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# The Opinions of William Cobbett

Edited by James Grande, John Stevenson and Richard Thomas

Politician, journalist, reformer, convict, social commentator and all-round thorn in the side of the establishment, William Cobbett cut a swathe through late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century British society with his copious and acerbic writings on any and every issue that caught his attention. Both a radical and a conservative, and with strong opinions on any given subject, Cobbett had a talent for controversial and pugnacious writing that echoes down the centuries and still rings fresh today. Commemorating the 250th anniversary of Cobbett's birth in 1763, this book provides a selection of his writings – both published and unpublished – that highlight his talents, obsessions, and concerns. From corruption and Parliamentary reform, poverty and commerce, to patriotism and religion, the selections display Cobbett at his best – sometimes outraged and excoriating, sometimes sympathetic and reasoned – but always honest and witty.

Divided into 14 chapters each dealing with a particular theme, the selections are contextualised so as to provide the necessary historical background for any readers who may be unfamiliar with the period. In so doing, the book not only brings to life the dynamic and rumbustious world of Georgian England within which Cobbett moved, but also reveals many uncanny parallels with modern concerns. Whether espousing political reform, promoting rural affairs or decrying a spiralling national debt, many of Cobbett's opinions seem as relevant today as when they were first written. Certainly modern readers will find much here to educate, amuse and admire.

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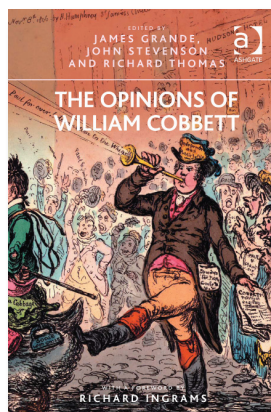
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December 2013

200 pages

Paperback

978-1-4094-6432-7

£25.00 **£12.50**

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