

Response

Boyle on Thatcher's England

That splendid article in your July/August issue, Nicholas Boyle's 'Understanding Thatcherism', triggered this:

When England had an empire
She grew a strong left hand
With which she kept her balance:
The right displayed her, grand.

And while her neighbours fashioned
A world for industry
Too harsh for competition
The left hand kept her free.

Labour of faceless millions
Far off secured at home
A world still medieval
Where Tennyson could roam.

After the amputation
There was nowhere to turn
But to her pressing neighbours,
And yet she would not learn.

The easy style persisted
(The amputee's felt limb)
And so she fell behind them
And life grew poor and grim

And ready for the Thatcher
To thwack back to the real
A nation still bewildered
And too afraid to feel.

Not braked by education
She knew not what she did:
A complex operation
Went to the highest bid,

And the great institutions
Of School and Church and Law
(The left hand gone in earnest)
Must function like a store.

The mindless prosecution
Of what had to be done
Issues in contradictions
Unseen by her alone.

The move is back to Europe
And into the machine,
And yet the Common Market
Is target of her spleen.

Freedom for individuals
To do their thing becomes
A function of the market
To which the whole succumbs,

And Government's withdrawal
Becomes total control
Of science and production
By changing protocol.

And thus we get the rulers
Our ancestors deserved:
The Golden Calf triumphant
By Iron Lady served.

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