

only foreign visitor to describe the insanitary slums in which the poorest workers – many of them Irish immigrants – lived under disgusting conditions.

*W. O. Henderson, Hemel Hempstead*

Stanley H. Palmer, *Police and Protest in England and Ireland, 1780–1850*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988, pp. XXIV, 824, bound, £ 30.00.

The industrial revolution in England was accompanied by the establishment of factories, the growth of population, and the expansion of large towns. The Gordon riots of 1780 showed that the traditional method of combating crime could not cope with the new situation. Neither special constables nor the volunteers nor the regular army could be relied upon to deal with the threatened breakdown of law and order. Eventually the parish constable would have to give way to the modern policeman.

Accounts of the establishment of the London police force in 1829 generally start with a discussion of earlier attempts at reform such as John Fielding's foot patrol of 1773 and the Thames river police established by Patrick Colquhoun and John Marriott in 1798 to combat pilfering in the docks. It is the great merit of Professor Palmer's detailed survey on the early history of the police force in England that he shows how police reforms in Ireland paved the way for police reform in England. This is surprising since social unrest in England was very different from social unrest in Ireland. In England – though there were agrarian outrages in 1830 – the maintenance of law and order was largely an urban problem. However in Ireland – where the Protestant minority oppressed the Catholic majority – outrages were endemic in the countryside. Murders and mainings were all too common. Witnesses were intimidated so that it was very difficult to bring criminals to justice.

An early attempt to check agrarian disturbances in Ireland was the establishment of a rural police force first in Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny and Tipperary (1787) and then in most other counties. A police force was established in Dublin in 1777 and reorganised in 1808. In England, on the other hand, attempts at this time to establish a police force in London were frustrated by opponents who associated police forces with absolutist governments on the Continent. The efficient armed police of Paris and the French provinces were regarded with deep suspicion in England. Lacking a modern police force the authorities had to rely upon soldiers and volunteers to deal with emergencies such as the Luddite movement (1811–12).

Robert Peel, Irish Chief Secretary between 1812 and 1818, was determined to tackle the intractable problem of agrarian outrages in Ireland. He established the armed Peace Preservation Police, first in Tipperary and then in other districts in which disorders were rife. His successors – Charles Grant and Leveson Gower – extended the activities of the Irish police. When Peel became Home Secretary he founded the metropolitan police force in 1829. In doing so he was clearly influenced by his previous experience in setting up a police force in Ireland. When dealing with the gradual extension of police forces in the provinces in England, Professor Palmer covers familiar ground. His admirable survey ends in 1850, two years after the London police – assisted by special constables – had prevented Chartist demonstrators from marching on Parliament.

*W. O. Henderson, Hemel Hempstead*

John Davis, *Reforming London. The London Government Problem 1855–1900* (= Oxford Historical Monographs), Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press 1988, pp. XI, 203, clothbound, £ 29.50.

Since the earliest times there have been two Londons – the City and the surrounding built-up area. The City covered only one square mile. It was not a centre of government –