

instance, parts of some of the less accessible works that Hume referred to in the *Treatise*). What is more, he also studied the manner in which others read Hume, and *The Philosophy of David Hume* therefore also serves as a contribution to the history of the reception of Hume. Kemp Smith thus set in motion some of the best practices that the

history of political thought and intellectual history have come to enjoy. The re-issue of his work is wholly welcomed and Garrett's introduction is a very helpful addition to it.

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Vacillating statesman

Arthur Aspinall, *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party*
(originally published 1927; reprinted Nonsuch, 2005)

Reviewed by Mark Pack

LAWYER, ORATOR, politician and prolific writer of letters, articles, history and even a three-volume romance, Henry Brougham was a prominent advocate of parliamentary reform and a leading opponent of slavery (at least after his early years), who helped found London University and was a successful promoter of widespread education. His political career saw him serve as one of the leading Whig politicians in the long years of opposition before 1830, before the brief climax of a very high-profile election victory in 1830 in Yorkshire and then a short period as Lord Chancellor before he was retired off. Scornful and outspoken, he was one of the foremost political publicists of his day, but also frequently mistrusted by colleagues.

Understanding the importance and impact of Henry Brougham poses the same problems for historians as ascertaining the significance of London Mayor Ken Livingstone is likely to pose in the future. They have in common political careers containing many years in opposition, years in power in relatively peripheral posts, but notwithstanding that, a

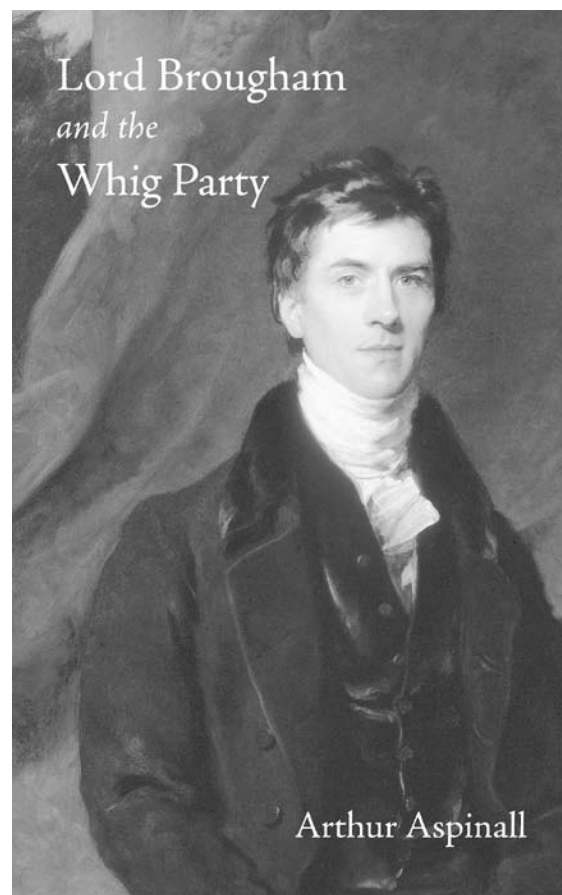
hold on the public imagination and political debate wholly disproportionate to an otherwise rather limited tally of actual policy achievement.

The detailed treatment of Brougham's life in Aspinall's extensive (480-page) volume helps explain the lack of trust he generated – the author frequently recounts Brougham's changes of position and flirtations with erstwhile opponents. As Aspinall summarises, 'His unwillingness to support all Whig policy unquestioningly, and his occasional support of Tory and Radical policies, led to conflict with his fellow Whigs and was, perhaps, the principal reason he failed to reach even higher political office.'

In his early years he had more Tory than Whig sympathies and toyed with such illiberal causes as support for slavery – even urging cooperation with the French to support slavery – and Aspinall makes a convincing case that, had the Tories tried to harness his talents, he might have ended up a Tory. This flirtation with the Tories hindered his desire to be an MP, for it meant many Whigs were reluctant to help find him a seat, an important consideration at a

time when relatively few seats were open to genuine election and competition. Even when not flirting with the Tories, his favour moved back and forth between traditional Whigs and more radical reformers, leading Ricardo to say of him, 'A man who wishes to obtain a lasting name should not be a vacillating statesman, too eager for immediate applause.'

His eloquence and hard work, and his skill at attacking the Tories in public debate, gradually earned him over the years more support from his fellow Whigs, though often it was only granted grudgingly and it was frequently undermined by over-zealous and self-defeating attacks on poorly-chosen opponents in his speeches. Without these lapses in judgement, 'Blundering Brougham' – as he was sometimes known – might well have become the leader of the Whigs in the House of Commons, and as a result enjoyed a more senior role in Grey's 1830 Whig government. As it was, when power



IN SEARCH OF THE GREAT LIBERALS

H. H. Asquith, William Beveridge, Violet Bonham Carter, Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Richard Cobden, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, Charles James Fox, W. E. Gladstone, Jo Grimond, Roy Jenkins, J. M. Keynes, David Lloyd George, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, Lord John Russell – or someone else: who was the greatest Liberal?

Based on the votes cast by *Journal* readers (see pages 4–12), four candidates will be presented at this meeting. Leading politicians and historians will make the case for each one of the four, and *Journal* readers and conference participants will be able to vote for the final choice of the greatest Liberal.

20.00, Wednesday 19 September 2007

Forest Room, Quality Hotel, Brighton

came, he was out-manoeuvred into a cabinet backwater – being made Lord Chancellor, so that his mercurial talents could not be deployed against the government, but without him gaining much power. He used his time in the post to introduce some important legal reforms, but his political career fizzled out and when he lost the position a few years later he then had a long period in retirement.

Given the date of Aspinall's book it is no surprise that it follows the traditional picture of Brougham as a highly talented and somewhat mercurial person whose contribution to the Whigs, whilst positive, was limited by lack of trust and teamwork. In this (and really only this) respect the book has dated somewhat, with the more recent William Hay book, *The Whig Revival* (2005) emphasising his positive contribution in building the party around the country. Aspinall touches

on Brougham's belief in the importance of extra-parliamentary pressure, but does not give his achievements in this area anywhere near the same weight as Hay.

Although Aspinall explicitly decries any notion of his book being a biography of Brougham, writing instead that it is an account of his career as a politician, Brougham the person – the bombastic, outspoken, self-confident Brougham – comes through clearly in what is a clearly-written and enjoyable read. For book lovers, the good news is that the book itself has traditional good production qualities, with a decent spine, good quality paper, a meaningful index and, if not footnotes on each page, at least chapter endnotes.

Dr Mark Pack completed a PhD on nineteenth-century English elections, and now works in the Liberal Democrats' Campaigns Department.

L. T. Hobhouse and J. A. Hobson: The New Liberal influence on Third Way ideas (continued from page 24)

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| 36 Hobhouse, <i>Liberalism</i> , p. 73. | | an article for the <i>Nation</i> in 1907, reprinted in <i>The Crisis of Liberalism</i> and later used by Ramsay MacDonald. |
| 37 L. T. Hobhouse, <i>The Elements of Social Justice</i> (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1922), p. 67. | | |
| 38 Hobhouse, <i>Liberalism</i> , p. 66. | 43 | Ibid.; Freedden, <i>J.A. Hobson: A Reader</i> . |
| 39 Allett, <i>New Liberalism</i> , pp. 259–60. | 44 | David Marquand, <i>The New Reckoning: Capitalism, States and Citizens</i> (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), pp. 74–75. |
| 40 Freedden, <i>J.A. Hobson: A Reader</i> , p. 12. | | |
| 41 Ibid. | 45 | Ibid. |
| 42 A phrase he used as the title of | | |

Corrections

Unfortunately the gremlins were at work on issues 53 and 54 of the *Journal*. Our apologies to all readers, and the relevant authors.

In *Journal* 53, the lower cartoon on page 8, accompanying Patrick Jackson's article 'Gladstone and the Conservative Collapse', was not of John Morley, but of Joseph Chamberlain.

Also in *Journal* 53, the introduction to the article on 'Beveridge in Person' on pages 37–38 gives the impression that Ivor Davies wrote it; in fact it was written by his son, John Davies. Also, our software failed to reproduce Greek letters in the title of the Butler sonnet used by Beveridge, though the English translation is given accurately.

In *Journal* 54, a printer's error (not an editorial fault this time!) meant that page 63 failed to print correctly; several lines were omitted. A corrected version of page 63 is included with this issue.