Towards Mid-Victorian Social Consensus

1. The Great Reform Act 1815-1832
   a. 1832 Act: Commons, Lords pass; William IV signs
   b. Twilight of the aristocracy: Waterloo to Peterloo
      i. Congress of Vienna
      ii. Tories/Conservatives dominate because Whigs/Liberals & Radicals split
         (1) Lord Liverpool (ministry, 1812-1827)
         (a) Corn Law (1815)
   c. Reform demands: Peterloo and after
      i. Aug. 1819, mass meeting St. Peter's Field, Manchester
         (1) the Six Acts (1819)
         (2) Shelley’s “England in 1819"
      ii. Sir Robert Peel and the reform of the law
      iii. Wellington and the break-up of the Tory party's alliance with Church and State
   d. the Bill
   e. Significance and Aftermath
      i. Party now king

2. Age of Reform after the Great Reform?
   a. Reform from above?:
      i. aristocratic Whigs–Lord Grey to 1834, Lord Melbourne to 1841 (end of slavery, factory reform, poor law [workhouses and 1834 Act])
      ii. Tories accept Reform Act, but seek to hold the line after that (until Peel and Repeal).
   b. Radical Reform from below?
      i. Anti-Corn Law League (formed 1838, Manchester)
      ii. Chartists (1837/8-1848)
   c. Peel and Repeal:
      i. Peel embraces utilitarians and brings party into 19th c.
   d. Moderate Reform and State Intervention
      i. Evangelicals and Utilitarians
      ii. State Regulation

3. State Regulation
   a. Whigs and Tories advance welfare state at different times
      i. even liberals (free marketers) fear forces of reaction–landlords, publicans, clergy–at local parish level
   b. Begins with Labor reform
      i. Dickens’s *Oliver Twist* (1838): Reality or Propaganda?
      ii. Sadler Committee of 1832, headed by Michael Sadler
      iii. Utilitarians lead investigation → in Factory Act of 1833
      iv. Mine Acts of 1842 and 1850 (prohibit women and boys under 13 in mines, under central supervision)
      v. Fight for 10 hour day long (60 hours/week), not passed until 1847, and applied only to women and children.
   c. Poor Law of 1834 (result of commission led by utilitarians): controversial
   d. Cholera Scare leads to National Board of Health, 1848

4. Victorian Social Consensus (by 1850)
   a. Government interference in economic affairs to protect individual citizen
   b. National government interference in local government to increase administrative efficiency
   c. *Laissez faire* abroad, limited state intervention at home.
   d. Why accepted by both parties?; by rich and poor?
      i. prosperity and Victorianism
5. The role of Two Industrial Revolutions
   a. Britain’s might seen in the Crystal Palace exhibit of 1851
      i. Industrial might
      ii. European peace with other nationalities
      iii. Colonial might
   b. 1st Industrial Revolution: cloth/coal/iron (1780s-1830s)
      i. By 1830, produced 50% world’s iron
      ii. By 1830, produced 70% world’s coal
      iii. By 1830, produced 50% world’s cotton cloth
   c. 2nd Industrial Revolution: electricity/oil/chemicals (2nd half 19th century)
      i. Late 19th century, spread of 1st Industrial Revolution (factory) processes
      ii. New Inventions

6. Gladstone and Disraeli
   a. British Politics dominated by rivalry between William Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli for twenty years (alternating ministries)
      i. Disraeli (Cons.), 1866-68
      ii. Gladstone (Lib.), 1868-74
      iii. Disraeli, 1874-80
      iv. Gladstone, 1880-85
   b. Gladstone (1809-1898), son of Liverpool merchant
      i. Rises to power under influence of Sir Robert Peel (Conservative reformer) and Peelites (reformers)
      ii. Standard bearer of Victorian liberalism (1) moral stance
   c. Disraeli (1804-81), son of a writer who had converted from Judaism
      i. (Jews given full civil equality only in 1860)
      ii. Famous as a novelist before entering politics
      iii. Flirted with Radicals before moving to the Tories
      iv. Principal founder of the modern Conservative party
   d. Gladstone and Disraeli had careers that show that politics no longer simply the preserve of the aristocrats
      i. Second Reform Bill (1867) shows party struggle and new Victorian Social Consensus