

FINAL STUDY QUESTIONS

You will be asked to write about ONE of the following three questions in class. You will not be given a choice of which question to write, but it will be one of the questions below. To prepare, you should make sure you have read all the documents in the brochure. You will be allowed to use the brochure while writing the essay. You will have 2 hours in which to do the test.

- 1) Discuss the role of religion in British society and politics, 1830-1914. Make sure you cite at least 2 documents from the brochure in your essay.
- 2) "English history between 1832 and 1914 is a history of the general progress of equality in all respects" Comment. Make sure you discuss Imperialism in this context.
- 3) **Comment on the following text, bearing in mind its date. Make sure to evaluate it in light of some of the readings in the brochure. *Sujet du partiel***

Thomas Escott, 1885

"The era of the enlargement of English society dates from the Reform Bill of 1832, and if it has brought with it some contradictions, anomalies, and inconveniences, it has also been instrumental in the accomplishment of great and undoubted good. It has substituted, in a very large degree, the prestige of achievement for the prestige of position.... The degrees of esteem allotted (= assigned) to the different English professions are exactly what might be expected in a society organized upon such a basis and conscious of such aims. Roughly it may be said professions in England are valued according to their stability, their remunerativeness, their influence and their recognition by the State. These conditions may partially explain the difference which English society draws between the callings of the merchant and the stock-broker. Stock-brokers make immense fortunes; but there attaches to them a suspicion of precariousness infinitely in excess of that which, in some degree or other, necessarily attaches to all fortunes accumulated in commerce or trade. The merchant represents an interest which is almost deserving of a place among the estates of the realm, and with the development of which the prosperity and prestige of England are bound up. His house of business is practically a public institution, and the speculative element-the fluctuation of prices and the uncertainty of markets-enters as little as possible into it.

Such, at least, is the conception formed by the public of the two men of business, and it indicates not incorrectly the corresponding view of English society. The British merchant, as has been said, is very probably a Member of Parliament; the instances in which stock-brokers are members of Parliament at the present day might be counted as something less than the fingers of one hand. The life of the ideal stock-broker is one of display; that of the ideal merchant, one of dignified grandeur or opulent comfort. Possessed of a certain amount of education, often acquired at a public school, sometimes both at Eton and Oxford, the stock-broker of the period has decided social aspirations. He makes his money easily, and he spends it lightly in procuring all the luxuries of existence. He marries a handsome wife, sets up a showy establishment, lays in a stock of choice wines, hires a French cook; he has carriages and horses, a box at the opera, stalls at theaters and concerts innumerable. ... He has acquaintances in the highest circles, and congratulates himself on being in society."