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concerns. The first (and the one that will probably have the most impact) is his consideration of the unreformed electorate. The older Namierite view of the political system before 1832 as one based on patronage and bribery, or (in the work of D. C. Moore) deference, has been sharply challenged by the work of Frank O’Gorman, James Vernon and the late John A. Phillips. The latter portray a system that was diverse but open to participation and the possibility of ideological debate. The thrust of Jaggard’s account tends to confirm this new interpretation, although one of the peculiarities of Cornwall is that the aristocracy was not particularly powerful. Thus, in the boroughs, the middle classes increasingly challenged patronal stability as did farmer activists in the county seats. Demands for reform took a Wyvillite form. Even before the end of the eighteenth century, voters showed considerable signs of increasing independence and were difficult for the elite to control. By the 1820s, Cornish politics also manifested increasing awareness of national issues. Jaggard’s second theme is the making of Cornish Liberalism. The early nineteenth-century Reform movement helped shift Cornwall away from the Tories. West Cornwall became solidly Whig-Liberal (there were no electoral contests) whereas East Cornwall shifted between the parties. The Conservatives enjoyed a revival in the late 1830s, benefiting from improved planning and the issue of protection. However, this was short-lived. Jaggard does not overestimate the importance of loyalty to national party organizations but shows how local concerns continued to shape Cornish politics right up to the end of the nineteenth century. The third concern of the book is the importance of Methodism. Although Methodists could be persuaded to vote Conservative at times, they came to underpin Cornish Liberalism as a political force. This was particularly true after 1867 when political parties began to improve their organization and address working-class electors. Temperance thus became an increasingly important issue. Densely researched and clearly written, Jaggard’s book demonstrates the continuing importance of local studies in understanding how the nineteenth-century political system worked in practice.

Anglia Polytechnic University, Cambridge ROHAN MCWILLIAM

Thomas Paine: Political Writings, ed. Bruce Kuklick (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2000; pp. xxx + 347. £25; pb. £7.95).

Thomas Paine: Political Writings, ed. Bruce Kuklick, is the second attempt to produce a satisfactory selection from Paine for the Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought series. The first edition appeared in 1989, and was almost a hundred pages shorter: the appendix to the second edition of *Common Sense*, fifty pages previously omitted from the *Rights of Man*, and *Agrarian Justice* make up the bulk of the additions. Unfortunately this cannot be regarded as a reliable text for scholarly use. Thus the editor tells us ‘A very few of Paine’s notes – none substantive – have been silently dropped’. We thus lose a crucial note from *Common Sense*, one on which intellectual historians have built substantial edifices: ‘Those who would fully understand of what great consequence a large and equal representation is to a state, should read *Political Disquisitions*’. We also lose (again silently) Paine’s epigraph from Thomson’s *Liberty*: ‘Man knows no Master save creating Heaven, / Or those whom choice

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and common Good ordain'. And we are presented with a text which is far from faithful to the original. All three of the early editions have the sentence 'Each Congress to sit [. . .] and to choose a president by the following method'. This edition silently closes the gap, producing a sentence which would confuse any alert reader, while a competent editor would have filled it with a conjecture: '[for a fixed period]'. Although the bibliography has been updated, it remains antiquated (nothing on republicanism after 1963; nothing on the French Revolution after 1964; nothing on the debate on the French Revolution in England after 1963). In every respect this edition is inferior to the Oxford World's Classics edition edited by Mark Philp (1995), which is scrupulously accurate, helpfully annotated (Kuklick offers no explanatory notes), and cheaper. Only those who want to own a complete set of the Cambridge blue books, or those determined to read a text with modernized spelling and punctuation, should buy Kuklick's new edition.

Queen Mary and Westfield College, London DAVID WOOTTON

Imagining the King's Death: Figurative Treason, Fantasies of Regicide, 1793–1796, by John Barrell (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2000; pp. 737. £70).

John Barrell's innovative examination of trial transcripts, legal manuscripts, parliamentary debates, and published works, reveals that the political controversy surrounding 'imagination' during the mid-1790s is as significant as any conversation about 'sovereignty', 'liberty' and 'constitution'. Debates over imagination featured large in the 1794 high treason trials. The medieval treason statute, *25 Edw. III, Stat. 5, c. 2*, defined the egregious act of treason as 'when a man doth compass or imagine the death of our lord the king'. In the fourteenth century, to imagine meant to intend or to design. In 1794, however, to imagine described a spontaneous and involuntary act. The Crown prosecutors and defence counsel struggled to distinguish between the fantasy of *merely* imagining and the deadly intention of *really* imagining the king's death. After 1789 imagination shifted from a pejorative, or the base imaginations of the mind, to a word with specific meaning. Respondents to Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, for example, accused it of employing 'wild imagination', and his 'diseased imagination' became a routine accusation of the republican opposition. Burke's apologists accused the most popular responder, Thomas Paine, in *The Rights of Man*, of 'writing to inflame the imaginations of the mob'. Both sides believed that 'imagination' was inappropriate for political discussion, and yet imagination was at the heart of debates over loyalty, allegiance, and national identity from 1793–96. Prosecutors in 1794 failed to provide physical proof of either a conspiracy to raise a British 'Jacobin army' with French support or to incite rebellion with the intent to kill the king's person. In lacking this, they lacked an overt act necessary to convict according to *25 Edw. III*. By October 1794, however, prosecutors attempted to prove a 'conspiracy to levy figurative war against a figurative king'. According to Barrell, this was part of the deliberate process of creating a new, 'modern treason'. In the Edinburgh trials of Robert Watt and David Downie, prosecutors began to reject the traditional legal interpretation that an overt act of levying war 'must' reveal a specific intention to kill the king's person. Instead, prosecutors asserted that

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