyping. Although his conception of industrial regiments, which would “regenerate” society and produce a theocratic “*Civitas Dei,*” is an extention of the idea of building a “green flowery world” with which he had concluded *Past and Present,* it shifts the source of the labor from the ruling class—the captains—to the poverty-stricken laboring class (159, 166). The shift in his military metaphors is telling. In *Past and Present,* where he was concerned with “captains of industry,” he attacked and sought to reform the ruling classes. In *Latter-Day Pamphlets,* where he proposes empressing the unemployed in “Industrial Regiments,” he attacks and seeks to control the poor. Because he would force all able-bodied paupers to enlist, his proposal for industrial regiments, which would impose a hierarchical military order on industry, is in effect a proposal for establishing slavery in England (41–43). It is, in fact, of a piece with his arguments against abolition in “The Negro/Nigger Question.”

“The Negro/Nigger Question” takes up the discourse of the debate on the nature of freedom touched off by the abolition movement. At the center of this debate, which began in the 1770s and developed further in the early nineteenth century, was the analogy between slaves and factory workers widely used both by defenders of slavery and critics of industry. Political economists, who defined freedom in strictly economic terms as the freedom to buy and sell one’s labor in the marketplace, generally regarded abolition of slavery as an extension
of laissez-faire principle. Critics of the laissez-faire marketplace, and of industry in particular, challenged this notion of freedom, arguing that slaves were better off than the majority of English laborers, who were slaves of necessity, as the simple need to survive deprived them of their theoretical freedom to seek better employment. Carlyle, like his predecessors in this debate, often gives an ironic intonation to the word *free* by putting it in quotation marks, implying that the freedom offered by emancipation is only nominal, that it would not free slaves from the hardships of human existence (*LDP*, 24, 40).

The slaves-of-necessity argument was used by anti-abolitionists to argue that slavery was no different than industrial labor, and by critics of industry, like Coleridge, to argue that slavery should be abolished and industrial capitalism regulated. Both Coleridge and Carlyle attempted to define freedom in ethical rather than economic terms, but they could do no better than claim that freedom was "best expressed and enforced through a traditional hierarchy of social relationships that defined one's 'duty'" (Gallagher, 18). The "free man," Carlyle writes, "is he who is *loyal* to the Laws of this Universe" (*LDP*, 251). When Carlyle supported slavery, he was not really departing from Coleridge's position but admitting more frankly that the hierarchical social order they both desired, harkening back as it did to medieval serfdom, entailed a form of slavery. He thus inverts Coleridge, arguing, in effect, that slavery should be extended to the British working class.

*Latter-Day Pamphlets* and "The Nigger Question" represent the relationship between masters and laborers through the metaphor of farmers and horses, a transformation of the metaphor of horse and halter—representing rebellion and authority—that Carlyle had developed in the 1830s. When, in *Sartor Resartus*, the young *sansculotte* Teufelsdröckh rejects the constraints of the law, he is depicted as a "colt" who breaks off his "neck-halter"; and, in *The French Revolution*, the French people are depicted as "gin-horses" who rear up when threatened with the "whip" (*SR*, 121; *FR*, 1:5). In *Sartor Resartus*, Carlyle also points out that whereas a manufacturer will lay off his workers and let them starve during a slack season, horse owners would never think of neglecting their horses just because they have no work for them (230). In *Chartism* and *Past and Present*, Carlyle combined the two figures to suggest that treating horses according to the principles of laissez-faire—abandoning them to survive through the winter when
one has no work for them—would lead to a horse rebellion, horses “leaping fences” and “eating foreign property” (CME, 4:142, 158; PP, 27; see 277). Horses would be justified in rebelling because they need to eat, he implies, but rebellion is not necessary if masters do their duty. In Latter-Day Pamphlets, and later in “The Nigger Question,” he appears much less concerned that the horses might eventually starve than that they refuse to work for Farmer Hodge and are “wasting the seedfields of the world” (LDP, 27). The analogy is no longer an argument against laissez-faire so much as an extension of the proslavery argument against the emancipation of slaves. Whereas the Carlyle of 1830, the struggling author, had identified with the rebellious horse, the Carlyle of 1850 identifies with the agrarian capitalist.

Carlyle's desire to rationalize his proposal for industrial regiments led him to take up positions that contradicted his critique of political economy. The situation in the West Indies provided the opportunity to shift the focus of his analysis. He had long argued that the English poor were starving because employers failed to provide for them in times of dearth when employment was not available, but the situation in the Indies was different. The West Indians were refusing the work offered them because they preferred to work for themselves, to establish their own subsistence economy. Carlyle argues that they are refusing the only real work available to them, that their work, as opposed to that done by English planters, is not productive: “the gods wish beside pumpkins, that spices and valuable products be grown,” and so the English have produced “fruit spicy and commercial, fruit spiritual and celestial” (CME, 4:375, 373; emphasis added). But, as Mill immediately perceived, Carlyle's argument relies upon the assumption that spices and sugar are more valuable because they are “commercial,” because they have value in the capitalist economy, a startling contradiction of his belief that value cannot be defined in economic terms (Essays on Equality, 90, 92).

Carlyle's advocacy of forced labor—in the guise of prime minister he warns the idle Irish that he will make them work—similarly reverses his earlier critiques of the political economists (LDP, 44). Whereas he had once argued that the poor were forced by circumstances (e.g., that no work was available) to go on relief, in 1849 he complains that the “one or two thousand great hulks of men lying piled up within brick walls” of the workhouse in Killarney simply refuse to work (RIJ, 77; see 175–76). But, once again, work has become allied to capital-
istic production—his industrial regiments produce “green crops, and fresh butter and milk and beef without limit”—rather than a means of realizing an ideal social order (LDP, 46; see CME, 4:355–56, 377–78). Carlyle’s “green flowery world” is a capitalist utopia built with forced labor.

Carlyle’s loss of sympathy for the poor makes itself manifest everywhere in Latter-Day Pamphlets. In Past and Present, he had attacked those who denied their kinship—their “sisterhood”—with the Irish widow, but in Latter-Day Pamphlets he denies his kinship with the Chartists arrested by Russell in 1848: “In brotherhood with the base and foolish I, for one, do not mean to live” (PP, 151; LDP, 66; see 77). In Past and Present, he could sympathize with a poor couple guilty of murdering their children for insurance money, arguing that the guilt lay equally with the social system that drove them to this act, but he now attacks those who lament the plight of seamstresses (PP, 9–10; LDP, 27). Carlyle insists in Latter-Day Pamphlets (and later in the 1853 “Nigger Question”) that it is the greed of these distressed seamstresses, who have given up good jobs as servants, rather than the greed of employers that is responsible for their poverty. Yet he adduces nothing but anecdotal evidence on behalf of his argument and fails to see, as he might have ten years earlier, that the seamstresses might be justified in rejecting an oppressive servitude.

Significantly, Carlyle holds those with the least power in British domains—women, Irish, and blacks—responsible for its social ills. Moreover, he exploits his own as well as his culture’s racial prejudices in order to reinforce his criticisms of the poor and unemployed. Although he denied the charge of racism in Oliver Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches and the 1853 “Nigger Question,” it can be readily demonstrated that he employed racial stereotyping and the premise of racial hierarchy to justify his defense of slavery and his proposals for industrial regiments.

Carlyle’s racism is most evident in “The Negro Question,” which argues that blacks “have to be servants to those that are born wiser than [they], that are born lords of [them]” (CME, 4:379). Even after Mill publicly criticized these imputations of racial inferiority—he was quick to point out that Carlyle was treating cultural traits as natural ones—Carlyle continued to insist, in Latter-Day Pamphlets, that blacks were slaves by the authority of God (Essays on Equality, 92–93; LDP,
“The Nigger Question” did not substantially alter this view. Although he now claimed that he did not “hate the Negro”—and there is no reason to believe he was being insincere—he continued to depict blacks as racially inferior. The problem in discussions of Carlyle’s racial attitudes is that it is incorrectly assumed by his defenders that an absence of racial hatred is incompatible with the presence of racial prejudice. Carlyle was not being inconsistent; the claim that one loves one’s inferiors is the foundation of paternalism.

Carlyle’s prejudice against Celts enabled him to substitute the West Indian blacks of “The Negro/Nigger Question” for the Irish of the projected book on the Irish Question. A letter to Emerson, written just after his 1849 visit to Ireland, reveals how the two groups were related to one another in his mind: “‘Blacklead these 2 million idle beggars,’ I sometimes advised, ‘and sell them in Brazil as Niggers,—perhaps Parliament, on sweet constraint, will allow you to advance them to be Niggers!’” (RWE, 456). He made it clear elsewhere that he believed he and his Annandale forebears were descended from the Danish rather than the Celtic settlers of Scotland: “The Annandale Scotch . . . are all Danes . . . stalwart Normans: terrible Sea-Kings are now terrible drainers of Morasses, terrible spinners of yarn, coal-borers, removers of mountains. . . . The windy Celts of Galloway meet us, not many miles from this, on the edge of Nithsdale: is it not a considerable blessing to have escaped being born a Celt?” (CL, 13:192; see 278–79 and n. 2). Although he recognized that subjection to unjust landlords might be responsible for the development of undesirable cultural traits, nonetheless, as early as Chartism, he represented the Irish stereotypically as “Immethodic, headlong, violent, mendacious” (CME, 4:137). By 1849, in spite of his friendship with and admiration for Gavan Duffy, he had come to consider the majority of Irish as incorrigible beggars, reduced to “deceptive human swine” (RIJ, 176; see 193).

Carlyle seems to conclude that if the transcendental word cannot persuade the poor to work, it can only be because they are racially incapable of vision. His caricatures of blacks and Irish as well as the impoverished working class insist that they, like Cagliostro, merely eat and drink, that they consume rather than create. In “The Negro/Nigger Question,” the blacks of the West Indies loll about eating pumpkin, and in Latter-Day Pamphlets, paupers, seamstresses, and the Irish are drunkards who turn down every opportunity to do honest work.
Whereas Carlyle had earlier sought to convert the middle class, he now turned to trying to coerce the working class (LDP, 93–94; see RIJ, 120; CME, 4:355–57, 375–76).

The Carlyle who had once recoiled from the Bucanier morality of the middle class now recoils from the “ape-faces, imp-faces, angry dog-faces, heavy sullen ox-faces” of a monstrous and bestial working class (LDP, 55). The rhetoric of Latter-Day Pamphlets, as manifested in the passage just cited, dehumanizes the working class, depicting the poor as animals, or even inanimate offal. “Pauperism” becomes “the poisonous dripping from all the sins, and putrid unveracities and godforgetting greedinesses and devil-serving cants and jesuitisms, that exist among us” (158). In spite of the fact that, as Carlyle must have known, the foul odors, slime, ooze, and fetid effluvia to which he repeatedly alludes were the inescapable conditions of life in the poverty-stricken districts of major cities, in the Pamphlets he transfers what had once been a revulsion against the putridness of greed to the poison of poverty (27–28, 159, 164, 167).

Carlyle’s anger against the working class was rooted in his contradictory desire for a revolution that would complete the Puritan revolution by reestablishing hierarchical authority. Although he had demonstrated in The French Revolution, and even in Oliver Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches, that revolution unleashes anarchy that cannot be controlled except by repression, he had continued to hope that revolution could reestablish authority. The anger of Latter-Day Pamphlets manifests his bitter disappointment that the revolutions of 1848 did not bring England a new Cromwell. Whereas in 1789 the French people had risen up and rid themselves of false government, he complained, the people now let themselves be the “dupes” of “Sham-Kings” (12, 11; see 13–14). Latter-Day Pamphlets argues for the use of the “whip” to control the rebellious working classes and simultaneously brandishes the whip at them because they have failed to rebel.

This contradiction is most fully evident in the final Pamphlet, “Jesuitism,” which unexpectedly sides with sansculottism rather than authority. On the face of it, Ignatius Loyola might be one of Carlyle’s heroes. At a time when belief was being challenged, Loyola—using the same metaphor Carlyle favored when he conceived the “industrial regiments”—had created a symbolic army to defend the hierarchical authority of the pope against “Sansculottism” (330). Indeed, Carlyle cannot help praising the Jesuits’ emphasis on obedience to authority.
But, of course, Loyola was fighting against the Reformation that had produced his beloved Puritans. He therefore attacks Loyola on the grounds that the authority Loyola served was a sham and defines "Jesuitism" as the practice of sustaining the pretense of authority in institutions that no longer possess it. Although he names the practice after the Jesuits, the pamphlet is, in fact, an attack on the Church of England, the chief practitioner of Jesuitism in Victorian England. Much as he fears anarchy, Carlyle takes the side of the sansculottes, because they intended to reinstate the authority that had vanished from the churches of Rome and England. *Latter-Day Pamphlets* expresses the anger and frustration of a man who, expecting apocalyptic revolution to produce epic society, had in 1848 seen revolution debased from tragedy to farce.

The contradictory impulses of "The Negro Question" and *Latter-Day Pamphlets* also emerge in Carlyle's attitude toward his own authority. At certain moments, his inflated sense of authority makes him capable of imagining himself ruling England as a Cromwell, while at other moments his doubts about the authority of literature lead him to question the entire enterprise of writing social criticism. On the one hand, as Mill recognized when reading "The Negro Question," Carlyle was now writing as if he possessed transcendental authority: "The author issues his opinions, or rather ordinances, under imposing auspices; no less than those of the 'immortal gods.' 'The Powers,' 'the Destinies,' announce through him, not only what will be, but what shall be done" (*Essays on Equality*, 87). But Mill did not seem to realize that Carlyle's exaggerated claims to authority may have been intended to cover up his anxiety that he lacked any authority at all. When *Latter-Day Pamphlets* attacks English literature for failing to transform the heroic actions of the English into a written epic, it implicitly draws attention to Carlyle's failure in regard to Cromwell (281–82, 322–27). If the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* express his anger at his contemporaries for failing to discover a Cromwell, they also express anger at himself for failing to convince them that they need one.

Mill's response to Carlyle's persistent command that the poor work must have hit home: "I do not include under the name labour," wrote Mill, "such work, if work it be called, as is done by writers and afforders of 'guidance,' an occupation which, let alone the vanity of the thing, cannot be called by the same name with the real labour, the exhausting, stiffening, stupefying toil of many kinds of agricultural and manufac-
uring labourers” (Essays on Equality, 91; see August, xxvi–xxvii). Is writing, even writing social criticism, work?

Carlyle himself had long been apprehensive that it was not, that speech or writing could never become action but always displaced and deferred it, and he dedicated one pamphlet, “Stump-Orator,” to this question. Perhaps recalling how as a young student he had aspired to achieve “glory in literature,” he now rues an educational establishment that entices young men into the literary profession by telling them that they will “astonish mankind” (172). “[T]here never was a talent even for real Literature,” he replies, “but was primarily a talent for something infinitely better of the silent kind,” while defending himself against Mill’s charge by claiming that no other profession is open to men of talent (212; see 190–91). In the conclusion of “Stump-Orator,” Carlyle virtually acknowledges that his time has passed, that his opportunity to become a heroic Cromwell has been wasted in his enslavement to literature. He leaves the future to the young: they “are in the happy case to learn to be something and to do something, instead of eloquently talking about what has been and was done and may be! The old are what they are, and will not alter; our hope is in you” (213).

Carlyle, age fifty-five, clearly includes himself among the old who can only talk eloquently about “what has been” (Abbot Samson, Oliver Cromwell) or “what may be” (a green flowery world). If the author of Latter-Day Pamphlets always seems to be on the attack, it may be because he believes, at bottom, that his words are impotent.

In moving to London in 1834, Carlyle had hoped to “commune” with fellow souls, but by the time he wrote Latter-Day Pamphlets he felt cut off from almost everyone. Whereas The French Revolution established his authority, “The Negro Question” and Latter-Day Pamphlets expressed his suspicion that his authority was specious and served in turn to undermine that authority in the minds of the reading public. His relationship with Mill, whom he met rarely in the 1840s and almost never afterward, is exemplary. Just one decade after writing the rave review of The French Revolution that confirmed Carlyle’s reputation as a major writer, Mill felt compelled to rebut publicly the views Carlyle put forth in “The Repeal of the Union” and “The Negro Question.” Carlyle later regarded the period following the publication of Latter-Day Pamphlets as a time when even friends whose political views were much closer to his own than Mill’s, friends like Forster and Spedding, “fell away . . . into terror and surprise;—as indeed every-
body did” (Rem., 126; Spedding, 753; see NLM, 2:14). As he at least half intended, “The Negro Question” and Latter-Day Pamphlets drove away those who were not of his faith; but instead of leaving behind a saving remnant, this strategy left him virtually alone. For the next fifteen years, he abandoned the attempt to address his contemporaries about the problems of the day and, turning inward, meditated on the authority of fathers and the careers of their sons.