

Contents



Introduction

- I The Spirit of the Age 1
II The Essay as Genre 18

Early Victorian England

- Thomas Carlyle,
“Signs of the Times” (1829) 31

- John Stuart Mill,
“The Spirit of the Age” (1831) 50

- T. B. Macaulay,
“Civil Disabilities of the Jews” (1831) 80

- W. M. Thackeray,
“The Snobs of England, by One of Themselves” (1846–47) 91

- Charles Dickens,
“Demoralisation and Total Abstinence” (1849) 107

Mid-Victorian England

- George Eliot,
“Evangelical Teaching: Dr. Cumming” (1855) 119
- Walter Bagehot,
“Dull Government,” “Average Government,” and
“Thinking Government” (1856) 145
- John Stuart Mill,
“A Few Words on Non-Intervention” (1859) 157
- John Ruskin,
“The Roots of Honour” (1860) 172
- John Henry Newman,
“General Answer to Mr. Kingsley” (1864) 185
- Matthew Arnold,
“Culture and Its Enemies” (1867) 205

Late Victorian England

- John E. E. D. Acton,
“The History of Freedom in Antiquity” (1877) 227
- Millicent Garrett Fawcett,
“The Future of Englishwomen: A Reply” (1878) 248
- W. E. Gladstone,
“‘Robert Elsmere’: The Battle of Belief” (1888) 260
- Beatrice Webb,
“Pages from a Work-Girl’s Diary” (1888) 280
- Oscar Wilde,
“The Soul of Man under Socialism” (1891) 294
- T. H. Huxley,
“Evolution and Ethics” (1893) 311