

# **Nationalism and the Shadow of the Declining Empire: Dickens's Journalism and Speeches in the Mid-Fifties**

Fumie TAMAI  
*Doshisha University*

## **I**

This essay aims to investigate nationalism in Dickens's journalism and speeches about sanitary and administrative reforms in the mid-fifties. Both sanitary and administrative reforms were basically domestic issues; however, they could not be considered as being entirely separable from the greatest international issue of the day, that is, the Crimean War. During the war Britain saw the upsurge of nationalistic sentiments. The press was filled with belligerent articles which praised the brave and heroic British soldiers as contrasted with the savage enemies, and which confirmed the general feeling of British superiority. Patrick Brantlinger says that the Crimean War 'evoked jingoist sentiments in literature and the press long before the word "jingo" was coined in the music halls'.<sup>1</sup> In Dickens, nationalistic sentiments saw their culmination in the Christmas story of 1857, 'The Perils of Certain English Prisoners', the inspiration for which was derived from the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny. It is, however, possible to detect a certain undercurrent of nationalism a couple of years before that.

Nationalism is a complex ideology which needs to be further examined. Benedict Anderson argues that a nation is an imagined community, and that 'nationality, [. . .] or nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind'.<sup>2</sup> Nationalism as an ideology is a modern phenomenon, which most historians would agree was promulgated in the later half of the eighteenth century, although there is also the view that the origin of national sentiment dates back before modernisation. The Declaration of Independence in the United States in 1776 and the French Revolution in 1789 are considered as the events which signalled the advent of nationalism. Leonard William Doob argues that whereas patriotism is the subjective and internal state of mind which is most commonly defined as 'love of country', and which exists universally, nationalism is the more complex elaboration of this psychology into a set of more or less uniform demands and actions which are politically significant.<sup>3</sup> Although in his

definition nationalism arises from patriotism, it is not a psychological term as such but a term which implies political impact on society. Gerald Newman distinguishes between patriotism as ‘a mere primitive feeling of loyalty’<sup>4</sup> and nationalism as ‘something much more complex and much more attached to ideals of internal solidarity under an egalitarian moral discipline’.<sup>5</sup> Both definitions presuppose a certain degree of uniformity of culture and people who constitute the nation. Ernest Gellner contends that nationalism emerges only in a modern industrial social organisation, in which a standardised, literacy- and education-based system of communication makes it possible to create a culturally homogeneous group of people. He says:

[W]hen general social conditions make for standardized, homogenous, centrally sustained high cultures, pervading entire populations and not just elite minorities, a situation arises in which well-defined educationally sanctioned and unified cultures constitute very nearly the only kind of unit with which men willingly and often ardently identify.<sup>6</sup>

Uniformity and homogeneity of culture, however, do not automatically engender nationalism. It is the result of continuous collaborative efforts of the people of the nation to nurture and sustain a sense of solidarity among themselves. The purpose of this essay is to examine the contribution which Dickens, as one of the most influential writers of the period, made to this collaborative process of engendering nineteenth-century nationalism.

When we discuss nationalism in Britain, we necessarily face the issues of the internal division and conflicts between England on the one hand and the Celtic fringe on the other. These, however, were almost totally outside Dickens’s view. He would not have hesitated to assert that England represented Britain, and that Englishness was Britishness. In evoking a sense of solidarity among people, he was rather concerned with the division between classes, that is, between the rich and the poor, which were considered to constitute ‘two nations’, as the subtitle of Benjamin Disraeli’s *Sybil* (1845) indicates. The novel describes England divided into two groups of people:

‘between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other’s habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws’.<sup>7</sup>

This gap between the two classes had to be bridged to create an idea of unified nation, because egalitarianism is the basis of nationalism. Edward Hallett Carr writes: ‘The founder of modern nationalism as it began to take shape in the 19th century was Rousseau, who, rejecting the embodiment of the nation in the personal sovereign or the ruling class, boldly identified “nation” and “people”’.<sup>8</sup> Tom Narin argues along the same lines that nationalism is ‘not necessarily democratic in outlook, but it *is* invariably populist’, and that ‘[p]eople are what it has to go on’.<sup>9</sup> In constructing the idea of nation as an ‘imagined community’, ‘intercourse’ and ‘sympathy’ between classes are indispensable, for, as Anderson argues, ‘regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship’.<sup>10</sup>

The phenomenon of nationalism cannot be explained without considering the tension and power relationships between classes. It was a movement which was originally initiated by the parvenu bourgeois. Historians of nationalism maintain that bourgeois intelligentsia played the central role in the rise of nationalism. Isaiah Berlin explains that ‘mere national consciousness’ develops into nationalism when slights are incurred against ‘the traditional values of society’ and when ‘wounded pride and a sense of humiliation in [a nation’s] most socially conscious members [. . .] produce anger and self-assertion’.<sup>11</sup> In his study of nationalism in England from 1740 to 1830, Newman contends that in England nationalism emerges as a result of the *Kulturkampf* between the cosmopolitan aristocratic and the newly rising bourgeois who began to assert their own national identity. Discussing national consciousness in Britain from 1750 to 1830, Linda Colley also argues that while the ruling class in the eighteenth century regarded populist nationalism as dangerous and threatening, the middle class considered it as an ideal vehicle for self-assertion: ‘To many *nouveau riche* and bourgeois elements in Georgian Britain, patriotic activism also felt like an opportunity to assert their parity with, and in some cases their superiority to, the landed classes’.<sup>12</sup> The development of nationalistic sentiments in Dickens’s writings can be also explained in terms of *Kulturkampf*. The Crimean War disclosed the total incompetence of the aristocratic government, and his antipathy towards the upper classes was strengthened. He began to feel the need for the united action of the people in order to carry out drastic reform, and stressed the importance of the union between the middle and working classes.

The development of nationalism in Dickens is a gradual process. In this essay I will examine his writings and speeches about sanitary and

administrative reforms during the Crimean War, and demonstrate how he constructs the idea of nation and tries to call up a sense of solidarity among people which extends beyond class boundaries. In other words, the focus of this essay is the way in which he evokes egalitarian sentiments, which paves the way for nationalism. I also hope to show that this nationalism stems from his anxiety about the future decline of England and the British Empire which began to dominate his mind during the war. Though the empire was still expanding and proud of her unrivalled power in the world on the surface level, Dickens detected the first symptoms of her decline in the corrupt aristocratic government which mismanaged both domestic and international issues. His concern that England would either collapse from inside or be conquered by a power from outside urged him to appeal for the solidarity and loyalty of the people for the defence of the country. Fears of both internal and external threat were indeed inextricably entwined in his psyche, and in the following discussion, I hope to clarify the process in which such fear had reactively spilt over into aggressive nationalism.

## II

Britain was drifting towards war with Russia from the summer of 1853, when the latter invaded and occupied the Turkish provinces of Moldavia and Walachia. In September 1853, backed by French units, the British Mediterranean fleet moved to the straits below Constantinople, and in March 1854 Britain and France declared war on Russia, giving up any attempts to achieve peaceful negotiation. Most people--Radical, Liberal, and Conservative--were hearty supporters of the war. For them, Russia was a dangerous barbaric force which threatened the peace of Europe. The war was perceived, in Lord Clarendon's words, as 'the battle of civilization against barbarism, for the independence of Europe'.<sup>13</sup> It was only a small group of Manchester School Radicals known as advocates of peace and free trade who were against the war and called the Crimean War a crime.<sup>14</sup>

Like most Englishmen of the period, Dickens believed that England should check the unlimited territorial expansion of Russia. He wrote to W. W. F. De Cerjat on 3 January 1855, '[I]t is an indubitable fact, I conceive, that Russia *must be* stopped, and that the future Peace of the World renders the War imperative upon us'.<sup>15</sup> He sometimes showed even patriotic enthusiasm for the war. In his summer residence in Boulogne in 1854 he hoisted the Union Jack on a haystack '[f]or the glory of England',<sup>16</sup> and later hoisted the French colours over it in honour of the national alliance.<sup>17</sup> The

Christmas story for *Household Words* in 1854, 'The Story of Richard Doubledick' in 'The Seven Poor Travellers', is the story of antagonism, reconciliation, and friendship between a British soldier Richard Doubledick and a French officer during the Napoleonic Wars, and is very patriotic in its celebration of heroism: the narrator concludes the story by reminding the readers of the current war in which the English and French fight 'side by side in one cause: with their respective nations, like long-divided brothers whom the better times have brought together, fast united'.<sup>18</sup>

Dickens, however, was critical of the war when it was used by the government as an excuse for the postponement of urgent domestic reforms, especially sanitary reform. Dickens's irritation against the government for its neglect of domestic issues was most keenly felt when Asiatic Cholera returned to London in summer 1854 and killed more than 10,000 people. Dickens wrote to Angela Burdett Coutts on 26 October 1854, 'I clearly see that the War will be made an Administration excuse for all sorts of shortcomings, and that nothing will have been done when the cholera comes again'.<sup>19</sup> He had had a keen interest in sanitary reform since the late 1840s, when his brother-in-law, Henry Austin, actively participated in the sanitary movement as secretary of several associations and boards. In the Preface to the cheap edition of *Martin Chuzzlewit* in 1849, Dickens wrote, 'in all my writings, I hope I have taken every possible opportunity of showing the want of sanitary improvements in the neglected dwellings of the poor'.<sup>20</sup> In the early 1850s he gave speeches twice at the meetings of the Metropolitan Sanitary Association, in which he underscored the urgent need to improve sanitary conditions in London and to alleviate the suffering of the poor who had no political power themselves.

In *Household Words* issued on 7 October 1854, Dickens contributed an article entitled 'To Working Men', in which he again underscores the importance of urging the government to implement urgent sanitary reform, but it differs from the two speeches he made at the Metropolitan Sanitary Association in the early fifties in that it is an appeal particularly addressed to 'the working people'. At the beginning of the article he says, 'we would carry a forcible appeal made by our contemporary *The Times* to the working people of England a little further'.<sup>21</sup> Many articles concerning the epidemic appeared in *The Times* during the period of its prevalence in London, but what he had in mind here is probably an article published either on 2 September or on 13 September 1854. The article of 2 September is written in order to give some pieces of practical advice to the working-class people on how to choose proper houses and how to keep their dwellings hygienic. Its emphasis is on the need for their own efforts to 'raise themselves',<sup>22</sup>

because it regards them not as a passive and silent group of victims who 'must await the action of a committee and sub-committee'<sup>23</sup> but an active and independent group of people who are responsible for the amelioration of their own living conditions. It tells them that the support of the wealthy is ready for them, but that it will be given only after they act themselves: 'Disregard of the sufferings of the poor is not the characteristic of the more wealthy classes in this country at the present time. They would gladly give assistance if they knew how to do it in an effectual manner'.<sup>24</sup> The emphasis of the article of 13 September, however, has shifted from the importance of the self-responsibility of the working-class people to that of 'the united action of the nation'.<sup>25</sup> While the former article makes the working class their own victimisers, the latter makes them victims of the neglect of the wealthier and calls for their sympathy for the 'poorer countrymen, who may be placed under more untoward circumstances'.<sup>26</sup> In 'To Working Men', Dickens also stresses the need for the working class to initiate an action for themselves: 'it is now the first duty of The People', he says, to firmly insist 'on their and their children's right to every means of life and health that Providence has afforded for all'.<sup>27</sup> He, however, expresses at the same time 'a sense of self reproach' on the part of the middle class for having neglected the sufferings of the poor, and its willingness to support them.

If working men will be thus true to themselves and one another, there never was a time when they had so much just sympathy and so much ready help at hand. The whole powerful middle class of this country, newly smitten with a sense of self-reproach [. . .] is ready to join them.<sup>28</sup>

Here he puts special emphasis on the fundamental bond and mutual sympathy between the middle and the working classes and tries to evoke a sense of solidarity extending beyond class barriers in people's minds, for he views sanitary reform not as a class-specific issue but as a national issue, and it is for the 'lasting benefit to the whole community'<sup>29</sup> that the middle and the working classes should cooperate with each other. He even presents an almost utopian vision of society in which the harmonious fusion of classes is realised:

A better understanding between the two great divisions of society, a habit of kinder and nearer approach, an increased respect and trustfulness on both sides, a gently corrected method in each of considering the views of the other, would lead to [. . .] blessed improvements and interchanges among us.<sup>30</sup>

As Trey Philpotts argues, one reason why Dickens centres on the sanitary issue in his appeal for class unity is that ‘disease is a problem that quite literally transcends class boundaries’ and that much of the built-in class antagonism would have to be overcome in order to solve it.<sup>31</sup> This is especially true in the time when it was still widely believed that an epidemic like cholera was caused by miasma, which lurked in dirt or stagnant water, or which was bred in the stale air of confined spaces, but once touched off by a certain atmospheric condition of temperature or humidity, spread ‘on the wings of the air’.<sup>32</sup> Dickens thus says in a speech at the first anniversary banquet of the Metropolitan Sanitary Association on 10 May 1851, ‘that no one can say, here it stops, or there it stops, either in its physical or moral results, [. . .] is now as certain as it is that the air from Gin Lane will be carried, when the wind is Easterly, into May Fair’.<sup>33</sup> This view is dramatised in *Bleak House* (1852-53), in which ‘any pestilential gas’ bred in Tom-all-Alone’s propagates infection and contagion ‘up to the proudest of the proud, and to the highest of the high’.<sup>34</sup> Sanitary reform is, and should be, therefore, the common interest of people of all classes. To improve the sanitary condition of the poor is an imperative for the wealthy in order to defend both groups of people from epidemics.

The epidemic is a medium of connecting not only people of different classes but also people at home and soldiers abroad, for the first enemy which the British troops had to fight against in the Crimea was not the Russian but cholera. One article appearing in *The Times* on 2 September 1854 reports the ravages inflicted by cholera on the forces there and states that ‘in the dismal and sanguinary annals of war no page is more affecting than that which relates the fall of men of strength and valour before the breath of an unseen foe’.<sup>35</sup> The epidemic is indeed an enemy which might be even more dangerous and devastating than the Russian. Thus, *The Times* article concludes, ‘the aspect of this disease has done more to depress the spirit of the troops than the severest perils they could have encountered in the presence of the enemy’.<sup>36</sup> The writer of an article entitled ‘A Lesson Lost upon Us’ in *Household Words* on 9 January 1858, which is about the sanitary conditions of the British camps during the Crimean War, says in the similar vein, ‘Her own unwholesome camp was a more devastating enemy to Britain than the Russian with his fortress and his batteries’.<sup>37</sup> The epidemic at home is also regarded as an invisible enemy, whose devastating effects are often compared with those of the Russian. ‘[I]n London alone’, Dickens writes to the Hon. Mrs. Richard Watson on 1 November 1854, ‘an infinitely larger number of English people than are likely to be slain in the whole

Russian war, have miserably and needlessly died'.<sup>38</sup> In 'A Home Question', an article about sanitary reform published in *Household Words* on 11 November 1854, Henry Morley also writes, 'By fever and by sickness bred of gross neglect, this country alone has probably lost more lives than have been sacrificed in all the battles ever fought in the whole of Europe since its history began'.<sup>39</sup> He goes on to say, 'Typhus [is] a more deadly enemy than any Czar'.<sup>40</sup> 'A Home Question' is apparently a parallel with the 'Eastern Question', and this parallel implies that both the Russian and the disease are equally threatening, and that both the soldiers abroad and the people at home should fight against these common enemies and secure the future prosperity of England.

Epidemics are often represented as barbarous forces which have to be conquered just as are the Russian, and the fight against epidemics is represented as a perpetual battle of civilisation versus barbarism just as is the conflict with the Russian. The author of an article in *The Times* on 21 September 1854, for instance, writes:

The battle is not with a single epidemic disease, but with all. [. . .] It is, of course, impossible for any community to wage a combined war against sporadic disease. [. . .] [B]ut we can carry on the war against the sweating sickness, the plague, the cholera, smallpox, or typhus.<sup>41</sup>

A further appeal is made to the readers: 'Let us desire [. . .] to fight great battles--to cover the surface of the planet with the triumphs of science as we may--we must begin by living in order that we may accomplish these great things'.<sup>42</sup> In the fight against disease there is no distinction between actual battlefields and towns and villages. All people should defend themselves armed with science and knowledge against the invisible enemy and conquer it instead of being conquered by it. In 'A Lesson Lost upon Us', after describing the successful example of improvement in the sanitary conditions of the British troops in the Crimea, the writer concludes the article:

Never before was there so conspicuous an evidence afforded of the nature of those fevers and plagues which infest our towns and villages, and of the readiness with which they can be conquered, when we are determined that they shall not conquer us.<sup>43</sup>

This sort of discourse can be utilised to evoke patriotic sentiment among people. Morley thus concludes 'A Home Question' with an appeal to his readers in highly jingoistic terms:



There is little hope now left to us of success for the next ten years in the war against pestilence, unless--every man volunteering as a sanitary militia-man for the defence of his own hearth--the whole public goes into training, and, equipped with the right knowledge, fights for itself the battles that will then assuredly be won.<sup>44</sup>

### III

An appeal for the solidarity of the people extending beyond class boundaries is made once again in a speech Dickens gave at the third meeting of the Administrative Reform Association (ARA) on 27 June 1855. *The Times* revealed the miserable plight of the British troops in the Crimea, Sebastopol, and Balaklava during the winter of 1854-55. The military leaders were totally incompetent after forty years of peace, and, even though there were many episodes of individual soldiers who were brave and heroic, Britain could not fight well under such chaotic military administration. The transportation of clothes, medicine, and food was delayed because of the inefficient aristocratic government, and it is said that more British soldiers were killed by disease and neglect than in actual battles. The Administrative Reform Association was formed under these circumstances with Samuel Morley, a nonconformist textile manufacturer and politician, as its chairman, and its first public meeting was held on 5 May 1855. The core of the Association consisted of City businessmen, bankers, and professional men, who were critical of the nepotism of the aristocratic government: their immediate efforts were concentrated on demanding that government introduce a competitive examination for all junior clerks in the Civil Service.<sup>45</sup>

It was the Association's chief spokesman in Parliament, A. H. Layard, who aroused Dickens's interest in the Association. Dickens joined the Association mainly because of his indignation at the maladministration which caused great misery to the British soldiers in the war. In letters he expresses his irritation against the 'political aristocracy' again and again. He writes to Mrs. Gaskell on 3 February 1855, 'I have an old belief that our Political Aristocracy will ruin this land at last',<sup>46</sup> and to John Forster on the same day, 'our political aristocracy and our tuft-hunting are the death of England'.<sup>47</sup> He now regards the aristocratic politicians and what he calls 'Red Tapism' of the government as another enemy of England. In his speech at the third meeting of the ARA, he says:

[T]he ghastly absurdity of that vast labyrinth of misplaced men and misdirected things [. . .] made England unable to find on the face of the earth, an enemy one-twentieth part so potent for the misery and ruin of her noble defenders as she has been herself [. . .].<sup>48</sup>

Dickens, however, does not excessively stress his antipathy towards the aristocracy in this speech. Instead, as he has done in 'To Working Men', he again underscores the importance of social harmony which can transcend class antagonism:

It is stated that this Association sets class against class. Is this so? [. . .] No, it finds class set against class, and seeks to reconcile them. [. . .] I wish to avoid placing in opposition here, the two words Aristocracy and People. I am one of those who can believe in the virtues and uses of both [. . .]. I will use, instead of these words, the terms, the governors and the governed. These two bodies the Association finds with a gulf between them, in which lie, newly buried, thousands on thousands of the bravest and most devoted men that, even England ever bred. [. . .] [T]his Association seeks to help to bridge over that abyss, with a structure founded on common justice and supported by common sense.<sup>49</sup>

Dickens reiterates common-ness of people, 'common justice' and 'common sense', to bridge the gulf between 'Aristocracy and People'. By de-emphasising class antagonism, he emphasises that, like sanitary reform, administrative reform is not a class-specific but a national issue and that people of all classes should unite and cooperate with each other in order to carry it out. One reason for this fundamental affinity of the rhetoric he uses in promoting these two reforms is that government irresponsibility and bureaucracy are regarded as other forms of the epidemic which plagues England. In an unsigned article entitled 'Plagues of London' in *Household Words* on 5 May 1855, for example, the writer lists physical and metaphorical epidemics which are prevalent in London, and the last one on the list is 'Routine', which is 'the newest of the plagues of London':

Who does not know how dreadfully infectious this new sickness is? How it is communicated by papers and documents, lurks in the horsehair of stools, and how it clings to tape (especially to tape of a red colour) with so much energy that no known disinfectant [. . .] is able to remove it? For very many years this pestilence has waged its war against humanity,

being most dangerous in the more central parts of the city of London, and in the districts of Whitehall and Westminster.<sup>50</sup>

In his speech at the ARA Dickens also uses the metaphor of epidemic and infection in describing the chaotic conditions of the House of Commons comprised of incompetent politicians: 'the confined air of the lobby' generates the 'primitive gases' which have 'deadening influences on the memory of that Honourable Member'.<sup>51</sup> For the sake of the nation, people should overcome class antagonism and fight together against this metaphorical disease as well as physical disease.

Philpotts argues that by substituting the terms 'Aristocracy' and 'People' for 'the governors' and 'the governed', Dickens de-emphasises the distance between these two classes and adds the concept of responsibility on both sides.<sup>52</sup> Dickens says that he believes in 'the virtues and uses of both' and thus implies that each class has its own unique role in society. The view that a nation is an organic whole which is composed of individuals with different roles and responsibilities is the one shared by the members of the ARA. Olive Anderson argues that the principle of the reform, 'the right man in the right place' is derived from an idealistic Coleridgean 'vision of organic society and a government based on ideals of responsibility and reverence for all men'.<sup>53</sup> Duty and responsibility are what Layard stresses in public speeches. In a speech at Liverpool in April 1855, for instance, he says, 'when the lives of thousands are at stake we must not allow private considerations to override our sense of public duty'.<sup>54</sup> Dickens's idea of society is epitomised by his words in a letter, 'this is a world of action, where everyone has a duty to fulfill, a part to play'.<sup>55</sup> Each individual has his/her own sphere of action in which he/she carries on his/her unique activities, fulfils his/her responsibilities, and yet subordinates him/herself to the good of the whole--this is Dickens's ideal picture of harmonious society. In the speech at the ARA, he expresses his hope that the Association will unite 'large numbers of the people [. . .] of all conditions, to the end that they may better comprehend, bear in mind, understand themselves, and impress upon others, the common public duty'.<sup>56</sup> Here again he reminds people of the importance of being responsible members of a social body and living in harmony with others. In 'A Home Question', calling for comprehensive measures for sanitary reform, Morley says, 'no progress can be made unless the Nation as a body works at it'.<sup>57</sup> He presents the same ideal of nation as an aggregate of people who have their own individual wills but still are able to work together as a unified organic body for the common weal.

Anderson contends that the Administrative Reform Association was inspired by injured national pride and ‘a dogged determination that Britain should retrieve her reputation in Europe’.<sup>58</sup> In a speech in the House of Commons in December 1854 Layard says that ‘Her Majesty’s Government’ should ‘adopt a policy [. . .] which, at all events, would be more in consonance with the true position and the important interest of this mighty empire’.<sup>59</sup> In a speech at Liverpool, he again expresses the same nationalistic feeling, saying, ‘What we desire is that this country shall continue great, that this country’s reputation shall continue untarnished, that we shall hold the position we have ever held’.<sup>60</sup> Dickens also shares this kind of national pride with Layard, which manifests itself clearly in a letter written for the second meeting of the Association which he could not attend:

I have enrolled myself a member of the Administrative Reform Association, because I believe it to be impossible for England long to hold her place in the world, or long to be at rest within herself, unless the present system of mismanaging the public affairs, and mis-spending the public money, be altogether changed.<sup>61</sup>

The fear that England and the empire may eventually decline and fall if the present system and government continue without any drastic reforms is expressed throughout in Dickens’s essays in *Household Words* and letters written around this period. An essay entitled ‘Gone to the Dogs’, which appeared in *Household Words* on 10 March 1855, is a chronicle of the growth of the worldliness of men and women who have ‘gone to the dogs’. In the concluding paragraphs the narrator laments that not only the people but also Britain herself, who ‘slays her children’ in the Crimean War, shall ‘be added to the possession of the Dogs’.<sup>62</sup> In this essay, Dickens expresses his concern that individuals, the nation, and the empire show the same symptoms of decline. In a letter to W. C. Macready on 4 October 1855, he writes, ‘at present we are on the down-hill road to being conquered, and the people *will* be content to hear incapable and insolent Premiers sing Rule Britannia, and *will not* be saved’.<sup>63</sup> Even the victory in the Crimean War in March 1856 could not eradicate his persistent anxiety about the future decline of Britain. In an essay titled ‘Proposals for a National Jest-Book’ in *Household Words* on 3 May 1856, he says that ‘the English are the only people possessing the peculiarity of being quite untrained in the power of associating to defend themselves, their children, their women, and their native land’.<sup>64</sup> In ‘Nobody, Somebody, and Everybody’ in *Household Words* on 30 August 1856, he expresses his concern that the irresponsible attitude of the

government which attributed every fault to Nobody might some day bring about 'the national death'.<sup>65</sup>

Administrative reform, therefore, is indispensable for the future prosperity of the nation and the empire, and in order to realise it, Dickens maintains, all people in the nation have to be unified. He thus says at the ARA:

I did believe, and I do believe, that the only wholesome turn affairs so menacing could take, was, the awakening of the people, the outspokening of the people, the uniting of the people in all patriotism and loyalty to effect a great peaceful constitutional change in the administration of their own affairs.<sup>66</sup>

What they need to accomplish sanitary reform and administrative reform and what they need to win the war are fundamentally the same--only the solidarity of loyal and patriotic people can achieve all these and save the country.

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick Brantlinger, *The Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p.28.

<sup>2</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn (London: Verso, 1991), p.4.

<sup>3</sup> See Leonard William Doob, *Patriotism and Nationalism: Their Psychological Foundations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p.6.

<sup>4</sup> Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830* (London: Macmillan, 1997), p.52.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.54.

<sup>6</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> Benjamin Disraeli, *Sybil; or, the Two Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp.65-66.

<sup>8</sup> Edward Hallett Carr, *Nationalism and After* (London: Macmillan, 1945), p.7.

<sup>9</sup> Tom Narin, *The Break-up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (1977), repr. in *Nationalism*, ed. by John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp.70-76 (p.75).

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Isaiah Berlin, 'Nationalism', cited in Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, p.56.

<sup>12</sup> Linda Colley, 'Whose Nation? Class and National Consciousness in Britain 1750-1830', *Past and Present*, 113 (1986), 97-117 (p.110).

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- <sup>13</sup> Cited in Asa Briggs, *Victorian People: A Reassessment of Persons and Themes 1851-67* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p.64.
- <sup>14</sup> See *ibid.*, p.60.
- <sup>15</sup> *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, Vol.VII (1853-1855), ed. by Graham Storey, Kathleen Tillotson, and Angus Easson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p.495.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.383.
- <sup>17</sup> See *ibid.*, p.409.
- <sup>18</sup> Charles Dickens, 'The Seven Poor Travellers', in *Christmas Stories*, ed. by Ruth Grancy (London: Dent, 1996), pp.54-83 (p.78).
- <sup>19</sup> *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, VII, p.444.
- <sup>20</sup> Charles Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p.40.
- <sup>21</sup> Charles Dickens, 'To Working Men', in *Dickens' Journalism*, Vol. III, 'Gone Astray' and *Other Papers from Household Words 1850-59*, ed. by Michael Slater (London: Dent, 1998), pp.225-29 (p.226).
- <sup>22</sup> *The Times*, 2 September 1854, p.8.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8.
- <sup>25</sup> *The Times*, 13 September 1854, p.6.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.
- <sup>27</sup> Dickens, 'To the Working Men', p.226
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.228.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.229.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p.228.
- <sup>31</sup> Trey Philpotts, '“To Working Men” and “The People”: Dickens's View of Class Relations in the Months Preceding *Little Dorrit*', *Dickens Quarterly*, 7 (1990), 262-75 (p.267).
- <sup>32</sup> See Norman Longmate, *Alive and Well: Medicine and Public Health 1830 to the Present Day* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), p.35.
- <sup>33</sup> K. J. Fielding (ed.), *The Speeches of Charles Dickens: A Complete Edition* (Hemel Hempstead Harvester: Wheatsheaf, 1988), p.128.
- <sup>34</sup> Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1996), p.710.
- <sup>35</sup> *The Times*, 2 September 1854, p.8.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8.
- <sup>37</sup> An unsigned article, 'A Lesson Lost upon Us', *Household Words*, 17 (1858), 73-80 (p.77).
- <sup>38</sup> *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, VII, p.454.
- <sup>39</sup> Henry Morley, 'A Home Question', *Household Words*, 10 (1854), 292-96 (p.292).
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p.294.
- <sup>41</sup> *The Times*, 21 September, 1854, p.8.

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- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8.
- <sup>43</sup> ‘A Lesson Lost upon Us’, pp.79-80.
- <sup>44</sup> Morley, ‘A Home Question’, p.296.
- <sup>45</sup> See Briggs, *Victorian People*, pp.60-94, and Olive Anderson, ‘The Administrative Reform Association, 1855-1857’, in *Pressure from Without in Early Victorian England*, ed. by Patricia Hollis (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1974), pp.262-88.
- <sup>46</sup> *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, VII, p.521.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p.523.
- <sup>48</sup> *The Speeches of Charles Dickens*, p.201.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.203.
- <sup>50</sup> An unsigned article, ‘Plagues of London’, *Household Words*, 11 (1855), 316-19 (pp.318-19).
- <sup>51</sup> *The Speeches of Charles Dickens*, p.202.
- <sup>52</sup> See Philpotts, ‘“To Working Men” and “The People”’, p.268.
- <sup>53</sup> Anderson, ‘The Administrative Reform Association’, p.279.
- <sup>54</sup> *The Times*, 23 April 1855, p.12.
- <sup>55</sup> To Miss Emmely Gotshalk on 2 May 1853, *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, VII, p.74.
- <sup>56</sup> *The Speeches of Charles Dickens*, p.206.
- <sup>57</sup> Morley, ‘A Home Question’, p.293.
- <sup>58</sup> Anderson, ‘The Administrative Reform Association’, p.279.
- <sup>59</sup> *The Times*, 13 December 1854, pp.8-9.
- <sup>60</sup> *The Times*, 23 April 1855, p.12.
- <sup>61</sup> *Daily News*, 14 June 1855, repr. in *The Speeches of Charles Dickens*, pp. 198-99.
- <sup>62</sup> Charles Dickens, ‘Gone to the Dogs’, *Dickens’ Journalism*, III, pp.283-91 (p.291).
- <sup>63</sup> *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, VII, p.716.
- <sup>64</sup> Charles Dickens, ‘Proposals for a National Jest-Book’, in *Dickens’ Journalism*, III, pp.362-69 (p.367).
- <sup>65</sup> Charles Dickens, ‘Nobody, Somebody, and Everybody’, in *Dickens’ Journalism*, III, pp.391-96 (p.394).
- <sup>66</sup> *The Speeches of Charles Dickens*, p.201.

(Instructor, Doshisha University)

