To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Robert Aaron Dedmon, Jr., entitled "The Contributions of Robert Southey to The Quarterly Review, 1809-1839." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English.

Kenneth Curry

Kenneth Curry, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Galen Broaddus

E. W. Fulton

Bain T. Stewart

Accepted for the Council:

Hilton C. Smith

Vice Chancellor for
Graduate Studies and Research

Thesis
75b
.D335
cop.2

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ROBERT SOUTHEY TO THE QUARTERLY REVIEW, 1809-1839

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee

Robert Aaron Dedmon, Jr.

June 1975

1227382

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Without the continued patience and encouragement of Dr. Kenneth Curry over the last five years, my degree program and my dissertation would never have been completed. In earning his approval, invaluable recommendations, and friendship I have earned my most cherished reward.

I wish to thank my Committee members, Dr. Edward Bratton for his constant reassurance and friendship, Dr. Galen Broeker for lighting my path through many winding historical ways, and Dr. Bain T. Stewart for his expert help in the preparation of the final version of this study. I am also indebted to the Department of English of The University of Tennessee for providing considerable financial support for my graduate studies.

Many personal friends deserve my gratitude for their interest in my work. Among them are Dr. Raymond Considine, Dr. Robert Weathersby, William Humble, Ira Michael Shuff, Marvin F. Austin, Jr., and Mary Ann Moore. A final note of deep appreciation goes to Professor Henry B. Evans, formerly of Memphis State University and Union University, for his wisdom and encouragement through several years, and to my wife Judy, who never doubted that it would be done.

ABSTRACT

As a social, political, and literary critic Robert Southey has not received the attention which has been accorded to many of his contemporaries, and this is unfortunate because he was one of the most skillful and powerful English periodical essayists of the first third of the nineteenth century. By many students of the period he has been remembered as a political apostate, arch-conservative, and spokesman for the forces of political repression. This study is an apology for Southey and a needed definition of his political, social, religious, and literary views as they appeared in his principal vehicle for expression during the mature period of his career, The Quarterly Review.

This study of Southey's ninety-three essays, published between 1809 and 1839, seeks to show that despite his frequently rabid political conservatism, his obvious prejudices, and his extreme fear of revolution and social disorder, he was far from being an apostate from his earlier idealistic beliefs which had found expression in such works as the juvenile Wat Tyler (1794), his first epic Joan of Arc (1796), and his role in Pantisocracy. After the first decade of the nineteenth century Southey's idealism became tempered and took new forms, and a careful examination of his Quarterly papers show him to have been a powerful advocate of social, educational, and political reforms. The study provides, then, a badly needed qualification of the nature of his views of his contemporaries and his age, and it indicates the generally humane tone of his literary criticism and his standards for reviewing

as well as his various opinions upon the literary history and traditions of England. It also points out some basic similarities between his Quarterly essays and other works, especially Letters from England by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella (1807), Sir Thomas More: or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society (1829), and Essays, Moral and Political (1832). In order to indicate consistencies and developments in Southey's thought, a generally chronological treatment of the Quarterly papers has been followed.

Chapter I discusses Southey's association with The Quarterly Review from 1809 until 1839, his role in the inception of the review and the formulation of its political and literary policies, his relationships with his editors and other reviewers, his attacks upon and attitudes toward The Edinburgh Review--all set against the context of the times, the war in Europe and the economic and political confusions in England. This chapter also indicates that Southey was not always in agreement with the policies of the Quarterly, nor did the review always reflect his own opinions. Because of the policy of anonymity of authorship of articles Southey was often falsely accused by his contemporaries of expressing opinions which he did not hold.

Chapter II treats Southey's views of history, political theories, and contemporary politics. The major points discussed are his standards for the writing of history, his historical evaluations of the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars, and certain facets of British history, particularly the seventeenth century. In addition, this chapter defines his attitude toward the French war, his political

theory, and the bases of his fear of a popular revolution, or bellum servile, in nineteenth-century Britain. The two great political issues to which Southey was opposed were Catholic emancipation and the reform of Parliament, and this chapter indicates the bases of his opposition. While the second chapter defines Southey's conservative political theories, it also points out that he was not a narrow partisan.

Chapter III examines Southey's social criticism in the Quarterly, especially his recognition of the inequities growing out of the industrial revolution and the English manufacturing system. The chapter also points out Southey's strong advocacy of substantial reforms in the poor relief system, emigration schemes, and agriculture, and it defines his proposals for a system of national parochial education for England. This chapter serves to qualify his political prejudices, for it shows him as both a humanitarian and as a reformer who believed that certain basic changes should be instituted in British society in order to avert social and political revolution.

Chapter IV deals with Southey's religious articles in the Quarterly, his own religious beliefs, his interest in the missionary efforts of the Church of England and dissenters, and his interest in ecclesiastical history. It also notes the basis and development of his hatred of Roman Catholicism and his distrust of contemporary religious sects. The chapter also treats his staunch defense of the Church of England as a religious, social, and political institution.

Chapter V discusses Southey's criticism of contemporary works of

poetry and drama, his numerous reviews of travel literature, and his superbly written biographical sketches, which are perhaps the finest of his essays. In addition, his deep knowledge and interest in English literary history is treated. Since Southey's reviews in the Quarterly were published anonymously, the problem of the identification of authorship has been resolved, and an appendix is attached to this study which provides a list of his essays.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	ROBERT SOUTHEY AND THE QUARTERLY REVIEW	1
	Introduction	1
	Inception of The Quarterly Review	33
	Southey, His Editors, and Quarterly Policies	47
	Southey and The Edinburgh Review	78
II.	HISTORY, POLITICAL THEORY, AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICS	93
	Standards for Historical Writing	93
	The French Revolution	107
	The Napoleonic Wars	115
	English History	124
	Other Historical Articles	136
	Political Theory and the Bellum Servile	142
	Pasley, Politics, and War	174
	Parliamentary Reform	177
	Catholic Emancipation and Ireland	188
	Corn Laws and Political Conclusions	201
III.	SOCIAL CRITICISM	214
	Social Reformers, the Poor Laws, and the Manufacturing System	214
	National Education	251
	Emigration, Industry and Agriculture	259

CHAPTER PAGE

IV. SOUTHEY AND RELIGION IN THE QUARTERLY REVIEW. 276

Southey's Religious Beliefs 276

The Missionaries. 287

Church History. 301

Roman Catholicism and Dissenting Sects. 322

The Church of England 360

Individual Religious Leaders. 377

V. LITERATURE AND LITERARY CRITICISM IN THE QUARTERLY REVIEW . 383

Southey, the Quarterly Scholar-Critic 383

Southey's Criticism of Contemporary Works of Literature . 418

Reviews of Travel Literature. 426

Southey's Biographical Sketches 441

Conclusion. 455

BIBLIOGRAPHY. 466

APPENDIX. 473

VITA. 481

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS IN TEXT AND NOTES

AR	The Annual Review
CB	Edward Dowden, ed. The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Carolyn Bowles. Dublin: Longman, 1881.
Colloquies	Robert Southey. Sir Thomas More: or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society. 2 vols. London: Murray, 1829.
EAR	The Edinburgh Annual Register
ER	The Edinburgh Review
Essays	Robert Southey. Essays, moral and political. 2 vols. London: Murray, 1832.
LC	Charles Cuthbert Southey, ed. The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey. 6 vols. London: Longman, 1849-1850.
NL	Kenneth Curry, ed. New Letters of Robert Southey. 2 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1965.
QR	The Quarterly Review
SL	John Wood Warter, ed. Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey. 4 vols. London: Longman, 1856.

Other forms of documentation conform to those set forth in The MLA Style Sheet, 2nd ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1970).

CHAPTER I

ROBERT SOUTHEY AND THE QUARTERLY REVIEW

I. INTRODUCTION

Robert Southey is an author whose misfortune it has been to have had his name outlive his works; indeed, despite his voluminous productions of prose, epic poetry, history, biography, fiction, political and social criticism, and periodical reviews and essays, only one work ironically retains wide currency today, the nursery tale "The Story of the Three Bears," which appeared in the third volume of The Doctor in 1837. Certainly his name is known to most readers of the works and biographies of the major figures of English romanticism, but only in a tangential way. To many students of English literature Southey is remembered in a purely negative connection--as the object of Byron's satirical "Vision of Judgment" and the dedication to Don Juan, or as the target of Macaulay's maiden essay in The Edinburgh Review in 1830, or as the man who succeeded Henry James Pye in 1813 as Poet Laureate only because Sir Walter Scott had refused the honor.

To students of the first generation of romantic poets and prose writers Southey may be remembered as an author whose works had substance, but not emotional impulse and imaginative fire, and to students of the second generation of romantic authors he is generally called to mind as a political apostate who abandoned his early republican idealism in favor of social, political, and religious orthodoxy.

Some readers may know him through his Life of Nelson (1813), the only major work of Southey which has survived with any prominence into the twentieth century, although modern editions of his Letters from England, Journals of a Residence in Portugal, and Omniana have been published.[1] Finally, some few students may have encountered Southey only through badly representative but widely anthologized pieces of his poetry--poems such as "The Cataract of Lodore" or "The Battle of Blenheim."

Critical interest and esteem for Southey have long been on the wane, as Lionel Madden's recent Robert Southey: The Critical Heritage (1972) has illustrated only too well, and Kenneth Curry has accurately observed that "Southey has often been the target for depreciatory criticism whose purpose has been to enhance at his expense another author or group of authors."[2] Since the publication of Edward Dowden's biography in 1879, it appears that Southey has received little critical attention, although there have been three important works in Southey biography in this century which throw light upon his life and works: William Haller's The Early Life of Robert Southey in 1917, Jack

---

[1]Jack Simmons, ed., Letters from England (London: Cresset Press, 1952); Adolfo Cabral, ed., Robert Southey: Journals of a Residence in Portugal, 1800-1801, and a Visit to France in 1838 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960); Robert Gittings, ed., Omniana, or Horae Otiosiores (Slough, Buckinghamshire: Centaur, 1969).

[2]Kenneth Curry, "Robert Southey" in The English Poets and Essayists: A Review of Research and Criticism, eds. Carolyn Washburn Houtchens, and Lawrence Huston Houtchens, rev. ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 1966), p. 170. Curry's chapter in this work provides a thorough survey of Southey criticism through 1965.

Simmons' Southey in 1945, and Kenneth Curry's edition of New Letters of Robert Southey in 1965. Curry's new study entitled Southey was published in 1975 and will prove useful for the general student. While twentieth-century critics have tended to neglect Southey's significance as a poet, biographer, and historian, some serious attention has been directed to his social and political works.[3] Without doubt the best and most extensive study of Southey's social and political thought is Geoffrey Carnall's Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind (1960). In addition Jean Raimond's Robert Southey: L'homme et son temps (1968) provides a thorough treatment of Southey's relationship to his era.

In most general literary histories Southey has been accorded an almost apologetic mention or a footnote of two, or lacking anything favorable to say about him or his works, some literary historians have said nothing at all. As a social and political critic he certainly has not received the attention which has been given to many of his contemporaries, and this is perhaps the most unfortunate area of neglect, for he was one of the more powerful English periodical writers whose essays drew the attention of readers during the first third of the nineteenth century.

---

[3]Examples are A. V. Dicey, Lectures on the Relation between Law and Public Opinion in England during the Nineteenth Century (1905), Crane Brinton, Political Ideas of the English Romanticists (1926), Alfred Cobban, Edmund Burke and the Revolt against the Eighteenth Century (1929), Bernard N. Schilling, Human Dignity and the Great Victorians (1946), Raymond Williams, Culture and Society 1780-1950 (1958), and A. M. Allchin, The Silent Rebellion: Anglican Religious Communities 1845-1900 (1958).

It seems clear that the relative lack of critical attention to Southey stems partly from the sheer volume of his prose works, and the lack of energy on the part of scholars to explore them adequately. It is also clear that this neglect of Southey, as well as the misinterpretations of his place in relation to his contemporaries and his age, has led many Southey scholars to take a defensive approach. Certainly his biographers have not enhanced his reputation by their too sympathetic tone (perhaps Edward Dowden is the best example) although Jack Simmons has done much to provide an objective study. Geoffrey Carnall's work is an excellent defense of Southey's social and political thought. The present study is too an apology for Southey, but it is also an explanation, a needed definition of his political, social, religious, and literary views as they appeared in his principal vehicle for expression during the mature period of his career, The Quarterly Review. This dissertation will also provide an examination of Southey's relationship with the Tory journal itself, its inception and its policies. Perhaps more importantly this study will show that despite Southey's frequently intense political conservatism, his obvious prejudices, and his extreme fear of revolution and social disorder, he was far from being an apostate from his earlier idealistic beliefs which had found a youthful expression in such works as the juvenile Wat Tyler (1794), his first epic Joan of Arc (1796), and his leading role in the scheme of Pantisocracy in 1794-1795.

After the first decade of the nineteenth century Southey's idealism became tempered and took new forms, and an examination of his

papers published in the Quarterly will show him to be a forceful advocate of social, educational, and political reforms. This dissertation should, then, provide a much-needed qualification of the nature of Southey's views of his contemporaries and his age, and it will also indicate the generally humane tone of his literary criticism in the Quarterly as well as his standards for literary criticism.

Southey's contributions to The Quarterly Review from the inception of the review in 1809 until the laureate's last paper in the March issue of 1839 constitute, then, a seriously neglected body of his prose writings. Over this thirty-year period--a period which saw great transformations in English politics, society, and literature--Southey wrote nearly one hundred reviews for the journal and collaborated with other reviewers on a number of others. Over the years individual reviews or groups of reviews have been the subjects of study, but as yet no attempt has been made to treat the articles comprehensively and to assess their place in the Southey canon, and no attempt has been made to distill from this great number of essays, highly varied in subject matter, the essence of Southey's thought.

The biographers of Southey, from Dowden to Haller to Simmons, and Southey scholars, from Zeitlin to Raimond, have tended to give only a passing recognition to the Quarterly papers and to acknowledge their general importance before passing on to Southey's better-known, and presumably more important, works of poetry, history and historiography, and biography. Frequently the papers have been summoned to support particular generalizations, and Carnall has provided careful

discussions of several of the more important ones, but the articles have yet to be examined as a whole, as a major facet of Southey's works. Some scholars have found in the papers only what they have wanted to find to reinforce a particular theory, and they have ignored other points of Southey's thought.[4] In addition, Southey's involvement with the inception and policies of the Quarterly has not been traced in any satisfying detail. Southey as a critic of social, political, and historical events and works, as a reviewer of travel literature and religious works, as a critic of literature, has too long been ignored; the wide range and variety of his interests as evidenced by his contributions to the Quarterly have not been taken fully into account in the evaluation of Southey as a major figure in English letters.[5]

The relative neglect of Southey's Quarterly Review work seems especially unfortunate because, more than his contributions to The Annual Review and to The Edinburgh Annual Register and other periodicals, they constitute his most significant periodical writings; the

---

[4]Perhaps the prime example is a series of works by Walter Graham: Tory Criticism in the Quarterly Review, 1809-1853 (1921; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1970); "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," Philological Quarterly," 2(1923), 97-110; "Some Infamous Tory Reviews," Studies in Philology, 22(1925), 500-517; English Literary Periodicals (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1930).

[5]Doctoral dissertations concerned with Southey's writings have touched only briefly upon this particular body of his work, e.g., Richard G. Bozorth, "Robert Southey as a Critic of Poetry" (Princeton, 1951), Paul Warren Whitney, "Robert Southey's Views on English Literature," (Pennsylvania, 1960), Richard B. Geyer, "The Literary Reputation of Robert Southey," (Northwestern, 1952), John W. McCullough, "Robert Southey's Theories and Concepts of History," (North Carolina, 1952), and Daniel R. Whitney, "The Social and Political Idealism of Robert Southey," (Northwestern, 1950).

Review itself provided the main outlet for his criticism for three decades of his mature career, and his papers were the chief medium through which he publicly expressed his political, social, literary, and moral opinions. Further, for a student of early nineteenth-century England and the literature of the period, Southey's Quarterly reviews provide a particular view of the age, just as the Quarterly as a whole provides a remarkable overview of the great movements of opinion and the great variety of interests of nineteenth-century thought.

Southey's Quarterly papers, as well as his remarkable letters, frequently illuminate his more renowned works. Such works as his Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism (1820), The Book of the Church (1824), and the Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae (1826) may be viewed as developments of ideas and opinions expressed in early Quarterly reviews concerning the history of dissenters, the rise of evangelical sects, the Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions, and the historical and religious effects of the English Reformation. There is some continuity of thought between Southey's early distrust of religious dissenters and Roman Catholicism and his championship of the established church in The Quarterly Review and his more extended treatment of these subjects in the 1820s. Certainly his Sir Thomas More: or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society (1829) may be seen as a distillation of the political and social ideas which were first published in the Quarterly.

Some of Southey's Quarterly papers formed the basis for later

expanded works. His Bell and Lancaster review (QR, VI, 1811) Southey expanded into a pamphlet in 1812 entitled The Origin, Nature and Object of the New System of Education, and the same Quarterly paper later formed a basis for his Life of the Reverend Andrew Bell (1844).[6] The celebrated Life of Nelson (1813) grew directly out of Southey's review of several biographical sketches of Nelson (QR, III, 1810). The year after Southey's death in 1843 there appeared the Select Biographies: Cromwell and Bunyan. The Cromwell biography was adapted from Southey's biographical account in the Quarterly (QR, XXV, 1821). The Essays, moral and political (1832) reprinted the Quarterly essays which Southey himself felt to be the most significant.

Aside from providing a poorly-paid poet with a much-needed means of livelihood,[7] the Quarterly work, as Jack Simmons observes, turned Southey from a hack reviewed into a competent and polished essayist,

---

[6]The Life of the Reverend Andrew Bell was edited by Southey's widow Caroline Bowles Southey and published in 1844. Only the first volume was written by Robert Southey; the second and third volumes were written by Southey's son and editor, Charles Cuthbert Southey.

[7]The Quarterly Review paid its contributors well, and as a professional author Southey always had a keen eye for the pecuniary rewards of his services. Although he sometimes complained in his letters that the reviewing cost him dearly in time and effort, it did furnish the main source of his income for many years. For his first paper he received £ 21. 13s. His fee rose from ten guineas per sheet in 1810 to a standard fee of £100 per article in 1816. From 1816 until 1838 the Quarterly paid a yearly average of £ 275. He frequently alludes to his payment in his letters. See SL, III, 47; LC, III, 273; IV, 312; VI, 14-15, 159; NL, I, 523, 527; II, 121, 371; CB, p. 88; Lionel Madden, ed., Robert Southey: The Critical Heritage (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 24-26.

and despite the fact that the articles were published without the signature of their author, they greatly added to his literary reputation and influence.[8] Undoubtedly, the remarkably lucid Southey prose style and the forcefulness of their expression served as their author's signature. "Southey's prose," wrote the editor William Gifford, "is so good that every one detects him."[9]

The reviews which Southey wrote for the Quarterly followed the general pattern and served much the same basic function as most papers published in the Quarterly and in The Edinburgh Review and a number of lesser journals. While they provided information for readers about recently published books, and frequently included long passages of summary and quotation from the work under consideration, Southey's papers were, as Simmons has noted, "something more than merely elaborate reviews; the best of them were independent essays, clear and well argued in a style rather more trenchant than that of his books."[10] Reviewers frequently followed the practice of dealing only briefly in a critical way with a work and then expanding their reviews into essays in which the reviewer offered his own opinions and arguments on a particular subject raised by the work under review. Seen in this way early nineteenth-century periodical reviews constitute a special genre, with particular limitations and advantages.

---

[8]Jack Simmons, Southey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), pp. 130-131.

[9]Samuel Smiles, A Publisher and His Friends: Memoir and Correspondence of John Murray (London: John Murray, 1891), I, 260.

[10]Simmons, p. 129.

the end. Evidence of Southey's methodical and meticulous process of composition is always apparent, despite the fact that many of his papers were composed rapidly under the pressure of publication deadlines. Samuel Smiles has summed up Southey's process of composition quite well:

> By dint of experience, he was able to collect his information and write out his articles with great rapidity; and he could, without difficulty, have filled a whole number from his own head and pen alone. It was said of him that he was able to "tear the heart out of a book"; glancing down each page to see whether it contained anything he was likely to make use of, he made certain notes which he slipped in as marks, and in the course of a few hours, with the help of his remarkable memory, he obtained enough materials to form the subject of an interesting paper. It was not merely a review from extracts, but a complete analysis, giving the gist of the book under consideration.[11]

A note of caution should be sounded here, for there is a scholarly hazard in writing about periodical literature. The temptation of the student is to think that an author is writing ex cathedra, that he is making a final pronouncement of opinion, and that all papers were very carefully thought out when they were submitted to the editor for publication. John Clive has noted quite properly at the outset of his study of The Edinburgh Review that

> one tends to take the articles too seriously, forgetting that they were often dashed off in great haste by authors more interested in great haste by authors more interested in supplying a manuscript on time than in standing its test. Nothing is simpler than to construct consistent systems of thought and seemingly harmonious lines of development out of the mass of available material. On the

---

[11]Smiles, II, 40.

> other hand, nothing is more dangerous. For almost every assertion a contradiction may be found, if the search be diligent enough.[12]

While this is sound advice, anyone who has studied carefully Southey's methods of research and composition will tend to believe that it applies less to him than to other writers, for he was among the most methodical, the most professional, of authors. Many of the comments in his correspondence dealing with his work for the Quarterly hint strongly that he wrote with an eye to consistency of thought and opinion.

Perhaps one of the major concerns or limitations involved with the review-essay is the question of the relative independence of the essayist. In Southey's case, particularly, the question centers upon the extent to which he was an editorialist or propagandist for the Quarterly and its political supporters and the extent to which he functioned as an independent essayist. That he regarded the review as a vehicle for his own opinions is clearly evident from statement after statement in his letters. He wrote, for example, early in 1813 ". . . the Review gives me . . . more repute than anything else which I could do, and because there is no channel through which so much effect can be given to what I may wish to impress upon the opinion of the public. . . ."[13]

Throughout his association with the review Southey continually insisted upon his freedom of expression. He was by no means always in

---

[12]John Clive, Scotch Reviewers: The Edinburgh Review 1802-1815 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 11.

[13]LC, IV, 18.

agreement with his editors on the policies of the Quarterly, and his correspondence makes it abundantly clear that he did not wish to compromise his own opinions merely to support the current policies of the periodical. Clearly one of the reasons that he so strongly and so frequently complained about editorial changes in the manuscripts he submitted to two of his editors, Gifford and Lockhart, was that he feared that editorial emendations might change the substance or tone of his papers. It should be noted also that in some of his reviews he deliberately muted or restrained his expression in order to escape changes by the editor. He admitted, for example, to his friend Charles Wynn in a letter of December, 1816, "What I have at different times written in the Quarterly has sometimes been mutilated, and was always written under a certain degree of restraint to prevent mutilation."[14] Three years later he complained to John Murray, the owner and publisher of the review, of the effects of publishing papers anonymously and of the problems of editorial cutting:

> . . . I cannot speak out, as I would do, tho by doing so I should serve the Government with far greater effect. This passage must be softened, and that must be expunged--till sometimes a paragraph appears so mutilated in argument and so emasculated in style that I scarcely recognize my own writing and should be unable to defend it. And perhaps in the next number there appears an article . . . expressly written for the purpose of contradicting what I had advanced. . . . You may not be aware how much my articles have suffered mutilation--to say nothing of what they lose by being under a sense of restraint.[15]

---

[14]LC, IV, 229.

[15]NL, II, 204-205.

One can be sure from the evidence presented in his letters, however, that Southey submitted nothing to the Quarterly in which he did not believe, and that if there were editorial changes in his papers which substantially altered their meaning or tone he would complain bitterly in his letters, as he frequently did. Thus Southey's letters are an indispensable guide to certain of his Quarterly essays. Further, a comparison of his opinions and views as expressed in his letters with those published in his Quarterly papers does not reveal a great deal of difference between his private and his public expressions. Immediately upon becoming a contributor to The Quarterly Review he had written Gifford: "Two things I can promise,--perfect sincerity in what I write, without the slightest assumption of knowledge which I do not possess; and a punctuality not to be exceeded by that of Mr. Murray's opposite neighbours at St. Dunstan's."[16] Nor did he ever fail to keep both promises.

The list of Southey's contributions to the Quarterly provides a clear indication of his wide range of interests: history and contemporary politics, social criticism, religion, travel literature, biography, poetry, as well as literary history, criticism, and scholarship. His papers concerning historical events and contemporary political issues constitute a major portion of his work, and he dealt with such matters as the methods of writing history, interpretations of historical events and figures, the particular issues of parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, the prosecution of the war against

---

[16]LC, III, 222.

Napoleon, various economic issues, domestic discontent, concepts of foreign policy, and a large number of topical issues which have long since been forgotten except by specialists in early nineteenth-century British history.

Southey's essays of social criticism were heavily influenced by his persistent fear of social upheaval and political revolution--the fundamental dangers of any rapidly changing society--as well as by his genuine concern for the problems generated by the industrial revolution in England. Although by 1809 he had become a defender of the Crown and the Ministry, his Quarterly papers clearly show that his earlier social vision had not dimmed but had changed and become both deeper and richer. His articles of social criticism began in 1813 and doubled by 1818. He advocated reform in the social spirit rather than radical reforms of the social machinery, and he urged a sweeping rebirth of the human spirit which would give rise to such specific changes in society as a system of national education sponsored jointly by the government and the established church, measures to prevent or correct the abuses of a growing industrial society, and improvements in the poor relief system which would better the lot of the lower classes and the poor. Of his essays of social criticism Hill and Helen Shine have observed with accuracy:

> Some of the most interesting subject-matter in his essays, for the reader of today, are found in the broad plain where the religious, the educational, and the economic issues meet and fuse into the great social problems brought to a head by the industrial revolution. . . . At opposite poles, as they were, from the laissez-faire and utilitarian and statistical economists' approach, they in some measure anticipate the paternalistic socialism of Carlyle

and Ruskin, and perhaps suggest even some of the twentieth century's efforts to deal with poverty and unemployment.[17]

Scattered throughout his essays and frequently emerging as separate articles are Southey's opinions concerning the functions and duties of the Church of England and his evaluations of dissenting religious groups. Notable here is his treatment of the origin and rise of English Methodism. Although he frequently exhibited a frank admiration and sympathy for individual religious leaders, his great distrust of dissenting sects, which he saw as a dangerous threat to the Church Establishment, is clearly evident. He professed great admiration for the efforts of dissenting missionaries who, in foreign fields of labor, posed no immediate threat to the Church of England and thus carried to heathen lands the doctrines of reformed Christianity. Notable too is Southey's intense hatred for Roman Catholicism which he viewed not only as a massive system of superstition, apostasy, and heresy, but also as a very real threat to the security of his country. Rare is the essay in which he did not hurl a few barbs at Roman Catholicism.

Southey's essays dealing with matters of religion frequently betray their author's fascination with religious fanaticism of one sort or another, and he traced with scrupulous care the origins and development of popular religious superstitions and their effects upon religious converts. Examples are his essays concerning the "apocalypse" of Sister Nativité, the religious professions of Joanna Southcott, and the remarkable career of the Reverend William Huntington.

---

[17]Hill and Helen Chadwick Shine, The Quarterly Review under Gifford: Identification of Contributors 1809-1824 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949), pp. xiii-xiv.

It is something of an irony that Robert Southey, the most domestic of men who travelled relatively little beyond Keswick and the Lake District, should regard the review of travel books as a pleasurable specialty, and that he should, with great competence and detail, treat works dealing with such a broad range of areas: North and South America, Polynesia, Iceland, India, Portugal, the West Indies, and England itself. He took particular notice of works dealing with the United States, and among the works he reviewed were an account of the Lewis and Clark adventures, an account of Timothy Dwight's travels in New England, and George Head's stories of adventures in the woods of Canada and the northern United States. In addition Southey sometimes produced commendatory reviews of travel books by friends and relatives.

Southey's greatest forte as a prose writer was biography, and perhaps the finest of his Quarterly papers are his biographical sketches which appeared usually as a part of a review but which can stand on their own merits as well. Included here are his small-scale biographies of such varied figures as Wellington, Nelson, Oliver Cromwell, the Duke of Marlborough, John Evelyn, pastor John Oberlin, engineer Thomas Telford, John Bunyan, Alfieri, Lope de Vega, Captain Philip Beaver, John Hampden, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Admiral Lord Howe, and Bayard, "une Chevalier sans peur et sans reproches." Of Southey's ability in biographical writing Hill and Helen Shine have made this observation:

> When Southey discussed Wellington among his cheering soldiers or Wesley among his singing colliers, his essay was not merely on a moment and a man. In it one feels a movement and a force--indeed,

> a motion and a spirit that impels. It is a part of a historical development, with its past, its present, and its probable future.[18]

Relatively few of Southey's reviews were devoted to what today are considered major literary works or authors, and perhaps his review of Landor's Count Julian is the only one of note. He did, however, give attention to the works of such minor poets as James Grahame and James Montgomery, and his interests included such obscure poetesses as Lucretia Davidson and Mary Colling. In addition, more than one essay indicates a genuine interest in the uneducated contemporary poets of England.

The most significant literary reviews which Southey penned are the essays dealing with literary history and scholarship, and his most ambitious work in these areas is a two-part review of Chalmers' English Poets. Southey's early visits to Portugal and his long interest in the history of Brazil qualified him as a scholar of the literature and history of the Iberian Peninsula and South America, and included in his Quarterly papers are reviews of Lope de Vega, Camoens, and Portuguese literature. Emerging from these varied reviews are his standards of poetry, his opinions on the function of literature in a modern age, and several facets of his critical theories.

The chapters of this study are organized, somewhat arbitrarily, according to these broad areas of interest, and within each chapter treatment of pertinent articles is arranged chronologically as the papers appeared in The Quarterly Review. This chronological arrangement

---

[18]Ibid., p. xiii.

gives some idea of the development, consistency, or lack of development in Southey's thinking in particular areas during the thirty years that he wrote for the review. Admittedly, several articles fit into several broad categories, and some of them cannot be made to fit into any category. It is, however, not the purpose of this study to be exhaustive in its treatment of Southey's papers, for such an undertaking would undoubtedly require several volumes. While the limitations of time and space do not permit attention to every article Southey wrote, the dissertation is, however, representative in nature and seeks to provide an overview of Southey's work, an exposition of the major tenets of his thought, and such references as might prove helpful to one who wishes to investigate more fully one or more aspects of the Quarterly papers or the opinions of their author. In this way it should prove of some value to the general student as well as providing a point of departure for more specialized scholars.

Some account should be taken here of the problems inherent in this study, and one of them is the degree of attention which should be directed to the books themselves which Southey reviewed. Many of them were of little consequence in their day, and almost all of them have today drifted silently into literary obscurity. It seems appropriate, then, to focus more attention upon the subjects of the essays and on the opinions expressed in the essays than upon the particular books which were under scrutiny, although certainly Southey's standards and methods of reviewing should be made explicit. Also inherent in a study of this nature is a certain degree of repetition because many articles

cut across different areas of interest; however, every attempt has been made to keep repetition of treatment to an absolute minimum.

There is also the frequently frustrating problem of the authorship of the reviews which arises from the policy of anonymous publication. The policies of both The Edinburgh Review and The Quarterly Review were, of course, to publish all reviews anonymously, and there were good reasons for it. Certainly the policy of anonymity of authorship would tend to protect contributors who set forth unpopular views, and since reviewing was sometimes considered an ungentlemanly occupation--and often was--the contributors would thus be protected in that area as well. One should also consider the relatively small size of the literary world at the beginning of the nineteenth century; a reviewer might sometimes be very well acquainted with the author under review, or the author's circle of friends, and thus anonymity would afford a greater degree of objectivity in reviewing as well as serve to protect friendships.[19] In addition, a policy of anonymity contributed to the tone of oracular authority so cherished by many reviewers. A policy of signed reviews, on the other hand, might well have weakened the overall effect and unity of the review itself. Arthur R. D. Elliot, himself an editor of The Edinburgh Review, has noted that the system of anonymous reviewing

> . . . soon led to the review acquiring a distinct personality of its own. By ninety-nine out of every hundred readers, the

---

[19]John O. Hayden, The Romantic Reviewers, 1802-1824 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 12.

> criticism expressed would be accepted as that of the review--of The Edinburgh or The Quarterly--and they would enquire no further. Among regular contributors, as, of course, with the editor, the feeling prevailed that articles in the review represented something more than the opinion, at the moment, of the individual writer. . . . Without the practice of anonymity, combined with responsible and vigorous editorship, a lasting corporate personality could not have been acquired; and the chief reviews, though they would still have fulfilled a useful purpose, could not have become influential organs of public opinion.[20]

Despite the advantages offered by the policy of anonymity, Southey was not in agreement with it. He wrote to Murray in 1816:

> I have often wished some mark might be affixed to the different papers in the Review--a single letter for instance--which might just serve the purpose of exempting Mr A from any imputation of holding the same opinions as Mr B, or the rest of the Alphabet, and thus leaving every writer responsible to the public only for what he advances himself.[21]

And he again complained to his publisher in November, 1819:

> The advantages of writing anonymously are imaginary as far as I am concerned. I have already as large a portion of critical and Jacobinical abuse as can possibly be bestowed upon me. Whoever hates the government and the religion of his country, whoever has renounced his Saviour and would dethrone his King, regard me with a deadly hatred. If I cared for this (which I do not) I am not in the slightest degree protected from it by writing in the Review; I am just as much exposed--and what is a real evil, I am exposed to disadvantage which I should not be, if standing alone.[22]

Southey was very often accused of being the author of reviews in the Quarterly which he did not write, and this was frequently a source of constant distress to him. To many of his contemporaries he became a

---

[20]Arthur R. D. Elliot, "Reviews and Magazines in the Early Years of the Nineteenth Century," Cambridge History of English Literature (New York: C. P. Putman, 1916), XII, 156.

[21]NL, II, 140.

[22]NL, II, 204.

symbol of the attitudes of the Tory review, and his hostile critics, Byron chief among them, were prone to use him as a whipping boy in their own attacks upon the Quarterly. Southey's letters reveal that he resented deeply such charges against him. He wrote, for example, to the Quaker poet Bernard Barton in January, 1820:

> . . . for though I bear a part in the Quarterly Review (and endure a large portion of the grossest abuse and calumny for opinions which I do not hold, and articles which I have not written), I have long since found it necessary for reasons which you may easily apprehend, to form a resolution of reviewing no poems whatever. My principles of criticism, indeed, are altogether opposite to those of the age. I would treat everything with indulgence, except what was mischievous; and most heartily do I disapprove of the prevailing fashion of criticism, the direct tendency of which is to call bad passions into full play.[23]

Clearly he objected to being lumped together with such critics as Croker or Gifford.

Perhaps the most notable instance of Southey's being thus falsely accused involved the celebrated quarrel between the laureate and Shelley which led to their remarkable exchange of letters in 1820. In the April number of the Quarterly for 1819 there had appeared an unfavorable review of Shelley's Revolt of Islam, and the young poet wrote Southey from Pisa in June of the following year to accuse him, politely but firmly, of having authored the review. Southey immediately replied to deny authorship, but he also made clear to Shelley his irritation at having been thus falsely accused.[24]

---

[23]LC, V, 15.

[24]CB, p. 359. The four letters comprising the Southey-Shelley correspondence are printed in the appendix of Edward Dowden's edition of the Southey-Bowles correspondence, pp. 358-364.

In August, 1820, Shelley replied to Southey acknowledging the latter's denial of authorship of the review of Islam and providing the laureate with an exposition of his religious and political views. In this letter Shelley pointed out that he held many of the same opinions which Southey himself once espoused. In his final letter to Shelley, written late in the same year, Southey answered the charge which would frequently be hurled at him because of his Quarterly articles--the charge of political and religious apostasy. With high indignation Southey wrote:

> Nor were my opinions ever similar to yours in any other point than that, desiring, as I still desire, a greater equality in the condition of men, I entertained erroneous notions concerning the nature of that improvement in society, and the means whereby it was to be promoted. Except in this light, light and darkness are not more opposite than my youthful opinions and yours. You would have found me as strongly opposed in my youth to Atheism and immorality of any kind as I am now, and to that abominable philosophy which teaches self-indulgence instead of self-control.[25]

And with that the Southey-Shelley correspondence came to an end. The review which had precipitated the quarrel was not written, of course, by Robert Southey but by John Taylor Coleridge, the third editor of the Quarterly.[26]

Kenneth N. Cameron has speculated, perhaps unnecessarily, that

---

[25]Ibid., p. 364. The best places to trace the Southey-Shelley relationship are Walter E. Peck, Shelley: His Life and Work (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927); Carl Grabo, The Magic Plant (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936); Newman I. White, Shelley (New York: Knopf, 1940); Kenneth N. Cameron, "Shelley vs. Southey: New Light on an Old Quarrel," PMLA, 57(1942), 489-512; NL, II, 19n, 239-241, 474-475.

[26]Shine, p. 66.

after 1816-1817 Shelley came to dislike Southey so intensely that he began to believe that every unfavorable and reactionary paper in the Quarterly came directly from the desk of Southey; the dislike "assumed a new and strange form of an idee fixé, that every anonymous attack on him in The Quarterly Review was by Southey."[27] In the January, 1818, Quarterly there appeared a review of Leigh Hunt's Foliage which contained some rather unfavorable remarks about Shelley, and in December of that year Shelley wrote to Hunt to blame Southey for writing the review.[28] Once again, the review of Foliage had been written not by Southey but by either Coleridge or by John Wilson Croker.[29]

Shelley did, however, have some reason for ill-will toward Southey because of an article in the Quarterly. In the review for January, 1817, there appeared one of Southey's best-known political articles entitled "On the Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection." One of the political papers which received unfavorable treatment in this review was a work entitled "A Proposal for Putting Reform to a Vote throughout the Kingdom," by the "Hermit of Marlow." The Hermit was Percy Shelley, and the pamphlet was his first reform paper. Further, Southey's article also contained a three-paragraph digression in which the reviewer rather obviously turned away from his discussion

---

[27]Kenneth N. Cameron, "Shelley vs. Southey: New Light on an Old Quarrel," PMLA, 57(1942), 490.

[28]Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck, eds., The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, Julian Edition (New York: Scribner, 1926-1930), X, 9-10.

[29]Cameron, 490; Shine, p. 59.

of political radicals to attack young "literary adventurers," and one young "literary adventurer" in particular. It is probable that Shelley felt that he was the particular adventurer under attack.[30]

An examination of Southey's letters from this period indicates rather clearly, however, that he had no way of knowing the identity of the "Hermit of Marlow," and because he never identified the "literary adventurer" whom he attacked there is no reason to believe it was Shelley. There is, however, good reason to believe that Shelley felt Southey was directly involved in the celebrated Quarterly attack upon John Keats in the April number for 1818.[31] Shelley's belief, of course, would have been mistaken, for Southey was neither the author of the review of Endymion, nor was he influential in directing the often vituperative critical policies of the Quarterly. The author of the review was John Wilson Croker.

That others believed Southey responsible for the Endymion review is indicated by a letter published anonymously in The Morning Chronicle for October 3, 1818, which named Southey as a possible author of the offending paper. Byron, of course, missed the mark altogether when he listed Southey, but not Croker, as the possible author of the review in the famous verse:

> Who killed John Keats?
> "I," says the Quarterly,
> So savage and Tartarly;
> " 'T was one of my feats."

---

[30]Cameron, 492.

[31]Ibid., 507; See Jean Raimond, Robert Southey: L'homme et son temps, "Etudes Anglaises," No. 28 (Paris: Didier, 1968), pp. 127-129.

Who shot the arrow?
"The poet-priest Milman"
(So ready to kill man)
"Or Southey, or Barrow."

Byron's anger was also stirred by a review of Hunt's Foliage and the supposed slurs on Shelley in that article, and he believed that the attack on Shelley was the work of the Poet Laureate. This was his mood when, in September, 1818, he composed the dedication to his Don Juan.[32] Byron's anger over the Foliage review may also have been a strong contributing factor in his concerted attacks on Southey which followed in "The Vision of Judgment" in April, 1821, Canto III of Don Juan in August, 1821, and the prose appendix to The Two Foscari in the same year. In 1822 the famous Byron-Southey quarrel was to reach its height with Southey's letter to the Courier in January answering the several charges of Byron.[33]

In a second letter to the Courier on December 7, 1824, Southey publicly denied that he had written the review of Foliage, and he further defended himself against charges of authorship of other deprecatory reviews in the Quarterly, including that of Endymion.[34]

---

[32]Simmons, p. 167.

[33]The Courier, January 5, 1822. See Simmons, p. 168.

[34]Both of Southey's letters to The Courier are conveniently reprinted in his Essays, moral and political (1832), II, 191-205, and in LC, V, 349-361. In his second letter to The Courier, dated December 8, 1824, Southey wrote: "Papers in the Quarterly Review have been ascribed to me (those on Keats's Poems, for example), which I have heartily condemned both for their spirit and manner. But for the one in question [the review of Foliage], its composition would be creditable to the most distinguished writer; nor is there anything either in

In 1825 an anonymous reviewer for Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine accurately summed up the Byron-Southey quarrel this way:

> In Southey, one of the most learned and accomplished scholars, and pure and virtuous men, that the modern world has produced, Byron could see nothing but the Tory partizan, and the author of certain articles in the Quarterly Review. In Byron, on the other hand, in one of the greatest of the great Poets of England . . . Southey could see nothing else but a "pander-general to youthful vice," and the founder of a "Satanic school."[35]

It should be noted in Southey's favor that although he did not himself attack Hunt in the May, 1818, review of Foliage, he had good reasons to do so. In April, 1817, Hunt had published in the Examiner a savage attack upon the laureate entitled "Death and Funeral of the Late Mr. Southey," and the following month he published another vitriolic attack entitled "The Extraordinary Case of Mr. Southey."[36] Both articles reviled Southey for his conservative political and literary views, and the Hunt articles in the Examiner provide a fine example of the kind of vituperative criticism and abuse to which Southey was subjected following the surreptitious publication in February, 1817, of Wat Tyler. They are also good examples of the kind of satire which Southey himself detested and in which he consistently refused to engage. Southey found frequent occasion in his Quarterly papers to attack Hunt and the Examiner, directly and by name, as prime

---

the opinions expressed, or in the manner of expressing them, which a man of just and honourable principles would have hesitated to advance." (LC, V, 356)

[35]Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, 16(1825), 711.

[36]The Examiner, April 13, 1817, 236-237; May 11, 1817, 300-303.

examples of the kind of journalism which, in his opinion, was seditious, treasonous, and a serious danger to the internal security of Britain during the difficult years between 1810 and 1820.

Through the years Southey has been accused of writing other reviews; for example, Peter Cunningham in 1854 absolved Southey from blame in an 1810 Quarterly review of Dr. Nott's Herrick, and he pointed out that the author was not Southey but Barron Field, a friend of Charles Lamb.[37] At any rate, these examples should be sufficient to show that Southey often absorbed much of the hostile criticism and abuse which would have been more justly directed towards John Wilson Croker, or John Taylor Coleridge, or William Gifford, or lesser-known contributors to the review. Because he was relatively well known, and because his papers were published anonymously, Southey seems to have been a convenient figure to attack for the various hostile and unpopular reviews which appeared in the Tory journal. In addition, Southey was frequently regarded by many Americans as the author of unfavorable papers on America and American authors.

Southey was, however, the author of a Quarterly paper which led to a painful personal disagreement with one of his most cherished friends, Charles Lamb. Lamb's Essays of Elia were published in January, 1823, and Southey paid them an unfortunate compliment in his article "The Progress of Infidelity" (QR, XXVIII, 1823) when he remarked that Lamb's work "only wanted a saner religious feeling to be

---

[37]Peter Cunningham, "Herrick and Southey," Notes and Queries, 10(1854), 27.

delightful as it was original," a very poor choice of words in view of Lamb's personal experience with insanity.[38] Lamb wrote a reply in his "Letter from Elia to Robert Southey" in the London Magazine for October, 1823. The quarrel was a mild one, however, and was resolved when Southey wrote his apologies to Lamb and the two met in London late in 1823 to make up their differences. This was not the first time that Lamb had felt himself maligned by the Quarterly, nor was it the first time Southey had been swept into a quarrel between Lamb and the review. In the Quarterly for December, 1811, William Gifford, in one of the few papers he actually wrote for the journal, referred to Lamb's comments in a review of Ford's The Broken Heart as the "blasphemies of a poor maniac," and he had further described Lamb as one for whom "every feeling mind will find an apology in his calamitous situation." This seemed excessively brutal of Gifford, especially in view of the fact that Lamb's sister, like Calantha, was gradually going insane. Southey protested at once to Murray, and Gifford made the appropriate apologies.[39]

In 1814 Lamb, at Southey's request, wrote and submitted to Gifford a review of Wordsworth's Excursion, which the editor proceeded to edit heavily before publishing it in the Quarterly for October, 1814.

---

[38]See LC, VI, 288.

[39]See LC, V, 150-151; NL, II, 28-29; for discussions of the relationships between Southey, Lamb and the Quarterly see Roy Benjamin Clark, William Gifford: Tory Satirist, Critic, and Editor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1930), pp. 222-228 and Walter Graham, "Some Infamous Tory Reviews," Studies in Philology, 22(1925), 508-511.

Lamb wrote Wordsworth complaining strongly that the editor had cut away fully a third of the paper and had changed the tone of the review entirely.[40] This incident undoubtedly did little to improve relations between Gifford and Southey, who complained to Grosvenor Bedford, a personal friend, of the editor's "merciless mutilations."[41]

While the policy of anonymous authorship of reviews led to unjust accusations against Southey, the policy has also led to a great deal of difficulty in the identification of the reviews which Southey actually did write. The bases of identification of the Southey papers in The Quarterly Review should be made clear, and this can be done by an examination of the several lists of his articles which exist. Murray's "Register of Authors and Articles in The Quarterly Review" at Sir John Murray's, 50 Albemarle Street, London, provides a list of Quarterly articles and their authors from 1809 until 1879, and it provides much helpful information. The Murray register, as Hill and Helen Shine have pointed out in their study, does not, however, always provide definitive attributions of authorship.[42] The Shines' study, The Quarterly Review under Gifford: Identification of Contributors, 1809-1824, furnishes a thorough compilation of evidence for the authorship of articles, but sometimes the work does not provide definite

---

[40]CB, p. 71; see also E. V. Lucas, ed., The Letters of Charles Lamb (London: Dent, 1935), II, 136-139.

[41]SL, II, 393.

[42]Shine, p. 100.

conclusions. In addition, the Shine work only extends through 1824 while Southey continued his contributions until 1839.

Several specific lists of Southey's contributions exist, and they exhibit varying degrees of accuracy and contradiction. Joseph Cottle, in his Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey, reprinted a list of the Quarterly papers which Southey himself sent to Cottle from Keswick on April 7, 1825. This list, however, is only good for the first few years of Southey's work, and Cottle himself recognized that the list had some omissions.[43] In an appendix to the sixth volume of the Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey, Charles Cuthbert Southey provided a list of his father's contributions to periodical literature, and included in this bibliography is a list of the articles contributed to The Quarterly Review from 1809-1839.[44] Cuthbert Southey's list, however, contains some serious and unfortunate inaccuracies.[45]

---

[43]Joseph Cottle, Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey (London: Houlston and Stoneman, 1847), 242-243.

[44]LC, VI, 400-402.

[45]Cuthbert Southey's list does not include the articles entitled "Captain Pasley on the Military Policy of Great Britain" (QR, V, 1811) and "On the Corn Laws" (QR, LI, 1834), both of which Southey wrote. The list does include reviews of John Anderson's Sumatra (QR, XXXIV, 1826), Head's Rough Notes and Myers's Chile (QR, XXXV, 1827), and Sparks' John Ledyard (QR, XXXVIII, 1828), which Southey did not write. Raymond Dexter Havens, in an article entitled "Southey's Contributions to the Foreign Review," Review of English Studies, 8 (1932), 210-211, has pointed out that there are serious inaccuracies in Cuthbert Southey's list of his father's papers in the Foreign Quarterly Review and the Foreign Review and that these errors also cast doubt upon the reliability of the listing for the Quarterly Review contributions.

A more recent Southey scholar, Jean Raimond, has composed an excellent bibliography of Southey's works and criticism on Southey in the appendix of his Robert Southey: L'homme et son temps, but since Raimond depends upon Cuthbert Southey's listing for the Quarterly articles he only repeats the same errors. The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900, covers, of course, only the last fourteen years of Southey's association with the Quarterly, and it also reproduces the Cuthbert Southey list. Through the years scholars such as John D. Kern, Elizabeth Schneider, Irwin Griggs, and Karl Pfeiffer have given attention to the identification of particular articles. Myron Brightfield has identified the articles of Lockhart and Croker, and these findings are sometimes helpful in determining the authorship of a Southey paper.[46]

Perhaps the most accurate list of Southey's articles is that contained in a manuscript in Southey's hand given to Mr. Bertram R. Davis, a Bristol scholar, on April 7, 1957, by Mrs. F. F. Boult, Southey's great-granddaughter, a copy of which has kindly been furnished by Professor Kenneth Curry for the purpose of this dissertation. The most accurate method to follow in determining the canon of Southey's Quarterly papers is to correlate these various lists and then

---

[46]J. D. Kern, E. Schneider, I. Griggs, "Lockhart to Croker on the Quarterly," PMLA, 60(1945), 175-198; Karl G. Pfeiffer, "The Authorship of Certain Articles in the Quarterly Review," Philological Quarterly, 11(1932), 97-108; Myron F. Brightfield, John Wilson Croker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1940), pp. 453-459; Myron F. Brightfield, "Lockhart's Quarterly Contributors," PMLA, 59(1944), 491-512; M. Clive Hildyard, Lockhart's Literary Criticism (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931), pp. 166-173.

Edinburgh Review, for the histories of the two are inextricably tied together. By the time that the Quarterly came into existence in London early in 1809, the Edinburgh had since October of 1802 been the voice of progressive whiggism under the editorship of Francis Jeffrey, a Scottish advocate, and his very active collaboration with Sydney Smith and Henry Brougham, later Lord Chancellor and a co-founder of London University. The Edinburgh had transformed English literary criticism through its energy and independence and by its emphasis upon what its founders considered a high quality of criticism and its solicitation of professional reviewers, handsomely remunerated. The Edinburgh had been an immediate success, and by 1809 its circulation had increased more than ten-fold.

The first few numbers of the Scottish review left little doubt about what its policies would be. In politics it would be a journal of reform, but in literary criticism it would be both traditional and pontifical. Its hostility toward new trends in literature was immediately apparent from Jeffrey's review of Southey's Thalaba in the very first number; the campaign against the "Lakers" was joined early and would have long-lasting repercussions. The Edinburgh introduced a dogmatic critical tone, and its reviewers were unabashedly hostile

---

195-204; NL, II, 317n. The article "On the Means of Improving the People" is Southey's, but Rickman had a large part in its research and preparation. Southey claimed the Corn Law article, NL, II, 406, and sufficient evidence exists in Southey's letters to attribute the Pasley article to him although John Wilson Croker was involved in its preparation; see Shine, pp. 23, 59, and 61 for evidence on the authorship of these articles.

toward authors who did not represent the politics or literary tastes of the review and its supporters. From its first number, as John Clive has noted, the review

> gave notice that no author, whoever he was, could henceforth go unscathed if cant and dullness characterized their productions, and that its reviewers were willing and able to lay down the law according to their lights, with incisiveness and vigor.[48]

Almost from the time of its birth The Edinburgh Review wore the colors of the Whig faction of Charles James Fox, and there was little effort to disguise its political bias.[49] Its chief political strength lay in the efforts of Brougham who would later become one of the most influential politicians in Britain. Certain basic political tenets characterized the early numbers: an early stand in favor of Catholic emancipation, a recognition of the need for a quick solution to the social and political plight of Irish Catholics, the efficacy of a balance of power policy in Europe, and, most offensive to the

---

[48]Clive, p. 53.

[49]Ibid., p. 36. Clive notes: "The Review from the very first bore the buff-and-blue colors of Fox's party, and there is no question about the generally Whiggish inclinations of its projectors. But Edinburgh Whiggism, based on opposition to the benevolently stifling despotism of Dundas, was quite different from the English parliamentary variety at the turn of the century--or what there was of it." Clive's Chapter IV provides an excellent discussion of the politics of The Edinburgh Review. Nothing is more confusing to the modern student of this period of English history than the use of the labels "Whig" and "Tory." They are used for the sake of convenience in this dissertation and should be taken only in the broadest sense. Southey never used the term "Tory" to describe himself, and the word appears seldom in his writings. He sometimes used the term "Whig" but preferred more specific terms as "Pittites," "Foxites," "Grenvillites," the "Opposition" and the like. In his age disciplined political parties in the modern sense did not exist; Parliament was composed of ill-defined interest groups and members who preferred to view themselves as independents.

ministerial party, a call for a reconciliation with Napoleon who was during these years moving rapidly to extend his power on the Continent. On more specific issues the Edinburgh seems not to have followed a consistent policy but rather turned with the winds of prevailing public opinion.[50] The whiggism of Jeffrey, Smith, and Brougham, however, and the toryism of Sir Walter Scott, one of the review's most capable early contributors, did not make a harmonious mixture, and Scott soon became disgusted with the politics and the critical tone of the review and left the Edinburgh in 1808 to become a founder of the rival Quarterly Review.

In 1808 public distaste for the political policies of the Edinburgh reached a climax in some circles with the publication in the October issue of a paper entitled "Don Pedros Cevallos on the French Usurpation in Spain," a joint work by Jeffrey and Brougham. In this review the Edinburgh gave praise to the Spanish insurgents who, in May of 1808, had risen up in a quasi-military rebellion against Napoleon's authority, but the reviewers also portrayed the Spanish guerillas as hopelessly deluded idealists, badly organized and badly led, who quixotically tilted at windmills. The paper also contained sharp criticisms of the upper classes of Spain and England, and called for substantial reforms in the British constitution. With somewhat contradictory logic, then, the reviewers both praised and condemned the Spanish insurgents. In praising the stand of the guerillas against

---

[50]Ibid., p. 102.

Napoleon the reviewers implied that rebellion against constituted authority, even though in this case against tyrannical authority, was an acceptable corrective for political and social inequities. Since the reviewers also noted that the Spanish rebellion could not succeed, as indeed it did not, many readers believed that the Edinburgh was sounding a shameful note of defeatism.

The "Don Cevallos" paper scandalized many from both ends of the political spectrum, including the staid Lord Buchan who, according to the celebrated story, kicked the offending copy of the Edinburgh from his doorstep into the middle of George Street and then fumigated his bookshelves. Also among those scandalized by the Edinburgh review was Sir Walter Scott who, along with John Murray the London publisher, set things in motion for the founding of a rival review which would counteract the seditious influence of the Edinburgh. Scott felt that the northern review's persistent arguments for a foreign policy of appeasement were scarcely short of treasonous.[51] Arthur Eliot has noted with great historical accuracy:

> The true causes that brought The Quarterly Review into existence are clear enough. The time had come, and the man, to challenge and dispute vigorously the domination of the great Scottish whig organ. Scott had good reason to fear that whig politics, by its instrumentality were being disseminated in the most jealously guarded of tory preserves. . . . It was, indeed, high time, in the public interest, that the arrogant dictatorship of The Edinburgh, on all subjects literary and political, should be disputed by some worthy antagonist worthy of its steel. Thus, it happened that The Quarterly, unlike The Edinburgh, was founded with a distinctly

---

[51]Edgar Johnson, Sir Walter Scott: The Great Unknown (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 299.

> political object and by party politicians of a high standing, to arrest the dangers, threatened by the spread of the doctrines of whigs and reformers, to church and state.[52]

The founding of The Quarterly Review came at a crucial time for supporters of the Ministry, for both foreign and domestic affairs had been disappointing since the Tories had returned to office under the leadership of Portland's ministry after the failure of the coalition government of Grenville in March, 1807. While the Tories were to remain in office for the next very difficult twenty-three years under the successive cabinets of Portland, Perceval, Liverpool, Canning, Goderich, and Wellington, they were to be constantly harassed by internal discontent in the country, by economic depressions, and by demands for religious and governmental reforms.

In 1809, however, the threat from abroad seemed most important. Since Trafalgar the British had made few gains against the French, and Napoleon's empire steadily gained in territory and in power. The "Continental System" instituted by the Berlin Decree in December, 1806, had made its impact upon the British economy. Napoleon had defeated the Austrians and Russians at Austerlitz in 1805 and had smashed the Third Coalition. His brother Joseph ruled in Italy, and his brother Louis in Holland. He was triumphant at Jena, Auerstadt, Friedland. He took Prussia and made peace with the Tsar at Tilsit. Nearing the zenith of his power, the Emperor had occupied Portugal in 1808, and the Portuguese royal family had exiled themselves to Brazil.

---

[52]Elliot, p. 164.

In the same year he invaded Spain, forced the abdication of the Bourbon dynasty there, and placed his brother Joseph on the Spanish throne in January, 1809. Murat had crushed the popular uprising in Spain in May, 1808, and had reoccupied Madrid. The victory of Sir Arthur Wellesley over Junot at Vimiero was spoiled by the Convention of Cintra in August which permitted Junot's army to withdraw from Portugal. Wellesley himself was removed from command of the British expedition and replaced by Sir John Moore who, in December, 1808, was forced into retreat to Coruña. The war in the Peninsula lagged on through 1808 and 1809, and the British expedition against Walcheren in the Low Countries turned into a dreary failure in July, 1809.

The tide of the war in Europe would, of course, turn by 1812 when Napoleon's alliance with Russia would fail and lead to the ill-fated French invasion of Russia. The Emperor's advance into Russia would weaken the French effort on the Peninsula and thus pave the way for eventual British victory there; but in 1808 and early 1809 this turn of events could not have been foreseen. Napoleon occupied most of the Continent and seemed invincible, and The Edinburgh Review acknowledged it. Set against this background of events there is little wonder that the "Don Cevallos" article, which seems rather innocuous today, would have created such a stir among British moderates and conservatives.

If the foreign situation seemed dismal during these years, the domestic scene seemed just as unstable. At home the Tories saw growing signs of popular disaffection. Many of the Whigs, some of whom had earlier sympathized with the French Revolution, now withheld themselves

from active support of the war effort, and although not strong in Parliament and the higher councils of government, had found articulate supporters outside the legislature. But the Whigs were deeply divided after the failure of the Ministry-of-All-the-Talents, and three dominant groups had emerged: the more moderate Grenvillites, the moderate Foxites, and a radical fringe led by such men as Samuel Whitbread who not only actively opposed the war but advanced radical proposals for the reform of Parliament. Hovering suspiciously at the edge of the Whitbread faction was Sir Francis Burdett, radical member for Westminster, and his supporters.

Although the Whigs had lost their leader in Charles James Fox, who died in September, 1806, his followers, notes a Quarterly historian

> were not discouraged; and there was growing up, especially in the north, a group of young men, able, eager, and eloquent, determined to keep alight the torch of Whiggism, albeit temporarily dimmed by the lurid flames of war. Moreover, it must be confessed that, in 1809, the Tory party, though it numbered among its leaders such men as Perceval and Canning, offered, in its obstinate resistance to internal reform, its military blunders, and the scandals which shielded or condoned it, not a few points open to attack.[53]

And the same historian notes further:

> Deprived of all share of executive power, almost banished from the counsels of the nation, the Whig party found in the "Edinburgh Review" an organ hardly less potent, and more widely penetrating, than the tongue of Charles Fox. The blows which it delivered sounded far and wide; and the Tory party had no champion at all comparable in weight and vigour to return them.[54]

---

[53]Anonymous, "The Centenary of 'The Quarterly Review,'" Quarterly Review, 211(1909), 732-733.

[54]Ibid. See Hayden, p. 21.

Pitt had died a few months before Fox, and like Fox, he had left no competent successor. There was to follow him a series of rather mediocre Prime Ministers, each of whom would be overshadowed by one or more of his ministers. The ineffectual Duke of Portland seemed to hold his government in power only because of the divisions of the Opposition, and he was to resign in October, 1809. Portland was succeeded by Spencer Perceval, one of the few Tory leaders who showed promise, but he was assassinated two years later. For both traditional parties, then, it was a period of internal divisions, quarrels, disunity, and the parliamentary process seemed to be carried on not by disciplined parties but by amorphous groups of individuals. The Tories, in addition, were rocked by scandals such as that of Mrs. Clarke and the Duke of York involving the illegal sale of military commissions, and they were further divided by strong disagreements among their senior leaders, of which the duel between George Canning and Lord Castlereagh in 1809 provides a good example.

Despite their problems the ministries of Portland, Perceval, and Liverpool held firmly to three basic positions: a "fight-to-win" policy towards France, opposition to Catholic emancipation, and opposition to reform in the apportionment and electoral methods of the House of Commons. The Edinburgh Review came to favor positions opposite to those of the ministers.

In the founding of The Quarterly Review, three elements were involved: the Portland administration itself, represented by the Foreign Minister, George Canning and his young nephew Stratford

Canning, the publisher John Murray II, who as early as September, 1807, had suggested to the Foreign Minister the founding of a rival to the Edinburgh, and the resentment of such authors as Scott, whose Marmion had in 1808 been dissected by the Edinburgh reviewers (ER, XII, 1808) and Robert Southey, whose epic Thalaba had received an unfavorable review in the very first number of the journal (ER, I, 1802), and whose Madoc and Letters from England had been similarly reviewed somewhat later (ER, VII, 1805; XI, 1808).[55]

The prime mover in the foundation of the Quarterly was Walter Scott, who early in 1808 had made overtures to Canning, his brother Thomas Scott, George Ellis, and John Wilson Croker and had asked their aid in founding a rival journal.[56] Scott was also instrumental in helping Gifford secure the services of several valuable contributors such as William Stewart Rose, George Ellis, Southey, and the Hebers. Southey wrote his brother Thomas in November, 1808:

> A few days ago came a letter from Bedford, communicating to me the, as yet secret, intelligence that it is thought expedient to set on foot a Review, for the purpose of counteracting the base and cowardly politics of the "Edinburgh." Walter Scott, it seems, was the suggestor, to some of the men in power. Gifford (the Baviad and Massinger Gifford) is to be editor, and he commissioned Bedford to apply to me. The pay will be as high as the "Edinburgh," and such political information as is necessary will be communicated from official sources,--for, in plain

---

[55]Walter Graham, Tory Criticism in the Quarterly Review 1809-1853 (1921; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1970), p. 2; for Scott's reaction to the Edinburgh review of Marmion see Edgar Johnson, 279-284.

[56]For an account of Scott's role in founding the Quarterly see Edgar Johnson, 298-305 and H. J. C. Grierson, ed., The Letters of Sir Walter Scott (London: Constable, 1932-1937), II, 81-82.

> English, the ministers set it up. But they wish it not to wear a party appearance,--only to breathe at this time the right English at-him-Trojan spirit.[57]

Walter Graham has noted that Scott's "letters of direction, encouragement, and warning to the men most interested, tell the story. Scott was almost the creator of the Tory organ."[58] Even before the appearance of the "Don Cevallos" article John Murray and Scott had met in semi-secrecy in mid-October, 1808, at Ashestiel in Yorkshire to discuss the prospects for a rival review. Here Murray gave assurances of unofficial government sanction for such a venture and outlined plans for the foundation of the Quarterly.[59] Initially Murray offered Scott the editorship of the new review, but he declined it in favor of William Gifford, whose experience as editor of The Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner in 1797 qualified him for the position which he assumed late in 1808. Malcolm Elwin has noted that

> Murray would have preferred Scott as editor, but to combat the powerfully established "Edinburgh" he needed ministerial support, with the authority of inside information for political articles, and Gifford was the nominee of the "higher powers."[60]

On October 25, 1808, Scott wrote Gifford an important letter advising the new editor of the policies which the Quarterly should follow. Aside from the practical matters of payments to contributors and ways of increasing circulation, Scott indicated his hope that the

---

[57]SL, II, 107-108.

[58]Walter Graham, Tory Criticism in the Quarterly Review, p. 4.

[59]Edgar Johnson, 299.

[60]Malcolm Elwin, "The Founder of the 'Quarterly Review'--John Murray II," Quarterly Review, 281(1943), 6.

new review would not take a strictly partisan tone. A week later Scott wrote to George Ellis stressing the necessity for a fair, non-partisan attitude. The review, he said, should accentuate "principles English and Constitutional," and it should include papers from a wide variety of interests. If the review could avoid an obviously partisan stance it could gain the edge over its rival without offending readers.[61]

The first number of The Quarterly Review, substantial but hardly dazzling, was published in February, 1809, and its lead article, written jointly by Ellis and George Canning, was entitled "Affaires d'Espagne," an obvious counter to the "Don Cevallos" paper. The problems of the new journal were immediately apparent. Gifford was never a punctual and methodical editor, and after the appearance of the first number it was not until John Coleridge assumed the editorship in 1824 that the Quarterly was published with quarterly regularity.[62] In the years following 1809, however, its circulation increased rapidly, and both the Edinburgh and the Quarterly reached their peak circulations of about 14,000 in 1818 and 1819.[63]

---

[61]Grierson, Letters, II, 121. For Scott's letter to Gifford concerning the policies of the review see Grierson, Letters, II, 100-109.

[62]Roy Benjamin Clark, William Gifford: Tory Satirist, Critic, and Editor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1930), pp. 25, 174.

[63]Richard D. Altick gives these circulation figures for the two reviews. Edinburgh Review: 7000 in 1807, 13,000 in 1814, 12,000 in 1818, and 11,000 in 1824-26; Quarterly Review: 5,000 in 1810, 12,000-14,000 in 1817-18, 9,000-10,000 in the 1830s. The English Common Reader (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 392. See also Smiles, I, 188, 259, 366, 372, 383, 495; II, 39, 448.

As the circulations of the two reviews grew, each became the undoubted spokesman for its political supporters, and although

> neither entirely excluded from its pages occasional contributions from the opposite camp; as a general rule, writers on any subject who were in sympathy with the political objects of liberalism or conservatism rallied respectively to the Edinburgh or The Quarterly Review.[64]

Somewhat later two new voices were added to political journalism with the founding of the radical Benthamite Westminster Review in 1824 and the energetic monthly Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine in 1817. It is difficult to understate the influence which the two great quarterlies wielded, and at least one scholar has been led to conclude that "these great Reviews molded the literary taste of England as the Academy directed that of France; their political influence was even more potent."[65] Ian Jack has also noted that "in an age of discussion they were among the chief channels of discussion. At times their influence

---

[64]Elliot, p. 167.

[65]Walter Graham, English Literary Periodicals, p. 230ff. Newman Ivey White has noted: "In the early nineteenth century . . . the prejudices of The Quarterly had the weight of the Tory government and the Church of England behind them and were endorsed by the majority of respectable Englishmen. Able as The Edinburgh was, The Quarterly probably exerted a greater influence on English opinion during the time that Shelley's poems were being reviewed. This influence, which played up to the popular fears and prejudices of the decade, was almost incredible. One sturdy Briton quoted by Tennyson's father ranked The Quarterly next to the Bible. Hazlitt testified to its power when he complained that one review in The Quarterly absolutely stopped the sales of one of his books. Leigh Hunt offers testimony of another sort when he ignores all other enemies to assail The Quarterly alone for its attacks on Hunt and Keats. Byron and Shelley acknowledge it when they solemnly supposed that a Quarterly review could kill not only a book, but a genuine poet. The Unextinguished Hearth: Shelley and His Contemporary Critics (Durham: Duke University Press, 1938), p. 5.

was comparable to that of Parliament itself."[66]

The degree to which the policies and development of the Quarterly were influenced and determined by its long-standing feud with its Scottish rival can scarcely be underestimated, and this rivalry makes it difficult to define with any great accuracy the exact political and critical policies and alignments of the Quarterly because they so often depended, in specific issues, heavily upon responses and reactions to the Edinburgh.[67] Initially, of course, the first task of the Quarterly was to counteract the political ideas of the Edinburgh and what was viewed as its subversive, defeatist philosophy concerning the war. The Whig writers had expressed very little faith in the foreign policies of Canning; the Tory writers felt bound to defend ministerial policy and to bolster the English faith in the cause of the Spanish guerillas in the 1808 uprising. Other matters of concern were the prosecution of the English effort on the Peninsula, the emancipation of Roman Catholics in Ireland and England, and the reform of Parliament. The dominant policy of the Quarterly was to oppose Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform until these issues were resolved in 1828 and in 1832.

While it is not possible to determine precisely the degree of influence which the Tory governments exerted upon the Quarterly, there can be little doubt that the influence was considerable. Certainly the

---

[66]Ian Jack, English Literature 1815-1832 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 8.

[67]See Charles J. Monk, "Edinburgh Critics and Quarterly Reviewers," Athenaeum, No. 2473 (March 26, 1875), pp. 393-395.

Cannings not only gave frequent advice but also had a hand in the writing of some articles.[68] Many of the contributors were actually in the Ministry at various times. George Ellis, a co-founder of the review, was by 1809 a well-known political figure and writer. John Rickman, a personal friend of Southey, also contributed to the review on various occasions and helped Southey with some of his own papers, and he was for many years a government census taker and clerk at the House of Commons. John Wilson Croker, a mainstay of the Quarterly, served as First Secretary of the Admiralty from 1809 until 1830 and as a member of Parliament. John Barrow, who wrote over 110 reviews, was Second Secretary of the Admiralty for many years. With Gifford, the editor, there was some degree of political continuity between his Anti-Jacobin and the Quarterly Review; with Gifford, Canning and Ellis had been principle contributors in the 1790s to the Anti-Jacobin. What is clear, however, is that Scott opposed government influence and a partisan tone, and at first both Southey and Murray were in fundamental agreement with him. Gifford, on the other hand, clearly favored the strong party line, and he, along with Croker, must bear much of the blame for excesses in this area.

III. SOUTHEY, HIS EDITORS, AND QUARTERLY POLICIES

Robert Southey was closely involved with the founding of The Quarterly Review. In 1807 he had been approached by Scott with an

---

[68]John Ransome Marriott, George Canning and His Times: A Political Study (London: Murray, 1907), p. 145.

invitation to write for the Edinburgh, but despite Jeffrey's offer of a tempting fee, he had immediately refused the offer as a matter of principle. His main objection to the northern review was its policy toward the war and, as will be noted later, its literary criticism. Even before the "Don Cevallos" article had appeared the Edinburgh reviewers had indicated that Britain should consider seeking a policy of reconciliation with Napoleon, since obviously the French could not be defeated militarily. In his letter of refusal to Scott, Southey wrote:

> Jeffrey is for peace, and is endeavouring to frighten the people into it; I am for war as long as Bonaparte lives. He is for Catholic emancipation; I believe that its immediate consequence would be to introduce an Irish priest into every ship in the navy. My feelings are still less in unison with him than my opinions.[69]

He considered the war against Napoleon a holy cause, a crusade, and Jack Simmons has noted that Southey "in expressing his discontent with the Edinburgh, his anger at its politics . . . was airing the opinion of the overwhelming majority of English conservatives, and of all those who were in favour of the whole-hearted prosecution of the war."[70]

Early in November of 1808 Gifford approached Southey through their mutual friend Grosvenor Bedford with an invitation to become a contributor to the proposed Quarterly Review, and this time Southey readily agreed by writing a letter to Bedford which was obviously intended as well for Gifford's eyes. This letter, Simmons has observed, constitutes an important statement in the evolution of Southey's

---

[69]LC, III, 124-125. See Earl Leslie Griggs, "Robert Southey and the Edinburgh Review," Modern Philology 30(1932), 100-103.

[70]Simmons, p. 127.

political ideas; "it illuminates the path that he had already taken, and it foreshadows the future development of his mind."[71] Southey defined his position by writing

> . . . I believe myself to be a good reviewer in my own way, which is that of giving a succinct account of the contents of the book before me, extracting its essence, bringing my own knowledge to bear upon the subject, and, where occasion serves, seasoning it with those opinions which in some degree leaven all my thoughts, words, and actions. . . . Voyages and travels I review better than anything else, being well read in that branch of literature; better, indeed, than most men. Biography and history are within my reach; upon any of these topics I will do my best. . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . You know my way of thinking upon most subjects. I despise all parties too much to be attached to any. I believe that this country must continue the war while Bonaparte is at the head of France, and while the system which he has perfected remains in force; I therefore, from my heart and soul, execrate and abominate the peacemongers. I am an enemy to any further concessions to the Catholics; I am a friend to the Church establishment. I wish for reform, because I cannot but see that all things are tending towards revolution, and nothing but reform can by any possibility prevent it.[72]

For the first number of the Quarterly Gifford wanted Southey to write a paper upon the Spanish affairs as a counterblast to the "Don Cevallos" article, but Canning objected, and Southey refused to write the paper.[73] He submitted instead an article upon the Baptist missions in India, and thus began his long career with The Quarterly Review, a career which would be pursued for the remainder of his active life, and which was to provide him with the basis of his income for many years.

Gifford had chosen wisely in asking Southey to become one of the

---

[71]Ibid., p. 128.

[72]LC, III, 183-184.

[73]R. B. Clark, p. 171; Smiles, I, 108.

first contributors, and he had not invited a novice writer. In 1809 Southey was thirty-five, but he had enjoyed a wide reputation as a successful poet since the publication of Joan of Arc in 1796. Two of his epic poems, Madoc and Thalaba, had been published, along with two volumes of minor poems. The fact that Thalaba the Destroyer was singled out for attack by Jeffrey in the initial number of the Edinburgh in 1802 is an indication of his fame. His edition of Chatterton had appeared in 1803, and with Bedford he had edited Specimens of the Later English Poets, published in 1807. His translation of Amadis of Gaul had appeared in 1803, the translation from the Portuguese of Palmerin of England in 1807, and the translation of The Chronicle of the Cid in 1808. The Curse of Kehama would appear a year after the first number of the Quarterly.

With a dozen years of experience in reviewing Southey was certainly no stranger to periodical writing. From 1798 until 1804 he had contributed to The Critical Review, and he had written for The Annual Review from 1802 until 1808. From 1808 until 1811 he was the author of the massive historical section of The Edinburgh Annual Register. Four years after the founding of the Quarterly he would, through the efforts of Scott and Croker, become Poet Laureate of England, and the future would bring an offer from Lord Liverpool in 1816 to help found a government journal. In 1817 he would be approached with an offer to become editor of The Times.[74] In 1818 he would be

---

[74]Simmons, pp. 155-157.

offered the position of Librarian to the Advocates Library of Edinburgh. In 1827 he would become a contributor to the Foreign Quarterly Review, and in later life he would be elected to Parliament and offered a baronetcy, both of which he would decline.

Gifford had also found in Southey a contributor who held very high standards of reviewing. Reviewing, Southey had written to Bedford as early as November, 1805, is "an immoral occupation, unless the reviewer has actually as much knowledge at least of the given subject, as the author upon whom he undertakes to sit in judgment."[75] Further, he believed that each author under review should be shown humane consideration, and that the bitter and often vicious tone of many contemporary critics had no place in professional literary criticism. Gifford, much to his irritation in the years to come, had also in Southey a contributor who valued highly his independence from editors and policies of the review, as Southey's frequent complaints in his letters amply indicate. So highly did he cherish his independence that several times during his career he threatened to withdraw from the Review unless he could make his own opinions clear.[76]

As Geoffrey Carnall has pointed out, from the very outset Southey made it abundantly clear to Gifford and to Murray that

> his support of the Quarterly implied no change in his opposition to constitutional reform for Britain. Though a supporter of the

---

[75]LC, II, 352.

[76]NL, I, 508; II, 271-273; LC, V, 140-141; SL, II, 140, 145.

> Church establishment, he was no churchman, and he insisted on freedom of opinion in his contributions to the review.[77]

Further, Southey had some serious doubts about writing for the Tory journal, and he admitted to Bedford in November, 1808, that "he feared its subservience to ministers and that he would have to write for it with his gloves on, for it would be dirty business."[78] In the same letter Southey wrote:

> The principle which justifies me is this, that their influence will give currency and weight to my opinions on other subjects,--and tho my opinions all hang together, all the hanging which they imply will not be perceivd.[79]

At no time did he view himself as a party man.

Also from the very beginning of the review, Southey, like Scott, had opposed making it into a purely political organ, although he had no illusions about the political necessity and purpose of the review. In this connection Walter Graham notes:

> The task of unmuzzling Gifford . . . and letting him set up his old cry of Jacobinism against all who wished for reform, met with Southey's stern disapproval. . . . And consistently enough, he refused several times in the early days of his career as Quarterly reviewer to write political articles or papers on subjects that would make partisan expression necessary.[80]

Further, Southey wished the new review to be less like its rival in

---

[77]Geoffrey Carnall, Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 98.

[78]Carnall quotes an unpublished Southey letter to Grosvenor Bedford dated November 18, 1808, p. 98.

[79]Ibid.

[80]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," Philological Quarterly, 2(1923), 98.

tone and policy. In March, 1809, after the publication of the first number of the review, he wrote to Scott:

> The Quarterly is a little too much in the temper of the Edinburgh to please me. No man dips his pen deeper into the very gall of bitterness than I can do . . . but I do not like to see scorn and indignation wasted on trivial objects--they should be reserved, like the arrows of Hercules, for occasions worthy of such weapons.[81]

A few years later, however, deeply alarmed at growing popular disaffection and discontent in England, Southey more clearly saw the potential the review presented as a political instrument, and he did not hesitate to use it and to urge its use upon the publisher.[82] Walter Graham has noted, although perhaps a bit unfairly, that

> when Murray later declared that all hesitation as to the future political course of the Review was at an end, no one was happier than Southey. Intentionally or not, he gave support to the group of ultra-Tories, who, in the later years of Gifford's editorship and the few years following his retirement, represented neither the whole party, nor . . . the Administration. Probably Southey gave this support accidentally. There was little logic in his politics, and much personal feeling.[83]

It is obvious today, however, that Southey insisted from the start that in politics he be allowed to follow his own path and not be constrained to advocate policies simply because the editor or the Ministry advocated them. Even before the first number was published, he wrote Bedford:

> The case stands thus: you wish to serve the public, ministers wish to serve themselves and so it happens that, just at this

---

[81]NL, I, 501; Cf. LC, III, 222.

[82]See NL, II, 313.

[83]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," 98-99.

> time, the two objects are the same. I am very willing to travel with them as far as we are going the same way, and, when our roads separate, shall of course leave them. . . . I am a quiet, patient, easy-going hack of a mule breed; regular as clockwork in my pace, sure-footed, bearing the burden which is laid on me, and only obstinate in choosing my path.[84]

Also in 1808 he wrote simply: "I am afraid, however, that the Review is too much under the immediate influence of the ministry."[85] Years later, in the summer of 1816, when Southey was invited by Prime Minister Liverpool to become a political writer for the government, he politely refused because he felt it might compromise his freedom of opinion.[86]

Southey, then, insisted upon his independence, and frequently the Quarterly did not speak for him, nor he for the Quarterly. Although he was often looked upon as the chief spokesman for the review, it never really expressed his opinions fully. His son Cuthbert has noted:

> . . . at no period could the Quarterly Review be said fairly to represent my father's opinions, political or otherwise, and great injustice was often done him both by imputing articles to him which he never wrote, and also by supposing that, in those known to be his, all his mind had appeared. The truth was, as his letters will show, that his views on most subjects, while from this time [1808] they gradually grew nearer to those of the Tory party, yet occasionally differed widely from them, and most certainly were never those of a blind, time-serving, and indiscriminating allegiance.[87]

---

[84]LC, III, 186-189; Cf. LC, III, 199.

[85]SL, II, 145.

[86]LC, IV, 201-202.

[87]LC, III, 184-185.

Southey's biographer Edward Dowden wrote further in 1879 that Southey and the Quarterly "were often spoken of as a single entity. But the Review, in truth, never precisely represented his feelings and convictions."[88] There is, however, very little evidence to indicate that the main thrust of his own articles did not clearly reflect his views.

There were to be other significant points on which Southey disagreed substantially with the policies of the review. He strongly disapproved of the vituperative critical tone which many contributors took toward their subjects--the best example, of course, is the famous Croker review of Keats. Several times he urged a gentler and more rational approach for critical reviews. To his newly-installed second editor, John Taylor Coleridge, Southey offered this forceful advice in 1825:

> The Quarterly Review has been overlaid with statistics, as it was once with Greek criticism. It is the disease of the age--the way in which verbose dulness spends itself. The journal wants more of the literae humaniores, and in a humaner tone than it has been wont to observe. I think a great deal of good may be done by conciliating your writers who are going wrong, by leading them with a friendly hand into the right path, giving them all the praise they deserve, and advising or insinuating, rather than reprehending. Keats might have been won in that manner, and perhaps have been saved. . . . Severity will have ten times more effect when it is employed only where it is well deserved.[89]

Southey was unhappy with the attitude of the Quarterly toward the United States and American writers. The blame here seems to rest with Gifford, Croker, Lockhart, Barrow, Basil Hall, and even on

---

[88]Edward Dowden, Southey (New York: Harpers, 1880), p. 156.

[89]LC, V, 202-203.

occasion with Southey himself. The attitude toward America was usually one of haughty condescension and outright contempt. Myron F. Brightfield has observed that the reviewers were unable to understand the robust vigor and pioneering qualities of Americans, and they were prone to unfair comparisons of rugged American life with the more polished manners of the British.[90]

When Gifford's retirement seemed imminent in 1823 Southey wrote to his American friend Professor Ticknor:

> I have more than once remonstrated both with him [Gifford] and Murray upon the folly and mischief of their articles respecting America; and should the journal pass into the hands of any person whom I can influence, its temper will most assuredly be changed. . . . Such papers . . . have made me more than once think seriously of withdrawing from it; and I have only been withheld by the hope of its amendment, and the certainty that through this channel I could act with more immediate effect than through any other.[91]

After Gifford's retirement a year later he wrote Ticknor again: "There is an end of it now, and henceforth that journal will do all in its power towards establishing that feeling which ought to exist between the two nations."[92] In his own articles dealing with America and Americans Southey took a favorable view which was tempered only by his distrust of republican forms of government. His essays on America began early with a review of Abiel Holmes' History and Present State of America (QR, II, 1809), and continued with his reviews of Lewis

---

[90]Myron F. Brightfield, John Wilson Croker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1940), p. 389.

[91]LC, V, 141.

[92]LC, V, 194.

and Clarke's American Travels (QR, XII, 1815), Timothy Dwight's Travels in New England (QR, XXX, 1823), and the poetry of Lucretia Davidson (QR, XLI, 1829).

The most notable occasion on which Southey clearly differed with the policies of the review and its editor came during the editorship of Lockhart when Southey's paper "The Roman Catholic Question: Ireland" appeared (QR, XXXVIII, 1828). For many years prior to 1828 Southey had been the spokesman for the review on the Catholic question, and he had consistently opposed any political concessions to Roman Catholics in England or Ireland. In his 1828 paper he asserted that Roman Catholics in Britain could not, whether under the presumption of natural right, expedience, or tolerance, demand a greater voice in governmental processes or wider civil rights. The review also contained scathing attacks upon those reformers, within and without the government, who advocated Catholic emancipation.

By the time that Southey's article appeared in the fall of 1828 it had become apparent that measures assuring the emancipation of Catholics would pass in the House of Commons, and the government of Wellington, yielding to mounting pressures in Ireland and England, was secretly willing to acquiesce. For some time John Taylor Coleridge had favored the emancipation of Catholics, and Lockhart had come to recognize the necessity for reforms in this area, although certainly he did not actively advocate such measures. When he allowed Southey's paper to go to press he was fully aware that Southey's sentiments were not in accordance with those of the editorial management of the review.

Some scholars have seen in this a failure of the editor to keep the review in step with changing times. Scott Bennett asserts:

> . . . Lockhart's management of the Quarterly during the Emancipation crisis cannot, I think, be called responsible. Rightly convinced as he was of the necessity of Emancipation, he allowed his magazine to speak otherwise. At a time when concession was probably the only way to maintain peace in Ireland, Lockhart fired Southey's mortar against any concession. Lockhart . . . was acting irresponsibly.[93]

It is entirely possible that Lockhart had not sufficiently advised Southey of the opinions of the management.

During the period in which Southey wrote for the Quarterly there were three editors: William Gifford, 1809-1824, John Taylor Coleridge, 1825, and John Gibson Lockhart, 1825-1853. Southey's relationships with all three, especially the first and the last, as well as his relationship with the publisher Murray, were frequently strained. Since the editors of the review necessarily determined the subjects assigned to each contributor, and wielded considerable authority in the preparation and editing of articles for publication, any study of the work of a single contributor must also take into account that contributor's relationship with his editors.

"Southey," wrote an anonymous reviewer in Bentley's Miscellany in 1856, "was a jibbing horse in the Quarterly team. He had a dislike to the driver, who had the whiphand of him, and sometimes touched him in the raw."[94] Throughout his Quarterly career Southey consistently

---

[93]Scott Bennett, "Catholic Emancipation, the 'Quarterly Review,' and Britain's Constitutional Revolution," Victorian Studies, 12(1968-69), 296.

[94]"A Quartet of Quarterly Reviewers," Bentley's Miscellany,

strained against editorial control. At one point, after he had been a reviewer for eight years, he wrote in a moment of exasperation to his friend Bedford:

> The more I consider the matter about emancipating myself from any engagement which subjects me to the control of an editor, the more I perceive and feel the fitness of so doing; and, regarding it as I ought to do, without any feeling of anger, I shall consult my own perfect convenience in the matter, and leave the Murraymagne to discover that I find other modes of composition more agreeable, if not more profitable.[95]

And ten years later he wrote to another friend:

> In one thing all editors are alike; they cut and mangle the papers of their contributors, in order to bring it within the number of pages which it suits their arrangement for the number to afford, just as the Russians are said to fit old pictures to ready-made frames by cutting them.[96]

Southey's association with Gifford was never cordial, and their ill-feeling undoubtedly began a dozen years before the foundation of the Quarterly when, in the first number of the Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner on November 20, 1797, Gifford had published parodies of some of Southey's poems, and continued to publish such parodies through several numbers of that periodical.[97] When Southey became a contributor for the Quarterly he found in Gifford an editor who cherished his authority as little short of absolute and who did not hesitate to make arbitrary changes in the articles of his reviewers prior to publication.

40(1856), pp. 320-324. Quoted by Lionel Madden, p. 452.

[95]SL, III, 84-85.

[96]SL, IV, 3.

[97]Lionel Madden reprints some of these parodies, pp. 55-60.

Southey's most frequent complaint against Gifford was that the editor "mutilated," "emasculated," or "castrated" almost every article which was submitted for publication, and his letters are filled with such complaints.[98] At first he had been mildly amused at Gifford's editorial work, and he even expressed some admiration for the skill which the editor exhibited in his mutilations.[99] Soon, however, amusement turned to anger, and to Southey Gifford became "a butcherly review-gelder."[100] A typical complaint is the one written in 1819 to the Reverend Herbert Hill:

> I am as little pleased as you can be with the manner in which Gifford mutilates whatever is sent him, upon no imaginable principle, as far as I can discover;--in most cases, for no other reason than that of indulging a habit which he cannot help. He has repeatedly promised me that he would not do it, and yet every one of my papers comes forth castrated from under his hands. It would be a great satisfaction to me if I could do without this Review, and at present there seems to be some probability that my connection with it may be broken off, however great the immediate circumstances.[101]

Although only a few of Southey's manuscripts are available now for comparison, he seems to have complained about relatively minor editorial changes when seen from the twentieth-century perspective. He most frequently grumbled about editorial alterations which involved interpolations, reductions in the length of articles, substitutions of

---

[98]LC, III, 221, 226-227, 349; IV, 12, 18, 58, 102, 207-208, 228, 229, 250, 362; V, 97; SL, II, 144, 251, 362, 393, 395; III, 4-6, 56-57, 159, 167-168, 283, 417; CB, p. 71; NL, I, 503; II, 39, 125, 126, 132, 204, 341.

[99]LC, III, 226.

[100]SL, III, 87.

[101]SL, III, 167.

adjectives and proper names, changes in paragraphing and the like. Gifford's emendations do not seem to have changed drastically the substance, tone, or import of any major paper, and it should be noted that when Southey reprinted what he considered to be his most important Quarterly articles in the Essays, moral and political in 1832 he did not make extensive efforts to alter them from the way they had originally appeared in the review.

Much can be said in Gifford's defense. Often he found it necessary to reduce the length of Southey's prose manuscripts to publishable size, for Southey's tendency was not to write with the limitations of periodical publication in mind. Further, the articles which Gifford felt inclined to "mutilate" had been handsomely paid for, and they were published without the signature of their author. Hill and Helen Shine observe that

> . . . a fairly clear principle seems to emerge. That is, the Quarterly articles were considered entirely the property of the periodical; and that periodical--the periodical alone, rather than any individual reviewer--was responsible for whatever appeared in its pages. From that point of view, Gifford's practice becomes ethical and honest.[102]

Without unfairness the Shines have also noted that Southey himself was an individualist and a very sensitive author. Indeed, he sometimes considered himself to be something of a prophet who conceived his works in solitude and brought them forth with pains. He had little respect for periodicals as a publishing medium, and he wrote only out of financial necessity. There is little wonder, then, that

---

[102]Shine, p. xviii.

> he became irritably articulate when he believed that his vision from the guarded mount had been clipped and fitted to the conventional policies of a party or to the standards of inferior insight. But while Southey complained of revision, Scott invited and welcomed it; Croker accepted it, perhaps without grace but also without resentment; and Barrow, so far as we know, raised no objection.[103]

William Gifford, a man who has not unfairly been termed by one scholar as "a dull-sighted, thick-skinned, heavy-hearted critic, with little acumen and no delicacy," possessed neither a congenial personality nor outstanding professional competence.[104] Ian Jack has observed of him that he was "an important figure in public life, and those who knew him only in that capacity had every reason for detesting him. The truth is that he rose to a position of authority for which he was intellectually and morally quite unsuited."[105] It is quite apparent that he did little to inspire harmony among his contributors.[106] Malcolm Elwin, a historian of the Quarterly, noted of Gifford's editorial practices:

> Though it has long since become common courtesy for an editor to make no alterations to an article without asking the author's consent, Gifford followed the contemporary practice induced by the prevailing rule of anonymity. . . . In view of Gifford's political bias and acid tendency, it is probable that he pointed many of the barbs which gave offence and marred the "Quarterly's" just reputation for generally judicious criticism. . . . Murray repeatedly protested against Gifford's acerbity against political opponents, especially against his tilting with the "Edinburgh." He received support from Southey, who believed

---

[103]Ibid.

[104]C. T. Winchester, A Group of English Essayists of the Early Nineteenth Century (New York: Macmillan, 1910), p. 10.

[105]Ian Jack, p. 332.

[106]See Roy Benjamin Clark, pp. 172ff.

that the best way to shake the credit of the "Edinburgh" was "to take up those subjects which he has handled most unfairly."[107]

Southey's objections to the attitude of Gifford and some contributors toward Americans and America has already been mentioned, and certainly Gifford seemed to encourage as well as practice the kind of invective criticism which Southey deplored and refused to write; Gifford's treatment of Lamb is a fine example. Gifford took his position as editor with deep seriousness, and although he actually wrote little himself, only eight papers, he gave close attention to the work of each contributor. Without doubt he frequently used his editorial prerogatives of cutting and altering reviews to express his own personality and opinions. He had the sole authority to accept or reject the work submitted by contributors, although he did so primarily under the influence of Scott, Ellis, and Murray. Canning's political judgments were always accepted by Gifford. On occasion he so offended new contributors that they refused to submit anything further to the Quarterly.[108]

It should also be noted that Gifford's influence in selecting the types of articles to be included in the review was potent. During the first few years he kept papers on foreign politics to an absolute minimum; there is, for example, very little mention of the French war during the first six years of publication. Except for Southey's papers on Wellington in 1815, the Peninsular War is not

---

[107]Malcolm Elwin, pp. 7, 8, 9.

[108]Roy Benjamin Clark, pp. 177-178.

noticed after 1809. No attention is given to the Austrian campaigns of 1809 in that year, and events such as the battle of Leipzig and its after-effects, the first and second Peace of Paris, the Congress of Vienna, the battle of Waterloo, and the death of Napoleon in 1821 passed relatively unnoticed in the review.[109] One can conjecture that neglect of these events was not pleasing to Southey.

Gifford, who had not forgotten his connection with the Anti-Jacobin, had a habit of raising the "old cry of Jacobinism," and this did not please Southey, Murray, or Canning.[110] Also in opposition to Southey's wishes, as R. B. Clark has pointed out, "Gifford was always of the opinion that the Quarterly did not receive sufficient support from the government, and Murray too liked the more decided tone in politics. . . ."[111] Further, Gifford, through his editorial changes to articles, did much to stimulate deliberately a periodical controversy between the Quarterly and a number of American publications, and of this Southey never approved.[112]

Gifford and Southey clashed on other matters as well, particularly the matter of the tone and function of literary criticism. One of the reasons that Southey was to favor the appointment of John Taylor Coleridge as editor after Gifford's retirement was that he hoped that the tone of the review's criticism would be moderated. In October of

---

[109]"The Centenary of 'The Quarterly Review,'" 760.

[110]SL, II, 86.

[111]Roy Benjamin Clark, Ibid.

[112]Ibid., pp. 182-187.

1824 he wrote to Scott that neither Murray nor Gifford favored Coleridge as editor because there was

> an apprehension on the part of both that the Journal in John Coleridges hands would take its bias in some degree from me, for I am considered by Murray as too bigotted, and by Gifford as too liberal: the certainty, alike unwelcome to both, that no articles would be admitted which could have no other effect than to wound the feelings and injure the fortunes of an obnoxious author; there would be none of that injustice and cruelty (for example) which was shown toward Keats. . . .[113]

In 1825 there appeared in the Quarterly a review of Lady Morgan's France. R. B. Clark notes of this review, which was probably written by Gifford, that

> in length the review was all out of proportion to the importance of the work, which was an ill-written conglomeration of praise of France, slurs on England, and childish impudence toward Christianity. The article is one of the harshest in the Quarterly. The reviewer is in a state of furious indignation throughout. He accuses the author of falsehood, licentiousness, and impiety. He shows extreme bigotry in politics and religion. He uses the tone and methods of the editor of the Anti-Jacobin in its most savage parts.[114]

Southey wrote of Gifford's review: "I would rather have cut off my right hand . . . than to have written anything so unmanly and so disgraceful; and yet there are some people who impute it to me, perhaps as much from stupidity as malice."[115]

Despite Southey's many complaints and disagreements with

---

[113]NL, II, 268. Cf. Grierson, Letters of Sir Walter Scott, VIII, pp. 376-377. Kenneth Curry notes that Southey also objected to the Endymion review in an unpublished letter to Murray of December 18, 1818, NL, II, 268n. Grierson notes, p. 377n, that under the editorship of Lockhart the Quarterly Review would resume the offensive treatment of Keats and Hunt.

[114]Roy Benjamin Clark, p. 122.

[115]Quoted by Roy Benjamin Clark, p. 123.

Gifford, there can be little doubt that Gifford recognized the value of Southey to the review. It should be noted that the laureate could not complain of unfair or hostile reviews of his own works in the Quarterly during the period of Gifford's editorship. Scott, John Coleridge, Reginald Heber, and Grosvenor Bedford all treated him with generosity in their reviews, and Gifford did not substantially alter the tone of their criticism.[116] Samuel Smiles has pointed out that Gifford often wrote to Murray about the high quality of Southey's work, although Southey himself was totally unaware of the editor's praise. On one occasion Gifford wrote Murray:

> Southey's prose is so good that every one detects him. But take care how you confess it. Mum is always the safest word. When Southey comes to town, let him do as he pleases. . . .

And Gifford also wrote that Southey was "the sheet anchor of the Review and should not be lightly hurt."[117] It is no coincidence that during Gifford's editorship in one out of every four numbers of the review the editor placed a Southey contribution in the leading position.[118]

The relations between Southey and Gifford, then, can hardly be said to have been harmonious, although it is really doubtful, as

---

[116]The reviews, all unsigned, are Grosvenor Bedford, review of Curse of Kehama (QR, V, 1811); Bedford, review of Roderick (QR, VIII, 1815); Reginald Heber, review of History of Brazil, Vol II (QR, XVIII, 1817); Heber, review of the Life of Wesley (QR, XIV, 1820); George Procter and J. W. Croker, review of the History of the Peninsular War, Vol I (QR, XIX, 1823).

[117]Quoted by Smiles, II, 160, 260.

[118]Shine, p. xiv.

R. B. Clark suggests, that Southey "held both Gifford and Murray in contempt."[119] Southey's letters usually betray the warmth of his character, but the letters which he wrote to Gifford always are characterized by a cautious, cool, and thoroughly businesslike tone. Frequently the editor stirred Southey to uncharacteristic anger.[120]

By 1822 Gifford's failing health made it apparent that he would soon have to retire from the editorship, and for the greater part of that year Croker and Barrow carried on most of the editorial work; indeed, most of the management for the fifty-seventh, fifty-eighth, sixtieth, and sixty-first numbers was done by Croker and Barrow with the personal help of Murray.[121] Gifford's editorship was consistently marked by numbers behind time, and delays in publication dropped the circulation of the review in 1813 from 5000 to 4000, and in 1819 only three numbers found their way into print.[122] By 1823 it was clear that Gifford should step aside. Southey thought for a brief time in 1822 that he might be the editor's successor, although he decided that if the appointment were offered he would decline. He was, however, not offered the job.[123]

Southey regarded the replacement of Gifford as a crucial

---

[119]Roy Benjamin Clark, p. 127.

[120]See LC, III, 221; Cf. Smiles, I, 198, 199, 259; II, 40.

[121]Myron F. Brightfield, John Wilson Croker, p. 182.

[122]Roy Benjamin Clark, p. 25.

[123]LC, V, 127-128; SL, III, 346, 350; Cf. Clark, pp. 227-228.

matter for the success of the Quarterly. In October of 1822 he wrote Bedford:

> Poor Gifford! The state of his health must make him think seriously of appointing a new king of the Romans; and, between ourselves, neither he nor Murray-le-Magne are aware of how much depends upon the choice. . . . Murray has a great many enemies, especially in his own trade; and the "Quarterly Review" has disgusted a great many persons who were by principle strongly disposed to be its friends. They are offended by its wretched inconsistency upon many points . . . by criticisms which are often as ill tempered and unmanly as they are unjust.

In the same letter he spoke of the beginning of a new review, to be headed by himself, should Gifford's successor be unsatisfactory.[124] By 1824 he wrote to Scott urging the appointment of John Taylor Coleridge, nephew of the poet, as the chief editor, and in earlier letters to Murray in 1822 he expressed the same desire.[125] He also wrote to his friend Herbert Hill that he was using all his influence "to get John Coleridge chosen King of the Romans, upon the demise or abdication of Emperor Gifford."[126]

When Gifford finally did abdicate and Coleridge succeeded to the throne in December, 1824, Southey looked upon it as a personal triumph:

> The "Quarterly Review" is at last consigned to John Coleridge; and Murray may thank me for having provided him with an editor, for he knew not where to find one. If any adequate person, supposed to be adequate, could have been found, I am not without a suspicion that my recommendation would have stood in J.C.'s way, both in Gifford's opinion and in Murray's; Gifford holding me to be too liberally inclined, and Murray, on the other hand, entertaining the equal fear of my bigotry. Both, therefore, would be

---

[124]SL, III, 336.

[125]NL, II, 268, 239.

[126]SL, III, 345.

> disinclined to an editor who would confide in me, and in whom I could confide. The change will be of serious advantage to the "Review"; and so far as that "Review" acts upon the public, a very desirable one; and, for myself, I shall write with the better will, as being no longer liable to capricious mutilations, nor in any danger of hearing what I have said in one number purposely contradicted in the next.[127]

He hoped, then, that he could work more smoothly under Coleridge, and two months before Coleridge assumed the editorship he wrote a rather strong letter to John Murray indicating that he would not allow any future editor to treat him as Gifford had:

> No future Editor, be he who he may, must expect to exercise the same discretion over my papers which Mr. Gifford has done. I will at any time curtail what may be deemed too long, and consider any objections that may be made with a disposition to defer to them where it can be done without sacrificing my own judgment upon points which may seem to me important. But my age, and (I may add without arrogance) the rank which I hold in literature entitle me to say, that I will never again write under the correction of any one.[128]

Although Coleridge became editor of The Quarterly Review at the beginning of 1825, largely through Southey's efforts, Southey did not know that Coleridge's appointment was designed by mutual agreement of Coleridge and Murray to be a temporary one, and in November of 1825 Murray appointed John Gibson Lockhart, nephew of Sir Walter Scott, as editor and accepted the resignation of Coleridge.[129] Southey was

---

[127]SL, III, 455. It is possible that Southey's championship of John Coleridge to be Gifford's successor derived in part from Coleridge's favorable review of Roderick ten years before in the British Critic, 2nd series, 2(1815), 353-389.

[128]NL, II, 272; Cf. SL, III, 345-346, 383.

[129]Bernard John Lord Coleridge, The Story of a Devonshire House (London: Unwin, 1905), pp. 285-286. Lord Coleridge prints John

furious because he had not been consulted, and his letters from this period show great bitterness and resentment toward both Murray and the usurper Lockhart. Gradually, however, probably through the efforts of Scott, he came to accept Lockhart as editor.[130]

Southey's relationship with Coleridge had been good, and there seemed to exist between them a feeling of mutual respect, although Southey was later to oppose Coleridge's stand on Catholic emancipation.[131] His association with Lockhart, however, was strained from the very beginning, first because he did not at all approve of the change in editors, and second because he felt that Murray had dealt unjustly with Coleridge and had forced his resignation.[132] Indeed, at points during his Quarterly career, Southey seems to have directed greater wrath toward Murray than toward any of his editors, for not only had Murray offended Southey in the appointment of Lockhart, he had also given reason for offense in his relations with Lord Byron. Murray had been a sponsor for Don Juan, and he had not allowed the poem to be chastised by the Quarterly. The lenient treatment of Byron

---

Coleridge's letter of resignation to John Murray of November 19, 1825. Samuel Smiles' Chapter 25, "Gifford's Retirement from the Editorship of the 'Quarterly' and Death," provides a good account of the circumstances surrounding Gifford's retirement and succession by John Coleridge.

[130]LC, V, 127-128, 194; SL, III, 346, 350, 514; IV, 2-3; Smiles, II, 160; Grierson, Letters of Sir Walter Scott, IX, 297-299, 309-312.

[131]LC, V, 311.

[132]SL, III, 514; NL, II, 288-291; Cf. NL, II, 288-291, 371; CB, pp. 93, 123.

disgusted Southey whose views of Byron's conduct and poetry are well known.[133] At one point Southey even considered helping to found a new review to rival the great Quarterly itself, and he was deterred not by loyalty to Murray but by financial considerations.[134] Certainly Southey did not hesitate to advise the publisher on the policies which the review should follow, or the ways in which it should be managed.[135]

Even before Lockhart became editor Southey had disapproved of his part in the Jonathan Christie-John Scott duel in February of 1821, and he had not been very pleased with the virulent and personal tone of Lockhart's criticism in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. Kenneth Curry notes that Southey frequently "complained of the postponement of his papers (with a consequent postponement of the payments upon which he had counted for his household expenses) and a reduction in payment from the 100 £ per article that he had been receiving," and Curry sums up the Southey-Lockhart relationship in this way:

> The correspondence with Lockhart observed all the amenities and even appeared to show a certain frankness; but Southey never trusted Lockhart nor cared for him personally. Lockhart felt the same way. . . . The situation can be seen as one in which Lockhart knew that he must follow an independent course as the new editor, but at the same time recognized the necessity of retaining the support of those older contributors who had made possible the success of the review.[136]

---

[133]LC, V, 125.

[134]SL, II, 335, 336; NL, II, 290.

[135]See NL, II, 313-314, 372.

[136]NL, II, 494.

In 1827 Southey complained to Carolyn Bowles of uncivil treatment from Lockhart, and in the same year he turned a good deal of his attention away from The Quarterly Review to the Foreign Review and the Foreign Quarterly Review, and his contributions after 1833 dropped to only one or two a year.[137]

Although Southey later developed a personal regard for Lockhart, he did not entirely agree with the editor's management policies. Lockhart, he felt, was too susceptible to revolutionary ideas, and this, at least in Southey's view was dangerous to have in the editorial office. Perhaps too, as Jacob Zeitlin had noted, "the sad truth was that the new generation had arrived at power and Southey's influence had waned."[138] At least some of the animosity which Southey initially felt toward Lockhart resulted from the latter's review of Southey's Life of Wesley in the February, 1824, number of Blackwood's.[139] Here Lockhart had written of Southey:

> As to criticism and politics of the day, he is but one of the Quarterly reviewers, and scarcely one of the most influential of them. He puts forth essays half antiquarianism, half prosing, with now and then a dash of a sweet enough sort of literary mysticism in them--and more frequently a display of pompous self-complacent simplicity, enough to call a smile into the most iron physiognomy that ever grinned. But these lucubrations produce no effect upon the spirit of the time.[140]

---

[137]CB, p. 123.

[138]Jacob Zeitlin, ed., Select Prose of Robert Southey (New York: Macmillan, 1916), p. 148.

[139]John Gibson Lockhart, unsigned review of the Life of Wesley, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, 15(1824), 208-219.

[140]Quoted by Lionel Madden, p. 280.

Ten years later, in March, 1834, Lockhart reviewed Southey's The Doctor in the Quarterly. This curious novel of Southey's had been published anonymously, and Southey had whimsically denied authorship. Lockhart took Southey at his word and proceeded to say in his review quite a number of things about this unconventional work which could hardly have been pleasing to its author.[141] One can only conjecture as to whether Lockhart really believed Southey's denial.

Unlike the absolutist Gifford, Lockhart as editor reigned much as a constitutional monarch, advised by his chief ministers Croker, Barrow, and Southey, and with the consent of Murray. He was willing to temper the older toryism of Southey, who vehemently opposed Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform, by leading the Quarterly, as Arthur Elliot observes, "to support the liberal conservatism of the Tamworth manifesto, and to uphold Peel till the general bouleversement of tory politics which followed his repeal of the corn laws."[142] The problems surrounding the publication of Southey's "Roman Catholic Question: Ireland" in 1828 have been mentioned; on this major issue Southey and his editor had a substantial

---

[141]John Gibson Lockhart, unsigned review of The Doctor, Quarterly Review, 51(1834), 68-96. Lockhart wrote of the authorship of The Doctor: "At first, suspicion lighted Poet Laureate himself; and certainly the moral, political, and literary doctrines of the book are such, in the main, as might have countenanced such a notion . . . but surely, of all the gross errors, both in the conception and in the execution, to which we have already alluded, the least could never have been supposed to have come from him,--unless, perhaps, in some merely juvenile prolusion. . . ." Quoted by Lionel Madden, p. 393.

[142]Elliot, pp. 169-170; Cf. Smiles' Chapter 27, "Mr. Lockhart as Editor of the 'Quarterly'" for a thorough treatment of the nature of Lockhart's editorial work.

difference of opinion. In addition, many of Southey's complaints against Lockhart are in the same vein as those against Gifford, except that they were less frequent; there were, he felt, excessive editorial changes to the articles which he submitted for publication.[143] Like Gifford, however, Lockhart recognized the value which Southey represented to the review, and in the Quarterly for December, 1850, seven years after Southey's death, he published a favorable notice of Cuthbert Southey's Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey. The review contained a glowing tribute to Southey's life and works.[144]

It would be impossible to make broad generalizations about Southey's relationships with other contributors to the Quarterly, for there were many of them, and the opinions of Southey and his colleagues fluctuated widely on specific issues over a period of three historic decades. Frequently in his letters Southey commended or condemned a paper or an opinion of another contributor, but the references were usually brief and rarely substantial, except, of course, when he violently disagreed with a fellow reviewer. The relations of Southey with Gifford, John Coleridge, Lockhart, and Murray have been discussed, but perhaps some attention should be given to his association with John Wilson Croker and John Rickman, for these are the most important contributors in the Quarterly circle who had

---

[143]NL, II, 341-342.

[144]John Gibson Lockhart and Whitwell Elwin, unsigned review of Life and Correspondence, Quarterly Review, 88(1850), 197-247.

a bearing upon Southey's thought and work.

John O. Hayden has concluded that Southey was the most incompatible of the Quarterly group and that "he did not get on well with Murray, Gifford, Ellis, or Canning, which leaves Scott and Croker as his only friendly contacts with the Review."[145] Southey's letters, of course, do not indicate that this generalization should stand without much qualification, but obviously Southey's relationships with Croker and Scott, and Rickman, are most important than others and bear examination. His most important dealings with Scott on the Quarterly are mainly relative to their efforts to establish the review and to their agreement on certain basic tenets of policy in 1809. This relationship has already been discussed.

Croker and Southey probably first met in 1811, and while they were never personal friends, Croker was very helpful to Southey, for he, along with Scott, was highly instrumental in securing the laureateship for him in 1813. Croker also had helped Southey with the research for the Life of Nelson, and in turn Southey dedicated the work to Croker. It is highly likely that Croker influenced Prime Minister Peel in early February, 1835, to offer the Poet Laureate a baronetcy.[146]

The reviews of Croker provide a valuable guide to Quarterly policies and illustrate well the political connections of the review. For many years Croker was the only direct link between the Quarterly

---

[145]Hayden, pp. 32-33.

[146]Myron F. Brightfield, John Wilson Croker, p. 216. A number of letters from Southey to Croker are included in The Croker Papers, ed. L. J. Jennings, London, 1884.

and the Ministry, and it is because of this link that the review was so frequently a reliable indicator of government policies. Furthermore, Croker understood clearly the value of official propaganda and saw no reason for keeping politics out of the review. He was well versed in French affairs, and, like Southey, he believed revolutions to be "terrible cataclysms in which the worst part of mankind gained the upper hand and tore down all that was civilized and valuable."[147]

Through the years Croker did much to impress upon the review his strong Tory persuasion, as did Southey, and on domestic affairs Croker was often as uncompromising as Southey himself. As a Quarterly reviewer Croker was an ardent opponent of parliamentary reform movements, and as a member of Parliament himself he cast his vote emphatically against Catholic emancipation. Both of these are positions which Southey appreciated, but there were points of disagreement between the two, especially in the matter of the Quarterly's attitude toward America. Croker regarded the United States as the natural enemy of Great Britain; Southey did not. Certainly Southey strongly disagreed with the notoriously harsh tone of Croker's literary criticism.

Southey's association with John Rickman is also of some importance to his Quarterly work. Rickman, whom Southey first met in 1797, enjoyed a distinguished career in public service as an economist and secretary to the Speaker of the House of Commons until 1840. He was

---

[147]Ian Jack, p. 332.

largely responsible for the first census of Britain in 1800, and those which followed in 1811, 1821, and 1831. In his official capacities he was in charge of a number of substantial government studies and reports. Although his own contributions to the Quarterly are not substantial, he was important as a collaborator with other reviewers. He was often in a position to furnish Southey research and confidential information for Quarterly papers, the most important of which is "On the Means of Improving the People" (QR, XIX, 1818). In most of his important essays on political and social issues, especially those dealing with the poor laws, Southey received considerable advice from Rickman.[148] Southey's correspondence with Rickman, carried on for many years, indicates the great extent of their collaboration and shows the influence which Rickman often had upon Southey.[149] Rickman also served his friend in a very practical way, as Professor Kenneth Curry, with characteristic thoroughness, has noted: "since Rickman had the franking privilege he served as the medium through which Southey sent and received manuscript and proofs to editors and publishers."[150]

So close was the collaboration between the two that one important Quarterly paper has been falsely attributed to Southey alone, while Rickman actually wrote most of it. The paper, entitled "Poor Laws,"

---

[148]N. L. Kaderly, "Southey and the Quarterly Review," Modern Language Notes, 70(1955), 261.

[149]Orlo Williams, in Lamb's Friend the Census Taker: Life and Letters of John Rickman (London: Constable, 1911), pp. 10, 134, 195-204, provides a survey of the Southey-Rickman correspondence and indicates the extent of their collaboration on some Quarterly articles.

[150]NL, II, 499.

appeared as the lead review in the Quarterly for January, 1818. Apparently Rickman had written the major portions of the article, and Southey edited and revised Rickman's work for publication.[151]

While Southey and Rickman were in fundamental agreement about the pressing need for certain social reforms to improve the lot of poor Britons, there were substantial differences in their attitudes. Geoffrey Carnall has summed up their differences in this way:

> Southey's conservatism allied him with people who cared little for his humanitarian principles. . . . While Rickman was, in his own way, a reformer too . . . he considered much of Southey's thinking to be sentimental. Rickman had no misgivings about the manufacturing system, and no patience with Robert Owen [as Southey did]. He tolerated the slave trade, and was suspicious of schemes for the education of the poor [as Southey did not]. He did not share Southey's regret over the disappearance of peasant farming.
> . . . . . .
> In the war against the destructives, Rickman was too formidable an ally for Southey to wish to weaken the force of his arguments. So his economic views passed unaltered into the review of Pasley's book on military policy; and in preparing Rickman's poor-law article for the Quarterly, Southey was countenancing a sterner attitude towards the poor, in marked contrast to the earlier paternalism which his own articles had fostered. Not that he allowed Rickman to bludgeon him out of his opinions . . . but Rickman was not the man to encourage Southey in a generous, warm-hearted concern for human dignity.[152]

IV. SOUTHEY AND THE EDINGURGH REVIEW

An account of Southey's work for the Quarterly must necessarily include some mention of his relationship to The Edinburgh Review as

---

[151]Shine, p. 59, ascribes the article to Southey, but other evidence indicates that Rickman might have been the author. See Orlo Williams, pp. 190-198 and Geoffrey Carnall, pp. 194-195.

[152]Carnall, pp. 194-195.

well, for many of his papers were replies to articles which had appeared in Jeffrey's review. In addition, his bitterness toward Francis Jeffrey helps to explain Southey's prominent part in the inception of the Quarterly and his willingness, despite frequent criticism and differences of opinion with his editors, to continue his work for thirty years. His animosity toward the northern review began early with the publication in the first number of the Edinburgh of Jeffrey's review of Thalaba the Destroyer, a review which Jack Simmons, Southey's chief biographer has called "one of the classic protests of the eighteenth century against the new Romantic Movement."[153] The review was as much a condemnation of a new school of poets as a particular condemnation of Southey's epic poem.

Jeffrey felt that the Lake poets represented a degeneration of literary standards with their use of inappropriate, "common," diction, their lack of emotional restraint, and their vulgar "moral nature." Of Southey's work in particular Jeffrey wrote:

> He is often puerile, diffuse, and artificial and seems to have but little acquaintance with those chaster and severer graces, by whom the epic muse would be most suitably attended. His faults are always aggravated, and often created, by his partiality for the peculiar manner of that new school of poetry, of which he is a faithful disciple, and to the glory of which, he has sacrificed greater talents and acquisitions, than can be boasted of by any of his associates.[154]

Southey regarded as unfair the "Edinburgh attempt at Thalabacide."[155]

---

[153]Simmons, p. 237.

[154]Francis Jeffrey, unsigned review of Thalaba, Edinburgh Review, 1(1802), 63-83. Quoted by Lionel Madden, p. 90.

[155]NL, I, 306.

In the years that followed Jeffrey would write reviews of other works by Southey, and these reviews constitute a concerted attack upon Southey in particular and upon the Lake school in general; Madoc, Kehama, Roderick, Lay of the Laureate, Wat Tyler, the Vision of Judgment--all came under the scrutiny of Jeffrey and his reviewers.[156]

Jeffrey's censure in 1802 did much to establish Southey's name among the reading public, and it should be noted that Jeffrey, like Macaulay years later, often found much to admire in Southey's poetry. In 1851 William Bodham Donne, writing in The Edinburgh Review, would atone for many of Jeffrey's sins against Southey in the first decade of the century.[157] But in 1802 the offense had been given, and Southey was more than capable of bearing a bitter, long-standing grudge against the diminutive Scotsman. Even Jeffrey's biographer, James A. Greig, has noted that "Jeffrey's impatience with Southey sometimes made him distinctly unfair."[158] The indignation of Southey over the 1802 review of Thalaba, and the reviews which followed, must have done much to antagonize him toward the Edinburgh and toward Jeffrey especially. He was indeed capable of dipping his pen into the "very gall of

---

[156]Jeffrey's reviews of Southey's works are: Thalaba (ER, I, 1802); Letters from England (ER, XI, 1808); Madoc (ER, VII, 1805); The Curse of Kehama (ER, XVII, 1811); Roderick (ER, XXV, 1815); The Lay of the Laureate. Carmen Nuptiale (ER, XXVI, 1816); Wat Tyler (ER, XXVIII, 1817); Vision of Judgement (ER, XXXV, 1821); see James A. Greig, Francis Jeffrey of the Edinburgh Review (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1948), pp. 173-192.

[157]William Bodham Donne, unsigned review of Life and Correspondence, Edinburgh Review, 93(1851), 370-402.

[158]James A. Greig, Francis Jeffrey of the Edinburgh Review (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1948), p. 191.

bitterness," and his Quarterly papers frequently reflected his ill-will.

Geoffrey Carnall has concluded that "there can be little doubt that one quite important reason for Southey's willingness to help the Quarterly was a desire to be even with the Edinburgh."[159] The laureate's desire for revenge is illustrated by a letter to Rickman in February, 1809, in which he admitted simply: "In my hatred to the Scotchman (a little revenge being mingled therewith) I wish this Quarterly to succeed."[160] In addition, Carnall concludes that

> Southey would naturally tend to disagree with any point of view held by Edinburgh reviewers, and to sympathize with any point of view or person attacked by it. . . . Inevitably this would tend to be a conservative influence on the whole.[161]

Nor is there any doubt that Southey also resented the criticisms of the northern review because it tended to diminish his standing with the popular reader, and thus diminish the sale of his books. It is also probable that in view of his already failing reputation Southey felt some of Jeffrey's criticisms were too true, and that indeed his poetical talents were not as great as he had believed.

It is of interest to note that much of Southey's hostility toward the Edinburgh took the form of a very personal dislike of Jeffrey himself. Southey had met him in Edinburgh in 1805, and in November of that year he wrote to Richard Duppa of the meeting:

---

[159]Carnall, p. 99.

[160]Ibid., p. 100.

[161]Ibid.

> They who fling dirt at me will only dirt their own hands--for I am out of reach. . . . In fact I am not very irascible, and if I had been so--found him too little to be angry with. He is not above five foot one, a man of ready wit, no taste, and so little knowledge that it would have been scarcely inaccurate to have said none. Bating the very immoral trade which he has set up, of publicly speaking ill of books which he makes no scruple to commend in private, a good-natured man who writes malignantly because it gratifies his vanity and sells his review.[162]

Occasionally Southey's dislike of Jeffrey and his review is highly amusing. After having contributed to the Quarterly for five years Southey wrote of Jeffrey in December, 1814, to his friend James Hogg:

> . . . you little know me if you imagine that any thoughts of fear or favour would make me abstain from speaking publicly of Jeffrey as I think and as he deserves. I despise his commendation and I defy his malice. Jeffrey can no more stand in my way to fame, than Tom Thumb could stand in my way in the street. . . . He knows that he has dealt unfairly and maliciously by me; he knows that the world knows it, that his very friends know it, and that if he attacks Roderick as he did Madoc and Kehama it will universally be imputed to personal ill-will. . . . When I take him in hand it shall be to dissect him alive, and make a preparation of him to be exhibited in terrorem, an example to all future pretenders to criticism. He has a forehead of native brass, and I will write upon it with aqua-fortis. I will serve him up to the public like a Turkey's gizzard, sliced, scored, pepperd, salted, kiannd, grilled, and bedeveilled. I will bring him to justice: he shall be executed in prose, and gibbetted in verse, and the Lord have mercy on his soul![163]

In all of this Southey begins to sound like a resentful child, but the feud with Jeffrey and the Edinburgh was to extend throughout Southey's reviewing career until Macaulay's attack on the Colloquies in 1830.[164]

---

[162]NL, I, 407-408.

[163]NL, II, 112, 113.

[164]Thomas Babington Macaulay, unsigned review of Sir Thomas More, or Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society, Edinburgh

That Southey's work for the Quarterly was affected significantly by these ill-feelings is apparent, even before the review had an existence. In 1807 Jeffrey approached Southey through Scott with an invitation to write for the whig review. Scott wrote Southey in November of that year that "the only reason which occurs to me as likely to prevent your rendering the Edinburgh some critical assistance, is the severity of the criticisms upon Madoc and Thalaba."[165] Of course Scott was right. Southey replied in a very revealing letter the following month--a letter in which he seemed to protest too much:

> The reviewals of Thalaba and Madoc do in no degree influence me. Setting all personal feelings aside, the objections which weigh with me against bearing any part in this journal are these: --I have scarcely one opinion in common with him upon any subject. . . . On subjects of moral or political importance no man is more apt to speak in the very gall of bitterness than I am, and this habit is likely to go with me to the grave; but that sort of bitterness which he [Jeffrey] indulges, which tends directly to wound a man in his feelings, and injure him in his fame and fortune . . . appears to me utterly inexcusable.
> . . . . . .
> . . . my moral feelings must not be compromised. To Jeffrey as an individual I shall ever be ready to show every kind of individual courtesy; but of Judge Jeffrey of the Edinburgh Review I must ever think and speak as of a bad politician, a worse moralist, and a critic, in matters of taste, equally incompetent and unjust.[166]

Always, however, Southey's hostility toward the Edinburgh is expressed as hostility toward Francis Jeffrey. In the same letter he seemed to

---

Review, 50(1830), 528-565. This famous review has been frequently reprinted; see Lionel Madden pp. 341-379.

[165]Quoted in LC, III, 122-123.

[166]LC, III, 124-125.

underscore his resentment at Jeffrey's reviews by denying repeatedly that they had disturbed him in the least or influenced his decision not to write for the Edinburgh. The unfavorable reviews of his own works, Southey protested, "make no more impression upon me than the bite of a sucking flea would do upon Gargantua." "The judge is criminal who acquits the guilty, but he is far more so who condemns the innocent," Southey wrote, and this is what Jeffrey had done in his system of reviewing. Southey is the innocent giant, and Jeffrey is a guilty, sucking flea.[167]

With others involved in the founding of the Quarterly Southey shared deeply the sentiment that the Edinburgh's political propaganda, especially relative to the war, should be countered and, if possible, neutralized. Jeffrey and Brougham were chiefly responsible for a series of Edinburgh papers between 1807 and 1809 which urged peace with France, discounted the Spanish rebellion, and caustically criticized Canning, Frere, Sir John Moore, and others, who were blamed for English military defeats.[168] Southey was alarmed, and his letters reveal the depth of his resentment of the Edinburgh's tone.[169]

Early in 1815, on the eve of Waterloo, Southey used his review of Elliott's Life of Wellington (QR, XIII, 1815) as an instrument to influence public opinion and to counter the propaganda of the

---

[167]LC, III, 127.

[168]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," p. 100.

[169]LC, III, 316, 319; SL, II, 114, 124, 129, 151.

northern review. Graham notes that

> Southey expressed the opinion that it was not possible to speak of the "peace party" with more severity than their ignorance, their presumption, and their pusillanimity had deserved. They disgusted the allies and encouraged the enemies of England.[170]

And Southey's comparison of the character of Wellington with that of Napoleon would seem prophetic after Waterloo; it would draw strong praise for the Quarterly and for Southey himself.[171]

Some of Southey's significant contributions to the review were replies to specific articles which had earlier appeared in the Edinburgh. Even his first paper in the Quarterly, an article on the Baptist mission in India, was a reply to the malicious and entertaining attack on the Baptist missionaries by Sydney Smith in the Edinburgh.[172] In the autumn of 1810 Southey attacked the Unitarian James Sedgwick's Hints to the Public and the Legislature, on the Nature and Effect of Evangelical Preaching (QR, IV, 1810). Although Sedgwick shared Southey's alarm at the rapid growth of evangelical Methodism, Southey attacked the book because Sedgwick had made

---

[170]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," pp. 100-101.

[171]Ibid. Southey wrote a second review on Wellington (QR, XIII, 1815) after the Battle of Waterloo in which he celebrated the victory of the allies. Walter Graham gives an indication of the Edinburgh attitude when he writes: "The Edinburgh Review for June, 1815, was printed and ready for distribution, with an anticipatory article by James Mackintosh, in which--prepared for military reverses--he showed that England should have avoided war with Napoleon years before, and that the consequences must be disaster. At news of Waterloo, the Whig editor suppressed the article and put one on craniology in its place." p. 101.

[172]Carnall, p. 99.

favorable comments on Sydney Smith's Edinburgh article on Baptist missions in India.[173]

Late in 1811 Southey both attacked The Edinburgh Review and gave expression to his developing belief in a strong central government for England with his review of Bell and Lancaster's systems of education (QR, VI, 1811). In defending Dr. Andrew Bell Southey was attacking the Edinburgh as well, for in October, 1807, and November, 1810, Sydney Smith had published papers in the Edinburgh which highly praised Bell's antagonist Joseph Lancaster and his associates. There can be little doubt that Southey's hostile attitude toward Lancaster was stimulated in large part by his attitude toward the Edinburgh reviewer.[174]

It is obvious that a number of Southey's essays reflect his opinions of the Scottish review and its contributors, and many are replies to specific articles appearing there. Curiously, in a letter to Murray in August, 1816, Southey again denied a desire for retaliation. Specifically regarding the Bullion controversy, Southey advised that the Quarterly should not be an echo to the Edinburgh:

> It would be truly disgraceful if because the Edinburgh had taken the one side, the Quarterly for that reason should take the other, and if I were always to think differently from Messrs. Jeffrey and Brougham, merely from the spirit of opposition, I should prove myself to be as devoid of principle as I believe them both to be.[175]

---

[173]Ibid., p. 130.

[174]Ibid., p. 135.

[175]NL, II, 140.

Here Southey expressed a principle which he violated with frequency in the early years of his association with the Quarterly. In later years, perhaps as he gained age and maturity, he replied less often to the Scottish review.

It is correct to assume that Southey's contributions to The Quarterly Review, aside from possible changes in substance and tone by editorial revision and aside from his penchant for ready replies to those who had offended him, constitute the reliable record of his thought on the broad and particular issues of his age. When his papers are examined in the order they appeared, stretching over thirty years, surprisingly few inconsistencies or sudden shifts of thought can be found. His voluminous correspondence, the best indicator of his intimate thought, shows very few differences in his public and private opinions. The differences that do occur are those of tone and intensity, rarely of belief or theory.

Though Southey became a thoroughgoing Tory by 1810, his essays show a continued development of thought, and an expansion of interests, and they show him not to be as dogmatic in his opinions as some of his detractors have made him out to be. What is obvious is that the tone of his papers increased in intensity in proportion to the occurrence of various domestic and political crises around him. His later political and social articles exhibit a more vitriolic tone than his more balanced and moderate earlier papers. It may also be noted that as Southey grew older and viewed the events of his age from his relative retirement in Keswick such important questions as

parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation--major social and political changes by any standards--he was deeply impressed with a growing sense of urgency and an unwillingness to acknowledge basic changes in English society. His articles in the late 1820s are particularly indicative of this tendency.

It is ironic that by the time he became the Poet Laureate of England in 1813 most of his major poetry had been published and that he had turned away from poetry to prose as his most effective mode for expression. In the years after becoming laureate he was to channel most of his efforts into his prose works. That he considered his histories, biographies, editions, translations, and his one strange attempt at a novel, worthy of remembrance is confirmed by numerous references in his letters. Most of his prose remains unread today. That he considered the essays he wrote for The Quarterly Review to be among his most important prose writings is borne out by the fact that he had what he considered the most important of them reprinted in 1832 in Essays, moral and political.[176] The Essays along with the

---

[176]Portions of the first three essays reprinted in Essays (1832) were taken from work which Southey had done for the Edinburgh Annual Register: "Essay I. On Sir Francis Burdett's Motion for Parliamentary Reform. . . . On the Conduct of the War . . . and on the cry of the Whigs for Peace. 1810," I, 2-26, combines material from EAR, 2(1809), 285-293, and from "Captain Pasley on the Military Policy of Great Britain," QR, 10(1811), 435-437; "Essay II. Army and Navy Reforms, 1810," I, 29-47, is taken from EAR, 3(1810), 155-162, and "Essay III. On the Economical Reformers, 1811," I, 51-73, is taken from EAR, 3(1810), 211-220. The remainder of the 1832 essays are taken from the Quarterly Review papers and exhibit no great revisions save those which alter paragraphing or delete topical references from the original papers. "Essay IV. On the State of the Poor, the Principle of Mr. Malthus's Essay on Population, and the Manufacturing

Colloquies in 1829 provide a valuable distillation of his thought, but they should not be read apart from the body of the Quarterly papers. The Essays and Colloquies give the substance, but the Quarterly papers provide the tone, the detail, the qualifications, and the sense of urgency and immediacy necessary to connect Southey's thinking to the context of his times.

Geoffrey Carnall has correctly based his study of Southey's thought upon the assumption that the development of his thinking cannot be seen apart from the events of the age in which he lived, and Jean Raimond prefaces his study by noting "si l'on veut porter aujourd'hui une jugement authorisé sur la signification de l'oeuvre de Southey, il est indispensable de la replacer dans le contexte historique et littéraire qui la vit nâitre."[177] All this is quite true, but it places a great burden upon the scholar who undertakes to

---

System, 1812," I, 73-158, is taken from "Inquiry into the Poor Laws," QR, 8(1812), 319-356; "Essay V. On the state of the Poor, and the means pursued by the Society for bettering their condition, 1816," I, 159-247, is taken from "The Poor," QR, 15(1816), 187-235; "Essay VI. On the Accounts of England by Foreign Travellers, and the State of Public Opinion, 1816," is from "Works on England," QR, 15(1816), 537-574; "Essay VII. On the State of Public Opinion, and the Political Reformers, 1816," I, 327-422, is reprinted from "Parliamentary Reform," QR, 16(1816), 225-278.

The second volume of Essays (1832) reprints four papers from the Quarterly. "Essay VIII. On the Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection, 1817," II, 35-107, is reprinted from "Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection," QR, 16(1817), 511-552; "Essay IX. On the Means of Improving the People, 1818," II, 111-180, is a reprint of "On the Means of Improving the People," QR, 19(1818), 79-118; "Essay X. On Emigration, 1828," II, 209-275, is taken from "Emigration Report," QR, 37(1828), 539-578; and "Essay XIII. On the Catholic Question, 1828," II, 329-443, is reprinted from "The Roman Catholic Question--Ireland," QR, 38(1828), 535-598.

[177]Raimond, p. 14.

do it, for it is impossible to recreate with precision historical events or to measure exactly the impact which historical events might have had upon the people of that age. One can only approximately judge such matters and advance well-reasoned speculations.

Certainly the essays of Southey cannot be separated from the books and events and people that inspired them, especially in the realms of social, political, and religious criticism. Periodical and journalistic literature occupies a place among the most topical kinds of writing, and an exhaustive examination of each of Southey's essays and each social, historical, religious, or literary event which they touched and which touched them lies beyond the scope of this study. Broad outlines and patterns of thought, however, can readily be discerned, and the schools of thought which Southey represented in his age, and articulated in the Quarterly, were potent forces. A controversial foreign war, a faltering economy, a struggle between and within branches of government, scandal in high places, social amelioration, the progress of society, the effects of historical and judicial precedent, the relationship between church and state, the assassination of a Prime Minister, the rights of the state and the rights of the individual, relief of the poor, reform in education, economic inflation and recessions, the functions of literature, the dangerous power of the press--these are the broad questions to which Southey addressed himself in the pages of The Quarterly Review, and this is why his essays bear reading today. The specific issues which

he treated were resolved over a century ago, but the broad issues still remain.

In December of 1816 Southey wrote from Keswick to his friend Charles W. Wynn of what he hoped he could accomplish with his work for the Quarterly:

> . . . I am disposed to think it not unlikely that I may do some present good, and almost certain that if the hope be disappointed for the present, it must sooner or later take effect. There is plenty of zeal in the country, and abundance of good intentions, which, if they were well directed, might be of infinite service. There are great and sore evils which may certainly be alleviated, if not removed; and there are dangers which we ought to look fairly in the face. I have nothing to hope or fear for myself, and the sole personal consideration that can influence me is the desire of acquitting myself of the sin of omission. Better that a candle should be blown out than that it should be placed under a bushel.[178]

What good Southey did accomplish with his reviews is impossible to determine. Undoubtedly he swayed many readers against Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform, but in 1828 the Catholics were emancipated, and four years later Parliament was reformed. His essays did not stimulate great social reforms, but they did serve to point out to a wide forum, perhaps for the first time, certain social abuses which had gone unnoticed before. His literary criticism in the review was of less importance than that of his contemporary poets and contributors, but it did serve to moderate the tone of the Quarterly, and it did serve to give recognition to some obscure and minor poets. The ideas which Southey so ardently wished to express independently of

---

[178] LC, IV, 229.

the influence or hindrance of his editors and fellow contributors are still open to investigation and will be explored in the subsequent chapters of this study.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY, POLITICAL THEORY, AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

I. STANDARDS FOR HISTORICAL WRITING

The writing of historical and biographical works was a major part of Southey's long career as a professional author. By the time that he began his engagement with The Quarterly Review in 1809, he had come to recognize that his inclinations and talents lay not with poetry but with history, biography, and political criticism. That he regarded his historical works as his major claim to literary immortality is obvious from numerous comments in his letters. To his friend Walter Savage Landor, for example, he wrote in 1810:

> Is it a mark of strength or of weakness, of maturity or of incipient decay, that it is more delightful to me to compose history than poetry? . . . I have an ominous feeling that there are poets enough in the world without me, and that my best chance of being remembered will be as an historian.[1]

The extent of his interest in the writing of history is clearly indicated by his ambitious plans, formulated in 1804, for a program of historical writing. In September of that year he wrote to his brother Thomas projecting a massive series of works which would include a three volume history of Portugal, a two or three volume history of the Portuguese empire in Asia, a history of Brazil, a history of the Jesuits in Japan, a two volume literary history of Spain and Portugal,

---

[1]LC, III, 283; Cf. LC, IV, 214.

and a general history of monasticism . . . "in all," he wrote, "ten, eleven, or twelve quarto volumes. . . ." At the end of his letter he added whimsically, "God give me life, health, eyesight, and as much leisure as even now I have, and done it shall be."[2] Done it never was, at least not on the scale which he had projected. Despite the fact that this enormous project became a life-long preoccupation, only fragments were ever published.

The only full-length work of his original plan to be completed was the History of Brazil which appeared in three volumes between 1810 and 1819. In 1820 he published the Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism, and in 1823, 1827, and 1832, the three volumes of the massive History of the Peninsular War appeared. In 1824 and 1826 two historical works with a distinctly propagandistic purpose were published, The Book of the Church and the Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae. In the waning years of his life, between 1833 and 1840, the five volumes of the Lives of the British Admirals completed Southey's major contributions to historical writing. It is, of course, something of an irony that of these impressive volumes none would be remembered in later years and that his slighter work, the Life of Nelson, which he expanded from a Quarterly Review article in 1813, would be the basis of such fame as he would enjoy as an historian after the close of his career. It is clear, however, that Southey deeply treasured his historical pursuits and that he regarded

---

[2]LC, II, 305-306.

history as a branch of literature which, as W. L. Renwick has observed, he "enjoyed as he enjoyed all literature and especially such as occupied him in the collection of multifarious facts."[3]

It is not surprising, then, given Southey's keen and abiding historical interests, that a large number of his Quarterly papers should be historical in nature and that they should reflect his interpretations of historical events and figures as well as his theories of history and his standards for the writing of history. Although of his 1804 plans only the History of Brazil found its way into print, his plans did not go entirely unfulfilled. He had projected works on the history of Portugal and the Portuguese empire, the literary history of Spain and Portugal, and a history of monasticism; these appeared as long papers in the Quarterly Review.[4]

There is scarcely an article among the Quarterly contributions which does not indicate Southey's antiquarian interests and his belief that a sound treatment of any topic, whether social, political, or literary in nature, requires a thorough and penetrating examination of the history of that topic. In addition to papers dealing explicitly with historical events, a number of his essays are short sketches in historical biography, of which his lives of Nelson, Wellington, Marlborough, Hampden, and Cromwell are the prime examples.

---

[3]W. L. Renwick, English Literature 1789-1815 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 235.

[4]QR, I, 268-292; IV, 1-24; VI, 313-357; XIV, 333-368; XVIII, 1-46; XXII, 59-102; XXVII, 1-39; XXXI, 378-390; XLI, 184-226.

Aside from his analyses of individual historical events and personages there emerge in Southey's Quarterly papers his opinions and standards concerning the study and writing of history. While there are some signs of a philosophy of history in the articles--an idea of the cyclical pulse of history, an interest in the small links in long chains of events, a keen appreciation of the fact that the whole course of history can be changed radically by a minor event, and a perceptive recognition of the interlocking factors governing any historical event--Southey does not present a systematic philosophy of human history. He is, moreover, averse to needless speculation in the study of the past--the "what might have happened if" approach. What is obvious, however, from all of his historical articles is that Southey believed that since history must be based upon truth of fact it must also function as a presentation of moral and philosophical truth.

Peter F. Morgan has correctly noted in a recent article that for Southey "the study of history teaches more successfully than poetry; its great lesson is forbearance of judgment."[5] Further, to Southey history is merely a study in curiosity unless it serves to illuminate present events and point the way to the future--history must be prophetic. In March, 1813, he wrote his publisher Murray:

> No man has ever taken more interest than I have done in looking back into the history of the human race, or in looking forward to their amelioration, and collecting the light of the past as in the

---

[5]Peter F. Morgan, "Southey: A Critical Spectrum," The Wordsworth Circle, 5(1974), 72.

> focus of a mirror, to fling it before me that I may see into the future.[6]

In 1803 Southey wrote to his brother of the requisites for a good historian: "industry, judgment, genius; the patience to investigate, the discrimination to select, and the power to infer and to enliven."[7] These three standards are clearly reflected in his Quarterly papers concerning the writing of history. It is, then, of some importance to examine Southey's standards for the writing of history as they appear in the review before moving on to a discussion of individual articles and the main points of his historical criticism.

Although remarks concerning the writing of history and the duties of the historian appear in numerous reviews of individual historical works, Southey's standards emerge most clearly in two articles published fifteen years apart; a paper entitled "History of Dissenters" (QR, X, 1813) and his long review of Henry Hallam's Constitutional History of England (QR, XXXVII, 1828). In the 1813 paper he recorded his basic criteria for historical writings:

> To write history as it ought to be written requires a power of intellectual transmigration with which very few persons are gifted. The author, if he would deal justly toward those whose actions he professes to record, should go back to their times, and, standing where they stood, endeavour . . . to see things as they appeared within their scope of vision, in the same light, and from the same point of view, and through the same medium.[8]

This power of "intellectual transmigration," enhanced by a

---

[6]NL, II, 53.

[7]LC, II, 242.

[8]QR, X, 91.

simple and lucid style and a careful eye for interesting detail, enlivens the historical record and gives to it a sense of vitality and immediacy. That Southey himself possessed this power is apparent to all discerning readers of the Life of Nelson or his treatments in the Quarterly of the adventures and triumphs of Marlborough and Wellington, the atrocities of Napoleon, the characters of Hampden, Cromwell, Charles I, and Charles II. Always in his essays he was interested in vivid details, the confusions, the emotions, the interlocking pieces of the great historical puzzle, and always he stressed the humanity of those who participated in the drama of history. In addition, he felt that it was important for the historian to recreate the spirit of the times in which events took place, and for this it was necessary to base historical writings upon original sources of information.[9]

Despite his hostility toward speculation and speculative philosophies of history, Southey did not diminish the responsibility of the historian to view past events in light of subsequent developments, and he consistently stressed the necessity for historical perspective. For Southey, however, historical perspective was never a matter of cool disinterest or studied objectivity, and it should be recognized that he had his own strong prejudices which colored his accounts, for example, of the English Puritan revolution or the rise of the French revolutionists. He often denied that the mere passage of time gives to the historian a superior vantage point and recognized

---

[9]QR, XXXVIII, 210.

that history must be an imperfect, or perhaps incomplete, study simply because it is not always possible for lack of evidence to portray the past with total precision. It is therefore impossible to be entirely objective in historical record except at the simplest level of listing facts and events; objectivity, however, is still the ideal goal. Moreover, Southey held that although all historians should aim for factual veracity and exciting, humanizing details, the best historian will always be a cautious and subjective interpretor, for he must serve the function of a prophetic teacher as well.

History must convey moral truth as well as the truthful record of fact; past events function mainly to guide the way for the future conduct of individuals, statesmen, and nations. Southey frequently complained that uncharitableness is the general fault of historians.[10] His view of the progress of human history, further, is generally an optimistic one, especially for England, because the lot of man, socially and politically has improved vastly over the centuries, but this is a generalization which he never allowed to stand without careful modification.

Southey frequently cautioned historians against oversimplifying the historical record and against praising or condemning historical figures without qualification. Indeed, qualifications running many pages in length are a hallmark of his historical articles as he attempted to examine at great length each important factor and each

---

[10]QR, X, 92.

important force which created, or might have helped to create, an event or led to the actions of a particular individual of historical significance. The villains of history, he often urged, should be presented for their good qualities as well as for their evil ones.[11]

The duties of the historian, especially in the uncertain times of the nineteenth century, carry heavy responsibilities, for it is within the power of the historian to perpetuate falsehoods which may arise from a too harsh, too objective, or too highly simplified view of past events. Falsehoods thus perpetuated can endanger the course of future events, for the past is but the pattern and precedent for the future. Above all things, Southey felt, the historian should avoid "partyism." In a somewhat contradictory statement he wrote:

> . . . it is the duty of the historian to exercise the high office which he has assumed, with charity as well as justice. He injures his own cause if he forbear to expose the errors of the party whose general principles and conduct he may conscientiously approve; still more does he injure it if he attempt to conceal or gloss over their crimes; but if he goes beyond this, and dare to apologize for them, he appropriates to himself no light portion of the guilt which he sanctions, and makes himself responsible for the consequences to which that sanction may tend. That which has happened may happen again; the passions of men remain the same; progressive as we are, we often have to go through the same lessons as the ages before us; and therefore it especially behoves the historian to inculcate charity, and take part with the oppressed; whoever may have been the oppressors.[12]

In the January, 1828, Quarterly Review, Southey made his most explicit statement on the writing of history in his highly condemnatory review of Henry Hallam's Constitutional History of England.

---

[11]Ibid., 102.

[12]Ibid.

In this paper he strongly attacked Hallam's work as one flawed by faulty organization, self-contradiction, illogical reasoning, an excess of party spirit, and what he considered to be a false interpretation of certain facets of the English Reformation and the Puritan rebellion of the seventeenth century. Hallam, of course, was a Whig historian, and Southey was a Tory reviewer, but more important than the reviewer's evaluation and refutation of another's historical judgments, is Southey's theory of the writing of history and the duties of the historian which emerge from this paper.

In Southey's view history cannot be divided neatly into its constituent parts--civil, military, ecclesiastical, constitutional, commercial, literary, and moral--with each part treated separately by the writer. Historical events and periods must be viewed as total entities with countless interrelated factors--to simplify is consciously to distort the record and to cut away the atmosphere from the event. A chronological order of narration should be followed, and some obvious sense of the simultaneity of events must emerge.[13]

The cardinal sin of the historian is an excessive dependence upon party or personal bias in portraying past events. This is a theme which runs throughout Southey's social and political criticism in the Quarterly; political and class biases, partisanship and factionalism always tend to distort the view of the individual and as a whole tend to weaken dangerously the fabric of society. To judge or

---

[13]QR, XXXVII, 194.

view historical events or movements upon the basis of present political or social preferences renders history insidious and perpetrates falsehood, and thus engenders a host of dangers.[14] The historian who allows himself to be thus guided "contracts an obliquity of moral vision: his views are narrowed: his understanding is warped: his sense of right and wrong is perverted: he has ceased to be just, and, therefore, he can no longer be generous." In short, the historian must not be affected by political or religious convictions, by his love of country or party, by his own professional predilections;

> . . . he comes to his task, not like an advocate with the purpose of bringing forward such parts of the case as may favour the side on which he is retained, and of keeping others in the shade; but under the sense of a more generous responsibility, and a higher duty.[15]

To summarize, Southey's standards for the writing of history, as they appear in his Quarterly papers, require of the historian the gift of "intellectual transmigration," the absence of excessive political, social, or religious biases, the ability to narrate historical events chronologically while taking careful account of the multitude of interrelated factors governing an event, a sense of the simultaneity of events, compression and simplicity of style, moderation of tone, and a charitable treatment of figures of history while maintaining the integrity of factual veracity. To Southey, whose scholarly proclivities sometimes led him to expect too much of people, history was clearly more of an art than a social science.

---

[14]Ibid., 195.

[15]Ibid., 198.

His criteria, however, often appear contradictory both in their statement and in his own practice in the Quarterly. His own religious convictions, for example, highly influenced some historical essays, and his views of the Reformation and dissenting religious groups were always written from the perspective of an intractable Anglican. Always, past and present, Southey energetically defended the Church of England. For him a religious spirit is closely connected with the writing of history. "The more religious an historian is," he wrote,

> the more impartial will be his statements, the more charitable his disposition, the more enlightened his philosophy. In religion alone is true philosophy to be found. . . .[16]

Southey's own religious and philosophical views, moreover, led him to discern a clear pattern in the course of history. As early as 1812 he wrote:

> He who contemplates the history of the world with the faith of a Christian and the comprehensive views of a philosopher, perceives in the course of human events, as harmonious an order as that which science has demonstrated to us in the movements of the material universe. Evil there has been, evil there is, and evil there yet will be. . . . But it has ever been, and it ever will be subservient to good upon the great scale.[17]

While particular countries have degenerated morally and fallen into servitude or been laid waste by oppression, the human race has continually been advancing toward a better state of society.

Although Southey stated many times that the historian should maintain an air of impartiality, he admitted in an 1832 article that

---

[16]Ibid.

[17]QR, VII, 437.

on some matters it would be wrong to be impartial:

> . . . when great national interests are at stake, or great principles are contended for, he will unavoidably take his part, with Pompey, for instance, or with Caesar--with Papist or Protestant. . . . with Charles I or the Parliament. To be impartial when such subjects are treated, would be to show himself indifferent to right and wrong; what is required of him is, that he should be just,--that concerning either party he should relate the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, neither concealing the faults of the one side, nor exaggerating those of the other. . . .[18]

Southey's own Quarterly reviews make it very clear that he was not always able to fulfill his own high standards. While he strongly condemned historians who allow political opinions to interfere with their writing he condemned Hallam from a distinctly political point of view, and his review disintegrates at points into mere political squabbling. While he urged that the historian must possess a glowing, charitable, religious spirit in approaching the figures and events of the past, he very rarely made any concessions either to Roman Catholicism or to dissenting sects, and his papers dealing with the role of Catholicism in European and English history are characterized by a tone of extreme bitterness and an obvious attempt to belabor excesses and to underplay good qualities. Frequently these papers display his very considerable capacity for invective. While he urged that every villain of history has his good qualities, he found none in the French revolutionists or in Napoleon, and very few in Hampden or Cromwell.

Further, while he possessed the gift of "intellectual

---

[18]QR, XLVII, 458.

transmigration," and no one can argue that his accounts of some events lack vividness and liveliness, he very often carried with him into the past his current conservative political and religious views. Frequently, as with the Hallam paper and his reviews of Bishop Burnet's History of his Own Time (QR, XXIX, 1823), and Lord Nugent's Memorials of Hampden (QR, XLVII, 1832) as well as his "Life of Cromwell" (QR, XXV, 1821), Southey made extensive efforts to revise treatments of historical events to fit his own predilections. His records of English history, the French Revolution, the English Reformation, and the seventeenth century are always influenced by his political conservatism, his distrust of republicanism, his fear of revolution, his virulent anti-Catholicism, and his distrust of all things French.

Southey's historical articles are usually written in a vigorous first person narration, especially those which treat relatively recent events, and the author rarely leaves doubt about which side he takes. His attempt to convey a sense of the simultaneity of events sometimes fails and leads to confusion, and his biases often destroy his tone of scholarly authority. He rarely supplied dates in his papers, and this, too, makes difficult reading for the modern student. Frequently he neglected to identify adequately minor historical personages, and sometimes the essays are badly flawed by long digressions, usually political or religious in nature, and often he dwelt to an inordinate extent upon seemingly minor events while neglecting to give an overall picture of the general topic under treatment.

Too frequently the reader is left with the distinct, and not inaccurate feeling, that Southey wrote in a bookish world all to himself, oblivious to political and historical realities around him.

Although he dealt with a myriad of historical topics ranging from a history of America in an 1809 paper to the history of the West Indies twenty years later, three broad areas of interest emerge from the list of his contributions to the Quarterly: church history, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era, and the history of England. In the first area he included articles dealing with the missionary efforts of dissenting sects, the history and rise of evangelical sects in Britain, a history of the Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions, a history of Salisbury Cathedral, the origin and progress of religious infidelity, theophilanthropy in France, a history of British monasticism, accounts of miracles, superstitions, and tenets of faith of the Roman Catholic Church. The basic themes are attacks upon Roman Catholicism, condemnation of religious fanaticism in any form, and a defense of the present and historical role of the Church of England.

In the area of British history he gave particular attention to the Puritan revolution of the seventeenth century, the Restoration, and the individual roles of certain pivotal figures such as Cromwell, Hampden, Marlborough, Nelson, and Wellington. His treatment of the French Revolution and the career of Napoleon are indicative of his own political conservatism, his fear of republican forms of government, and his hatred of the French.

II. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Since Southey's political development and opinions cannot be seen apart from his view of historical events, his essays bearing upon the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era are of particular significance. Although as a young man he had demonstrated certain strong republican tendencies, by 1809 his views had substantially changed, and he had come to view the French Revolution as a bloody, cataclysmic, and tragic event which had unleashed an incredibly dangerous chain of historical events which would continue into the unforseeable future.[19] For him the revolution of 1789 epitomized the pattern of all popular revolutions, and he felt it demonstrated for all time the dangers of a weak central government and a lack of control of a disaffected population. His extensive knowledge of the revolution, coupled with the internal situation of England between 1810 and 1820 explains his pervasive and long-standing fear of an English revolution in the nineteenth century, a fear which echoes continuously throughout his Quarterly papers.

The effects of the French Revolution in England, historian Philip Antony Brown has noted, produced among the higher orders of society a horror of every type of political and social innovation, and among the lower orders both a distrust of moderate reforms and a tendency to advocate the boldest political experiments. The general effect of the revolution in the first decades of the nineteenth

---

[19]See QR, VII, 413.

century was "to strengthen the hands of the advocates of the stationary state," epitomized best perhaps by Lord Chancellor Eldon, champion of the opponents of political change. The Lake poets, for example, "experienced the strong reaction in politics, and became Conservative Nationalists under the influence of the great wars, and intense haters of France and French ideas." But while Wordsworth gradually became a quiet, unpolitical traditionalist, and Coleridge became a philosopher in the tradition of Burke, "Southey became a man of affairs and an aggressive opponent of the views which all three had accepted as young men."[20]

Historically Southey felt that the French Revolution had brought the whole course of western civilization to a major crossroads. In an 1811 article he wrote:

> No precise line of demarkation can be traced through the twilight boundaries of ancient and modern history; but the outline which separates this new era from that which has ended within our own remembrance, is strongly and conspicuously drawn for future ages. The French Revolution has been, as it were, the breaking up of the abyss, and from our ark of liberty, which rides securely upon the waters, we behold every thing around us laid waste by the deluge.[21]

The following year, in 1812, he wrote that the revolution tended to negate the idea that man has in his intellect and morality gradually improved over the ages. Man's capacity for evil grows as well as his capacity for good.[22]

---

[20]Philip Antony Brown, The French Revolution in English History (London: Allen and Unwin, 1918), pp. 166, 207.

[21]QR, VI, 313.

[22]QR, VII, 416.

Southey's accounts and evaluations of the French Revolution are primarily contained in four Quarterly papers: "Lives of the French Revolutionists" (QR, VII, 1812), "La Roche Jaquelein--La Vendée" (QR, XV, 1816), "French Revolution--Conspiration de Babeuf" (QR, XLV, 1831), and "Prince Polignac--Revolution of the Three Days" (QR, XLVIII, 1832). The first of these papers is perhaps the most interesting to the modern reader, for it is a carefully structured and coherent treatment which traces in some detail the development of the Constitutionalists and Brissontes during the early revolutionary period and provides vivid accounts of the major leaders of the revolution at its various stages, including, with some obvious glee, accounts of their violent downfalls.

The general principle which Southey draws in his "Lives of the French Revolutionists" is that the natural course of any popular revolution brings to positions of unusual power not the best of men but the worst, and that their personal ambitions invariably lead to faction, division, and social and political anarchy. His conclusion in this paper, and it is restated repeatedly in his political essays, is that inevitably all such revolutions create a state of chaos which necessitates an equally dangerous state of military tyranny.[23] This state of military tyranny will be resolved in time either in military conquest and aggressive imperialism or in counter-revolution. Popular revolution always consumes itself, and Southey found parallels

---

[23]Ibid., 428, 436.

in the Puritan revolution and the rise of parliamentary power in England in the seventeenth century. The causes of the French Revolution he isolated conveniently as a combination of weak government and unbridled freedom of the periodical press.[24]

It is apparent from this paper that Southey's treatment of the French Revolution was influenced by and perhaps determined by his belief that revolution was an imminent danger in the England of 1812. (This paper appeared shortly after the assassination of Prime Minister Perceval in May, 1812, an event which left Southey badly shaken.) His belief in a carefully controlled press is a note which punctuates every political essay to the end of his career. Any popular revolution, he indicated in this article, should be regarded as a fundamental violation of the natural order of society, divinely sanctioned; a revolution, since it is self-consuming and attended by violence, can produce nothing which aids in the gradual improvement and progress of mankind and the amelioration of social ills.

This article, however, does give some indication of his qualified theory of optimism. The conclusion of the paper seems to be an attempt to put into perspective the threat of a contemporary English revolution. Ultimately, he held, good must always defeat evil. Although particular nations may decline and fall, man has generally advanced to a better state of civilization. Although the collapse of the Roman Empire was a calamity at the time, yet "it was expedient for the welfare of mankind that the Roman empire should be

---

[24]Ibid., 437.

subverted." Perhaps in like manner the evils of the French Revolution would ultimately work for the benefit of mankind.[25]

Four years after the publication of "Lives of the French Revolutionists" Southey published "La Roche Jaquelein," an account of the resistance of royalists in Vendée in 1793 to the National Convention, and he gave special praise to the leaders of this counter-revolution who wished, with certain modifications, to re-establish the old order in France. His account of the Vendée insurrection not only provided him with confirmation of his belief that revolution breeds counter-revolution but also gave him occasion for expressing one of his favorite themes in his account of the French Revolution and its aftermath: the atrocities which were committed by the revolutionists and the unstable national character of the French. "The natural character of the French," he wrote, "is so cruel, that humanity, when displayed, must always be accounted for an especial virtue in him who possesses it."[26] The French revolutionists were "the most atrocious

---

[25]Ibid., 437-438. This attitude of qualified historical optimism is certainly consistent with Southey's Colloquies published in 1829. In Colloquy II, for example, which is entitled "The Improvement of the World," Montesinos, speaking for Southey, contends that "the human race will one day attain the utmost degree of general virtue, and thereby general happiness, of which humanity is capable . . . a state of society is conceivable almost as superior to that of England in these days, as that itself is superior to the condition of the tatooed Britons, or of the Northern Pirates from whom we are all descended. Surely this belief rests upon a reasonable foundation, and is supported by that general improvement (always going on if it be regarded upon the great scale) to which all history bears witness." Colloquies, I, pp. 29-30. As early as November, 1814, he held the same view, LC, IV, 88-89.

[26]QR, XV, 17. He frequently found occasion in other essays to

criminals that ever outraged humanity." His conclusion is simply stated: ". . . of all evils--of all miseries--of all curses which can befall a civilized country,--revolution is the greatest."[27]

His third article dealing specifically with the French Revolution is an 1831 review of a work by Philippo Buonarroti entitled Conspiration pour l'Egalité, dite de Babeuf. Here he paraphrased much of Buonarroti's work which was published in Brussels in 1828. In this article he was particularly interested in the factionalism which grew out of the revolution and the state of anarchy which followed from a lack of strong centralized authority in the country. This was, he maintained, the primary cause of the failure of the revolution. He sketched in some detail the life and career of François-Emile Babeuf and the history of his conspiracy in 1796-1797 against the Directory to restore the Constitution of 1793 and to abolish all existing distinctions of property, class, and rank which had survived the initial revolutionary holocaust. This provided

---

comment upon what he considered as an inherent instability and savagery in the French character, without regard to class or station, although he qualified this idea in his praise of the Vendeans. This instability of character he felt was a primary cause of the traditional instability of French governments. In an early paper in 1809 he wrote: "It has been observed that the French accomodate themselves more easily than any other Europeans to the habits of savage life; . . . the reason is obvious: a Frenchman has no respect for himself, because he has no sense of moral dignity; to become a savage he has nothing to do but to put off the coxcomb, or rather to change the coxcomb's fashion; and he remains with his craft and his cruelty; his shallow feelings and his profound dissimulation; his animal activity, and the inexhaustible resources of his ingenuity; all the bad qualities of the savage, and few of the good ones." QR, II, 331.

[27]QR, XV, 2.

Southey occasion to assail the levelling tendencies of popular revolutions, and he stressed again what he considered the invariable law of revolutionary cannabalism--revolution breeds its own destruction. By its nature, popular, democratic revolutions can give rise to nothing which can endure.

Southey's final, and perhaps most important comment on the revolution, because it appeared after there had been time for perspective, was a review of Prince Polignac's Considérations Politiques sur l'époque actuelle. This essay, published shortly after the reform of the British Parliament in 1832, shows clearly the influence of its author's conservative politics and his alarm at the changes in Parliament of that year. He provided an account of the social and political state of France in the early 1830s, and an account of the Revolution of Three Days in July, 1830, which resulted in the fall of Charles X. Much of the article is given over to an exposition of the political theories of Polignac with digressions upon the state of French Canada. Southey's theory is that the revolution of 1830, although much milder, followed basically the same pattern and was an ultimate result of the revolution of 1789. The lesson of the revolution of 1789 is clear--"the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children."

Both the revolutions of 1789 and 1830, Southey maintained, arose from the skeptical, Catholic, and anarchistic nature of the French people and from the unbridled liberty of the periodical press.

Further, popular revolutions are rarely popular--they result from an active minority and the ignorance of the great mass of the people.[28] Missing from Southey's article is an examination of the ultimate causes of the 1789 revolution; always he tended to generalize and focus upon immediate causes and results. A part of his thesis is that the Revolution of 1789 insured that France would never again be great, for it legitimized the principle of revolution, and the overthrow of Charles X in 1830 was thus a natural consequence of the historical precedent set forty-one years earlier. Further causes of the 1789 revolution were, in Southey's view, a lack of public morality fostered by the Roman Catholic Church, a weak monarchy, and the ignorance and unstable passions of the lower and middle classes.

In all of his treatments of the French Revolution Southey maintained that a prime cause of any political uprising is an uncontrolled press. "Power," he wrote, "without responsibilities, is admitted to be an evil, an intolerable evil, by all except those who exercise it, or are profiting under its exercise; yet this is the power which the press claims for itself everywhere when it can make its claims heard. . . ."[29] Further, ". . . there can be no freedom without a free press, as surely as there can be neither freedom nor order with a licentious one. If peace be preserved on the continent, the first stable government in France will control the press."[30]

---

[28]QR, XLVIII, 260.

[29]Ibid., 271.

[30]Ibid., 272.

III. THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

Southey's study of history led him to believe that revolutionary governments were either destroyed by counter-revolutionaries from within or were toppled by strong military dictators. The meteoric rise of Napoleon from the smoldering ruins of the French Revolution was for him the prime confirmation of his theory. Writing at a time when England and her allies were locked in a desperate war of survival with Bonaparte, Southey made little attempt to disguise his hatred of the French emperor. In addition, his judgment as an historian for the Quarterly Review was clearly prejudiced by his role as a national propagandist and by his own often exaggerated sense of patriotism.

For Southey's view of Napoleon and the Napoleonic era one should turn to five articles in the Quarterly; the Pasley article (QR, V, 1811), the life of Nelson (QR, III, 1810), the two-part life of Wellington (QR, XIII, 1815), and his treatment of Napoleon's expedition to Egypt (QR, XIII, 1815). His judgment of the French emperor appears most clearly in the latter, "Miot's Memoires de l'expédition en Egypte" which was published in the April, 1815, issue of the review. As a Quarterly historian Southey often labored under the burden of having to write of events which were too recent to allow sufficient historical perspective. The review of Miot was written and published just prior to Waterloo, and Southey's historical judgments in it are influenced by the close proximity of events. It is in this paper, however, that his historical prejudices and capacity for

invective are most apparent; completely missing are his standards of objectivity, charity and humanity in treating the villains of history.

The review of Jacques Miot's work traces in some detail the Egyptian campaigns of the French in 1798-1799, and while the paper contains very little in the way of criticism of the work, it is filled with strong comments on French barbarism, depravity, and atrocities in Northern Africa. The article also exhibits Southey's keen awareness of critical moments in history. Despite his antipathy to speculation, he noted in discussing the sailing of the French fleet to Egypt in June, 1798:

> On the 26th, while they were manoeuvering to collect the transports which had been dispersed by a gale during the night, they discovered through a fog the English fleet steering in search of them towards the northern coast. Had that fog cleared up--or had Nelson been provided with frigates . . . what years of suffering might have been spared to Egypt, to Europe, and to the world.[31]

Elsewhere he had noted that had the career of Napoleon been checked in Egypt the course of human history would have been altered substantially, and Napoleon would have held a considerably different place in history:

> A romantic obscurity would have hung over the disgraceful expedition to Egypt, and he would have escaped the perpetuation of those crimes which have incardined his soul with a deeper dye than that of the purple for which he committed them; these acts of perfidy, midnight murder, usurpation, and remorseless tyranny, which have consigned his name to universal execution, now and forever.[32]

A similar crucial moment of history, Southey noted in another article, was the battle of Worcester during the English civil war of the

---

[31]QR, XIII, 4.

[32]QR, III, 247.

seventeenth century. Had Charles I won that battle English history would have been changed, and the evolution of the British government would have been immeasurably altered.[33]

Most of the review of Miot, however, is devoted to the details of French atrocities in Egypt and Syria with some attention to the grand strategies of the expedition, and Southey took special care to remove any hint of honor from the French commanders on this campaign. Of all the atrocities committed by Napoleon, or any other military commander in history, the celebrated massacre of prisoners at Jaffa was the most barbaric, and Southey dwelt at length upon it.[34] He also provided careful attention to the unsuccessful siege of Acre by the French, and, despite his particular prejudices, provided the reader with an impressive display of his grasp of complex military strategies and situations.

To Southey Napoleon represented the "incarnation of Evil Principles" whose crimes in Egypt were but "a spot in the confluent eruption of his enormities." His condemnation of the French general often led him to ridiculous lengths: "Buonaparte is the first person who ever desecrated the nature of the camel," he wrote with great seriousness, "without which the desert would be impassable, by training it to war."[35] Napoleon is variously styled a "thief," a "robber,"

---

[33]QR, XXV, 335ff.

[34]QR, XIII, 38.

[35]Ibid., 30.

a "renegade," a "murderer," and a "madman." His character was formed by the Egyptian campaign, and this, Southey felt, was why that expedition would prove to later historians a pivotal point in the course of history. In Egypt ". . . he fleshed his followers in crimes, from which, before his baleful ascendancy, the French army would have shrunk in horror and indignation."[36] Of Bonaparte's character he wrote further:

> Amidst all his power, and all his varied fortunes, the same audacious profligacy, the same inherent cruelty, the same native meanness have been shewn . . . his policy having ever been one continued course of vilest artifices and foulest falsehoods. . . . He understands enough of mankind to dazzle the weak, to dupe the vain, to overawe the timid, and to make the wicked his instruments. . . . Patriotism and virtue and duty are words to which he has never felt any correspondent emotion in his soul, which he never thinks of but in contempt, which he never utters but in profanation. Therefore in his political calculations they have always been overlooked; and Portugal and Spain and Russia, and Germany . . . bear witness to the consequences of such error and such ignorance.[37]

And Napoleon consistently comes under similar judgments in other articles, particularly the life of Wellington.

One of Southey's most significant early articles was his review of Captain C. W. Pasley's Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire which appeared in the Quarterly for May, 1811. While this essay is more oriented toward politics and foreign policy than history, it does shed some light upon Southey's view of the Napoleonic struggle. His purpose was to summarize Pasley's

---

[36] Ibid., 54.

[37] Ibid., 55.

treatise, support some of the opinions of the author, and to concur in Pasley's opinion that the main hope of Britain's defense and independence rested upon increasing greatly the strength of the British army. The paper is largely statistical in nature, and it surveys the condition of the military establishment of Great Britain while at the same time assessing the stability and strengths of the British economy in 1810-1811.

In the paper Southey agreed with Captain Pasley that a more vigorous and aggressive military policy should be pursued in Spain against the French, maintained that a continuation of eighteenth-century British imperialism would be essential in order to assure protection of other areas from the French menace, and bitterly attacked those Whig politicians at home who advocated husbanding British resources until an actual invasion. While this article was not intended primarily as an historical account, Southey's comments upon the Peninsular struggle are significant because they underscore his recognition of the historical importance of the war in that area. In his view Napoleon represented a menace which could not be averted by negotiation but only by total destruction.

Perhaps more important for Southey's historical judgments of the Napoleonic era are three biographical essays: the life of Nelson, and the two part life of Wellington. In each of these papers he recognized that because the events discussed were so recent no lasting historical evaluations could be made; however, he did advance some significant opinions. The forty-page life of Nelson is primarily

composed of factual accounts of the battles of the Nile, Copenhagen, and Trafalgar, and these accounts clearly show their author's ability to describe intricate naval strategy in a vivid and coherent manner understandable by the layman. Also evident in the article is Southey's fascination with the minute events of history which determine the outcome of greater events--the tiny jewels, sometimes seemingly insignificant, upon which the great wheels of history revolve.

The two Wellington papers are of greater importance for Southey's record and view of the Peninsular War and the events leading to Waterloo. For this task he was particularly qualified by his earlier articles which appeared in the Edinburgh Annual Register, great portions of which were to reappear later, sometimes with relatively little revision, as a part of the History of the Peninsular War. The Wellington papers are marked by an easy familiarity with the scenes of the war as well as a coherent overview of the complex military situation. Undoubtedly Southey's early residence in Spain and Portugal in 1796, 1800, and 1801 was of great aid in the composition of these papers. Although both essays lack sufficient dates to make them easy for the modern reader, the events recorded in both are arranged chronologically, and to a well-informed contemporary they would have presented few problems. Both essays, however, are as political as they are historical in nature, and both are written with a vigorous first person plural narration with many barbs hurled at the "peace-mongers" at home; nor did Southey fail to criticize freely what he considered to be the blunders of the Portland ministry in the prosecution of the war.

The first half of the life of Wellington was published before Waterloo, and the second half appeared shortly after the battle.[38] At many points Southey's praise of Wellington is effusive, and his treatment of Napoleon seems to the modern reader unnecessarily abusive. In both essays Southey saw as Wellington's greatest achievement not the battles he won but his restoration to the British people of a sense of rightness in their cause and pride in their strength, which spirit enabled them finally to triumph.

The first Wellington essay is composed of a detailed biographical account of Arthur Wellesley and a discussion of his early exploits in India and the French encroachments in the Asian subcontinent culminating in the battle of Naulnair. Southey also provided an account of the British expedition in 1807 against Copenhagen and Wellesley's role in it. Perhaps the most significant portion of the article is his treatment of Napoleon's early efforts in Spain and Portugal and his judgment that the Spanish government bowed too quickly and too quietly to the French. In addition, Southey traced in careful detail the political and diplomatic intrigues which led to the fall of the Spanish Bourbons and the house of Braganza. Of particular interest to him are the Madrid revolt of May, 1808, the

---

[38]At the specific request of the Duke of Wellington, who wished to get before the public his own version of Waterloo, Gifford made a number of substantive revisions. When Southey discovered this in the proofs, he indignantly insisted that the presses be stopped and that the article be restored to its original state. This is another indication of his concern for historical truth and freedom of his own expression. Cf. NL, II, 124-126; SL, III, 5, 6. Lord Coleridge, The Story of a Devonshire House (London: Unwin, 1905), pp. 267-268.

battles of Rolissa and Vimeiro, and the Convention of Cintra which he felt would be viewed by later English historians as a disgrace, a breach of honor which served only to prolong dangerously the prosecution of the war. His condemnation fully equals that of Wordsworth as he wrote:

> . . . the fair hopes of the country had been withered at once, like April blossoms by a snow blast;--our own honour and the interests of our allies had been sacrificed--we had looked for a triumph of justice and of moral feeling as well as of our arms;--we had seen these things forgotten and despised, and had been fooled in negociation out of what we had won with the sword.[39]

The remainder of the article contains a carefully qualified condemnation of the leadership of Sir John Moore and details the exploits of Wellesley following his dramatic return to Spain in April, 1809, with particular attention to his engagements with the French Marshal Massena, the battle of Salamanca, and the battle of Vittoria.

Writing thus before Waterloo he assessed the historic role of Wellesley as that of a deliverer. "The spirit of the country," he wrote, "rose with its successes. England once more felt her strength, and remembered the part which she had borne and the rank which she had asserted in the days of her Edwards and her Henrys. . . . Our victories in the Peninsula prepared the deliverance of Europe. . . ."[40] In the continuation of the Wellington account in the next issue of the Quarterly both his historical account and the lively tone of the paper

---

[39]QR, XIII, 243.

[40]Ibid., 272.

are spoiled by his penchant for propagandizing and celebrating the final defeat of Napoleon in Belgium. He dwelt inordinately upon the atrocities of the French in Spain, and gave particular care to the bitter castigation of those in England who had called for policies of peace and conciliation. "No effort on their part," he complained, "was ever wanting to deaden the hopes, to thwart the exertions, to disgust the allies, and to encourage the enemies of their country."[41] Clearly Southey regarded the British effort on the Peninsula not only as a holy cause but also as the pivotal event of the Napoleonic wars, and a crucial event for England. Had Napoleon not been checked in Spain and Portugal and turned northward and eastward the survival of Britain herself would have been seriously jeopardized.

In the second part of the life of Wellington Southey provided, among other things, an enlightening discussion of the blockade policies of France and Britain, the fall of Paris, and the restoration of the Bourbons, but perhaps the most interesting portions of the essay are those in which he compared the French and English civil wars, indicating basic differences in the characters of the peoples of the two cultures, and his account of the battle of Waterloo. While Waterloo was fully as crucial as Cressy, Agincourt, and Blenheim, Southey asserted, the great tragic irony of the event was that it was such a needless battle. Had Napoleon been more justly and more severely punished at Elba the Hundred Days would never have occurred.

---

[41]Ibid., 272.

The paper concludes with a strongly worded appeal for more severe punishment of French leaders, in Southey's view war criminals, involved in the return of Napoleon to France so that Britain would not have to beat down her traditional enemy a third time in one generation.

IV. ENGLISH HISTORY

Southey's third major area of historical interest in his contributions to the Quarterly was the history of England, particularly that of the Protestant Reformation, the Puritan revolution, and the evolution of the British system of government. In addition, he showed conscious concern with revising traditional views of certain figures in English history. He defended the politics and policies of Elizabeth, Charles I, and on occasion Charles II, and he became an ardent apologist for such men as Thomas Cranmer, Sir Thomas Wentworth, the Earl of Strafford, and Archbishop William Laud. The chief articles of concern in this area are his reviews of several biographies of Thomas Cromwell (QR, XXV, 1821), his review of the six-volume Bishop Burnet's History of his Own Time (QR, XXIX, 1823), his most ambitious historical essay, a review of Henry Hallam's The Constitutional History of England (QR, XXXVII, 1828), and his treatment of Lord Nugent's Memorials of Hampden (QR, XLVII, 1832).

The review of Bishop Burnet's History is primarily of interest for his evaluation of the Restoration period during which, he felt, the country "underwent greater changes . . . than in any preceding age;

changes not produced by violence, but by the gradual and natural course of events, and thus permanently affecting the manners, the institutions, and the character of the nation."[42] In no other age of English history, Southey believed, did so many causes combine to injure the national character, and he provided in this essay a long, wordy condemnation of the moral character of Restoration England, its king and court, its parliaments, its arts and literature. But the excesses of the Restoration, he was careful to observe, did not originate solely with the king and his court but with the vices generated during the twenty-year period prior to 1660. The Puritan Interregnum had dangerously weakened the English church, the English family structure, and the education of the young, and it had created a host of problems with which no king could have effectively or quickly dealt.[43]

In view of his deep moral and religious biases, Southey's treatment of Charles II is on the whole surprisingly favorable; many of the king's problems, he theorized, arose ultimately from the circumstances of his early life and the attempts of his mother to convert her children to Roman Catholicism. Consequently, his assessment of Henrietta Maria is harsh, and he attacked strongly the French influence in the courts of both Charles I and his son. A long section of the essay is devoted to the political consequences of the marriage

---

[42]QR, XXIX, 172.

[43]Ibid., 179ff.

of Charles II to Catherine of Braganza. In the strongest terms he condemned the policies of leniency of Charles II toward English Catholics after the Restoration, and he gave a great deal of attention to the historical significance of Titus Oates and the Popish Plot, the importance of which he seems to have exaggereated.

Continually in this essay Southey stressed the historical role of the Church of England as the bulwark of government in that age and in his own. Of the Restoration he noted further that Puritanism, although subdued by the return of the king served as a prophylactic against "the prevailing pestilence of licentiousness" in the Restoration age.[44] The whole experience of the period of Puritan revolution and rule served the ultimate purpose of strengthening the Church of England and purifying its clergy; this, in 1688, helped to counteract the excessive effects of Restoration morality and the danger of increasing Catholic influence in the country.

Perhaps Southey's most significant historical review in the Quarterly was his treatment of Henry Hallam's Constitutional History of England, from the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of George II. These rather considerable volumes had appeared in 1827, and during the course of his review the following year Southey gathered together historical opinions which appear scattered throughout a large number of other essays. While he condemned the Whig historian for his

---

[44]Ibid., 210.

partisan approach and faulty methods of research and writing, Southey took occasion to provide his own conclusions upon the broad course of English history since 1485. Notably he expressed the opinion that in the framework of all human history a divine plan can be clearly perceived.[45]

Particularly of interest in this rather long paper are Southey's assessments of several major figures of English history. He greatly admired Henry VII because he brought strength out of weakness and order out of the anarchy of the civil wars, and he provided a detailed examination of the major laws of the first Tudor and their long-reaching effects. Of Sir Thomas More he noted, "the wonder is, not

---

[45]QR, XXXVII, 199. An excellent brief treatment of Hallam's place as historian is Corinne Comstock Weston's "Henry Hallam," in Some Modern Historians of Britain, eds. Herman Ausubel, J. Bartlet Brebner, and Erling Hunt (New York: Dryden Press, 1951), pp. 20-34. Hallam's Constitutional History was perhaps the first work on modern England of national and international importance. His book became a standard text in the English universities, was frequently cited as an authority in Parliament, and was studied by Queen Victoria and her Consort. Hallam and his work were overshadowed later in the nineteenth century by the combined influence of Macaulay and Gardiner. Macaulay favorably reviewed the work in the Edinburgh Review in 1828. Weston's article is helpful in defining Hallam's place as an expositor of Whig interpretation of British history. The use of the term "Whig" in this dissertation with reference to Hallam does not indicate party membership but the historical philosophy held by Macaulay and Hallam. Hallam stood apart from party politics and differed with members of his own party on the issue of parliamentary reform. Weston notes that he was very conservative on that issue: ". . . he was little removed, if at all, from the extreme Tory position" and "not only was Hallam a Whig so conservative that he could scarcely be distinguished from a Tory, but among his contemporaries he generally enjoyed a reputation of being an historian above party" (p. 28). Hallam's general view of English constitutional development sharply contrasted with that of the Tory view of David Hume in the mid-eighteenth century, however, in his History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution (1754-1767). Hallam's work was an attempt to displace Hume's view of

that he, being so upright a man, should have acted upon the opinion which he had formed; but that being so wise a man, that he should have formed such an opinion."[46] A figure of special admiration for Southey is Thomas Cranmer who

> entered upon the primacy with an upright mind and religious intention; and in happy hour did he take upon himself the responsibility of that most important and then most perilous station,--in happy hour for England, for the protestant cause, for us, and for our posterity.[47]

Historically Southey perceived a vital link between the morality and political stability of a people and their professions of religion, and he drew a long comparison between the development of the Protestant cantons of Switzerland, which exhibited great unity of purpose, and Catholic Italy, the epitome of political instability and divisiveness. He defended Elizabeth from Hallam's charges that she had unduly prosecuted English Catholics, and he defended what he perceived as the immeasurable wisdom of her via media. She exhibited, to his view, that rare combination in English history of monarchial strength and political astuteness. Her restraints upon Roman Catholics in England were, given the temper of the times, absolutely necessary for the general safety of the nation, and here Southey gave a long digression upon the dangers which the Jesuits in England posed to the crown and the government of Elizabeth, a lesson which should still

---

the nature of the monarchy and the balance of power among institutions of government.

[46]Ibid., 205.

[47]Ibid., 212.

have application in the nineteenth century.

Throughout his review of Hallam's work Southey maintained repeatedly that "no portion of English history has been, and continues to be, so greatly misrepresented as the reign of Charles the First and the Great Rebellion."[48] He then attacked Hallam's unfavorable treatment of the royalist party and the historian's attempts to justify the excessive and extreme measures of the parliamentarians. In addition, Southey provided a long section vindicating the actions of the Earl of Strafford and Archbishop Laud while both Hampden and Pym appear as disappointed place-seekers. At length he traced what he felt were the real causes of the Puritan revolution and gave this unconventional interpretation of the Great Rebellion:

> the grievances which excited discontent arose from no scheme of tyranny in the crown, but from the remains of feudal oppression and the rapacity of powerful men, among whom were some of those who were most active in instigating and directing the rebellion . . . the financial difficulties which accelerated the crisis . . . were not produced by any wasteful expenditure on the part of Charles's government, but by the conduct of parliament at the commencement of his reign . . . and, finally, by the Scotch insurrection . . . the intolerance and persecution were not on the side of the laws and the establishment, but of the puritans . . . there was no design of subverting the liberties of the nation, but there was a settled purpose of overthrowing the church and the monarchy . . . the king appealed to the laws, and his opponents to the prejudices, the passions, and the physical force of the people.[49]

Evident in this review is some hint of a philosophy of history as it applies to the formation of governments. Governments, Southey

---

[48]Ibid., 228.

[49]Ibid., 238.

argued, are not established by social contracts between the governors and the governed but by a conflict of force between them and within them. Action and reaction, revolution and counter-revolution, force and counterforce, thesis and antithesis, king and parliament--these are the antagonistic forces which determine the forms and developments of governments. The whole pattern of human history is the pattern of the confrontation of opposing forces and may be compared to the strata of the globe itself

> which in their inequalities, and anomalies, and flaws, as well as in their general disposition, bear evidence of the convulsions which they have undergone, and the force under which they have been compressed. Centuries elapsed before the two races of the conquerors and the conquered in modern Europe were incorporated, and became one people in language and in feeling. The process had been completed when the respective kingdoms acquired stability as well as strength; and then those internal struggles began by which the nature of government was to be determined, and, ultimately, the character of the nation formed.

Moreover, the tendency of any people is, and historically always has been, to desire "tranquillity above all things and willing, therefore, to repose under any settlement, acquiesced in all changes."[50]

The review of Hallam's Constitutional History is a fine example of contrasting Whig and Tory views of English history. Hallam consistently took the side of Parliament, the Puritans, and the Catholics, while Southey just as consistently appeared as the defender of the Crown, the aristocracy, and the Church of England. Southey followed the method of quoting at great length from Hallam's work and then attempting to refute Hallam's arguments by careful,

---

[50]Ibid., 206.

detailed analysis of the quotations cited. Both scholars appear to the reader today as eminently pragmatic and partisan in their interpretations of various facets of English history, although at times Southey appears somewhat naive and idealistic. Of Hallam he noted in a typical tone that

> in no other English writer who makes the slightest pretensions to morality and religion, have we seen the abominable doctrine so often maintained, that the end justifies the means, and that conspiracy, treason, and rebellion, are to be treated as questions of expediency, laudable if they succeed, and only imprudent if they are undertaken without a sufficient likelihood of success! . . . Mr. Hallam has carried into the history of the past, not merely the maxims of his own age, as infallible laws by which all former laws are to be tried, but the feeling of the party to which he has attached himself, its acrimony and its arrogance, its injustice and its ill-temper.[51]

The review also makes clear that Southey's own fear of contemporary revolution and political disorder either determined or resulted from his view of past history. In any event, his historical assessments always favor the representatives of established institutions, order, and political strength. He is quite guilty of his own charges against Hallam, at least in the Quarterly, for he always carried his own maxims, his own beliefs, and his own fears with him into the past.

Two other articles are helpful in discussing Southey's view of

---

[51]Ibid., 260. Corrine Weston notes that Southey's bad feelings toward Hallam were perhaps due to the fact that his feelings had been hurt by Hallam's derogatory remarks in his history about Southey's The Book of the Church as well as by the historian's cutting treatment of the high churchmen and the high Tories. "Henry Hallam," p. 29. Her charge is substantiated by a letter from Southey to Caroline Bowles, CB, p. 129.

the seventeenth century: his lives of Cromwell and Hampden published in 1821 and in 1832. These papers, appearing eleven years apart, reveal consistent views as Southey took the royalist side against the rise of parliamentary power. The parliamentary leaders, he felt, never had the interest of either country or religion at heart when they rose against the rule of Charles I. Though divided, they "proceeded upon a deliberate system of deceit and intimidation," and "the very faults for which the king's government was most severely reproached, were committed by the parliament in a far greater degree, and with every possible aggravation."[52] And Southey furnished numerous examples of the methods of Parliament for dethroning the king along with lengthy discussions of the complicated political intrigues by which Cromwell, the one man most responsible for the overthrow of the king, rose to power in the late 1640s. Of the Protector he wrote this evaluation:

> Few men have ever possessed in such perfection as Cromwell the art of rendering others subservient to purposes which they abhorred, and of making individuals of the most opposite characters, views, and principles co-operate in a design which they would all have opposed if they had perceived it. This rare dissembler availed himself at the same time of the sensual and profligate unbeliever, and austere sectarian and the fierce enthusiast. . . .[53]

Of Charles I, however, he wrote: "the influence of pure religion upon a sound understanding and a gentle heart has never been more

---

[52]QR, XXV, 295, 296.

[53]Ibid., 310.

finely exemplified than by Charles during the long course of his afflictions."[54]

In his Cromwell essay Southey traced in some detail the progress of the civil war through the actions at Naseby, Bristol, Devizes, Hampshire, Worcester, Winchester, and Edgehill, and noted that the Interregnum exemplified again the unchangeable law of history that all violent revolutions against established authority must ultimately fail. Cromwell's government eventually fell because of the factionalism engendered by a lack of unified leadership and because of the personal selfishness of the leaders themselves. The Puritan rebellion and the rule of Cromwell provide a great historical lesson:

> There it may be seen to what desperate lengths men of good hearts and laudable intentions may be drawn by faction. There may be seen the rise, and the progress, and the consequences of rebellion. There are to be found the highest examples of true patriotism, sound principles, and heroic virtue . . . in Strafford . . . in Falkland, and Capal, and Newcastle, and in Clarendon. . . .[55]

And, drawing the relationships between that era and his own, he noted:

> From the history of that age, the young and ingenuous may derive and confirm a just, and generous, and ennobling love of the institutions of their country, founded upon the best feelings and surest principles; and the good and thoughtful of all ages will feel with what reason that petition is inserted into the Litany, wherein we pray the Lord to deliver us from all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion: from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart and contempt of his word and commandments,--sins which draw after them, in certain and

---

[54]Ibid., 313.

[55]Ibid., 347.

inevitable consequence, the heaviest of chastisements upon a guilty nation.[56]

Southey's review of Lord Nugent's Memorials of Hampden is valuable for his view of the Puritan revolution as well as for an analysis of the parliamentary careers of John Hampden and Sir John Eliot. Here again Southey strongly defended the policies and actions of Charles I and justified such policies as the levying of ship-money, the legality of which he considered at great length with the conclusion that this measure, although admittedly extreme, was necessitated by the action of Parliament. Further, by cutting off the monarch's revenues the Parliament had jeopardized the security of the nation, an action tantamount to treason. The king justifiably used these means to raise the money necessary to meet foreign commitments and obligations.

Although Southey concluded that Charles' conduct of government during the famous period of personal rule was both admirable and well-executed, he stopped short of endorsing the idea of pure executive or monarchial government, a principle which he felt as dangerous as unrestricted legislative government. Of the parliamentary party and the Puritans in particular he noted that "when they were strong enough, they regarded the gospel as little as the law."[57] Once again he defended Strafford and Laud and contended that they were both judicially murdered. In seeking to exonerate Strafford, Southey

---

[56]Ibid.

[57]QR, XLVII, 493.

provided a careful examination of the legalities of the prosecution of the Earl and noted that most of the actions for which he was prosecuted and upon which he was convicted actually should have been rewarded. The conduct of the king in giving up Strafford was both criminal and an act of political suicide, for it eventually paved the way for the overthrow of the monarchy itself: "little benefit," he wrote,

> will any one derive from history who, when he contemplates the course of human events, disregards the moral government of the world. The death of Strafford more than any other single cause, may be said to have brought the sword upon this nation.[58]

History is always the great teacher, Southey concluded, and the lessons of the Great Rebellion are of utmost importance for the 1830s. Considering still the possibility of a nineteenth-century revolution, he noted in the Hampden review:

> Our revolution, if to this it must come, will begin where that of our forefathers ended,--in that dissolution of principle, that destruction of order, that anarchy of opinions, that disruption of society, that monstrous fanaticism, that more monstrous impiety,--that triumph of all that is base, all that is flagitious,--from which God in his mercy delivered us once.[59]

Moreover, Southey found striking points of resemblance between the age of Charles I and his own, particularly in the area of the rising power of Parliament and the results of the 1832 Reform Act. The issues of both ages were much the same: the relative powers of Commons, Lords, and the monarchy; reapportionment and representation; political

---

[58]Ibid., 506.

[59]Ibid., 518.

factionalism. It is never against excessive power that reformers struggle, he concluded, but for the possession of it.[60]

V. OTHER HISTORICAL ARTICLES

Church history, the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars, and the history of England are the chief areas of Southey's historical interest in the Quarterly Review, but there are other papers scattered throughout his career which treat topics of historical interest to him and give expression to some of his isolated theories and opinions. Some brief mention of them is in order.

The interest which Southey held in the history and development of the United States is evidenced primarily by three Quarterly papers: "History and Present State of America, by Abiel Holmes" (QR, II, 1809), "Lewis and Clarke's American Travels" (QR, XII, 1815), and "Dwight's Travels in New England" (QR, XXX, 1823). The first of these essays is perhaps the most interesting, for in it Southey gave attention to such topics as the displacement of the American Indians by settlers, a process of which he approved heartily, King Philip's War, an episode he felt fit for an epic poem, the rise of Quakerism and Methodism in the United States, the history of American literature, slavery, the American national character, the evolution of American law, and other varied topics. In this paper he stressed heavily the dependence of the United States upon England for most major aspects of its heritage

---

[60]Ibid., 487.

and the necessity of maintaining cultural and commercial links between the two countries. Southey concluded in part that the history of America has revealed a trace of savagery in the American character produced both by the circumstances of its society and its struggle against the forces of nature.

The review of Lewis and Clarke's Travels to the Source of the Missouri River, and across the American Continent to the Pacific Ocean, an uncharacteristically humorous essay, is of primary significance for its detailed and informative outline of the adventure and contains relatively little historical matter. Southey did, however, attack the idea of the noble savage, and he made clear that his own study of history and travel literature indicated to him that although no savage is inherently noble, American savages have always displayed far less barbarism than those in other parts of the world, a theme which frequently reappears in his numerous travel book reviews in the Quarterly.

Southey's review of Timothy Dwight's Travels in New England and New York is of consequence for his comments upon the evolution of the American form of democratic government and for certain observations on the natural history of the country. Here Southey most clearly expressed the theory that all forms of government

> have originated in some circumstances which rendered them suitable to the times and places of their growth; and that when that fitness has ceased to exist, it is by a gradual adaptation to those new circumstances which have gradually been evolved, and not by undue and violent change, that the melioration which is always and everywhere to be kept in view, can alone be effected; otherwise

> the certain and enormous evil of the process must heavily counterbalance the contingent good of the result. Circumstances have as naturally rendered America a republican country as they have made Great Britain monarchial; and the adventurers who should attempt to set up monarchy in the one country would incur the guilt and deserve the punishment of treason as much as they who should seek to overthrow it in the other.[61]

Southey continued in this article, moreover, to argue against the social contract theory of the origin of human government. In the earliest ages of mankind government was patriarchial in form. This "natural order" of government, he contended, was gradually overthrown as soon as man's capacity for violence and rebellion began to prevail, and customs, convenience, climate, and superstition determined the specific form a government took in any given locality. Historically a process of action and reaction, usually attended by violence, always was involved in the evolution of government. Because the English colonies in America were commercial and not military in nature, and because they were acquired by occupation and annexation, and not by conquest, a republican form of government naturally prevailed. Although Southey distrusted any republican form of government, he felt that this form survived in America because the country was large enough and abundant enough to afford employment and property to most who sought it. America, simply, had room to grow and to expand. These are the essential safety-valves of any republic.[62]

---

[61]QR, XXX, 24-25.

[62]Ibid.

In general Southey viewed American democracy as a grand and unprecedented historical experiment "to see with how little government, with how few institutions, and at how cheap a rate men may be kept together in society." He noted further:

> Time will show whether a people can become powerful without an efficient government; whether they can be prosperous without a liberal public expenditure; whether they can advance in arts and literature without a gradation of ranks, and the influence and permanence of hereditary wealth; whether they can be virtuous and happy without a religious establishment.[63]

A number of articles indicate Southey's interest in the history of Portugal, an interest stimulated by his early residence there: "Portuguese Observer" (QR, IV, 1810), "Tracts on the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions" (QR, VI, 1811), "Baille's Lisbon" (QR, XXXI, 1824), "Political and Moral State of Portugal" (QR, XLI, 1829) as well as scattered papers on Portuguese literature, the writings of various Spanish and Portuguese authors, and reviews of numerous travel books. The first of these papers, a review of a work entitled Observador Portugueze, Historico e Politico, de Lisboa, published in Lisbon in 1809, is primarily an assessment of the period of Napoleonic rule in Portugal before and during the Peninsular War, and a discussion of the resistance of some segments of the population to French domination.

Southey's "Tracts on the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions" begins with a balanced view of the historical role of Roman Catholicism in recent European history and quickly turns into a strong condemnation of the moral, religious, and legal inequities of the inquisitions.

---

[63]Ibid., 36, 40.

Particularly interesting in this essay is his view of the historical role played by the Spanish Jews, the unifying influence of medieval Catholicism on the Peninsula, and the origins and effects of the inquisitions. The inquisitions in Spain and Portugal failed, Southey maintained, because any unjust political or religious tyranny inexorably gives rise to a resistance by the persecuted which makes them stronger than their oppressors. The article constitutes one of his strongest anti-Catholic statements in the Quarterly and shows the historical basis for many of his later opinions which led him to be so vocal an opponent to Catholic emancipation in Britain.

Perhaps Southey's most ambitious treatment of Portuguese history and society is his 1829 essay "Political and Moral State of Portugal." This paper, laden with many obscure historical allusions, deals with the growth and development of Portugal after the Peninsular War and with the current state of the Portuguese government. It was written in praise of the Portuguese peasantry and in condemnation of the governors of the country in the early nineteenth century. The essay also provides a treatment of the British presence in Portugal during the Napoleonic years. Southey was highly critical of the weak and divided government there which followed the conclusion of the war.

Other Quarterly articles show the variety and depth of Southey's antiquarian and historical interests. There is a complicated history of British monasticism, a history of the Waldensians, a history of Durham, a history of British cathedrals, but perhaps the most unusual

and bizarre of all is a paper which appeared in the review for April, 1819, entitled "Cemeteries and Catacombs of Paris." This essay, appropriately introduced and punctuated by long quotations from Sir Thomas Browne's Hydriotaphia and containing philosophical musings on human mortality, probes with great relish and thoroughness such matters as the burial customs of the natives of New Holland, the Peruvian Andes, and the Orinocco tribes, the practice of cremation in India, traditional Jewish burial customs, the excommunication of the dead, examples of notable desecrations of burial places and customs. Southey lost no opportunity to degrade the French revolutionaries who disinterred the remains of their aristocratic predecessors during the French Revolution. Mainly, however, the paper is devoted to a history of burial practices and places in Paris.

In general Southey's view of history is highly dependent upon and closely related to the political views which he came to embrace prior to his engagement with the Quarterly and which developed and stabilized during the first decade of that association. His chief historical essays cannot be read apart from the political papers which appeared with them during this period of his career. The connection between past history and contemporary politics was for Southey a close one. In a review of William Coxe's Memoirs of John Duke of Marlborough (QR, XXIII, 1820), he wrote:

> . . . it is only by the study of history statesmen can be formed, and . . . though the secrets of cabinets can be known to few, and are not always worth knowing,--the causes of the rise and progress and decline of nations--the virtues by which they have

> flourished--the vices by which they have fallen--the spirit by which revolutions are brought about, and the march of human events in which what has been in perpetually recurring, are within the reach of the historian, and form the lessons by which alone the science of politics can be attained.[64]

His political essays provide the best indicator of what were his various views of his own age and how firmly he held them. Most of his predilections--the fear of revolution and distrust of republican government, his opposition to unbridled liberty of the press, his strong opposition to political reform in Britain, his opposition to political concessions to the Irish and to Roman Catholics--resulted not primarily from his personal experience with these matters but from his study of history and from the specific events which occurred in England between 1810 and 1820. This, of course, is an oversimplification, but the informed reader will recognize that the historical essays show history filtered through Southey's own personality.

VI. POLITICAL THEORY AND THE BELLUM SERVILE

In his very competent study of the political ideas of the English romanticists, Crane Brinton has written of Southey:

> It is his freedom from the qualities of genius, his nearness to ordinary human beings, his respectability, that make his political thought valuable. . . . He is not that abstraction, an "average man"; but he is very much of a man. His frank acceptance of life, his dislike of systems, his common sense, always at the mercy of his enthusiasms, but never the dupe of introspection, happily complement the other-worldliness of

---

[64]QR, XXIII, 1.

> Coleridge and the self-searching intensity of Wordsworth. Without Southey our study of the political ideas of the Lakists would risk reproach for the eccentricity of its subjects; with Southey it returns to common things.[65]

Brinton is correct in his evaluation; Southey's political beliefs were a response to the frequently alarming political and social movements of his own times, and it is misleading to write of his "political theory." He was never a theorist, and he was most often interested in political expediencies which would preserve the order of society which he had come to appreciate after the turn of the century. By virtue of his "freedom from the qualities of genius" in political writings, Southey is a valuable figure to study, for he reflects more accurately than many of his contemporaries the realities of his day. His political essays in the Quarterly present neither a systematic political philosophy nor the organized doctrine of a political party. "If their character was predominantly Tory," Southey's biographer Jack Simmons has written, "they recommended too many measures of practical reform to be acceptable to the die-hards, while they were not 'liberal' enough to please the coming young Tories of the school of Canning and Peel."[66] In some respects his political and social ideas were to have a marked influence upon Thomas Carlyle, but the indebtedness appears insignificant because Carlyle expressed those ideas in such a forceful and individual way

---

[65]Crane Brinton, The Political Ideas of the English Romanticists (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 85.

[66]Jack Simmons, Southey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 152.

that they seemed completely original to him.[67]

Something of the political events surrounding the foundation of the Quarterly Review in 1809 has already been said in the first chapter of this study, but before investigating Southey's key political essays some account should be taken of the context from which they emerged. The fervency of his opinions and the frenzied tone which they often took in expression resulted largely from what today appears to have been one of the most fluid and complex periods of English history--a period which defies neat generalizations. It was a time of continental war, of economic depressions, of constitutional reforms and social change. It was the period of the initial impact of the Industrial Revolution and of widespread popular disturbances which to contemporaries often appeared to be leading swiftly to general revolution.

When Southey began his association with the Quarterly Review in 1809 the war in Europe was far from its conclusion. Yet to come were the climax of the Peninsular campaigns, Napoleon's invasion of Russia, the battles of Vittoria, Leipzig, Toulouse, the fall of Paris, the Hundred Days, and finally Waterloo. While the war raged on the continent, controversy concerning the conduct of that war raged bitterly in Parliament. In 1810 the king of England went permanently insane, and an unpopular Regency began. Two years later

---

[67]Ernest Bernbaum, Guide Through the Romantic Movement, 2nd ed. (New York: Ronald Press, 1949), p. 163.

the Prime Minister of England was assassinated in the very halls of Parliament. Yet to come were the economic crises of 1810-1811, 1815-1816, and 1825, the Luddite activities of 1811, the Spa Fields riots in late 1816, the suspension of Habeas Corpus in 1817, the Peterloo Massacre and the Six Acts in 1819.

In 1820 finally came the accession of George IV followed by the trial of Queen Caroline, the dissolution of Parliament, the Cato Street conspiracy, and revolutions in Spain and Portugal. In 1822 Lord Castlereagh committed suicide, and the following year brought agricultural unrest of major proportions. In 1825 there was speculative frenzy and financial panic, and the election of 1826 brought into greater prominence debate concerning Catholic emancipation, the Irish question, and the controversy over the Corn Laws. In 1828 came the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts followed the next year by the emancipation of English and Irish Catholics. In 1829 agitation for parliamentary and constitutional reform increased resulting in the passage of the Reform Act three years later. There is little wonder that Southey, relatively isolated in Keswick, regarded his age with no little alarm. Throughout the period he expected immediate anarchy and rebellion; looking back at these events from the perspective of a century and a half, it is difficult for modern men to appreciate the sense of danger which he felt. It is perhaps because of this historical perspective which Southey did not possess, that some have labelled him an arch-alarmist, a rabid reactionary, an ultra-tory, but he was certainly not the only alarmist. Even so calm

a man as Walter Scott could write to Southey in 1812 "you are quite right in apprehending a Jacquerie; the country is mined below our feet."[68] Southey's letters to John Rickman from 1812 to 1820 clearly express the depth of his fears. Perhaps it is true that he reflected more accurately the opinion of many segments of the public, especially the governing class, than many suspect today.

Corresponding with a rise of anti-ministerial feeling during the first two decades of the century was an increase in the circulation of such radical newspapers as Cobbett's Political Register, Wooler's Black Dwarf, and William Hone's Reformist's Register. As a result, Carnall notes,

> even the most poor and ignorant could talk about the sinking fund, standing armies, sinecures, and pensioners, and demand universal suffrage and annual parliaments. If these demands should be conceded, the miserable majority would gain political control over the comfortable minority who manipulated the administration for their own benefit. This was the bellum servile that haunted Southey's imagination.[69]

It was, as Richard Altick has observed, "a journalism which struck home, as none had done since the days of Paine. . . ."[70] The alarm of the Ministry at the influence of the radical press led to a policy of

---

[68]H. J. C. Grierson, ed., The Letters of Sir Walter Scott (London: Constable, 1932-1937), III, p. 126.

[69]Geoffrey Carnall, Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 158.

[70]Richard D. Altick, The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 324. In addition to Altick's comprehensive study Arthur Aspinall's Politics and the Press: 1780-1850 (London: Home and Van Thal, 1949) provides a good study of the radical periodical press during this period.

repression including suspension of Habeas Corpus in 1817 and the notorious Six Acts of December, 1819, legislation clearly designed to wipe out anti-government papers.

Although neither Gifford nor Lockhart entirely trusted Southey with political papers, his essays touch upon a seemingly endless variety of political topics.[71] There are, however, only four major areas of concern to which entire essays are devoted; they are, in order of their appearance in the review, the prosecution of the war, popular disaffection or the fear of a political and social revolution, and the issues of parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, none of them strictly partisan in nature. These are the topics upon which Southey wrote with the greatest frequency and the greatest vigor in the Quarterly Review.

All of Southey's essays of political criticism bear the deep mark of his persistent fear of a popular political revolution by the disaffected working classes in England. The new manufacturing system, while on the whole greatly increasing the wealth of the nation, had in his view greatly lessened its security by creating the circumstances and material for revolt. This fear, coupled with his thorough studies of the French Revolution and his deep-seated belief in the capacity of ignorant men for violence and savagery does much to explain his life-long hostility to political reforms and his advocacy of a strong central government and an enlightened

---

[71]QR, CCXI, 764.

electorate for Great Britain. It is the fundamental cause of his conservatism, and, his son wrote shortly after Southey's death, "the thoughts which made him a political writer were roused wholly by a fear of revolution in England."[72] During the years between 1810 and 1820 the Burdett riots, the Spa Fields riot, the Luddite disturbances, and the Peterloo incident must have fully convinced him that his fears were justified. Further, the economic crises of these years indicated to him that there was certainly sufficient cause for popular unrest in the country. What Southey feared more than reforms and social changes were the reformers, whose sincerity he always questioned. He consistently viewed political and social reformers mainly as ignorant and frustrated men who were interested not in equitable reforms but in the possession of power for their own ends.

After the Luddite activities in 1811 there followed popular disturbances in May, 1812, in southern Lancashire, and in the same month occurred the assassination of Spencer Perceval in the lobby of the House of Commons by a self-styled instrument of God, John Bellingham, who immediately became a popular hero. These were the pivotal events in the final formation of Southey's political vision. Now fully convinced that Britain stood on the edge of a revolutionary abyss, he wrote Grosvenor Bedford from Keswick immediately upon receiving word of the Prime Minister's death:

---

[72]LC, IV, 200; Cf. LC, V, 4-5.

> This country is on the brink of the most dreadful of all conceivable states--an insurrection of the poor against the rich. . . . Things are in that state at this time that nothing but the army preserves us; it is the single plank between us and the red sea of an English Jacquerie,--a Bellum Servile; not provoked, as both these convulsions were, by grievous opposition, but prepared by the inevitable tendency of the manufacturing system, and hastened on by the folly of a besotten faction, and the wickedness of a few individuals. The end of these things is full of evil, even upon the happiest termination; for the loss of liberty is the penalty which has always been paid for the abuse of it.[73]

In the same letter Southey mentioned counter measures which he felt should be taken to protect the constitution and the stability of the government: a system of armed vigilantes, a system of parochial education, deportation of subversives and seditious libellers--all proposals later raised in the Quarterly essays as effective medication for the distempered body politic.

Two days later Southey wrote a second letter to Bedford about the assassination indicating his early opposition to concessions to Roman Catholics in Britain:

> . . . It is my deep and ominous sense of danger to the country, from the Burdettites on the one hand, and from Catholic concessions on the other. . . . I am convinced that the overthrow of the Church establishment would bring with it the greatest calamities for us and for our children. If any man could have saved it, it was Mr. Perceval. The repeal of the Test Act will let in the Catholics, and invite more Dissenters. . . . All these parties will join in plundering the Church. . . . As for conciliating the wild Irish by such concessions, the notion is so preposterous, that when I know a man of understanding can maintain such an opinion, it makes me sick at heart to think upon what sandy foundations every political fabric seems to rest.[74]

---

[73]LC, III, 334-335.

[74]LC, III, 338-339.

A few days later he wrote John Rickman ". . . I believe the only thing doubtful is whether we shall have a military despotism before we go through the horrors of a bellum servile, or after it."[75] He continued in this letter to call for the immediate suspension of the liberty of debate and freedom of the press, a suspension of Habeas Corpus, the imprisonment of "every Jacobin journalist"--again, all measures which would find their way into the Quarterly Review in later years. He added in the conclusion of the letter:

> A judicial fatuity seems to have been sent among us. Romanists, sectarians of every kind, your liberality men, and your philosophers of every kind and of every degree of folly and emptiness are united for the blessed purpose of plucking up old principles by the roots, each for their own separate ends, but all sure of meeting with the same end if they are successful. We who see this danger have no power to prevent it, and they who have the power cannot be made to see it.[76]

He further complained to Sir Walter Scott that the Liverpool government, in its early months, was not sufficiently aware of the dangers posed by the events of 1812:

> . . . They live in such a cloud of their own dust, that they cannot see the signs of the tempest gathering around them. A sense of this danger however is spreading and I will do my best to extend it. It might be crushed, but the more I consider how deeply the causes are laid, how widely they are spread, and how long they have been maturing, the worst does the evil appear; and the end which I deprecate seems so necessary a consequence of these causes, that I confess my fears very far outweigh my hopes.[77]

---

[75]LC, III, 342.

[76]LC, III, 343.

[77]NL, I, 36-37; Cf. NL, II, 142, 143, 148, 204, 206-207 for Southey's continuing fears of an English revolution.

Southey's intense reaction to the assassination of Perceval and to the disturbances of that year led him to a search for means by which these problems might be alleviated, and the Quarterly Review was the instrument he chose to use in extending a sense of the impending dangers in British society. The lessons of the French Revolution, he felt, had not been taken to heart in England, and in the issue of the Quarterly which followed the Prime Minister's death he wrote:

> . . . the example of France must be our security at home: it has been lost upon our Heberts and Marats, and Caumettes, who go on inflaming the passions of the ignorant and ferocious part of the community, as if they themselves were not sure to be the victims in their turn, of the revolution which they are labouring to produce. The circumstances of England give these men far greater advantages than their fellow journalists and writers enjoyed in France.[78]

In the Quarterly for December, 1812, Southey published his first significant political essay, entitled "Inquiry into the Poor Laws" (QR, VIII, 1812), a review of Colquhoun's Propositions for ameliorating the Condition of the Poor. In this paper he sounded the notes he would play in several articles which followed during that decade. Here he voiced his opinion that the distressing condition of the industrial poor led them naturally to be the unwitting but dangerous victims of the incendiary writings of radical journalists and politicians, and he called for heavy restrictions against both. In addition he proposed that those convicted of seditious libel should be immediately deported, although Gifford, fearing too much controversy, cut this proposal out

---

[78]QR, VII, 438.

of the article.[79] He also proposed a system of national parochial education and schemes for massive emigration as well as a system of public works to occupy the poor and unemployed, those most likely to revolt. Almost everything in this paper is touched with the urgency of a writer who is seeking desperately to avert a political and social explosion. Carnall has noted of the article:

> He attacked Malthus as an odious preacher of anti-social philosophy. He observed the new dangers that came with the development of the art of unlawful organization. In the past an inflamed mob was united only by a momentary impulse of blind passion. Now, with the aid of the models of self-government provided by the Quakers, the Methodists, parish clubs, and benefit societies, a revolution could be readily effected. The Luddites and secret trade organizations were perfectly able to raise funds and sustain strike action for prolonged periods. Later writers have seen in these activities evidence of the British worker's capacity for peaceful improvement of his status. To Southey, however, they appeared to be yet another of the many causes that were interacting to produce a social earthquake.[80]

It should be noted that many of Southey's specific fears were aroused in part by what he read in the newspapers which reached him at Keswick, and these were frequently exaggerated accounts. Nevertheless, he was not entirely cut off from the world in his remote corner of northern England. Although he was not closely acquainted with the industrial classes, he did know Keswick, the population of which "were a specimen of the British populace, whose frightening insubordination he read about in the newspapers, but whom he did not know with enough

---

[79]Carnall, p. 149. Indeed, Gifford cut from this paper a number of proposals which Southey felt would effectively prevent the spread of popular disorder. Cf., SL, II, 274; Carnall, pp. 148-150.

[80]Ibid.

intimacy to counteract the effects of panic."[81]

By 1816 there was widespread fear in the country of the possibilities of a revolution, and the alarm continued throughout the decade. The causes of unrest appear to have stemmed mainly from the general economic distresses following the conclusion of the war in 1815 and attending the unsteady transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy. Although some years, such as 1818, were more prosperous than others, the general trend was one of increasing unemployment, low wages, and severe privations among many segments of the working class.[82] In August of 1819 the riot at St. Peter's Field in Manchester helped to produce a wave of uncertainty and a sense of helplessness which lasted throughout the year.

In addition to his essay on the poor laws in December, 1812, four other articles published in the same decade are of importance as indicating Southey's assessment of the condition of England: "Reports on the Poor" (QR, XV, 1816), "The Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection" (QR, XVI, 1817), "Poor Laws" (QR, XVIII, 1818), and "On the Means of Improving the People" (QR, XIX, 1818). As if to summarize his political opinions Southey published in 1831 near the end of his association with the review a paper entitled "Moral and Political State of the British Empire" (QR, XLIV, 1831), a paper which should be used as a point of comparison and contrast with his earlier

---

[81]Ibid., p. 152; Cf. LC, VI, 13.

[82]Ibid., p. 153.

articles, for here he made a final survey of the events of his era and the current situation at the dawn of the Victorian age.

The first of these papers, "Reports on the Poor," is largely an updated version of his 1812 essay and deals with means by which social problems might be alleviated thus averting political unrest, but the article is also important because it qualifies the picture of Southey as an arch-conservative, ultra-tory dedicated to opposing any kinds of social or political reforms. Southey acutely recognized the urgent necessity for social reform, but he was deeply concerned about the degree of reforms instituted and the methods to be used in effecting them. He began with the grand premise that the British empire in 1816 in wealth, resources, and strength, was unparalleled in the history of the world. Since the mythical golden age man "has no where, nor at any period, existed in so favourable a condition as in England at this present time. . . ." The insular position of Britain, her laws, institutions, history, "and national character which these circumstances have combined to form, have made it of all parts of the world the most prosperous and the most happy." England thus stands conspicuously blessed "above all countries either of the ancient or the modern world."[83]

Britain, he maintained, is not cancerous in her vital parts, but those who call for sweeping reforms believe so, "and if the common weal were delivered into the hands of these practitioners they

---

[83]QR, XV, 190.

would prove the inveteracy of the disease by destroying the patient. With their knife of radical reform, and their Irish Catholicism, they would make quick work!" Southey did admit that there were diseases in the body politic "but none which stand in need of the knife and the cautery. Diet is more needful than medicine; and where medicine is required, alterations, not drastics, ought to be administered." In the modern age, he noted further, the empire is so closely woven and so interdependent upon its various parts that "it resembles a spider's web, in which the slightest impact upon any one of the threads is felt throughout the whole." If one thread, if one support is weakened or destroyed, he concluded, the entire structure is endangered. Political and social turmoil in Britain, the strong implication is, would also lead to disastrous international repercussions.[84]

This article contains one of the most representative of Southey's blasts against contemporary political journalism and "the weekly epistles of the apostles of sedition." He rarely conceded that there could be anything constructive about political journalism:

> Every alehouse has its newspaper, and a large majority of newspapers are enlisted against the government. The factious journalists are in opposition to their country in times of war, and to the government of the country at all times. True to this spirit of opposition, and to this alone, they advance with the same vehemence any principle which may suit their immediate purpose, blind to, or heedless of the grossest and most palpable self-contradictions. But self-contradictions matter little; they address themselves to the discontented, the unthinking, and

---

[84]Ibid.

> the uninstructed;--the most senseless declamation, the most shameless misrepresentation will pass current in the taproom, and by the ale-house fire;--and the journalist poisons the minds of the populace with its weekly dose of sedition, while the distiller is poisoning their livers with ardent spirits, or the brewer is inducing diseases not less formidable with his decoction of quassia and cocculus indicus.[85]

After surveying the current prosperity of Britain and its upper and middle classes, Southey provided an examination of the condition of the lower classes. He recognized the steadily worsening state of the working poor, the dangers inherent in a change from an agricultural to an industrial base for society, the necessity for giving the lower classes property and with it some pride and stake in their country, and what he felt to be the nobility of the common man.[86] He went on in the paper to urge specific reforms which might improve their condition. For all his social criticism and his obviously genuine concern for social and political amelioration, it is obvious in this essay that Southey was primarily motivated by his fear of anarchy, and that he recognized that while the common man might possess a noble character he had, through his ignorance, a fearsome capacity for savagery as well. In long digressions he continued to assail unrestricted freedom of the press, and almost

---

[85]Ibid., 202; such comments are also frequently found in Southey's letters. Late in 1819, for example, he wrote to a friend: ". . . all governments must be considered as imperfect which do not keep in their own hands the direction of public instruction and the control of the press." SL, III, 161, 215.

[86]Cf. Colloquies, I, 148ff. Colloquy VII, "The Manufacturing System."

without qualification he equated political and social reformers with anarchists. Reformers, he felt, had not been taught by the example of the French Revolution, and they were wrong in their belief that sweeping political and constitutional reform was the cure of all social ills.[87]

In this paper Southey further justified his belief in a strong, central government on the basis that such government would be aided by the natural vis conservatrix in the state. The principle of political conservatism he viewed as dynamic a force as anarchy. Carnall comments on this article by noting that for Southey "order is not a bulwark, precariously held against the violence of uncontrollable life, 'hideous, dim, confused.' It is itself one of the forces far bigger than the individuals through whom they are manifested."[88] Later, in his Life of Wesley, Southey would write of the historic "struggle between the destructive and conservative principles--between good and evil"[89] which characterized the political history of his age. In the Quarterly, however, he was much more interested in the destructive aspects of political principles. His "Reports on the Poor" apparently met the approval of many in the Liverpool government, for shortly after its publication the Prime Minister approached Southey through Nicholas Vansittart, Chancellor of

---

[87]QR, XV, 202.

[88]Carnall, p. 175.

[89]C. C. Southey, ed., The Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism (London: Murray, 1846), I, p. 286.

the Exchequer, with an offer to edit a government newspaper, an offer which, after some consideration, Southey declined.

Two years later, in January, 1818, Southey, with the active collaboration of John Rickman, published a third paper on the plight of the poor in England, "On the Poor Laws."[90] Although this paper is more specifically addressed to the matters of needed legal and economic reforms and indicates Southey's recognition of the miserable condition of the agricultural and industrial poor, a major theme again is his fear of rapid social and political reforms. Here he maintained that because of political partisanship effective and safe reforms are impossible to attain in Britain, and that because of this excessive partisanship and lack of unanimity in political parties, the lack of gradual reforms, and increasing discontent in the working classes "few countries were ever in a more inflammable state than England is at this time."[91] Again the spectre of popular revolution was raised for him as he discussed the causes of the insurrection in the Isle of Ely of that year, an insurrection directly caused by incendiary journalists and too much liquor. Again there are

---

[90]There is some question about how much of this article came from the pen of Southey. Certainly there is abundant evidence to indicate that Rickman's collaboration was heavy; indeed, it would seem that rather than writing the article Southey simply prepared Rickman's manuscript for publication in the Quarterly. Even if the article is primarily Rickman's, however, there is ample evidence in Southey's correspondence to indicate that he fully concurred in the opinions expressed; certainly those opinions are generally consistent with other articles by Southey. Cf. NL, II, 178-179, 499n; N. L. Kaderly, "Southey and the Quarterly Review," Modern Language Notes, 70(1955), 261-263; Shine, pp. 59, 61.

[91]QR, XVIII, 303.

long and energetic denunciations of political journalists and party factionalism. The recent war, he maintained, had created a vast demand for newspapers, but since the war had ended, journalists must turn to other topics which would stimulate the public appetite and thus sell newspapers, and

> . . . the unbridled slander of a government, faulty only in its inability to repress the turbulent, is a topic always at hand and never out of season, and upon this topic envy, hatred, and malice may be palmed upon the world for patriotism and public virtue, the most atrocious falsehood may pass current, and the grossest ignorance go undetected. The habitual lucubrations form a large class of society and the great majority imbibe, in all sincerity and simpleness, the opinions of such teachers.[92]

Revolution, he concluded, can only be averted by gradual reforms in the system of poor relief, the strengthening of religious education, immediate restrictions upon the press.

In the next issue of the Quarterly, that for April, 1818, Southey, again with the aid of John Rickman, wrote a review of T. P. Courtenay's Treatise upon the Poor Laws and Thomas Myers' Remarks on a Course of Education designed to prepare the Youthful Mind for a Career of Honour, Patriotism, and Philanthropy. His article, with the running title "On the Means of Improving the People," is largely a restatement and expansion of his previous article.[93] Once again his

---

[92]Ibid., 305.

[93]N. L. Kaderly correctly argues that this is Southey's and not Rickman's essay as Orlo Williams has maintained. See N. L. Kaderly, "Southey and the Quarterly Review"; Orlo Williams, Lamb's Friend the Census Taker: Life and Letters of John Rickman (London: Constable, 1911), pp. 10, 134, 195-204. Kenneth Curry has pointed out that Rickman was of special help to Southey in preparing this paper by furnishing him with research materials, Cf. NL, II, 499n.

proposals for social reform were colored by his fear of popular unrest. In this paper he analysed the causes of contemporary pauperism, attacked Malthus's theory of population, called for prison reforms, attacked alehouses as beds of sedition, decried the lack of severity in dealing with crime in England, regretted the decay of the old system of apprenticeship, castigated the government for excessive granting of liquor licenses, urged the foundation of savings banks for the poor, advocated the abolition of severe penalties for misdemeanors, and once again called for a system of national education which would instill the principles of religion and patriotism and which would thus strengthen the stability of the government in the future. Again he called for sweeping moral reforms, and accused the press of encouraging such crimes as murder by providing too detailed accounts of such crimes. In this paper he noted that in the course of history there are certain times when an entire empire stands at the crossroads of crisis, and the course taken will determine the ultimate fate and survival of the nation. England, he argued again, stood at such a crossroads in 1818.[94]

Southey's four essays on the poor belong properly to the category of social criticism, but they are all marked by his fear of political revolution. Perhaps the one paper which best exemplifies his fears and best illustrates how they developed from his interpretations of key events of English history and contemporary events

---

[94]QR, XIX, 79.

and were influential in the formation of his political views is an analysis of the history of revolution and disaffection in England and a commentary upon the condition of the nation in 1816. This paper, "Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection," published early in 1817, was, according to Walter Graham, an article "which brought Whigs and Radicals about Southey's ears, and laid him open to perhaps the most damaging criticism of his career."[95] His purpose in the paper was by an examination of history to trace the growth of public disaffection and opposition to government and to seek for the

---

[95]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," Philological Quarterly, 2(1923), 104. The criticism to which Graham alludes was, of course, the celebrated Wat Tyler controversy, perhaps one of the most ridiculous literary squabbles in the period. At the same time that Southey's "Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection" appeared in February, 1817, a pirated edition of his Wat Tyler, a revolutionary dramatic poem written in 1794, was published. The sentiments of this poem were in direct contrast to those expressed in Southey's articles "On Parliamentary Reform" and the "Rise and Progress." Because of Southey's well-known conservative views, the juvenile Wat Tyler ironically became the best-seller of his works. On February 25, 1817, the laureate was attacked by Henry Brougham in the House of Commons, and on March 14 by William Smith, opposition member for Norwich, who read alternately passages from the Quarterly article on parliamentary reform and from Wat Tyler. To Southey's enemies the poem proved his political apostasy. The controversy aroused the bitterest criticism of Southey's career. Cf. William Hone, Reformist's Register, February 22, 1817, I, 157-158; William Hazlitt, Examiner, March 9, 1817, 157-159; Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, January--April, 1817, XXV, pp. 1090-1094; unsigned review, The Black Dwarf, March 26, 1817, 139-144; unsigned review, Literary Gazette, March, 1817, 147-148; Southey's "Letter to William Smith," Essays, moral and political, II, pp. 3-31. The best accounts of the controversy are Frank Hoadley's "The Controversy over Southey's Wat Tyler," Studies in Philology, 38(1941), 81-96; Geoffrey Carnall, Robert Southey and His Age, pp. 61-65; Lionel Madden, Robert Southey: The Critical Heritage, pp. 12-14, 232-242; Jack Simmons, Southey, pp. 159-164. Cf. NL, II, 150, 153; LC, IV, 251n, 367-390.

causes which in the early nineteenth century "have tended to combine so many persons against the best government in the world."[96]

Traditionally, he maintained, there had been a deplorable lack of national feeling in the characters of many English politicians whose parties or groups were out of office, and this had resulted in the particular bitterness of those who opposed the government of Lord Liverpool. These contemporary oppositionists fell under his blanket indictment; they were to him, radicals and Whigs alike, a "generation of vipers." In times of war, he wrote,

> . . . they go from step to step, pleading the enemy's cause with all the warmth and zeal of unfed advocates. . . . In times of peace they join in any cry however senseless, take up any course however frivolous or unjust, and follow any leader however worthless, desperate, or despicable, for the sake of annoying the government at least, if they cannot succeed in inflicting upon it any serious injury.[97]

Like the wars of the Roses the current political turmoil in England resulted not from any question of public principle but from petty partisanship and factionalism. The English Catholics during the Marian period looked to Phillip II "as the ultra-whigs of the present day have looked to Buonaparte, and in like manner forgave his insatiable ambition, his falsehoods, his murders, and his massacres, because he was the enemy of their own government." In all periods of English history "they who disregard all sanction of antiquity, who dissent from the institutions and abhor the ceremonies

---

[96]QR, XVI, 516.

[97]Ibid.

of their country, have proceeded far in denaturalizing themselves."[98]

The rise of organized political factions Southey traced immediately to the reign of Charles II when

> we first behold men acting for or against the government, not upon any consistent scheme of political views or moral principles, but merely as they happened to be in or out of place. And in the same reign the religious disputes . . . settled into a chronic disease.

This view led Southey to the conclusion that the Church of England "is vitally and inseparably connected with the State, and they who are discontented with it are but half-Englishmen." Although in fear of revolutionary activities, he believed the revolution of 1688 to be "of all revolutions the most necessary in its causes, the most moderate in its course, and in its consequences the most beneficial. . . ."[99] The "Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection" also contains one of Southey's most blistering and most representative indictments of English political journalism both in the past and in the contemporary ages.[100]

Southey credited John Wilkes with being one of the prime causes of the success of the American Revolution because he generated political division and unrest which helped to prevent unified action by Parliament during the revolutionary period. In addition, he wrote, there had been in England a succession of "Roi des Halles" for which

---

[98]Ibid., 517-518.

[99]Ibid., 522, 524.

[100]Ibid., 530ff.

Titus Oates was the first, followed by Dr. Sacheveral, Wilkes, Lord George Gordon, and Leigh Hunt. The political bitterness and divisions caused by men such as these illustrated to him the dangers of a system of government which allows too much liberty of debate and too much freedom of expression. Further, the American Revolution served to contribute to a long-lasting spirit of divisiveness, for it made the dissenters once more feel their political strength.

Southey concluded, as he had done earlier in his Quarterly papers, that the nature of any country, its cultural heritage, economic bases, climate, and location, determined the form of government appropriate for it, and that forms of government contrary to these things cannot by force successfully be imposed upon a people.[101] The great error, then, of social and political reformers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was that they did not recognize that the state of a government must depend upon the age and condition of a country, and that all countries differ in fundamental ways. While a republican form of government, broad representation, and universal suffrage might work for a relatively young country like the United States, it would be disastrous for an old and well-established empire like the United Kingdom. What has worked in one nation might not be expedient in another. Further, zealous political reformers in Britain fell into the mistake after the American Revolution

---

[101]Ibid., 534; Cf. QR, XXX, 24ff.

> of believing that the facilities of subsistence in America were owing to its form of government, and that the abolition of the privileged orders was all that was needful for placing us in the same condition with the inhabitants of a new country, where hands were wanting to till the ground, and consequently where the wealth of every family was in some degree in proportion to its numbers.[102]

When these principles of reform began to spread after the American Revolution, Southey maintained, "literary journals were almost wholly in the hands of dissenters, and more particularly of those dissenters who prided themselves upon the freedom of their opinions." This fact accounted for a dangerous dissemination of anarchistic and heretical doctrines between 1780 and 1789.[103] Southey particularly took note of William Godwin's Enquiry Concerning Political Justice as indicative of this tendency. Godwinism was to Southey ". . . a system of politics and ethics, which laid the axe to the root of every social institution, human or divine, and of every domestic virtue!" Godwin's treatise was one ". . . in which the existence of the Deity was spoken of as an hypothesis, and in which the ethics were worthy of the religion." Godwin himself Southey credited with sincerity and fair intentions, and "he erred from vanity, not from any principle of evil."[104]

In a digression Southey attacked the "literary adventurers" of his own day and traced briefly the rise of political and social

---

[102]Ibid.

[103]Ibid.

[104]Ibid., 536, 537.

disaffection in English letters. It is when literary adventurers commit the "act of moral suicide," he wrote

> . . . that they render themselves objects of as much compassion as is compatible with abhorrence,--when they become base in the basest way, and acting as panders to the lowest vices or the worst passions of man's corrupted nature, deal in scandal, sedition, obscenity, or blasphemy whichever article may be most in demand, according to the disease of the age.[105]

Leigh Hunt appears as a specific target for attack as a prime representative of a man of letters, talented and intelligent, who had compromised his honor and enhanced his own reputation by "more abuse of the Prince Regent, a stronger infusion of slander, and a little more of the essential spirit of treason."[106] Of all groups who are politically dangerous to the state and welfare of the populace, gifted men of letters who question the established order of society are the worst.[107] Curiously among the pamphlets which he reviewed in this paper was one entitled "A Proposal for putting Reform to the Vote throughout the Kingdom" by the "Hermit of Marlow." Southey was not aware that the hermit was Percy Shelley.

In this article Southey blamed much of the danger of political turmoil in his own day upon the English manufacturing system, the direct tendency of which had been to cultivate a class of men, divorced from the land and traditional agricultural pursuits and family ties, who were exposed to every imaginable circumstance that

---

[105]Ibid., 539.

[106]Ibid.

[107]Ibid., 541ff.

could make them dissatisfied and volatile. The system of industry, however, had sown the seeds of its own destruction, and governments which base their strength and security upon manufactures "sleep upon gunpowder."

The political condition of England in the second decade of the nineteenth century Southey maintained to be the most dangerous in the history of the nation. The oppositionists in Parliament, who had staked their characters, fortunes, and reputations upon the issue of the French war and had lost, were now without effective leaders or ideological unity. He felt that in the past the discontented portions of the public had been able at least to look to a party in the legislature and invest their hopes in leaders by whom desired changes might be effected. In the past the leadership of the opposition had been generally able and ready to assume command of the nation should it devolve upon them. But in 1816, Southey warned, the opposition was as much at variance within themselves as with the Liverpool ministry. As an effective opposition party the Whigs had practically ceased to exist, and this weakness had given greater voice to the radicals.[108]

The basic axiom of Southey's political and social philosophy, if it may be called a philosophy, finds one of its clearest and most direct expressions in this essay. He concluded simply:

---

[108]Ibid., 545.

> States are secure in proportion as the great body of their people are contented with their situation, and attached to the institutions of their country. . . . Wherever this attachment is loosened and a spirit of discontent has gone abroad, convulsions must be expected, and revolutions ultimately follow, unless the evil be averted by preventive means. While the endemic moral maladies of the last half-century have been tainting the middle classes,--while a false philosophy, sapping the very foundation of religion, has made a breach through which unbelief and atheism have come in;--and while crude and erroneous notions of policy have substituted a cosmopolitan liberality as it is called, and a spurious patriotism in place of those English virtues which our fathers called loyalty and love of our country, changes more alarming only because they act upon a wider population, have been taking place in the condition of the populace.[109]

Southey concluded his article with the opinion that only two things could be done to insure the survival of the constitution and the country and to avert ultimate revolutionary catastrophe. First, the existing laws should be rigorously executed against libellous journalists, rebels, and radical seditionists, and second, much should be done "toward that amelioration of the people which is the only true reform, and upon which our security mainly depends."[110] The crucial question facing England in 1817 was whether revolution--"this endemic moral malady of this distempered age"--could be averted long enough for the people to be educated to its dangers and their social condition improved. He closed with the optimistic note, perhaps merely rhetorical, that if all did their duty it would be proved that "the good principle is mightier than the evil one.

---

[109]Ibid., 541-542.

[110]Ibid., 552.

The laws are with us--and God is on our side."[111]

In periods of crisis, Southey wrote in an article more than twenty years later (QR, XLI, 1829), the strength of the nation is found in those

> . . . who are attached, heart and soul, to its institutions--who think of no other stake than their hearths and altars, and who believe and feel that it is their religious duty to fear God and honour the king, and die, should they be called upon to do so. . . .

The belief that men who have the largest material stake in the

---

[111]Ibid. That Southey was in many respects the philosophical alter ego of Prime Minister Liverpool is clearly indicated in his correspondence and in a remarkable document entitled "Memorandum submitted to Lord Liverpool by Robert Southey, Esq.," dated March 19, 1817. This private communication expresses precisely the same views as "Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection" but with greater urgency and in more direct language. In addressing the Prime Minister upon the state of the nation, Southey expressed some doubt that laws to prevent seditious libel would prove effective, and he called for more stringent measures. Concessions to radical reformers, he wrote, would serve only to hasten the catastrophe of revolution. "Woe be to the garrison who hoist a white flag to an enemy that gives no quarter." He urged Liverpool to go beyond the law in dealing with radical journalists: ". . . I beseech you do not hesitate at using that vigour beyond the law which the exigence requires, and which your own personal safety requires as much as the vital interests of the country. It is in vain to dissemble the nature of the contest. . . . Unless these men are silenced, and unless the press is diligently watched and curbed, the spirit which now exists will be kept alive . . . and sooner or later we shall have all the horrors of a bellum servile."

Southey went on to advocate transportation as the only effective punishment for abuse of the press. He also urged Liverpool to make every effort to insure the loyalty of the army and of veterans which represented a dangerous force if joined to rioters. ". . . there are moments," he wrote, "when the defection of a single company may decide the fate of a kingdom." Two years later the Liverpool government sanctioned the passage of the Six Acts designed to repress anti-government journalists. Charles Duke Yonge, The Life and Administration of Robert Banks, Second Earl of Liverpool, K.G. (London: Macmillan, 1868), II, pp. 298-299.

country can, because of that investment, be relied upon to preserve the social and political order, is fallacious. The men upon whom, in revolutionary times, a government may depend are not those who have the greatest properties to lose, for the possession of that property and the strong desire to preserve it might just as well lead them, at a certain stage of revolution, to turn against the state. Patriotism must be spiritual, not material.[112]

One of Southey's final statements of political theory in The Quarterly Review came in a review in 1831 of Essays on the Principles of Morality, and on the Private and Political Rights and Obligations of Mankind by the Quaker moralist Jonathan Dymond (QR, XLIV, 1831). In this paper Southey considered the opinion of Dymond that political power is rightly possessed only when it is possessed by the general consent of the community of the governed. This principle, he felt, should be carefully qualified. While it would be convenient and popular to invest with power "any ephemeral idol of the populace" it would be a course too dangerous to be expedient, for "it would divest them also as easily; for such a right, instead of being fixed upon the strong foundation of principles and laws, veers with the weathercock of public opinion." Instead Southey maintained that

> political power is rightly possessed by that individual, or that body, to whom or which it has duly devolved according to the laws and institutions of their ancestors. It may be overthrown by wrongful violence, or it may be forfeited by gross abuse; then comes the government by consent,--and with it come

---

[112]QR, XLI, 197.

> instability, insecurity, disorder--an age of convulsions, anarchy, and misery.[113]

Political power is rightly exercised, moreover, only when it serves the general welfare of the community and only when it does so by means which the moral law permits. Characteristically, Southey did not specifically define what he meant by the moral law.

He went on to note that "present expedients for present occasions, rather than a wide-embracing and far-seeing policy" have been the great characteristics of European politics. Although he did not dispute the fact that a simple democracy might be the best and most equitable form of government he branded it as a practical impossibility because of large, unwieldy populations and because the theory of democratic government assumes the perfection of man. Pure democracy presupposed purity, an absense of wickedness and brutality, and because men are not thus perfect it must remain a theoretical ideal. It is not reasonable to believe, he asserted further, that the power and influence of a monarchy could be abolished without the consequent destruction of that monarchy; it is necessary, therefore, to strike a precarious balance between monarchial government and legislative government. The order and stability of a government is most efficiently assured by the rule of a strong executive or a monarch. In Southey's view, his biographer Edward Dowden wrote, a republic is the best form of government in itself

---

[113]QR, XLIV, 106-107.

> as a sundial is simpler and surer than a time-piece; but the sun of reason does not always shine, and therefore complicated systems of government, containing checks and counterchecks, are needful in old countries for the present;--better systems are no doubt conceivable--for better men.[114]

Southey argued strongly against the levelling ideas of Quaker Dymond, and noted that social and political equality is an admirable but impossible goal to attain. He wrote simply:

> . . . before society can be reduced to the level platform which he desired, chaos must come again; and not such a chaos as existed when the earth was without form and void, and all things being in solution might settle into conformity; but the chaos that is brought about by convulsions, which never take place upon this inhabited globe without producing inequalities.[115]

Thus the idea of equality and equal justice is also an impossible ideal--inequality is the natural state of society and there will always be injustice in the human nature. Social inequalities, Southey clearly implied, are not necessarily evil except when they become excessive, as in nineteenth-century England. While inequalities cannot be abolished, they can be greatly alleviated; but every individual has his station to hold in the scheme of society. The first and greatest duty of statesmen should be to improve the physical and moral condition of the governed, but gradations of wealth, education, social class, and power are essential for effective and stable government.

Southey's political essays in the Quarterly bear close

---

[114]Edward Dowden, Southey (New York: Harper, 1880), p. 145.

[115]QR, XLIV, 120.

comparison with his Colloquies; or the Progress of Society, published in 1829, a work which grew from Southey's belief that there were great similarities between the age of the Reformation and his own. Emerging from the imaginary dialogues between Montesinos (who represents Southey) and the ghost of Sir Thomas More are indications of Southey's fears of the consequences of social and political disintegration. Here he expressed his concern that the "religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would be matched by new struggles following the modern political revolutions."[116] He proposed that political convulsion could only be averted by the strengthening of Christian institutions, high taxation, and high government expenditure to distribute wealth more equitably. In his review of the work in the Edinburgh Review in 1830 Thomas Babington Macaulay charged, perhaps with some justice, that Southey made the state too strong and that he wanted it both omnipotent and omnipresent. Carnall, in addition, has observed:

> It is certainly true that Southey is prophetic of the modern nation-state in both its good and its dangerous aspects; its comparatively efficient administration, its strong influence on economic policy, its control of education and of the dissemination of ideas. Church and State together could master the restless buffeting that both repelled and frightened him.[117]

---

[116]Carnall, p. 180.

[117]Ibid.

VII. PASLEY, POLITICS, AND WAR

As noted earlier in this chapter the war with Napoleonic France was for Southey a topic of both historical and political interest, and his views have already been made clear. It was for him a clear struggle between the moral forces of good and evil, and he regarded with bitter contempt those politicians who advocated terms of peace with Napoleon. It is equally clear that he was constantly haunted by a fear of the mob which represented to him political forces which human institutions were unable to control, but the mob was frequently amorphous and ill-defined. It is perhaps quite true, as Carnall has maintained, that "much of the urgency with which he called for aggressive war seems to have come from his need to grapple with a palpable monster."[118] The war gave him early a clear political issue, and his views are perhaps best expressed in his Pasley article (QR, V, 1811). This review was written with the aid of John Rickman who supplied Southey with some of his research materials on political economy. John Wilson Croker, at Gifford's order, further softened certain passages which the editor felt might be offensive to the Sicilian government.[119] The purpose of the article was to present the

---

[118]Ibid., p. 123.

[119]Ibid., pp. 123-130. Rickman provided research in the form of various parliamentary documents of several types. It should be noted that Southey objected to a number of editorial omissions and alterations in the paper and that some of these changes contradicted a few of the opinions which he wished most to express. Southey's letter to Scott of April 2, 1811, serves to qualify much of the article, LC,

public with a summary of Pasley's work "endeavouring to support the general opinions of its author, by a view of the actual strength of the British Empire, so consolatory, so proud, and so unanswerable, as to put the lily-livered crew of our husbanding politicians to shame."[120]

Pasley's thesis was based upon the assumption that the French would in the second decade of the century gradually gain naval superiority over the British, and that consequently the chief hope of British defense and independence would rest upon the strength of the land forces. He further noted that the despotic French government was able to function more effectively in wartime because, unlike the British, they did not have to contend with opposition politicians at home. The book also provided a statistical comparison of the relative military resources of the two nations in 1810.

III, 307-308. Southey also gave some thought to making his version of the article in to a separate pamphlet. Carnall has pointed out that some of the economic opinions expressed in the article were Rickman's and ran counter to Southey's views. See SL, II, 209-210, 223, 228, 308; IV, 162; LC, III, 295,298, 303, 307; V, 18; NL, II, 4n, 11. Kenneth Curry has noted that Croker rewrote much of the article but that some of Southey's work was retained in the paper. Most of the concluding paragraphs of the review Southey reprinted in his Essays (1832). Cf. QR, V, 435-437 and Essays, I, 22-26; Shine, p. 23. Carnall concludes, p. 27, that "in the Pasley article he wrote, not as Robert Southey, but as a Quarterly reviewer." No one can argue, however, that the broad outlines of the article, i.e., advocacy of an aggressive war policy and condemnation of domestic factionalism, fail to represent Southey's general views.

[120] QR, V, 403-404.

While Southey attempted to refute Pasley's contention that the British economy had been seriously weakened by French economic warfare, he did advocate a British policy of aggressive, but benign, imperialism as not only good for the colonies but for the prosperity and defense of Britain as well.

The political thrust of the article came when Southey agreed with Pasley that the basic cause of the failures of the British army came not from a lack of leadership in the field but from a lack of support and confidence at home, and this lack of support grew, he maintained, from the divisions and contentions of parliamentary parties, the weakest point of the British system of government. The natural tendency of the parliamentary system in wartime, he argued

> is to intimidate public men, and to paralyze public measures--to recommend to the adoption of a minister or a general, not what may be useful or glorious, but what shall be easy and safe; and to dissuade him from the most important objects of national security and honour, because they necessarily involve a degree of hazard, and are subject to the chances which must affect all human efforts.[121]

Southey argued further against aggressive political efforts by the British inside Spain, and he maintained that there should be no encroachment upon the legitimate internal affairs of that country. In addition, he expressed hopes for a rupture between France and Austria and for a general continental insurrection, supported and abetted by Britain, against French rule. Finally, he lashed out bitterly at the Whig politicians, whom he did not name specifically,

---

[121]Ibid., 423.

who had advocated that the British should "husband" their resources and forces until actually attacked or invaded by French armies.

The Pasley article also made clear Southey's concept and approval of British political freedom as it existed in the early years of the second decade of the century.

> Under no possible or conceivable form of government could we enjoy more perfect individual liberty. An Englishman is as free in word and deed as in thought, subject to no other restriction than that which natural law requires, which is the rule of reason, that he not use his own freedom to the injury of another. . . . That any man of upright intentions might deliver his opinions plainly and freely upon all public matters, is a fact so notorious that it might seem superfluous to assert it.[122]

Much of the essay is characterized by a vigorous, intense, polemical tone, and Southey conceded no ground to the oppositionists in Parliament. As has been noted earlier, his lives of Wellington and other scattered Quarterly essays also reflect his political views related to the war.

VIII. PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

In June, 1832, the first Reform Act instituting a reform of Parliament became law, and it was only a beginning in the movement for parliamentary reform during the century.[123] This first great reform

---

[122]Ibid., 437; Cf., Essays, I, 26.

[123]The number of individual studies of the parliamentary reform movement is bewildering. I have, however, found the following to be most helpful in tracing the growth of reform agitation and in detailing the provisions of the reform bills themselves: George Woodbridge, The

law, the result of several decades of increasing agitation, accomplished two basic things: it defined who could vote for members of the House of Commons, and it defined the constituencies from which members could be elected. Specifically fifty-six boroughs lost their representation in Parliament, sixty-five seats in Commons were transferred to the counties, and forty-two new boroughs were created. The law resulted from a number of complex factors: a great increase in population after 1760 which continued for several decades, broad economic and social developments, the shift from agriculture to industry as a basis of economy, and the rise of emerging new classes of workers. The war years from 1793 to 1815 had exacerbated existing social problems.

The immediate causes leading to the 1832 law began in 1760, the first year of the reign of George III. The events of the Seven Years War (1756-1763) and the dynamic personality of William Pitt the Elder had given rise to increasing public interest in political events. The Wilkes elections of 1768 and 1769 created among many dissatisfaction with the existing political system, and the American Revolution (1776-1783), which had been severely criticized by leaders such as Burke and Charles James Fox, gave rise to questions about the nature of representative government in Great Britain. In addition,

---

Reform Bill of 1832 (New York: Crowell, 1970); two volumes of the Oxford History of England--J. Stevens Watson, The Reign of George III, 1760-1815 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960) and Llewellyn Woodward, The Age of Reform, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, coupled with domestic unrest, also stimulated a policy of government repression which in turn led to increasing unrest and calls for reforms. The growing influence of the periodical press aggravated the clamor for parliamentary reform during these years.[124]

After the turn of the century persuasive and influential voices called for changes in apportionment and procedure in Parliament: William Cobbett, Henry Peter Brougham, Lord John Russell, Jeremy Bentham with his Parliamentary Reform Catechism. Journals such as Cobbett's Political Register, Thomas Wooler's The Black Dwarf, Richard Carlile's The Republican, Leigh Hunt's The Examiner, and the pamphlets of Henry "Orator" Hunt and William Hone added to the controversy. These are prime examples of the "seditious journalists" against whom Southey so frequently and so vigorously complained in the pages of the Quarterly.

In 1782, 1783, and 1785 William Pitt had made proposals in Parliament for the elimination of rotten boroughs, and between 1792 and 1800 Charles Grey, later Prime Minister (1830-1834), gave strong indications of his desire for a parliamentary reform bill. In 1809 Sir Francis Burdett, radical member from Westminster, proposed a parliamentary reform bill, and continued to introduce such bills in 1817, 1818, and 1819. Other attempts were made by John George

---

[124]George Woodbridge, The Reform Bill of 1832 (New York: Crowell, 1970), pp. 14-15ff.

Lambton in 1821, and by Lord John Russell in 1822, 1823, and 1826. In 1821 Russell, later Lord Chancellor in Grey's reform cabinet and Prime Minister in 1846, secured the disfranchisement of Grampound, and in 1827 of East Redford and Penryn. He was not the only leading advocate of parliamentary reform in the 1820s, but in 1831-1832 he helped to prepare the reform bill which finally passed into law. In 1829 and 1830 further proposals for reform were made by George Spencer Churchill.

Although by 1810 Southey had become a strong and vocal opponent to parliamentary reform, as late as 1808-1809 he had indicated some sympathy with the "parliamentary Ishmaelites," the radical reformers, in his history of the year 1808 for the Edinburgh Annual Register, and his sympathies continued as late as March and April of 1809.[125] After the foundation of the Quarterly, however, his views changed considerably as he reflected that parliamentary reform in 1810 would give an undesirable degree of power to the "peacemongers" who opposed the war. The Walcheren debates in Commons in the spring of 1810 as well as the economic difficulties of mid-1811, which led to an unusual number of bankruptcies and a high level of unemployment and raised the possibility of mob violence, seem to have marked the turning point in his views of parliamentary reform.[126]

---

[125]Carnall, pp. 92-93. Cf. J. W. Robberds, A Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Late William Taylor of Norwich (London: John Murray, 1843), II, p. 276.

[126]Ibid., pp. 101, 107.

Southey's first definitive statement in opposition to reform appeared in his history of the year 1809 in the Edinburgh Annual Register for that year, which he had written during the winter of 1810.[127] Until this time he believed that ministerial influence in Commons had been too great, but an analysis of the current composition of Parliament convinced him that the strength of opposition elements was far greater than that of the Ministry. Unless the influence of the Ministry were increased in Commons no government then or in the future could stand very long or rule effectively. Carnall notes in this connection:

> . . . the government of Britain would be virtually dissolved. Burdett's reform aimed at making all elections popular, like those in Westminster, which meant that all members would be anti-ministerial. The inevitable result would be anarchy. Public opinion, Southey continued, had reached the utmost influence proper to it. Any extension of its power would put the country at the mercy of demagogues.[128]

The electorate, Southey argued, should be composed of those who were adequately educated. This would help to preserve political order and insure a strong, effective government. The existing constitution of government was, in his opinion, flexible enough to allow needed reforms without substantive changes in its nature.[129]

In his Quarterly Review essays Southey strongly and

---

[127]EAR, part i, pp. 240ff.

[128]Carnall, p. 121.

[129]Southey's lasting and consistent opposition to parliamentary reforms may be traced in some detail in his correspondence. Cf. LC, III, 295-296, 302, 303; IV, 172-173; SL, IV, 218, 256, 274, 282, 338; NL, II, 374, 394.

consistently defended the existing system of parliamentary elections and representation and opposed any measures designed to bring major revisions to that system. Portions of his political essays frequently took the form of bitter attacks upon those who proposed such reforms. While his views are clear, his essays are heavily laden with topical references and allusions which only contemporaries would have been able to understand fully. He rarely attacked specific proposals or reformers by name, however.

While comments and digressions concerning the issue of parliamentary reform appear scattered throughout many papers between 1816 and 1831, perhaps the most significant and clearly stated is a paper simply entitled "Parliamentary Reform" (QR, XVI, 1816).[130] This article, a review of several reform pamphlets of the time, constitutes one of the first real indications of the depth of Southey's political conservatism and expresses the views on parliamentary reform and the sanctity of the British constitution which would appear with almost no modification in subsequent papers. Seeming to argue more in theory than addressing specific issues and politicians, Southey made clear his belief in the existing institution of Parliament while giving expression to the same themes which dominate all of his political essays: a fear of revolution

---

[130]This was another important article "mutilated" by Gifford. See Carnall, pp. 221-222. In his 1832 Essays Southey restored the true text of his article. Cf. Essays, I, 353 and QR, XVI, 239-240, Essays, I, 385, 388 and QR, XVI, 257, 258, and Essays, I, 411-412, 421-422 and QR, XVI, 271, 276-278.

stimulated by an incendiary radical press, partisanship, and reforms which would award too much power too quickly to the common people.

The successful prosecution and conclusion of a difficult twenty-year war, which he asserted to have been completely popular, proved to him beyond doubt the success and strength of the British system of parliamentary and cabinet government and its ability to respond effectively to crises. The period following the war was an ideal time to leave the government at leisure

> to pursue with undistracted attention those measures, which, by mitigating present evils and preventing crimes in the future, may, as far as human means can be effectual, provide for an increasing and stable prosperity;--at this time a cry of discontent is gone forth, the apostles of anarchy take advantage of a temporary and partial distress, and by imposing upon the ignorance of the multitude, flattering their errors and inflaming their passions, are exciting them to sedition and rebellion.[131]

What is immediately striking to the modern reader about this essay is that Southey directly equated all those who would wish parliamentary reforms with seditionists and revolutionaries. He made little distinction between reasonable reformers and more extreme radicals. The multitude, he observed, always ignorant, always passionate, always violent, have always been easily deluded, and this posed a very real present danger. The voice of the people is not the voice of God, he argued: "God is in the populace as he is in the hurricane, and the volcano, and the earthquake."[132] Noting

---

[131]QR, XVI, 225-226.

[132]Ibid., 276.

that the excesses of the French Revolution and the subsequent military despotism of Bonaparte prove the dangers of sudden social and political changes and alterations in long-established forms of government, Southey expressed his belief, once again, that the conditions of England in 1816 posed a set of circumstances which made revolution a probability. All that the revolutionists require is a rallying point, a match to set off the explosion--the hue and cry for parliamentary reform.

There have always been only three possible forms of government, he argued, monarchial, parliamentary, and republican. The unique quality of the British system is that it combined these three into a balanced unit which is conducive to the safety, happiness, and welfare of the people. In 1816, however, he felt that the influence of republican ideas and the legislature had dangerously increased and should be diminished while the influence of the Crown and the Ministry should be increased.[133]

Part of the national crisis, to Southey's mind, was that in 1816 there had yet emerged no clear definition of parliamentary reform, and that reform proposals had not been presented clearly either in Commons or to the people. What the reformers lacked was a disciplined, organized, and well-defined movement. "But what is meant by Parliamentary Reform?" he wrote,

> Whenever this question has been propounded among the reformists at their meetings, it has operated like the apple of discord--

---

[133]Ibid., 252.

> the confusion of Babel has been renewed,--with this difference, that the modern castle-builders are confounded in their understandings and not in their speech.[134]

He further defended the constitution of the state against reformers with a well-developed sartorial metaphor. The constitution, he said, is the creature of theory.

> It is not as a garment which we can deliver over to the tailors to cut and slash at their pleasure, lengthen it or curtail it, embroider it or strip off all the trimmings, and which we can at any moment cast aside for something in a newer fashion. It is the skin of the body politic in which is the form and the beauty and the life,--or rather it is the life itself.[135]

The constitution had arisen out of the habits and necessities of the people, growing with their growth and gradually amending itself to the changes of society. It is more than a set of laws; it is

> our Ark of the Covenant;--woe be to us if we suffer the profanation! Our only danger arises from the abuse of freedom, and the supineness with which that abuse is tolerated by those whose first duty it is to see that no evil befall the commonwealth.[136]

Further, a swift and immediate reform of Parliament he viewed as completely unnecessary since Parliament had always and would always gradually change to meet the changing needs of the people: "no system of representation could be more suitable than that which circumstances have gradually and insensibly established."[137]

In his discussion of several election reform proposals of 1815

---

[134]Ibid.

[135]Ibid., 253.

[136]Ibid.

[137]Ibid., 255.

and 1816 Southey recorded firmly his belief that the English country gentry, the natural aristocracy, constituted the most eminently qualified, by virtue of background, leadership, and training, to represent their constituents. His assumption was that under the current system of Parliament only those with the noblest intentions and purest ambitions usually would aspire to be elected to the legislature. Popular election practices, an extended franchise, and certainly "universal" suffrage would seriously jeopardize the stability of Parliament. Furthermore,

> the principle that the representative must obey the instructions of his constituents, which many of the reformers profess, would follow as a necessary consequence; and the moment that principle is established, "chaos is come again," anarchy begins, or more truly an oligarchy, a mob-government, which is as much worse than anarchy, as the vilest ruffians of a civilized country are more wicked than rude savages.[138]

Members of Parliament, then, are elected not to represent the wishes of their electors, but to act in accordance with their own judgment, abilities, and opinions. Parliament is not, and should never be, in the strictest sense democratic.

Southey further held that a reform of Commons would not eliminate influence-peddling in elections, among other abuses, and that a reform could only serve to "aggravate every ill which it pretends to cure; and instead of relieving the distress of any one branch of the community bring infinite distress upon all."[139]

---

[138]Ibid., 258.

[139]Ibid., 260.

And he went on to exonerate Parliament from any responsibility in the economic crisis of 1815 and 1816 because these problems were, in his view, the immediate and temporary results of the termination of the war. Not only do these economic problems lie outside the responsibility of Parliament: they lie outside its control. Perhaps the most rhetorically intense portions of this essay are Southey's attacks upon the press, specifically the Monthly Magazine and Cobbett's Political Register. The imagery employed in these attacks is often that of disease and pollution.

Southey's "Parliamentary Reform" seems in the main to have been a reaction to those who in 1815 and 1816 called for reform because of the severe economic problems generated by the end of the war, and this economic issue provided him another occasion to defend the government's prosecution of the war. There is little specificity in his reaction to parliamentary reform proposals other than his attacks upon the press and his cut-and-slash rhetoric against reformers in general. As he had done many times in other papers, Southey again expressed his view that governmental changes must be evolutionary and gradual, but his argument at points seems rather disjointed, and, because of his invective, at points irrational. When the Reform Bill became law sixteen years later Southey reacted bitterly in his letters and in scattered remarks in later Quarterly essays. After the change of government in November, 1830, and as the final struggle over the bill developed, Jack Simmons has noted that "his language became more and more frantic, until at times one

begins to wonder if his mind was not becoming unhinged." When the great cholera epidemic of 1831 spread to England he wrote, in perfect seriousness, that it was sent by God as "one means of awakening the nation to a sense of its madness and its wickedness."[140]

IX. CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION AND IRELAND

Closely associated with the issue of parliamentary reform in the 1820s was the important political and religious question of Catholic emancipation, an issue which had generated serious political repercussions for years. In 1802 William Pitt, of whom Southey never really approved, had resigned because of the king's obstinate refusal to grant political concessions to Roman Catholics and to the Irish. Such a move, George believed, would be a fundamental violation of his coronation oath, and his continuing opposition became a factor in the coalition Ministry of All the Talents in March, 1807. Because of their differing views on the issue George Canning and his followers were separated from other Tories. It is, according to historian George Woodbridge, hardly an exaggeration to say that Catholic emancipation was the one political issue which kept the Whig party alive in the 1820s as a separate, recognizable party.[141] By 1827 Canning was Prime Minister and was supporting moves for emancipation, although other influential Tories, among them the Duke of Wellington

---

[140]Simmons, p. 183. Simmons quotes Southey's letter of November 8, 1831.

[141]Woodbridge, p. 23.

and Robert Peel, ostensibly opposed the reform.

The established church in the United Kingdom was composed of three branches: the Church of England, the Church of Ireland, and the Church of Scotland. According to the law only those persons who adhered to the established church could hold office in Parliament or could vote in an election. The Test Act of 1672 and an act of 1678 (30 Car. II, st. 2) required an oath of allegiance from all persons holding public office as well as subscription to a declaration against transubstantiation. These laws, the Treaty of Limerick in 1691, and key Elizabethan legislation closed all public offices, including, of course, parliamentary seats, to dissenters and particularly to Roman Catholics. Over Wellington's opposition in 1828, Parliament, acting upon a proposal of Russell, repealed the Test and Corporation Acts, among others, and thus established the principle that for dissenters religious affiliation would no longer be a qualifying factor in the franchise or in holding of office. The principle, however, applied only to Protestant dissenters and not to Roman Catholics.

The issue of political emancipation of Roman Catholics centered mainly upon Ireland. Following the Act of Union in 1801 Irish Catholics had expected that legal and political restrictions against them would be soon removed. When this did not happen Irish dissatisfaction with the government in London increased. The movement for emancipation in Ireland was further enlivened by the skillful work of Daniel O'Connell and his Catholic Association.

In mid-1828 O'Connell was elected to the House of Commons, even though as a Catholic he could not take his seat in that body. The issue was forced to a head. The dissolution of the Union was unthinkable because it would raise the possibility of the establishment of foreign bases too close to England; equally unthinkable was the threat of armed rebellion in Ireland. Wellington and Peel thus reversed their past positions and allowed the Roman Catholic Relief Act to pass into law in 1829.

It was, all in all, a controversy upon which Robert Southey had very strong feelings, even stronger feelings than he had on parliamentary reform. His son and biographer observed after his father's death that Southey always believed that all rights should be conceded to Catholics and all restrictions removed in matters which were not closely related to political power. To invest them with that power, however, he considered as "the most perilous experiment that could by possibility be tried in a Protestant country."[142] Southey's study of the history of Catholicism and his own acquaintance with the principles and practices of that church gave rise to his life-long opposition to emancipation. Cuthbert Southey wrote in his account of his father's life:

> . . . he could not divest himself of the idea that her members must necessarily be actuated by the same spirit as of old. He felt that if he were of that faith his whole heart and soul would be bent upon the overthrow of the Protestant Church,--that he would have striven to be a second Loyola; and believing

---

[142]LC, VI, 36.

> one of the moving principles of the Roman Catholic religion to be that the end justified the means, he did not see how any securities that might be taken from members of that persuasion could be strong enough to overcome what he considered ought to be a paramount duty on their part.[143]

On the question of Catholic emancipation for Ireland Southey became spokesman for the ultra-Tories and published his opinions in the Quarterly, although his views did not altogether represent those of the publisher and the editor of the review. Southey's most significant statement upon the issue is an article composed in mid-1828 when discontent in Ireland was at its height. This long paper, entitled simply "Roman Catholic Question: Ireland," appeared in the Quarterly for October, just three months after Daniel O'Connell's election to Commons and a few months prior to the final passage of the Roman Catholic Relief Act. Southey was unyielding in his opposition to political concessions to Irish Catholics, and his paper is of some significance because it indicates a clear divergence of opinion between Southey and his editor John Gibson Lockhart.

Before the paper appeared in 1828 The Quarterly Review had not been outspoken in opposition to emancipation. Lockhart,

---

[143]LC, VI, 37. The growth and consistency of Southey's position on this issue may be traced throughout his letters. Cf. LC, VI, 26-37; SL, I, 145, 356, 416, 426; II, 276; III, 31, 160, 312, 398, 480; IV, 130, 158; NL, II, 231, 296, 320, 327, 334, 337. Southey's writings in the Edinburgh Annual Register indicate opposition to political concessions to English and Irish Catholics because he believed the goal of the Catholics was ultimately to seize control of the government. In Colloquies, published in the same year as the passage of the Roman Catholic Relief Act, Montesinos says to More: "The Roman Catholics aim at supplanting the Establishment; they expect to do this presently in Ireland, and trust ultimately to succeed in this country also, a consummation for which they look with as much confidence, and as little reason, as the Jews for their Messiah." Colloquies, I, 253. See Colloquy IX, I, 262-270.

realizing that the issue would eventually be settled in favor of the Irish Catholics, felt inclined to regard Murray's interests and take a soft line toward the question.[144] Southey's article seems to have created the impression among many readers that his view represented the policy of the Quarterly, but, as Scott Bennett argues, "to equate the magazine's larger corporate identity with Southey would be to misunderstand the facts, to overlook editorial alternatives, and to ignore the circumstances that led to Southey's being the Quarterly's spokesman."[145]

Although Lockhart was persuaded both of the inevitability and the necessity for emancipation, he was forced, for fear of alienating Southey, to accede to Southey's request to speak for the review. He had already lost the services of John Wilson Croker, and to lose Southey might work a greater hardship on the review. For some years Southey had felt that the Quarterly should speak more strongly on the Catholic question, and thus he took full advantage of the opportunity presented by the 1828 article.[146]

In the article Southey contended that from the days of

---

[144]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," p. 107; Cf. Samuel Smiles, A Publisher and his Friends (London: Murray, 1891), II, 269.

[145]Scott Bennett, "Catholic Emancipation, the 'Quarterly Review,' and Britain's Constitutional Revolution," Victorian Studies, 12(1968-1969), 284.

[146]See NL, II, 296; LC, III, 325. John Rickman provided much of the historical research for Southey's article. Cf. Orlo Williams, Lamb's Friend the Census Taker: Life and Letters of John Rickman, pp. 202, 242.

Spenser the greatest sources of misery in Ireland had not been the presence of English power there but the relative lack of effective application of power. Traditionally, he maintained, Ireland had provided the ground "on which the church of Rome, in alliance with a foreign power, might bring its force to bear with most effect against heretical England."[147] The strategic importance of the issue was further emphasized by the geographical position of Ireland. Although Southey expressed doubts that in mid-1828 the Catholic Association possessed the power and influence which it claimed, he did warn against the dangers of allowing too much unity among the wild Irish, and he did agree that the Catholic Association was the most dangerous and most mischievous body that had ever been allowed to exist in the country.

The problems of the Irish peasantry, admittedly pressing and acute, did not arise from the exclusion of Roman Catholics from public offices but from the abuses of the Irish landholders and from the aptitude of the Irish "for becoming the instruments of mischief and murder . . . the original sin of the race--their unhappy inheritance--the national crime and the national curse."[148] He viewed O'Connell as an arch-revolutionary, an anarchist, and concluded that the issue of emancipation had forced the kingdom into a grave crisis.

---

[147]QR, XXXVIII, 539.

[148]Ibid., 543. Southey's letters to the Reverend Richard Shannon, March 2, 1829, and to Sir R. H. Inglis, February 22, 1829, clarify his position greatly. LC, VI, 34-36, 26-29.

Much of Southey's paper is devoted to an examination of what the ultimate consequences of Catholic emancipation might be. It would threaten the Protestant succession, and the Bill of Rights, along with the Coronation Oath, would become "as much an old almanac as history." Historically, he maintained, the Roman Catholic Church had worked, primarily through the Jesuit order, "to obtain an influence over the influential persons, and [to] gain the ear of queens and kings, into which . . . they instil something more deadly than the 'juice of cursed hebenon.'"[149] The Church of Rome had always acted systematically to subvert legitimately constituted governments and to gain for itself political power. No other system in history, he wrote further,

> has ever been devised so excellently adapted to practise upon the weakness of men, and to form a strict alliance, offensive and defensive, with their vices. It addresses itself seemingly to the better part of our nature, while it enters into a compromise with the worst. It enslaves the understanding and corrupts the conscience. . . . Let us not be deceived. Catholic emancipation may be argued upon the ground of expediency, the only ground upon which its advocates can make out the shadow of a case . . . but it comes to a question of religion at last.[150]

But the issue was for Southey fully as political as it was religious.

Protestants, he argued, can never look forward to a time when the state might safely disregard all religious differences and admit to the Roman Catholics an equal share of political power with their fellow subjects, not while the Church of Rome remains what it is,

---

[149]Ibid., 571.

[150]Ibid., 572.

and not while the Catholic clergy continue to swear allegiance to the See of Rome, and not while the church continues to teach that faith cannot be kept with heretical protestants.[151] Southey's hope, then, was that the British government would not grant political opportunities to Irish Catholics, and "that wholesome exercise of authority, which has too long been delayed, may yet be used with excellent effect. But whatever remedies a dangerous madman is to be treated, the beginning must be to secure him in a strait-waistcoat."[152]

In time the political, economic, and social problems of Ireland could be alleviated by means other than the uncertain and drastic course of emancipation. Give the peasants employment in public works projects, extend the poor laws to Ireland, tax the landholders into submission--his conclusions, however, given the context of the times, ring rather weakly and give some indication of his own political naiveté. "Better their condition thus," he wrote,

> educate the people; execute justice; maintain peace;--and Catholic Emancipation will then become as vain and feeble a cry in Ireland, as Parliamentary Reform has become in England. Let everything be done that can relieve the poor--everything that can improve their condition, physically, morally, intellectually, and religiously; and let us "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free," and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.[153]

---

[151]Ibid., 596-597.

[152]Ibid.

[153]Ibid., 598.

This, Walter Graham delighted in pointing out, "was written less than one year before the Catholic Relief Bill became a law, and less than four years before the passing of the Reform Bill. It is an excellent commentary on Southey's political discernment."[154] When, only a few months afterward, the Tory government of Wellington turned about and made concessions to the Irish Catholics, Southey was astonished, even shocked, and certainly very bitter. He could never, he wrote Sir R. H. Inglis in February, 1829, forgive Wellington and Peel for betraying him and the kingdom:

> They took none of those measures which might have prevented this alternative; they suffered the danger to grow up, knowingly, wilfully, and, I cannot but add, treacherously; and they now make the extent of the danger their excuse for yielding to it. They have deceived their friends, and betrayed the constitution.[155]

Further testimony to Southey's continuing bitter opposition to Irish Catholic emancipation, even after it had become law, is provided by a review of Thomas Moore's Life and Death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald (QR, XLVI, 1831). This paper, detailing the exploits of Fitzgerald, an Irish peer who during the 1790s had served as a negotiator between Irish rebels and French revolutionists, provides another survey of the history of rebellion in Ireland. Again Southey regarded with horror the clubs and associations for revolutionary activities in late eighteenth-century Ireland--the

---

[154]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," p. 107.

[155]LC, VI, 26.

"Plot of Patriots," the "Society of United Irishmen," and the "Catholic Committee." Respectable Irish citizens had been supplanted by a set of desperate political adventurers, and they who had much to lose by revolution were thrust aside by those who believed that they had something to gain by it.[156] Particularly interesting in this paper are Southey's sharp comments upon particular revolutionary leaders, especially Theobald Wolfe Tone.

Britain had traditionally had two formidable enemies in Ireland--poverty and ignorance. In the late eighteenth century these two elements were leagued with two others: religious bigotry and political fanaticism. The British government in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been remiss in allowing the Irish to continue in "papal darkness," but the situation of Ireland, despite the poverty of the people and the abuses of the landholders, would have gradually improved without revolutionary activism. In 1796 Ireland for a century had been progressive in industry and wealth, and the country was rapidly improving. Conditions would have continued to improve had Irish leaders been patient and

> if there had been no agitators in the land, no evil tongues, no seditious press, no evil spirits at work; and if all those whose desire it was . . . to better the condition of their countrymen, had understood, or even been capable of understanding, that the way to effect this was by instructing them in their duties, not by haranguing them upon their rights; by removing their ignorance, correcting their errors, and improving their morals--instead of inflaming their passions.[157]

---

[156]QR, XLVI, 236.

[157]Ibid., 241.

The Roman Catholic Church, Southey argued again, had directly contributed to unrest not only by deliberate means but by the very nature of its organization and tenets of doctrine. The people of Ireland were as blindly submissive to their priests in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as they were in the days of St. Patrick and of Laurence O'Toole, and their ferocious propensities were as easily inflamed as in the worst ages of their history. But from the turn of the century until the 1830s the priests and revolutionaries "assumed the ominous appearance of a Jacquerie or servile war, and latterly of a religious one as well."[158]

The political activism in Ireland in the early nineteenth century was indicative to Southey of the state to which England herself could be reduced by rapid political and social reforms. Neither the issue of Catholic emancipation or parliamentary reform really mattered to the poor, ignorant, deluded and oppressed Irish peasantry. The issues were, however, political windfalls for opportunists and power-seekers. They were "levers for deadlier designs"--the separation of Ireland and England and the dissolution of the Union through violent revolution.

Southey's conclusion in 1831 was that Catholic emancipation had not and would never tranquilize Ireland, and that even the largest measure of legislative reform could not change the basic nature of the Irish people. The permanent causes of problems in

---

[158]Ibid., 242.

Ireland have always been the ignorance, the bigotry, and the abject poverty of the great majority of the population. Ignorance and bigotry he blamed upon Roman Catholicism which instigated them and upon the British governments which had allowed them to exist and had thus perpetuated them. The poverty of the Irish is the fault, he argued, of "an utter disregard of justice and humanity in the landholder to which nothing but the inveterate custom of the country could have brought or reconciled men in their degree of civilisation."[159]

Southey did not change his opinion in the three years since his "Roman Catholic Question: Ireland" concerning the remedies for conditions in Ireland. The Roman Catholic Relief Act had proved nothing to him, and he wrote, perhaps as simplistically as he had in 1828, that a moral reform must be instituted in Ireland as the only alternative to revolt and anarchy. His conclusion to this paper seems to the modern reader to be a rather weak gesture, and underlying it seems to be the admission that the Irish problem cannot be solved. The state of Northern Ireland in the last third of the twentieth century seems to confirm his belief. Clearly, however, Southey was more interested in this paper in attacking the characters of Moore and Fitzgerald, and he merely used the article as a vehicle for voicing further complaints about the resolution of the emancipation issue.[160]

---

[159]Ibid., 251.

[160]Ibid.

Southey's political opinions, especially those bearing upon the matters of parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, should be seen in light of a paper published early in 1831. He wrote this essay, "Moral and Political State of the British Empire" (QR, XLIV, 1831), two years after Catholic emancipation had become a reality and only a few months after the resignation of the Duke of Wellington in November, 1830. Appearing a year before the passage of the 1832 Reform Act this paper, long, rambling, frequently digressive and melancholy as it is, is of importance in that Southey here provided his final survey and evaluation of the political events in Britain over the previous twenty years. It is a gloomy restatement of his earlier papers.

One note of conjecture should be inserted here concerning Southey's political opinions which so often coincided with those of the Tory ministries of Liverpool and Wellington, and which caused him to be viewed by many of his contemporaries as an unofficial spokesman for the government. In an article published fifteen years ago Professor Galen Broeker pointed out that in the late 1820s Southey was often granted access to the State Paper Office through the good graces of Robert Peel, in 1828 Home Secretary and party leader in Commons. Equal access to the same documents was not so easily granted to others, especially Americans such as the historian Jared Sparks. One cannot help but wonder whether Southey was being fed information which the Wellington government wished him to have,

since his specific requests for research in the State Paper Office had to be cleared with government officials, and the extent to which Southey might have been exploited by the government in supporting official policies. It is obvious that he was surprised at the sudden reversal of the stand of the Wellington government on Catholic emancipation in late 1828, and that he had not been aware of the change in the positions of the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary on this issue.[161]

X. CORN LAWS AND POLITICAL CONCLUSIONS

In the 1830s Southey was an older and calmer man than he had been during the turbulent second decade of the century, and even though his Toryism had become narrower and more stubborn, he viewed with a greater degree of detachment the agitation for reform in the early 1830s. Although he was still very much frightened at the approach of what he believed would be the inevitable great English revolution resulting from the emancipation of Catholics and the reform of Parliament, he wrote at times with almost a sad resignation.[162] Carnall has rightly noted: "Southey had been grappling with the spectre of revolution so often since 1812 that the events of 1830 to 1832 made less impression than one would expect."[163]

---

[161]Galen Broeker, "Jared Sparks, Robert Peel, and the State Paper Office," American Quarterly, 13(1961), 150-152.

[162]Note his letter to Grosvenor Bedford, May 14, 1831, LC, VI, 148.

[163]Carnall, p. 181.

Nevertheless, there was a flurry of legislation after the passage of the Reform Bill which must have stirred great alarm in him and confirmed his fears and provided some fulfillment for his predictions--such legislation as the Irish Coercion Bill in February, 1833, and the Church Temporalities Bill which passed in August, 1833.

There can be no doubt that Southey felt that 1830 was a political and historical watershed. A new age had commenced with the new reign of William IV, and he could not view it with much optimism:

> A new age has commenced . . . and he must be a careless spectator of passing events who does not perceive, that the circumstances amid which it commences are regarded with grave, if not mournful, forethought, by those who love and venerate the institutions of their country, but with eager and exulting anticipations by all who are desirous of bringing about revolutionary changes.[164]

He found considerable points of resemblance between the age of the Antonines and his present times. For the Romans there had been a long period of tranquility, and luxury had risen to high levels. Corruption in taste and language were the symptoms of a declining state. An old religious establishment was beginning to show signs of incipient decay and was weakening before the onslaughts of its enemies. Rome was threatened by foreign enemies who at length overthrew the empire.

Though Britain in 1831 was not threatened by foreign powers her church establishment faced inevitable threats. The church, he

---

[164]QR, XLIV, 263.

wrote, would never be destroyed, but it might well be overthrown for a time. It might well be debased, outraged, despoiled and persecuted. If there are no barbarians, he observed, like the Picts and Scots of old threatening to break Britain's strength, ". . . we have let the great body of the people grow up like barbarians in the midst of our civilization."[165] A great deal of his "Moral and Political State of the British Empire," however, is given over to another discussion of the causes and effects of Catholic emancipation. William Pitt receives Southey's strong condemnation for favoring it--"a minister retreating from the rock of principle on which till then he had stood, took up a position upon the shifting sands of expediency. . . ." From the time of Pitt, and largely because of Pitt's lack of opposition and leadership on the question "there was a leprosy in the walls of the constitution, and the dry rot began to show itself in the main beams and timbers."[166]

The success of Catholic emancipation and the impending success of parliamentary reform arose in his view from government bowing to the pressure of public opinion, and this was contrary to Southey's theory of stable government which he so often expressed. The people cannot rule because they are not qualified to rule; they are as children who must be led. He wrote:

> Any ministry which takes public opinion for its guide, steers by the weathercock instead of the compass, and then the course

---

[165]Ibid., 264-265.

[166]Ibid.

> must ever be, as in such cases it ever has been, through storms and tempests to the calm of a Dead Sea, in whose noisome and pestilential exhalations other storms are generated.[167]

One interesting, if somewhat bitter, theory which Southey put forth in this essay is that the government of England from the Restoration until 1830 had ever been much more corrupt than the people themselves, but in 1831 both the government and the people have together been corrupted by their ignorance or indifference to rapid social and political change. He surveyed the movement for parliamentary reform and provided his evaluations, all negative, of the roles played by Lord Goderich, Viscount Castlereagh, and George Canning. He analysed the merits of the prime ministers of the period, and the only one in whom he could find real merit is Lord Liverpool--"he was mild, considerate, conciliatory; right minded and conscientious in his station . . . there could not have been a better minister in better times!"[168]

Only Liverpool recognized the evils growing out of the abuse of the poor laws; only Liverpool fully recognized the dangers of the manufacturing system, of rapid political reform, of Catholic emancipation. Only Liverpool had perfectly understood the dangers arising from a profligate press incessantly at work undermining the institutions of the country and corrupting the morals and religion of the people with their revolutionary principles. Even so, Southey

---

[167]Ibid., 267.

[168]Ibid., 277.

criticized Liverpool for the "irresolution of his nature." The Prime Minister, he wrote, "was not a pilot for rough weather. No sailor on the wide Aegean ever longed more fervently for rest when the moon was hidden by black clouds, and not a guiding-star was to be seen.[169] The strength of the Liverpool administration ended with the suicide of Castlereagh in 1822.

After a digression in which he paused to slash at the political economists of his age who "imbibed the radiant darkness of Jeremy Bentham," he went on to praise the legal reforms of Robert Peel. He was hardly favorable in his evaluation of the government of George Canning, although he did deplore the attacks upon Canning by Tory journalists soon after his taking office. Of the Goderich government which followed the death of Canning, Southey wrote that it was an administration "so feeble that it seemed to disparage government itself. There was scarcely a member of it who, if his eyes had been opened, might not have read Tekel upon the walls of his office."[170]

In this article Southey again accused the Wellington government of having deserted the majority of the British people in its stand on Catholic emancipation. For his stand in favor of the issue Peel exhibited a want of moral and intellectual courage. Again he claimed that the Irish settlement would be ineffectual.

---

[169]Ibid., 275.

[170]Ibid., 283.

The paper also contains one of Southey's final tirades against seditious journalists and includes long quotations from them to illustrate his charges. Richard Carlile is a "mischievous, ignorant, fanatical, anti-Christian," Robert Taylor a "madman," and Hunt and Cobbett are styled "thorough-paced demagogues."

This paper, like those which preceded it, illustrates quite well Southey's propensity for oversimplifying controversial and complex political issues. When Parliament met just before Wellington's resignation late in 1830 with increasing reform agitation in the country, Southey typically simplified the situation in this way:

> . . . the appellations of Whig and Tory should be dropped, because they no longer designated the same differences of opinion which they had formerly denoted. There were but two parties in the country--that which sought to overthrow the constitution, and that which was resolved to support it . . . in these broad distinctions, all minor ones must, sooner or later, be merged; and this truth could not be recognised too soon for the constitutional cause and the general good.[171]

While he certainly wished the new Grey ministry well, he felt that it could not, or would not, do much to preserve the constitution of government.

Once again Southey equated with almost no qualification those who favored reform measures with those who wished to overthrow the constitution by drastic alterations in the established system of laws and government. On the questions of parliamentary reform,

---

[171]Ibid., 315.

legal reforms, and Catholic emancipation his views in 1831 were wholly consistent with those he had enunciated in the Quarterly Review twenty years earlier. The only difference is a moderation of tone which came with his mournful resignation to the fact that Catholic emancipation had and parliamentary reform would become political realities. His letters from 1832-1833 indicate clearly that he believed that the consequence of these reforms would be civil war in Ireland. In a letter in January, 1832, to his son-in-law John Wood Warter he noted that "Parldemonium," his name for the reformed Parliament, contained between one and two hundred "thorough-going revolutionists who will act together, boldly, steadily, and perseveringly . . ." to overthrow the institutions of British society.[172] The first shock of the civil war, aided by radical political unions, would come in Ireland and perhaps spread in time to England. Parliament, newly constituted, would be too diluted and too weak to combat the rebellion. "The most turbulent democracy of the ancients," he write Warter,

> was not more under the rule of popular opinion, than the English Government is now, and must continue to be, till the inevitable inconveniences which result and the serious sufferings which may be expected bring the nation to a sense of its folly or of its sins.[173]

After the issues of Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform had been resolved, Southey "found himself in an unfamiliar

---

[172]NL, II, 390-395.

[173]NL, II, 391.

political world, in which the struggles of his own generation were becoming increasingly remote." His political interests, however, found new ground in the last decade of his life in the issues of the protection of British agriculture and the advocacy of factory reforms.[174] His last political paper, "On the Corn Laws" (QR, LI, 1834) appeared in 1834.

Since the controversy between commercial and landed interests over the Act of 1815, Tory political writers had generally opposed the removal of duties on foreign grain.[175] In this tradition Southey argued in his Corn Law essay for the protection of British farmers by a system of government subsidies of domestic agriculture. Although the repeal of the Corn Laws would enable British industry and agriculture to compete more effectively on the world market, he contended, it might also engender international friction. In addition, open commercial competition might prove undesirable if it made countries dependent upon each other for the necessities of life. In this as in other questions, Geoffrey Carnall has observed, "Southey was apprehensive of anything that could not be kept under control. The State must keep the means of subsistence within its power, or run into formidable peril."[176]

Attacking the Times, which had been arguing the opposite side

---

[174]Carnall, p. 188.

[175]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as a Tory Reviewer," p. 102.

[176]Carnall, p. 189.

of the question, Southey supported a fluctuating duty on grain and opposed both a fixed duty and the removal of all duty. The latter part of the essay, however, called for a reform of the factory system and reiterated an idea which lies at the heart of every earlier political essay. The industrial revolution had created a vast class of poor laborers, miserable in every way, who were aware that they were worse off then they could or should be, and who knew their power to rebel. In calling for reforms to avert the dangers of insurrection Southey even, in this final article, came to some agreement with William Cobbett who had warned in his pamphlets and in Rural Rides against the dangers of a manufacturing system which created small groups of persons in the country who possessed great capital while giving rise to misery and poverty among the industrial poor. Unless there were immediate reforms in the working conditions, education, recreation, and wages of the laboring poor, Southey forcefully asserted, the industrial system would eventually be destroyed by its own inbred evils.[177]

In the last quarter of the twentieth century it is difficult to judge Southey's effectiveness as a political writer. Certainly there is clear indication that at least Lord Liverpool gave some ear to Southey's views, but the fact remains glaringly obvious today that on the two greatest domestic issues of his age Southey was ineffectual in his opposition. Catholic emancipation and the reform

---

[177]QR, LI, 278-279.

of Parliament led neither to the wholesale political revolution nor to the social cataclysm which he had so long anticipated. It is as obvious that while England changed drastically during these times Southey did not modify his positions and opinions to meet these changes. He was much the same political critic in 1834 as he had been in 1812; the age had passed him by.

It would be a great mistake, however, to assume that Southey was alone in his opinions and that he was unsupported by many of his contemporaries. Certainly he expressed in his essays many of the political views of important segments of the country gentry, the aristocracy, and the bishops. Many figures in the Liverpool government sanctioned his opinions, as did, at various times, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Croker, and John Rickman. On some issues even his enemies agreed with him. Both Southey and Cobbett deplored the abuses of the manufacturing system and called for reforms, and even Shelley, in the second chapter of his remarkable Philosophical View of Reform, presented some points of agreement on social and political questions. Southey outlived many of his contemporaries, however, and his political vision outlived its time of relevance.

His obsession with political stability and his fear of a shifting center of power in Britain seriously weakened his strength as an advocate of certain social and political reforms. In his paper on Ireland in 1828, for example, he recognized the genuine need for social changes, and he admitted freely that the Irish sought relief for real wrongs, but his remedies were always those of repression.

Before the unjust absentee landholders could be taxed into fairness and before the poor laws could be introduced in Ireland, political activists must be subdued by force. "To advocate repression," Carnall has written,

> was not the way to inspire confidence that a genuine policy of social reform was intended. There can be no question that Southey himself wanted such a policy. But he laboured to produce a political situation in which anything of the sort would have been highly improbable.[178]

His conservatism derived primarily from the eighteenth-century tradition of Burke and stood opposed both to the revolutionism of Godwin and Paine, expressed by such diverse spokesmen as Hazlitt, Shelley and Cobbett, and to Benthamite utilitarianism. Scholars who have treated Southey's political criticism have recognized his basic faults. Crane Brinton's assessment is perhaps more accurate than most:

> He felt the need of discipline as he had felt the need of freedom. He could never reconcile them, because they are reconcilable only in the intellect; and Southey never used his intellect for purposes of reconciliation. Instead, he used it to defend a haphazard collection of political expedients designed to curb specific instances of human cruelty.[179]

But to the defense of the institutions of society Southey brought a crusading spirit and a conviction of righteousness usually seen only in attack rather than in defense. Professor Oliver Elton characterized his conservatism less favorably:

---

[178]Carnall, p. 194.

[179]Brinton, p. 95.

> His conservatism is unbending; and yet this is no bar to permanence, for the same might be said of Wordsworth, of Coleridge, and of Scott. But Southey's conservatism has not the geniality, the romantic chivalrousness of Scott's: nor has it the august stamp of meditation which at times distinguishes Wordsworth's. Nor is it, like Coleridge's, rooted in a philosophic play of thought, which is alive to the last whatever we might think of its conclusions; it is fixed and unreflective.[180]

Perhaps Southey's greatest detractor in the area of political criticism is Walter Graham who has concluded that whatever his social ideas and consistencies Southey's politics during the years of his association with the Quarterly Review do not compel the respect of later scholars. Although Graham admitted that Southey was humanitarian in his social concern, he also argued that he was an "unfeeling obstructionist" in domestic politics when the church and the constitution seemed to be threatened. Graham noted further:

> For the most conservative section of the conservative party he handled the most stirring subjects of the day in long and impressive reviews. These political essays, after some trimming by Gifford or Lockhart, were probably effective in influencing a large section of public opinion. Southey's sincerity undoubtedly increased the value of his work, and made his efforts invaluable to the Tories during their long period of ascendancy and of unbroken power spent in ignoble attempts to stem the tide of English political freedom.[181]

For the modern scholar Southey is somewhat redeemed from these charges of self-righteousness, repression, unbending dogmatism,

---

[180]Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature: 1780-1830 (London: Edward Arnold, 1912), II, p. 12.

[181]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as Tory Reviewer," pp. 110-111.

and political obstructionism by his laudable efforts in the area of social criticism. His Quarterly Review articles directed toward the amelioration of the pressing social problems of early nineteenth-century England not only illustrate his humanitarian concern but also emphasize the grand paradox of his thinking--his inability to reconcile in a realistic way his craving for order, stability, and permanence with his equally strong need for freedom, individual liberty, and social justice.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL CRITICISM

I. SOCIAL REFORMERS, THE POOR LAWS, AND THE MANUFACTURING SYSTEM

Southey's political essays in The Quarterly Review reveal but one side of his character, and that in truth is not always an admirable side. As a political critic he was stubborn, inflexible, often repressive and dogmatic, and sometimes self-righteous, but what is more serious is that his essays reveal that he was frequently out of touch with political realities, and that he was unable to adjust to the political changes of his times. His obsession with order and stability led him to overlook the fact that an orderly society must be dynamic and that the stability and survival of governments and political parties rest upon their ability to turn with the prevailing winds of the age. As a social critic and commentator, however, Southey was among the first of those in his century who recognized the evils of an industrialized society, and he displayed in this area an astonishing perception and a remarkable ability to propose specific social reforms which would meet the challenges and abuses of the day. More importantly he proposed sweeping moral reform which would insure the happy solution of pressing social problems.

To those who view Southey primarily as one of the most obstinate resisters to the reform of Parliament, Catholic emancipation,

free trade and laissez faire economics, the long list of practical social reforms which he urged with great energy in his Quarterly papers must come as a surprise. His proposals for social amelioration and his deep and abiding concern for the ills of English society also emphasize the absurdity of attempting to assign to him one political label. Unyieldingly conservative on the major political issues of the age, he was among the most practical and liberally-minded of social reformers. While neither a utopian zealot nor a radical firebrand, he was interested in any measures which would immediately relieve human misery and which would in the long term assure a more prosperous and secure life for the children and the grand-children of his own generation.

The list of social reforms which Southey advocated in The Quarterly Review is a long and impressive one. In addition to calling repeatedly for a great, fundamental moral and religious reform in the hearts and minds of the people of all levels of society, he proposed a system of national parochial education, the diffusion of cheap and wholesome literature, a highly-organized system of colonization and female emigration to alleviate the pressures of a growing population, better training for children in the slums of large cities, the founding of a Protestant order of sisters of charity, the establishment of savings banks in rural areas and small towns, the abolition of flogging in the military services except in extreme cases, and modifications in the substance and administration of the poor laws and the game laws.

Further, he felt the necessity for revisions in the code of criminal law which would eliminate capital punishment for relatively minor crimes, measures designed to prevent major crimes, prison reforms, changes in the factory system designed to improve the pay and working conditions of laborers, a reduction in employment of children in factories, a system of national public works in times of economic distress, and a system of allotting plots of ground to poor agricultural workers. Other proposals included the employment of indigents in the reclamation of waste lands, the abolition of large cemeteries in crowded metropolitan areas, the commutation of tithes, the need for more clergymen, more colleges, and more courts of law to deal with a rapidly growing and fluid population.[1]

In both political and social criticism Southey was his own man. Vacillating between cautious optimism and the darkest pessimism, he proposed no great social theory, only practical measures of expediency. He often strongly disagreed with the leading social theorists of his day: Adam Smith, William Godwin, Thomas Robert Malthus, Robert Owen, William Cobbett, Jeremy Bentham. He keenly

---

[1]LC, V, 6, 7. Cuthbert Southey felt that his father's views on social subjects were of greater value than the political opinions which often attended them, and he hoped that posterity would judge his father's periodical writings "upon his earnest advocacy of those measures he thought most calculated to ameliorate the condition of the lower orders, and to cement the bonds of union between all classes of society, and this as proving that both in early and in late life the objects that he aimed at were the same, although he had learned to think that political power was not the panacea for all the poor man's evils." LC, V, 5.

recognized the futility of theory in a dangerous age and that direct and swift action was indicated by the needs and condition of the people, particularly in the second decade of the century.

That Southey did not, however, dismiss completely the social reformers of his day is evidenced by his appreciation of the social analyses and theories of Owen, despite his friend John Rickman's open hostility towards that utopian. Geoffrey Carnall has noted that Owen believed that his

> new agricultural communities would form the nucleus of an order of society which would undermine all existing institutions. This struck Southey as over-sanguine, although he believed [in 1816] that in the long run a pantisocracy was likely to replace the system of inequality. He was constrained to tell Owen, however, that he would more easily undertake to convert the Archbishop to the Mohammedan faith than to make him assent to such principles.[2]

As noted in the preceding chapter of this study, Southey could not believe in the concept of social equality or social levelling but rather in the necessity of social gradations, but he did write in his "Letter to William Smith" in 1817:

> We are far from that state in which anything resembling equality would be possible; but we are arrived at that state in which the extremes of inequality are become intolerable. They are too dangerous, as well as too monstrous, to be borne much longer.[3]

As the years passed Southey became increasingly convinced that unusual and unprecedented dangers existed in a manufacturing population

---

[2]Geoffrey Carnall, Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 154; Cf. LC, IV, 195-197.

[3]Essays (1832), II, 23; for Southey's opinions of Owen's social theories see LC, III, 45, 175; IV, 146; NL, II, 141.

excited by both radical and moderate social reformers. Although during the 1820s he had shown considerable interest in the co-operative societies of Owen, particularly the Brighton Co-Operative Society, by 1831 he had come to view such co-operatives as agencies through which revolution could be effected. They had, he believed,

> been taken up by dangerous, desperate men, and allied with the aggressive levelling system, of which Robespierre, Saint-Just, and Babeuf were the prophets. A struggle was going on in Europe [1830-1832] between the ideas of government by authority and government by popular impulse. And this was only a prelude to the great struggle between the principle of property and that of a community of goods.[4]

Nearing the end of his Quarterly career he reaffirmed his belief in the efficacy of property holding as the basic support of society. "Vested rights," he wrote, are the key-stone of our social edifice." If they are sacrificed to abstract principles of reform "there will soon be no more security for private than for public rights, for individual than for corporate possessions."[5] Co-operative communities which provide equality for its members were, he felt, practical only if the size of the community were kept relatively small. The principles of equality which underlie them are not applicable to nations of great size and wealth. Social reformers who advocated the principle of levelling and social equality were mistaken in believing that a state of equality would be possible to attain in the current state of human nature;

---

[4]Carnall, p. 179.

[5]QR, XLV, 448.

> or that, if possible, it would not lower the standard of civilization, and be incompatible with that freedom which every man in this kingdom possesses now, whether he enjoys or abuses it. . . . They are mistaken in thinking that the rich are too rich, or that the social good could ever spring from a dislocation of society; but they are not mistaken when they say that the poor are too poor, and that their condition might be amended, and that it ought to be amended; and till it shall be amended they see before them . . . the materials for instigating a bellum servile.[6]

Despite his fundamental disagreement with the theories of Owen Southey never quite lost his appreciation for them, and several Quarterly papers illustrate his admiration for Owen's intentions and enthusiasm, although not for Owen's followers.[7]

With other social critics Southey found points of agreement, particularly with Michael Sadler and Antony Ashley Cooper, Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, on the inequities, cruelties, and abuses of child labor, and Carnall has observed that

---

[6]Ibid., 449, 450. This paper, "Doctrine of Saint Simon," is the clearest expression of Southey's distrust and fear of social levelling and the abolition of corporate or private ownership of property. It is, in addition, an enlightening exposition of the social and religious doctrines of Saint Simon and his followers.

[7]Raymond Williams has noted with accuracy that "where Cobbett sneered at Owen's 'parallelograms of paupers,' Southey, with very many of the new generation of English industrial workers, approved. In a movement like Christian socialism, the influence of both Southey and Owen can be clearly discerned. Yet Owen, in his main bearings, led to socialism and the co-operatives; Southey, with Burke and Coleridge, to the new conservatism. Southey's part in the latter movement, moreover, was no minor one. . . ." Williams has found, in addition, substantial points of agreement between the ideas of social amelioration and reform in Southey's Colloquies (1829) and Owen's Observations on the Effect of the Manufacturing System. Raymond Williams, Culture and Society: 1780-1950 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. 22, 26-29.

> while he gradually became hostile to many social reformers of his day, he could recognize virtue and was not always blinded by his obsession with social order. He could, for example, congratulate Grey Bennet for his exposé of conditions at Newgate prison and his defense of factory children, but he could not sanction Bennet's support of "that principle of evil which is at work night and day for the destruction of laws, monarchy, religion, and social order."[8]

Southey's concern with factory children would have considerable influence upon the Earl of Shaftesbury who later wrote that Southey was "essentially the friend of the poor, the young, and the defenceless--no one so true, so eloquent, and so powerful."[9] In many respects, Carnall has maintained, Southey anticipated the great Victorian social prophets

> awakening the country's conscience to intolerable social evils, condemning the cold philosophy of selfishness which condoned those evils. If he was a conservative, he was of the same school as Sadler, Oastler, and Lord Ashley. He has a place of honour in Max Beer's History of British Socialism, and would have felt much sympathy with Engel's denunciation of "the brutal indifference, the unfeeling isolation of each in his own private interest" which characterized the England of his day. . . .[10]

In its basic tenets Southey's social criticism in the Quarterly was consistent from beginning to end and is marked by a deepening of concern and an increasing fervency of expression as the years passed. At least one scholar, William Haller, has convincingly argued that

---

[8]Carnall, pp. 190ff. Cf. QR, XIX, 113-114; for Southey's agreement with the social criticism of the Earl of Shaftesbury see SL, IV, 328, 353, 375; NL, II, 338, 385, 394, 411.

[9]Jack Simmons, Southey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), p. 154.

[10]Carnall, p. 193.

"the structure of Southey's thought on society and the state had become clear by 1797, and remained simple and consistent."[11] In 1793 Southey had read Godwin's Political Justice and, Haller maintains, "Godwin's theory as to the nature or content of individual purpose in society" had a long-standing influence upon Southey, especially in his Quarterly papers. Godwin's notion had been that the rational being does not act according to individual self-interest but according to the interests of his society. Further, Godwin had maintained that the paramount duty of society was to satisfy the needs of the individual members and that "the claim rising from need to the use and possession of anything takes precedence first over the right to property derived from conquest or legal title, and then over the right of the workman to the whole produce of his labor."[12] This concept of the abstract relationship of property to need was the heart of Godwin's treatise.

An examination of Southey's social essays tends to confirm his agreement with these Godwinian principles, although certainly there were modifications designed to defend the concepts of social gradations and individual property ownership, and, Haller notes,

> to the fundamental idea of the infinite possibilities of human progress through direct human effort and the subordination of private to public interest, in a word, to the idea of the

---

[11]William Haller, "Southey's Later Radicalism," PMLA, 27(1922), 282.

[12]Ibid., 283.

> perfectibility of man and society through joint endeavour, Southey brought an abiding faith religious in its intensity.[13]

Accordingly Southey could only abhor the doctrine of laissez faire which left each man subject only to his own efforts in an often brutal world.

Like Thomas Carlyle Southey based much of his social commentary upon his fear of social or political upheaval, but he also based it upon his own genuine belief in the preciousness of human life and his sharp perception of human misery. He was, as Bernard Schilling has observed, "the first of the literary humanitarians to complain of the industrial era on aesthetic grounds, as well as to emphasize the squalor and filth in which men lived, with its accompaniment of disease and early death."[14] Southey was, in the words of A. V. Dicey,

> a Carlyle without Carlyle's rhetorical genius and rough humour, but also without Carlyle's cynical contempt for humanitarianism. He was essentially a philanthropist. He is to us the prophetic precursor of modern Collectivism. To his own generation he was the preacher of Tory philanthropy.[15]

In his frequent complaints of the physical conditions endured by the working poor Southey anticipated the later writings of the socialists William Morris and Charles Kingsley, and his Quarterly essays contain numerous comments upon the ugliness and filth of the new industrial towns epitomized by Birmingham. The impoverished factory

---

[13]Ibid., 283-284.

[14]Bernard N. Schilling, Human Dignity and the Great Victorians (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), p. 62.

[15]A. V. Dicey, Lectures on the Relation Between Law and Public Opinion in England during the Nineteenth Century (London: Macmillan, 1940), p. 225.

laborer and small farmer were for him the special victims of modern civilization, and he felt that both Adam Smith and Thomas Malthus had in their theories and treatises coldly ignored the elements of human compassion and the value of individual human life.

It was the human cost of an industrialized society that most moved Southey--the loss of honor, integrity, and the decay of the intellectual and spiritual powers of the individual. The spirit of selfish gain had caused both a degeneration in the quality of goods produced and in the morality of factory owners and workers alike. The cost of English capitalism was simply too great. For Southey the greatest tragedy of all was

> . . . the degeneration of human life under the system which denies the oneness of mankind and abandons every man to his own resources . . . the manufacturing system and the philosophy underlying it were therefore evil, because they were not concerned with the dignity of man . . . and because it ignored, to a degree never before known in England, the proper end of human life, Southey held the competitive system to be the worst thing that had ever happened to the nation.[16]

In the application of social reforms for the alleviation of the misery of the poor and to redress their wrongs and to correct their morals, Southey felt, the greatest care should be taken to preserve the traditional social classes and institutions of society. At the same time he called for a change of attitude of the government toward the people; governments should think more kindly of human nature and should formulate plans for social improvement as if the potentials of man were unlimited. The British government must "cease

---

[16]Schilling, p. 66.

to think of men as machines or animals, but must care for them as human beings and bear to them a sense of parential obligation."[17]

Southey's social criticism in his Quarterly papers is complemented primarily by his Letters from England by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella (1807-1808), one of the earliest literary exposés of English industrial life with its descriptions of the abuses of child labor and the miserable life of Birmingham workmen, and by his most ambitious attempt at social criticism and analysis, Sir Thomas More; or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society (1829), both of which brought down upon him the wrath of the Edinburgh Review critics.[18] The Quarterly papers, however, unlike the quasi-fictional Letters and the theoretical Colloquies, are more realistically and specifically addressed to particular social problems and carry with them a greater tone of sincerity and urgency and alarm which is missing from the other works.

The important questions which Southey raised in Colloquies were the same as those which he had first raised in his Quarterly Review essays. The dialogue between himself and Sir Thomas More, however, provided him the opportunity to make historical comparisons and to assess the nineteenth century in the perspective of history. The result, R. W. Harris has correctly observed, "was a sombre picture of a guilt-ridden age, perplexed by problems deeper

---

[17]Ibid., p. 67.

[18]See Francis Jeffrey, unsigned review, ER, 11(1808), 370-390 and Thomas Babington Macaulay, unsigned review, ER, 50(1830), 528-565.

than any which had faced the nation since the sixteenth century."[19] On the grounds of social progress the nineteenth century had little reason for optimism, The age of reason with its inflated optimism had passed into an age of volatile extremes of reason and madness. While the years following the Glorious Revolution had been perhaps the happiest in English social history, they had ended at last in the triumph of a false philosophy of selfish materialism.[20]

In the area of social criticism and commentary ten of Southey's Quarterly articles are important although scattered remarks of significance are found in numerous other papers. The most prominent group of these essays are those written with the collaboration of John Rickman and addressed specifically to the condition of the poor and to the inequities of the existing poor law system; this group, however, also deals with a broad range of economic and social problems: "Inquiry into the Poor Laws" (QR, VIII, 1812), "Reports on the Poor" (QR, XV, 1816), "Poor Laws" (QR, XVIII, 1818), and "On the Means of Improving the People" (QR, XIX, 1818). His political essays "Parliamentary Reform" (QR, XVI, 1816) and "Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection" (QR, XVI, 1817) restate many of the opinions expressed in the poor law papers.

Two articles are treatments of the role of education in

---

[19]R. W. Harris, Romanticism and the Social Order: 1780-1830 (London: Blandford, 1969), p. 271.

[20]For Southey's comments upon the manufacturing system and industrial competition see Letters . . . by Espriella, Letters XXVI, XXXVI, XXXVIII, and in Colloquies, Colloquies IV, V, and VII.

society: "Bell and Lancaster's System of Education" (QR, VI, 1811) and "Elementary Teaching" (QR, XXXIX, 1829). One paper, "Emigration Report" (QR, XXXVII, 1828), deals with the questions of colonization and the labor market, and one of his last significant papers in the Quarterly, "Moral and Political State of the British Empire" (QR, XLIV, 1831), touched upon a number of social issues. Essays of lesser interest are "Works on England" (QR, XV, 1816), "Dymond--On the Principles of Morality" (QR, XLIV, 1831), "Doctrine of Saint Simon" (QR, XLV, 1831), and "On the Corn Laws" (QR, LI, 1834). Almost every article listed here is a political essay; for Southey political and social criticism were frequently inseparable. It should be noted, also, that in his essays of social criticism there is a high degree of redundancy and restatement.

The four essays dealing with the poor laws, the political aspects of which have been treated in the previous chapter of this study, constitute the most important area of Southey's social criticism in the review, showing both the depth and the range of his interest. It should, however, be remembered that Southey's friend John Rickman had a hand in each of these papers and that, despite their close collaboration, they were men of widely differing personalities. Rickman, who had tolerated the slave trade and who had doubts about the wisdom of educating the poor, seems not to have shared Southey's humanitarian principles. For example, he did not regret, as Southey did, the gradual dissolution of small-scale farming

in Britain and believed that large-scale agriculture was necessary, despite the human cost, to maintain the current state of British society.[21] Southey viewed with some contempt Rickman's statistical treatment of human problems. The more technical portions of these essays may well have been Rickman's contribution, and while Southey may have agreed with his friend's fundamental principles he certainly did not share his attitude toward the poor. Kenneth Curry has appropriately characterized Rickman as "a matter-of-fact person whose attitude toward most subjects could be described as hard-headed."[22]

Southey's frequent dependence upon Rickman reflects a major flaw in his social commentary; his relative ignorance of the science of economics. But, as Jacob Zeitlin has rightly noted, Southey

> must be given an honorable place as a forerunner of Carlyle and Ruskin in the attack on the gross one-sidedness of the new science. . . . He knew nothing about economics, as the Edinburgh Reviewers repeatedly pointed out, but it required no special knowledge to realize that the unqualified acceptance of the current doctrines [those of Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham] was subversive of fundamental human claims. It needs no research to prove that the treatment of men as manufacturing animals pure and simple is not consonant with any well-ordered social scheme.[23]

---

[21]See Carnall, pp. 194-196; LC, III, 45-46.

[22]NL, II, 498; in late 1830 Rickman and Southey wrote a sequel to the latter's Colloquies, which Murray, because of the political climate generated by the imminent passage of the Reform Bill, and the financial difficulties of 1831, was not able to publish. Cf. Carnall, pp. 186-189; NL, II, 382n.

[23]Jacob Zeitlin, ed., Select Prose of Robert Southey (New York: Macmillan, 1916), p. 22.

The maladjustment of trade and the economic depression created by the end of the war, the rise of unemployment and inflated prices, the failure of the harvest of 1816, the opposition of the government to parliamentary reform, the Spa Fields riots and other popular disturbances in the country had all led to an increased concern for means of remedying social ills, and one of the areas upon which public attention focused most was the unsatisfactory state of the poor laws. The system of poor relief in the early nineteenth century was based upon Elizabethan legislation which had given individual parishes the prime responsibility for caring for the destitute and for finding employment for the poor. This poor relief system, coupled with the law of settlement of Charles II, had led to the accumulation of an excess of laborers in parishes for which there was inadequate employment. The Napoleonic war had, in addition, caused a relaxation of administration of the poor laws, and this had resulted, one scholar has observed,

> in the almost universal application of poor rates in aid of wages, especially when the excuse could be made that by such means the families of those who shed their blood for the country were being kept from want. The poor rate therefore increased with alarming speed, without conferring any great benefit, for the system kept wages low and encouraged idleness.[24]

Southey's first poor law paper, a December, 1812, review of

---

[24]Orlo Williams, Lamb's Friend the Census-Taker: Life and Letters of John Richman (London: Constable, 1911), p. 190. Williams points out that in 1801 the poor rate was £4,000,000 for a population of 9,000,000; in 1813 over £6,000,000 in 1818 £7,870,000 or 13s. 3d. per citizen for the entire population.

Colquhoun's Propositions for ameliorating the Condition of the Poor, deals only tangentially with the poor law problem. The paper does reflect, however, his first expressions of concern for the abuses stemming from the manufacturing system, and it forms the basis for opinions expressed throughout the decade. This article, expressing strongly Southey's belief that social reform was an immediate necessity to avert revolution and his alarm at the events of 1812, is largely negative in tone. Geoffrey Carnall has noted that

> . . . the article is directed to a triumphant conclusion, with a vision of the empty spaces of the world populated by British people enjoying British institutions and speaking the English language, the savage vehemence with which it is written betrays the fears which lay behind its composition. . . .[25]

Southey did, nevertheless, convincingly urge schemes of national education, large-scale emigration, and a public works system which would employ paupers.

This paper also expressed his great alarm at increasing pauperism in the country and the dangers which this posed to government and society, but he was also deeply alarmed at the waste which the paupers represented. The paper is a fine example of Southey on the attack as he slashed at the theories of Malthus, Godwin, Francis Burdett, various radical journalists, and French revolutionaries. Of particular interest is his fundamental disagreement with the conclusions of Thomas Robert Malthus in his Essay on the Principle of Population (1798, 1803) and of Malthus's philosophical opponent

---

[25]Carnall, pp. 149-150; Cf. SL, II, 304.

William Godwin in his Enquiry concerning Political Justice (1793, 1796). Indeed, the one social critic and theorist who comes most often under Southey's wrath in the Quarterly is Thomas Malthus. In his Essay Malthus had maintained that the most effective checks on population had always been and would always continue to be famine, plague, war, and disease, and he had opposed the system of poor relief as an encouragement to early marriage. The poor, he had urged, should, by the abolition of the poor rates, be starved into celibacy. If Malthus's theory was valid, Southey argued, and if the population continued to push beyond the margin of subsistence, it would be hopeless to seek any social alleviation at all. R. W. Harris notes in this connection:

> Malthus had written that nature had laid no place at the feast for those without subsistence, and that they had no right to expect one. Southey replied that those so excluded would very soon fight for one, and thus that Malthus's way led to a social struggle.[26]

While Southey recognized that the population was increasing too rapidly, he did not believe that the increase could be checked by either voluntary restraint or by legislative action; population could, however, be diverted to useful ends. Colonization, he believed, was not only Britain's destiny and obligation, but it was quickly becoming a social necessity, an alternative to hunger, unemployment, political unrest, and social injustice. Thus he concluded that Britons, particularly poor Britons, should be fruitful

---

[26]R. W. Harris, p. 265.

and multiply, especially in Canada, the Cape Colony, Australia, Surinam, and North America. Because the laboring classes of society always had a tendency naturally to multiply faster than the higher ranks, colonization was a necessary safety-valve.[27]

Southey's April, 1816, "Reports on the Poor" is a much less impassioned and more carefully reasoned statement than his 1812 paper. Noting that the base of the social pyramid of any society is the large, ignorant class of peasants, he contended that in the rural areas of England the lower classes had deteriorated badly during the reign of George III and that the result had been an increase in the numbers of those seeking poor relief. The condition of the lower class he felt worse than it had been in two centuries and that it would continue to deteriorate, while during the same period of time the wealth and comfort of the middle ranks of society had increased tenfold.

Many of the most pressing problems of the poor had, he argued, arisen from the new system of large-scale agriculture which had either deprived the poor of their small slips of land or placed

---

[27]Southey, with the aid of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, reviewed the second edition of Malthus's Essay on Population (1803) in the Annual Review for 1803 (pp. 297-8, 301, 292-295). Here he wrote that Malthus "triumphantly destroys all arguments for all amelioration of the state of the human race." For Southey, in 1804-1805, the Malthusian theories implied a universe of blind conflict, and for Southey this was unthinkable. See Carnall, p. 63. His opinions of Malthus did not change when he wrote for the Quarterly, and his hostility toward the Malthusian school can be traced clearly in his letters. See LC, II, 251, 284, 294; III, 22, 95, 188, 226; IV, 149; VI, 100; NL, I, 327, 350, 351, 355, 357, 546; SL, I, 224, 287, 298, 408; II, 304; IV, 114, 180.

them under the burden of a grinding and inequitable rent. In the broad view, large-scale farming had increased the national prosperity, but the human cost had been staggering. "The loss," he wrote, "is that of a link in the social chain,--of a numerous, most useful, and most respectable class, who, from the rank of small farmers, have been degraded to that of day labourers. . . ."[28]

Just as important, the shift from small farms to large-scale agriculture and industry had led to a consequent loss of family pride and character in the lower ranks, and the inevitable tendency of the system had been to force the poor into a hopeless cycle of despair:

> He who lives by the wages of daily labour, and can only live upon those wages, without laying up store for tomorrow, is spending his capital; a time must come when it will fail; in the road which he must travel, the poor-house is the last stage on the way to the grave.[29]

The loss of hope among the poor would open the way for increased discontent. "The men who grow corn," he wrote, "are never the men who set fire to it." Accordingly he felt it imperative that the poor be given some material share of property, some tangible stake in society, no matter how small.

Southey's belief that political stasis and social change were a necessary combination for the security of the nation is repeatedly stated:

---

[28]QR, XV, 197-198.

[29]Ibid., 199.

> Let us not deceive ourselves! governments are safe in proportion as the great body of the people are contented, and men cannot be contented when they work with the prospect of want and pauperism before their eyes, as what must be their destiny at last. If you would secure the state from within as well as from without, you must better the condition of the poor.[30]

In the natural course of society, he argued, the peasantry are attached strongly only to those governments or individuals who protect them, and because of the collective power inherent in their numbers the lower classes must be kept the happiest part of society. Two things, however, had combined in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to make the lower classes discontented: the new agricultural system and the spread of seditious, incendiary journalism. Combined, these made the threat of social deterioration inevitable.

In England, however, many of the social problems had been met with some success. Southey believed that Britain had done more to alleviate the miseries of the poor than any other European nation, more indeed than any other government in the history of the world; this was why she had survived a season of revolutions. While he particularly praised the efforts of such private groups as the "Society for Bettering the Condition and Increasing the Comforts of the Poor," founded about 1796 by the Bishop of Durham, William Wilberforce and Sir Thomas Bernard, his analysis of the underlying causes of poverty in Britain led him to a strong defense of the role of government in meeting social ills. Although advocates of radical reform had charged that high taxation was the direct cause of the distresses of

---

[30]Ibid., 200.

the English poor, Southey believed that taxation affected the poor in an infinitely trifling degree compared to the inflated prices of food, fuel, and other necessities of life. Taxation burdened the rich and the middle class much more than the poor. A badly inflated economy had resulted directly from the increasing greed of a commercial people and the selfish spirit of competition inherent in a capitalistic system expanding too rapidly.

While temporary expedients might meet the challenges of inflation, taxation, and poverty, Southey affirmed his belief that material and legislative reforms would be utterly useless without a drastic reform in public morality and attitudes, and this is the major note of his social commentary. "The country," he wrote,

> stands truly in need of radical reform; but it is a reformation which cannot be effected by laws or political changes; it must be in public opinion; in the habits of thought and the principles of action . . . no plan for the improvement of the condition of the poor will be of any avail, unless the foundation be laid in the amelioration of their moral and religious character.[31]

A primary responsibility of government in difficult times is to regard the brightest side of human nature and the limitless capacities of men in adversity, but government also has a responsibility to institute stern and effective measures to crush discontent. Southey's is both a humanitarian and a politically repressive principle. In his view the lower classes are children to be led, and sometimes savages who must be controlled:

---

[31]Ibid., 206.

> Among savages, those tribes have ever been found the most unfeeling who possess the fewest comforts, and have the most difficulty in obtaining food; for when self-preservation becomes the prime concern, the natural charities are starved; a brutish selfishness occupies the whole heart, and man, having no instinct to supply the absence of his human affections, becomes worse than the beasts. Mournful as this is, it is far more mournful to contemplate the effects of extreme poverty in the midst of a civilized and flourishing society.[32]

The guilt does not lie with the savages, but with those who force men into savagery.

Penal laws against the poor were, in Southey's view, not only unjust but ineffective in dealing with the problems which they were instituted to correct. Improvement of the condition of the poor, he argued further, must largely be a matter of individual incentive--this will come only when the lower classes have something for which they can hope. The responsibility of the government must be to assure men a measure of individual dignity by providing them with a vital interest in the prosperity of the nation--a chance to save more than they spend, a chance to earn more than they need, a chance to buy what they wish.

"Hope," he wrote, "is the leaven without which the mind becomes inert, and tends only to corruption. As well might you look for the kindly fruits of the earth without sunshine in its season, as for any good product from the people without hope."[33] Southey defined his "true radical reform" not only as the nurture of hope

---

[32]Ibid., 209.

[33]Ibid., 215.

but also as a reform of the characters, morals, and religious beliefs of the poor. While government action could be effective, far more could be done by individuals and by benevolent groups toward the improvement of the nation's poor, but he warned repeatedly:

> . . . in every measure respecting the poor, we should avoid sudden and rapid changes . . . not only sudden changes ought to be avoided, but also any unnecessary variation in form and manner from long-existent institutions. . . . Great good may be brought about by means so easy and gradual as almost to be imperceptible.[34]

In this paper he also made more specific proposals for social reform. He urged a redistribution of real property which would provide small plots of land to honest laborers; this would instil incentives for pride and work and at the same time lessen the potentials for violent social upheaval. Government must immediately change its attitudes toward the working poor:

> Too long has that foul philosophy prevailed which considered men either as mere machines who fulfilled all the purposes of their existence if they furnished recruits for fleets and armies, and raised money sufficient for the exigencies of the state; or as mere animals, whose wants were all that were to be taken into the account of statistical economy.[35]

He urged the establishment of a system of savings banks in small towns which would act as a sinking fund toward the extinction of the poor rates. Certain temptations should be removed from the poor: an excessive number of public houses, disorderly meetings, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, gaming, and the like. Outdated game laws should be

---

[34]Ibid., 216.

[35]Ibid., 217.

repealed because minor offenses of poaching were often the first steps on a road of crime. In an uncharacteristically emotional tone he called for government action to limit or to abolish child labor practices, and he called for a special act of Parliament to abolish chimney sweeping by city children.

A major portion of the essay is devoted to advocacy of a system of national education for the lower classes. He believed it unwise for a government to pursue a policy of keeping the people in ignorance; accordingly he felt it was politically expedient for the government to retain strong control over education to assure that the poor would be inspired with respect for religion and the institutions of the nation. Such a system, of course, should include thorough instruction in the principles of the Church of England, for ". . . if governments are secure in proportion as the great body of the subjects are attached to the institutions of their country, it necessarily follows that national education ought to be conducted in conformity with those institutions."[36] Such a system could be effective and economical only if conducted upon the Madras scheme of the Reverend Andrew Bell and if rendered permanent and national by acts of Parliament.

Southey left little doubt that the system of education which he proposed would serve largely to preserve the Church of England, which he felt was threatened from outside by the growth of dissenting

---

[36]Ibid., 226.

groups and by the possible dangers inherent in the uncontrolled enthusiasm of some sects. The system would also generally improve the poor, and, most important, help to secure political stability in the state.

Southey's conclusion to the article was both practical and realistic. "The age for enacting Utopias," he wrote, "is gone by; but God forbid that we should cease to look on in hope and in faith to the gradual and possible amelioration of society."[37] The abolition of the slave trade and the discovery of vaccination were the eliminators of the greatest moral and physical evils in the world and demonstrated the fact that social progress was possible without political upheaval. "With education for all," R. W. Harris has written of this article, "with new laws to curb the radical press, with factory acts to protect children, and with a great programme of land settlement in place of the system of poor relief, Southey believed that the dangers from social discontent would pass."[38]

The particular object of attack in the essay was the Malthusian school of social philosophy, a domesday school which Southey called a "colloquitative diarrhoea of the intellect."[39] The essay is one of his strongest anti-Malthus statements as he wrote:

---

[37]Ibid., 223.

[38]R. W. Harris, p. 271.

[39]QR, XV, 234.

> To legislate upon theories of population would be as absurd as if a physician upon some theory of pneumatics were to set respiration to music, and order all his patients to regulate their breathings by the time. A numerous population is, like the Amreeta cup of Kehama, the greatest of evils or the greatest of blessings, according to the government which wields it. A people properly instructed in their duty, and trained up in the habits of industry and hope, which induce prudence, can never be too numerous while any portion of their country remains uncultivated, or any part of the habitable earth uncolonized.[40]

And, following a rather tenuous chain of logic, he concluded:

> The better the people are instructed, the happier and the better they will become; the happier they are, the more they will multiply; the more they multiply, the greater will be the wealth, and strength, and the security of the state; and these maxims are as certain as the laws of nature and of God.[41]

Two years later, early in 1818, Southey published a third essay on the poor entitled "On the Poor Laws" which was a review of reports of a Parliamentary select committee and two other works, one by John Davison of Oriel College, Observations on the Poor Laws, and the Earl of Sheffield's Observations on the Impolity, Abuses, and False Interpretations of the Poor Laws. The essay was based upon the same premise as the earlier papers--governments are secure only in proportion to the content of the masses--but this paper addressed more directly the inadequacies of the current poor relief system itself.[42]

Southey called for substantial revisions in the administration of the poor laws as an issue which transcended partisan differences.

---

[40]Ibid., 435.

[41]Ibid.

[42]This article is illuminated by a letter of Southey to Walter Scott and by two letters addressed to John Rickman; LC, IV, 296-299.

It was, he wrote, "perhaps the most arduous and the most important subject that ever came under the consideration of Parliament."[43] While the principles underlying the poor laws were honorable, their application and their scope had proved injurious, for they operated "as a perpetual bounty for the encouragement of pauperism;--nothing can be more anomalous, and nothing more contradictory to the general spirit of our institutions."[44] A continuation of the system, indeed, might ultimately threaten the right of lower and middle class Englishmen to hold property, and this, in turn, would contribute to revolutionary activity. Much of the essay is given over to a defense of the principle of individual property ownership, a principle threatened by taxation required to support the poor rates, as a bulwark of the English social structure.

Over the sixty years prior to 1818 Southey argued that governmental expenditures for poor relief had increased ninefold, and this, combined with the economic distresses of 1816 and 1817 had placed an intolerable burden upon the government itself because taxation contributed to social discontent. The unfair tax burden placed upon landowners in several counties to support poor relief had tended to retard agricultural production. Just as important, however, were the moral effects of an over-extended poor relief system--a system which had encouraged abuse in administration,

---

[43]QR, XVIII, 261.

[44]Ibid.

corruption, growth of pauperism. Nothing had been accomplished by the "work-house" system in England, which in many cases had proven only to be a refined form of slave labor.

While he admitted the good done by private groups and benevolent individuals, he opposed proposals for the founding of "Parochial Benefit Societies" within individual parishes because the potential for graft was too great, and the political consequences might prove dangerous. Such societies would constitute only a replacement of a government system with an unregulated private one. In addition he repeated his proposal for the establishment of savings banks for poor laborers as a way to abolish a poor relief system altogether. Further, he opposed the proposed appointment of salaried government officers in each parish to oversee relief because of the potential for cruelty and corruption. Southey gave careful consideration to the effects of the growing manufacturing system upon the poor rates and proposed an alternative system, carefully regulated by government, by which the manufacturer would deduct from each worker's pay a small amount, the use of which would be determined upon an individual basis by local magistrates--a controlled system of compulsory savings.

The increase of poverty in Britain, he argued, had not resulted significantly either from increases in population or from individual abuses as much as it had from an excess of liberality and a misapplication of relief on the part of the national and local governments. While the poor laws might be inadequate in the breadth of

their application, they were, in areas where administered, injurious because they were not applied stringently enough: ". . . nothing more is required than a strict adherence to the spirit of these laws as they exist, in making a broad and intelligible distinction between misfortune and misconduct, between the industrious and the dissolute poor."[45] The best reform which he felt could be instituted would be a system of poor relief under which, simply, the deserving poor would be fed, housed, and clothed at public expense better than the undeserving professional pauper, although certainly no individual should be allowed to starve. This would encourage the industrious laborer to seek and hold employment. One scholar has written of Southey's view:

> The right attitude of parental concern by the government would demand that work be created for those who could not find it for themselves. Southey anticipated Carlyle's horror of idleness among men, as much for its human as for its economic consequences. He would even say that any work, no matter how futile its results, was better than none.[46]

Once again Southey expressed deep concern for the condition of poor children and the aged, and he called for substantial prison reforms to rehabilitate promising prisoners, but he repeatedly hammered home the point that no one had, or should have, the right to be maintained by the public, only the privilege of being so maintained. This is the heart of his proposal for reform of the poor relief system:

---

[45]Ibid., 287.

[46]Schilling, p. 68.

> Not that a golden age is to be expected, in which poverty and disease shall disappear; even when the mother evil, the poor rates, shall be removed, more, much more remains to be done, before we effect even that improvement in the general weal which assuredly is within our reach. But let this mother evil be withdrawn, and it may fairly be expected that the particular spendthrift, the drunkard and the vagabond can expect is that they should be preserved from perishing by want. To put them in a better condition than that of the poorest labourer who earns his subsistence is an act of direct injustice and a discouragement to meritorious poverty. When the poor-house supplies for such guests no better fare than they deserve, the table will soon cease to be crowded.[47]

He continually admitted that there were vast dangers to the public peace even in the most gentle and gradual of social reforms, but unless the poor laws and their application were changed, he felt that high taxation would threaten the destruction of all the landed property in England, thus ". . . the question which arises is, in what manner to secure the public tranquillity without alarming any constitutional jealousy which might divide the opinion of the well-disposed, at a time when the strictest union of all such would be especially needful."[48] The question, in brief, was how to divorce politics from social reform while at the same time making full use of political power. During the period of proposed reform Southey advocated the use of a strong constabulary as a safeguard against insurrection and popular disturbances.[49]

In the next issue of the Quarterly Southey published yet

---

[47]QR, XVIII, 300-301.

[48]Ibid., 306.

[49]Ibid., 308.

another paper bearing upon the condition of the poor--"On the Means of Improving the People," a review of numerous contemporary pamphlets on the topic. Looking back over a century and a half, the modern reader might find Southey's proposals in this essay hopelessly ingenuous. He seemed to shy away from offering specific legislative proposals and suggested instead that all might be set right only with proper education and religious training for the people. He repeated his proposals for reform of the poor laws from his previous essay and reiterated his belief that the existing laws, with only minor legislative modifications to improve their administration, would work effectively.

Once again he maintained that the poor laws in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had contributed to the deterioration of the habits and character of the English peasantry and placed unfair taxes upon those in the middle and upper ranks of society. He decried the decay of the feudal system which, despite its obvious inequities, had at least bound the poor to the land and to the landholders and contributed to the stability of society. The wounds created by the gradual dissolution of feudalism and its vestiges had not been healed, and no such ordered system had arisen to replace old feudal ties; the demise of feudalism necessarily gave rise to increased pauperism and thus necessitated a poor relief system which, at first, was designed only as a temporary measure. The system established under Elizabeth as a temporary expedient had become permanent and had not sufficiently changed with the centuries.

In all of this one finds in Southey a frank admiration of a feudal system in which every individual had a fixed and secure place. Schilling has noted in this connection that

> Southey felt that the worker of his time had paid dearly for his independence through the loss of these feudal attachments. These were obviously no longer possible for the manufacturing laborer; but even the peasant who remained on the land found his status changed when the commercial principle was applied to farming . . . a useful and respectable class was degraded from the rank of small farmers to that of day labourers. Here the humanitarian wonders again at the human cost, the deterioration of pride and self-respect, and the death of hope.[50]

"On the Means of Improving the People" also provided Southey an occasion for expressing one of his favorite themes--one which the modern reader might find amusing--the evils of alehouses, the increase of which, he wrote in serious indignation, was "surely the effect and the cause of an increased and increasing depravity of manners." The country alehouse was "a seminary for idleness, misery, and pauperism," and he called for a reduction in their number through more conscientious enforcement of laws by local magistrates and through more stringent licensing practices. For the poor laborer, in Southey's view, the alehouse "is a place of pure unmingled evil . . . the diminution of these houses is one of the most practicable and efficient means of real radical reform."[51]

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this article, however, is Southey's anatomy of the lower class and his extensive analysis of

---

[50]Schilling, pp. 63-64.

[51]QR, XIX, 82, 84.

the causes of pauperism, much of which is an expansion and restatement of his earlier poor law essays. Pauperism in England, he asserted forcefully, was caused not primarily by defects in the institutions of society or its system of laws but by defects on the part of the lower class itself: "misconduct," "want of frugality," "want of forethought," "want of prudence," "want of principle," and "want of hope." Further, he felt it the paramount duty of the government to see that "hope and good principles" are given the poor--"and if they are not followed by prudence and prosperity, as their natural consequence, the evil will be of that kind for which the sufferer has nothing to reproach himself."[52] The potential depravity of the human being he felt amply illustrated in the infectious miseries of the lower classes: the vices of idleness, drunkenness, gambling, and cruelty.

As both the Quarterly essays and the Colloquies make abundantly clear, Southey believed that most of the current social problems of England stemmed from basic failures of the English Reformation, especially "the platform of general instruction was not laid (as it should have been) when we passed from popery to protestantism." The early Anglican establishment failed in organization and neglected to establish a regimen of instruction which over the centuries would have instilled an incentive for work in all classes. The monasteries were dissolved when they should have been reformed, modified, and

---

[52]Ibid., 85.

made useful as educational facilities. The reformation had been effected too hastily, and the effects of the rapid social changes attendant upon it would be felt even throughout the nineteenth century.[53]

Although Southey did admit that much had been done in the eighteenth century to educate the children of indigents and the working poor, such efforts had lacked a firm, broad, and permanent foundation, and he noted the effects of large, unplanned metropolitan areas in the propagation of moral diseases. The latter problem, he felt, could be largely corrected by more efficient administration of the constabulary, medical practice, and moral instruction. Once again, he was emotionally touched by the plight of poor children in large cities.

True social reform, he reiterated, must always begin with moral reform, for moral laws are not less immutable than the physical laws of the universe:

> The seasons are not linked together in more inevitable sequence than human actions and their consequences; and trees do not more certainly bring forth fruit after their kind than good and evil are attendant upon virtue and vice. . . . There can be no permanent prosperity unless it be founded upon industry, virtue, and religion; the public weal, as well as the welfare and happiness of individuals rests upon these, and rests upon them wholly; in proportion as the people become idle, immoral, and irreligious, the state becomes insecure, its base is undermined. . . .[54]

This does not, however, prove Southey a utopian critic, for he

---

[53]Ibid., 87.

[54]Ibid., 91.

recognized the frailties of human character and that moral reform could only improve, not perfect, that character. In addition, he consistently criticized utopian schemes of social reform as contradictory to the principle of individual liberty:

> . . . in all ideal schemes of government a greater superintendence is supposed on the part of the magistrates, and a greater interference with the actions of individuals and the occupations of private life, than has ever been exercised under the most despotic monarchies.[55]

Revolutionary France was his prime example of utopia gone mad; the moral reforms with which it began ended in atheism, skepticism, and rationalism, and the political liberties which it promised led to anarchy and then to tyranny.

Finally, Southey's "On the Means of Improving the People" contained a number of other general proposals--including greater rights for women in English society. Again he attacked Malthus, the current prison system, and the periodical press. At the basis of all is his continuing faith in education:

> Education alone will not do everything; but it is the base upon which everything must rest, and unless we lay the foundation here, we are building upon sand. Are we contented with our institutions, civil and religious? have we risen and thriven under them, with God's blessing, and by their means? have they been tried and sifted in controversy, proved and approved by experience, purified, and matured and sanctified by time? why then do we omit any possible means of engrafting them upon the hearts of every succeeding generation, of amalgamating them with their moral and intellectual being?[56]

---

[55]Ibid., 92.

[56]Ibid., 94.

And he again stressed that such reforms could be effected with relatively little upset: ". . . the greatest and most beneficial of all changes may be produced gradually and surely with the least possible innovation, and by the easiest and most unobjectionable means."[57] One cannot help but be impressed, however, by Southey's failure to take account of the difficulties with which such reforms might be effected and the unforeseen consequences which might attend them.

His political essay "Parliamentary Reform" (QR, XVI, 1816) touched upon a number of reform proposals which he had urged in his poor law essays. Most significant here is his belief that current proposals for a radical reform of Parliament and election practices as a means to social reform would be ineffectual because they were too radical and too rapid. Parliamentary reform, and all of the reforms under that general title, would not in his view abolish influence in elections or unfair pensions and sinecures or "special interests" in government administration; it would serve only to "aggravate every ill which it pretends to cure; and instead of relieving the distress of any one branch of the community bring infinite distress upon all."[58] The essay also makes clear Southey's belief that social reform was not a political or legislative matter as much as a matter of individual morality. The government, he

---

[57]Ibid., 105.

[58]QR, XVI, 260ff.

asserted, had little responsibility for the social and economic distresses following the termination of the war, and alleviation of such distresses lay not only beyond the province of good government but beyond its capability. Only temporary measures could be initiated and enforced by the government to relieve unemployment, specifically through a system of public works, but in the long term satisfactory and permanent reform had to begin with a change in the morality and attitude of the people themselves.[59] This article, in addition is primarily negative in nature as Southey sought to show the dangers of a lack of social reform and, more importantly, the dangers of what he considered to be the wrong kinds of reform.

Another political article published in 1817, "Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection" (QR, XVI, 1817), is significant for Southey's prediction, which has not yet been proven entirely erroneous, that the manufacturing system, because of its own inbred evils and because of increasing foreign competition, would inevitably falter and decline in Britain. The rise in unemployment in 1816-1817 was primarily the fault of manufacturers who short-sightedly over-extended and overspeculated during the war years. "Instead of cautiously proportioning the supply to the demand," he charged, "they acted as if the demand would always keep pace with the supply."[60] The manufacturing system itself--British capitalism--not Parliament

---

[59]Ibid., 275-276

[60]QR, XVI, 544.

or the national administration, must bear the burden of guilt in bringing on the problems of unemployment, poor working conditions, exploitation of workers, pauperism, idleness, crime, and hopelessness in the second decade of the century.[61]

II. NATIONAL EDUCATION

At the very center of all of Southey's social commentary in the Quarterly and elsewhere is his long-standing belief in a permanent program of national parochial education, and this belief finds its clearest and most forceful expression in two articles published eighteen years apart: "Bell and Lancaster's Systems of Education" (QR, VI, 1811) and "Elementary Teaching" (QR, XXXIX, 1829). In these papers he conveniently distilled his proposals for education which are found scattered throughout the poor law essays.

---

[61]Southey's group of essays dealing with the poor laws and related topics should also be seen in light of an article entitled "Works on England" (QR, XV, 1816). This paper, a review of nine travel books by foreign travellers in England, provided, like Letters of Espriella, an outside view of English society, and the paper contains one of the best examples of Southey's frenzied fear of revolution and his belief in the necessity for broad social reforms to curb the danger of revolt. "Works on England" also provides one of his more astute analyses, without the aid of John Rickman, of the economic problems created by the transition from war to peace in 1815-1816, and he surveyed the existing social conditions which he felt had made England ripe for revolution--mainly unemployment brought on by increasing use of machinery and the end of the war--conditions exacerbated by an uncontrolled, incendiary radical press. Before any reforms could be contemplated in Britain, he felt that laws against sedition, conspiracy, and unlawful meetings should be rigorously enforced and strengthened.

The first of these papers is one of his most important and famous reviews, for through it he found a means both to attack The Edinburgh Review and to argue the case for a strong government in Britain.[62] In the four or five years prior to this 1811 review there had been established in England a large number of schools for the poor through the efforts of the Quaker Joseph Lancaster, who had supposedly developed and refined a system of teaching large numbers of children through one master aided by a number of assistants. While this system was relatively cheap it had made little provision for religious instruction. This lack had alarmed supporters of the Church of England, including, of course, Robert Southey, and, Geoffrey Carnall has noted, "the prospect of a whole generation growing up not educated in the principles of the State

---

[62]In the controversy which had developed by 1811 between Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster and their followers, the Edinburgh had consistently taken the side of Lancaster. An article by Sydney Smith in the Edinburgh for November, 1810, in which Lancaster's system of education was extravagantly praised probably confirmed Southey in his hostility toward Lancaster. Much of his heated defense of Bell must thus be seen in light of his hostility toward the Scottish review as well. See SL, II, 236; LC, II, 316, 319; Carnall, pp. 135-136. Southey's article was considerably toned down by Gifford, who wrote John Murray, "I am afraid at Southey's violence and must leave out the passages which attack the ER so personally" (Shine, p. 26). In 1812 Southey enlarged his Quarterly article into a pamphlet entitled The Origin, Nature, and Object of the New System of Education, which has recently been reprinted (1972; Augustus M. Kelley, ed.). Southey's long friendship with Bell can clearly be traced through his letters; See LC, III, 224, 319, 320; IV, 113, 243, 267, 268n, 269n, 274n; V, 104, 122-123, 219, 228; VI, 114, 122, 150, 151, 179, 180, 212, 230, 277n, 342, 358, 363; SL, I, 418; II, 237, 250, 255, 289, 290, 377; III, 130, 226, 326; IV, 222, 327, 339, 344, 355; NL, II, 33, 57.

Church seemed equivalent to a prospect of revolution."[63] By 1811 a counter-movement had begun in the form of a "National School Society" which advocated the foundation of a system of schools based upon the monitorial Madras method of the Anglican clergyman, Andrew Bell.

By 1811, also, there had developed the controversy concerning who--Dr. Bell or Mr. Lancaster--had actually invented the monitorial system. In his article Southey charged that Lancaster had stolen many facets of the system from Bell and had changed the system for the worse. He was especially critical of the lack of religious and moral training in the Lancaster system, and to him "the religious neutrality of his [Lancaster's] schools was tantamount to favouring dissenting principles. The Church Establishment was already in danger, and Lancaster's school were adding to the danger."[64]

In his article Southey provided a detailed account of the origin and development of Bell's Madras method and school, which had begun in 1789, and he castigated Lancaster for his bold thefts. He did not neglect to treat the political and social aspects of the question. Bell's revolutionary innovation had been to use the

---

[63]Carnall, p. 134.

[64]Ibid., p. 135; Cf. SL, II, 250-251. Southey's advocacy of the inclusion of religious training in accordance with the doctrines of the Anglican church indicates that he had changed his mind somewhat since he had taken an opposite position in the Annual Review five years earlier. See AR for 1806, pp. 278-282. He enlarged the Quarterly article into a pamphlet which he originally intended to dedicate to the editor of the Edinburgh.

students themselves as teaching assistants, partly because of the lack of qualified masters in India. When he returned to Europe Bell published in 1797 a pamphlet, "An Experiment in Education, made at the Male Asylum of Madras; suggesting a system by which a school or family may teach itself under the superintendence of the master or parent." In 1803 Lancaster countered with his pamphlet "Improvements in Education." Both in his schools in England and in his treatise it is obvious that Lancaster had taken much from Bell without giving credit.

For Southey the most serious part of the controversy was that Lancaster had proposed non-doctrinal religious training and that he seemed to have minimized the importance of such instruction altogether. After severely criticizing Lancaster's elaborate system of rewards and punishment, Southey went on to define his own philosophy of education in a statement echoed in essays published later in the decade:

> A state is secure in proportion as the subjects are attached to the laws and institutions of their country; it ought, therefore, to be the first and paramount business of the state to provide that the subjects shall be educated conformably to those institutions; that they shall be "trained up in the way they should go"; that is, in attachment to the national government and the national religion.[65]

The system of English polity, he stressed, consisted of both church and state--"the two pillars of the temple of our prosperity"--

---

[65] QR, VI, 289.

they must either stand together or fall together, and the fall of either would "draw after it the ruin of the finest fabric ever yet reared by human wisdom under divine favour." For an educator to propose a system of national education "of which it is the avowed and distinguishing principle that the children shall not be instructed in the national religion is to propose what is palpably absurd."[66]

The spread of the Madras system and the cause of national education had been greatly retarded by reaction in England to the French Revolution. Southey, however, despite his pathological fear of revolution, did not share this sentiment--public instruction, unless misguided or badly superintended, would not be a step towards revolution--and those who opposed national education on these grounds "fell into the grievous error of supposing that the ignorance of the subject was the best security of the government."[67] The example of national education in Scotland, he asserted, proved conclusively that such a system would be the most powerful weapon in the arsenal of safe, effective social reform.

Through the efforts of Bell and his associates Southey believed that education for the first time had been reduced to an exact and practical science, and he called for the intimate connection of the school and church establishments. A national network of parish

---

[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid., 293.

schools, perhaps with a standardized curriculum, he believed would form a firm foundation for social improvement as well as a secure bulwark of the state. The neglect of education and the ignorance of the poor he believed the root of all the evils for which the poor laws were but an inadequate alleviation as well as the main cause of those offences which made necessary stringent criminal laws. In the long term it would always prove easier and cheaper to prevent crime, ignorance, and poverty than to alleviate them after they had become dangerous social evils. Only through the inclusion of training in the doctrines of the church could such a system be rendered most effective; dissenters might have their own schools, but not on a national basis nor supported through state or church funds.[68]

Southey's belief in the efficacy of national education remained substantially unchanged in 1829 when he reviewed for the Quarterly a number of books and pamphlets dealing with methods in elementary education. In this article, "Elementary Education" (QR, XXXIX, 1829), he surveyed the history and abuses of the scholastic system of education in Europe, and he discussed the methods of elementary education in sixteenth-century England, particularly condemning the practice of strict corporal punishments. Also stressed are the advantages of gentler education in the nunneries as opposed to the monasteries before the Reformation, the excellencies of William Lily's Grammatices Rudimenta, varying methods of teaching Latin, and

---

[68]Ibid., 303ff.

the current state of elementary education in Scotland and Ireland. A great deal of the paper, however, was written in praise of Andrew Bell and the Madras system.

The specific question which Southey treated in this essay was the application of the Bell system to classical schools and colleges, for he believed that national education on the higher levels was fully as important to social reform as a national system of elementary instruction. He recognized that the existing universities of England were unable to meet either the increase in population or the broad changes in the social matrix, and he felt the strong need for a third university in London which would assure a generalized program of study for those who, for various reasons, were unable to attend Oxford or Cambridge. If such a university be established for the common man it must be based upon the proper religious and national principles and provide both useful and classical learning. Religious instruction could be made palatable to dissenters and Catholics alike, since the national religion, Southey believed, adhered simply to the basic tenets of Christianity. Specifically in the article he supported the much touted proposal to found a "King's College" in London.

Perhaps the most striking portion of this 1829 treatment of education is that in which Southey restated his position concerning mass instruction with much greater emphasis and clarity than he had done in his previous papers. If the masses are educated rightly, he asserted, there could be no possibility of educating them too much:

> If the foundation is properly laid in religious principles, it is then as impossible that a man, whatever may be his condition in life, can be too learned and too wise, as it is for him to be too healthy, too active, and too strong. In proportion as he acquires a love of knowledge, will he cease to be attracted by meaner things; in proportion as he attains wisdom, will he be more fully sensible of his duties toward God and man, and better disposed, and, under certain circumstances, better able to perform them, if he has been instructed in them fully and betimes.[69]

While a little learning is a dangerous thing, a little learning everyone will and must have--the only way to avert the danger is to provide all the facilities for acquiring more.

Southey's confidence in what a national system of instruction could do for British society was unshakeable, and, perhaps, overly simplistic, for he believed it a panacea for the remedy of all social problems. One can, however, detect more than a slight hint that public instruction would be an efficacious means by which the government could exercise greater control over the people:

> The maxim that it is politic to keep the people in ignorance, will not be maintained in any country where the rulers are conscious of upright intentions, and confident likewise in the intrinsic worth of the institutions which it is their duty to uphold, knowing those institutions to be founded on the rock of righteous principles. They know, also, that the best means of preserving them from danger is to promote the increase of general information as to make the people perceive how intimately their own well-being depends upon the stability of the state, thus making them wise to obedience.[70]

In his advocacy of general education Southey did not minimize the importance of proper training for the gentry; indeed, in

---

[69]QR, XXXIX, 126.

[70]Ibid., 138.

proportion to the increase of instruction for the masses, education for the higher classes should be rendered even more effective, since the practical constitution of British society accorded actual power and immeasurable influence to both the hereditary nobility and to the country gentry, the national repositories of leadership. The general weal, he believed, demands that the influence, power, and privileges of the upper classes be carefully preserved, but they can be preserved only if their possessors are worthy and capable of maintaining and perpetuating them:

> In a country like this, the constitution cannot be kept together by the attraction of cohesion. . . . Whatever is for the general good, whatever is just and reasonable, will ultimately stand: but unless they who shall be the depositories of this power, when the storm rages, are so qualified as to make it manifest that it is for the general good, and therefore reasonable and just and necessary that they should continue in their hereditary station, they must fall. It is no wisdom to dissemble this; the way to overcome danger is to provide against it, and expect it, and meet it resolutely.[71]

III. EMIGRATION, INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE

Most of the social reforms which Southey proposed in the pages of the Quarterly were temporary expedients when compared with his two main obsessions--education, which was inseparable in his mind from religion, and emigration. Bernard Schilling has commented that

> Southey professed to have outgrown his pantisocratic enthusiasm in later life, but he never forgot its basic command: leave the evils at home and go somewhere else to make things better. Probably not realizing how much of Malthus he really believed,

---

[71]Ibid., 139.

> Southey was sure that population would go on increasing and that the poor would multiply with time. Therefore a regular system of emigration was "as necessary in the economy of a state as of an ant-hill, or bee-hive."[72]

Many of the pressing social and economic problems of the late 1820s in particular Southey felt could be eased immediately through a controlled and systematic emigration of the poor from England to her colonies, and scattered comments to this effect are found throughout the essays and in an 1828 review of a report of a Parliamentary select committee which was then examining the issue of Irish emigration into England. This article, entitled simply "Emigration Report" (QR, XXXVII, 1828) and appearing the year before Colloquies, is one of his last sustained efforts in the field of social commentary in the Quarterly. The paper was an analysis of the condition in 1828 of agricultural and industrial workers, and it painted a gloomy prospect for the future; it is also of some significance because it made apparent again Southey's long-standing disagreement with the domesday school of Malthusian thought. The population of England, he believed, was neither too great nor insupportable, but it was redundant in the division of labor, and this redundancy both arose from and injured the system of domestic trade in the nation.

This essay, perhaps more than any other which he had written earlier, demonstrated his clear perception of the ill effects of

---

[72]Schilling, p. 69.

the industrial revolution which by 1828 were becoming more and more apparent. Certainly he admitted that the growth of mechanized production practices, despite its obvious evils, had provided certain incalculable benefits--a better quality of goods, better working conditions for some, and a larger market stimulated by a larger volume of production. At base, however, he perceived two problems: unrestricted commercial speculation and competition which had served to glut many foreign and domestic markets, and the manufacturing system which had helped to produce a too rapid growth in the population of the lower classes--this, in turn, had given rise to greater misery and widespread poverty.

The age of machinery, in the last analysis, would be found to be an evil one, and the growth of industry he felt analogous to the spread of an insidious, cancerous disease which had not only blighted the English countryside with its factory towns but had dangerously weakened the very fabric of society.[73] Because machinery was in competition with human labor the disease would increase because those whose sole object is immediate profit would continue to exploit the workers unless checked by legislative enactments.

---

[73]Southey often described the new age with the imagery of disease. He has Sir Thomas More say, for example, in Colloquies that the manufacturing system "is a wen, a fungous excrescence from the body politic; the growth might have been checked in time; but now it has acquired so great a bulk, its nerves have branched so widely, and the vessels of the tumour are so inosculated into some of the principle veins and arteries of the natural system, that to remove it by absorption is impossible, and excision would be fatal." To such a conclusion Montesinos had no reply. Colloquies, I, p. 171.

Unlike his earlier essays, in this one Southey called for more direct and decisive governmental interference in the solution of social problems:

> The desire of gain . . . causes a continual and intense application of inventive ingenuity in this direction, and a power which might have satisfied the ambition of Archimedes is not at its command. But in proportion as improvements in machinery are effected, the competition becomes greater; over-production is the sure result; the increase of population goes on; increase of pauperism, and all its attendant evils, follow;--and who can tell where the misery, and the danger, and the ruin, are to end?[74]

The state of the agricultural worker Southey felt still to be in a serious decline because wages had not kept pace with inflated prices. There was, he argued, an enormous disproportion between the wages of farm workers and industrial workers--an injustice which he traced to the dissolution of the feudal system and the development of a less rigid and less stable system in its place. Traditionally law and government in Europe had never been equitable to workers:

> This injustice is traceable in its origin to the laws, which, in their relation to the inferior classes of society, were, throughout all European governments, made by the strong against the weak, the natural consequence of government founded upon conquest.[75]

The early statutes of Edward III, Henry VII, and Elizabeth, though insuring the social order and peace, were at base grossly unfair, for "their constant tendency was to keep the poor labourer in the caste

---

[74]QR, XXXVII, 548.

[75]Ibid., 549.

wherein he was born."[76] A limited degree of social mobility, Southey strongly implied, was always necessary to keep a society flexible and dynamic, and therefore stable; gradual social mobility, simply, is always a safe-guard against revolution.

Southey further noted the need for an annual budget of government and for stronger control by the government over private and corporate spending, and he castigated Pitt for not taking action in this area when it might have prevented the problems which arose later in the century. The economic problems of 1819 to 1828 might well have been brought under control, but Liverpool's government had failed to do so. The difficulties of these years had been further aggravated by a massive influx of Irish laborers who, "as soon as they are landed, spread themselves over the country in all directions, ready to undertake any kind of work for any wages that may be given them; and if they can get no wages, willing to labour for merely their day's food."[77] This Southey felt grossly unfair to the English worker who could not work so cheaply, and, of course, he feared that the importation of hordes of Irishmen might constitute a significant danger to the government itself. It was a problem for which he could find no solution, for he admitted that it would be a cruel and miserable expedient to turn the poor Irishmen back to Ireland.

---

[76]Ibid., 552.

[77]Ibid., 560.

Upon one point Southey was in agreement with Malthus--"the poor will continue to increase and multiply, notwithstanding the schemes of madmen and the devices of men who are the opprobrium of humanity." The drop in the rate of mortality over the past century had accelerated the increase in population, but instead of natural or artificial checks upon population growth, Southey proposed--as Malthus had also done--the rather simple-minded solutions of voluntary deferment of marriages among the poor and of voluntary moral restraints.[78] The duty of the state, in addition, was not to seek to control the rate of increase of its population, but to find methods of channelling and distributing that increased population productively.

The increase in population combined with the displacement of human labor by machines could only lead to an insupportable crisis, economically and socially, by mid-century. Again he stressed the point that it is not machinery nor human ingenuity but the greed of men, stimulated by an overly competitive system, that created a crisis situation:

> So long then as men in trade are actuated by selfishness, which is the spirit of trade, and as competition, which is the life of trade, continues unrestrained, so long will a manufacturing country be liable to the distress that arises from having overstocked its markets; and a great part of the ingenuity of this country, and no small part of its capital also, will continually be employed in bringing on this distress.[79]

The manufacturing system is an evil only in its abuse.

---

[78]Ibid., 572.

[79]Ibid., 573.

Southey's assessment of the state of the nation was that the current circumstances of British society indicated a continued increase of pauperism and even seasons of economic prosperity and industrial growth would have the certain effect of accelerating poverty among many segments of the population. To protect Britain he called for strong governmental controls upon immigration to England from Ireland and from other colonies and other countries as well as expanding and encouraging emigration from Britain.

Two other Quarterly articles are of importance to Southey's social criticism: "Moral and Political State of the British Empire" (QR, XLIV, 1831) and "Dymond--Principles of Morality" (QR, XLIV, 1831). The former, although more politically than socially oriented, provided some further closing notes of social comment which are of significance. Here he argued upon the basis of historical precedent that without strong central government there could be no social or political justice in Britain, and, as noted in the preceding chapter of this study, he provided his evaluation of the performance and accomplishments of the cabinets and ministers of his age. Above all others he praised the political accomplishments and skills of Lord Liverpool, but he also gave the Tory leader a great deal of credit for being the one prime minister since the turn of the century who had been acutely sensitive to the evils which abuses of the poor laws and the growth of pauperism were causing. Further, only Liverpool had really recognized

> that as improvements in machinery were made, and our manufactures were extended, the national wealth did not increase in so great a proportion as the population which those manufactures collected, and which, by the effect of the manufacturing system, (regulated, or rather irregulated as it is), was rendered improvident, reckless, and dissolute when in full employ, miserable and helpless when, by any vicissitude or reverse of trade, thrown out of work,--discontented and dangerous at all times.[80]

Nor had Liverpool been blind to the perilous tendencies of social experimenters. But, except in his opposition to Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform, Liverpool, despite his excellent intentions, perception, and clear judgment, was a "timid, temporizing minister" who did not sufficiently look at the long-range effects of current social problems.

Southey was particularly interested in inserting into this paper an attack upon political economists in general and upon Jeremy Bentham and his "philosophico-philotelon-philanthropy . . ." in particular, and the schemes of utopian reformers were also objects of his wrath. Political economy was to him a pseudo-science--solutions to social problems, he felt, could never be reduced to neat, concise formulae, and theoretical schemes could never adequately take into account the fluctuating variables of human need, human emotion, and human irrationality. Only a man of weak mind could suppose that national affairs could be conducted either safely or wisely by academics alone. To the cold statistics of economic theorem a human, moral, and religious element should be added. "He was certain," Bernard Schilling has concluded,

---

[80]QR, XLIV, 274.

> that no economist had as yet seen the proper relationship among men which would secure justice for all. No ponderous economic treatise had taught that the state of nature was not a state of hostility and war and that the interest of man was best secured through unity with his fellows.[81]

Southey believed that the British government, although to a much lesser degree than other European governments, had for an entire century committed the basic mistake of measuring national prosperity and happiness in terms of national productivity and wealth, an attitude which he felt reflected the political philosophies and policies of the younger Pitt and Lord Goderich in particular. Although admirable efforts had been made since 1800 in the collection of information about social problems, and although there existed an abundance of research concerning economic difficulties and the moral state of the population, insufficient action had been taken by public and private leadership. Even though efforts had been made by the government in the establishment of benefit societies and savings banks, the strengthening of the church, and "something (would it had been more!) towards the mitigation of white slavery in the cotton-mills, by limiting the hours of children's labour, and checking the inhuman practice of night work" much more was needed, and immediately. The lack of government action, however, he did partially excuse upon the grounds that statesmen and ministers had had to bear a crushing burden in conducting the war and in confronting the great political issues of the period. The legal

---

[81]Schilling, p. 73.

reforms instituted by Robert Peel, he felt, would stand as a high point of both political and social reform.[82] In his attack upon the radical press Southey once more expressed his fear of the discontented masses taking concerted action against the government, particularly in the last quarter of 1830 when agricultural disturbances were pronounced. The press, he left little doubt, must bear a full portion of guilt in instigating some real social problems--crime, rioting, insubordination.

The second essay in the same issue of the Quarterly "Dymond--Principles of Morality," provided a further treatment of the moral responsibilities of government to individual citizens, the efficacy of property ownership, and the broad effects of the economic revolution of the century. Here again Southey defended the principle of social inequality based upon wealth, property, and education as possessing greater potential for justice than for abuse of justice. When such inequality is excessive, however, certain dangers become apparent. The disproportion of wealth distribution in his own age he felt was a direct result of the growth of capitalism under the industrial revolution and not a result of the traditional gradations of British society. Specifically this excessive inequality

> had diminished the happiness, and in the same degree the security of the commonwealth, by ruining the race of small farmers, thus destroying that yeomanry in which no inconsiderable part of the

---

[82]Ibid., pp. 279ff.

> strength of England formerly consisted. It is now ruining the small tradesmen. . . .[83]

The article, then, contained one of Southey's clearest indictments of the manufacturing system which he felt was establishing a new aristocracy, an oligarchy of trade, enriching a few great traders to the ruin of small tradesmen, the bedrock of commercial society, glutting foreign and domestic markets with goods poor in quality, throwing out of work thousands of manual workers in the manufacturing districts, shifting the demographic pattern of England, and indirectly exacerbating the distresses of the agricultural population. The industrial revolution had not been beneficially progressive:

> --if there be thus a general and growing distress, with which a growing discontent necessarily keeps pace, then indeed, those who have what they call a stake in the country, and desire no revolution in the state, would do well to consider whether it be desirable to extend this revolution in commerce, which renders men disaffected by reducing them to want; and whether it be wise to promote those revolutions of opinion which are generally forwarded in the beginning by men of good intentions, but are presently directed by persons of the very worst, and can end only in anarchy and ruin--the misery of the whole existing generation, the degradation of the English nation, and the downfall of Great Britain.[84]

Southey's views on the social importance of widespread education are consistent in this paper with those expressed in his Bell and Lancaster review twenty years earlier. Here, however, he strongly argued against the utilitarian philosophy of education

---

[83]Ibid., p. 96.

[84]Ibid., pp. 97-98.

which would exclude the teaching of classical languages. "Horace and Cicero, Homer and Thucydides, are to be discarded," he complained bitterly, "so that room may be made for the Malthuses,--and the MacCulochs,--and the Jerry of all Jeremies!"[85] A study of the classical authors, he believed, was necessary to inculcate moral and patriotic principles. Again he defended the Madras system of Bell and called for its extension to all levels of instruction, and he stressed education not only as a viable means to social reform and improvement, but also as the parental obligation of government.

Other issues treated in the article included capital punishment and penal reform. While he hailed reforms that had eliminated the death penalty for relatively minor offenses, he did argue that for many centuries British penal laws had been "most atrociously inhuman and unjust." While significant reforms had been instituted over the last century the tendency of these reforms had been to swing from one extreme to another, from too much severity to too much leniency in punishment. In his view the best method to pursue in lessening the occurrence of major and capital offenses would be more stringent prosecution of minor offenders.[86]

In many respects Southey's social commentary in the Quarterly indicated a desire for a return to a society with a feudalistic base,

---

[85]Ibid., p. 105.

[86]Twenty years earlier Southey had called for similar reforms. See EAR for 1808, part 1, pp. 152-157, for 1810, part 1, pp. 232-240, and for 1811, part 1, pp. 151-163.

although he seemed unaware that this contradicted his strong humanitarian belief in the freedom and dignity of the individual. His obsession with social order led him to yearn for a rigid social structure in which every individual held securely his own station, governed by a natural aristocracy, while at the same time enjoying the maximum degree of personal liberty commensurate with the overall safety of the state. While in this sense he was something of a utopian his religious beliefs appear to have prevented his agreement with contemporary reformers. Schilling notes that Southey

> could not help believing that the earth was not the permanent home of man, that in the nature of things evil would always exist, that men could only hope to improve conditions somewhat and never change them utterly, and that the best to be expected was an amount of good greater than the unavoidable evil.[87]

He could, for example, admit that Robert Owen was correct in his practical benevolence and his schemes for employing the poor in agricultural and co-operative associations, but because Owen's schemes lacked a religious basis Southey could not fully endorse them. His religious faith made it impossible for him to break entirely with the existing social order. Only religion could preserve the social system from total disintegration.

Southey also believed that history moved forward in an inexorable cycle of human progress and that gradual, evolutionary social progress was almost inevitable as man grew in population, wealth, power, and knowledge. In this respect at least one scholar has

---

[87]Schilling, p. 71.

labelled him a Kantian.[88] His belief in the gradual cycle of human progress was, however, always heavily qualified wherever it appeared in print and was frequently buried deeply under gloomy complaints about the problems of the contemporary scene.

Perhaps the greatest problem for Southey was that of reconciling the evils of industrialism and the advantages which it had given to Britain early in the century. Without the industrial system Napoleon could never have been defeated; on the other hand, the evils

---

[88]R. W. Harris has noted that "Southey learnt from Coleridge to admire Kant. What particularly appealed to him was his view of history as the great unfolding of a rational plan. . . ." The ultimate object of the plan was the attainment of a perfect state of civil constitution for society in its internal relations in which human nature could be fully developed. Harris also notes that "what he disliked about Kant was that he supposed that man could be guided by reason alone, without the aid of religion." In addition, Harris makes the interesting observation that Southey's Colloquies and Thomas Babington Macaulay's review of that work represent together the two dominant socio-political schools of thought of the day. "If Southey may be said to have summarised the tory philosophy of 1829, Macaulay certainly summarised the whig philosophy." Basically stated, Southey's view of the prospects of society was a gloomy one while Macaulay was more optimistic. While Southey heavily qualified his belief in gradual human improvement Macaulay was entirely confident that there was no reason for human progress to be retarded or checked by the social problems of the nineteenth century. Harris, pp. 282ff.

In many ways Francis Jeffrey's review of Letters from England anticipated Macaulay's later criticism of Colloquies. Like Macaulay, Jeffrey had noted Southey's deficient knowledge of political economics and his weaknesses and contradictions in logic. See ER, 11(1808), 370-390; 50(1830), 528-565. Jack Simmons has also observed that the connection between Jeffrey's and Macaulay's criticism is striking: "What lay behind both was the eternal antagonism between the Liberal, the convinced believer in social progress, unchecked and unlimited, and the Tory who saw at the same time a little of the suffering it caused." Simmons, ed., Letters from England, p. xxiii.

which it had created were immeasurable and unprecedented. The problem which Southey confronted, and was never able to resolve, was how the social evils of industrialism might be gradually eliminated while at the same time retaining and expanding the social benefits of an industrialized society. He could offer temporary measures for the short term problems and propose national education and moral reforms for the long term, but the problem, one social historian has observed, "remained to modify the evils by some form of paternalism, without attempting to put back the clock of progress."[89]

Despite his humanitarian nature, the measures which Southey proposed in the Quarterly Review for the alleviation of social ills were always at base authoritarian--they were also entirely consistent with his political views which to many modern readers may often seem almost fascist in nature. His authoritarianism resulted probably from his inability to be optimistic about most things. Often, as Jack Simmons has observed, "like a Jeremiah and Carlyle he comes to take a ghastly pleasure in breathing forth his prophecies of doom. It is unattractive, on occasion absurd; but seen against the background of his time, it is not unintelligible."[90] From 1812 he came to view higher taxation, equitably distributed, and more governmental power exercised through bold and decisive actions as prime necessities to the modern state. Although private societies and

---

[89]Harris, p. 276.

[90]Simmons, Southey, p. 153.

individuals might do much and should bear the burden of labor in correcting social abuses, governmental sanction would in the final analysis be the only effective course to pursue. This call for governmental influence and action increased as he grew older and as social ills intensified in the 1820s and 1830s. It should also be noted that many of his ideas in social criticism anticipated those of the Young England Movement of the 1830s and 1840s, and at least one historian has noted the similarities between Southey's social commentary and that of F. W. Faber, John Robert Manners, and George Smythe.[91]

Southey's Quarterly essays, however, do confirm William Haller's contention that even in the midst of his Toryism Southey remained something of a radical, unwilling to accept things as they were and guardedly admitting the endless potentials of the human spirit:

> The radicalism of the youthful Southey had been part of the boyish expectation of Utopia through political revolution. The radicalism of the later Southey was the belief that progress depended on the state of men's hearts and minds, and that it could and should be brought about by the leaders and rulers of England. In the wisdom of the common people he had never had anything but the most theoretical kind of faith; even his early epics turned upon the deliverance of the people at the hands of some "missioned" maid or hero whose power was for the people but of God. In the need of the people, however, and in the duty of serving that need, he believed with religious passion, and, be it said, with fanatic bad temper.[92]

---

[91]Llewellyn Woodward, The Age of Reform: 1815-1870 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 114.

[92]William Haller, "Southey's Later Radicalism," 291-292.

History proved to Southey that man's lot had always improved, but he believed that with the advent of the manufacturing system and its attendant problems England had moved beyond the safe realms of historical precedent. While he could advocate moral reform and specific proposals for the improvement of society his age and the future of England left him, like many of the other social critics of the day, profoundly frightened, frustrated, and puzzled. It was this fear, this sense of helplessness and puzzlement which led to his repressive side, but his good angel never failed to tell him that things could get better, and he did not, like many of his political friends, retreat from the problems of his era. "A man whose mind was full of projects of this kind," wrote his son and biographer,

> ought . . . to be safe from sentences of indiscriminate condemnation, and, indeed, when we remember how few of them had occupied the attention of politicians when he wrote of them, it must be allowed that he was one of the chief pioneers of most of the great and real improvements which have taken and are taking place in society of our own times. . . .[93]

---

[93]LC, V, 6.

CHAPTER IV

SOUTHEY AND RELIGION IN THE QUARTERLY REVIEW

I. SOUTHEY'S RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Robert Southey's abiding interest in religion and religious history is evidenced by his substantial Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism (1820) and his controversial works The Book of the Church (1824) and Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae (1826) as well as by numerous remarks upon these subjects in Letters from England by Don Manuel Espriella (1807-1808) and his Colloquies (1829). His interest is also illustrated by the fact that fully twenty-five of his Quarterly Review articles--over a quarter of his total contributions--were devoted to religious subjects. From this formidable body of periodical writing there emerge six clearly distinguishable areas of concern: (1) the missionary efforts of dissenting sects and the established church, (2) the history of the Christian church in Europe, (3) the relationship between church and state and the political, social, and moral roles of the Church of England, (4) the doctrines and practices of dissenting sects, (5) the doctrines, traditions, and political activities of Roman Catholicism, (6) the lives and works of several individual religious leaders, Protestant and Catholic.

Southey's religious essays in the Quarterly betray a paradox of

his character. While he appeared most often as a deeply religious man, a defender of Christian and humanitarian principles, his virulent anti-Catholic opinions and his pathological fear of any type of uncontrolled religious enthusiasm revealed how deeply he could dip his pen into the very gall of bitterness when he felt the occasion demanded it. These essays also show clearly the extent to which his political beliefs influenced his assessments of dissenters and Catholics in Britain, the influence of his intense study of church history upon his own religious and political opinions, and his abhorrence of any form of disorder and instability.

Southey's religious articles must, of course, be viewed in light of his own religious beliefs after 1809. While as a Quarterly reviewer he enjoyed a fairly wide reputation for religious orthodoxy on the basis of his defense of the Church of England against the growth of dissenters and Catholics and his frequently, violently-worded denunciations of unbelievers and skeptics, Southey's own adherence to orthodoxy was always conditional. In a revealing letter to Grosvenor Bedford in December, 1814, he provided an unusually detailed confession of his faith:

> I am neither enthusiast nor hypocrite, but a man deeply and habitually religious in all my feelings, according to my own views of religion; which views differ from those of the Church which I defend, in material points;--otherwise I should be in that church. . . . I write religiously because I write as I feel. Not being of the Church, I hold the Church Establishment one of our greatest, perhaps the greatest of our blessings; and conscientiously desire to strengthen and support it. Not believing in the inspiration of the Bible, but believing in the faith which is founded upon it, I hold its general circulation

> as one of the greatest benefits which can be conferred upon mankind. Not believing that men are damned for not being Christians, I believe that Christianity is a divine religion, and that it is our duty to diffuse it. See whether whatever I write in my own person is not consistent with this exposition.--The consequence naturally is that I am exposed to a double imputation, of enthusiasm from those who believe less,--of irreligion from those who believe more.[1]

The last sentence of this quotation is of importance, particularly the phrase "whatever I write in my own person," for it releases Southey from the charge that his Quarterly essays reveal a wide difference between his private beliefs between 1809 and 1839 and his public utterance. The difference is not as wide as many of his contemporaries believed, and it should be remembered that Southey was not writing in his own person in the review but rather as the quasi-anonymous spokesman for political conservatism and religious orthodoxy. In addition, the great bulk of evidence from his letters indicates that he wrote little which might violate his own conscience or convictions. There was one notable exception to this, however, and that will be pointed out later in this chapter.

Such confessions of faith are very rare in the Quarterly papers, but there are at least two notable exceptions when the tone of his writing seems to indicate a public expression of deeply felt personal belief. The first of these is a remarkable "sermon" found

---

[1]Letter quoted by Geoffrey Carnall, Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960) pp. 216-217. Perhaps the finest account of Southey's religious beliefs after 1811 is Carnall's appendix, pp. 215-220. Several of Southey's own letters throw light upon his religious development: NL, I, 468, 472-474; II, 6, 7, 418-420.

in the concluding paragraphs of his review of Gregoire's Histoire de la Théophilanthropie (QR, XXVIII, 1823). This is a lively exposition of Christian evidences and a strong condemnation of the infidels of his own age. Here Southey argued forcefully that pure Christianity, unfettered by human doctrines and customs, always appeals to man's noblest and highest faculties. This, he felt, was the final and conclusive evidence of Christianity--its immeasurable power to confer true happiness and to release the better instincts of human nature. The Christian can be assured of the truth of his religion because he naturally recognizes it and believes it; the human heart intuitively perceives its grace, its truth, and its power.[2]

The second instance is an article which was published late in Southey's career, a review of the Quaker Jonathan Dymond's Essays on the Principles of Morality, and on the Private and Political Rights and Obligations of Mankind (QR, XLIV, 1831). In his examination of certain basic tenets of contemporary Quaker belief, Southey seemed to abandon the facade of official spokesman for the review and to assume a gentle tone of sincere interest and sympathy with many Quaker doctrines, even though he made his disagreement with them clear enough.

Even when he did write under his own name, however, he did not adhere totally to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. He had planned his Book of the Church to be a popular account of the heroes of the English church, but many of his comments questioned

---

[2]QR, XXVIII, 535-536.

several of the Thirty-nine Articles and left him open to charges of heresy.[3] He gave evidence of sympathy with the doctrines of Pelagius and indirectly questioned the teachings of St. Paul on the nature of Christian faith. If stripped of its ecclesiastical corruption and political abuses, he implied clearly, Roman Catholicism might well be an acceptable religion. In his Life of Wesley he exhibited a marked tendency to attribute belief in the divine inspiration of scriptural writers and the enthusiastic faith of some contemporary believers to mental illness or to fanatical delusions, and, as Geoffrey Carnall has observed, his

> objections to the "oddities" of Methodism often concealed an objection to Christianity itself. To protest against the doctrine that good works cannot be performed before justification is to protest against more than John Wesley; it is to be at odds with the official doctrine of the Church of England.[4]

Even Shelley at the time of their celebrated meeting in Keswick expressed surprise to find Southey so unorthodox in his religious opinions.[5]

Although after 1811 Southey's religious beliefs became more conservative than they had been when he was a youthful republican, for many years he felt himself in sharp conflict with several doctrines of the established church, and he felt himself part of the broader

---

[3]See QR, IV, 513; British Review, 22(1824), 315-344.

[4]Carnall, p. 216.

[5]Roger Ingpen and W. E. Peck, eds., The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley (New York: Scribners, 1926-1930), VIII, 223, 227-228, Cf. CB, pp. 361-364.

communion of Christianity which included both Protestants and Catholics. Carnall has identified Southey's religious position after 1811 as "close to that of such 'rational churchmen' as Bishop Watson and Sydney Smith; but it was not one that could comfortably be held by a member of the Church of England."[6] Near the end of his life he did consider himself a member in good standing of the church, but his advocacy of the Church Establishment as a social institution at no time in his career included a vital enthusiasm for the doctrine of eternal punishment for unbelievers and unrepentant sinners, the inspiration of the Scriptures, and, at first, even the doctrine of the Trinity. He was, however, always passionately attached to the belief in individual immortality.[7]

"Much of Southey's religious belief," Carnall has written, "can be described as a christianized faith in the holiness of the heart's affections and in man's unconquerable mind."[8] One should remember too that despite his capacity for bitterness Southey's greater tendency was to perceive and to appreciate the better side of human nature, and that, as one scholar has put it,

> religion was recognized in all he thought and wrote as a great and vital concern of life . . . conservative though he became in his reaction . . . he never lost faith in his fellows or degenerated into practical skepticism of the Eldon type, but kept to the end his love of liberty and his sympathy with all good men.[9]

---

[6]Carnall, p. 218.

[7]LC, VI, 346.

[8]Carnall, Ibid.

[9]Edward Mortimer Chapman, English Literature and Religion: 1800-1900 (London: Constable, 1910), p. 148.

Southey's religious development prior to 1811 ran a gamut of interests which were later reflected to varying degrees in the Quarterly papers. As a young man his Christian faith had been turned by Gibbon's skepticism, and he became briefly a Socinian. At one period in his life he felt strongly attached to Quakerism, an attachment particularly evident in the Quarterly essays. At Oxford in the autumn of 1793 he considered taking Orders, but he could not in good conscience become a clergyman because of his deep-seated objections to certain doctrines of the church. His upbringing had not been one of religious emphasis, and his biographer Jack Simmons has noted that "the doctrines of the French Revolution, which he took up with an enthusiasm that might in other times have been given to religion, ran directly counter to orthodox ideas of Christianity, as of politics."[10] At this period of his life, in the 1790s, he disapproved of the Church of England more on political than on doctrinal grounds, just as later, he would ironically defend the church on political rather than doctrinal premises. In later life as well he could never approve entirely of the material wealth of the church, which he felt incompatible with the basic doctrines of Christianity itself.[11]

Some of Southey's early letters show him to have been somewhat prudish in his personal beliefs and standards of conduct. At Oxford

---

[10]Jack Simmons, Southey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 36.

[11]Ibid.

he was appalled at the looseness of belief and behavior of fellow students. He argued strongly against atheism, and he showed the influence of his early reading of Epictetus in his sober ideals of conduct, though, as Jacob Zeitlin has observed, "of the exaulted austerity of the great stoic there are but vague traces either in the active or contemplative life of Southey. His ideal of philosophy he found in the British divines of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." In reality,

> his characteristic virtues are those of a good Christian--a warm faithfulness in the performance of his duty to God and man as he understood that duty, a touching patience under the sufferings imposed by God's inscrutable dispensation, and implacable hostility to the Devil and all his earthly agencies. This Christianity clearly colors his political sympathies at a very early period.[12]

Southey seems to have shaken off without traumatic mental conflict or struggle the spell of Godwinianism through which he and many of his young contemporaries passed.

Southey's leading biographer has convincingly argued that his attacks upon Catholics and nonconformists in the Quarterly, The Book of the Church, and Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae, were religiously sincere. Though a "punctilious churchman and a supporter of the Establishment through thick and thin" his religious interests in his writing were often more political than doctrinal:

---

[12]Jacob Zeitlin, ed., Select Prose of Robert Southey (New York: Macmillan, 1916), p. 15.

> in religion, as in politics, his was a crossbench mind. . . . His controversies always centered on the politics of religion: in matters of belief he displayed the widest charity and very little of the dogmatic spirit . . . he showed his independence of mind . . . [which is] characteristic of Southey's whole religious position--that of a true and deeply convinced Christian, whose faith constantly sustained him in the cruellest trials of his life.[13]

Although Jack Simmons often seems, like Edward Dowden before him, too favorable to Southey, there can be little doubt that the religious quarrels in which Southey engaged focused chiefly upon the politics surrounding such issues as Catholic emancipation and the growth of the political strength of dissenting sects.

Southey's turn toward orthodoxy in the first decade of the nineteenth century directly corresponded to his change of political philosophy and the intensification of his fears of political and social anarchy in England. Specifically he perceived in 1807-1808 the dangers presented by the rapid rise of dissenting factions, especially that of a potential Methodist ecclesiastical polity. While in his essays he often admitted the great good which arose from the pastoral care which the Methodists exercised over their congregations and the order and sobriety which they helped to instill in the lower classes, he also believed that these efforts tended to strengthen an organization which was contrary to the state religion and which provided a point of unity around which the discontended elements of the working class could rally. At the same time he felt that the weakening of the system of tithes in the Church

---

[13]Simmons, pp. 164-165; Cf. SL, II, 31.

of England during this decade would undermine the church considerably in the face of Methodist attacks--this would jeopardize the established church, and since he conceived the church as an integral part of the British system of government, it would also endanger the strength and stability of the state at a time when Britain was locked in a desperate struggle with the French in Europe.[14]

Southey never disguised his fear of the democratic character of Methodism and related sects because he found in that character alarming political analogies to the Corresponding Societies and the United Irishmen, Catholic groups which he felt were subversive to the state. In addition, "the fact that people like Wilberforce and Hannah More, 'Church Evangelicals,' were an influential party in the state was in itself frightening evidence of the social power of intolerant religion."[15]

While Southey may have exaggerated the power and the intolerance of early nineteenth-century evangelical sects, it is clear that as early as 1803 he regarded the Church of England as the main bulwark against fanaticism and the infectious powers of social anarchy, and that after 1806 he was particularly influenced by the thought of

---

[14]Robert Southey, Letters from England by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella (London: Longmans, 1807), II, pp. 352-354; Cf. Southey's review of Myles's Chronological History of the Methodists in AR for 1803, pp. 201ff. and Carnall, pp. 69-70. Southey's review of Myles suggested that the Thirty-Nine Articles and all non-Biblical teachings might be abandoned in order to restore the Church of England to a purer form of Christianity.

[15]Carnall, p. 71; Cf. SL, I, 249.

the Anglican Bishop Richard Watson, whom he viewed as a friend to social and political order.[16]

At the same time that he expressed great fear at the growth of Methodism, he became attracted warmly to the Quakers and wrote in the Annual Review for 1803 that "a worse danger than the spread of methodism can scarcely be apprehended for England; a greater blessing for mankind cannot be desired or devised, than that the system of George Fox should become the practical system of the Christian world."[17] Southey was genuinely impressed by the warmth of Quaker sentiment and their freedom from rigid doctrine; they did not preach the doctrine of eternal punishment and exclusivity of salvation, nor did they regard the Bible as the final law of God. They believed rather in a quiet, perpetual, inner revelation. These beliefs seem to have coincided with that of Southey in 1809 that Christianity was an unending revelation and not merely an historical religion. In addition, he viewed with particular favor their Christian stoicism. Southey's comments upon Quaker leaders and philosophy in the Quarterly are not marked by the same bitter and harsh tone with which he often judged other dissenting sects.[18]

---

[16]Ibid., p. 73.

[17]AR for 1803, pp. 207ff.

[18]Carnall, pp. 74-76.

II. THE MISSIONARIES

The interest which Southey maintained in the missionary efforts of Christian churches is reflected mainly by four of his essays, two of which were his first and third contributions to the review: "Account of the Baptist Missionary Society" (QR, I, 1809), "Transactions of the Missionary Society in the South Sea Islands" (QR, II, 1809), "Church of England Missions" (QR, XXXII, 1825), and "New Testament in Negro Tongue" (QR, XLIII, 1830). Even though he felt sharp theological differences with Catholic, dissenting, and even Anglican missionaries, he clearly sympathized with their evangelical efforts. As early as 1802 he had pointed out in the Annual Review that he could not share the belief of most missionaries that there was no salvation outside of the Christian faith, but he did believe that the moral institutes of Christianity could put an end to such barbaric practices as polygamy, human sacrifice, infanticide, and primitive superstitions in less civilized areas of the world. In addition he felt an inculcation of basic Christian principles would serve to lay the foundations for the extension of British rule.[19]

The "Account of the Baptist Missionary Society," a review of several contemporary pamphlets, was Southey's first contribution to the Quarterly; it was also an indirect reply to a recent attack upon Baptist missionaries by Sydney Smith in the Edinburgh. The paper was

---

[19]See AR for 1802, pp. 207-218; AR for 1803, pp. 200ff; AR for 1804, pp. 27-33.

also something of an experiment on its author's part. Southey, concerned that the new Quarterly Review might be too subservient to the Ministry, and insisting upon his own freedom of opinion and expression, wrote the article partly to determine how much independent thinking the editor and supporters of the periodical would tolerate. Accordingly he followed the lines of his previous articles in the Annual Review by insisting that the importance of propagating Christianity lay upon its moral principles, not upon the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, or Eternal Punishment. Even so he felt that he had written with considerable restraint and that had he been able to write under his own name he could have dwelt more upon the corruptions and perversions of contemporary religion. The Quarterly, he felt, should not fear to offend men of political and religious orthodoxy, and it should seek to interest readers with minds of their own. So severely did Gifford "mutilate" this article that Southey almost vowed never again to write for the review.[20]

The article itself, which seems today to be characterized by a somewhat controlled, restrained tone, lacked a doctrinal treatment of missionary teaching. Southey praised the missionary efforts of the Methodists and of the Calvinistically-oriented "Particular Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen" which were working in India. Sectarianism, he felt, had one distinct advantage, despite its dangerously democratic character, which the Church of

---

[20]LC, III, 199; Carnall, p. 98.

England did not possess--men of real ability and talent were more readily recognized and were not neglected by their superiors. Most of the article, however, centered on Baptist efforts in India, and there were long digressions which discussed the Sepoy insurrection and the massacre at Vellore in July, 1806.

Southey also took the occasion to assess the strengths of the British Empire in India, holding it to be more in danger from internal disorders than from French encroachments. The Empire might be strengthened there and British rule rendered permanent through "christianization" and not through colonization alone. The Hindoos, contrary to popular belief, Southey argued could be converted, or at least led to a greater degree of attachment to Christianity and thus to their British masters. Clearly he was more interested in the imperialistic and civilizing aspects of missionary work than in the spread of Christian doctrine itself. "It is," he wrote, "only by christianizing the natives that we can strengthen and secure ourselves."[21]

In addition Southey gave utterance to some rather controversial opinions in the paper. "None but the Catholics or Calvinists," he wrote, "will now maintain the desperate doctrine, that salvation is exclusively attached to one system of faith, and that they who have never heard of Christ must now be damned." The practical benefit of Christianity, he felt, had always been that under its system man

---

[21]QR, I, 211.

can be progressive and free in thought while other systems of belief kept him in subjection to narrow doctrines. Further, "that religion therefore which most effectively promotes our well doing in this world, is necessarily in the same degree most instrumental to our well-being in the world to come."[22]

He went on to castigate the Church of England for its lack of missionary zeal--the church had few effective missionaries because it had trained none, and although "there is ability and there is learning in the Church of England . . . its age of fermentation has long been over; and that zeal which for this work is the most needful, is, we fear, possessed only by the Methodists."[23] The Quakers, although perhaps the best adapted of all people to spread Christianity, were in his opinion so few in number as to be ineffectual. He also defended some of the missionaries who had been attacked by orthodox churchmen, and instead of attacking dissenting missionaries, he voiced the unorthodox proposal that the Church of England would do well to regard them as useful auxiliaries.

For the third number of the Quarterly Southey provided a meticulously detailed account of a Methodist missionary expedition to the South Sea Islands in 1796-1797, including some attention to the culture of the natives of Taheite, Tongataboo, Nooaheevah, and the St. Christina islands in the Friendly Islands, and he noted the

---

[22]Ibid., 216.

[23]Ibid., 222.

instinctive yearning for religious belief even among the most primitive of savage races. His observations on native superstitions, governments, and societies prefigured his later travel book reviews both in style and content. He did not idealize the primitive life, and he found ample occasion to attack those who had in the eighteenth century praised Taheite as a paradise of sensual pleasures and of freedom from the "artificial" legal and moral restraints of civilization. He was also careful to note that the general influence of the civilized white man, including most eighteenth-century European missionaries, had proven to be detrimental to the natives and to their cultures.

He argued forcefully that missionary efforts in these primitive areas had been hampered not by any innate hostilities of the natives but by the hatred, envy, and moral pollution left by the first contact with Europeans and by American traders in Polynesia. Further, there was little doubt that

> the total silence of former visitors upon the subject of Christianity, the complacency with which they assisted at idolatrous ceremonies, and the habits of licentious intercourse to which they abandoned themselves, must have greatly prejudiced the natives against any lessons of religion or morality from the English. A remembrance too of the grievous evils which we have really brought upon them, and of those which they unjustly impute to us, operate as another obstacle.[24]

He was also quick to recognize other obstacles to mission work inherent in varying forms of Christianity:

---

[24]QR, II, 52.

> If Christianity be true, it is not possible that any state of society, nor any established superstition, can render a people utterly incapable of receiving it. There are but two peaceable methods of conversion, by influencing the feelings and imagination, or by persuading the understanding. Unfortunately it happens that of all forms of Christianity that of the Methodists is the least attractive and the most irrational. It must also be acknowledged that Protestantism wants many of the most effectual implements of conversion;--precisely in proportion as it is purer than Popery is it less adapted to impress the gross and uncultivated mind of a heathen.[25]

In 1825, sixteen years after his first articles on English missionary work, Southey reviewed for the Quarterly an abstract of the Annual Reports and Correspondence of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, from the Commencement of the Connexion with the East India Mission, A.D. 1709, to the present day. This article, entitled simply "Church of England Missions," comprises perhaps his most definitive statement upon the topic of missionary activities. He began his survey of Anglican evangelism with a comparison between Roman Catholic and Protestant mission efforts from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth. Historically Catholic missionary work had received the support of princes and the general population of the countries from which they originated as well as an ample financial base; Protestant missionaries traditionally had to rely upon voluntary contributions for support, lacked the assistance of the state or of men in political authority, and had been attacked continually and mercilessly by detractors. While the Catholics had the zeal and the training of the Jesuits, Protestant churches

---

[25]Ibid., 54.

had to rely upon zealous and enthusiastic but often ill-educated adventurers. He argued further that the corruptions of the Roman Church had actually greatly aided in its success in missionary works:

> It presented tangible objects of adoration to those who were either in a state of savage ignorance or of gross idolatry. It had the aid of imposing forms and ceremonies. It laid claim to miraculous powers among tribes and nations who believed in enchantments and supernatural agencies of every kind; and it was not more scrupulous abroad than it had been at home of establishing its pretensions by well worked wonders, and the fabrication of systematic falsehoods. It contented itself with exacting from its converts a routine of easy practices; and conversion in many cases was nothing more than the transferring from one name to another of that lip and finger-worship to which the poor idolators had been accustomed.[26]

Despite his condemnation of the Roman Catholics, however, Southey did admire some of their intentions and the effectiveness of their work, particularly that of the Jesuits in Brazil because they had established a paternalistic social and political system and had a strong civilizing influence upon the Indians. But Jesuit efforts in South America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had failed, and the cause of that failure he felt to be "the most characteristic difference between the Romish church and the Reformed missionaries."

> The Romanists did not introduce the Bible. They built upon the sand; the storm came, and the building fell. The converts had nothing left whereon to rest their belief, when the spiritual rulers were called away. Had the Jesuits raised up a body of

---

[26]QR, XXXII, 2.

> intelligent Christians, and trusted them with the evidences of their faith, that faith would have survived the system of policy which was overthrown in their overthrow, and the Indians of Paraguay would have at this day existed as a Christian and civilized nation. But the system of the Romish Church is to withhold from the people those holy scriptures which were written for our instruction.[27]

There was another important, and somewhat paradoxical, difference between the mission work of Protestant sects and the Roman Catholics. While various Protestant groups--Presbyterians, Independents, Moravians, Methodists, Baptists, and Anglicans--had traditionally united and co-operated to an astonishing degree in far-removed mission fields, there had always been a great deal of infighting among Catholic missionaries--Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Carmelites--which had undermined Catholic efforts in many areas of the world.

In tracing briefly the origins and rise of the Christian religion in this article Southey noted that

> as the rise and progress of the Christian religion is the most momentous part of human history, so there can be no more important or interesting object of speculation than the means of furthering its diffusion, till all the nations of the earth shall become one fold under one shepherd.[28]

The first great victory of Christianity was becoming the established religion of Rome; the second was over those warlike nations by whom Rome was overthrown and divided. He sketched the conversion of

---

[27]Ibid., 14. Southey's admiration for the Jesuit work in Brazil is evidenced further by his thorough discussion of the subject in his History of Brazil (1817), II, 333-356.

[28]Ibid., 5-6.

Britain in some detail and asserted that the final victory of Christianity would be in uniting all peoples in a common bond of peace; in this way it would serve a vital and practical political purpose for the troubled nineteenth century.

One of the most interesting parts of his article is that in which Southey identified the problems and obstacles facing missionaries in the early nineteenth century. Unlike their earlier counterparts, contemporary missionary preachers, in Persia and India for instance, must face the barriers of a more sophisticated political jealousy and more highly organized systems of pagan religion as well as peculiarly modern fusion of religion and politics. Involved also were the problems arising from the jealousy of local native princes of their powerful British overseers. The intermixture of pagan religions had in many mission fields tended to produce strong philosophical hybrids against which the best efforts of European missionaries were often completely useless. Hostile prejudices, again, had also been created by the bad behavior of previous European commercial exploiters.

Despite these disadvantages, however, Southey argued that the contemporary Protestant missionaries had some advantage over any of their predecessors in the early days of Christianity. In many areas the process of civilization had been established with good effects, and this made heathen peoples more receptive to a white man's religion. The Bible had been translated into several languages by 1800 and was becoming more widely available than ever before. He particularly praised, through copious quotations from Cotton Mather's Magnalia

Christi Americana, a work which he much admired, the translation of the Bible into the language of the Indian Six Nations in North America by Eliot, an event he felt of great significance for the spread of Christianity.

In "Church of England Missions" Southey also recognized at length the efforts of the Huguenots in Brazil during the first century of the Reformation. They had established a colony which, had the Portuguese not destroyed it, would have insured that Calvinism, not Catholicism, would have taken root in South America--this would have altered for the better the balance of religious belief in that region of the world and would no doubt have also altered substantially the subsequent course of the history of the new world. In addition, he highly praised the missionary work of the Dutch in India and Ceylon and Danish efforts in Africa during the seventeenth century.

Perhaps the most significant portion of the article, however, is Southey's survey and assessment of the evangelical work of the Church Establishment. The lack of mission activity during the first century of the church he attributed to the general shock of the Reformation which had so disjointed the whole fabric of English society and had resulted in a long period during which there was an inadequate supply of clergymen for England herself. During the reign of Elizabeth there had been few colonies, and thus the need for mission work was minimal. During the succeeding reign,

however, the church had been sufficiently established for such efforts to be undertaken. James I had two goals, Southey noted, to unite all reformed churches and if possible to bring about a reunion of Protestants and Roman Catholics in England. Had either of these goals been accomplished the course of subsequent world history might have been radically changed.

The inept pursuit of these ideals by Charles I, however, became one of the pretexts for the Puritan rebellion, and the general state of religious anarchy created by that rebellion had rendered mission work all but impossible. Only at the beginning of the eighteenth century was progress made in this area in operations confined only to the North American colonies--these efforts, even, were haphazard attempts by both church and state alike. "The British government," Southey wrote, "was not sensible of its policy and its duty, and the neglect of forming an episcopal establishment in America is one of the many causes which tended to bring about the violent separation of the colonies from the mother country."[29]

Southey believed that the rise of missionary spirit in the Protestant world in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries would prove to be one of the most remarkable features of the history of the age. The English Baptists had given the first impulse to this gradual revival with the foundation of their London Missionary Society in 1795, the Edinburgh Missionary Society in the

---

[29]Ibid., 23.

following year, and the Church Missionary Society in 1800. Although he doubted that the spiritual condition of Britons was as poor as these zealous dissenting sects continually maintained, he did admit that the results within Britain itself, provided religious enthusiasms were carefully restrained, could not help but be greatly beneficial in the short term. He went on to praise the Methodists under the leadership of Coke and the work of the Moravians whose missionaries were always sent where people were most miserable and most in need of religious comfort.

Southey strongly emphasized the need for specially trained Anglican clergymen for mission work, and he dwelt heavily upon the work of the Anglican Church Mission Society in Sierra Leone and the Society's program for the specialized training of preachers and the dissemination of pamphlets and books. He also provided a digression upon the absurdities of celibacy for Catholic missionaries and the practice of Wesleyan missionaries in Gambia of preaching in "talkee-talkee." Christian preaching, he argued, should properly be done only in English:

> . . . it should be the tendency of civilization not to increase the confusion of Babel, but to lessen it. There can be no necessity either for preaching or writing in broken English . . . in proportion as the missionaries condescend to the vulgar speech for the sake of producing immediate effect, they counteract what the schools [in mission areas] are doing.[30]

Again and again he stressed the idea that conversion and education

---

[30]Ibid., 37.

must go hand in hand--educational efforts and colonization must be the foundations upon which any effective religious endeavor can be built.

The failures of the Reformation and the slowness of the propagation of Christianity throughout the world did not rest entirely with the Church of England, despite her obvious position of leadership in the Protestant world and her feeble efforts in the mission fields:

> If indeed the other Protestant churches had been established upon a like liberal foundation with that of England, and had united with it in discipline and forms, the victory of the Reformation would, ere this, have been complete, and we should not have seen Popery and infidelity in some parts of Europe disputing for the sway, and in others dividing it.[31]

In 1825, however, Southey thought that the Church of England was realizing her destined station as the leader of reformed religion, and was only beginning to realize the obligations of that leadership. He especially praised the Societies for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Propagation of the Gospel--" . . . these societies having, in some degree, supplied the place of the Convocation, which, unfortunately for this kingdom, has for so long a time been suspended."[32] He also had praise for the work accomplished by such ventures as the Bishop's College in Calcutta. The age of religious indifference in England had passed, and a new day of religious responsibility was dawning.

---

[31]Ibid., 41.

[32]Ibid.

In 1830 Southey wrote his final article concerning Christian missions, a condemnatory review of Da Njoe Testament va wi Masra en Helpiman Jesus Christus, a translation of the New Testament into Negro-English dialect for use in Surinam by missionaries of the United Brethren under the auspices of the British and Foreign Bible Society. He made clear his opinion that "talkee-talkee" was not a language but an undignified patois--a "mingle-mangle" of sounds which is "comical and childish." He distinguished carefully between Negro-English and the actual languages spoken by the natives of Surinam and went on to analyse in somewhat confusing detail the nature of native jargon--its Dutch, English, and French components. He further ridiculed such "translations" as ineffective and often harmful tools for missionary work.

Although this article lies more in the area of linguistic criticism than any other of his contributions to the Quarterly, Southey again stressed the necessity of a well-organized program of education as the basis for any effective missionary work. The use of "talkee-talkee" Bibles would serve only to counteract the efforts of teaching missionaries and to keep the Negro nations in ignorance. It had been a well-intentioned effort, but it had "done more for perpetuating the ignorance of the black and coloured people, and thereby perpetuating their degradation, than the most Machiavellian policy could have accomplished."[33] Such a translation would have the

---

[33]QR, XLIII, 560.

evil effect of making useful education more difficult for the natives who were encouraged to use it.

III. CHURCH HISTORY

Southey's intense interest in the history of the Christian church is everywhere apparent in his articles which treat religious topics; indeed, it was his study of the historical roles and the development of the Roman Catholic Church and of various reformed churches which led him to regard himself as a champion of the Church of England. He was highly consistent in his bitter condemnations of Roman Catholicism on both historical and doctrinal bases--he was considerably less consistent in his varying treatments of Protestant sectarianism. He was always the ardent apologist for the Church of England, past and present. In the area of ecclesiastical history the articles of primary interest are "Evangelical Sects" (QR, IV, 1810), "Tracts on the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions" (QR, VI, 1811), "History of Dissenters" (QR, X, 1813), "Foxbrooke's British Monasticism" (QR, XXII, 1819), "Burnet's Own Times" (QR, XXIX, 1823), "History of the Vaudois" (QR, XXXIII, 1825), "Britton's Cathedral Antiquities" (QR, XXXIV, 1826), and "Hallam's Constitutional History of England" (QR, XXXVII, 1828).

As noted in the second chapter of this study, Southey's condemnation of Roman Catholicism in his age was based largely upon his study of the history of that church and upon his belief that the nature of the church had remained essentially unchanged from the days

of the inquisition to his own era and that it thus presented a real political threat to Britain. In 1811 he wrote for the Quarterly a review of several contemporary tracts treating the history of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions, and this article gave him occasion for his first extensive discussion of the history of Catholicism in the review.

In the annals of Spain Southey saw the worst danger which could be posed by the Catholic system of religion, the appeal against heresy to secular power with secular laws supporting the persecution of Christians by Christians. Taking the Arian controversy as his prime example, he pointed out that the Spanish Inquisition historically represented the hazards of a civil government allowing itself to be governed by the Papacy. The ascendancy of the Catholic church no where became "so intimately connected with the system of government, and no where did it produce so permanent an effect upon the national character, and so materially affected the fate of the nation. . . ."[34]

In Spain the Roman church had reached the summit of its power in Europe--and "the wonderful and monstrous establishment which in the dark ages was substituted for the religion of Christ, is the greatest monument of human genius, human wickedness, and human weakness that was ever reared."[35] Nevertheless, Southey felt that

---

[34]QR, VI, 317.

[35]Ibid.

the good which the church had produced in unifying Europe during the medieval period had in part counteracted its evils; medieval Catholicism was a great and vital force for unity amid the jarring factions and disunity of that era, and it was admirable because it had preserved some principles of political order.

In his qualified defense of medieval Catholicism he gave particular praise to the Benedictines who brought to perfection the system of religious unity and charity. The church operated as the only asylum from the evils to which every country was exposed--amid continual wars and local disturbances the church enjoyed peace and was regarded as a sacred realm by men and countries who were bitter political enemies:

> Abused as it was by the worldly-minded and ambitious and disgraced by the artifices of the designing and the follies of the fanatic, it afforded a shelter to those who were better than the world in their youth, or weary of it in their age; the wise as well as the timid and the gentle, fled to this Goshen of God, which enjoyed its own light and calm amid darkness and storms.[36]

Southey felt that the widespread corruption of the Roman Catholic Church had been produced by a multiplicity of co-operating causes, the chief of which was the rise of Manichaeism. This doctrine, placed in the hands of Catholic expositors, had led to extremes of interpretation and to absurdities of superstition. Its most marked effect was excessive asceticism. The flesh was seen to be at utter enmity with the soul, and Southey felt that this was a psychologically

---

[36]Ibid.

debilitating philosophy, for it suppressed the natural instincts of man which, if properly channelled, were vital to emotional health. Further, in Spain Catholic priests had recourse to pious frauds for political purposes, and the rise of systems of sainthood, relics, and superstitious traditions came to obscure the true nature of the church and of Christianity itself.

In the Peninsula and throughout many sections of Europe in the late middle ages, particularly during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, historical truth and Catholic superstition became inextricably mingled, and

> the mythology of that church became, as it were, the machinery of the Spanish annals, and being thus interwoven with historical truth, with all the memorable and heroic acts of their forefathers, faith in these things became blended with patriotism and with national pride in the Spaniards. Meantime the Romish priests in other countries . . . were equally audacious in their practices [of combining myth and history for the purposes of persuading converts and perpetuating Catholicism] . . . from the earliest ages of the papacy a regular system of deceit has been practised and encouraged by the Romish church.[37]

The origin of the Inquisition Southey attributed to the persecution of the Albigenses by St. Dominic--"the only saint in whom no solitary speck of goodness can be discovered. . . ." In the bulk of his article he traced the development of the Inquisition, particularly the persecution of the Jews in Spain and Portugal at the close of the fourteenth century, to about 1485. Also of interest is his account of the inquisitorial persecution of reformers and

---

[37]Ibid., 320.

Protestants in the Peninsula, and he noted the liberty taken by the inquisitors in altering and falsifying historical accounts and legal records in order to bring them into conformity with church doctrine and discipline and to justify their own practices and actions, sometimes after the fact. He went on to conjecture that

> the Romanists, proceeding upon the principle of exterminating heresy, did their work effectually in Spain; if our bloody Mary, instead of dying providentially when she did, had lived to the age of Elizabeth, the same work would have been done as effectually in England.[38]

Much of Southey's essay was given over to a close examination of the legal bases and procedures of the Inquisition, but of somewhat greater interest is his assessment of the historical place which it would hold in the annals of the church; it would go down as the greatest corruption which had befallen Catholicism. The Inquisition would be seen by future historians as a self-defeating process, for such tyrannical persecutions always inspire the greatest resistance among the persecuted. Rather than suppressing heresy it had done more than any other single event to bring about opposition to Catholic religion and papal rule. It served to clarify certain errors of Catholic doctrine as well, but the damage which it had done to the Christian religion in general would prove to be immeasurable, for it had created skeptics and unbelievers as well as reformers.

Southey wrote comparatively more in the Quarterly about the history of Protestant dissenting sects than he did about the history

---

[38]Ibid., 335.

of Roman Catholicism, and his first significant essay in this area was an 1813 review of three works: The History of Dissenters, from the Revolution in 1688 to the year 1808, by David Bogue and James Bennett, Wilson's History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches, and Neal's History of the Puritans. This review also is his most extended and most thorough treatment of the history of dissenters in England which appeared in the review. He prefaced his article with an indication of his belief in the importance of the study of ecclesiastical history. It is a topic which

> has rarely been written in an enlightened spirit; rarely, indeed, in a good one. We too often find in it whatever is most monstrous in romance, whatever is most impudent in falsehood; perverse ingenuity, microscopic dullness, bigotry, envy, and uncharitableness. The falsehood belongs more peculiarly to the Romanists, the latter ingredients have been plentifully used by writers of almost every communion. Few studies are so mournful; but to him who reads with understanding and with the mind of a Christian philosopher, perhaps none can be more instructive.[39]

He considered the Protestant Reformation to be the greatest historical blessing that had come to England in her long history because "it rid us of Catholic idolatry, Catholic polytheism, the celibacy of the clergy, and the abomination of auricular confession. . . ." The price which had been paid for this blessing, however, was dear, for the wounds opened by religious war and political disorders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had not been entirely healed in the early nineteenth; nevertheless, the

---

[39]QR, X, 90.

cost was not too great, for the benefits received from it were beyond measure. "It is," he wrote, "to the Reformation that England is indebted for that moral and intellectual eminence which she has so long enjoyed." Much of his article centered upon the rise of English puritanism, which he felt an inevitable consequence of the religious revolution of the Reformation, and the civil war which was the inevitable result of the combination of dissenting politics and dissenting religion in the seventeenth century. He argued further that puritanism and popery were almost identical in the political consequences descending from their presumed infallibility. The chief characteristic of the English brand of puritanism Southey identified as a particular intolerance and spirit of exclusivity which he found fully as despicable as that of Roman Catholicism during the Inquisition."[40]

Of special interest in the paper is Southey's careful consideration of the causes for the multiplicity of Protestant sects in those countries which led the Reformation. The Roman church itself, by the nature of its very composition and practices, had unwittingly encouraged discontent through its systematic persecution of dissenters, and the beliefs and practices of reformers varied with those of their oppressors. In addition, Protestantism had arisen in different countries, among different peoples, and at different times, and this had contributed to divisions among reformers.

---

[40]Ibid., 93, 96.

Reformed religions generally had lacked the strict internal discipline of the mother church, and Protestantism as a whole had lacked a center of authority. The large number of Protestant sects had delayed the progress of reformed religion through the centuries, and in seventeenth century England religious factionalism and bitterness had done much to destroy the original spirit of the Reformation.

A substantial portion of the article is devoted to Southey's admiration of George Fox and his followers in England, particularly their capacity for absorbing undauntedly the repeated attacks and persecutions of their early detractors. It was their Christian stoicism in their early years that he especially applauded, but he also condemned harshly their early extremes of doctrinal interpretation and codes of conduct. Their lack of emphasis upon education both in the seventeenth and in the nineteenth centuries he deplored.

Although in other historical articles Southey had been quick to defend the political policies of the Stuart kings, in this one he strongly attacked their religious policies. "The Stuarts," he argued,

> were ready enough to persecute any person whose religious notions were opposite to their own policy; they cared nothing for disputes concerning the Creed, but they morally hated non-Conformity. For this hatred, it must be acknowledged, they had some reason; but it prevailed over honour, gratitude, justice, and even common humanity . . . James [I] was

> emphatically a hard-hearted man . . . James was never known to shew mercy. . . .[41]

The lack of royal toleration Southey felt particularly exemplified by the treatment accorded Baptist sects during the early period of Stuart rule. It was the spirit of religious bigotry, dogmatism, and narrowness which he most deplored in ecclesiastical history--and he felt that the lack of leniency on the part of the Stuarts had done much to intensify that of the Puritans and thus, through a bloody civil war, to damage the cause of reformed religion in England.

Southey's study of the history of dissenting sects led him to conclude that factionalism, which arose almost invariably from petty, inconsequential differences of opinion, was the greatest weakness of the reformed Christianity instituted by the English Reformation. The weakness of division, however, he felt unavoidable because it grew out of the principle of dissent and liberty of opinion, "but among Dissenters the right of private judgement is so injudiciously inculcated that the men who are trained among them learn not infrequently to despise all judgement except their own."[42] Inherent in the principle of dissent was the principle of rebellion against established belief and authority, and the idea that each generation must make some discovery beyond that of its predecessor. Thus in England Presbyterian seminaries produced Arians who produced Socinians who produced at last skeptics. The consequence in time

---

[41]Ibid., 121.

[42]Ibid., 130.

was the gradual reduction of Presbyterians in England, and by like process in other sects, the general weakening of the structure of reformed religion. There is, he observed,

> . . . a spirit of dissent, as well as a spirit of christianity. The points of difference become the life of the non-conformists' theology. When those points relate to doctrine, men are too prone to forget . . . that the very obscurities are a sufficient evidence that the subject of them can never be matter of faith necessary to salvation; and when they relate to discipline, the strictest disciplinarian may well doubt whether any difference is of sufficient moment to counter-balance the inconveniences of separation, which if there be not sufficient reason for it, even the writers before us pronounce, to be a heinous crime.[43]

The possibility of reunion between the reformed churches and the Roman church had, Southey admitted, always been and always would be an impossible ideal--the rupture occasioned by the Reformation was final and inviolable, and though the goal of reunion might be admirable, the practical and ideological benefits of the Reformation had proven over three centuries to be too great for the attempt. The price of the Reformation, once again, would be wasted if schism prevailed in reformed churches. The possibility of Protestant ecumenism, however, was very real, and Protestant unity was a necessary goal if men would fulfill their Christian obligations.

In an interesting speculation Southey argued that the American Revolution and the controversies surrounding it in England had served to destroy the rational harmony which had briefly existed among all Protestant denominations during the eighteenth century. "The Jacobites," he wrote

---

[43]Ibid., 131.

> had died a natural death, the church was perfectly tolerant, the Dissenters were contented with complete toleration, and the Roman Catholics were then not heard of. But the American war introduced a dangerous change of feeling in this country. It placed a portion of the English people in mental alliance with the enemies of England.[44]

The dissenters had generally adopted the cause of the American rebels because they were attached to them by peculiar bonds of religious union. A number of dissenting groups had been founded or strengthened by English malcontents or refugees, and thus these groups maintained a basis of strength in the United States. In a similar manner the French Revolution had produced schisms and skeptics within certain English sects, and this in turn created a threat to the established church. These attachments to foreign causes not only threatened the Church of England but the state itself, and thus opinions tantamount to treason were fired by common religious ties. Further, much of the divisiveness among various dissenting sects in England during the eighteenth century, and in his own day, he ascribed to the petty jealousy of dissenting clergymen toward the stability, wealth, and prestige of the Church of England itself.

Perhaps Southey's most ambitious excursions into religious history in the Quarterly are his two reviews of works by Gregoire: Historie des Sectes Religieuses (QR, XXVIII, 1822) and Histoire de la Théophilanthropie (QR, XXVIII, 1823). These essays, apart from exhibiting some of their author's more virulent attacks upon Roman Catholicism and some of his staunchest defenses of the Anglican

---

[44]Ibid.

church, provide his assessments of various Protestant sects in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The first essay, published under the running title "Gregoire--History of Religious Sects," was introduced by an exposition of popular misconceptions of the Church of England and various non-conformist sects by Catholic scholars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Southey defended Quakerism in England from specific charges of Gregoire and discussed briefly the origin and development of other sects, particularly the unsuccessful efforts of the Moravians, the Quakers, and the Methodists to establish themselves in Scotland. He also treated more fanatical minor sects such as the "Dunkers," the "Shakers," and the "Jerks," in the United States. With the latter he seemed to be particularly fascinated and discussed their activities in 1805 in Knoxville, Tennessee, and their subsequent growth and practices in the United States.

Southey showed special interest in aberrations of behavior induced by religious enthusiasm--such conduct he attributed to mental malady and to something akin to mass hysteria. "It is curious to observe," he wrote,

> how that peculiar disease which religious enthusiasm produces varies with its type, and becomes endemic in whatever form it happens to first break out. Among the early Quakers it brought on that tremendous agitation from which their popular designation was given them. Among the early Methodists it manifested itself in convulsions. The Welch enthusiasts jump, and when the American ones began to jerk, the falling

> epidemic, which before had been the prevailing influenza among them, seems to have been suspended.[45]

Such marks of behavior, he felt, were not characteristic of truly reformed Christians, and they had not appeared generally among the reasonable, rational Protestants in Europe during the early stages of the Reformation. They were rather a symptom of a degeneration of the religious instinct.

Southey's discussion ranges in this article through treatments of Dutch sects, the Hattemistes and the Verschoristes, the Rhinsburghers, the Mennonites in Alsace, whom he particularly admired, and a number of the more extreme German sects such as the Gichtelians, who flourished in the late sixteenth century. He went on to provide accounts of the Abrahamites of Bohemia, the Adamites, the Wurtemberg Separatists, the Gallopers of Wurtemberg, and other fanatical groups in both France and Germany. In addition he gave attention to such Roman Catholic embarrassments as the Convulsionnaires, a radical sect which flourished during the French Revolution, and provided a long list of examples of fanatical Catholic sects to counter Gregoire's assertion that the emotional nature and composition of Protestantism was, as evidenced by its many divisions, unstable and doomed to eventual failure. Throughout the article he deliberately dwelt upon religious madness in the Roman church in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in order to demonstrate

---

[45]QR, XXVIII, 7.

that Protestantism did not have a monopoly upon these types of enthusiasts.

Upon the basis of the divisive history of European Protestantism Gregoire had argued that reformed Christianity because of its lack of unity and centralization could never remain a potent historical force, and that ultimately it would meet the fate of all the smaller groups of reformers which during eighteen centuries had failed to weaken the fabric of Catholicism. Southey countered that the growth of reformed religion over the three centuries since the Reformation had begun proved beyond any doubt that Protestantism was a viable and enduring movement. Gregoire's book, he concluded, was written either in almost total historical ignorance or was a deliberate attempt to ignore historical fact, though he admitted the admirable zeal with which it was composed. The survival of the English church in particular, through three centuries of war, political turmoil, and social change, certified its strength, its stability, and its permanence. Its toleration and its basic commitment to the principle of religious compromise would insure its destined position of leadership in the Protestant world.

In his subsequent review of Gregoire's Historie de la Théophilanthropie Southey continued his defense of the Church of England both on historical and doctrinal grounds, and he examined what he perceived as the causal relationship between French Catholic fanaticism, the rise of French deism, and the French Revolution.

The article also provides his best organized treatment of the rise and development of deism in Europe and in the United States. In particular he traced the efforts of the Unitarian minister David Williams who had attempted to establish a deistical form of worship in London during the years of the American Revolution. He also discussed the growth of deist theophilanthropy during the second phase of the French Revolution and attempted to refute Gregoire's argument that this doctrine of deism had been imported from England to France during the eighteenth century.

Southey noted that the proliferation of religious sects and cults in France just before the outbreak of the Revolution resulted largely from an increasing mood of skepticism in the country, and he traced the rise and fall of theophilanthropists in revolutionary Paris under the leadership of Reveillere. The Revolution took place partly because the church establishment, Roman Catholicism, had allowed dangerous sects to proliferate without attempting to control them. French ministers and Catholic bishops had, apparently, been oblivious to the ultimate political consequences of the growth of these sects. Of the theophilanthropists themselves he concluded:

> The history of this attempt at establishing a system of mere natural religion in a Christian country, will neither be considered as incurious nor as unimportant. The total failure proves the inefficacy of the principles upon which it relied. The projectors built upon sand, and at the first hostile breath of opinion down fell the baseless edifice.[46]

---

[46]Ibid., 508.

Because "the most ignorant, the weakest, the craziest of men, when possessed by religious zeal, have produced effects which have changed the character of nations"--his examples are St. Francis, Ignatius Loyola, George Fox, and Count Zinzendorff--Southey felt that the consequences of the theophilanthropists having rebelled against the established forms of religion were of importance historically. They brought disaster upon themselves by trying to operate outside of the established system. The broader attempt at introducing a popular form of deism had resulted in France in an increased rate of suicide, revolutionary tribunals, and permanent guillotines. Infidelity was the logical consequence of deism. The weakening of the public and political morality which resulted in the Revolution was traceable directly to the deistical rebellion against the established religion in France.

Gregoire had charged that the modern wave of religious indifference and infidelity had been imported into France from England where the court of Charles II had brought it into fashion, but Southey countered that it was from France that the profligate court had borrowed its fashions in the first place--they were not of native English growth. The fashion of religious indifference in France had, in Southey's view, been set by Henri IV and other leaders in the French civil wars who had made religion merely a pretext for political moves. Further, he discussed the persecution of the French Huguenots by the Roman church, persecutions which he felt equal to the injustices of the Spanish Inquisition itself,

persecutions which he felt were motivated almost entirely by political considerations. In an interesting comment he also noted that during the Restoration the Church of England had, for all practical purposes, been overthrown by the irreligion and the French Catholic influence in the Stuart court.

In his view the three writers who had done the most in eighteenth-century Europe to endanger the cause of Christianity in general were Voltaire, Rousseau, and Hume--men who "co-operated in the baneful work of sapping the foundations of civil order and individual happiness." Voltaire was "actuated by hatred of Christianity; Rousseau by the fervour of a disordered mind; Hume by the mere love of speculation." To this triad the name of Gibbon might also be added, "an abler and more insidious enemy of Christianity than any who had preceded him." Gibbon had "made for himself the guilty reputation of having been the English writer who had produced and will continue to produce the most injury to mankind." Southey also concluded that the progress of infidelity in England prior to the French Revolution was more extensive than had generally been thought by historians. By the late eighteenth century something unprecedented had happened in England, an alliance between popular disaffection and religious unbelief. This alliance, abetted by the radical popular press, Southey felt continued down to his own day.[47]

---

[47]Ibid., 517, 520, 522.

In the same year that he reviewed Gregoire's Théophilanthropie Southey reviewed the six-volume Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time (QR, XXIX, 1823). This review restated many points in the Gregoire articles relative to religion in England during the Restoration, and the paper, as noted in the second chapter of this study, is primarily of interest for Southey's historical evaluation of late seventeenth-century England. While the article was addressed to the secular history of the period, Southey did take account of the religious controversies which surrounded and sometimes actuated political events. Primarily he discussed the policies of Charles II toward English Catholics and concluded that the king did not sufficiently appreciate the sense of divided loyalty which devout English Catholics felt, or should have felt, toward the Crown and the Papacy. Charles had, in addition, pursued policies which were far too lenient in allowing English Catholics certain freedoms of worship and political activity.

Two other Quarterly essays are indicative of Southey's interest in Protestant history: "History of the Vaudois" (QR, XXXIII, 1825) and "Britton's Cathedral Antiquities" (QR, XXXIV, 1826). The first of these was a detailed history of the origin and development of the Vaudois, or Waldenses--the oldest Protestant sect in Europe--who had flourished in the Alps even before the Reformation. His article was also designed to be a meticulous defense of the Vaudois against the charges of Catholic scholars such as Dr. John Milner and Charles Butler

that the Waldenses were actually Manichean and Arian heretics. Southey's history of the Vaudois also contains his most complete exposition of the philosophy of Manicheism and its influences upon reformed religion.

In both doctrine and practice Southey contended that the Vaudois had traditionally exhibited strong similarities to the Church of England, and he traced in some detail the wars of extermination, sanctioned by the Catholic Church, which had been waged against this Alpine sect which by the nineteenth century was located primarily in the province of Pinerolo. In many respects, he argued, the Vaudois preserved in the remote areas of the Alps a simpler and purer form of Christianity than was evident in most reformed churches, and that they had done this despite the deliberate persecutions of Catholicism and Roman Catholic princes down through the centuries. Upon these persecutions he dwelt heavily, and the article as a whole provides ample evidence of the historical bases of Southey's anti-Catholic sentiment. He again turned to the great example of the Inquisition and treated the involvement of the Benedictines and the Dominicans in its foundation and perpetuation. The greatest burden of guilt he laid upon St. Dominic, however, because the church had broadly, consistently, and directly sanctioned inquisitorial persecutions, and he concluded:

> . . . in the management of which [persecutions] all monastic orders and the secular clergy, as well as the regulars, have taken their full part; and for the crimes of which the Roman Catholic church is responsible, as having not only permitted,

> but authorized, sanctioned, approved and appropriated them; they were committed in the name and by the authority of that church, and no sophistry can extenuate its guilt, nor efface its infamy.[48]

Since the Inquisition in Europe was his great historical argument against Roman Catholicism, Southey delighted in pointing out specific instances of Catholic persecution of the Waldenses in Spain, Bohemia, Germany, the Low Countries, and France in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In Germany and the Low Countries, despite continual and concerted harassments, the Waldenses "prepared the way for Luther. Here, in England, they sowed that seed, of which, by God's blessing, we now enjoy the harvest."[49] The inquisitorial activities in France during the reign of Louis XI and of the chief inquisitor Albert de Capitaneis in Dauphiny in the latter part of the fifteenth century Southey saw as classic examples of a Catholic prince's co-operation with the monstrous atrocities of the church. The inquisitorial proceedings against the Vaudois and against other sects were always self-defeating in the end, for they served only to attach the persecuted more passionately and more stubbornly to their beliefs. Of all the Catholic princes who had allowed these persecutions "there is no prince of that age in whom persecution appears so odious as in Francis [II]."[50]

---

[48]QR, XXXIII, 153.

[49]Ibid., 159.

[50]Ibid., 164.

One of the most interesting sections of this article is that in which Southey treated the massacre of the Waldensians in Piedmont in April, 1655, by the Duke of Savoy's force of French and Italian troops--an event also commemorated by Milton's famous sonnet. The incident arose from the refusal of the Waldensians to embrace Roman Catholicism or go into exile. In this connection he had a number of good things to say of Oliver Cromwell and his efforts in behalf of Vaudois refugees. "The conduct of Cromwell," he wrote, "on this occasion is one of the redeeming parts of his life. It was a case in which his heart and head were perfectly in accord, his feelings prompting him at once to what was his true policy as chief magistrate of England."[51] Southey further commended the efforts of English sympathizers in raising funds to aid the surviving Waldensians.

Southey's review in 1826 of Britton's Cathedral Antiquities and Memoir of the Life and Writings of John Britton illustrates very well the antiquarian side of his interest in ecclesiastical history. In this paper he traced in substantial detail the history of the Cathedral of Salisbury and its successive bishops. He also expressed great regret at the neglect and destruction of the great English cathedrals which were monuments to the energy, ingenuity, and courage of the English nation. He called for well-funded government maintenance and superintendence of these cherished national monuments. His article also illustrates his considerable knowledge of architecture and building.

---

[51]Ibid., 176.

In the second chapter of this dissertation Southey's review of Henry Hallam's Constitutional History of England (QR, XXXVII, 1828) has been discussed. That long article restated many of his views on the history of the English church which are mentioned in this chapter. It is a paper which is important for the structure of Southey's historical defense of the Church of England and for his attempts to exonerate Archbishops Thomas Cranmer and William Laud from the several charges of Hallam and other historians of his persuasion. For these and other figures of Anglican history and for the wisdom of the Elizabethan via media Southey voiced nothing but the highest praise.

IV. ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND DISSENTING SECTS

Something of the historical bases of Southey's long-standing antipathy towards Roman Catholicism has been noted in the discussion of his treatments of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions earlier in this chapter. The political bases of his sentiment have been discussed in connection with the issue of Catholic emancipation in the second chapter of this dissertation. Southey's hatred of Roman Catholicism may well have sprung originally from his residence in Spain and Portugal in 1795-1796, for it was then that he witnessed for the first time and at first hand some of the end results of the Inquisition and the actual practices of the church. From this residence, Kenneth Curry notes in his new study of Southey,

> came his determined, life-long, and somewhat unreasoning hatred and distrust of the Roman Catholic Church. He was shocked by what he saw of a church that appeared to encourage superstition, that was itself filled with corruption, and which only recently had persecuted all dissent with all the terrors of the Inquisition. Its alliance with a venal, incompetent, and corrupt monarchy also contributed to this feeling.[52]

Southey's opinions were no doubt deepened and confirmed by his second and somewhat longer visit to the Peninsula in 1800-1801.

In addition to his Quarterly articles Southey's hatred of Roman Catholicism found its fullest expression in The Book of the Church (1824). In many respects this work is a distillation of attitudes and opinions which he expressed toward the Roman church in Quarterly papers both before and after 1824. Like his reviews The Book of the Church bore the impress of the controversial issue of Catholic emancipation which was debated through the 1820s. As in the Quarterly Southey stressed in The Book of the Church the struggle in the middle ages

> between Popes and Kings and the deception and dishonesty of the Papacy. He also tells many tales of fraud and deceit in connection with relics and in the dissemination of miraculous stories concerning the lives of the saints.[53]

The doctrinal and political bases of Southey's anti-Catholic sentiments are clearly seen in a number of Quarterly papers, and the fact that many of the articles were addressed to specific issues only added to the vehemence of his expression. The articles which most

---

[52]Kenneth Curry, Southey (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 33.

[53]Ibid., p. 128.

clearly express his opinions are "Fosbrooke's British Monachism" (QR, XXII, 1819), the two reviews of Gregoire previously mentioned (QR, XXVIII, 1822, 1823), "The Apocalypse of the Sister Nativité" (QR, XXXIII, 1826), "Bibliotéque Chretienne: pour l'Édification de la Jeunesse" (QR, XXXVI, 1827), and "The Roman Catholic Question: Ireland" (QR, XXXVIII, 1828). His varying opinions of several dissenting sects of the day were recorded in his articles on missionary work already discussed and in "Evangelical Sects" (QR, IV, 1810), "History of Dissenters" (QR, X, 1813), and "Huntington's Works and Life" (QR, XXIV, 1821).

Southey's review of Thomas Dudley Fosbrooke's British Monachism, or Manners and Customs of the Monks and Nuns of England provides a general sketch and assessment of the origins and development of monasticism in England prior to the Reformation, but it was also clearly designed as an attack upon Catholic doctrine, tradition, and superstition, although the unity of the paper is uncharacteristically spoiled by lengthy digressions upon the political philosophy of Jeremy Bentham, attacks upon contemporary social and political reformers, and a somewhat detailed treatment of the plight of educated, unemployed, and impoverished women of the middle class in Britain in 1829. Although his introduction promised a treatment of monasticism in England, he provided a rather general historical discussion of it in Europe. He did make clear, however, his regret that monastic properties were too hastily dissolved at the Reformation,

> for it may be safely affirmed that no other establishments have produced so much unmingled good . . . but we have rather to wonder that in the calamitous and stormy age of the Reformation so much should have been saved from the wreck, than that so much was plundered and lost.[54]

Southey believed that in the early stages of Christianity in England the monastic institutions were founded upon popular superstition, became eminently useful to society, but then ended in corruption and wickedness. The origin of Christian monasticism he traced to Egypt and Syria and the first Christian hermit, Paul the Egyptian. Gradually the institution spread into southern Europe where in the early years it was based upon "contrived excitements of fear, hope and passionate superstition, which induced a state of permanent delirium" which resulted in practices of extreme asceticism which he felt totally alien to fundamental Christian doctrines.[55]

The second age of Christian monasticism Southey identified as beginning with St. Benedict, and he devoted careful attention to the Rule of St. Benedict which at the Council of Douzy in 876 had been declared by Catholic scholars as a work of divine inspiration, co-equal with the canonical Scriptures. "Judging of the saint by this Rule alone," Southey wrote,

> it appears that Benedict is to be ranked among reformers, not among the knaves, fanatics, or madmen of a fraudulent church. His institutions are not to be estimated by themselves, but by comparison with those from which they are derived, and there

---

[54]QR, XXII, 60.

[55]Ibid., 74.

> is then more cause to admire their moderation than to wonder at their severity.[56]

The Benedictine Order alone had made the monastic institution socially beneficial in England:

> They attracted, regulated and directed the zeal and the fanaticism of the times, making beneficial what would else have been injurious, as waters which would produce devastation in torrents, or render the air poisonous by stagnating in marshes, serve for the use of man when collected in reservoirs and proper channels.[57]

While the eastern church gradually fragmented Southey felt that the Benedictine monasteries had served to deliver the Roman church in the middle ages from "the pest of heresiarchs and heretics" which then prevailed. At the same time they provided the only useful schools for an age of massive ignorance. The Benedictine Order, however, turned sour when it succumbed to Catholic politics and superstitions, and Southey's charge against Roman Catholicism, repeatedly hammered home, was that the church had made good use of fantastic fables and superstitions to gain converts or to achieve political goals. As well as appealing to the best of men the church had traditionally made use of the worst of men also:

> The same freaks and follies of the human mind,--the same diseases of the moral and intellectual nature have shown themselves in all ages; the Romish church has had the dexterity to turn them to account. In her service there was a place for every one, saint or sage, the painful student, and the expert sophist, the haughtiest temper and the

---

[56]Ibid., 75.

[57]Ibid., 76.

> humblest knave, madman, and idiot, all had their uses, and were employed with excellent advantage to the papacy.[58]

Having expressed admiration for the Order of St. Benedict, Southey turned with holy wrath to the Dominicans. In this connection he particularly attacked the Catholic doctrine of purgatorial punishment as in his view one of the greatest and most pernicious perversions of Christian doctrine, and he provided a lengthy discussion of the veracity of Catholic versions of history and the authenticity of Catholic miracles. The age of St. Dominic and of sainted miracles was "the age of imposture; and it is not difficult to discover by what means it had become the system of the Romish church." In addition he discussed the use of relics as proof of the absurdities to which Catholic priests would go to gain converts and power over the poor and ignorant as well as the wealthy and powerful. "Fraud and credulity," he wrote, "kept pace with each other . . . the middle ages are indeed characterized by falsehood." The Papacy had always, and would continue, to use relics, false miracles, superstitions, fables, and corrupted versions of history in a deliberate attempt to gain political and spiritual domination over the whole of the Christian world, and ". . . superstition was gradually increased by knavery, and knavery grew bolder by continued success, till a gross and idolitrous polytheism had been substituted in place of Christianity."[59]

---

[58]Ibid., 78-79.

[59]Ibid., 83, 84.

Both the Franciscan and Dominican orders, Southey argued, had been founded for the express purpose of opposing the principles of reformation and were still being used for this purpose in the nineteenth century. They had deferred the Protestant Reformation for three centuries either by persecuting malcontents or by absorbing into their own ranks those dissatisfied monks and priests who might otherwise have united and worked against the mother church. Further, he made clear that he believed the Papacy was yet at work seeking methods by which it could subvert civil laws and governments and meddle in the internal affairs of sovereign nations. He warned parents in England to guard their children well from the pernicious strategies of scheming priests who would separate children from parents and shut up their poor victims of delusion for the remainder of their days in spiritual darkness.

"There is," he wrote in great seriousness, "no want of money among Catholics for any object connected with the propagation of their corrupt and mischievous doctrine. They can erect colleges and purchase estates for their support. Means are never wanting where there is zeal."[60] In this, as in later articles, Roman Catholicism was for Southey a palpable monster which threatened the affections of the young, domestic felicity, the doctrines of true religion, the strength of the church and the state, and mankind's best hopes for the future. He was always willing to ascribe the

---

[60]Ibid., 102.

worst motives and the most pernicious practices to the church in almost any area.

In 1826 Southey reviewed a work entitled Vie et Révelations de la Soeur Nativité by Abbé Genet, a book which had received considerable acclaim by Roman Catholic churchmen and scholars in Britain. This biography of Jeanne le Royer of Fougères, an Ursuline nun of the eighteenth century, had been published in Paris in 1817; Genet had recorded her visions and revelations in 1790. The particular object of this record of her visions, Southey contended, was "to establish the corruptions of the Romish church,--it is the old device of endeavouring to prove false doctrines by feigned revelations."[61] Her supposed visions, which included seeing and conversing with the Trinity, the Virgin, and the Apostles, were designed to sanctify the authority of the Pope and to support the doctrine of transubstantiation. Further, he commented in attacking these fables, legends, and miracles of the church:

> The most daring of those legends, which the Romish priests age after age have palmed upon mankind, have been designed either to forward a political purpose, or to advance the interests of some monastic order, or to establish by fabled revelations and false miracles, the devices of man's imagination, which were successively introduced as articles of popular faith. In the present case the end in view is to support the purpose of aiding the priesthood in reasserting their old pretensions and recovering their former ascendancy.[62]

---

[61]QR, XXXIII, 393.

[62]Ibid., 395.

In her visions Sister Nativity had heard whispering voices, and saw what manner of men would enter paradise; she came to understand the nature of the relationship of the soul to the body. The Virgin Mary and God himself had appeared to her to explain the Incarnation. She understood the nature of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the mysteries of the seven sacraments. She saw Armageddon, a prophetic view of the anti-Christ, the final triumph of Catholicism, the new Eden, the composition and population of hell. Various saints, including St. Francis and St. Clare, explained to her the nature of human sin.

She had reportedly predicted the re-establishment of Catholic domination in France and the re-extension of the papal ascendancy throughout all of Europe during the nineteenth century. She had further asserted that there could be no salvation for those outside the pale of the church--"a principle," Southey noted, "which not merely affords a pretext for persecution, but renders it a religious duty." He objected vehemently to the doctrine of papal infallibility; the book itself he said "is valuable as a specimen of those practices which have been carried on in the Romish church in all ages; some incidental truths also appear in it, as facts for the history of manners are to be found in the wildest of the old romances."[63]

Sister Nativity's revelations Southey ascribed partly to

---

[63]Ibid., 395, 397.

mental disability and to general ignorance and partly to her being duped by excessive religious fanaticism which invariably weakens or destroys the reasoning faculties. He also suggested that her visions, dictated to Abbe Genet in 1790, had been deliberately falsified and embellished by him, since they were conveniently withheld from publication until long after the nun's death in 1798.

In Southey's opinion most of the Catholic martyrs, St. Jerome for instance, had been duped by others or deluded by themselves into believing the fantasies of a distempered imagination:

> That an enthusiast may, when awake and in broad day-light, actually see and converse with the creations of a disordered fancy, is as possible as well all know it to be in dreams and in delirium; and therefore it is often impossible to distinguish between delusion and deceit; though, even in the most decided cases of this description, there is a strange propensity to go beyond the bounds of truth, and impose upon others further than such fanatics are, or possibly can be deceived themselves.[64]

This, Southey argued, was a matter of indisputable historical fact, but what was most alarming to him was the fact that the revelations of Sister Nativity were almost contemporary and that the same deliberate system of fanatical fraud and delusion was yet being practiced by the church in modern times:

> . . . it is by a series of impostures that the corruptions of the papal church have constantly been supported, legends having been invented, miracles got up, and inspiration pretended for every false doctrine, every pretension of the priesthood, every usurpation of the popes, every scheme of the monastic orders; and this from the earliest times. A perpetual succession of such frauds can be shown from the Letter of Tiberius and the lives of the apostles by the imaginary Abdias, down to the Life and Revelations of La

---

[64]Ibid., 402.

> Soeur Nativité. None of all these exceeds in effrontery, though many may vie in impiety, with the production before us, which is of our own times, and was got up with the approbation of the heads of the emigrant clergy in England, and the chief Roman Catholic priests and prelates of our own country. . . . If any one says, or pretends to insinuate, that modern Roman Catholics differ one IOTA from their ancestors, he either deceives himself or wishes to deceive others.[65]

A year later, in the Quarterly for October, 1827, Southey published a sequel to his essay in which he reviewed a second edition (1819) of Genet's account and also two other works: Vie de Marie Angelique de la Providence, ou l'Amour de Dieu Seul, published in Paris in 1825 by Henri-Marie Boudon, and La Vie de M. Henri-Marie Boudon, Grand Archidiacre d'Eureux by M. Collet, Doctor of Theology and a prominent Catholic apologist. Here Southey continued to assail the sainted fables of the church and the records of the visions of Sister Nativity and Sister Providence. This second article, it should be noted, was also largely a reply to a pamphlet written by Southey's old adversary Charles Butler, entitled "A Reply to the article in the Quarterly Review, for March, 1826, on the Revelation of La Soeur Nativité." In 1825 Butler had published his Book of the Roman Catholic Church in answer to Southey's Book of the Church. In 1826 Southey answered Butler's Book with his Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae.

In his 1827 review Southey was again concerned with what he viewed as the deliberate and well-organized system of fraud which

---

[65]Ibid., 410.

continued to be conducted by the Roman church. He was alarmed that such religious frauds, which he felt active in nineteenth-century England, might be a conscious attempt to subvert and to destroy the established institutions of the British church and state, and he wrote:

> The charge which the Quarterly Review, and which Protestant Christendom, brings against the Papal Church is, that of impiety and imposture, evinced in a succession of legends not more false than blasphemous; which legends the Church has authenticated and appropriated, by adopting them into its Liturgies, and by canonizing the Saints, both male and female, for whose honour the fables were cunningly devised, and by, or upon whom . . . the frauds were practised.
> . . . . . .
> . . . the same system is still pursued, and by the same means; . . . attempts are still making to accredit, by immediate revelation, those dogmas and practices of the Romish Church against which all Protestants declare, as being corrupt and idolatrous, injurious to the well-being of society, repugnant to the senses and to the nature of man, and in direct opposition to the revealed word and will of God; that the loftiest pretensions of the priesthood, pretensions whereby they formerly established that intolerant tyranny which, with such cost and difficulty, we shook off at the Reformation, are in these days proclaimed anew, under the pretended orders of our Lord and Saviour; and that this gross and palpable imposture, this blasphemous fabrication [the revelations of Sister Nativity] . . . had been seen, and examined, and approved, before it was sent into the world, by high ecclesiastical authorities, French and English.[66]

In its greed for political power Southey believed the church precisely the same in the nineteenth century as it had been during the Inquisition, and he made no distinctions between the secular and spiritual divisions of the church.

For basic proof of his charges Southey pointed to the other

---

[66]QR, XXXVI, 311, 312.

Sister Nativities of Catholic history: the Blessed Elizabeth of Schonauge in the twelfth century, Margaret of Cortona in the thirteenth, Christina of Stumbala in the fourteenth, Veronica in the fifteenth, Columbia of Rieti in the sixteenth, Maria-Madeline de' Pazzi in the seventeenth, and Sister Nativity and Sister Providence in the eighteenth and nineteenth. At no time since the Reformation, he wrote, "has it been more necessary than at the present that the character, and practices, and crimes of the Romish church should be thoroughly exposed and understood."[67]

He examined the purported revelations of Sister Providence and the life of her biographer Henri Boudon of La Fère in Picardy (b. 1624). Marie-Angelique had been born at Evreux in 1650 and was an Ursuline nun. Southey was particularly interested in her visions of Satan, and he gave detailed episodes from the account of her visions and revelations and refuted or ridiculed them point by point. Again he repeated his alarm that such tales were given wide currency and that many in Britain apparently believed them:

> . . . let it be borne in mind that the history of Sister Providence is not a legend of the dark ages, nor of an ignorant country; the proof against that church would even in that case be the same; but this is of modern date, and recent publication. It occurred in the flourishing years of Louis XIV. . . . Could such practices exist . . . could such a superstition stand, if the people were permitted to read the scriptures? And can we wonder that where such things are practised--where such books are circulated--where such a superstition is established, infidelity should there extensively prevail, and men reject with contempt and indignation a religion which they can understand only as it is presented

---

[67]Ibid., 325.

> to them, and which they see connected with, and disgraced by, such loathsome representations, such extravagant falsehoods, and such impious impostures.[68]

By way of summing up his evidence against the church Southey provided also a discussion of the Biblioteque Chrétienne pour l'Édification de la Jeunesse, a seventeenth century Catholic record of miracles and visions, running to one hundred volumes, which was published for the instruction of the young. This massive work, which had recently been re-published in France, he found to be the ultimate monument to Catholic falsehood, fraud, subversion, corruption, and imposture.

Southey, then, objected to Roman Catholicism primarily upon the basis of his historical study of its persecutions of dissenters and non-believers, its use of miracles, relics, and superstitions, and what he considered to be its perversion of basic Christian doctrine. He particularly found objectionable the doctrines of transubstantiation, purgatory, papal infallibility, exclusivity of salvation, and eternal punishment of sinners incompatible with his own beliefs. What he feared most immediately, however, was what he perceived as the political ambitions of the church, and this fear was closely related to his fear of revolution by the lower classes of British society in his own day. His "Roman Catholic Question: Ireland" (QR, XXXVIII, 1828), the political aspects of which have been examined in an earlier chapter, illustrates better than any

---

[68]Ibid., 353.

other paper the depth of these fears and the extent of his distrust of the Catholic church in Britain.

For Southey, again, the church had not changed substantially over the long centuries of her history, and he perceived in Elizabeth's reign, as well as in that of George IV, that Ireland was the "ground on which the church of Rome, in alliance with a foreign power, might bring its force to bear with most effect against heretical England."[69] In particular he looked with horror upon the political activities of such groups as the Catholic Association through which he felt the church acted. The activities of such associations were for him classic examples of Catholic political policy of meddling in the internal affairs of an independent kingdom.

While Southey consistently supported the policy of religious compromise and toleration followed by the Anglican church since its inception in the sixteenth century, he did not feel that it should be extended in any substantial way to the Catholics of his own day simply because Catholics could not, by nature of their belief, be classified with other non-conformists. He was careful, however, to define the limits of toleration which he felt should be allowed by the church and the government in Britain:

> To tolerate is to allow that which is not approved,--to suffer that which is not and ought not to be encouraged. Toleration is such allowance, such sufferance;--nothing more. And more no dissidents ought to expect or ask, more being inconsistent

---

[69]QR, XXXVIII, 539.

> with the fundamental principles of any constitution whereof religion is a part. And this, too, must have its limits; for nothing may be tolerated which would manifestly endanger the public peace,--nothing which is contrary to a divine command,--nothing which is in itself nefarious.[70]

There must be strict limits to religious toleration, and the degree of toleration extended to individual religions must be defined by the dangers which the individual religious group might present to the British constitution. There were degrees of toleration, he wrote in a revealing figure of speech,

> just as in insanity there are certain cases for which constant and strict coercion is necessary, and others where the hallucination being perfectly harmless the afflicted person may and ought, upon every principle of humanity and justice, to be left at large, and indulged in every thing that may alleviate the calamity with which he is visited.[71]

While Protestant dissenters might well be erroneous in their doctrines and disciplines, and while their conduct in former times might have produced greater injury to true reformed religion than Roman Catholicism could ever do, and while they too might threaten the state with revolution and subversion, still

> . . . they are Protestants, and being so, they acknowledge no foreign jurisdiction; their allegiance is imperfect, but it is not divided; no case can be imagined in which the head of their religion could call upon them to disobey their temporal sovereign, or to act against him. Their discipline is not dangerous to the state, and none of their doctrines or practices are, in their immediate and obvious effects, injurious to society. Therefore they are entitled to the fullest toleration. . . .[72]

---

[70]Ibid., 550.

[71]Ibid., 551.

[72]Ibid., 553.

Further, with regard to the issue of Catholic emancipation, but broadly in view of the religious and civil rights of British Catholics, Southey espoused this principle:

> . . . we will say that, with such limitations as humanity requires, and as our faith enjoins, no sect is entitled to ask for more toleration than it is willing to give, and than it actually gives wherever it is dominant. If our principles are declared by them to be so pernicious that a Protestant, however blameless, however amiable, however virtuous and pious, must necessarily be excluded because of them from the kingdoms of heaven,--surely they ought not to complain, as of a grievance and injustice, that the British Protestant Government has deemed it necessary, because of theirs, to exclude them from seats in the legislature, and from a few offices in the state.[73]

Southey defended the abstract right of worship according to individual conscience, but he argued that Catholicism had, by its very doctrines and practices, always worked against and would always work against that principle. The right had been abused further by skeptics and unbelievers, but he held that the right of individual worship was not necessarily related to the political rights of men and churches. The profession of religious belief and practice must always be a very real qualification for all offices in the state because of the nature of the British constitution.

For Southey, then, the principle of political freedom did not apply fully to Catholics, for he believed that their allegiance to the Papacy was more than a religious connection; it was a political

---

[73]Ibid., 556.

attachment tantamount to an allegiance to a foreign sovereign power whose policies were hostile to British sovereignty and liberty. He granted the right of freedom of worship and belief to Catholics as long as it did not infringe upon the laws of the state. A good Catholic in office, he felt, would always be actuated by his allegiance to the See of Rome. He further argued that Catholics

> are not to be bound in their dealings with a Protestant state by any declarations or oaths, however solemn; and this is no secret part of their system for it has been decreed and pronounced by popes, canons, and councils, that no such oaths and declarations are binding. It is upon the religious sincerity of other men that you have your surest reliance; but in exact proportion as the Roman Catholics are sincere in their religion, must they, upon any point in which the interests of their church are concerned, be disturbed. Corruptio optimi pessima. The better, the sincerer, the more religious they are, the more effectually are they disqualified by their creed.[74]

He strengthened his argument by pointing out that the hope of a Catholic for ultimate spiritual salvation was made contingent upon his temporal obedience to the superiors of the church: thus spiritual concerns, however admirable they might be, depended at last upon temporal ones. The church of Rome had acted systematically in its wisdom--

> for the wisdom of the serpent belongs to it; and the structure of that church is the greatest work of such wisdom which the world has ever yet seen. No other system has ever been devised so excellently adapted to practise upon the weakness of men, and to form a strict alliance, offensive and defensive, with their vices. It addresses itself seemingly to the better part of our nature, while it enters into a compromise with the worst. It enslaves the understanding and corrupts the conscience.[75]

---

[74]Ibid., 560.

[75]Ibid., 572.

The most tolerant and enlightened Catholics, he believed, were those who lived in England "and who have moreover from their childhood breathed the free air of a Protestant country." There are, he said, many English Catholics who believe it possible for a Protestant to be saved in his own faith and who are willing to swear unflinching allegiance to their king, but English Catholics are atypical, and, furthermore, "grievously indeed are they deceived who are persuaded that the Romanists have anywhere abated one jot in their pretensions, or in any one point relaxed the rigour of their intolerance."[76]

Southey was totally convinced of a general Catholic conspiracy. "Contented that hierarchy never will be," he seriously concluded, "till it has either brought about the overthrow of the Protestant Church, or consumed the principles which it now holds, and to which it is bound."[77] But while to his mind Roman Catholicism posed an external threat to reformed religion, non-conformists, with their petty bickerings, enthusiasm, fanaticism, multiplicity of doctrines, and democratic character, represented a very real threat from within. They questioned civil authority, and they drew strength away from the Church of England. Theirs were religions of personalities and individual preachers. While Southey could for thirty years write blanket indictments of Roman Catholicism, he found difficulty in forming consistent opinions of various dissenting sects.

---

[76]Ibid., 575.

[77]Ibid., 579-580.

Some were as pernicious as any subversive organization of the Irish Catholics; some could be viewed as examples for the English church itself to follow. As a whole, however, he distrusted dissenters, and near the end of his writing career he summed up his feelings in a fairly representative letter to his cousin Herbert Hill, Jr., in May, 1834:

> In truth I have a very hearty dislike for the dissenters as a body, tho with abundant liking for individuals among them. No one knows their history better, and without reading their own historians, their own magazines, it would be hardly possible to believe how dishonestly they write, how impudently they suppress or misrepresent important facts, how rancorously they hate the church, and with how bitter and uncharitable spirit they are possessed.[78]

Southey's interest in dissenting sects of the nineteenth century was evident early in his career. He provided such an extensive treatment of them in his celebrated Letters from England by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella (1807) that the work even today seems disproportionately weighted with that topic. One modern Southey scholar has noted that perhaps the greatest flaw in Letters from England

> is the excessive number of letters devoted to religious groups. The Quakers, the Jews, Richard Brothers, Joanna Southcott, Swedenborgianism, the Methodists--each receives a separate letter, and to these must be added accounts of churches and cathedrals. . . . The proportion of space devoted to this aspect of English life seems out of balance; indeed Letter 29 on the number of sects and something of their history would inform the reader of today of all that he might wish to know.[79]

---

[78]NL, II, 410-411.

[79]Curry, Southey, pp. 79-80; See Letters from England, Letters 28, 29, 53, 57, 62, 63, 70.

And, twenty years later, he devoted a good deal of his Colloquies (1829) to the same subject.[80]

Southey's Quarterly Review papers treating sectarianism, however, were not designed primarily to enlighten the reader as much as to sound warnings or, on occasion, to commend the work of some sects. Always haunted by the fear of the mob Southey came to look upon any democratically oriented religious sect with misgivings. The enthusiasm displayed by many of them he felt a dangerous symptom of emotional or mental aberration. The common element of his fear of Catholics and dissenters was that they both in his view possessed in varying degrees the materials, the organizational structures, and the zealous confidence to threaten the property and power of the Church Establishment and endanger the state itself through social upheaval and a shifting of religious patterns in Britain.

Perhaps his most significant article in the review bearing upon contemporary non-conformists was his review in 1810 of an anonymous work entitled Hints to the Public and the Legislature, on the Nature and Effect of Evangelical Sects, published in 1808-1810. This paper, which carried the running title "On the Evangelical Sects," is primarily of note because it reflected his basic criticisms of several sects--criticism which he would voice consistently in his scattered comments in various other papers.

---

[80]See Colloquies, Colloquies 10 and 11.

"On the Evangelical Sects" was designed primarily to be a brief history of the origin and rise of Methodism in England, and although he went far to defend the liberties of religious belief and practice, Southey did voice some harsh criticism of Methodism on the grounds of its popular character, its appeal to the working classes, and its doctrine of exclusivity of salvation. He made very clear his feeling that the group was dangerous to the state unless the activities of its more ardent advocates were gently but firmly controlled.

The anonymous author of Hints to the Public, "a Barrister," had attacked the group, and Southey sought to defend them on some points in which he felt they had been grossly misrepresented. (The author of the pamphlet was actually James Sedgwick, a Unitarian.) It is clear today, however, that Sedgwick's Hints was actually designed to express the alarm which many, including Robert Southey, had begun to feel at the rapid spread of Methodism. Geoffrey Carnall has noted of Southey's harsh treatment of Sedgwick's work:

> One reason for Southey's severity was Sedgwick's favorable attitude to Sydney Smith's article on the Baptist mission in India, from which there is a long quotation in the fourth section. [Hints (1810), iv, 76-77.] Southey's review was thus part of his private campaign against the Edinburgh. But he also seems to have been genuinely indignant at Sedgwick's misrepresentation of Methodist teaching.[81]

Carnall has also observed that Southey was indignant as well because of Sedgwick's misinterpretations of certain doctrinal

---

[81]Carnall, p. 130.

positions of the Church of England. Sedgwick had claimed that moral duty was more important than doctrinal mysteries and that such was also the attitude of the established church. Southey reacted strongly in favor of the Church of England. In replying to Sedgwick he was careful, however, to ignore doctrines in which he himself had no belief and to stress those in which he did believe. This made him appear much more orthodox than he actually was at the time that he wrote the article. Carnall notes that

> he had been very much annoyed when Gifford had done this for him in the first number of the Quarterly. Why had he now become anxious to appear orthodox? Sedgwick's attitude to the Church of England was practically the same as his own when he was writing fot the Annual Review. Like Sedgwick he had called upon it to abandon the Thirty-Nine Articles . . . it is very probable that the events of 1810, which turned him against reform, prejudiced him also against "free and fearless" thinking in matters of religion.[82]

Southey appeared considerably less orthodox, and more in accordance with Sedgwick's views, in a letter written to his brother Thomas scarcely three months after he wrote his Quarterly article. This letter helps to define some of his religious views as well as to show a disappointing gap between his private opinions and his public utterance in the Quarterly:

> The Establishment has been an infinite blessing to England--in proof of this we have only to look at Popery and Calvinism from both of which it has preserved us. It still is a blessing because it saves us from persecution; but its creed will not stand the test of sound criticism. The story of the Fall, the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and the miracles must be given up. Abandon these, insist upon a diseased moral nature,

---

[82]Ibid., pp. 131-132.

> the necessity of all-sufficiency of grace effecting a moral redemption, preach the doctrine of a perpetual revelation, appeal to the heart of man for the truth of these doctrines, and Christianity becomes invincible. The nature of the Fall and the question of the Trinity and the superhuman nature of Christ may safely be left undefined, for every person to understand according to his judgment.[83]

It might be said that from this point onward Southey's defense of the Church of England was more political than religious in nature. The only solution to religious problems in England, he admitted to his brother, would perhaps be to combine all the good elements from each religious organization into one universal church:

> the most practicable . . . remedy is by setting up a new system, an Eclectic Church combining all that is good in each, yet so philosophically framed, that as the world grew wiser it would be adapted for a Catholick--i.e.--a universal faith.[84]

Whether Southey wrote this letter in seriousness or was merely "thinking aloud" cannot be known, but the wide difference in content and tone between the letter and "On the Evangelical Sects" cannot but seem striking and unfortunate to any student of Southey. Carnall has noted that the division between his private and public opinions in this instance

> was to be debilitating; the more so as he was not fully conscious of what he was doing. Quarterly reviewing was an insidious temptation to insincerity, especially as it was a means of securing greater public recognition and social influence. Southey was gratified by the praise which his review of the Barrister's Hints got from the Prime Minister himself.

---

[83]NL, II, 6.

[84]Ibid.

> It led him to hope that Canning might compare Bonaparte to Kehama in the House of Commons--it would be good for sales.[85]

The article was not without some criticism of the church, however. Southey noted that modern times had altered the traditional pastoral function of the priest and that clergymen of the Church of England were not being sufficiently trained to meet the new demands of a rapidly changing society. In rural areas parishioners were regarding the clergyman rather as a gentleman than as a priest because he was so far above them in manners and in education. The failure of the clergy to respond to the specific needs of the poor and of the working class parishioners inevitably would tend to give rise to discontent, discord, and disunity within the individual parish. The growth of Methodism, therefore, he felt largely attributable to the advantages which Methodist preachers, by virtue of training and temperament, would have over their Anglican counterparts--the advantage was "that from their habits and breeding they can be familiar with the lowest orders of their hearers."[86]

Southey felt that the doctrine propounded by Methodist preachers was one of the perpetual revelation of God freely granted to all those who sincerely sought it--"an inward light breaking upon the soul with not less irrestible conviction than flashed upon Paul from heaven. . . ." The Methodists had been successful in their efforts among the common people because unlike Anglican churchmen

---

[85]Carnall, p. 133; See LC, III, 303.

[86]QR, IV, 488.

> they appeal to the heart and conscience to bear testimony to the truth of what they preach; they pour forth glowing descriptions of death and hell and judgment; and when they have thus heated and terrified the imagination, the bodily feelings which they excite are compounded with the impulse of the spirit. Such they represent them, and such they believe them to be. This indeed is a pitiable delusion, and perilous in its consequences; but the truths which they inculcate sink deep, and when they succeed in impressing upon their people a sense of the weakness of human nature, they teach them also where its strength consists.[87]

While he could condemn the excessive emotionalism of Methodist doctrine and preaching, Southey could also admit the good which it often did. It gave to the poor working man a deep sense of community and individual worth, as well as glorifying the ethics of toil, industry, frugality, and sobriety, and he admired the rigid discipline and order which existed in many Methodist groups. There was incalculable danger to the state and to society, however, if that sense of community and industry inspired by Methodism was misused by an intelligent leader who had the ability to inflame the passions of the poor and lead them, in their ignorance, in the paths of sedition and rebellion.

The general body of Methodists, or "Evangelicals," Southey divided into two main groups, the one professing Arminian doctrines, and the other embracing Calvinistic beliefs. The doctrine of predestination was the point of disagreement and separation for the two groups. Although he recognized the dangers presented by both groups he particularly objected to Sedgwick's call for thorough

---

[87]Ibid.

government regulation of Methodism. "It would," he argued, "be oppressive in the state to do so, what it cannot do if it would, prevent a man's thoughts. . . ." The growth of Methodism must be indicative of its good qualities:

> . . . this fact is certain, that no system, or set of opinions could ever become widely prevalent, unless it were in some point well and wisely adapted to human nature. When the tree flourishes, it is sure indication that the soil and the climate are congenial.[88]

The good qualities of Methodism, however, "may not be attainable without the evil which alloys it." The moral conduct of any people, he argued, never depends entirely upon any state religion, but "upon the circumstances in which they are placed and the temper of the times. . . ." Moral conduct also depends greatly upon the manners of the people in any given area of the country. In England, he noted,

> because manners supply the only general rule of life, and the lower you descend in society, the worse are the morals of the people; for the populace, when collected together in large towns, or in manufactories, or in mining counties, lose the natural and simple feeling which characterises an uncorrupted peasantry, and acquire nothing in its sted.[89]

Methodism, then, could be a force for great good or for great evil, depending upon how the Methodist leaders exploited the manners and the circumstances of the common working people.

Southey was very careful to point out what he considered to be the dangers and faults of Methodism--criticisms which he also

---

[88]Ibid., 485, 486.

[89]Ibid., 487.

extended to other evangelical dissenting sects. He was especially critical of what he felt to be a lack of decorum and dignity in their worship and an excess of emotionalism in their preaching and practices of worship and conduct. The Methodist habit of intense introspection and self-examination he believed to be particularly dangerous psychologically. Their habit of open, group confessions might well encourage rather than prevent moral misbehavior.

The preaching tactics of fear and spiritual conflict he looked upon with disdain, for they were dangerous to the emotional and mental happiness of the hearer:

> There are minds of a finer mould for whom the struggle which is thus excited, first between conscience and modesty, and then between virtuous principles and desires unnaturally inflamed, is too strong, and they lose their senses in the conflict. This process is quickened by the religious terrors which the preachers labour to excite, for like empirics they have but one drug. The same powerful medicine which restores the confirmed sinner to health by searching his very bones till the joints open and the teeth are loosened, they administer in all cases, and in those who have weak nerves and warm imagination, madness is frequently the result.[90]

He also condemned strongly the doctrine of eternal damnation which the Methodists preached and which they frequently used to frighten people into conversion. This doctrine would drive a sensitive individual, if he sincerely believed it, into insanity. In addition, he objected to the stress placed upon the guilt of the individual:

> What a doctrine is this, that none can be saved unless they feel an assurance of salvation? . . . what is to become of

---

[90]Ibid., 490.

> those whose understanding is too strong, or whose imagination is too weak, to render them capable of this assurance, and who are yet persuaded that without it their souls must perish everlastingly?[91]

He contended further that the increase of religious insanity in England was occasioned by and commensurate with the spread of Methodism and similar evangelical sects. All men sin by nature of their humanity, but those who are so emotionally obsessed with religious enthusiasm and the fear of damnation have little ability to deal with the sins which they do commit, much less those they only imagine.

Southey complained that the training of Methodist preachers had no provision for the liberal arts; he also objected to the austerity and sternness of their meeting places. "They have," he wrote,

> stript religion of all its outward grace, and, in proportion as they overspread the country, the very character of the English face is altered . . . they have already obtained as distinct a physiognomy as the Jews or the Gipsies--coarse, hard, and dismal visages, as if some spirit of darkness had got into them and was looking out of them.[92]

He ridiculed the strict attitudes of Methodists toward such insignificant matters as dancing, snuff-taking, smoking, drinking, styles of dress, working on the Sabbath, the theatre, and the singing of complex hymns and anthems--"the attention paid by the lawgivers of this formidable sect to the minutest circumstances

---

[91]Ibid., 500.

[92]Ibid., 503.

which can strengthen their hold upon the minds of the people. . . ."[93]

At the heart of Southey's distrust of Methodism, however, was his concern that as a united body they could pose a formidable threat to the state:

> . . . the Methodists already form a distinct people in the state, and the main object of their rulers is to keep up and strengthen the distinction . . . all who are not Methodists are unbelievers, and all who are unbelievers are in a state of damnation. Especial pains are taken to keep up this exclusive spirit. . . .[94]

Such an exclusive, separatist spirit could easily lead them to believe themselves apart from the rest of the citizenry and therefore not subject to the same government. These are clearly the prime materials for rebellion.

In addition, he noted the intolerance of Methodist leaders in trying to control what their ministers preached and what their members read:

> What then must be the effect of a confederated and indefatigable priesthood, who barely tolerate literature, and actually hate it, upon all those classes over whom literature has any influence! To these classes Methodism is not less injurious than it is beneficial to the rude and uncivilized orders; it acts upon them as a mildewing superstition, blasting all genius in the bud, and withering every flower of loveliness and of innocent enjoyment.[95]

The narrow-minded intolerance of Methodist leaders was in many respects identical to that of Catholicism at its worst. The

---

[93]Ibid., 505.

[94]Ibid.

[95]Ibid., 507.

publications of the Methodists, further, were also rank with narrowness, pettiness, and deception, for they gave the Roman Catholics cause to reproach England with the miracles of modern "saints" and "to retort upon us the imputation of gross incredulity, or of gross deception."[96]

Southey never attempted to hide his alarm at the rapid increase in the number of Methodists and other sectarians:

> It is no light evil for a state to have within its bosom so numerous and active and increasing a party, whose whole system tends to cut them off from all common sympathy with their countrymen, and who are separatists not in religious worship alone, but in all the ordinary observances of life. . . . The sectarian spirit which is thus formed and fostered, is nourished at the expense of the national spirit, and their growth is like that of an incysted tumour in the body politic.[97]

His feelings had not changed twenty years later when his sense of fear of the spread of dissenting sects is admirably distilled in the words of Montesinos: ". . . the principle of non-conformity in religion is very generally connected with political discontent; the old leaven is still in the mass, and, wherever there is thunder in the atmosphere, it begins to work."[98]

The Church of England should recognize the dangers inherent in Methodism and counter them by adopting the good which was also there; particularly the diligence of the Anglican clergy in preaching to the common working man should be increased. Indeed, the

---

[96]Ibid., 508.

[97]Ibid., 510.

[98]Colloquies, II, p. 44.

established church was already, in 1810, showing improvement, and it could be perceived that the church had derived, "in some degree, the same kind of benefit from this formidable opposition which the Roman Catholic Church derived from the Reformation."[99]

One should note that Southey's opinions in this 1810 article coincide neatly with those he held before and after he wrote it. In his review of William Myles's Chronological History of the Methodists for the Annual Review in 1803 he had given a similar treatment of the rise of Methodism and warned against the potential dangers it could present to the church and the state.[100] In addition, he had found fault with the practice of group confession, censorship of books and inflamed sermons. His views had softened somewhat by 1820 when, in his Life of Wesley, he expressed hope for the reunion of Methodist sects with the Church of England.[101] His Colloquies in 1829 bore the deep impress of his distrust of the principles of religious dissent in a rapidly changing society.

As a young man Southey had once felt attracted to the Quakers, a sect whose beliefs he always admired even when in later years he came to attack them in his writing. In his review of Myles's History of the Methodists in the Annual Review for 1803 he had compared the characters and teachings of John Wesley and George

---

[99]QR, IV, 512.

[100]AR for 1803, pp. 201ff.

[101]See SL, I, 146, 249, 255; II, 207, 221; III, 443.

Fox, to the advantage of the latter.[102] He had found striking similarities between Quaker belief and his own convictions, Geoffrey Carnall has observed in this connection:

> What chiefly attracted Southey to the Quakers when he became better informed about them was their combination of warm religious feeling with a freedom from dogma. They abstained from defining what had been left indefinite in the Bible, and did not regard the Bible itself as a final revelation. This fitted well with Southey's own belief that Christianity was not an historical religion but a perpetual revelation. . . . They avoided such theological horrors as the doctrine of eternal punishment and the impossibility of salvation outside the Christian fold. Their discipline of life appealed to Southey for they were truly Christian stoics.[103]

In the "History of Dissenters" in 1813 Southey's admiration of Quaker history and belief is evident, although he did attack some of the extravagancies of their belief in the early days of Quakerism. More important, however, was his judgment that because of their small size and their principle of pacifism they posed little real threat to the established church or to the state:

> The Quakers continue to this day faithfully to catalogue their sufferings in saucepans and spoons; and they retain their hatred of the Steeple House; but their extravagances have ceased, their peculiarities are softened down, and from being the Ishmaelites of the land, they now, in a far greater degree than any other body of separatists, enjoy the good word of all. . . . Their enthusiasm has burnt out; but their institutions still preserve them as a separate, though probably a decreasing people, more generally prosperous than any other sect, and more active and zealous in their beneficence. In information, and especially in literature, they have been miserably deficient . . . and follow none of

---

[102]AR for 1803, pp. 207ff; for 1806, pp. 593, 596, 606.

[103]Carnall, pp. 74-75.

> those pursuits which rouse and quicken the intellectual faculties, they are likely to remain inferior in this important point.[104]

In a later article, however, Southey came to praise several Quaker intellectuals, particularly the poet Bernard Barton.[105]

The one article which provides most clearly Southey's seasoned view of English Quakerism is his review of Jonathan Dymond's Principles of Morality (QR, XLIV, 1831). Here he gave a gentle analysis of Dymond's essays, and he dealt with some basic points of Quaker belief. He agreed with the proposition that the authority of civil government is a director of individual conduct, and he agreed with Dymond that the Christian has a right to disobey laws which are not in keeping with Scriptural principles. In addition, he restated his own belief, which was in harmony with that of Dymond, that

> they who are destitute of Scripure are not destitute of a direct communication of the will of God;--limited it may be, it may be incomplete; but it exists, and is enough to indicate a distinction between right and wrong, enough to make them moral agents and reasonably accountable to our common Judge.[106]

He also agreed with the Quaker philosophy which held that what is most expedient with respect to another world "is most expedient with respect to the present, but were it otherwise, men's happiness, and especially the happiness of good men, does not

---

[104]QR, X, 112.

[105]QR, XXVIII, 3-5.

[106]QR, XLIV, 84.

consist merely, nor mainly, in external things."[107] In matters such as duelling, adultery, and false semblances of devotion Southey agreed with Dymond. The strict Quaker attitude toward the keeping of the Sabbath, however, he felt excessive; in other areas he plainly admired Quaker self-discipline, morality, and modesty.

While he concurred with Dymond that "necessary as the artificial distinctions of society are, inequality is carried to an excess among us, and the general rights of nature are invaded to a degree which nothing can justify," he could not agree with the principle of social levelling argued by Dymond and other Quaker moralists.[108] Much of the article was devoted to the subject of the relationship between Christianity and the civil law, and he agreed with Dymond that Christians must not engage in litigation with one another.

Perhaps the major point of disagreement between Southey and the Quaker moralist was on the subject of education, particularly the utility of classical learning. Southey found the Quaker attitude too much akin to that of the utilitarians. In addition, he could not agree with the Quaker attitude toward the efficacy of a church establishment sanctioned and supported by a civil government. He also urged that religious education should be a joint responsibility of both church and state, while Dymond had argued that such

---

[107]Ibid., 87.

[108]Ibid., 86, 95.

responsibility lay entirely within the province of religions organizations. On certain proposed legal reforms of the day Southey disagreed with the Quakers, especially on the issue of capital punishment which he felt to be a viable deterrent to major crimes.

On the whole he admired the Quakers, but he also felt that their system was erected upon sandy foundations. Experience and observation, he felt, should prove to the Quakers that the institutions of society were not as evil as they delighted in depicting them. While wars were sometimes unjust and always immoral, Southey argued, British Quakers should likewise be aware of the fleets and regiments which protected their religious liberties.[109]

Toward the Unitarians he took a much less gentle attitude in his Quarterly papers. His remarks in "New Churches" (QR, XXIII, 1820) are a fair representation of his feelings toward them. They were the "Ishmaelites of the Christian world, their hand is against every Christian, and every Christian hand is against them."[110] He, of course, objected mainly to the Unitarian belief concerning the Trinity and the methods which various Unitarian groups were following to gain converts.

A number of Southey's articles dealing with religious topics display his puzzled fascination with religious fanaticism of one

---

[109]For Southey's interest in Quakerism see SL, I, 426; II, 31, 68; III, 199, 210; NL, I, 180, 468, 471, 474; II, 61, 222, 223, 247; AR for 1806, pp. 595, 606; Letters from England, III, 60ff; EAR for 1808, p. 160ff.

[110]QR, XXIII, 569-573.

kind or another--his treatment of Sister Nativity is the best example of this interest in the realm of Catholicism. He felt that non-conformist fanatics were a more puzzling and fascinating breed, however. Protestant fanatics were undeluded by an elaborate system of Catholic doctrine and superstition; they were, rather, self-deluded. For him Joanna Southcott represented the Protestant counterpart to Sister Nativity, and her grotesque image appears and reappears with great frequency in the essays. For Southey she was the perfect symbol of the lengths to which religious mania could take one. A similar figure was the Reverend William Huntington, S. S., to whose illustrious career Southey devoted an entire essay in 1821. The occasion was his review of The Works of the Reverend William Huntington, S.S. (QR, XXIV, 1821), which had been published in twenty heavy volumes in 1820. This review is uncharacteristically humorous for a Quarterly paper, and Southey seemed to take particular delight in relishing some of the more interesting of Huntington's fanatical exploits.

William Huntington, S. S. (Sinner Saved) was born in 1774, the year of Southey's birth, and became an itinerant preacher of considerable fame early in the nineteenth century. What Southey sought to do in his essay was to provide an analytical study of the development of a fanatical preacher and to trace the origins of his disordered mind. He left little doubt that he considered Huntington insane, and his insanity, like that of Joanna Southcott, arose from a combination of incredible ignorance and unbridled religious

enthusiasm. For evidence Southey pointed to Huntington's supposed visions of Christ and the holy angels. In such cases he never questioned the sincerity and actual belief of such visionaries, but he attributed their disorders to self-induced hallucination. Huntington's history was valuable for study, for it illustrated "how possible it is for the perfect enthusiast to ripen into perfect rogue, and how imperceptibly this natural transition sometimes takes place.[111] In Southey's view, such enthusiasts almost invariably converted sincere delusion into deliberate falsification for the purpose of gathering a following or of making money.

He concluded in part that the pattern of fanatical religious delusion was common both to Protestant and to Catholic sects, but that some were more skillful in making use of it than others:

> The Romanists boast that their church is the only one which lays claim to the power of working miracles; they are mistaken; the history of every fanatical sect abounds with miracles as veracious as their own. There is this difference; those of the Romanists are usually the most monstrous; those of the fanatics the most uncharitable. In other respects, par est improbiles, eadem impudentia, gemina audacia.[112]

And he noted further that "the example of all impostors, from Mahomet down to Dr. Solomon, may show that they who calculate upon the credulity of mankind are seldom deceived, and the more important the imposture, the greater is the likelihood for success."[113]

---

[111]QR, XXIV, 471.

[112]Ibid., 476.

[113]Ibid., 480.

The basic tenets of Calvinism--election, imputed righteousness, and final perseverance--were the common stock of such fanatical enthusiasts. The writings of all such opportunists were especially dangerous to the happiness of the English lower class. Such writings were always characterized by a tone of coarse, bold, and insolent invective, and this

> is what will always be the most successful with the ignorant and the vulgar, and therefore it always prevails in those writings, whether political or polemical, which are designed for such readers; the object of the trading journalist and the trading pulpiteer being the same, at once to flatter the vanity of their dupes, to feed their self-conceit, exasperate their angry feelings, and impose on them by the language of scurrility, and assumed triumph. Let but a man establish for himself a certain reputation among the vulgar . . . and any thing may pass current under his name; crudities, inconsistencies, absurdities, extravagancies, obscenities under a gauzy veil, and impious scoffs and blasphemies without veil, will be received and admired in the literary world; in the political one a plenary indulgence shall be granted for crimes of every kind; and in what is called the religious one, no fooleries can be advanced, which will not find admirers and believers; for no man has ever calculated too largely upon the credulity of mankind.[114]

All this Pope Huntington understood quite as well as Pope Hildebrand, and both exploited it to the greatest success.

V. THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

During the years of Southey's association with the Quarterly Review the Church of England enjoyed the support of the upper class and the greater part of the general population of England. Although it contained members of sharp theological differences, the Anglican

---

[114]Ibid., 495.

settlement, which was a practical compromise between prescriptive authority and liberty of opinion, insured its strength through the unsettled years of the early nineteenth century. Its hierarchy was never a priestly caste, and the division of the church into parties was a mark of strength and flexibility rather than of weakness, for these parties all remained within the same broad communion.

The most active members of the Church of England, the evangelicals who had not seceded with the Methodists, had reached their climax prior to 1815, but they had done more to strengthen the Church Establishment than to weaken it, for they had set a pattern of high morality and piety in an age characterized by low moral standards. In matters of ritual and ceremonies and in distrust of Roman Catholicism the high church group had differed little from the evangelicals. The latitudinarians were, before about 1830, a group of only minor influence within the church.

Toward 1830, however, two reforming movements came to the fore, one for administrative reform and the other for a revival of the idea of the church as a divinely appointed institution. These interdependent movements worked together to alter the outward form and internal nature of the church, and by 1840 the church had assumed a somewhat different character from that which it had possessed in the early nineteenth century with such events as the repeal of the test and corporation acts in 1828, Catholic emancipation in that same year, and the commutation of tithes in 1836. During these years there were also substantial reforms in the

apportionment of parishes and dioceses. The abuses of pluralism and maladministration of ecclesiastical properties were also reduced. In its established religion as well as in its politics the years between 1815 and 1835 were years of great change for Britain.[115]

The dissenters and infidels had not, as Southey feared, overturned the church, but they had, as he had hoped, stimulated some much-needed reforms and caused the church to move to meet some of the challenges of a changing society. His concern that the church remain a pillar of that society is everywhere apparent in his Quarterly essays which treat religious topics. That concern is also abundantly evident in three of his substantial works in the 1820s: The Book of the Church (1824), Vindicae Ecclesiae Anglicanae (1826), and Colloquies (1829). These works, as well as his reviews in the Quarterly, give ample evidence that he was more concerned with the politics of religion than with religion itself.

For Southey a very practical union existed between the established church and the state which supported it--one could not be threatened without the other being threatened as well. The strength and stability of the one depended vitally upon the strength and stability of the other. He argued this point both in The Book of the Church and in Colloquies, and it is an idea which shares much with Coleridge's Constitution of Church and State and which found its poetic expression in Wordsworth's sequence of "Ecclesiastical Sonnets."

---

[115]Llewellyn Woodward, The Age of Reform: 1815-1870 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 502-511.

His conception of the relationship between church and state does much to explain his hostility toward Roman Catholicism and the political demands of those who clamored for Catholic emancipation in the 1820s. As noted earlier Southey viewed Catholicism as a powerful political menace, and he always looked upon non-conforming sects as potential threats to the constitution. These opinions are implicit in almost every article devoted to a religious topic, for he always returned at last to a defense of the Church of England as a viable social and political institution. These opinions also inhere in his articles of political criticism as the second chapter of this dissertation makes clear.

Southey's religious beliefs have been noted; while he was often at odds with the church on matters of doctrine and interpretation he always considered it his highest duty and obligation to defend the church against the charges of its detractors. In an age of social and political change and potential revolution the church represented to him the last citadel of order and stability upon which the government itself could rest. Consistently he argued that the evangelical efforts of the church both at home and abroad were insufficient compared to those of Baptist and Methodist sects, and he early urged that the church could play a vital role in securing extensions of British power abroad.[116] He often deplored the fact that non-conforming sects were outstripping the

---

[116]QR, I, 211, 222.

church on the missionary front; although they might make many converts, they would not, by their dissenting and separatist natures, do much to strengthen British rule, say, in India or in the South Seas.

In addition he deplored the fact that Anglican clergymen in England were not realistically educated to work effectively with the lower classes of workers, and this presented a political danger. If the church did not secure some religious authority in manufacturing districts the government could not exert control over the discontented in these areas. More should be done in this regard lest the evangelical churches gain immeasurable support from the working class and exacerbate an already volatile situation in the second and third decades of the century. The English church, moreover, alone preserved the best from the Reformation and stood as a bulwark against religious fragmentation which could weaken Protestantism in England in the face of what he viewed as growing Catholic power both in-Ireland and in England.[117] Notably Southey often expressed admiration for the Anglican compromise rather than dwelling upon controversies or divisions within the church, although it is apparent that he felt more obligated to defend the high church rather than the more liberal or progressive elements.

To the Reformation generally and to the Church of England specifically Southey felt that England was

---

[117]QR, IV, 511ff.

> indebted for that moral and intellectual eminence which she has so long enjoyed. But woe be to us and our posterity, if the Church Establishment should again be over thrown; [as in 1650] if the principles and feelings of men should again be loosened; if the cables of their faith should be cut, and they should be left to drive about at the mercy of the winds and tides! A new age of moral and religious anarchy would ensue. . . .[118]

Consistently in his historical articles Southey stressed the religious generosity and politically expedient wisdom of Elizabeth's via media, a pattern of policy which should be the grand precedent to be followed in the nineteenth century and which, if properly supported and sanctioned, would work well in a new age:

> . . . here it is that the wisdom of the founders of our Church appears most conspicuous. They purified religion of all the gross corruptions with which Rome has polluted it, and retaining only that which, as they thought, could allowably be retained, offered so little violence to old feelings, that more outcry was raised against them by the zealots of the Reformation than by the Catholics themselves.[119]

And the church provided a vehicle for Christian unity which could dissipate religious bitternesses and contribute to a stable, happy national spirit--thus insuring the general well-being of all citizens.[120]

In the summer of 1820 Southey reviewed a number of books and pamphlets concerning the necessity of the construction of new churches and the expansion of evangelical efforts by the Church of England within Britain itself. This article, with the running title

---

[118]QR, X, 93.

[119]Ibid., 93-94.

[120]Ibid., 139.

"New Churches" (QR, XXIII, 1820), is a significant statement of his concept of the state church.[121] America, he felt, is the greatest political experiment of the new world of democratic government, but to insure political stability and a perpetuation of her basic institutions, she is badly in need of a state-supported and state-sanctioned church because of the invariable principle that modern colonies are always more immoral and unstable than their mother countries. They are rarely settled by the best of men--men irrevocably attached to their old country and its institutions. The United States, moreover, had been settled largely by dissidents, and

> if the general [federal] government continues to profess a liberal indifference whether there be any religion in the country or none, the Americans will find, at no remote time, that the want of an adequate provision for the moral and religious instruction of the people,--that is to say, the want of an established church,--a circumstance of which their short-sighted admirers have boasted as their peculiar happiness,--will bring upon them in its inevitable effects worse evils than have ever been produced, even by superstition itself.[122]

He argued more especially that the number of Anglican churches in both metropolitan and rural areas in England was grossly inadequate to keep pace with a growing population whose culture and commercial centers were constantly shifting downward with the rise of

---

[121]"New Churches" was one of those articles most heavily damaged by Gifford's "mutilations." See SL, III, 96-99, 122-123, 164-165, 167, 189, 190; Hill and Helen Shine, The Quarterly Review Under Gifford (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949), p. 71.

[122]QR, XXIII, 552.

industrialism. The advent of a manufacturing society had destroyed those bases of unity and interdependence between the social institutions, the government, and the common man. At this juncture of history the church could supply a needed center of union and amicable feeling between the people and their country and would serve to attach them more securely to their government. "The ecclesiastical, as well as the civil institutions of England," he contended, "were originally accommodated in many points to local circumstances which have long ceased to exist . . . the present division of parishes was generally fixed before the time of Edward the Confessor."[123] He argued further that the people's view of the church had drastically altered since the period just after the Reformation when "everything . . . tended to impress upon the people, a feeling of dignity and importance of their Church Establishment." Even in Catholic countries the "lowest of the vulgar are not abandoned to a state of utter irreligion" as in some parts of modern England.[124]

Later in the article Southey discussed the efforts of the first

---

[123]Ibid., 554.

[124]Ibid., 555. That Southey possessed a keen understanding of the complex problems facing the Church of England in the first third of the nineteenth century and that he proposed practical solutions to resolve them is evidenced by his letter of February 8, 1835, to Charles Wynn, one of his closest friends and a member of a commission to investigate the state of the dioceses of England and Wales. The recommendations of Wynn's committee led to extensive reforms in the financial policies of the established church. NL, II, 418-420.

two Stuart monarchs to build more churches and to lower the ratio of clergymen to members, and he also gave some attention to the act of Queen Anne to build fifty new churches, of which only eleven were ultimately erected. Much of the trouble Southey traced to the clergy's foregoing the old right of meeting in convocation while the Parliament in the eighteenth century had allowed the church to decay somewhat by mere neglect. No less than in Anne's day, he argued, is there a need in modern times to strengthen the church against the growth of non-conforming sects, and he dwelt at length upon the ways in which the church was in his own time being weakened by radical dissenters, infidels, and skeptics. The doctrines of infidelity, he complained, are disseminated in radical political journals of popular and wide circulation, and skeptical and seditious opinions are shared by most political incendiaries who use rationalism and infidelity as tools to subvert the legally established powers of the kingdom. These doctrines are pestilential and maintained by those who possess a "malignant desire of spreading their own curse."

"New Churches" also is of some note for Southey's attack upon Unitarianism, an attack which provided him occasion for a few cuts and passes at his old adversary, Mr. William Smith of Norwich who had introduced a bill for the repeal of certain statutes of William III which prohibited non-Christians from holding office or being participants in litigation. Southey chided Smith for acting in behalf of the Unitarians and argued that the statutes under

question had never kept any dissenting group from religious freedom or abrogated the civil or legal rights which were fairly commensurate with the degree of Unitarian attachment to church and state. In objecting to what he felt were gross misrepresentations of the Church of England by Smith and certain journalists whom he did not specify, Southey noted that the church really needed no defense:

> The Church of England has never shrunk from the fullest investigation of its tenets. . . . It had vindicated itself triumphantly against Romanists on the one hand, and Schismatics on the other; and maintained with equal strength, the truths of revealed religion against the Atheist. . . . Against fair and regular attacks the Church of England requires not, and needs not the protection of authority; it can protect itself by its own strength; its defenders are armed at all points, and ready at all times. But misrepresentations and charges of idolatry, supported by misstatements, and addressed promiscuously to the ignorant, are not the legitimate modes of warfare. And the Church has a right to require from the State, the welfare and existence of which is inseparably connected with its own, that the religious feelings of the people shall not be thus wantonly and publicly outraged.[125]

That is, the state has an obligation to protect the church against the attacks of incendiary journalists. Perhaps for the only time in the Quarterly Southey stated that the damage done by radical politicians and religious journalists to the church was immense and that England could never be the same for the damage. It could, however, be countered by an increased program of religious instruction by the church, particularly in rural and manufacturing districts.

---

[125]Ibid., 571.

Any society which is not founded upon Christian principles and not guided by a Christian government which supports and perpetuates a state church, he felt, is bound inexorably toward a state of anarchy or a state of despotism. Political freedom, social justice, and Christianity itself are inextricably bound up together, and

> It is only through the prevailing influence of pure religion and undefiled, that the permanent blessings of perfect freedom can be attained; and it is only by timely inculcating the principles of that religion that governments can at once effectually provide for their own security, and for the happiness of their subjects. To this object the measures of the legislature are at length wisely directed, since by the termination of a war not more arduous than it was inevitable and just, it has won for itself leisure to give its main attention to the improvement of the people, which is the great end of government.[126]

Clearly this article should make evident to any reader that Southey's concept of the Church Establishment and its religious and political roles was determined in great part by his fear of anarchy on one hand and tyranny on the other.

"New Churches" anticipated by nine years Southey's more cogent argument upon the same points in Colloquies. There he charged that the government had not helped the church provide an adequate number of clergymen or churches in rapidly developing industrial districts, nor had it sufficiently paid rural clergymen. The Catholics and dissenters could easily perceive these faults and could just as easily exploit them for their own advantages.

---

[126]Ibid., 579.

In Colloquies he also urged the granting of scholarships to encourage the proper training of Anglican ministers, a new university at Durham, and a system of national parochial education. Southey's arguments in both Colloquies and in "New Churches" are fairly well summarized by the words of Sir Thomas More to Montesinos: "To maintain that the state ought not to concern itself with the religion of its subjects is the greatest and most perilous of political errors; and to regard religion with indifference is the most dangerous of all moral ones."[127]

In a later article (QR, XXVIII, 1823) Southey, decrying the growth of rationalism and unbelief in his age, advanced the opinion that Church of England preserved and perpetuated more than any other reformed church the true doctrines and practices of Christianity and that the soundness of Anglican divines could never be seriously brought into question:

> . . . there is no age in which the truth of Christianity has been more clearly and powerfully demonstrated than in our own. The church of England has produced defenders worthy of itself. We have the cogent Barrow, the irrefragible South, the most subtle Berkeley, the analytic Butler, to omit a host of others; in these all is sterling, and each of these is sufficient to convince any reasonable mind of the folly and unreasonableness of unbelief. In the last generation the useful task of presenting the evidences of religion in a popular form has been performed by Paley, that of refuting the popular objections to it by Watson. . . . If he who desires to know the truth would look for it in these writers, and in such as these . . . he would find the evidences of Christianity so numerous and so complete, that no imaginable proof, prior or posterior, direct or collaterial, from without or from within, is wanting.[128]

---

[127]Curry, Southey, p. 84; Colloquies, I, p. 133.

[128]QR, XXVIII, 528; see QR, IV, 512-513.

And in the same essay he stressed the role of the church in educating the people, a note sounded so frequently in his Quarterly papers:

> To the truth of this, the world every where bears witness. Where men have not been taught to know their Creator in the days of their youth, they have worshipped sticks and stones, or made idols for themselves. Where they have not been led into the easy ordinances of true religion, they imposed upon themselves a burden of severe and painful ceremonies. Where they have not been instructed that the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit, they have shed human blood upon their altars, and offered up their children to devils in the fire. . . .[129]

Southey's treatment of the foreign missionary efforts of the Church of England has already been noted (QR, XXXII, 1825). Both at home and abroad he felt that the work of the church in this area was inadequate. The educational role of the church he stressed most of all, notably in his proposed scheme of national education based upon the method of Dr. Andrew Bell.

In his review of Thomas Fosbrooke's British Monachism (QR, XXII, 1819) Southey discussed the plight of unemployed ladies in England.[130] Young women of the middle class, unmarried or widowed, were increasingly finding difficulties in locating suitable positions of employment and were thus cast adrift in society. To remedy this situation Southey proposed the establishment of ladies associations or Protestant religious orders--a Protestant Sisters of Charity--for the benefit of these women. Southey, who had admired the example of the Beguines in Belgium, proposed that such associations

---

[129]Ibid., 526.

[130]See Colloquies, II, 318ff.

might best operate under the protection of the established church. In his proposal he anticipated some of the ideas of the Tractarians, as A. M. Allchin has noted:

> Southey's powerful advocacy of the idea of Sisters of Charity . . . met with a real response in the optimistic years before Newman's secession in 1845. The revival of religious communities was even considered as a political possibility in the Young England circles.[131]

The Young England movement, however, dissolved under the pressure of the political events of 1845-1846. After 1845 the Anglo-Catholics became a minor movement in the church, struggling against popular opinion, and the establishment of Protestant sisterhoods in England proceeded very gradually.

Southey's view of the political function of the church is perhaps most clearly stated in his "Roman Catholic Question: Ireland" (QR, XXXVIII, 1828). Many of the political problems of Ireland he attributed to the corruptions of the Irish clergy of the Church of Ireland prior to the reforms instituted by Laud and Strafford and the restoration of church properties by Charles II after 1660. The evils had been long lasting. In the seventeenth century the English government had lost control of the clergy and the church hierarchy in Ireland to materialistic clergymen.

The British constitution was, in Southey's view, composed of two elements, the church and the state. Allegiance to the one

---

[131]A. M. Allchin, The Silent Rebellion: Anglican Religious Communities, 1845-1900 (London: SCM Press, 1958), p. 43.

required an equal allegiance to the other, and if one dissented from the established religion he foreswore also his loyalty to the state. Those who clamored for the political emancipation of Catholics and dissenters came dangerously close to treason. Further, the church insured the Protestant succession of the monarchy. Thus the most basic institution of England, its monarchy, depended greatly upon the strength and stability of the Church of England.[132] The granting of political concessions to Irish Catholics would undercut the authority of the church, and the whole structure of the British constitution and the Crown itself would be undermined.

The necessity of a church establishment in a Christian nation, he argued, "is one of the points on which Roman Catholic, the English Churchman, and the Presbyterian, entirely agree." He argued forcefully in favor of the church's right to collect tithes and taxes from those landowners who were not members of the church, and he further defended the legal rights of the church to hold properties in both Ireland and England. Neither the British government nor the Church Establishment has any obligation to Catholics or to dissenters other than to insure them a reasonable degree of freedom of belief and expression, and the government must not give legislative sanction in Ireland or elsewhere to

> a system which the Protestant knows to be corrupt and delusive, fraudulent, and superstitious, which the statesman knows to be

---

[132]QR, XXXVIII, 571.

> injurious to the welfare of nations, which the philosopher knows to be irreconcilable to the highest interests of mankind.[133]

In his review of Dymond's Principles of Morality (QR, XLIV, 1831) Southey also defended the Church Establishment and explored the nature of the relationship between the church and the civil government. In principle, he argued, the authority of a civil government is subordinate to the moral authority of the church:

> . . . when the Christian conceives the requisitions of government to be opposed to a higher law, he must exercise a strict scrutiny into the principles of his conduct; and--the principle respects non-compliance only, not implying any right of resisting in any other manner . . . [this] principle is the old and true doctrine of the Church of England.[134]

Ideally the laws of the state and the policies of the government should be in direct conformity with the doctrines and policies of the state church, and no potential for conflict should exist. Further, Southey defended the legitimacy and the necessity for a system of national education administered and supported by the Church Establishment. He defended the church against various detractors, Dymond among them, who had charged that it was deficient in sound tradition and scholarship. No other church, he noted, could claim the accumulated learning and totally impenetrable defense of Christianity which the Anglican divines had always provided: Hooker, Jackson, Taylor, South, Barrow, Berkeley, Butler, Skeleton--"from whose stores the diligent student may arm himself against all

---

[133]Ibid., 588, 592.

[134]QR, XLIV, 85.

the errors of these distempered times." And although he had formerly criticized the lack of evangelical efforts of the church he now praised such work as had been done.[135]

Southey's "Moral and Political State of the British Empire" (QR, XLIV, 1831) shows his acute distress about the reforms of Parliament and emancipation of Catholics and paints a generally gloomy picture for the future of Britain. Through the inevitable anarchy which parliamentary reform would bring and the moral disintegration which would be occasioned by letting loose the Irish Catholics, however, Southey felt that the Church of England would endure. After the Reform Act of 1832 and the emancipation of Catholics four years earlier he waited in full confidence and anticipation for a general revolution in England. The revolution never came, but experience had proven to him that one could not put faith in politicians and that the main hope for the future of the kingdom would be the established church. He believed that the church in the 1830s, despite the social and governmental reforms which had been instituted, was stronger spiritually and intellectually than it had ever been since the days of Laud, and that it was capable of withstanding the social upheavals which he predicted for mid-century.[136] His eye was to the future, and, as Geoffrey Carnall notes,

---

[135]Ibid., 118-119.

[136]LC, VI, 222.

> little as Southey might sympathize with the Tractarian Movement as it developed, he participated wholeheartedly in the sentiment which initiated the Movement--the desire to take firm counter-action against the enemies of the Church.[137]

VI. INDIVIDUAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Although he often savagely attacked the doctrines and practices of both the Roman Catholic Church and non-conformist sects, Southey sometimes displayed considerable admiration for individual religious leaders, reformers, and preachers. Scattered remarks in his missionary articles, in "Evangelical Sects," and in "History of Dissenters" indicate his admiration particularly for the better qualities of George Fox and John Wesley. Other heroes were St. Francis, St. Benedict, Calvin, and Coke. The Anglican divines whom he most admired included Cranmer, Laud, Hooker, Jackson, Taylor, South, Barrow, Berkeley, Butler, Skelton, and even Watson and Wilberforce. Several of his Quarterly papers were designed to provide brief biographical sketches of other leaders, and these were sometimes condemnatory, as his treatment of William Huntington illustrates amply. Even though he could frequently find fault with Anglican churchmen, he could qualify his gentle criticisms with the warmest praises as his defense of Archbishop Laud in several articles and his general survey of the bishops of Salisbury in his review of Britton's Cathedral Antiquities illustrate.

---

[137]Carnall, pp. 191-192.

Late in his Quarterly career Southey devoted two entire papers to the lives and works of two contemporary European Protestant preachers who he felt provided high examples for the clergy of the Church of England to follow. The first of these papers was published in 1831--a review of a work by the Reverend Francis Cunningham entitled Memoirs of John Frederick Oberlin, Pastor of Waldbach in the Ban de la Roche (QR, XLIV, 1831). His account was both commendatory and eulogistic, for he found in Oberlin the perfect example of a reforming preacher who possessed a dangerous degree of emotional enthusiasm but who was able to control that enthusiasm and channel it into useful tasks rather than allowing it to run the course of fanaticism. As the pastor of a poor Protestant flock in one of the wildest parts of Europe, Oberlin had

> led a life not less laborious, not less signally virtuous, and even more remarkable [than those of Luther and Huss], than if it had been crowned by canonization or by martyrdom; more useful too in these times, because it affords an instance of heroic charity and enthusiastic zeal, keeping strictly within the bounds of order and duty, presenting thus an example, which, however, imitable, may safely and profitably be imitated.[138]

In vivid detail Southey traced Oberlin's life and work from his birth in 1740 in Strasbourg to his death in Alsace in 1826. Of special interest was Oberlin's life work in his curacy in Ban de la Roche in a mountainous canton of Alsace during the late eighteenth century and his assiduous efforts in quelling warring factions of Lutherans, building schools, and generally improving the

---

[138]QR, XLIV, 342.

agricultural pursuits of his people. Throughout the article Southey expressed his opinion that social improvement and not necessarily religious evangelism should be the highly valued facet of any ministerial labor: ". . . if Oberlin's zeal had been wholly directed toward spiritual concerns, his parish would have been rendered by it a scene of discord and evil passions."[139] Of greater note is his praise for the quiet resistance of Oberlin and his parishioners to the turmoils of the French Revolution--a resistance which was indicative of the industry, order, simplicity of habits, and respect for law inculcated by true reformed religion.

In many respects Oberlin's quiet parish represented to Southey the ideal of Protestantism with its industry and philanthropic attitude. Both Oberlin and his parishioners would provide excellent examples for English Christians and clergymen to follow. In the memoirs of this dedicated preacher the Anglican clergy could see

> . . . what Oberlin effected, under greater difficulties than any which they can meet with in Great Britain, as great perhaps as could be found any where in Ireland; and some errors of an even dangerous kind, he overcame all obstacles by Christian benevolence. . . . Philanthropy may be chilled, may be soured, may be perverted, and may be puffed up, and be easily provoked; men may deceive themselves with it, as easily as they deceive others, and more perilously; but he who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength, is safe; of necessity he will then love his neighbour as himself; thus we are commanded

---

[139]Ibid., 361, 370.

> to do, and in these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.[140]

Although this article is perhaps uncharacteristically "preachy" for Southey, he did stress the abstract principle of Christian love and the fact that this principle must never remain an abstraction but that it should be translated into tangible social action. Christianity, he felt, was not a philosophical or mystical religion primarily; it was eminently a religion of practical application.

In 1833 Southey reviewed William Gilly's Memoir of Felix Neff, Pastor of the High Alps; and of the labours among the French Protestants of Dauphine, a Remnant of the Primitive Christians of Gaul, published in London in 1832 (QR, XLIX, 1833). As in Oberlin he found in Neff an exemplary Christian laborer. He was especially impressed with the fact that in the secluded areas of the Piedmont resided the true descendants of primitive Christianity who had inherited a religion untouched by Roman Catholicism and who from generation to generation had preserved, "that Mode of faith, and that form of discipline, which were received when the Gospel was first planted in their land."[141]

In his paper Southey gave a brief biographical sketch of Neff, who was born in 1789, and his work in Geneva and in the cantons of Neufchatel, Berne, and Pays de Vaud. Particularly he praised

---

[140]Ibid., 388.

[141]QR, XLIX, 48.

Neff's ability to stand clear of bitter religious controversies. Neff, like Southey, had recognized that the greatest of evils which impedes the spirit and law of Christianity is religious division and sectarianism. Religious differences, he stressed, invariably arise from minor differences of opinion among those who have lost sight of the true doctrines of religion and who have become overly impressed by the significance of their own narrow beliefs and interpretations. "The rigor of Calvinistic manners," he noted for example, "impeded the progress of the reformation in France more than any other cause."[142]

The most interesting part of Southey's account is that which deals with Neff's work with a large and primitive parish in the center of which was the hamlet of Dormilleuse, the highest in the Val de Fressinière. His parishioners were a race of unmixed, ancient Waldenses. As in his account of Oberlin's work, Southey stressed here the agricultural and social improvements which Neff sought to bring about rather than preaching doctrinal mysteries to his primitive flock. Southey concluded that Neff, like Oberlin, had overcome almost insurmountable obstacles in his work and should stand as a prime example to the clergymen of England. But he also recognized that the English clergy were faced with difficult and unprecedented challenges, and his article turned into a long and bitter indictment of English society of the 1830s. The English

---

[142]Ibid., 54.

cleric, he observed, must face the obstacles represented by ale-houses, "schism-shops," interloping bigots, itinerant fanatics, poverty, iron-hearted manufacturers, smugglers, poachers, sabbath breakers, increasing crime, overcrowded metropolitan areas, and a host of others.[143]

In his long digression from the life of Neff he admitted that the English clergy were doing all that could reasonably be done to effect moral reform among Britons, but the very laws and government officers which should have aided them in their labors were now working directly against them. Parliament was encouraging rather than prohibiting immoral behavior by passing laws which increased drunkenness, social inequities, poverty, sabbath-breaking, ignorance, manufacturing abuses, and disrespect for the Church Establishment. The church in the 1830s simply was not receiving the support which it required and deserved from Parliament and the Ministry, and government in Britain after parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation was shirking its moral obligations to the people.[144]

---

[143]Ibid., 78-79.

[144]Ibid., 80, 81.

CHAPTER V

LITERATURE AND LITERARY CRITICISM IN THE QUARTERLY REVIEW

I. SOUTHEY, THE QUARTERLY SCHOLAR-CRITIC

Any student of early nineteenth-century English literature who should happen to review the list of Southey's Quarterly contributions would be impressed by the fact that very few of them fall within the bounds of what today is narrowly termed "literary criticism." Only five or six of his essays were reviews of creative, contemporary works of poetry, drama, or fiction; his was a broader criticism, and the belles lettres composed only a minor facet of it. The major topics of his criticism are works of biography and travel literature, followed by reviews centering upon literary history and scholarship. The concerns of this final chapter are as varied as the subject matter which it treats, but at the outset some general comments are in order about Southey's opinions of reviewing in order to shed light upon the kind of critic he was, the attitudes he held about reviewing, and the methods which he followed.

He always referred to reviewing, and, indeed, to most forms of journalism, in depreciatory terms, and of the literary critics of his own day he never had a high opinion. The words of Espriella in Letters from England expressed a life-long attitude toward critics:

> Baboons are said to have an antipathy to men; and these, who are the baboons of literature, have the same sort of hatred to those whose superiority they at once feel and deny . . . a writer is praised because he is a friend, or a friend's friend, or he must be condemned for a similar reason.[1]

And Espriella also questioned the value of journals devoted to literary criticism and general reviewing:

> Such journals, even if they were more honourably and more honestly conducted, must from their very nature be productive rather of evil than of good, both to the public and to the persons concerned in them. Many are the readers who do not know, and few are they who will remember, when they are perusing a criticism delivered in the plural language of authority, that it is but the opinion of one man upon the work of another. The public are deceived by this style. This however is a transitory evil: the effect of praise or censure which they can bestow is necessarily short, and time settles the question when they are forgotten. A more lasting mischief is, that they profess to show the reader that short cut to wisdom and knowledge, which is the sure road to conceit and ignorance. Criticism is to a large class of men what Scandal is to women,--and women not infrequently bear their part in it;--it is indeed Scandal in masquerade.[2]

He frequently expressed similar opinions in his later career.[3]

While he heartily disapproved of "the prevailing fashion of criticism, the direct tendency of which is to call the bad passions into play," his attitude toward reviewing was not altogether negative.[4] He felt that his own work approached the ideal alternative to the current tones and practices of reviewing:

---

[1]Robert Southey, Letters from England; by Don Manual Alvarez Espriella (London: Longman, 1807), III, p. 63.

[2]Ibid., pp. 65-66.

[3]Cf. Southey's letter to John Murray in 1818, NL, II, 184.

[4]LC, V, 15.

> I myself object to the whole tendency of Reviews,--the only way of lessening the evil which they do is to write for them with a scrupulous conscientiousness, with a disposition to befriend the author in question rather than to injure him, and to recognise that he is likely to know more about his subject than the casual reviewer.[5]

Most of all Southey objected to the personal invective and dogmatism of the critics of his age. "I look upon the invention of reviews," he wrote in 1804,

> to be the worst injury which literature has received since its revival. People formerly took up a book to learn from it . . . now they only look for faults. Everybody is a critic, that is, every reader imagines himself superior to the author, and reads his book that he may censure it, not that he may improve by it.[6]

He wrote also that the habit of fault-finding stimulated by contemporary criticism must necessarily injure the moral character of the critic or reader himself and render him incapable of fairness and honesty in his reviewing:

> He will contemplate his own powers with increasing complacency, he will learn to take pleasure in inflicting pain, he will cease to look for instruction, he will cease to reverence genius, he will cease to love truth. Meanwhile he disguises both from himself and the public his injustice to the living, by affecting for the dead an admiration which it is not possible he can feel; just as the Arian persecutors of old worshipped the saints, while they made martyrs.[7]

Southey's ill feelings toward Gifford for allowing such criticism to

---

[5]L. N. Broughton, "Some Early Nineteenth Century Letters Hitherto Unpublished," Nineteenth-Century Studies, Eds. H. Davis, W. C. DeVane, R. C. Bald (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1940), p. 76. Cf. Peter F. Morgan, "Southey: A Critical Spectrum," The Wordsworth Circle, 5(1974), 71-75. Morgan's article provides an excellent summary of Southey's attitudes toward reviewing and criticism.

[6]LC, II, 276-277.

[7]Letters from England, III, pp. 66-67.

prevail in the Quarterly, and his strenuous objections to the treatment of Keats and other contemporary writers have been noted in an earlier chapter.

It is difficult for the modern student to estimate the negative and hostile tone of the criticism of the great quarterlies. One scholar has noted the level of personal invective to which it descended:

> . . . feelings were exasperated to such an extent that no personal attack was considered too unseemly and no insult too undignified. Vituperative denunciation made the air foggy with prejudice and rancor and concealed in most cases the real issues. One cannot measure in wide enough terms the extremes to which literary criticism went. It was a combination of scurrility, invective, personal attacks and name calling.[8]

Although Southey was guilty of this kind of criticism in his political reviews, he revolted against it when it was applied to literary works. One of his ablest apologists has observed that he

> made great demands of the reviewer, and observed a scrupulous concern for the rights of the author under review. In his ideal conception it was the business of the critic to have as much knowledge of the subject as the author of the book on which he sat in judgment, and to pass his judgment not only with honesty, but with humanity and generosity as well. The intellectual equipment which he brought to his work consisted of a very wide range of English literature; a living interest in the writing of poetry . . . and the knowledge of Spanish and Portugueze literature and history acquired during his visits to the Peninsula. . . . But it was on his moral virtues as a reviewer that Southey prided himself.[9]

---

[8]Paul Mowbray Wheeler, "The Great Quarterlies of the Early Nineteenth Century and Leigh Hunt," South Atlantic Quarterly, 29 (1930), 282-283.

[9]Jacob Zeitlin, "Southey's Contributions to 'The Critical Review,'" Notes and Queries, 4(Jan. 1918), 35.

And Jack Simmons has written accurately that he was a conscientious, hard-working reviewer "who rarely dealt with a book that lay outside the range of his knowledge. At times he used his position to bring deserving but obscure writers into notice. . . ."[10]

Despite his prolificness Southey was never a quick or careless reviewer. Each article was based upon an immense amount of reading and research, as his Commonplace Book and his letters amply illustrate. He was careful to review each proof, if the editor was co-operative, before allowing his articles to pass into print. George Saintsbury has noted of his thoroughness that

> of the nearly 14,000 books which he possessed at his death, it is safe to say that all had been methodically read, and most many times; while his almost medieval diligence did not hesitate at working through a set of folios to obtain the information or the corrections necessary for a single article.[11]

In a much later comment Saintsbury gave Southey even higher marks in discussing his Quarterly criticism:

> That astonishing and almost godlike sanity which distinguished him, in almost all cases . . . is the constant mark of his critical reviews. Except for his overvaluation of Kirke White, which was undoubtedly due to his amiable and lifelong habit of helping lame dogs, I cannot . . . think of any critical estimate of his . . . which is flagrantly and utterly wrong; and I can think of hundreds which are triumphantly right. In respect of older literature, in particular, his catholicity is free from the promiscuousness of Leigh Hunt, and his eclecticism from the caprice of Charles Lamb: while, prejudiced as he can be, I do

---

[10]Jack Simmons, Southey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 112.

[11]George Saintsbury, A History of Nineteenth Century English Literature (New York: Macmillan, 1896), p. 66.

> not remember an instance in which prejudice blinds or blunts his critical faculty as it does Hazlitt's. . . . He knew, of course, far more literary history than any one of his contemporaries--an incalculable advantage--and he could, sometimes at least, formulate general critical maxims well worth the registering.[12]

While Saintsbury's comments may seem somewhat lavishly favorable in view of some of Southey's obvious political prejudices, there can be little doubt that Southey always thought himself fair in reviewing and always insisted upon his independence of judgment. He believed that reviewing should be constructive and morally edifying both for the author under review and for the readers who would form an opinion of that author and his work from the reviewer's words of criticism. He believed also that literature served a morally corrective purpose in his particular age, and thus his reviews of literary and historical works always assumed a moralistic, didactic tone. These standards and practices of positive criticism, morality, intellectual competence and gentleness even today set him apart from many of his colleagues in the Quarterly Review.

Southey's scholarship is no where more apparent than in his papers dealing with literary history and scholarship of which ten articles are notable--five on English and five on foreign literature. Throughout his career Southey showed particular interest in the literature of Portugal, and two papers were devoted to this topic: "Portuguese Literature" (QR, I, 1809) and "The Portuguese Observor"

---

[12]George Saintsbury, A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe (London: Blackwood, 1949), III, p. 234.

(QR, IV, 1810). In the first of these he gave a brief sketch of the history of Portuguese literature with attention to such writers as the poets Francisco de Sa de Miranda and Antonio Ferreira, dramatist Gil Vincente, heroic poet Manoel de Faria e Sousa, tragedian Domingos dos Reis Quita, and the chroniclers Fernam Lopes and Joam de Barros. In the second paper he sought to assess the current state of Portuguese literature and noted the effects upon literature of despotic rule by church authorities, the state, and the French invaders of the Napoleonic era. Government control of the press by the Boards of Censure in the eighteenth century, he noted, had all but stifled Portuguese literature so that much of it existed only in manuscript. Much of the article was given over to a treatment of French rule in Portugal and Junot's rule of Lisbon, and the paper is more politically propagandistic than literary in nature. In both articles, however, stress was put on the moral purposes of literature and upon Southey's own belief that the life and manners of an author as well as the circumstances of his times must be taken into account in critical evaluations of his works.

Three of Southey's articles examine editions of Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish authors: Charles Lloyd's translation The Tragedies of Vittorio Alfieri and Alfieri's own Vita di Vittorio Alfieri, both published in London in 1815 (QR, XIV, 1816); Henry Richard, Lord Holland's Account of the Lives and Writings of Lope Felix de Vega Carpio and Guillen Castro published in 1817 (QR, XVIII, 1817); and John Adamson's Memoirs of the Life and Writings of

Luis de Camoens (QR, XXVII, 1822). All three articles even today provide good accounts of the lives and principal works of Alfieri, Lope de Vega, and Camoens as well as indicate the soundness and meticulousness of Southey's criticism of translations and editing practices.

The review of Alfieri contains a fine specimen of Southey's dramatic criticism, although some critical terms are rather ambiguously used.[13] He particularly admired Alfieri because he discarded from his work the "absurdities of French tragedy" and for his use of simple plots, "embellishments of fancy," and intensity of treatment of a theme. Southey took Alfieri's Myrrha as the prime example of the dramatist's strengths. His greatest criticism of Alfieri, however, was that the dramatist was incapable of writing outside of himself, "of transfusing himself into other beings,--that he may see with their eyes, and feel with their prejudices, and reason on their data, and act from their motives. The characters of his creation are always types of himself. . . ."[14] His characters thus lacked psychological depth and appeared as shallow as those of the English novelist Richardson. Although Southey urged that Alfieri's works should be translated and receive wider recognition in the nineteenth century, his assessment was that "never did

---

[13]One of Southey's letters to Gifford tells the story of this article and indicates something of the circumstances and method of its composition, NL, II, 134.

[14]QR, XIV, 365.

any writer succeed in tragedy--scarcely did ever any one attempt it--who had so little fancy, so little sensibility, so little imagination, as Alfieri; strength of passion and strength of language were all to which he trusted."[15]

The review of Lord Holland's biography and edition of Lope de Vega exhibits Southey's astonishing knowledge of Peninsular literature.[16] In this paper he singled out what he felt to be the most important works of the author and provided brief critical summaries as well as a sketch of the life of Lope de Vega. Perhaps the most interesting portion of the essay is that in which he treated the involvement of Lope de Vega in the sailing of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Southey especially commended Lord Holland's efforts to define the canon of Lope de Vega's compositions which had previously been set by scholars at 1800 plays and 400 sacred dramas. These numbers Holland had reduced by five-sixths. The specific works which Southey treated were the pastoral romances Arcadia and La Hermosura de Angelica, the epic La Dragontea, about Sir Francis Drake, and the heroic poem, or "Tragic Epopyea," Jerusalem, the narrative poem Isidro de Madrid, and a number of minor burlesque poems such as the "Gatomaquia." A substantial part of the paper was also given over to a treatment of the pastoral tradition in Peninsular literature,

---

[15]Ibid., 367.

[16]Cf. Southey's articles on Holland's Life of Lope de Vega, AR, 5(1808), 397-411 and "Spanish and Portuguese Literature," The Monthly Magazine, July, 1796, pp. 451-453; October, 1796, pp. 697-700; April, 1798, pp. 275-276.

which Southey felt its richest vein, which had been derived primarily from the poetry of the Italian Renaissance.

The treatment which Southey accorded to the Portuguese poet Camoens in his review of Adamson's edition followed much the same pattern as his article on Lope de Vega except that he provided a much more detailed account of the poet's life and times.[17] The satirical Redoudilhas are treated in some depth, but Southey's primary emphasis was upon the heroic Lusiads, and he did not neglect to discuss the great commentaries on the Lusiads in 1639 by Manoel de Faria de Sousa, the first great editor of Camoens. In addition, he also assessed the translations of the work by Mickle and later by Fanshaw, the latter receiving his highest praise.[18]

The greater part of Southey's evaluation of the Lusiads was negative as he pointed out flaws in the structure and execution of the work, but despite its faults he felt that it would remain as a great inspiration to later heroic poets. Although Portugal would in time produce greater poets than Camoens, he argued, "it is from this well that they must drink," and Camoens is thus assured of fame which must endure as long as Portuguese literature is written and read. The fact that Portugal's greatest poet was largely ignored in

---

[17]Cf. Southey's review of Lord Strangford's Camoens, AR, 2(1804), 569-577.

[18]Cf. Southey's review of Mickle's translation of Camoens' Lusiadas in The Monthly Magazine, November, 1796, pp. 787-789; August, 1797, pp. 98-100.

his own country during his lifetime only confirmed the unreliability of popular acclaim of truly great authors. Southey also paid tribute to a contemporary Portuguese poet, Jose Agostinho de Macedo, whose O Oriente, written in imitation of Camoens, had appeared in 1811.

Perhaps of greater interest to the modern student, however, are the five articles which contain Southey's comments upon the literary history of England. In 1812 he reviewed Isaac D'Israeli's Calamities of Authors (QR, VIII, 1812), a series of moralistic sketches of the lives of English literary figures. This review was unusually disjointed, but Southey did defend the profession of letters as an honorable one, voiced opinions on copyright laws past and present, and argued that there was a need in England for a national academy for literary scholars. The review is also of interest for his defense of Thomas Chatterton against D'Israeli's charge that the boy-poet was a political hackster and for his discussion of the relationship between the English monasteries and literature in the middle ages. Of course Southey also recapitulated some of the "calamities" which had befallen a host of minor writers whom D'Israeli treated in his book.

He believed that the profession of letters should command a greater pecuniary return than it always had and that talented authors should be assured of some means of support in hard times. Literary talent should never lie fallow in a modern age, and accordingly he suggested the foundation of a national academy of literature, funded and sanctioned by the national government. Such an academy would

allow the government to put to use idle talent in the production of a national dictionary of the English language, editions of Irish, Welsh, Gaelic and Saxon writings, and editions of important but unpublished and neglected minor works of great authors.

Southey's review of Alexander Chalmers's twenty-one volume anthology The Works of the English Poets, from Chaucer to Cowper appeared in two parts (QR, XI, XII, 1814), and was his most extended, thorough, and detailed venture into English literary history in the Quarterly. The first part of the paper is largely negative in nature and sarcastic in tone as he questioned various selections and authors which Chalmers had included in his massive critical anthology. Chalmers had apparently selected his authors upon the basis of their relative popularity in their own times, and Southey strenuously objected to this method of selection. It was utterly fallacious, he argued, to determine an author's greatness or ability upon the flimsy standard of popular opinion. Great authors are often unknown in their own time, and a sufficient period of time must pass before their works can be examined and assessed accurately and with adequate perspective. Chalmers had not tried hard enough to procure and print rare works of significance, and the truth is, Southey concluded, that

> Mr. Chalmers is incompetent to the task which he undertook; he has not the requisite knowledge, and is still more lamentably deficient in the requisite judgement; and not being contented to appear in the character of a mere reprinter . . . he has ventured to thrust himself forward as a critic also, and to decide upon what he does not understand.[19]

---

[19]QR, XI, 482.

Specifically Southey felt that minor authors such as Hoccleve, Minot, Lydgate, and Hawes should not have been omitted from the initial volumes of the anthology. His running commentary upon major writers, however, is much more interesting than his specific and often wearisome criticisms of Chalmers. Chaucer is second only to Shakespeare in his intuitive knowledge of human character and the universality of his genius, and of Skelton Southey observed that "the power, the strangeness, the volubility of his language, the audacity of his satire, and the perfect audacity of his manners, render Skelton one of the most extraordinary writers of any age or country." Tusser and Sackville he designated as the greatest poets between Lydgate and the age of Elizabeth.[20]

Chalmers's annotations of selections from Shakespeare he called contemptible, and he railed against the admission into the anthology of such unskillful poets as Roscommon, Halifax, Sheffield, Stephney, Blackmore, Blacklock, and Fawkes to the neglect of Shakespeare's minor poetry. He went on to argue that Davenant formed his versification upon that of Sir John Davies and that Dryden had developed from both Davenant and Davies his opinions of the powers the quatrain as an heroic measure. Donne was a greater poet than had ever been admitted, and Southey especially praised the "ruggedness" of his satires in imitation of Horace. Poets who should have been included in the Elizabethan volumes of the

---

[20]Ibid., 485.

anthology were Churchyard, Constable, Watson, Willoby, Southwell, Breton, Chapman, Shalkhill, Abraham Fraunce, and Sir Philip Sidney; and in the seventeenth century volumes, Sylvester, George Wither, Quarles, May, Herbert, Herrick, Lovelace, Cleveland, and Randolph. Southey felt that these authors exemplified the main currents of English poetry.

He noted that Chalmers's biographical sketch of Chatterton "is written in that spirit of pharisaic morality which blinds the understanding as much as it hardens the heart."[21] Chatterton's literary deceptions were not criminal, and his original poems showed the marks of genius, a genius which Southey classed with that of Christopher Smart. William Mason is a poet who deserved greater attention than he had been accorded by Chalmers and other editors. Southey's comments were not entirely negative, however, as he admitted that Chalmers's sketch of Cowper was competently done.

In his severe criticisms of Chalmers's work in the first part of his review, Southey delivered a negative definition of literary criticism which was doubtless largely a reaction to the criticism of his own day:

> It is not the art of composing pompous sentences which swell like an inflated bladder, and are as empty as the bladder when you prick them for the meaning. It does not consist in talking of catelectics, and trochaics, and elisions. It is not displayed by chusing out half a dozen or half a score words from a poem containing as many thousand lines, and condemning them as too familiar for heroic poetry. It is not

---

[21]Ibid., 493.

> the art of finding fault. It is not, whatever ladies and gentlemen may think, common to all persons who have enjoyed the benefits of modern education. It requires long habits of thoughtful and comprehensive study, as well as intuition. It may be reduced to rules; but the best rules will no more make a man a critic, than they can make him a poet, painter, or musician, if the predisposing and innate faculty be wanting.[22]

The second part of the Chalmers paper displays Southey's considerable knowledge of the technical aspects of English poetry as well as his comprehensive grasp of literary history and his belief that there is always a vital link between the nature of a language and the moral worth, beauties, and refinements of its literature. This portion of the review, less sarcastic and negative in its criticism of Chalmers than the first half, repeats with greater clarity many points stated in the first part. Largely the second portion is composed of a brief survey of major developments in the evolution of English poetry with Southey's own evaluations of individual figures and movements. Considerable attention is paid to prosody in the treatment of individual poets.

Southey noted that, as in English laws and social institutions, a distinct national character had always predominated in English poetry, even though it may have been occasionally modified by the effect of foreign models, and that poetry "is the highest branch of literature,--the highest effort of the human mind,--and it is that also in it which England may justly challenge competition with the

---

[22]Ibid., 504.

world."[23] The national character of English poetry arises in part from the nature of the language itself. The poetry of any country, he maintained, is influenced to an immeasurable degree by the composition and sounds of its language. The French language, for example, may be very fit for lyrical compositions but not for heroic poetry. The advantage of English is its adaptability to a great variety of poetic forms and techniques, since it is made up of the best parts of the best languages of Europe, and continues to be enriched by a rapidly growing, energetic vocabulary. Prior to the time of Chaucer three poets had done much to improve the art of versification: Robert of Gloucester, Robert of Brunne, and Piers Ploughman, and every truly great poet since Chaucer had left some lasting imprint upon the language. In Spain, Italy, and England the greatest poets in the first ages of poetry employed the vernacular language, the natural rhythms and patterns of common speech and writing; this was the richness of Chaucer, and, Southey maintained, all great poets must remain within the mainstream of common language and shun excessive ornament, affectation, and falseness of diction.

In some detail he traced the various influences of French and Italian poets upon Chaucer and his language, but he observed that Chaucer drew

> more from observation and the stores of his own wealthy and prolific mind. Strong English sense and strong English humour

---

[23]QR, XII, 60.

> characterize his original works. He caught with a painter's hand the manners and features of the age; he beheld the objects of external nature with a poet's eye, and he penetrated with a poet's intuition into the recesses of the human heart.[24]

In an interesting conjecture he mused that had it not been for the social and political convulsions of the fifteenth century, England, with her Chaucer, Roger Bacon, and Wycliffe, would have become in that century the intellectual and literary leader of Europe.

Southey treated severely the imitators of Chaucer in the fifteenth century and the ornate style of poetry which followed him. The fashion of ornate style through a dilution of the language by heavy use of polysyllables he felt wholly contradictory to the national character and to the language of English poetry. It was a poor and unsuccessful experiment and a vain attempt at grandiloquence, and the attempt to elevate the sound of poetry resulted in the impoverishment of the sense of poetry. For examples of this style Southey quoted the poetry of Stephen Hawes. The "stiff pedantry" of the ornate poets of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries might have proven lastingly injurious to English poetry if the Reformation had not produced

> . . . a shoal of versifiers who berhymed the most impassioned parts of the Scriptures, and purposely levelled their tone to the capacities of the ignorant multitude. The wide circulation and general acceptance of these versions materially affected the character of the language in its then unsettled state. Devoid as they were of literary merit, they nevertheless

---

[24]Ibid., 65.

> influenced the literature of the country, as, without the sanction of authority, they made their way into the service of the established church. The effect was particularly seen in the fashion of metre which they established during the Elizabethan age.[25]

Southey concluded that no substantial improvement in versification was made between the times of Chaucer and Surrey who "enriched the language more than all his predecessors and all his successors." He noted further that "the improvement of our language under the Tudors was so rapid, that the school of Chaucer became obsolete."[26] There followed in the essay a detailed discussion of various metrical experiments made during the English Renaissance, including an examination of verse forms employed by Sternhold, Hopkins, Drayton, Daniel, Chalkhill, Fairfax and other minor poets. Of these various forms he noted that ottava rima was perhaps the medium in which most truly successful English poems were composed. The greatest master of English versification he felt was Edmund Spenser, and he noted that the experiment of Sir Philip Sidney and Gabriel Harvey in introducing Latin measures into English verse came too late to be successful or influential.

One of the poets for whom he had the highest praise was William Davenant, but he qualified his estimate of this poet by noting that Davenant's ruin was his association with Hobbes and that the civil war and subsequent Puritan regime retarded his opportunities for recognition. He also provided a criticism of Davenant's

---

[25]Ibid., 67.

[26]Ibid., 69.

political beliefs and the influence of Hobbes upon them. Davenant, however, was a far better poet than the metaphysicals of his own age and preserved the purity of English language and poetry: "it was his aim to charm the reader by the fitness of the conception, than to surprise him by its strangeness, and the thought was always clothed in the happiest expression, the words being . . . as it were the contracted essence of the meaning."[27] His judgment of the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century was, on the other hand, highly unfavorable. These poets desired "only to dazzle with the coruscations and flashes of extravagant fancy," and they "debased their sweetest strains by the most incongrous conceits. . . ."[28]

Part of his essay was devoted to the development of English heroic verse, a subject which he was eminently qualified to treat, and he traced its immediate origins to the introduction by Surrey of the verso sciolto, or rhymeless heroic verse, from Italy--a verse form which had been used with considerable success by Alfieri. This form was employed as a dramatic measure in the Elizabethan age and afterwards was adapted by Milton for the Paradise Lost, but Milton's influence in versification, Southey noted, was like that of most great poets, minimal in his own age.

He concluded his review of Chalmers with a treatment of the experiment in narrative meter done by Aaron Hill in his Gideon.

---

[27]Ibid., 80.

[28]Ibid.

Hill had employed varying types of irregular verse forms in the composition of narrative poetry. Southey also examined the verse forms employed by Macpherson in the Ossian poems, and he commented unfavorably upon Pope's translation of Homer which he felt excessively "ornamented." As a poet Southey held Pope in high estimation, although he felt that Pope's use of metrical embellishments, periphrasis, the couplet, and rigid verse forms, was atypical of the main stream of English poetry. For this reason he felt that Pope's influence upon English verse would not be a lasting one. Not one poet of eminence had arisen from the school of Pope, Southey argued--Thomson and Young, who each had some Popean qualities, had sufficient marks of originality not to be called imitators of Pope.

The review of Bishop Burnet's History of his Own Times (QR, XXIX, 1823) is important for Southey's comments upon the Restoration period of English literature and indicates clearly the moral functions which he felt all creative literature must serve. The article also contains a few slashes at the "Satanic school of the present age. . . ."[29] The degradation of the English theater, he felt, was indicated clearly by the fact that after 1660 Shakespeare and Jonson were supplanted by such inferior writers as Dryden, Shadwell, and Nahum Tate, and he objected to the presumption of some Restoration playwrights, including Dryden and Shadwell, in adapting

---

[29]QR, XXIX, 188ff.

freely Shakespeare to the tastes and preferences of their own age. The playhouses became, he noted, literally and figuratively, "nests of prostitution."

The general corruption of the theater after 1660 was due in large part to the influence of the tastes and manners of a "Frenchified" and corrupt royal court. By the sober and moral part of the nation the stage was justly shunned "like a house where the red-cross upon the door gave warning that the plague was within." After the removal of the last Stuart monarch the theater did not follow the court in its reformation so faithfully as it had followed the court earlier in its moral corruption. Southey commended Jeremy Collier's vehement attack upon Restoration drama, but he also noted that the attack, although truthful and well-deserved, had not had the broad effects which some later scholars had ascribed to it. Both Fielding and Wycherley were specific targets for Southey's condemnation. The evils of the stage, however, had at last been checked by government action, he noted, and "the act which subjected all pieces intended for representation, to a previous censure, unpopular as it was, operated beneficially, and from the commencement of the last reign the English stage became irreproachable on the score of decency."[30] It had taken a full century to erase the depravities of the Restoration from English drama, and

---

[30]Ibid., 209.

> had the depravity of manners which the stage in its corruption imitated first and then promoted, continued as long, England would not have been at this time the England that it is. It was happily too opposite to the national character, and too strongly resisted by our excellent institutions, to be of long continuance.[31]

In Southey's view the Restoration theater had fairly well represented the morality of London and the court, but not that of England. It was, however, from London that foreigners generally formed their estimation of the national manners, and this Southey found particularly deplorable. Puritanism, although subdued after the Restoration, had nevertheless acted as a "prophylactic against the prevailing pestilence of licentiousness" epitomized by Restoration drama, and the pestilence was also effectively countered by non-conforming divines such as Owen, Baxter, and Howe and by such men as Taylor, South, and Burnet within the Church of England.

Fortunately the second half of the seventeenth century was not without authors whose work ran counter to that of the Restoration dramatists:

> At the time when Dryden composed comedies to the taste of the court, and Elkanah Settle tragedies to the taste of the city; when Wycherley and Etherege published their impurities, and the press was polluted by the filth and ribaldry of Tom D'Urfey and Tom Brown, at that very time Clarendon was completing in exile his noble history . . . Milton was composing the Paradise Lost; and Izaak Walton . . . produced his inimitable pieces of biography. . . .[32]

Southey, then, viewed Restoration drama as an atypical phenomenon of

---

[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid., 211-212.

the city and the court, a blemish on the main body of English letters, and this period of literary history should and eventually would, be remembered for writers such as Milton, Clarendon, and Walton. It should be noted that Southey's opinions of the Restoration theater were not atypical themselves but were shared by some of his contemporaries. Shelley, for example, had expressed similar sentiments in 1821 in his Defence of Poetry.

In the summer of 1824 Southey reviewed John Johnson's edition of Memoirs of the Life and Writings of William Hayley, the Friend and Biographer of Cowper . . . with Extracts from his private Correspondence, and unpublished Poetry (QR, XXXI, 1824).[33] This article is of note for Southey's view of certain late eighteenth-century English poets, although it is still a fine account of the life and writings of Hayley himself, especially with respect to the Cowper-Hayley friendship and correspondence. Hayley's autobiography was flawed, Southey observed, by the use of a third-person narrative and unnecessary artifice of style. In some detail he traced the life of Hayley from his birth in 1745 through the years of his education and his attempts at dramatic composition and the writing of epic poetry in the 1760s and 1770s. More important, however, are his critical summaries of

---

[33]In a letter to Murray Southey shed light upon this article and indicated the kinds of difficulties which he often had with Gifford's editing. He defended himself against Gifford's charge that he had praised Hayley too highly and was too subjective in his paper: "His faults I have not dissembled, but I have praised the general tenor of a life devoted to better pursuits than those of gain--or of the turf of the fields, and treated him as a gentleman and a scholar might always wish to be treated." NL, II, 269-273.

Hayley's essays on painting and epic poetry and his epistles to the painter Romney which, along with his poetical works Serena and Triumphs of Terror had given him considerable popularity in the last two decades of the eighteenth century.

In the course of his treatment of Hayley's works Southey noted again the unfortunate influences of Pope upon English poetry. Since the days of Pope there had been no dearth of poetic talent in England, but no poets were so conspicuous as to influence appreciably the styles and manners of their contemporaries. Some few had established individual reputations, but collectively the minor eighteenth-century poets had produced this good: "they had by presenting new, and in some respects, worthier objects of admiration . . . in great measure weaned the nation from that idolatry of Pope, which, if it had continued, would have flattened our poetry to the level of the French taste."[34] Poets important in this regard were Thomson, who recalled "the love of natural scenery, and the feelings connected with it, for which the school of Pope had neither eyes nor hearts," and Young, who with his "Night Thoughts" had struck a chord "which vibrated in every mind that was either under the influence of sorrow, or constitutional melancholy, or religious enthusiasm," and Richard Glover. While Pope "had sent the English Homer into the world, laced, ruffled, periwigged and powdered, in a full dress court suit of embroidery," Glover in 1737 had introduced

---

[34]QR, XXXI, 285.

Leonidas "like a quaker, in drab, without ornament, without elegance, without any appearance of muscular strength; but grave, decorous, and respectable, and with an air of moral dignity."[35]

He also took some space in the paper to praise highly the poetry of William Mason who in his early works at least "possessed a finer ear, a more active imagination, and a richer flow of language and of thought" than most of his contemporaries. Collins and John Dyer were both poets badly neglected by their own age, although Southey expressed confidence that they would eventually receive their due. "Erroneous judgments in the court of criticism," he frequently observed, "are always, sooner or later, reversed by time, and heavy damages are then awarded against those by whom they were pronounced."[36] Akenside's reputation, resting mainly upon the "Pleasures of the Imagination," would never be tarnished, and this poet would provide a valuable lesson to future poets

> never to employ his best years in remodelling a work of his youth. It is vain to suppose, that the thoughts and feelings and opinions of forty can ever be made to assimilate in one composition, with those of twenty; this is no more possible than it would be for a painter to improve the likeness in a portrait by retouching it from the face of the original, after an equal lapse of years.[37]

The father of modern English poetry Southey identified as Thomas Warton who combined the best influences of Collins, Gray, and

---

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid., 287.

[37]Ibid., 288.

Mason in his poetry as well as being strongly tinctured by his own romantic and chivalrous reading. Hayley himself reigned for a while as "king of the bards of Britain" as incontestably as Johnson, Cowley, and Pope had reigned before him, and upon Warton's death had justly been offered the Laureateship which he perhaps wisely declined. Hayley was to be admired because his reputation was based firmly and solely upon the merits of his works, not upon any artifice or adventitious circumstances. He was connected to no party, literary, political, or sectarian, and he had not addressed himself to the "bad or baser passions," nor had he flattered or followed the tastes of the public as Cowper had done on occasion. Southey's praise of Hayley reveals much about himself and about his moralistic preferences in poetry. A poet's work, he made clear, could not be judged apart from a poet's life, and the best poets never followed, only guided, public tastes. The poet should be eminently both the teacher and the example.

In 1823 William Taylor of Norwich published his two-volume edition of The Collective Works of the Late Dr. Sayers, and Southey reviewed it four years later (QR, XXXV, 1827). Following his usual method in such reviews he sketched the life of Dr. Frank Sayers, a minor poet and dramatist who died in 1817 and whose experiments in free verse Southey himself had imitated in his early poetry, but more important than the biographical sketch are the opinions which Southey expressed concerning a number of minor poets of the eighteenth century. As in his previous reviews he also put emphasis

upon his conception of the moral functions of creative literature and the moral responsibilities of the poet.

True poets, he wrote, must not be concerned primarily with public recognition or praise, for the common race of men have always been incapable of appreciating great art and their applause has often been misdirected. History bears witness to the principle that as nations have declined in power and influence, the arts and public morals have declined with them. The general morality of a people and the refinements of their arts are inseparably linked. Britain, however, had been the greatest exception to this principle, for the moral and intellectual degradation into which she fell during the seventeenth century was not attended by a serious decline of national character or power. The Puritan rebellion and the subsequent restoration of the Stuarts had brought about the temporary decline of English poetry, primarily through the introduction of French taste, French manners, and French morals, and yet the true English character in men of letters such as Milton not only produced a remarkably recovery but an advancement in the morality of English literature.

Southey was careful to point out in this article that the debasement of public morals and the profligacy of the Restoration court had not only degraded the content of literature but also the language itself, in vulgarities of speech and writing, and "they who had been trained in the old ways of sound and orthodox learning--like Clarendon and South, and Barrow, preserved for us a style of English undefiled, not less excellent in manner than in argument; but the younger

generation wrote as loosely as they lived."[38] In the seventeenth century, then, three faulty fashions of writing in poetry and prose had prevailed: the "dry, dull dismal manner of the Puritans," a style of overstrained and elaborate and affected wit, and an ornate style "studded with sesquipedalian Latinisms, Grecisms, Hebraisms, and Arabicisms, which might frequently send the best scholar to his Lexicon. . . ."[39] The latter style had been used to great advantage by Henry More in poetry and by Sir Thomas Browne in prose, but it had failed miserably in the hands of inferior writers such as Hamond L'Estrange and Sir Roger L'Estrange. The ornate style of many court poets only emphasized their shallowness of thought.

Southey termed the eighteenth century "the golden age of the mediocrists: they had the field to themselves." It was a century when such a poet as Pomfret could attain nearly a hundred years of unrivalled and undeserved popularity. If Pope's Homer could be forgotten then he might be remembered as a great reformer of English poetry, for he did much to restore the purity of language of poetry after its debasement in the seventeenth century. Many of the minor poets of the period Southey had already treated in his life of Hayley and other essays; those of worth after 1760 he identified as Churchill, Michael Bruce, Chatterton, Emily, Russell, Bampfylde, Kirke White, and Herbert Knowles, all of them poets of promise whose careers were cut short by early death.

---

[38]QR, XXXV, 188.

[39]Ibid.

Although he admitted great dissimilarities in their verse Southey grouped together three poets whose work he felt worthwhile: Cowper, Erasmus Darwin, and Robert Merry. Merry's poems, exceptionally popular during the period, were written "to the ear and to the ear only"; they were all sound and little substance. Darwin was a more substantial and philosophical poet; although his "Botanic Garden" might never be equalled, he had lost his reputation ultimately because his poetic theory was false:

> He thought he could improve upon the versification of Pope, as much as Pope had improved upon the versification of a former age, and that this was to be done by giving the utmost finish to every line, superadding the highest varnish to the brightest colouring; making every word picturesque as well as significant, and the whole poem sonorous and splendid in all its parts. His own philosophy should have taught him that poetry, like painting, must have its relief,--its shade, as well as its light.[40]

Southey's close analysis of Darwin's poetic techniques in "The Botanic Garden" is one of the most satisfying parts of the review and provides further evidence of his own competence as a critic of the technical elements of poetry.

Another minor poet who received attention in this essay was James Hurdis, of the school of Cowper. Southey observed that all his poems

> are defective in plan; they are desultory as "the Task": but the pervading liveliness and vigour which give "the Task" its peculiar charm, . . . are wanting; and there is neither grace in the transitions, nor proportion in the parts . . . though

---

[40]Ibid., 198.

> there is a general character of feebleness which pervades his poems, they contain passages of singular beauty. . . .[41]

He concluded:

> Merry's verses were like the froth and bubbles of a rapid and shallow stream. Poetry proceeded in him from an empty mind, as in Darwin it did from a full one. Darwin's bore the stamp of his own character, but that of the age also not less decidedly; it embodied the material philosophy of the day, and, like it, was gross, earthly, and anti-spiritual; but it was the work of deliberation, thought, knowledge, and patient labour. Cowper's was a natural strain, proceeding from a playful temper and a serious heart: neither he, nor his disciple, Hurdis, seems to have felt the slightest impulse of vanity or ambition; it was as natural for them to give utterance to their feelings in verse, as for the birds to sing.[42]

Dr. Sayers himself had nothing in common with these poets except that like Darwin he wrote ambitious of poetic fame and bestowed upon his compositions careful corrections and revisions in later life; "he was the poet of art rather than of nature, of determination rather than of impulse."[43] In Sayers' choice of subjects for poetic composition Southey detected the marked influence of Gray's versions of the Runic poets and Percy's Northern Antiquities. In his dramatic attempts Sayers was, in Southey's view, heavily influenced by Mason and Klopstock, as well as the ancients, in the classical form and manner of his plays, and to prove his points Southey provided some brief but detailed analyses of several of Sayers' dramatic sketches and poems. One point which he did make in this essay, which he often repeated in other papers, was

---

[41]Ibid., 202.

[42]Ibid., 204.

[43]Ibid.

that excessive revision and rewriting of poems for the purpose of conforming to the tastes and preferences of a later age than that in which they were written could vitiate the effectiveness and integrity of poetic statement.

One of the basic principles of literary criticism in early nineteenth-century English periodicals centered upon the religious, moral, and instructional value of literature, and this principle seemed most prevalent in times of particularly disturbing political or social unrest. It was also exemplified by the stress placed upon religious literature by many reviews. As W. S. Ward has pointed out,

> no terms were used more frequently in the average review than the word "moral" and its variants. In fact, the average short review seems curiously incomplete unless in one way or another the morality of the poet is passed upon, and not infrequently the reviewer frankly says that poor poetry is more than amply atoned for by sound morality.[44]

The writer's ability to entertain was generally considered secondary to his duty to instruct the reader in principles of thought and moral conduct, and

> the survival of the moral emphasis of the Puritans, the continuance of the practical spirit of the Augustans, the national unrest and threat of revolution all combined to give the critics of poetry [and other genres] the appearance of moral censors and spiritual advisers. The pure aesthete found little encouragement during the first two decades of the nineteenth century.[45]

In his analyses of literary history and his few reviews of contemporary

---

[44]W. S. Ward, "Some Aspects of the Conservative Attitude toward Poetry in English Criticism, 1798-1820," PMLA, 60(1945), 392-393.

[45]Ibid., 395.

works of drama and poetry Southey was certainly no exception to these trends of criticism.[46]

In addition, a survey of Southey's criticism of poetry and his notions of English literary history in the Quarterly confirms the position of Peter F. Morgan that Southey placed primary emphasis upon poetic morality, poetic feeling, and purity of expression and that he aligned himself with the critical movement led by Wordsworth. Along with Wordsworth and Coleridge Southey rejected the heroic couplet in favor of blank verse which he felt belonged to the older and truer tradition of English poetry. Morgan has observed:

> For Southey, the cultural greatness embodied poetically in Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton was dealt a severe blow by the Puritan revolution and the Cavalier reaction. Dryden and Pope are poets of the second rank, as Macaulay was to agree later, their work badly marred. However, an upward movement in national morality, culture, and poetry took place, rising through Cowper to Wordsworth, whom Southey admires . . . as standing on an eminence beside the great poets of the past. As he looks around him and to the future, Southey sees this order threatened by the immorality, excess of feeling, and technical elaboration in the poetry of Bryon and his followers.[47]

Although he wrote relatively little of his own literary age in the Quarterly Review, Southey did see in it a greatness second only to that of the Renaissance, and to support his claim he mentioned those whom he considered the greatest poets of the early nineteenth century:

---

[46]Cf. Colloquies, II, pp. 398-399 and Colloquy XIV, "The Library."

[47]Peter F. Morgan, "Southey on Poetry," Tennessee Studies in Literature, 16(1971), pp. 77-78. Morgan's article is an excellent summary of Southey's basic critical tenets.

Wordsworth, Scott, Cowper, Burns, Bowles, Montgomery, Joanna Baillie, and, of course, himself. In his view Wordsworth ranked co-equal with Milton as "the great moral and philosophical poet of the age."[48]

In Southey's opinion poetry is "the highest effort of the human mind," but the poet must possess a unique combination of abilities. Shakespeare and Milton combined "moral dignity" and "intellectual strength," while Spenser united "perpetual harmony, pure thoughts, delightful imagery, and tender feeling."[49] While emotional enthusiasm is important in the composition of poetry, the poet must always seek to control it carefully. Ideally the poet writes to express himself honestly and to elevate his own character morally. The writing of poetry is "one of the noblest amusements. Our philanthropy is almost always increased by it."[50]

On several occasions Southey discussed the effects of poetry upon its readers, and he defined the writing of it as a process "by which a poet excites passion in order to satisfy and improve, to delight and reform the mind, and so to make mankind happier and better." The best purposes of poetry, he wrote, are "soothing the heart and elevating and purifying its desires." In 1829 he observed in Colloquies that "the most gratifying reward that an author can receive is to know that his writings have strengthened the weak,

---

[48]QR, XXIII, 584.

[49]QR, XII, 60; I, 283; XII, 73.

[50]QR, XLVII, 92.

established the wavering, given comfort to the afflicted, and obtained the approbation of the wise and the good."[51]

Southey's literary reviews for the Quarterly and other periodicals are striking for the ethical question which they raise: does the reviewer owe a greater duty to the author under review or to the reading public whose interest is aroused and guided by the review? Almost invariably he decided the question in favor of the author, and, as Jacob Zeitlin observed, he

> thought the public would take no harm even if they were deceived into buying an innocuous and worthless volume. He used to account for his own taciturnity as induced by the dread of Coleridge's loquacity; by the same token his critical insipidity was probably a reaction against the pungency of Jeffrey, from which he had personally suffered. Its contrast with the prevailing tone is its most interesting feature. In this particular Scott alone resembled him. It can be demonstrated as easily as the sum of two and two that his benevolence prevented Southey from exercising whatever share of the critical faculty he enjoyed.[52]

Perhaps Southey's primary critical principle was that "goodness is a better thing than genius."[53] Piety, religious conviction and sincerity, duty, all he felt more deserving than originality or intellectual brilliance. He was well aware of the anguish which a caustic review could inflict upon even the most accomplished and experienced author, and "he made it his aim to deal out such

---

[51]QR, XII, 89; XXXV, 194; XLI, 295; Colloquies, II, p. 306.

[52]Jacob Zeitlin, ed., Select Prose of Robert Southey (New York: Macmillan, 1916), p. 35.

[53]LC, III, 67.

milk-and-water praise as would do no harm."[54] He praised James Montgomery's poems in the Quarterly and commended their moral virtue and skill of execution even while privately he concealed his personal disappointment in them.[55] He admitted confidentially that Hayley's Memoirs was "a poor, insipid book" and that Hayley's poetry had justly slipped silently into literary obscurity, but Hayley was "a gentleman and a scholar, and a most kind-hearted and generous man."[56] He often devoted his labors to subjects which a serious critic might have ignored--the "diligent talents, early acquirements, and domestic happiness" of Barré Charles Roberts, cousin of Grosvenor Bedford, the pious life of Lucretia Davidson and the English girl poetess Mary Colling.[57] The statement of Jacob Zeitlin that "if Southey could have had his way, he would have reduced all the criticism in the Quarterly to his own innocuous standard" is probably quite accurate. He always preferred to emphasize the positive aspects of a literary work under review rather than to belabor its faults. That brilliant critical powers were latent in Southey is beyond doubt, but he was too gentle, too much the scholar and gentleman himself, to allow them to speak directly; he was content to applaud the good qualities of the unknown

---

[54]Zeitlin, Select Prose of Robert Southey, Ibid.

[55]QR, VI, 405; LC, IV, 33.

[56]SL, III, 427; LC, V, 179.

[57]QR, XII, 509.

of his day and bury himself in the literature of the past.[58]

II. SOUTHEY'S CRITICISM OF CONTEMPORARY WORKS OF LITERATURE

Although he contributed almost a hundred articles to the Quarterly Southey reviewed very few works by contemporary literati. Walter Savage Landor's Count Julian is perhaps the only famous work which he noticed (QR, VIII, 1812). This review and those of James Grahame's British Georgics (QR, III, 1810), James Montgomery's The West Indies and The Wanderer of Switzerland (QR, VI, 1811) and The World Before the Flood (QR, XI, 1814), Samuel F. B. Morse's 1829 edition of Lucretia Davidson's Amir Khan . . . the Remains of Lucretia Maria Davidson (QR, XLI, 1829), and Fables, and other Pieces in Verse by Mary Maria Colling: with some Account of the Author (QR, XLVII, 1832) comprise the whole of his contemporary criticism. Each of these reviews is relatively brief and generally composed of summaries of the works in question with some light, gentle, critical remarks. Most of them show Southey's interest in encouraging young poets such as Graham and Montgomery, or of saving others from literary obscurity such as Colling and Davidson. One other article, the review of Abiel Holmes' American Annals

---

[58]The limitations of space do not permit a thorough treatment of the general literary critical policies of the Quarterly Review here, but an excellent summation of these policies and some of those of the Edinburgh Review is John J. Welker's "The Position of the Quarterlies on Some Classical Dogmas," Studies in Philology, 37(1940), 542-562. Southey's interest in the literature of the past is shown by his proposal in 1809 to found an antiquarian review, to be entitled Rhadamanthus, to review exclusively old books. See SL, II, 140, 153; NL, I, 508.

(QR, II, 1809) is of some importance for Southey's appraisal of the current state of American literature.

It is not difficult to understand why Southey reviewed so few contemporary works. He was, simply, a very busy scholar. He wrote William Lisle Bowles in 1832:

> After having reviewed in the Quarterly Review Grahame's Georgics, Montgomery's Poems, and his World Before the Flood, and Landor's Count Julian, I found it necessary to resolve that I would not review the work of any living poet. Applications to me from strangers, and from others in all degrees of acquaintanceship, were so frequent, that it became expedient to be provided with a general reason for refusing, which would offend no one; there was no other means of avoiding offence. Many would otherwise have resented the refusal, and more would have been more deeply displeased if they had not been extolled according to their own estimate of their own merits.[59]

Rather than offend someone by pointing out faults in his work, Southey preferred to remain silent.

As noted in the initial chapter of this study, Southey was deeply concerned that American authors were not receiving fair treatment from British reviewers, and he was particularly disturbed by the anti-American tone so frequently taken by his fellow Quarterly critics. He sought to correct this injustice in part by his review of Abiel Holmes's history of America and by his notice of the obscure American poetess Lucretia Davidson. Although he believed that the American heritage would provide ample material for a vital literature, he also felt that Americans in 1809 had yet to produce anything of lasting literary merit. American drama was so

---

[59]LC, VI, 193.

bad "as almost to reconcile us to the present state of our own." The two best American poets thus far were Dwight and Barlow, and the former "has failed because he imitated bad models" and the latter "because he formed a bad style for himself." The main difficulty Southey saw as a government in the United States which was unwilling to encourage literary art. "It is," he observed,

> especially incumbent upon a nation which professes to despise factitious distinctions, to acknowledge intellectual rank with everything short of ostentation, and to set other countries an example by patronizing and promoting those efforts of genius which all civilized nations consider as their proudest boast, and their only permanent glory.[60]

One of the most notable literary friendships in the period of English romanticism is that between Robert Southey and Walter Savage Landor, and one of Southey's shortest and most glowing Quarterly reviews is that of Landor's tragedy Count Julian.[61] Most of the paper is composed of plot summary and generous quotations interspersed with a few critical comments. Undoubtedly the article was designed to publicize the work, since Southey also had a hand in securing the anonymous publication of the drama by John Murray. After noting that Landor had taken a different interpretation of the character of Count Julian from that of the Spanish writers, notably

---

[60]QR, II, 330.

[61]Southey had previously given Landor favorable reviews such as the paper on Gebir in The Critical Review, 27(1799), 29-39 and Landor's Poetry by the Author of Gebir, AR, 1(1803), 663-666. A good summary of the Landor-Southey friendship is Charles L. Proudfit's "Southey and Landor: A Literary Friendship," The Wordsworth Circle, 5(1974), 105-111.

Luis de Leon, Southey concluded that it was a good closet drama, not lending itself well to the stage, and that "the fable is not always sufficiently clear; in a few instances the language, which is occasionally belaboured into stiffness, borders on obscurity, and the verse is every where epic rather than dramatic." However, he did admit that "the higher requisites of poetry are incidentally displayed in an eminent degree."[62]

The review of James Grahame's British Georgics (1808) is shorter but more pithy than that of Landor's drama. Much of this paper is taken up with general comments upon the nature and execution of effective didactic poetry, of which Grahame's rustic poems are fine examples. The chief fault of the Georgics was that they too minutely treated agricultural pursuits and that his subjects were perhaps ill chosen. Grahame's genius, however, "is marked by tenderness, a quick and lively perception of beauty, indignation at cruelty in whatever form and under whatever disguise, and a deep and unaffected piety that sees God everywhere, and loves him in all his works. . . ."[63] Southey found in Grahame's pastorals virtues of omission; there were "no vapid episodes of maukish sentimentalism, no tales of 'Patty'; who hath not heard of Patty 'the fair milk-maid,' and Thrysis who won her for his wife. . . ." Graham had not included such stories as those with which Thomson had "disfigured the Seasons"

---

[62]QR, VIII, 92; Cf. NL, I, 546; II, 9, 10, 31; LC, III, 294, 299, 300, 312, 315; IV, 36; V, 345; VI, 193.

[63]QR, III, 459.

and was to be praised for avoiding "sickly affectation" and excessive use of periphrasis. Among the faults of the Georgics, however, was a lack of order--one passage did not grow out of another in logical sequence, and Grahame might have enriched his poem had he "more frequently recurred to the state of agriculture in former times, and the good and evil which arise from the present improved system."[64]

In two reviews Southey noticed the poems of James Montgomery, and in both he defended the publication of "common-place verses." He chiefly admired the moral tones of Montgomery's works; his poems

> were moral, they were pious, they were patriotic; but they spoke the language of no sect and of no party; they contained neither panegyric nor satire; the subjects were general, and nothing but an originality in the manner of treating them could have attracted notice.

He criticized Montgomery, however, for using in his shorter poems "the tinsel and taudry with which our modern poetry has so long abounded." The Wanderer of Switzerland Southey viewed as an experiment "treating an heroic subject in lyric measure and upon a dramatic plan," and he noted that blank verse would have been more appropriate to the subject.[65]

The only other writer to whom he felt Montgomery bore resemblance was Klopstock. Both poets, he noted, "have the same keen sensibility, and fervent piety; in both, too, the imagination overpowers the judgment; but the faults of the German are far more

---

[64]Ibid., 461. Southey had previously given a favorable review to Grahame's The Sabbath, AR, 4(1807), 588-591.

[65]QR, VI, 407.

conspicuous than those of the English poet." The worth of this poet he said was that "he flattered none of the vices of mankind, nor even any of their opinions . . . he imitated no fashionable style, and he had no friends among the oligarchs of literature to go before him with a trumpet and announce his merits."[66]

Southey's second review of Montgomery was also favorable, but he took occasion here to trace the relationships between sacred and pastoral poetry in Germany and to comment briefly and favorably upon such works as Gessner's "Death of Abel," Klopstock's "Messiah," and Bodmer's "Noah." Montgomery's World Before the Flood, published in 1813, he placed in the tradition of these writers and provided a critical summary of the work.[67]

Lucretia Maria Davidson died in Plattsburgh, New York at the age of seventeen in 1825, and four years later she was the subject of a biography by the American inventor Samuel F. B. Morse. In reviewing Morse's book for the Quarterly Southey wrote a brief sketch of her life and made an attempt to save her verses from obscurity. She was a child prodigy whom he admired. "In our own language, except in the cases of Chatterton and Kirke White," he wrote, "we can call to mind no instance of so early, so ardent, and so fatal a pursuit of intellectual advancement."[68] Although he quoted several

---

[66]Ibid., 412.

[67]Both reviews of Montgomery's poems are amplified by a letter from Southey to Montgomery in 1811. NL, II, 12-15.

[68]QR, XLI, 293.

specimens of her poetry, he did not enter into criticism of them; he merely praised her young genius, her sensitivity, and her humility, and the article is less a review than a eulogy.

In many respects the life of Mary Colling was a pattern of that of Lucretia Davidson; both displayed considerable poetical talents as children and both died early. Southey's review of the poetry of this English servant girl was much the same as his treatment of Davidson. There was very little in the way of subjective criticism of her poetry, and apparently his chief purpose was to publicize her work and commend her piety. A brief sketch of her life was provided, but most of the article was devoted to one of Southey's favorite themes--the defense of popular, "uneducated" poets. The fault of much contemporary poetry, he complained, was that it was too imitative, too "cultivated," and too refined; that of popular, self-educated poets, although perhaps less literate and less erudite, was a purer expression of the heart:

> Cultivation destroys wild flowers as civilization destroys wild animals. The greater number of those who are called uneducated poets in the present age, have actually received more education in their favourite art than those upon whom the utmost pains of regular culture were bestowed fifty years ago.[69]

Among those whom he especially praised were Mr. Struthers of Glasgow, Charles Crocker, the "humble Chichester shoemaker," Robert Milhouse, a weaver of Nottingham, James Barnfield of Cam in Gloucestershire, and John Alford of Trowbridge.[70]

---

[69]QR, XLVII, 92.

[70]Cf. LC, VI, 194. Southey noted in this 1832 letter that he wished not to encourage poetry of poor quality but rather poetry which

In the writing of poetry, Southey noted,

> imitation will not make genius, (which, indeed, cannot be made,) but neither will it mar it. In poetry, as well as in painting and architecture, the better the models which the student has before him, the more likely he is to profit by his studies, if there be no deficiency either of power or of judgment on his part.[71]

Ideally there must be a balance between originality of thought and execution and imitation of models. Southey's treatment of the uneducated poets, however, is somewhat flawed, for halfway through the article he turned entirely away from the subject to a consideration of the leading social and political concerns of 1832. His praise of the uneducated poet and "common-place" poetry does in substantial points coincide with the romantic emphasis upon the use of common, ordinary diction and sincere heartfelt expression.

---

arouses "the better feeling of our nature." Cf. Southey's essay "On Uneducated Poets" published by Murray in 1831 in John Jones's modestly titled Attempts in Verse, a work published at Southey's own urging. Richard Altick has noted of this essay that "the critics made short shrift of Jones, but Southey's essay, recalling with suitable emotion the careers of such versifiers of earlier ages as Ann Yearsley, milkmaid; John Taylor, Thomas Waterman; James Woodhouse and John Bennet, shoemakers; Stephen Duck, farm laborer; and John Frederick Byrant, tobacco-pipe maker, has permanent interest in its reflection of the era's sentimental adulation of the low-born poet." The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 241. Altick's eleventh chapter, pp. 240-259, provides a good account of the popularity of self-educated poets as does Rayner Unwin's The Rural Muse (London: Allen and Unwin, 1954).

[71] QR, XLVII, 98.

III. REVIEWS OF TRAVEL LITERATURE

It is difficult to underestimate the popularity of travel literature in Southey's age or the influences which it had upon the literature of English romanticism. The popularity of travel accounts can be gauged by the astonishing number of reviews accorded them in the Quarterly and in other periodicals. Voyages of discovery, pseudo-letters, accounts of missionary work, accounts written by diplomats, soldiers, naval officers, emigrants, princes, botanists, geologists, zoologists, poets, all appeared with great frequency in the pages of reviews. During the twenty-three years between 1809 and 1832, for example, the Quarterly alone reviewed no less than 232 travel books. Often several travel accounts dealing with the same topic were reviewed together in one article, and most of these books were noticed before 1828, after which date the Quarterly's interest in them declined perceptibly. A conservative estimate of this number shows about fifty books dealing with the Near East, twenty-five on North America, nineteen on the British Isles, eighteen on Africa, seventeen on the South Seas, thirteen on South America, ten on France, seven on the Orient, six on Russia and northern Europe, four on Spain, and three on Iceland.

The leading reviewer of travel literature during the term of Gifford's editorship was Sir John Barrow, himself the author of a number of accounts and co-founder of the Royal Geographical Society. Altogether Barrow contributed over fifty travel reviews. Other

reviewers were James Pillans, Reginald Heber, George Ellis, J. W. Croker, Joseph Blanco White, and Robert Southey. Generally the Quarterly travel reviews followed a standard pattern to which Southey usually adhered. Almost always the review contained a comprehensive summary larded with generous quotations and either introduced or followed by the critical remarks of the reviewer. The question of the author's accuracy and truthful representation of the subject matter was always an important concern for the reviewer because accounts of travel were particularly liable to generous embellishment and exaggeration, and a simple, factual, plain style was highly valued.[72]

Southey considered the review of travel books his speciality in the work for the Quarterly, and the fact that fully one quarter of his total contributions come under this heading perhaps indicates that he travelled much in Keswick as he noticed works on England, North America, South America, Polynesia, Portugal, Ireland, the Near and Far East, Tongataboo, the Feroe Islands, and the West Indies.

---

[72]A fine account of the popularity of travel books and their influence upon the literature of English romanticism is a series of articles by Wallace Cable Brown: "The Popularity of English Travel Books about the Near East, 1775-1825," Philological Quarterly, 15(1936), 70-80; "English Travel Books and Minor Poetry about the Near East, 1775-1825," Philological Quarterly, 16(1937), 249-271; "Byron and English Interest in the Near East," Studies in Philology, 34(1937), 55-64; "Robert Southey and English Interest in the Near East," Journal of English Literary History, 5(1938), 218-224. Cf. F. A. Kirkpatrick's "The Literature of Travel, 1700-1900," in the Cambridge History of English Literature, eds. A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1917), XIX, pp. 265-276.

Of particular interest to him were accounts of the United States, and he reviewed Lewis and Clarke's American Travels, Timothy Dwight's Travels in New England, Holmes' American Annals and several others. These reviews gave him occasion to counter the harsh tone towards the United States which had been adopted by his fellow reviewers in the Quarterly and in other publications. On occasion he used his travel reviews to bring into notice the work of a friend or kinsman as his articles on Henry Koster's Travels in Brazil, James Burney's History of the Voyages and Discoveries in the South Sea, and his brother Thomas Southey's Chronological History of the West Indies amply attest.

The overwhelming number and length of his travel reviews precludes an exhaustive treatment of them here; some of them have already been mentioned earlier, particularly in connection with his defense of the United States and the discussion of his interest in foreign missionary work. A discussion of three representative reviews will show the pattern and the method which he followed, however. This limitation is regrettable because his travel reviews comprise one of the more exotic and fascinating facets of his Quarterly work. Unlike most of his political and social reviews, these articles contained meticulously detailed summaries of the works under consideration, largely because their primary purpose was to entertain and to inform Quarterly readers. In all of his travel reviews Southey's greater interests were in strange and exotic customs, primitive governments and social structures, and pagan religions.

Although he did not idealize the primitive man, the "noble savage," or exalt him romantically, he quite frequently went to great lengths to point out the debilitating influences of European civilization upon savage races and to praise the better qualities of unsophisticated cultures. In addition he showed considerable interest in natural history and geography, and his articles indicated his wide reading of travel accounts and his immense historical researches.

Southey's interest in travel literature was not confined to foreign countries, however, and he more than once noticed works by foreign travellers to Britain, works written in much the same vein as his own Letters of Espriella. A fine example of this is his substantial review in 1816 of several books and pamphlets by travellers in England, including England and the English People by the prominent French professor of political economy Jean-Baptiste Say, the American Benjamin Silliman's Journal of Travels in England, Holland, and Scotland, in the Years 1805-06, J. A. Anderson's A Dane's Excursions in Britain, and Letters from London: Observations of a Russian during a Residence in England by Oloff Napea, a Russian cavalry officer. This travel review, carrying the running title "Works on England" (QR, XV, 1816) also illustrates very well that current English political problems were never far from Southey's mind even when he ostensibly reviewed works of little political interest. He took much space in this paper in discussing the Luddite activities and the economic problems of England in 1810-1815. It is obvious that he was deeply concerned about the impressions which foreign travellers formed

of the country during the difficult war years before Waterloo.

With characteristic thoroughness he introduced his essay with a long account of previous foreign travel accounts of England including some comments upon the methods of the genre of the pseudo-letter--the genre to which his Espriella letters belonged. He noted that travel writers are often notorious liars and that the reader should always beware of reading such accounts too literally, for travel writers have a tendency to pass off as truth things which they have not witnessed but only read. This, he felt, was particularly true of French writers who had adopted in the late eighteenth century a spirit of envious dislike for England. His examination of French works of travel in this review trailed off into a heated defense of Pitt's French policies.

In many of his travel reviews on England Southey's prime source of humor was the amusing misconceptions about English life and society formed by foreign writers, particularly the French ones. It might amuse the English reader, he noted, to be informed that sugared meat appears regularly on English tables, that the Lord Mayor has whole turtles served up in their shells, that

> when you dine at an Englishman's house, you know his politics by his dinner:--a ministerial man gives you French rolls; at a patriot's you get only stale bread: the ministerialist gives soup in his first course, and made-dishes; at an oppositionist's table you have an enormous piece of boiled beef, flanked with carrots boiled in water, and with cabbages seasoned with the same sauce!--a huge hare, with gooseberry sauce, is an excellent patriotic dish: ministerial men drink French wines; an oppositionists and a friend of liberty would be disgraced were he not to prefer Port to Claret or

> Burgundy; and a good republican ought to get drunk with nothing but what is of home manufactury.[73]

Southey's critical evaluation of M. Simond's Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain in this paper is valuable for his standards for travel literature. Of all forms of writing, he observed, it is perhaps the most demanding because it requires so many different talents: the ability to observe well and to record observation accurately while holding the reader's interest with a lively and entertaining style, the ability to see beyond surface appearances to the causes of things, and the ability to understand the complex interdependence of various aspects of a society. A travel writer must be author and political and social critic combined. In addition, there must be a pleasing balance between actual observation and bookish research--an excess of one or the other can easily lead to gross misconceptions and misrepresentations.

One of the more interesting portions of "Works on England" is Southey's evaluation of Benjamin Silliman's Journal of Travels, for it contains many of his opinions concerning the United States. Silliman's Journal, Southey observed, "represents England to the Americans as it really is, and exhibits to the English a fair specimen of the real American character."[74] On the basis of Silliman's book and his own research and observations Southey made in this review perhaps his most reasoned statement on the American

---

[73]QR, XV, 552.

[74]Ibid., 555.

character and upon early nineteenth-century American society along with his review of Timothy Dwight's Travels in New England and New York (QR, XXX, 1823).

There are two distinct classes of people in the United States: the descendants of the early settlers who carried with them habits of strict morality and austere religion and the modern "swarm of emigrants, renegadoes, and refugees, who are neither incommoded with one nor the other." The first class have outgrown the intolerance and bigotry of their ancestors while retaining their virtues and "are republicans as much by principle and duty, as by prejudice and inheritance." These people compose the federal party, and they were originally Tories during the revolutionary period. This class, however, "is as inferior in numbers as it is superior in every moral and intellectual qualification to the democrats."[75]

The democrats, or later settlers, left England not on account of their religious or moral qualities, but for less admirable reasons. Many of these emigrants were of Southey's own generation. Some left Europe in honest hopes of bettering their condition through assiduous industry, but many others left because they were

> political desperadoes whose revolutionary schemes had been frustrated at home,--refugees, not for conscience-sake, not for any principle, political or religious, but for the sake of escaping their creditors and the laws of their country, adventurers of the worst description, men of no fortunes, or

---

[75]Ibid.

> of broken ones, with principles as loose as their allegience, inflamed hearts and blasted characters,--the disgrace of the country which they have left, and the scandal of that which has received them.[76]

This class, in Southey's view, formed the greatest threat to the political structure of America and the peaceful evolution of its heritage.

Although no one can dispute the proposition that lesser evils are to be disregarded when they necessarily arise from a greater good, Southey asserted that this principle was not applicable to the concept of a democratic American society and government. The principles of political equality have been promulgated in an absurd manner in America, he argued, and this is symptomatic of a "most perilous disease in the body politic." Universal suffrage has literally made the people sovereign in America:

> Governors must obey the sovereign people or be dismissed,--but the sovereign people are the multitude, and the multitude are the poor; they envy the rich, and in America there is nothing to soften the inequality,--no ties of hereditary respect,--no gradation of ranks,--scarcely any distinction but the broad and perilous one between the poor and the rich. The measures of government in America must therefore be unfavourable to the rich, and consequently to commerce, which is in that country the only road to riches.[77]

A good deal of Southey's criticism of Silliman's work was devoted to the cultural and political ties between the United States and Great Britain, ties so strong that hostilities between the two, such as the recent war in 1812, were grossly unnatural and stimulated

---

[76]Ibid., 556.

[77]Ibid.

only by radical revolutionaries and seditionists on both sides. In a somewhat condescending tone he noted that no circumstance could possibly destroy the bonds of affinity between the two nations:

> . . . they have lisped the same mother-tongue, they have been fed at the same breasts of religion,--they derive their knowledge from the same reservoirs and fountain springs;--they communicate in the same bread of life. The American is indebted to England for every thing which can ennoble his character . . . England is to them what Italy and Greece are to the classical scholar, what Rome is to the Catholic, and Jerusalem to the Christian world.[78]

The observations which Southey made in this paper on the differences between British English and American English would be of interest to a linguistic scholar. Although the language was spoken and written more correctly by the mass of the English nation than the American, the Americans may have helped to define the basic elements of the language and purify it through the reduction of dialectical differences:

> There are no provincial dialects in America; emigrants from all parts of Great Britain have met there, and intermixed with each other, and with the natives of the country; the peculiarities of dialect have necessarily been melted down into the general speech, which is common English; and this is the language, therefore, which all children learn as their mother tongue.[79]

In England, he felt, the language is far less consistent and somewhat debased by regional fragmentation. America would further enrich British English by striking new vocabulary words, and future

---

[78]Ibid., 558.

[79]Ibid., 560.

generations would become the joint heirs of the best elements of the speech of both countries.

In the summer of 1828 Southey reviewed a three-volume work entitled Chronological History of the West Indies (QR, XXXVIII, 1828). This work had been written at Southey's urging by his brother Thomas, a commander in the Royal Navy. The review was, perhaps understandably, a highly complimentary one, but it illustrates well the method and thoroughness with which Southey reviewed other works of travel in the same general vein and with the same kinds of subject-matter. As usual he gave careful and close examination to the authorities and observations upon which his brother had written his account and indicated his own considerable knowledge and reading as his comments upon works by Hakluyt, Purchas, Jean-Baptiste Du Tertre, and Labat's monumental Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de l'Amerique testify.

His summary of the work traced the development of European exploration and settlement from the discovery of Columbus onward, and most of the paper was given over to a comparison of the efforts and contributions of Spanish, French, and English adventurers in the Caribbean islands. Despite the evils of slavery and disease which the white man brought to the Indies, the spread of western civilization to primitive peoples in the New World was no inconsiderable gift; "no person," he noted,

> who contemplates history with a religious mind, can fail to remark the striking resemblance between the more civilized

> American nations at the time of the discovery [by Columbus], and of the Canaanites when, in like manner, the measure of their iniquities was full.[80]

The moral enormities, for example, of Mexico and areas where the Aztec mythology prevailed were such that even the sad victories of Cortes might be regarded as a dispensation of mercy, and Southey, as he had previously done in Madoc, examined the barbarous customs and superstitions of primitive civilizations in South and Central America.

In his treatment of Spanish explorations he missed no chance to condemn the influences of Roman Catholicism in its "insane pretensions to universal domination," although he did admit and detail the good effects upon commerce and agriculture of the Spanish government in areas of South America. He provided interesting expositions of the growth of the American pineapple, Indian corn, and tobacco in the New World, and he also devoted several pages to the origin and development of slavery--an innovation which he credited to the Spaniards. Perhaps the most exciting portions of the article are those which he gave to heroic and romantic characters and their dashing exploits of adventure: Diego de Salazar, one of the first conquerors of Puerto Rico, and Sebastian Alonso de Niebla. In the same vein he described with some pride the adventures of the early English maritime explorers: Hawkins, Drake, Lancaster, and particularly the Duke of Cumberland who had helped to break Spanish naval

---

[80]QR, XXXVIII, 195.

dominance in the Caribbean. The French conquest of the West Indies Southey condemned in the strongest terms: "an unrelieved series of miseries and crimes." He especially pronounced guilt upon the exploits of the freebooter Huguenot, Le Vasseur. In addition he traced the beginnings and growth of the French colony of St. Domingo and the settlement of the Barbadoes, which in the seventeenth century became the most flourishing of the English islands.

For the twentieth-century reader Southey's travel reviews rarely make dull reading, for he employed to the fullest his penchant for lively detail and gripping anecdote. In this article, for example, there is a superb discussion of the activities of the romantic but frequently cruel and barbarous buccaneers who roamed the islands in search of gold and power. These maritime adventurers rivalled the Spanish conquerors in intrepidity and in cruelty, but "they resembled them, also, in having among them individuals who . . . retained their sense of right and wrong, and their love of better things." Of these buccaneers Dampier was the finest example.[81]

In Southey's opinion no European nation is entitled to reproach another on the score of its colonial history, "each having incurred a fearful share of sin; the consolation is, that in all cases it has proceeded less from the national character than from the character of the times."[82] Nevertheless, he rarely missed in his

---

[81]Ibid., 235.

[82]Ibid.

reviews an opportunity to extol the wonderful gifts which the English explorers and settlers had bestowed upon ignorant savages, and he urged that in the nineteenth century Britain should do more to spread its culture and heritage abroad. In particular he showed great excitement in the article on the British settlement of Australia and its growth. Colonization, he often repeated, is the best safety-valve for a rapidly growing population in the British Isles, but Britain must send her best colonists abroad, not merely her malcontents and offcasts.

His review of his brother's book is a good example of an historically oriented article. In another type of paper, however, he showed greater interest in natural history and geography as well as social structures among primitive peoples. Perhaps the finest example of this kind of review is that treating the Lewis and Clark expedition in North America with its meticulous examination of wild-life and vegetation and Southey's frequently humorous amazement at the American Indians. Another paper representative of this category of travel review is one of his last articles, a review of Smyth and Lowe's Narrative of a Journey from Lime to Pará and Lieutenant Henry Lister Maw's Journal of a Passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic, crossing the Andes in the Northern Provinces of Peru, and descending the River Marañon, or Amazon, both published in London in 1829 (QR, LVII, 1836).

As was his general custom Southey began his account of these

adventures by surveying the accounts of previous travellers to the same places: Orellana, Pizarro, Pedro de Ursua, Pedro Texeira, Condamine. He sought to stimulate the interest of the reader, in addition, by relating the story of the wife of Godin des Odonais, an eighteenth-century explorer who perished with his party while trying to measure a degree of the meridian near the equator in Peru. The woman, the sole survivor of an expedition destroyed by disease and hostile climate, remained alone in the dense jungles of Peru and eventually, through great hardship and effort, retraced the path back to civilization.

Maw and Smith, both British naval officers, had set out on a journey in the early 1820s to trace the source of the Amazon and to attempt discovery of a navagible passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Southey summarized their expedition step by step, almost day by day, and provided for his readers vivid natural and geographical descriptions of the Andes range. The article is full of exotic mountains and rivers: the Toulea, Mayobamba, Chichi Yaco, Guallaga, and Laguna. So detailed did he become in a relatively brief paper that he described the annoyance experienced by the travellers by swarms of mosquitoes and sand-flies at Santa Rosa de Quibé, which is 3766 feet above sea level. Nor did Southey neglect to describe the villages and the customs of the areas through which the British officers passed--villages such as Obragillo in the Peruvian Andes, "perched on an elevation of 8937 feet, containing about fifty families of Indians, with a slight mixture of Spanish

blood, speaking a mixture of the Quichua (Peruvian) and Castilian languages," and the turbulence of the Amazonian Marañon branch near Cerro Pasco and the lake Chinchaycocha which is the source of the Jacua, a branch of the Ucayali. For all his detail, however, there is never a quality of dullness, so adept was he at the selection of those details. His narrative was also enlivened by his accounts of the state of society, character, condition, habits and manners of the mountain dwellers and inhabitants of the valleys of the Cordilleras. He found little in them to command respect, but he did a vivid job of describing their poorer qualities of drunkenness and sloth, and he speculated upon their tales of cannibalism.

As is not infrequently the case with his travel reviews centering upon South and Central America, Southey took occasion to allude to his own poetical works. There is little doubt that works such as his epic Madoc and A Tale of Paraguay had equipped him with some expertise in discussing travel accounts of these areas. Anyone who has examined the notes to his epics can testify to the wealth of information which he possessed. In this instance he discussed the work of Jesuit missionaries in South America, an interest also apparent in his review of Martin Dobrizhoffer's Account of the Abipones (QR, XXVI, 1822), and he found space enough to quote from his own Tale of Paraguay. In his descriptions of the species and behavior of the native Southey American alligator Southey observed, no doubt in seriousness, that "Mr. Southey has a long and very

interesting note upon it in his 'Tale of Paraguay,' which beautiful poem includes so many exquisite pictures of South American scenery and manners."[83]

It is perhaps a disservice to discuss only three examples of the travel reviews, for they were undoubtedly to Southey one of the most enjoyable aspects of his frequently wearisome Quarterly work. In addition to those mentioned a student of travel literature would do well to read his accounts of the Feroe Islands (QR, III, 1810), Forbes's Oriental Memoirs (QR, XII, 1814), Lewis and Clark's American Travels (QR, XII, 1815), MacKenzie's Travels in Iceland (QR, XII, 1812), and Dobrizhoffer's Account of the Abipones (QR, XXVI, 1822), which are among his finest reviews, and which frequently sparkle with unexpected, and often almost undetectable, humor, as well as his accounts of travellers in England of which "Home Tours--Mrs. Bray's Letters on Devonshire" (QR, LIX, 1837) is a fine example. The review of Mrs. Bray's Letters is particularly notable for the fairy tales, folk stories, and local color which it contains.

IV. SOUTHEY'S BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

If his travel reviews are the jewels of his Quarterly contributions, then his fifteen biographical articles must stand out as the most skillfully written of his articles. Most of them are admirable examples of small-scale biography. Perhaps his accounts of military

---

[83]QR, LVII, 26.

and religious figures are the most interesting; those on Nelson, Marlborough, Cromwell, Wellington, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, William Huntington, Neff, and Oberlin have been mentioned in previous connections. Equally deserving of attention by the modern student are his accounts of lesser known figures: Evelyn, Bayard, Captain Beaver, Admiral Howe, and Thomas Telford. Many of them remain valuable reading for the general student and for the historian. All of them indicate that Southey was a master biographer, as his larger works on Nelson, Wesley, Bunyan, Cowper, Cromwell, and the British admirals should attest, and must cause their reader some regret that Southey did not make biography his chief occupation.

Even the casual reader of the biographical essays cannot help but be impressed by the depth and breadth of their author's research or fail to be amused at either his intentional humor or those places, as in the life of Cromwell, where he seems to take himself too seriously as an historical critic. All of them are relieved by his interest in the quaint and sometimes seemingly insignificant facts of history, the personal habits and idiosyncracies which often tell more about a figure than can the most accurate and detailed factual record. In his longer works of biography and in his Quarterly sketches Southey's fundamental plan was "to account for the actions of men by their own principles and represent them as the persons represented them to themselves."[84] And Zeitlin's

---

[84]J. W. Robberds, ed., A Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Late William Taylor of Norwich (London: Murray, 1843), II, p. 347.

characterization of Southey's biographical method is accurate:

> In this way justice is assured to the subject of the biography while there is nothing to prevent the author from expressing his individual judgment of the motives and actions which he has passed in review. There is always the danger that actions may be misunderstood and motives wrongly imputed, but with Southey's scrupulousness in the treatment of documents this danger was reduced to a minimum. Naturalness and spontaneity are distinctive qualities of his biographies. The story seems to be telling itself, simply and unpretentiously. The character is not deliberately and formally analysed, but revealed step by step in his words and deeds. Whatever personal bias may exist is either inherent in the choice of the subject or lightly superposed, as in the moral reflections on the South American savages, but it is not allowed to permeate the narrative.[85]

Except for the engineer Thomas Telford Southey had no personal acquaintance with any of the figures about whom he wrote, and his biographical works, unlike those of James Boswell and John Lockhart were based primarily upon published accounts and emphasized the public aspects of the subjects; even so, he did not neglect the personal touches which his assiduous research unearthed.[86] He came to his task in the Quarterly with excellent experience in the writing of biography, as his earlier lives of John Wesley and Colonel John Hutchinson in the Annual Review in 1806 show, and his longer biographies of Cowper and Wesley are fairly well known to students of the romantic period. Less known but equally indicative of his biographical skills are the short sketches he wrote as introductions to works which he edited such as that of Henry Kirke White in 1808,

---

[85]Jacob Zeitlin, Select Prose of Robert Southey, p. 57.

[86]Kenneth Curry, Southey (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 93.

John Bunyan in 1830, the lives of uneducated poets in the preface to John Jones's Attempts in Verse in 1831, and the edition of Horae Lyricae by Isaac Watts in 1834. Scarcely read today but nevertheless representative of his abilities is the massive Lives of the British Admirals published between 1833 and 1840.

In the Quarterly Review his general method was to write a chronological account with copious quotations from the biography ostensibly under review and from the letters or writings of the subject of the sketch. He was at his best when he could feel sympathy or respect for the person whose life he was describing, although his life of Oliver Cromwell is a notable exception to this rule (QR, XXV, 1821).[87] While he admired Cromwell's personal character and qualities of leadership, he also recognized the Protector as a tyrant who had overthrown legally constituted government and brought a period of political disorder to Britain. Had Cromwell been able to follow the true impulse of his own heart and mind he would doubtless have governed constitutionally, liberally, and mercifully. Southey's willingness to stress the finer qualities of Cromwell despite his own negative historical judgment of the man, one recent scholar has observed, "reveals him as capable of writing with a professional detachment that he had earned in the hard school of reviewing."[88] On some occasions, however, Southey's

---

[87]Southey noted in his letters that this was one article which Gifford had not mutilated, NL, II, 227; LC, V, 97.

[88]Curry, p. 102.

detachment and objectivity failed him as he overzealously sought to glorify historical figures such as Marlborough (QR, XXIII, 1820) and Wellington (QR, XIII, 1815). Even though he recognized some of the less admirable traits of Marlborough, for example, he concluded that the Duke approached "in all his relations, public and private, almost as nearly as human frailty will allow, to the model of a great patriot, a true statesman, and a consummate general."[89]

Southey generally thought it best to emphasize the better qualities of the men rather than the darker sides of their characters. "The feelings of the living must never be sacrificed to the celebrity of the dead," he wrote in his life of Nelson, undeniably one of his best efforts (QR, III, 1810). He noted further that

> not unfrequently the dead have been embalmed, when for the instruction of posterity they ought to have been dissected. It is not necessary, that the evil deeds of all men should be written in brass; but the effrontery of cloaking them over, not merely by indiscriminate eulogy, but by praising them for qualities the very opposite to those by which they were marked, is a species of falsehood as severely to be reprobated in literary history, as the crime of bearing false witness in a court of law. There may be no occasion to gibbet such offenders, but it is intolerable that they should lie in state.[90]

Notwithstanding these high principles of literary integrity, very little of the Hamilton-Nelson affair crept into his treatment of the admiral, nor did he often reprimand the tactical errors of Wellington

---

[89]QR, XXIII, 73.

[90]QR, III, 219-220.

or Marlborough, and frequently he wandered far afield, as in the life of Hampden (QR, XLVII, 1832), leaving the subject of the biography entirely to speculate upon some past or current social or political matter.

One of the more enjoyable of Southey's Quarterly papers is his sketch of the life of the seventeenth-century diarist John Evelyn, whose diary first appeared in 1818 (QR, XIX, 1818). The essay is largely eulogistic in tone as Southey viewed Evelyn as the exemplary English gentleman whose character and temperament were not unlike his own. In this as in other sketches he put greater emphasis upon ordered intelligence and morality than upon disordered and sometimes profligate genius. Without doubt this review of William Bray's edition of the Memoirs, illustrative of the Life and Writings of John Evelyn was designed in great part to stimulate a reawakening of interest in Evelyn as gentleman and author.

As he did in some of the other biographical essays, Southey noted that the right man and the right moment had met in the life of Evelyn; "he was born in that country, place, and condition of life which best suited his moral and intellectual nature. Never had any one more cause to be thankful for all the accidents of his birth."[91] He gave to the reader a detailed, chronological sketch of Evelyn's life and writings, and travels, along with generous comments of his own about the Puritan revolution. Evelyn's unhappy

---

[91]QR, XIX, 1.

contemporary, Oliver Cromwell, was a man who might have been really great had he not been the wrong man born at the wrong moment and into the wrong circumstances of history.[92]

One of the strengths of the account of Evelyn's life is that Southey was careful to place his subject in the context of his times, largely because he based the sketch upon Evelyn's Diary. Among the most interesting parts of the essay are those detailing the Puritan Interregnum, Evelyn's personal and public reactions to the displays of Puritan fanaticism, the plague and fire of London in 1665-1666, the Dutch war of 1667, the licentiousness of the Restoration theater, Monmouth's rebellion and the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Southey also provided a pleasing digression upon eighteenth-century ornamental gardening and upon Evelyn's own one-hundred acre oval garden at his Sayes Court estate:

> An Eden of Evelyn's invention, indeed, would have differed widely from Milton's; his scheme of a Royal Garden comprehended knots, trayle-work, parterres, compartements, borders, banks and embossments, labyrinths, dedals, cabinents, cradles, close-walks, galleries, pavilions, porticos, lanterns and other relievos of topiary and hortulan architecture; fountains, jettos, cascades, piscines, rocks, grotts, cryptae, mounts, precipices and ventiducts; gazon-theatres, artificial echoes, automate and hydraulic music.[93]

And Southey continued on to discuss the history of horticulture in Evelyn's Acetaria along with various comments upon the growing of cabbages, cucumbers, sunflowers, and thistles. Much of the essay

---

[92]Ibid., 30.

[93]Ibid., 17-18.

also is given over to a treatment of Evelyn's Sylva. All of Evelyn's life Southey found exemplary; he was the perfect model for an English gentleman, as Southey noted in some of his finest prose:

> Neither to solicit public offices, nor to shun them, but when they are conferred to execute their duties diligently, conscientiously and fearlessly; to have no amusements but such as being laudable as well as innocent, are healthful alike for the mind and for the body, and in which, while the passing hour is beguiled, a store of delightful recollection is laid up; to be the liberal encourager of literature and the arts; to seek for true and permanent enjoyment by the practice of the household virtues--the only course by which it can be found; to enlarge the sphere of existence backward by means of learning through all time, and forward by means of faith through all eternity,--behold the fair idea of human happiness! And this was realized in the life of Evelyn.[94]

In 1823 young Sara Coleridge, the daughter of the poet, translated The Right Joyous and Pleasant History of the Feats, Gests, and Prowesses of the Chevalier Bayard, the Good Knight Without Fear and Without Reproach, and Southey's review of this work may well be the most entertaining of all of his papers (QR, XXXII, 1825).[95] He followed a chronological method in his account of Pierre du Terrail, born in 1476 in Dauphiny and renowned for military valor, but he also included a large number of anecdotes chosen to illustrate the Chevalier's integrity, spirit of generosity, and fierce independence. The subject appealed to Southey. Bayard had been a protégé of Charles VIII and had served with high distinction in the Italian campaigns of that king as well as in the service of Louis XII and

---

[94]Ibid., 54.

[95]Sara Coleridge also translated from the Latin, at the age of nineteen, Dobrizhoffer's Account of the Abipones in 1821, which Southey also reviewed (QR, XXVI, 1822).

Francis I. The article traced the campaigns of Charles into Italy, the Battle of Taro, and a brief account of the military history of Italy along with many comments upon the Papacy in the fifteenth century. "There was," he wrote of the popes,

> no lack of ability among them during those centuries when they were the most active, the most aspiring, and in strict truth it may be added, the most flagitious potentates of Europe. The history of all kingdoms is but too disgraceful to human nature; but the history of the papacy exceeds all others in the hideous description of its crimes.[96]

His comments upon Pope Alexander VI are particularly indicative of his attitude toward the Papacy as he blamed it for being the major cause of the political disunity which had traditionally reigned in Italy.

Among the most interesting of Bayard's adventures which Southey narrated were his battles with the German marauder Ludovico Sforza at Vinesco near Milan, Bayard's capture and escape, and his part in the French-Italian wars following the founding of the League of Cambray. The siege of Padua, the storming of Brescia, and the battle of the "Great Captain" with Gonsalvo de Cordova at the Gariglians in the kingdom of Naples, Bayard's glorious death after the battle of Romagnano--all would be of interest to a reader with an historical bent. In this review, one scholar has noted, "Southey's early fondness for chivalry is reanimated and he indulges in that pleasant vein of archaic English which he had developed in the 'Amadis of Gaul' and 'The Cid.'"[97]

---

[96]QR, XXXII, 368.

[97]Zeitlin, Select Prose of Robert Southey, p. 60.

A more recent scholar has observed that Bayard

> lived during the last days of chivalry when it was still possible for a knight to distinguish himself by his personal valor, but gunpowder--as the Chevalier recognized--was soon to change the old ways. Bayard's campaigns in Italy showed him not to be skillful in direct combat and in the conduct of sieges only, but generous to his adversaries, to his captives, and liberal with the ransoms he received, rewarding his associates to such an extent that often nothing remained for himself.[98]

These qualities Southey stressed in his account, but he was also careful not to idealize the days of chivalry. The best age of chivalry, he noted, was that of Edward III, but its influence was really very limited. While in the life of Bayard and other knights one could read of actions which would make the heart glow with generous emotion such actions "are accompanied with details of the most inhuman ferocity, and even the prime spirits of that age represented often and deeply of its barbarity."[99] Southey, then, sought to produce a balanced account of Bayard and the waning days of chivalrous glory, and he also brought other source materials to bear in painting his portrait of the Chevalier and his gallantry. He stressed, for example, that

> the cruelty, indeed, with which war was often carried on in the age of chivalry might almost shock belief, but it is attested both by history and romance. The best knights of the Round Table are represented as executing barbarities from which, in our days, an English hangman would revolt. . . . Nor can the strength and beauty of a character like Bayard's be properly appreciated unless we take into consideration the brutalizing influences with which he was surrounded.[100]

---

[98]Curry, p. 101.

[99]QR, XXXII, 372.

[100]Ibid., 378-379.

Southey's biographical essays rarely concluded without an attempt to draw a lesson from the life of the subject under treatment, and the account of Bayard is certainly no exception. His conclusion repeated that of most of his other sketches: men must be judged according to the standards of their own times and the circumstances in which they were placed.

> There are some callings which deaden the moral sense, some which directly harden the heart, some which produce the even more injurious effect of perverting our perceptions of right and wrong. . . . There are spirits so happily constituted as to resist these injurious influences, and preserve, under all circumstances, the integrity of their nature.[101]

Bayard, Robert of Gloucester, the Black Prince, Sir Philip Sidney, Marlborough, Nelson, all were such examples for personal and public conduct. In proportion as knowledge of such exemplary figures is cultivated men will be disposed to judge each other more generously, more kindly, and more equitably.

Three of Southey's lesser known biographies deserve some mention: the "Life and Services of Captain Beaver" (QR, XLI, 1829), "Life of Admiral Lord Howe" (QR, LXII, 1838), and the "Life of Thomas Telford" (QR, LXIII, 1839). The first of these portrayed the life and adventures of an unknown but accomplished naval officer, Philip Beaver, who rose through the ranks to command several ships of the Royal Navy. The account seems fully as sound as the Nelson paper in discussing naval affairs and tactics and again displays Southey's

---

[101]Ibid., 396.

considerable knowledge, acquired only through reading, of fleet movements, naval history, ship handling, and nautical terms. Also of interest in the article are his discussions of Beaver's ill-fated endeavors as a settler in an African colony which he founded on the island of Bulama at the mouth of the river Grande in the 1790s.

In the summer of 1838 Southey reviewed Sir John Barrow's Life of Richard Earl Howe. Although his paper seems to lack the facility of style of earlier articles, he still displayed a considerably acute ability to overview military actions. The account, however, is a fine treatment of the life and career of the brother of the famous General William Howe who played such a prominent role in the early days of the American Revolution. Southey concentrated upon Admiral Howe's part in the Seven Years' War, particularly his role in an important action under Admiral Boscawen against the French off Newfoundland in 1755, an incident which helped to precipitate the hostilities. Also of interest are Howe's participation in the ill-fated expedition against the French town of Rochefort shortly after the elder Pitt assumed office and his command of the Channel fleet during numerous invasion scares of that war.

Any student who is interested in the revolutionary period of American history would find of interest Southey's discussion of the diplomatic intercourse between Howe and Benjamin Franklin in 1774, an attempt by both men to avert open war, and Howe's expedition to America early in 1776 in command of a squadron of warships and

transports. Southey's treatment of the early stages of the American war is balanced with criticisms of the inequitable policies of Lord North and the incompetence of British commanders both in Great Britain and in America. Howe and his brother, he felt, had been ill used by the Ministry, and he concluded that "during the American war, indeed, our statesmen and our commanders, with a very few honourable exceptions, seem to have been equally demented."[102] Another high point of the article is the treatment of the siege of Gibraltar in the 1780s by the French and Spanish. The victory of the British in that siege Southey credited to the genius and competence of Admiral Howe.

In the spring of 1839 at the age of sixty-five and at the close of his writing career, Southey wrote his final article for the Quarterly, a review of John Rickman's edition of the Life of Thomas Telford, Civil Engineer, written by himself (QR, LXIII, 1839). This article alone would stand well in proof of the proposition that Southey was not an enemy to industrial progress in his age, only to abuses of that progress, and the paper also has the distinction of being the only biography which he wrote of a figure with whom he was personally acquainted. In the autumn of 1819 Southey, in the company of Rickman and Telford, had toured Scotland, and his friendship with both men lasted until their deaths. On this tour the three men had visited the Caledonian Canal, of which Telford had been the

---

[102]QR, LXII, 39.

engineer and Rickman the secretary for the commissioners of roads and bridges in Scotland. Also from this tour came one of Southey's most pleasant works, Journal of a Tour in Scotland in 1819.

Although the tone of his sketch is eulogistic--Telford had died in 1834--Southey did not exploit his personal relationship with him but rather concentrated upon presenting a chronological account of the engineer's life and accomplishments, the high point of which was the design and construction of the Caledonian Canal, a canal sixty miles in length across central Scotland connecting the North Sea with the Atlantic. Like his Journal of a Tour in Scotland, his last Quarterly article shows close attention to the details of civil engineering, and it is also indicative, with its numerous comments upon railroads, canals, roadbuilding, and bridges, of Southey's firm belief in carefully controlled technological progress. Among the accomplishments described in clear detail are Telford's Severn bridges at Buildwas near Shrewsbury, the Ellesmere Canal project of 1793, Telford's aqueduct designs and constructions, the Chirk aqueduct near the valley of the Ceriog and an aqueduct over the river Dee, the Pont-y-Cysylle. Fifteen pages are devoted to the great Caledonian Canal, and among other accomplishments which Southey praised are the improvement of the Birmingham Canal in 1824, the Birmingham and Liverpool Junction Canal of the late 1820s, the Nene Outfall Channel, the North Level Drainage, and a new channel at Sutton Wash in Lincolnshire.

V. CONCLUSION

Anyone who has had the enduring and admirable patience to read this study through to its conclusion deserves the right to question the reasons for its composition. What is the importance of Southey's Quarterly papers, this dusty mass of material totalling perhaps five or six thousand pages? Why should anyone wish to write an extended study of them? Are they worthy of study by students of the period of English romanticism and of nineteenth-century British history? There are, of course, several answers which may be offered to these questions. The articles are worthy of study and interest simply because they have been so long ignored as a significant, major body of Southey's work. For anyone interested in the history and literature of early nineteenth-century Britain they provide an immediate "feel" for the age--a way of making history live again. They are also valuable for providing the fairly reliable "official" record of the reactions of one perceptive and extraordinarily sensitive scholar to the portentous events of his times, and they should fascinate any reader with a truly historical bent.

For students of the English essayists the Quarterly papers are deserving of recognition and study. Their author was a master stylist and essayist whose papers are valuable for their own sake, for their competence of style and their fluctuating moods of anger, placidity, restraint, compression--for their colloquial, easy tone which yet retains organizational and local development and dignity.

Southey attached great importance to the clarity and rhythm of his prose, and, as Jean Raimond has recognized, "sa prose donne une impression d'harmonie délicate, fort agréable à l'oreille. Il est certain qu'il voilait avant tout etre clair, mais l'emploi d'une forme simple et directe n'exclut nullement, chez lui, la recherche de l'euphone."[103]

George Saintsbury has noted without much exaggeration that "it is extremely easy to say who Southey is. He is the possessor of perhaps the purest and most perfect English prose style, of a kind at once simple and scholarly, to be found in the language."[104] And Samuel Smiles noted that he "wrote with ease, grace, and rapidity. . . . His prose style was charming--clear, masculine, and to the point. . . ."[105] Although Hugh Walker could argue that the value of Southey's essays lay almost wholly in their style because "they have not sufficient depth of thought, nor have they now sufficient freshness of information to give them vitality for their substance," he had to admit that "they are written in limpid, graceful and easy prose. There are no purple patches, nor is there anything unworthy. No style, not even Goldsmith's, is more free

---

[103]Jean Raimond, Robert Southey: L'homme et son temps, "Etudes Anglaises," No. 28 (Paris: Didier, 1968), p. 494. Raimond furnishes an interesting comparison of Southey's prose style in the Quarterly life of Nelson (QR, III, 1810) and the 1850 text of the Life of Nelson, pp. 494-511.

[104]Saintsbury, A History of Nineteenth Century English Literature, p. 68.

[105]Samuel Smiles, A Publisher and his Friends: Memoir and Correspondence of John Murray (London: Murray, 1891), I, p. 189.

from mannerism."[106] Perhaps Southey himself described his own style best in a letter of 1836 to Joseph Cottle in which he branded as "ridiculous" the opinion of Sir James Mackintosh that the style was founded upon that of Horace Walpole:

> It is founded upon nobodys. I say what I have to say as plainly as I can, without thinking of the style, and that is the whole secret. I could tell you by what poets my poetry has successively been leavened, but not what prose-writers have ever in the same manner influenced me. In fact I write as you may remember that I always conversed, without effort and without aiming at display.[107]

Aside from the soundness and beauty of their style Southey's Quarterly essays are a testimony to his indefatigable industry and the depth and thoroughness of his scholarship. If they provide one portrait of the age in which they were written, they also reveal much about their author--the pure scholar, a gentleman of good nature, good grace, and iron-clad opinions, a man slow to anger, but when angered a formidable opponent. They also reflect his sense of responsibility; despite the crushing blows of life--the death of his son Herbert in 1816 and the illness and death of his wife Edith in 1835--he kept to his often burdensome work as long as his own mind remained intact to 1839. The work provided financial support for his family and others whom he supported during difficult years, but he was always hesitant to look upon it as a simple financial venture. W. S. Hall has observed justly that

---

[106]Hugh Walker, The English Essay and Essayists (London: Dent, 1915), p. 213.

[107]NL, II, 442.

> Few worked harder than Southey. To Southey, however, mental labour was an absolute necessity; a year of illness such as most men have to suffer during life would have inevitable brought that which most of all things terrified him--debt.[108]

Nevertheless the work was often burdensome and less than pleasant, and he never fully enjoyed it. The last reference in his letters to his Quarterly Review association is depreciatory: "The story is not worth telling," he wrote, "it was a piece of disrespectful ill-usage which I resent not upon either Lockhart or Murray, but upon the Review personified."[109]

The essays show him to have been much more sensitive to the social, political, and philosophical problems of his age than many have thought. They show him to have been a gentle and kind critic, a superb historian, and an extraordinarily facile prose writer. They also clearly reveal his capacity for bigotry, narrow-mindedness, maddening stubbornness and inflexibility, and even vehement heart-felt hatred--always honestly expressed, and certainly they show him as a man keenly aware of his own prejudices. He was a man reluctant to let go of the political philosophy which he had come to appreciate in his maturity, but a man also unwilling to deny the necessary social changes of his age, and this is the remarkable paradox of his thought and his character. Whatever the articles tell about the man, they do not show him as either hypocrite or as political apostate; there is

---

[108]W. S. Hall, A Book of Memories of Great Men and Women of the Age, from Personal Acquaintance (London: Virtue, 1871), p. 197.

[109]SL, IV, 408.

an incalculable difference between deliberate and conscious changes of opinion and a reasonable modification of opinions to meet changing times and realities. It is his honesty that is most impressive, his desire to defend his beliefs despite whatever criticism they may have received.

Some of Southey's essays are of little interest even to the most avid and dedicated scholar of the period, and some of them rightly deserve to be forgotten; the primary example perhaps is his "Inquiry into the Copyright Act" (QR, XXI, 1819). But most of the papers exhibit his copious erudition and the fact that, unlike many of his contemporaries, he carried over into his mature career a youthful flair, an awareness of the movements and issues of his own age, an unwillingness to make his idyllic life at Keswick into a life-long retirement and hermitage, an active desire to participate in the great concerns of the day. For forty years he wrote reviews for The Critical Review, The Annual Review, the Edinburgh Annual Register, the Foreign Review, the Foreign Quarterly Review, and The Quarterly Review. It is not too much to agree with William Haller that out of his contributions to these publications

> might be compiled a work in several volumes giving a fairly complete social as well as literary history of the English people. Beginning with the reign of Henry VIII, it would include a full discussion of the revolution in France and of contemporary changes in England together with chapters on Ireland, foreign parts of the British Empire, and the United States. The immediate purpose of these writings was to oppose political change at home, but the larger purpose was to enforce a point of view toward the problems of English society, a social

> philosophy admittedly and radically opposed to that which prevailed at the time.[110]

It is, however, entirely too much to agree with Walter Graham that

> for thirty years Southey was the intolerant champion and abettor of a group of Ultra-Tories, notorious as the enemies of freedom. Indeed, he outdid them all in his intense, unyielding, almost fanatical zeal for the King and the Church and for repressive legislation to prevent any change in an outworn political and social order.[111]

Much of Graham's contention is doubtless true, but it cannot truthfully stand without careful qualification. It is accurate to say that Graham, like many of Southey's contemporaries did not adequately appreciate or understand his social, historical, religious, and literary opinions. Macaulay dismissed most of them as oppressive, antiquated, and preposterous. Shelley, Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, Bryon, Cobbett, and the great Mr. Smith of Norwich all could object to them on relatively minor points, but Thomas Carlyle was later to see in Southey's work the qualities of piety, honesty, sympathy, and truth, and he was to incorporate into his own forceful work, primarily Sartor Resartus, The French Revolution and the Latter-Day Pamphlets, many of the basic ideas which earlier were expressed by Southey in the Quarterly. Of the writers who followed him perhaps Carlyle bears the deepest impress of Southey's thought, but Southey's ideas on

---

[110]William Haller, "Southey's Later Radicalism," PMLA, 27(1922), 282.

[111]Walter Graham, "Robert Southey as Tory Reviewer," Philological Quarterly, 2(1923), 109.

education appear in Ruskin's Time and Tide, and it would not be too difficult to trace some similarities between his ideas and those of Arnold expressed in Culture and Anarchy. On occasions Southey's essays may have brought down upon him the harshest of contemporary criticism, but his place as a social prophet cannot be denied by those who examine his reviews in light of subsequent developments in English society in the nineteenth century, and it is notable that even under the severest of criticism he never shrank from expressing himself forcefully, plainly, and honestly.

Perhaps most of all Southey's essays are valuable for showing the development of a conservative mind, and if studied against the background of the times, his letters, and his other works, they effectively reveal that he was neither hypocrite nor political apostate--that he did not totally nor suddenly change his opinions in hopes of government favor, under the influence of unworthy motives. He was not guilty of the hope of basking in court smiles or ministerial favor, and he did not abruptly turn one day from the levelling opinions of Wat Tyler to high Toryism. Nor was it his association with the Quarterly which influenced the development of his opinions. The change of his views around 1809 are, as Cuthbert Southey claimed, more reasonably attributed to "time, experience, increased knowledge, and calm and deliberate conviction. . . ."[112] Both in history and in his own times he perceived two great opposite

---

[112]LC, V, 3.

evils to be dreaded, tyranny and anarchy. He felt that the former was no longer a threat, but that Britain was in imminent danger of the latter, and to this problem he addressed himself with all the fervor of a patriot. That he often exaggerated the danger cannot be denied, but to charge him with being deliberately inconsistent in his opinions over a troubled and confused thirty-year period is palpably unfair and illogical. Had he lived longer he no doubt would have changed some opinions further. His contemporaries might be excused from charging him with apostasy, but later scholars who possess the historical perspective which he and his contemporaries did not, may not be excused.

In his own political essays William Hazlitt leveled this charge against Southey and his Quarterly papers:

> Mr Southey is a man incapable of reasoning connectedly on any object. He has not strength of mind to see the whole of any question; he has not modesty to suspend his judgment till he has examined the grounds of it. He can comprehend but one idea at a time, and that is always an extreme one; because he will neither listen to, nor tolerate any thing that can disturb or moderate the petulance of his self-opinion. . . . A changeling is your only oracle. Those who have undergone a total change of sentiment on important questions, ought certainly to learn modesty in themselves, and moderation toward others; on the contrary, they are generally the most violent in their own opinions, and the most intolerant toward others. . . .[113]

Hazlitt's charge is unreasonable and false first because it assumes

---

[113]William Hazlitt, "Wat Tyler and the Quarterly Review" in Political Essays (1819) reprinted in William Hazlitt: Selected Writings, ed. Ronald Blythe (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970), pp. 245-246.

that political essayists must be perfectly consistent in all matters and second because it is refuted by the Quarterly essays. It betrays a spirit of petulance, egotism, and intolerance with which Southey himself was so frequently charged. At the same time, however, the honest student must agree with Geoffrey Carnall that it is Southey's

> self-righteousness and egotism that alienate most readers. They are appalled by his assumption that political reformers and religious unbelievers deserve either pity or punishment or both. His belief in his own greatness as a poet now seems impertinent, and his habit of stealing the limelight in laureate poems downright ludicrous. But to view Southey in this way is to miss the poignancy of his predicament. It was intolerable for him to feel that he might be helpless in this portentous age. He stoutly held to his conviction that most evils might be overcome if they were met manfully, and to some extent he enjoyed the sensation of manful resistance for its own sake. . . . His confidence in the correctness of his opinions and in the distinction of his poetry is all part of this need to feel that his way was clear amid the dangers of the world, and that he had the power to take it.[114]

The Quarterly essays provide a needed definition and clarification of his conservatism. By temperament he was a "conservative of conservatives," and his affections and prejudices were firmly rooted in a past age. He felt Great Britain was blessed with the best form of government the world had ever known,

> a government which secured to its subjects the greatest degree of liberty compatible with human weakness and which was sanctioned by association with the purest of all Christian churches. Its institutions had fostered the noblest intellects, the greatest poets. Under them the people had dwelt in virtue,

---

[114]Geoffrey Carnall, Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 205.

> happy in the performance of their duty to home and country, secure of the rightful reward which their blessed religion held in store for them.[115]

Such a state of affairs he felt must be made permanent; thus he reacted strongly to any force which he felt might endanger it. As social and political change became inevitable in his day, "he dug his own feet more firmly into the ground, resolved to die standing though the whole world should fly from its base." But as that change did come he became almost a pathetic figure in the years after the reform of Parliament and the emancipation of Catholics:

> . . . and all his gods falling about him, left far behind by his former associates, receiving from friends and enemies alike the kind of respect which is offered to one who has perhaps done much useful work in his day but whose opinions on subjects of importance no longer matter.[116]

But Southey was, as Crane Brinton has noted, "an incurable meliorist." He always thought his ideas attainable, and though he never wavered from his support of existing institutions of government, religion, and society, he always retained an unbending faith in the basic goodness of human nature and the "possibility of lessening human vice by improving political institutions."[117] His conservatism was always marked by the doctrine of the natural goodness of man, and it differed substantially from the tradition of

---

[115]Jacob Zeitlin, Select Prose of Robert Southey, p. 11.

[116]Ibid., p. 12.

[117]Crane Brinton, The Political Ideas of the English Romanticists (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 93.

Edmund Burke. Burke had believed that the problems of poverty were insolvable, but Southey repeatedly stressed in the Quarterly that the industrial and agricultural workers could and must be improved socially and politically. Burke could not believe in political freedom because he never believed in cultural and social growth, but Southey never questioned the limitless potentials of the human mind and spirit. He was an innovator who refused to limit the freedoms of the artist, but he did not believe that "practising innovation in metre implied countenancing innovation in business, or that to revolt against Pope was to justify an attack upon the unreformed House of Commons." Finally,

> The very ardent failure of the freedom of the industrial revolution to produce the sort of satisfaction he found in the freedom of the literary revolution made him seek an authority, a discipline, in politics. He did not see, as Coleridge did, that the real problem was to control, not to suppress the new energies of the Revolution. Nor did he ever attain the momentary flash of insight that permitted Wordsworth to comprehend the part nationality must play in the new world. He felt the need of discipline as he felt the need of freedom.[118]

One must agree with Brinton, at last, that Southey, despite his inflexible stubbornness, was by virtue of his frankness, his honesty, and his courage "a good, and perhaps a wise man."

---

[118]Ibid., pp. 94-95.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allchin, A. M. The Silent Rebellion: Anglican Religious Communities, 1845-1900. London: SCM Press, 1958.

Altick, Richard D. The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Anonymous. "The Centenary of 'The Quarterly Review.'" Quarterly Review, 211(1909), 731-784.

Bennett, Scott. "Catholic Emancipation, the 'Quarterly Review,' and Britain's Constitutional Revolution." Victorian Studies, 12(1968-69), 283-304.

Bernbaum, Ernest. Guide Through the Romantic Movement. 2nd ed. New York: Ronald Press, 1949.

Brightfield, Myron F. John Wilson Croker. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1940.

_____. "Lockhart's Quarterly Contributors." PMLA, 59(1944), 491-512.

Brinton, Crane. The Political Ideas of the English Romanticists. London: Oxford University Press, 1926.

Broeker, Galen. "Jared Sparks, Robert Peel, and the State Paper Office." American Quarterly, 13(1961), 140-152.

Broughton, L. N. "Some Early Nineteenth Century Letters Hitherto Unpublished." Nineteenth-Century Studies. Eds. H. Davis, W. C. DeVane, R. C. Bald. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1940.

Brown, Philip Antony. The French Revolution in English History. London: Allen and Unwin, 1918.

Cameron, Kenneth N. "Shelley vs. Southey: New Light on an Old Quarrel." PMLA, 57(1942), 489-512.

Carnall, Geoffrey. Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960.

Chapman, Edward Mortimer. English Literature and Religion, 1800-1900. London: Constable, 1910.

Clark, Roy Benjamin. William Gifford: Tory Satirist, Critic, and Editor. New York: Columbia University Press, 1930.

Clive, John. Scotch Reviewers: The Edinburgh Review, 1802-1815. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957.

Coleridge, Bernard John. The Story of a Devonshire House. London: Unwin, 1905.

Cottle, Joseph. Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey. London: Houlston and Stoneman, 1847.

Cunningham, Peter. "Herrick and Southey." Notes and Queries, 10 (1854), 27.

Curry, Kenneth, ed. New Letters of Robert Southey. 2 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1965.

_____. "Robert Southey." The English Poets and Essayists: A Review of Research and Criticism. Eds. Carolyn W. and Lawrence H. Houtchens. New York: Modern Language Association, 1966.

_____. Southey. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975.

Dicey, A. V. Lectures on the Relation Between Law and Public Opinion in England during the Nineteenth Century. London: Macmillan, 1940.

Dowden, Edward, ed. The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Carolyn Bowles. Dublin: Longman, 1881.

_____. Southey. New York: Harpers, 1880.

Elliot, Arthur R. D. "Reviews and Magazines in the Early Years of the Nineteenth Century." Cambridge History of English Literature. Vol. 12, pp. 154-180. Eds. A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller. 14 vols. New York: C. P. Putman, 1916.

Elton, Oliver. A Survey of English Literature: 1780-1830. 2 vols. London: Edward Arnold, 1912.

Elwin, Malcolm. "The Founder of the 'Quarterly Review'--John Murray II." Quarterly Review, 281(1943), 1-15.

Graham, Walter. English Literary Periodicals. New York: Thomas Nelson, 1930.

_____. "Robert Southey as Tory Reviewer." Philological Quarterly, 2(1923), 97-110.

_____. "Some Infamous Tory Reviews." Studies in Philology, 22(1925), 500-517.

_____. Tory Criticism in the Quarterly Review, 1809-1853. 1921; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1970.

Greig, James A. Francis Jeffrey of the Edinburgh Review. London: Oliver and Boyd, 1948.

Grierson, H. J. C., ed. The Letters of Sir Walter Scott. 12 vols. London: Constable, 1932-1937.

Hall, W. S. A Book of Memories of Great Men and Women of the Age, from Personal Acquaintance. London: Virtue, 1871.

Haller, William. "Southey's Later Radicalism." PMLA, 27(1922), 281-292.

Harris, R. W. Romanticism and the Social Order: 1780-1830. London: Blandford, 1969.

Havens, Raymond Dexter. "Southey's Contributions to the Foreign Review." Review of English Studies, 8(1932), 210-211.

Hayden, John O. The Romantic Reviewers, 1802-1824. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Hazlitt, William. "Wat Tyler and the Quarterly Review." Political Essays (1819). rpt. William Hazlitt: Selected Writings, Ed. Ronald Blythe. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970.

Hildyard, M. Clive. Lockhart's Literary Criticism. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931.

Ingpen, Roger and Walter E. Peck, eds. The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley. 10 vols. New York: Scribner 1926-1930.

Jack, Ian. English Literature: 1815-1832. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Johnson, Edgar. Sir Walter Scott: The Great Unknown. 2 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1970.

Kaderly, N. L. "Southey and the Quarterly Review." Modern Language Notes, 70(1955), 261-263.

Kern, J. D., E. Schneider, and I. Griggs. "Lockhart to Croker on the Quarterly." PMLA, 60(1945), 175-198.

Lucas, E. V., ed. The Letters of Charles Lamb. 3 vols. London: Dent, 1935.

Madden, Lionel, ed. Robert Southey: The Critical Heritage. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972.

Marriott, John Ransome. George Canning and His Times: A Political Study. London: Murray, 1907.

Monk, Charles J. "Edinburgh Critics and Quarterly Reviewers." Athenaeum, March 26, 1875, 393-395.

Morgan, Peter F. "Southey: A Critical Spectrum." The Wordsworth Circle, 5(1974), 71-75.

_____. "Southey on Poetry." Tennessee Studies in Literature, 16(1971), pp. 77-89.

Pfeiffer, Karl G. "The Authorship of Certain Articles in the Quarterly Review." Philological Quarterly, 11(1932), 97-108.

Proudfit, Charles L. "Southey and Landor: A Literary Friendship." The Wordsworth Circle, 5(1974), 105-111.

Raimond, Jean. Robert Southey: L'homme et son temps. Paris: Didier, 1968.

Renwick, W. L. English Literature: 1789-1815. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963.

Robberds, J. W. A Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Late William Taylor of Norwich. 2 vols. London: Murray, 1843.

Saintsbury, George. A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe. 3 vols. London: Blackwood, 1949.

_____. A History of Nineteenth Century English Literature. New York: Macmillan, 1896.

Schilling, Bernard N. Human Dignity and the Great Victorians. New York: Columbia University Press, 1946.

Shine, Hill and Helen Chadwick Shine. The Quarterly Review Under Gifford: Identification of Contributors, 1809-1824. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949.

Simmons, Jack, ed. Letters from England. London: Cresset, 1952.

_____. Southey. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948.

Smiles, Samuel. A Publisher and His Friends: Memoir and Correspondence of John Murray. 2 vols. London: Murray, 1891.

Southey, Charles Cuthbert, ed. The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey. 6 vols. London: Longman, 1849-1850.

Southey, Robert. Essays, moral and political. 2 vols. London: Murray, 1832.

_____. Letters from England; by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella. 3 vols. London: Longman, 1807.

_____. Sir Thomas More; or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society. 2 vols. London: Murray, 1829.

Walker, Hugh. The English Essay and Essayists. London: Dent, 1915.

Ward, W. S. "Some Aspects of the Conservative Attitude toward Poetry in English Criticism, 1798-1820." PMLA, 60(1945), 386-398.

Warter, John Wood, ed. Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey. 4 vols. London: Longman, 1856.

Welker, John J. "The Position of the Quarterlies on Some Classical Dogmas." Studies in Philology, 37(1940), 542-562.

Weston, Corinne Comstock. "Henry Hallam." Some Modern Historians of Britain. Eds. Herman Ausubel, J. Bartlet Brebner, and Erling Hunt. New York: Dryden Press, 1951.

Wheeler, Paul Mowbray. "The Great Quarterlies of the Early Nineteenth Century and Leigh Hunt." South Atlantic Quarterly, 29(1930), 282-303.

White, Newman Ivey. The Unextinguished Hearth: Shelley and His Contemporary Critics. Durham: Duke University Press, 1938.

Williams, Orlo. Lamb's Friend the Census Taker: Life and Letters of John Rickman. London: Constable, 1911.

Williams, Raymond. Culture and Society: 1780-1950. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958.

Winchester, C. T. A Group of English Essayists of the Early Nineteenth Century. New York: Macmillan, 1910.

Woodbridge, George. The Reform Bill of 1832. New York: Crowell, 1970.

Woodward, Llewellyn. The Age of Reform. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.

Yonge, Charles Duke. The Life and Administration of Robert Banks, Second Earl of Liverpool, K. G. 3 vols. London: Macmillan, 1868.

Zeitlin, Jacob, ed. Select Prose of Robert Southey. New York: Macmillan, 1916.

_____. "Southey's Contributions to 'The Critical Review.'" Notes and Queries, 4(Jan. 1918), 35-36, 66-67, 94-96, 122-125.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

A LIST OF SOUTHEY'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO

THE QUARTERLY REVIEW

The following is a complete list of articles by Robert Southey published in The Quarterly Review between 1809 and 1839; the articles are listed by volume, issue, article and page numbers, and by their running titles.

The identification of authorship has been made on the basis of Hill and Helen Chadwick Shine's The Quarterly Review Under Gifford: Identification of Contributors, 1809-1824, Southey's own correspondence (C. C. Southey, Warter, and Curry editions), a list made by Southey and included in a letter of April 7, 1825, to Joseph Cottle (Cottle's Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey, pp. 242-243), and a manuscript in Southey's own hand given to Bertram R. Davis of Bristol, England, in April, 1957, by Mrs. F. F. Boult, Southey's great-granddaughter, a copy of which has been furnished by Professor Kenneth Curry for the purpose of this study.

Volume I, Number 1 (February, 1809)
Article 17. "Account of the Baptist Missionary Society," 193-226.

Volume I, Number 2 (May, 1809)
Article 3. "Portuguese Literature," 268-292.

Volume II, Number 3 (August, 1809)
Article 2. "Transactions of the Missionary Society in the South Sea Islands," 24-61.
Article 5. "Lord Valentia's Travels," 88-126.

Volume II, Number 4 (November, 1809)
Article 9. 'History and Present State of America, by Abiel Holmes," 319-337.

Volume III, Number 5 (February, 1810)
Article 18. "Lives of Nelson," 218-262.

Volume III, Number 6 (May, 1810)
Article 13. "Residence at Tongataboo," 440-455.
Article 14. "Grahame's British Georgics," 456-461.

Volume IV, Number 7 (August, 1810)
Article 1. "Portuguese Observor," 1-24.

Volume IV, Number 8 (November, 1810)
Article 3. "Landt's Description of the Feroe Islands," 333-342.
Article 13. "Evangelical Sects," 480-514.

Volume V, Number 10 (May, 1811)
Article 8. "Captain Pasley on the Military Policy of Great Britain," 403-437. [Southey and Croker.]

Volume VI, Number 11 (August, 1811)
Article 15. "Bell and Lancaster's System of Education," 264-304.

Volume VI, Number 12 (December, 1811)
Article 1. "Tracts on the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions," 313-357.
Article 4. "Montgomery's Poems," 405-419.

Volume VII, Number 13 (March, 1812)
Article 3. "MacKenzie's Travels in Iceland," 48-92.

Volume VII, Number 14 (June, 1812)
Article 14. "Lives of the French Revolutionists," 412-438.

Volume VIII, Number 15 (September, 1812)
Article 5. "Landor's Count Julian," 86-92.
Article 6. "D'Israeli's Calamities of Authors," 93-114.

Volume VIII, Number 16 (December, 1812)
Article 4. "Inquiry into the Poor Laws; Colquhoun," 319-356.

Volume X, Number 19 (October, 1813)
Article 5. "History of Dissenters," 90-139.

Volume XI, Number 21 (April, 1814)
Article 4. "Letters on the Nicobar Islands," 57-72.
Article 6. "Montgomery's World Before the Flood," 78-87.

Volume XI, Number 22 (July, 1814)
Article 13. "Chalmers's English Poets," 480-504.

Volume XII, Number 23 (October, 1814)
Article 3. "Chalmers's English Poets," 60-90.
Article 9. "Forbes's Oriental Memoirs," 180-227.

Volume XII, Number 24 (January, 1815)
Article 2. "Lewis and Clarke's American Travels," 317-368.
Article 10. "Roberts Letters and Papers," 509-519.

Volume XIII, Number 25 (April, 1815)
Article 1. "Miot's Mémoires de l'Expédition en Egypte," 1-55.
Article 12. "Elliott's Life of Wellington," 215-275.

Volume XIII, Number 26 (July, 1815)
Article 9. "Life of Wellington," 448-526.

Volume XIV, Number 28 (January, 1816)
Article 2. "Alfieri's Life and Writings," 333-368.

Volume XV, Number 29 (April, 1816)
Article 1. "La Roche Jacquelein--La Vendee," 1-69.
Article 8. "Reports on the Poor," 187-235.

Volume XV, Number 30 (July, 1816)
Article 1. "Travels of Ali Bey," 299-345.
Article 12. "Works on England--Travellers," 537-574.

Volume XVI, Number 31 (October, 1816)
Article 11. "Parliamentary Reform," 225-278. [Southey and Rickman.]

Volume XVI, Number 32 (January, 1817)
Article 4. "Koster's Travels in Brazil," 344-387.
Article 10. "Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection," 511-552.

Volume XVII, Number 33 (April, 1817)
Article 1. "Burney and Mariner's Accounts of the Tonga Islands," 1-39.

Volume XVIII, Number 35 (October, 1817)
Article 1. "Lord Holland's Lope de Vega," 1-46.

Volume XVIII, Number 36 (January, 1818)
Article 1. "Poor Laws," 259-308. [Southey and Rickman.]

Volume XIX, Number 37 (April, 1818)
Article 1. "Evelyn's Memoirs," 1-54.
Article 3. "On the Means of Improving the People," 79-118. [Southey and Rickman.]

Volume XXI, Number 41 (January, 1819)
Article 10. "Inquiry into the Copyright Act," 196-213.

Volume XXI, Number 42 (April, 1819)
Article 4. "Cemeteries and Catacombs of Paris," 359-397.

Volume XXII, Number 43 (July, 1819)
Article 3. "Fosbrooke's British Monasticism," 59-102.

Volume XXIII, Number 45 (May, 1820)
Article 1. "Coxe's Life of Marlborough," 1-73.

Volume XXIII, Number 46 (July, 1820)
Article 12. "New Churches," 549-591.

Volume XXIV, Number 48 (January, 1821)
Article 9. "Huntington's Works and Life," 462-510.

Volume XXV, Number 50 (July, 1821)
Article 1. "Life of Cromwell," 279-347.

Volume XXVI, Number 52 (January, 1822)
Article 1. "Dobrizhoffer's Account of Abipones," 272-323.

Volume XXVII, Number 53 (April, 1822)
Article 1. "Life and Writings of Camoens: Adamson and Macedo," 1-39.

Volume XXVIII, Number 55 (October, 1822)
Article 1. "Gregorie on Religious Sects," 1-46.

Volume XXVIII, Number 56 (January, 1823)
Article 12. "Progress of Infidelity: Gregorie on Théophilanthropie," 493-536.

Volume XXIX, Number 57 (April, 1823)
Article 7. "Burnet's Own Times," 165-213.

Volume XXX, Number 59 (October, 1823)
Article 1. "Dwight's Travels in New England," 1-40.

Volume XXXI, Number 62 (July, 1824)
Article 1. "Life and Writings of Hayley," 1-31.
Article 6. "Baille's Lisbon," 378-390.

Volume XXXII, Number 63 (June, 1825)
Article 1. "Church of England Missions," 1-42.

Volume XXXII, Number 64 (October, 1825)
Article 4. "Memoirs of Bayard," 355-397.

Volume XXXIII, Number 65 (December, 1825)
Article 5. "History of the Vaudois," 134-176.

Volume XXXIII, Number 66 (March, 1826)
Article 5. "The Apocalypse of the Sister Nativité," 375-410.

Volume XXXIV, Number 68 (September, 1826)
Article 1. "Britton's Cathedral Antiquities," 305-349.

Volume XXXV, Number 69 (January, 1827)
Article 8. "Dr. Sayers's Works," 175-220.

Volume XXXVI, Number 72 (October, 1827)
Article 1. "Bibliotéque Chretienne: pour l'Édification de la Jeunesse," 305-353.

Volume XXXVII, Number 73 (January, 1828)
Article 7. "Hallam's Constitutional History of England," 194-260.

Volume XXXVII, Number 74 (March, 1828)
Article 12. "Emigration Report," 539-578.

Volume XXXVIII, Number 75 (July, 1828)
Article 8. "Chronological History of the West Indies," 193-241.

Volume XXXVIII, Number 76 (October, 1828)
Article 10. "The Roman Catholic Question--Ireland," 535-598.

Volume XXXIX, Number 77 (January, 1829)
Article 4. "Elementary Teaching," 99-143.

Volume XXXIX, Number 78 (April, 1829)
Article 4. "Surtees's History of Durham," 360-405.

Volume XLI, Number 81 (July, 1829)
Article 7. "Political and Moral State of Portugal," 184-226.

Volume XLI, Number 82 (November, 1829)
Article 1. "Remains of Lucretia Davidson," 289-301.
Article 5. "Life and Services of Captain Beaver," 375-417.

Volume XLII, Number 83 (January, 1830)
Article 4. "Scenes and Incidents in the Wilds of N. America," 80-105.

Volume XLIII, Number 85 (May, 1830)
Article 1. "Polynesian Researches," 1-54.

Volume XLIII, Number 86 (October, 1830)
Article 7. "New Testament in Negro Tongue," 553-564.

Volume XLIV, Number 87 (January, 1831)
Article 3. "Dymond--On the Principles of Morality," 83-120.
Article 7. "Moral and Political State of the British Empire," 262-317.

Volume XLIV, Number 88 (May, 1831)
Article 2. "Memoirs of Oberlin," 342-388.

Volume XLV, Number 89 (April, 1831)
Article 5. "French Revolution: Conspiration de Babeuf," 167-209.

Volume XLV, Number 90 (July, 1831)
Article 4. "Doctrine of Saint Simon," 407-450.

Volume XLVI, Number 91 (November, 1831)
Article 7. "Moore's Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald," 213-263.

Volume XLVII, Number 93 (March, 1832)
Article 3. "Poetry by Mary Colling," 80-103.

Volume XLVII, Number 94 (July, 1832)
Article 6. "Lord Nugent's Memorials of Hampden," 457-519.

Volume XLVIII, Number 95 (October, 1832)
Article 9. "Prince Polignac--Revolution of the Three Days," 234-285.

Volume XLIX, Number 97 (April, 1833)
Article 3. "A Memoir of Felix Neff," 47-81.

Volume LI, Number 101 (March, 1834)
Article 10. "On the Corn Laws," 228-282.

Volume LVII, Number 113 (September, 1836)
Article 1. "Expeditions on the Amazon," 1-29.

Volume LIX, Number 118 (October, 1837)
Article 1. "Home Tours--Mrs. Bray's Letters on Devonshire," 275-327.

Volume LXII, Number 123 (June, 1838)
Article 1. "Life of Admiral Lord Howe," 1-67.

Volume LXIII, Number 126 (March, 1839)
Article 5. "Life of Thomas Telford," 403-457.

VITA

Robert Aaron Dedmon, Jr., was born in Dyersburg, Tennessee on November 23, 1947. Most of his early life was spent in Friendship, Tennessee, where he attended public schools and was graduated from Friendship High School in 1965. From 1965 until 1967 he attended Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee, where he received the Associate of Arts degree in June, 1967. In 1967-1968 he was a student at The University of Tennessee at Martin, and in June, 1969, he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Union University in Jackson, Tennessee.

The following September he entered the Graduate School of The University of Tennessee at Knoxville and received the Master of Arts degree in English in December, 1970. In 1971 he began work on the doctorate and held a graduate teaching assistantship in English from 1970 until 1975 in addition to serving as an adjunct instructor of English for The University of Tennessee Division of Continuing Education. Presently he is a part-time instructor of English at Roane State Community College, Harriman, Tennessee. He is a member of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association and the Modern Language Association, and his area of special interest is the period of English romanticism. In June, 1975 he received the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in English.

Currently a resident of Knoxville, Tennessee, he is married

to the former Judy Louise Smith, also of Friendship, Tennessee, who is an elementary teacher in the Knoxville City School System.