

The Representation of Business in English Literature

Edited and with an Introduction

by Arthur Pollard



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The Representation of Business in English Literature was first published
by the Institute of Economic Affairs, London; December 2000.

Book design by Rich Hendel, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

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Printed in the United States of America

P 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
The representation of business in English literature
edited and with an introduction by Arthur Pollard.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-86597-758-7 (pbk.: alk. paper)

1. English literature—History and criticism.
2. Business in literature.
3. Literature and society—Great Britain—History.

I. Pollard, Arthur. II. Liberty Fund.

PR149.B87R46 2009

820.9'3553—dc22

2008043755

LIBERTY FUND, INC.

8335 Allison Pointe Trail, Suite 300
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250-1684

Contents

Note on the Liberty Fund Edition vii

Foreword ix

John Blundell

The Authors xvii

Introduction 1

Arthur Pollard

Eighteenth-Century Attitudes Towards Business 8

W. A. Speck

Early Nineteenth Century:

Birmingham—“Something Direful in the Sound” 35

Geoffrey Carnall

The High Victorian Period (1850–1900):

“The Worship of Mammon” 66

Angus Easson

The Early Twentieth Century:

Uniformity, Drudgery and Economics 100

Allan Simmons

Mid-Late Twentieth Century:

“An Unprecedented Moral Quagmire” 138

John Morris

Index of Fictional Characters 187

Subject Index 193

Note on the Liberty Fund Edition

The Institute of Economic Affairs has long acted as a bridge for ideas between the United States and Europe. Austrian economics, Public Choice or rather the Virginia School of economics, and of course the Chicago School lead the list. Working full-time in the United States from 1982 to 1993 was a real eye-opener for me. Here was this extraordinarily rich, compassionate and vibrant society set in such a massive and beautiful country. Yet every night on the TV news, in prime time and in movies and elsewhere, the great engine of personal liberty and prosperity—free-market capitalism—was almost universally denigrated.

But even here relief was at hand as scholars such as Emily Stipes Watts (*The Businessman in American Literature*) were examining the issue and groups such as the Media Institute (*Crooks, Conmen and Clowns: Businessmen in TV Entertainment*) were carrying out studies on it. I was deeply impressed by this work, and on returning to the United Kingdom in January 1993 my second priority (after introducing free-market environmentalism to Europe) was to begin addressing both the cultural and the moral attacks on wealth creation.

When the Institute of Economic Affairs published this volume in 2000, we were stunned by the volume of publicity it garnered. It probably received the most coverage of any IEA book, and considering we publish more than 120 authors each year (over a thousand books total), and among them ten Nobel laureates, that is amazing. The coverage was wall to wall and mostly critical, yet we had obviously touched a raw nerve and the book was a positive addition to the debate.

We are delighted that our friends at Liberty Fund have brought out this edition. My only regret is that Professor Arthur Pollard, who edited and introduced the IEA edition, passed away in 2002. He was a great scholar, a friend of liberty and a very early influence on me.

JOHN BLUNDELL

General Director and Ralph Harris Fellow,

April 2009

Foreword JOHN BLUNDELL

At first glance it might seem a little out of the ordinary for the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) to publish a collection of essays on the representation of business in English literature over the past three centuries, however good those essays may be.

However, the mission of the IEA is to broaden public understanding of the functioning of a free economy. Thus a very significant part of its work has to do with understanding the processes by which public opinion evolves and, against such analysis, to consider how the free economy is viewed, why it is so viewed, and how such a view might be improved.

When the IEA's founder, the late Sir Antony G. A. Fisher, met with future Nobel laureate F. A. Hayek at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) in the summer of 1945,¹ Hayek was between *The Road to Serfdom* and *The Intellectuals and Socialism*. The former was his call to arms, the latter his blueprint for change. In that blueprint he lists the types of people he believes make up the class of "intellectuals."² Before doing so, however, he makes these points:

- before you try making such a list yourself "it is difficult to realise how numerous it is"; try it now yourself before going any further—list all the intellectual professions you can think of;

1. See "Hayek, Fisher and *The Road to Serfdom*," my Introduction to the IEA's November 1999 reprint of the *Reader's Digest* condensed version of *The Road to Serfdom*, xi–xix. It was at this meeting that Hayek told Fisher ". . . reach the intellectuals, the teachers and writers, with reasoned argument. It will be their influence on society which will prevail and the politicians will follow."

2. In a letter to Fisher of 5 January 1985 Hayek confirms that this essay "gives a clear account of what I had then in mind in giving you the advice I did." Hayek later in that letter claims to have found the essay "pleasantly good" on his rereading of it.

- the “scope” for the “activities” of this “class” or group constantly increases in modern society; and
- “how dependent on it (that is, the class of intellectuals) we have become.”

Hayek’s list then goes on as follows:

- “journalists, teachers, ministers, lecturers, publicists, radio commentators, *writers of fiction* (my emphasis), cartoonists, and artists—all of whom may be masters of the technique of conveying ideas but are usually amateurs so far as the substance of what they convey is concerned”; and
- “many professional men and technicians, such as scientists and doctors, who through their habitual intercourse with the printed word become carriers of new ideas outside their own fields and who, because of their expert knowledge of their own subjects, are listened to with respect on most others.”

To Hayek the term *intellectual* is not very satisfactory because it does not give a full picture of the size of this group of “secondhand dealers in ideas.” This lack of a precise term he thinks has deterred serious study of the role of such people. He also attempts his own definition which has always delighted me, ever since I first read it as an undergraduate at the LSE.

In Hayek’s view, when someone is performing the intellectual function he or she is *not* an “original thinker” nor a “scholar or expert in a particular field.” In performing intellectual work he or she does *not* “possess special knowledge of anything in particular” and “need *not* even be particularly intelligent.” What the intellectual does have is “the wide range of subjects on which he can readily talk and write” and “a position or habits through which he becomes acquainted with new ideas sooner than those to whom he addresses himself.”

Hayek presents a bleak picture. He is clearly saying that this large class of intellectuals consists of two categories. In the first are the people who are expert at conveying ideas but are complete and utter amateurs when it comes to substance and need not even be particularly intelligent. In the second are people who are the true experts in a particular small area; unfortunately this gives them the standing such that

they are listened to with respect in all kinds of other areas well outside their areas of competence.

Hayek often told the story of how he nearly turned down the award of the Nobel Prize for Economic Science in 1974 because he feared the impact on him of being asked to comment on anything and everything under the sun with people hanging on, and possibly acting on, every word. Likewise former world number-one-ranked golfer David Duval (whose tour nickname is “the intellectual” because he says he both reads, and understands the ideas behind, the novels of Ayn Rand) was staggered at the range of questions, from astronomy to zoology, put to him while he enjoyed that top spot. Fortunately for both golf and society he was sufficiently intelligent to laugh off such inquiries.

Hayek’s point about the intellectual not needing to know too much was brilliantly illustrated in *Don’t Quote Me: Hi, My Name Is Steven, and I’m a Recovering Talking Head* by Dr. Steven Gorelick in the *Washington Post* Outlook Section, Sunday, 27 August 2000. Dr. Gorelick is special assistant to the President at the City University of New York’s Graduate School and University Center, and his Outlook piece was condensed from the 21 July issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Gorelick is an expert on how communities on the one hand, and news organisations on the other hand, respond to high-profile violent crimes. Over a ten-year period he found that having the Dr. title, holding an academic job and being the kind of person who keeps up with the issues of the day, he experienced “expertise creep” and was soon commenting on topics far outside his general area of expertise.

His moment of truth came when he was asked, “Should adopted children be encouraged to locate their birth parents?” He framed a suitable response in his mind: “It is probably not possible for an adult to form a complete, integrated personality without knowing fundamental facts about his or her personal history.” Suddenly he realised he “knew absolutely nothing about adoption.” He declined to comment and ever since has taken “the pledge” under which he refuses to be given a platform as an expert on something he knows nothing about. One would think this would be easy. Why would people want your view on something you know nothing about? He reports it is hard, as the telephone rings with requests for his views on euthanasia, socialisation and military readiness.

In the Hayekian vision of change there are experts and original thinkers or scholars, that is, firsthand dealers in ideas. But we are “almost all ordinary men” outside our specialist fields and thus terribly dependent on the class of intellectuals or secondhand dealers in ideas, including novelists, for access to the ideas and work of the experts. The intellectuals truly are the gatekeepers of ideas “who decide what views and opinions are to reach us, which facts are important enough to be told to us, and in what form and from what angle they are to be presented. Whether we shall ever learn of the results of the work of the expert and the original thinker depends mainly on their decision.”

Time and again IEA authors have turned to the theme of what makes public opinion from *Not from Benevolence: Twenty Years of Economic Dissent*³ to *The Emerging Consensus? Essays on the Interplay Between Ideas, Interests and Circumstances in the First Twenty-five Years of the IEA*;⁴ and from *Ideas, Interests and Consequences*⁵ to *British Economic Opinion: A Survey of a Thousand Economists*.⁶ A recent Liberty Fund video, in its *Intellectual Portrait* series, in which Lord Harris and Arthur Seldon are interviewed about the IEA’s influence on opinion, is in the same tradition, and, as this Readings concerns itself with “writers of fiction,” mention must also be made of Michael Jefferson’s chapter, “Industrialisation and Poverty: In Fact and Fiction,” in *The Long Debate on Poverty*.⁷

In the chapters that follow, one is faced with a rather damning picture of prodigiously wasteful, yet Scrooge-like businessmen who are abnormal and antagonistic; corrupt, cunning and cynical; dishonest, disorderly, doltish, dumb and duplicitous; inhumane, insensitive and irresponsible; ruthless; unethical and unprincipled; and villainous to boot. Direct data, loved by economists, are not available, but in the closely related field of TV entertainment some relief is to hand.⁸ The Washington, D.C.–based Media Institute tracked the portrayal of busi-

3. Hobart Paperback 10, Institute of Economic Affairs, 1977, 2nd impression 1977.

4. Hobart Paperback 14, Institute of Economic Affairs, 1981.

5. Readings 30, Institute of Economic Affairs, 1989.

6. Research Monograph 45, Institute of Economic Affairs, 1990.

7. Readings 9, Institute of Economic Affairs, 1972, 2nd ed. 1974.

8. Hayek was of course writing at the very dawn of television and were he writing today he would surely have included this medium.

nessmen in two hundred episodes of fifty prime time TV programmes. It found that:

- “Over half of all corporate chiefs on television commit illegal acts ranging from fraud to murder.”
- “Forty-five percent of all business activities on television are portrayed as illegal.”
- “Only 3 percent of television businessmen engage in socially or economically productive behavior.”
- “Hard work is usually ridiculed on television as ‘workaholism’ that inevitably leads to strained personal relationships.”⁹

Put another way, 97 percent of business is either illegal (Crooks) or duplicitous (Conmen) or foolish (Clowns), and those who practice it have rotten marriages and unhappy kids. . . . Of course they would have because they are all emotionally atrophied. Would the data for our novelists be any different? I doubt it.

The only possible TV bright spot is small business. Here the protagonist is not so much a vicious, corrupt, murdering drug dealer masquerading as a city banker, as a dumb, inept, social climber, way out of his league and subject to ridicule. So it is not much of a bright spot.

And in *The Businessman in American Literature* (University of Georgia Press, 1982), Emily Stipes Watts lights on a similar vein, namely “small, private businessmen” but even then openly admits that “four sympathetic protagonists . . . created by three important post-1945 novelists do not compose a dominant trend” (149). Indeed, less than twenty years later, my U.S. bookstore could not find one of the four titles and was unsure of another.

In some fields of literature, the portrayal of business is more positive. Popular writers such as Neville Shute and Dick Francis between them populate some three score or more high-selling books with lots of self-employed small business characters who are heroic yet humble; problem-solving and law-abiding; self-reliant and self-interested but not selfish. Long-running British soap operas such as *Coronation Street* and *Eastenders* have their fair share of used car dealers of all types, but

9. *Crooks, Conmen and Clowns: Businessmen in TV Entertainment* (Media Institute, 1981).

many of the main characters are utterly respectable smaller business people making wonderful contributions to all the lives around them. It is when one moves to a *Dallas* or to a Booker prize candidate that the picture changes and it is difficult, nay impossible, to point to “literary capitalism” while “literary socialism” abounds.

So why is the picture so bleak? Why does the novelist, the writer of fiction, spit at the market, despise its institutions such as private property and the rule of law, and try to bite off the hand that feeds him? Surely Hayek again has part, at least, of the answer for us, when later in *The Intellectuals and Socialism* he discusses the role of disaffection.

For Hayek, the talented person who accepts our prevailing current norms and institutions faces a wide range of good career paths. However, to those who are “disaffected and dissatisfied” with the current order “an intellectual career is the most promising path to both influence and the power to contribute to the achievement of his ideals.”

But Hayek goes further. The top-class person not “disaffected and dissatisfied” is more likely to opt for the scholarly rather than intellectual path whereas his equally able peer who is out to change things will see an intellectual rather than scholarly route as “a means rather than an end, a path to exactly that kind of wide influence which the professional intellectual exercises.”

Hayek concludes this section by asserting that there is no greater propensity to what he calls socialism among the more intelligent in society than to any other “ism.” If one gets that impression from the pulpit or in the classroom or from the television or in novels then it is simply because “among the best minds” there is a higher propensity among the socialists than among, say, the capitalists to “devote themselves to those intellectual pursuits which in modern society give them a decisive influence on public opinion.”

Should those concerned with the intellectual climate in which business operates be concerned about these scribblers of novels? How should they respond?

The power of fiction to convey a message is beyond question. As Hayek wrote *The Intellectuals and Socialism*, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) was busy establishing a daily fifteen-minute wireless soap opera set in the mythical country village of Ambridge. Its purpose then was to teach farmers good, new agricultural techniques to get

the most out of the land in highly rationed post–World War II Britain. Today it is more likely to feature a politically correct lesbian couple on an organic hobby farm wanting to adopt a baby than an ordinary land-owning farmer off to market.

Another BBC offering, the combined thirty-eight episodes of *Yes, Minister*, and *Yes, Prime Minister* by Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn, are not so much comedy as deeply insightful, highly educational, powerful training movies which have completely altered the way a generation looks at its government. Jay and Lynn’s programmes, which were recently voted ninth in a compilation of the one hundred best TV shows for the British Film Institute, removed our blinkers.

In the U.S., commentators from John Chamberlain on (“The Businessman in Fiction,” *Fortune*, November 1948, 134–48) have credited “to some extent” the passage of the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act directly to Upton Sinclair’s depiction of the slaughterhouses of Chicago in *The Jungle*. Chamberlain wondered why, in the face of the incredible impact of his novels, Upton Sinclair continued to write as if nothing had changed, either on the part of the businessman or on the part of the legislators.

Surely the answer is very simple and has close parallels with the so-called “environment movement” of today. Neither Sinclair nor the leaders of today’s “environment movement” are at all, not remotely, interested in improvement. The idea of a new, improved, kinder, gentler capitalism is utterly alien to them. They want to tear it down and destroy it: the novel or the “environment movement” is simply a means to an end, the outright destruction of business, the total demise of capitalism.

In both cases—the novelist and the environmentalist—appeasement has never worked and will never work. Legislation directly addressing Upton Sinclair’s worries did not slow him down one jot in the opening decades of the twentieth century and likewise with the environmentalists in the closing decades.

So how would I reply to the businessman who says, “Look, John, we are getting a real bad press here with these writers of fiction. It isn’t funny and over the long haul it is damaging our ability to provide our customers with quality products at a good price while simultaneously paying the pension funds who own us a good return. What should we do?”

First, I would urge patience and caution. Three centuries of bad press will not be fixed overnight, and throwing millions of pounds at problems such as this by, say, endowing an Oxbridge Chair of Literary Capitalism is not only futile but also self-defeating, as such resources will immediately be captured by the anti-capitalists.

Second, I would say that education is important and I would start a very modest programme of outreach to brand-new emerging talent. A day spent visiting a factory or similar capitalist institution would be a positive eye-opener for most, if not all, such talent.

Third, my still modest outreach programme would extend to current leaders, both market-place practitioners and academic theorists, to engage them in whatever way possible.

Lastly, I would argue that incentives do matter, and I would seek to find ways of financially rewarding fiction writers above all who treat business as an honourable, creative, moral and personally satisfying way of life. Some of the pounds spent on appeasing might be better spent on encouraging and rewarding.

Finally a word about the origins of this book. They go back some years now to a series of conversations I had with Fiona Davis, then a policy analyst with the Confederation of British Industry. Fiona was a regular attendee at IEA events and had a degree in English literature from Oxford University. My knowledge of the American literature in this area mentioned above but also including “The Capitalist as Hero in the American Novel” by John (“Jack”) R. Cashill (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Purdue University, August 1982; printed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1985) led us to discuss the idea of an IEA publication on how business has been treated over the centuries in English literature. Pressures from other commitments stalled Fiona’s progress, but serendipitously a favourable reference to Mrs. Gaskell’s *North and South* in an American magazine brought the name of Professor Arthur Pollard to mind and he caught the baton just in time.

As always, the views expressed in Readings 53 are those of the authors, not the Institute (which has no corporate view), its managing trustees, Academic Advisory Council members or senior staff.

The Authors

GEOFFREY CARNALL is an Honorary Fellow of English Literature at the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland, and is a former Reader in English Literature there. He is the author of *Robert Southey and His Age: The Development of a Conservative Mind* (Clarendon Press, 1960) and, with John Butt, *The Mid-Eighteenth Century*, vol. 8 of the Oxford History of English Literature (Oxford University Press, 1979). He has edited a volume of essays on the impeachment of Warren Hastings (1989) and a history of Quakers in India written by Marjorie Sykes titled *An Indian Tapestry* (Sessions Book Trust, 1997).

ANGUS EASSON, formerly professor of English at the University of Salford, in Salford, Greater Manchester, England, is now an Honorary Fellow of the university's European Studies Research Institute. He has edited many titles on Victorian fiction, including Elizabeth Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë* (Oxford University Press, 1996) and Dickens's *Little Dorrit* (C. E. Tuttle, 1999), and is currently editor of the supplements to the Pilgrim–British Academy edition of Dickens's letters.

JOHN MORRIS is Professor Emeritus of English and of Contemporary and European Studies at Brunel University, in Uxbridge, West London. He is the co-author of *Writers and Politics in Modern Britain* (Holmes and Meier, 1977) and has contributed essays to *The First World War in Fiction* (ed. Klein; Macmillan, 1976). He is also the author of *Time Lines: Tales of the Absurd* (Blaisdon, 2003).

ARTHUR POLLARD (1922–2002) was Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Hull, in Hull, East Yorkshire, England. Among his principal scholarly interests were nineteenth-century and Australian literature. His publications include works on Elizabeth Gaskell, Anthony Trollope, the Brontës, and William Makepeace Thackeray, as

well as the three-volume *Complete Poetical Works of George Crabbe* (with Norma Dalrymple-Champneys, Oxford University Press, 1988).

ALLAN SIMMONS is a Reader in English Literature at St. Mary's University College, Strawberry Hill, in Twickenham, England. He teaches various courses on modern and contemporary literature in English and is general editor of the *Conradian*, the journal of the Joseph Conrad Society. His publications include *Joseph Conrad* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) and *Conrad's "Heart of Darkness": A Reader's Guide* (Continuum, 2007).

W. A. SPECK is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Leeds, in Leeds, England, and is Special Professor in the Department of English Studies at the University of Nottingham, in Nottingham, England. He is the author of *Literature and Society in Eighteenth-Century England: Ideology, Politics, and Culture, 1680–1820* (Longman, 1998) and of *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (Yale University Press, 2006).

Introduction

ARTHUR POLLARD *University of Hull*

Making money is a dirty game. That sentence might almost sum up the attitude of English literature towards British business. Few writers have had first-hand experience of the world of commerce and industry. Their world is governed by the imaginative and the spiritual. It is no wonder therefore that they so often despise the other world that they see as materialistic, concerned with the despised but necessary activities of everyday existence, with matters of trade and work and wages and profits. Even if they do not condemn it for its materialism, they will see it as a world where things at best are very ordinary and uninspiring. For the most part, however, concerned as they are with the conflict of vice and virtue, they see businessmen as profiteers and bullies of their work-people.

As far back as Chaucer, the rogues on the Canterbury pilgrimage include the merchant concealing his debts, the reeve deceiving his lord and the shipman adept at theft and not above murder when it suits his purpose. In later periods a writer here and there may confer occasional favour on a diligent small businessman like Deloney's Jack of Newbury, but a more memorable figure from the Tudor-Stuart period is Massinger's Sir Giles Overreach in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, the aptly named stage-counterpart of the notoriously oppressive and ultimately disgraced monopolist, Sir Giles Mompesson. If in this period we find, as R. H. Tawney believed, the beginnings of British capitalism, it would develop amazingly over the next two centuries until with the burgeoning industrial revolution it emerged in recognisably modern form by 1800. It is not therefore until the nineteenth century and for the most part in the novel, itself often considered a bourgeois manifestation of literature, that we meet business in its various forms as a topic for extensive imaginative consideration.

Authorial attitudes, however, have not changed; imaginative writers, occupied largely with ethical values, have shown neither sympathy for

nor appreciation of materialistic success and the qualities required for its attainment.

As William Speck emphasises, much of the interest in the subject in the early eighteenth century related to finance. That is not surprising in view of the effect that the South Sea Bubble had on business consciousness, though this, of course, was also the period in which more “respectable” commercial activity such as the establishment of the Bank of England occurred. Industry also began to develop from the cottage to the factory stage, so that John Dyer in *The Fleece* (1757) could speak, in his ignorance of actual working conditions, of the mill chimneys of Leeds and Birstall with their smoke pouring forth as “the incense of thanksgiving”! Predominantly, however, England remained agricultural, but with a dramatic transformation affecting this area of the economy also, so that Goldsmith, lamenting rural depopulation caused by the spreading enclosure movement, could write:

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

That might be true, but his fellow-poet Crabbe was quick to point out in *The Village* that the rural environment was a place where the garden was not always lovely but more often an abode of poverty, degradation and crime. Similar social effects would later be laid at the door of the new economic order of large-scale industrialism and mass production.

It will be clear from what has already been said that graft, unrestrained greed, and oppression of the poor are among the evils which literature has associated with business. There are yet others, and one which, though in lessening degree, persists into the twentieth century is that of class. The self-made man is the envy of those he has outstripped and despised by those with whom his wealth has now provided him the chance to associate, a matter of keeping us “in our proper stations.” It is beautifully exemplified in Jane Austen and especially in the episode from which Geoffrey Carnall has taken the title of his essay. The rich but vulgar Mrs. Elton, daughter “of a Bristol—merchant, of course, he must be called” (the hesitation and reluctant near-synonym are charged with meaning), snobbishly remarks of a family of her acquaintance: “How they got their fortune nobody knows. They came

from Birmingham which is not a place to promise much. . . . One has not great hopes from Birmingham.”

This speech provides a defining moment in our subject. Jane Austen probably agreed with every word her character here spoke, but she questioned the right of Mrs. Elton to say it—and the reason was class. The author herself was “country,” she was “gentry”; her character, despite all her pretensions, is “trade,” and what right has “trade” to be scornful of Birmingham? Yet Birmingham was not Bristol. Bristol was old, it was merchanting, buying and selling; Birmingham was new, it was the city of Boulton and Watt. Neither, however, was “country”; both to Jane Austen were “trade.”

This contempt for “trade” persisted. We see it in such different contexts as those of Disraeli, Gissing and some of the poems of John Betje-man, but its significance lessens as the extent of engagement with and the degree of concern for business develops in the literature of the nineteenth century. The range of interest takes in finance and commerce, industry and agriculture. It may be useful to remind ourselves of just some of the examples that the period provided, the massive financial speculation of such precursors of Robert Maxwell as Merdle in Dickens’s *Little Dorrit* and Melmotte in Trollope’s *The Way We Live Now*, or the trading activities of *Dombey and Son*. There are also the major industrial novels of that single decade 1845–55—Disraeli’s *Sybil*, Dickens’s *Hard Times* and Mrs. Gaskell’s *Mary Barton* and *North and South*. Small-town economic activity often linked to the rural hinterland is illustrated in George Eliot and in Hardy’s *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, whilst Hardy supplies a vivid contrast in *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* between the contented prosperity of the Blackmore Vale and the upland starveling acres of Flintcomb Ash.

Whatever the context, it is always fundamentally a matter of men and money. Carlyle, in his idiosyncratic style, points up the conflict between business and literature, between matter and spirit, between life and possessions. The cash-nexus was not really a nexus at all.

Sooty Manchester—it too is built on the infinite Abysses; over-spanned by the skyeey Firmaments; and there is birth in it and death in it [and there] Brother, thou art a Man, I think; thou art not a

mere building Beaver, or two-legged Cotton Spider; thou hast verily a Soul in thee.¹

(Though Carlyle, incidentally, rejected his native Scottish Presbyterianism, it still suffuses his thought and language.) If Jane Austen makes us aware of the relationship of class and business, Carlyle compels us to take account of two other factors—the impact of thoroughgoing materialism on human society and in the reference to “Sooty Manchester” the effects of industry on the physical environment. In addition, his mention elsewhere in *Past and Present* of Morrison’s Pill, a popular quack remedy of the time, illustrates yet another ill in the trading system of the time, one which has its variations in Disraeli’s exposure of truck-selling and later in the exploits of Uncle Ponderevo in Wells’s *Tono-Bungay*. These examples remind us that fraud is not just bogus finance on a large scale, but quite as often the fleecing of the poor in the very staples of their existence. They are instances of that unrestrained competition which so much occupied Mrs. Gaskell in the Manchester settings of her novels. She lived there, and if Jane Austen and Birmingham form one defining moment in our subject, Mrs. Gaskell and Manchester mark another. Asa Briggs has called Manchester the “shock-city” of the 1840s, and in truth what was happening there at that time surpassed the ability of contemporaries either to control or understand. If contempt for business in Jane Austen is rooted in class, in her successors in the mid-nineteenth century contempt sharpened into animosity before the sheer dehumanising effects which industry had brought with it. Population had outpaced the capacity of housing and sanitation. Living conditions for the majority were simply ghastly. We need to remember, however, that this, though an effect of, was not primarily caused by, industry. Mrs. Gaskell was very fair about this. She does not underplay the foulness of the environment, but she does not blame the industrialists for it. She does feel deeply for the helpless plight of the workers. John Barton, as she herself stated, is the real inspiration of her first novel, not his daughter, the eponymous heroine. At the same time, like Dickens in *Hard Times*, she noticed the way in which trade-union agitators were quick to exploit the workers in tense industrial situations; and in her later novel, *North and South*, she

1. Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present*, vol. III, ch. xv.

would take the central character, John Thornton, cotton manufacturer, through a learning process by which he makes the connection between men and money.

Nevertheless, the chronicle of suffering inflicted by industry, as we have it in the nineteenth-century novel, takes us through sweated labour, class conflict, cut-throat capitalism, bankruptcies and suicides. It is often a grim story of callous individualism where dog eats dog and the devil takes the foremost. And so it continues, but the degree of artistic conviction can sometimes be in inverse proportion to the vehemence of social condemnation. Mrs. Gaskell got into trouble with Manchester manufacturers for what they considered to be her bias towards the workers in *Mary Barton*, but in her fair-mindedness she sought to redress the balance in *North and South*.

Perhaps not surprisingly, with their ready sympathy for those who are obviously suffering, creative writers can tend to be too simplistic. Thus Disraeli in *Sybil* has his heroine, the previously unrecognised aristocrat (note class again), resolve matters in what one can only call a fairy-tale solution at the end. In a comparable reversion of what has gone before, Gissing in *Demos* has his hero physically eradicate the new town and factory development and restore the landscape to its pristine pastoral condition! That sort of transformation is difficult to credit, but no more difficult than the relentless catalogue of oppression of the workmen which Robert Tressell describes in his turgid and prolix novel, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* (1914). Mrs. Gaskell and Dickens, by their fair-minded portrayal of such sympathetic characters as the enlightened John Thornton and in *Nicholas Nickleby* the Cheer-yeble brothers, based on the Grants of Ramsbottom (Lancashire), manifest a credibility that is so obviously absent from both the idealised and the excessively condemnatory examples of the industrial novel.

Attitude shows by way of tone. Earnestness was a Victorian characteristic; wit was not. We have to wait until the later years of the nineteenth century to find this latter faculty deployed upon our subject, though, one has to say, without that deft scalpel-like refinement which Jane Austen always had at her command. Nevertheless, we cannot but admire the effectiveness of Shaw as he makes the glorious impudence of the munitions manufacturer Sir Andrew Undershaft annihilate the ultra-seriousness of his earnest Salvationist daughter, Major Barbara,