CHAPTER

LIFE AND BACKGROUND

John Stuart Mill was born on the 20th of May, 1806 at Pentonville in England. His mother was Harriet Burrow and she was the daughter of a noble natured woman who was running a home for mad people at a place called Hoxton. His father was James Mill who was ten years older than Harriet. J.S. Mill was the first child and later his parents had eight children. Mill's father had no regular income or employment. He also had a bad temper. Therefore Mill's mother had a difficult time in managing the house and the children. She was a very beautiful, innocent and intelligent woman. She gave her best to her children. Mill's father James Mill became a friend of Jeremy Bentham around 1808 and at that time Bentham was about sixty years old. Bentham had already formulated his famous doctrine of utilitarianism, but he had not been able to get any followers for his doctrine. James Mill was one of the very first to like Bentham's doctrine and therefore he and Bentham became very close friends. Bentham gave a house to James Mill near his own house and the Mill family lived there for sixteen long years from 1814 to 1830. James Mill was very severe and harsh with his own wife and children. But Bentham liked the children and he was specially fond of little John Mill. When the Mill family went to live at Bentham's country mansion (at Ford Abbey in Devonshire) between 1815 - 1818, little John Mill had full freedom in the house. He was even permitted to run around with his wheel in the great hall of the mansion.

But all this came to an end when James Mill had to take up a job as Assistant Examiner at the East India Company in 1918. Now James Mill had a well-paid job and he had to
spend long hours in the office very regularly throughout the year. Even then he continued his political and philosophical activities. In the midst of all this he was also taking pains to educate all his children only at home. He never sent his children to any school or church but trained them himself at home.

Little Mill's education began very early with Greek. Later, when he was eight years old, Latin and arithmetic were added. He was taught logic when he was barely twelve years old and political economy was added to it in the next year! Thus young Mill's training was both very tough and very thorough. The catalogue of the works studied by Mill when he was so young is given in a famous chapter in his *Autobiography*. The list is very long and impressive. But everything a little boy is taught in not fully understood or appreciated by him. He may learn things very well, but he may also forget things equally well. Mill was made to read, in the original Greek, Plato's difficult dialogue *Theaetetus* when he was just eight years old. What can he understand at that age when even older people and philosophy teachers themselves have difficulties about it? Mill himself says that the dialogue "would have been better omitted, as it was totally impossible I should understand it.

But little Mill was never made to learn anything by heart. He was asked to read and then make a summary of what he had read in his own words. He was even asked to write it down with his own comments. Later, he had to discuss this summary and comments with his father in the house or during their long walks. James Mill was almost never satisfied with what little Mill had achieved. When the comments and summaries were very good, he said they could still be better. But when they were defective or premature, James Mill never failed to immediately criticise and condemn the little boy. Thus we can see that Mill's home-made education
was very strict and severe. Luckily, the little Mill did not break down under its pressure. Luckily, because it all resulted in making Mill capable of thinking for himself. Later, Mill had to use this "Lancastrian method" upon his own brothers and sisters to pass on many lessons he had learnt from his father.

Mill never grew up as a normal child. He had no contact with the outside world until he was fourteen years old. The only people he saw were his father's friends. But James Mill had great friends like Bentham and also Ricardo, the famous economic thinker. Mill remembers Ricardo very warmly in his Autobiography. What is very unnatural and cruel about little Mill's upbringing is the total absence of contact with other children of his own age. His brothers and sisters were his only companions. Mill himself remarked once: "I never was a boy; never played at cricket..." Never playing cricket! - that is the greatest tragedy that can happen to any English boy and it happened to Mill. Mill grew up among books and grown up people.

Mill was relieved from this strict control of his father in 1820 when he was sent abroad for a year. Probably this was also designed by his father as part of his continuing education. He stayed in France with the family of Sir Samuel Bentham. He went with them to the Pyrenees mountains and was greatly impressed by actually seeing the mountain scenery - about which he had been made to read only poems so far. At least one important change takes place in Mill after his foreign visit. Until then he was believing that only thought was extremely important in life. Now he was made to think that feelings can also be trained and polished just as thoughts can be trained and polished. What is more, he started thinking that probably it is of utmost importance to cultivate the feelings.
When Mill returned from abroad, his father stopped "teaching" him, but continued to "tutor" him. Only now Mill was made to go through some of the basic works of Benthamism. The first work he read was the *Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion on the Temporal Happiness of Mankind*. This work tried to prove that morality need not be based on religious sanctions, but it can still have universal hold on all mankind. Young Mill was greatly impressed by the arguments found in this work. He was able to easily follow and accept those arguments because he had never been to any school or church where he could have picked up absolute "faith" in religion as a basis for all morals. He also read Dumont's *Traité de Législation* and the *Rationale of Judicial Evidence* which he himself also edited for publication. He was also made to read law with John Austin for some time and developed a friendship with Charles Austin, the brother of John Austin. Charles was then studying at Cambridge University and Mill went there once in 1822. There was a lot of pressure on James Mill to send his son to Trinity College, but he totally opposed it. Next year he entered his son as a clerk at the India House. Mill remained there till the East India Company was closed down in 1858 after the First War of Indian Independence.

There were three influences on Mill during this period. The first was the Utilitarian Society founded by his own father in 1823. The members of this Society met very regularly every fortnight at Bentham's house for discussions. This Society appears to have died very young just after about three years of existence.

The second influence was an experimental group of a dozen young men who met every morning at the house of Grote, the banker, before they went to their offices. Here they were discussing books like James Mill's *Elements of Political Economy* and Ricardo's *Principles*. Later they went on to
discuss psychology, and logic. Mill himself says that his own original and independent thinking begins from this period.

The third influence was the London Debating Society. Mill became a leading figure of this Society which held public debates. Macaulay was a member of this Society. Mill came to know about the work of the positivist founder of modern sociology Auguste Comte here.

Meanwhile the older Philosophical Radicals had achieved some unity in their views and policies. They wanted to tell the public about the hollowness of the existing political parties and advocate a new policy of reform. For this they started a journal The Westminster Review with Bentham’s generous help. James Mill became a prominent contributor to this new journal. He got his son also deeply involved in this affair. He made him read all the back issues of Edinburgh Review, the journal of the Whig party, from 1802 onwards to prepare a refutation of Whig ideology. Mill’s article appeared in the very first issue in April, 1824. In this article he made a survey of the entire British scene, dissected the whole British constitution and exposed the dishonesty of the Whigs.

The younger Benthamites of this period were very much rigid and sectarian. They all agreed with the general point of view of Bentham, the economic ideas of Ricardo, the association psychology of Hartley and also the population doctrine of Malthus. Their political views were those of James Mill as expounded in his Essay on Government. They were all firmly sticking to their opinions at any cost. This can be shown from an incident in Mill’s life in 1824 when he was just eighteen.

Malthus in his Essay on Population had said that when
population grows excessively, there will be wars, epidemics and so on to bring down the excess population. But this was a natural method of reducing population. But Malthus had said that population can also be reduced by "moral restraints," that is, by postponing marriages for some time. Mill's father had actually advocated direct methods of birth control. Under these circumstances, while going to his office, young Mill noticed in 1824 the dead bodies of unwanted babies thrown at street corners. They were the babies of the poor people who lived in the slums of that locality. They had killed the babies because they were not able to feed them. Mill was very much disturbed by this sight. He was convinced that the only way to prevent such deaths of babies was by educating the poor people about the usefulness of birth control. He immediately acted on this conviction. Along with a friend he distributed birth control literature in the slums of that area. But both of them were arrested for this and were actually sent to jail by the Lord Mayor of London. Interestingly, Mill does not write about this in his Autobiography.

Around 1820 when Mill was barely fourteen, he had already formulated his goal in life: working for human happiness through adopting the Benthamite programme of reforms. He had been straining himself to achieve this goal in addition to hard and strenuous work at the office. He was very happy about himself in this involvement. Yet, suddenly, in 1826 when he was just twentyone, he found himself in a state of great mental depression. Mill describes this mental crisis within himself very vividly in his Autobiography as follows: ".... In this frame of mind it occurred to me to put the question directly to myself: 'Suppose that all your objects in life were realized; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to, could be completely effected at this very instant; ' would this be a great joy and happiness to
you? And an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered, 'No!' At this my heart sank within me: the whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell down."

Mill was shocked to discover that his feelings and emotions had dried up completely. He had no deep feelings left. His love of mankind and love of excellence had no emotional dimensions whatever. It was an abstraction rooted in dry thought. It was all a mere game of thinking which had no roots in his deepest being. He thought he would not last for more than a year in such a dull state of nerves. He had no one to turn to for advice or relief. His father had all along been opposed to any display of feelings. Mill says of his father: "Feelings as such, he considered to be no proper objects of praise or blame. Right and wrong, good and bad, he regarded as qualities solely of conduct—of acts and omissions." 3

Since James Mill undervalued feelings, he naturally undervalued poetry—and imagination in general—as an element of human nature. He had therefore advocated "rational" morality in opposition to "sentimental" morality. He did not attach value to the elements like conscience, affection, reverence, family feeling etc. So, he had taught his son to believe in the same thing. John Stuart Mill was too much the son of James Mill. Therefore Mill was alone in his suffering of his deep depression. Fortunately, this depression did not last long. One day when he was reading a pathetic French story, the story struck him very suddenly and powerfully. He was moved to tears. That experience proved to him that he was not merely a cold, thinking being but was also a feeling being. He had not cultivated this faculty of feeling because he had been told that it was unnecessary. He had been told convincingly that the cultivation of thought alone was enough to lead a full and meaningful life.
After discovering that feeling was a basic aspect of human personality, Mill was faced with problems. He had been taught that working for the general good itself would result in the highest happiness. He knew very well how a young man could be trained (according to the principles of the associationist psychology of Hartley), by planned educational processes, to find the highest happiness in working for the general good. He had himself been educated in that way for several years, and by a master like his own father. Yet, as we saw above, the association broke down in Mill’s 1826 experience. That experience had told him that even when the general good was there, the feeling of happiness need not be there.

"Rational" moral theory now seemed very inadequate to Mill. He had to ask the question: What kind of feeling or motive is behind the impulse to act rightly? What is the connection of moral motives to other feelings like affection, gratitude, kindliness etc? Previously he had thought that one had to balance one’s thoughts to be able to achieve the general good. But that was not so. Therefore he now asked: What kind of a balance of feelings is needed to bring about the common good?

Mill clearly saw the hopelessness of the man who would think: "I will become happy through working for the common good." An individual may be trained to think of, and also work for, the common good. But such training is not the only important thing in life. The internal culture of the feelings is also a vital necessity. After his crisis experience of 1826 Mill read Wordsworth’s Poems, 1815 in the autumn of 1828. He himself says about it in his Autobiography as follows: "[The poems] seemed to be the very culture of the feelings, which I was in quest of. In them I seemed to draw from a source of inward joy, of sympathetic and ima-
imaginative pleasure, which could be shared in by all human beings; which had no connexion with struggle or imperfection, but would be made richer by every improvement in the physical or social condition of mankind. From them I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed." 4

When the London Debating Society discussed for two evenings the comparative merits of Byron's and Wordsworth's poetry, Roe buck characterised Byron's poetry as the poetry of human life and Wordsworth's poetry as the poetry of flowers and butterflies. But Mill did not agree with this view which was shared by many of his friends. Here begins his break with the orthodox utilitarians. Here also begins his friendship with Sterling—an admirer of the poets Goethe and Coleridge. Until that debate Sterling had regarded Mill as a "manufactured man." When he found Mill appreciate Wordsworth's poetry and also defend it publicly, he recognised that Mill had at last become a genuine man and became his great friend. Mill was in correspondence with Sterling until Sterling's death in 1844. Mill's letters to Sterling show very great sensibility and vitality. They are worth reading even today.

Though Mill gained Sterling's friendship, he lost many old friends. In 1840 Sir John Bowring "spoke of Mill with evident contempt as a renegade from philosophy, i.e. a renouncer of Bentham's creed and an expounder of Coleridge's... Mill's newly developed 'imagination' puzzles him (Bowring) not a little; he was most emphatically a philosopher, but then he read Wordsworth, and that muddled him, and he has been in a strange confusion ever since, endeavouring to unite poetry and philosophy." 5

The above quotation sums up the opinion which many
orthodox utilitarians came to have about Mill. But the change that came in Mill's thinking made him a very different man. He also started becoming a different kind of philosopher. He started drawing up, after his father's death in 1836, a programme for a "new utilitarianism of the whole of human nature." In this new utilitarianism "feeling was to be at least as valuable as thought, and poetry not only on a par with, but the necessary condition of, any true and comprehensive Philosophy." 6

Mill's own moral and political theory begin with this transformation in him. He came to believe that human beings are not uniform units of rationality. They are individuals. They are beings who feel in infinitely many ways. The individual character and the individual differences between men has an intrinsic value. Men are not like manufactured goods where one piece is exactly like another. Any attempt to make any man like every other man should be resisted. This new thinking of Mill is clearly a defence of individuality and personal liberty. Any morality must therefore be related to such discrete individuals. Morality unrelated to feelings and inwardness is the morality of the machines.

If we remember that both Bentham and James Mill had totally condemned all feelings and inwardness in matters of morality, we must recognise that Mill is now trying to reverse the whole course of Benthamism and utilitarianism. Only a great mind can think of such a reversal.

These changes in Mill's thinking received a new dynamism and force through his friendship with Mrs. Taylor. It is difficult to underestimate the influence she had on Mill's thinking after they came to know each other in 1830. Harriet Taylor was the wife of John Taylor, a merchant in London, and as a pretty woman of twentytwo (in 1830) she was as witty as she was pretty. She was an extraordinarily
intelligent woman. She was probably too much of an intellectual wife for an ordinary, business-minded husband. She had read Berkeley's philosophy at the age of eleven and logic at the age of fourteen. She had a small circle of friends and Mill was admitted to it in 1830. Harriet was surely the first young woman Mill had ever met outside his own family and he developed great admiration for her. Harriet was obviously an intellectually hungry woman and she found a great companion in Mill. So, naturally, a great intimacy developed between them. In 1833 Harriet wrote saying that Mill was really as high as any human being could be and that "to be with him wholly is my ideal of the noblest fate."

This friendship disturbed Harriet's husband a great deal. He tried to bring to an end her friendship with Mill but he had no success. Later he resigned himself to their friendship. When Mill started dining regularly twice a week at Mrs. Taylor's house in 1842, her husband was somehow always absent at the dinner table. Not only John Taylor was displeased with Mill's friendship with Harriet, but even Mill's father was equally displeased with it. He openly charged his son of being in love with another man's wife. Many friends of Mill too could not accept his intimacy with Harriet. In fact, Mill's friendship with Harriet became the topic of hot gossip in the high society of London. This hurt both of them and Mill had even a sort of a nervous breakdown in 1835. He gradually withdrew from high society and limited his association to only a few individuals like Mrs. Taylor, George Grote, Alexander Bain and a few others. Mill admits that his association with Harriet was liable to be falsely interpreted, but declares that their relation to each other was one of "strong affection" and "confidential intimacy" only. Both of them disapproved of the marriage law as it then existed in England. They both held that marriage was entirely a personal affair of individuals.
They thought that no conditions of society could be binding on an entirely personal affair like marriage. But Harriet was no burning idealist. She was a very practical person. As there was no use breaking up her marriage after long years, she remained a loyal wife of an unhappy husband. She also remained a loyal friend of Mill even at the risk of considerable scandal. There is no doubt that she spent long hours with Mill discussing the abstract issues of Philosophy and the practical issues of morals and politics. Mill says that it was only through her that he came to see the practical possibility of socialism and also the importance of removing the injustices suffered by the working classes. He also says that the essay On Liberty was their joint work. If Mill became a radical and also remained a democrat in his later life, a good deal of credit for this must go to Mrs. Harriet Taylor.

The period of 1830s was the period of a strong movement for parliamentary reforms in England. A new transformation was to come, Mill thought. But it would not come naturally, not also organically, but as a result of positive notions. These notions are neither theological nor a priori but are verified by observation exactly as in the physical sciences. But Mill could not succeed in convincing the genuine radicals and convert them to his ways of thinking even after his father's death in 1836. Two essays of Mill were responsible for dividing him from his former friends: "Essay on Bentham" (1838) and "Essay on Coleridge" (1840). Both these are great studies in which Mill tries to examine the rivals to his own philosophy in an objective way. But he is very critical of Bentham. He concentrates more on showing the narrowness of Bentham. He describes Bentham's philosophy as "the empiricism of one who had little experience." He says Bentham's life had been without any inner conflict or suffering, like that of an extraordinarily intelligent school boy. He also said that Bentham had no imagination
or self-analysis and had no ability to profit from the light others had seen. Such characterisation in itself was enough to enrage devoted Benthamites. But he added to it in his next essay on Coleridge.

In merits he equated Coleridge with Bentham. He said that Coleridgeans were the true successors of the empiricism of Bacon and Locke. He admits that their methodology may be wrong but says that their methods are right. This is nothing less than total condemnation of Benthamism. No wonder, Mill's old friends sadly concluded that he had lost his philosophical foundations and had become something like a "mystic.

It was also during this period that Mill was engaged in writing his A System of Logic in two volumes. This work made him very famous. Mill does not hide his wonder and surprise about its 'success.'

Although this work might have been praised by all sorts of people and purchased by men who never read or understood it, it is still a landmark and a great work. Later writers on logic like Venn, Jevons, Johnson and Keynes have all based their work on Mill's book. Even the works of Meinong and Frege are important as departures from the position which Mill took in his A System of Logic.

The Coleridgean phase of Mill's thought ends in his Logic. In the next phase he returns to some of the issues he had given up after his crisis experience of 1826. He now rejects the idea that the mind has an intuitive power to discover truths. The so-called intuition can only anticipate the senses and the analytic faculty. He later writes the famous metaphysical treatise The Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy (1865) only to refute the intuitionism of the Germans. He came to hold a very poor
opinion of Hegel. James Stirling introduced Hegelianism into England and it finally culminated in the absolutistic philosophy of Bradley. About the classic exposition of Hegel by Stirling Mill says: "...conversancy with him tends to deprave one's intellect... For some time after I had finished the book all such words as reflection, development, evolution, etc., gave me a sort of sickening feeling which I have not entirely yet got rid of."

Mill now accepts the radical view that man can find no competent authority to guide him in the discovery and verification of fundamental truths. This he does in his Political Economy and Claims of Labour. He declares there that truth will make itself known only if absolutely free - and endless - discussion is allowed. It appears that Harriet Taylor played a major role in persuading Mill to make these revisions. But one thing he does not at all give up from his earlier period is his conviction that it is the inner life of feeling that is mainly important in morals. This is the basis of the ethical teaching of his Utilitarianism and his essay On Liberty. Mill believes that for any conviction there can be a corresponding exactly opposite conviction. Therefore he thinks that on many questions the mind which is open is the only rational mind. He does not now believe that theories and policies - which are products of pure thinking - are final. Beyond theories and policies there is the life of the soul itself, the soul which is "the secret cup of still and serious thought."

In 1848 Mill published his comprehensive work, The Principles of Political Economy. In this work he recognises the claims of the working classes much more than all previous political economists. He even added a chapter called "The Probable Futurity of the Labouring Classes" to later editions of this work. If the working classes came to have intellectual leaders in later times, it was because of
the influence of Mill. Mill's main concern with politics was to promote working class representation. But at the same time he wanted to avoid a total transition to working class domination because of the dangers and difficulties involved in such a changeover.

In 1849 John Taylor, the husband of Harriet Taylor, passed away. Two years later, Mill wrote a powerful article criticizing the whole character of marriage relations as constituted by law. Subsequently he married Harriet Taylor. Though this marriage lasted just seven years, it gave the greatest happiness to both of them. But Mill's mother and sisters were not happy about this marriage and they separated from him. Many others who had not approved of friendship with Harriet also criticized his marriage. But Mill did not bother much about this and went on to reformulate his moral theories on justice, utility, liberty, and on religious belief.

His essay *On Liberty* (1859) was written by him jointly with his wife although it was published only in his name. Mill himself considered it to be his most significant work and thought that probably its influence would last longer than his work on logic. The leading idea of this work is the importance and value of individual character and individual differences and their protection against the power of society. When Mill wrote this work he had in mind the highly industrial society that was going to come in the future. He had fears that in such a society the working classes may come to dominating positions and threaten liberty and freedom.

During the same period Mill also gave expression to his views on women and issues relating to women through his *The Subjection of Women*. Mill is an arch feminist here. Mill had the notion of the equality of the sexes as one of his
intellectual convictions even from his very early political days. This becomes a major passion of his later life largely due to his association with Harriet Taylor. From her he learnt that the disabilities of women have great practical consequences. He also came to connect those disabilities with the prominent evils of his own age—over-population and its resulting evils for the working classes, stupidity, servility, superstition and the over-emphasis on sex. Mill saw no essential distinctions between the best of males and the best of females. They were quite equal in his eyes and this severe feminism of Mill is certainly induced in him by Harriet. Regarding the equality of the sexes Mill says in one of his letters: "But the women, of all I have known, who possessed the highest measure of what are considered feminine qualities, have combined with them more of the highest masculine qualities than I have ever seen in any but one or two men, and those one or two men were also in many respects almost women. I suspect it is the second-rate people of the two sexes that are unlike.... but then, in this respect, my position has been and is,...'a peculiar one.'"  

Mill always held that any philosophy must be judged by its conception of human nature. If so, we must judge Mill's own philosophy by the same criterion. Mill himself admits that his view about men and women is a 'peculiar one.' Since his philosophy is based on such a peculiar conception of human nature, it is possible to judge it to be not very satisfactory.

In 1856 Mill was asked by his Company (East India Company) to write a petition for renewing its Charter. But it was not renewed and Mill resigned from its Council in 1858, just a year after the First War of Indian Independence here in India in 1857. His wife also died in 1858. This death deprived him of a chance of leisurely retired life in her
company. But he was not alone since his wife's daughter Helen Taylor chose to live with him and she did so until his death in 1873. Helen helped Mill in the writing of his Autobiography. In 1864 Mill made the acquaintance of Lord and Lady Amberly. With the help of Helen he made the Lord and the Lady join the feminist movement and also help in many other good causes.

Mill's essays on Utilitarianism first appeared in Frazer's Magazine in 1861. In the same year he read Sir William Hamilton's lectures on logic and metaphysics. Hamilton was professor of logic and metaphysics at Edinburgh for twenty years and he was the established leader of the British Kantians. Mill tried to refute Hamilton's philosophy by writing the Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy in two volumes in 1865. This is not a great work of Mill but it is good in parts. The chapters on mind and body and our knowledge of the external world contain very serious discussion of some of the most difficult questions of philosophy. Mill's classical exposition of phenomenalism is found in this work. It also contains valuable contributions to the foundations of formal logic and mathematics.

In 1865 a group of citizens of Westminster asked Mill to contest for the Parliament as their candidate from their constituency. Mill agreed to contest on certain conditions: he will not contribute to the election expenses; he would not go canvassing for votes; he would not give any information on his religious views; and above all, if elected, he should not be expected to devote his time to the local interests of just his own constituency! Surprisingly, the group of citizens agreed to all these conditions. Even more surprisingly, Mill was elected to Parliament!! This is something that can never happen in any country today.
Mill's strong aim in Parliament was to secure for the working classes a real share in political power. He adopted a very stern programme to achieve this aim. Mill was really responsible for bringing together the intellectual left wing of his society and the working classes. This served as the foundation for British socialism.

In the Parliament Mill spoke strongly in favour of extending voting power to the whole of the working class. Mill was also very much concerned with the working class agitation against the Tory government when Benjamin Disraeli was the prime minister. In 1866 a huge demonstration at Hyde Park was announced by the working classes, but the police banned it. There was a riot and the assembled crowd tore down the railings of the Hyde Park. In spite of police ban a second demonstration was called for. But Mill convinced the leaders of this demonstration that it would be a great mistake to invite a clash with the military. If he had not done this, the backbone of the working class movement would have been broken by the government. It would have totally destroyed the working class movement itself.

In the next session of Parliament Disraeli himself introduced a bill for giving the vote to all municipal householders. Mill introduced a small amendment asking for changing the term 'every man' into 'every person.' This is significant because 'man' could be interpreted as males only and women might be denied the right to vote. Mill's feminist leanings came out clearly in this amendment for which he got the support of seventythree other members of the House!

The other important event of this period is Mill's leadership of the Jamaica Committee. Governor Eyre of Jamaica (a British colony) had to face a revolt in that colony and he had savagely punished the black people who had
taken part in the revolt against the British rule. Mill wanted this governor to be punished for his crimes against black people committed a thousand miles away from England. There was a court battle and Mill succeeded in getting a verdict from the Lord Chief Justice that the governor was answerable for his offences against the black people. But this governor had plenty of support in England and Mill's action was opposed by a "Governor Eyre Committee." The jury finally endorsed the stand of the Governor Eyre Committee and Governor Eyre was never tried for his crimes. Mill had to be satisfied that at least Lord Chief Justice's verdict was "in favour of liberty.

Mill was very enthusiastic about the French Revolution of 1848, but very soon he was disillusioned by the turn of events in France leading to the rise of the emperor Napoleon and the Franco-Prussian war that followed it.

Mill contested again for Parliament in the general elections of 1868 but this time he was defeated. He was defeated because he contributed to the election expenses of a working-men's candidate called Charles Bradlaugh. Mill agreed with Bradlaugh in rejecting Christian beliefs and hence supported him. Bradlaugh was also willing to support Malthusianism, proportional representation and votes for women. But Bradlaugh spoke with contempt about Christian beliefs and he also used very provocative language in his speeches, which was not very much to the liking of Mill. Bradlaugh lost the election and Mill also went down with him.

After this defeat Mill left London and retired permanently into the small cottage at Avignon. Here he devoted his time solely to reading, writing and thinking. He wanted to be alone and he had very few visitors. When Queen Victoria's daughter wanted to come and see him in his cottage,
she was told by Mill that "he was not in a condition to avail himself of the honour intended." She did not meet him. In this retirement he wrote his The Subjection of Women and also the notes for his father's Analysis of the Human Mind. He also wrote many long letters and minor papers on three subjects that interested him greatly: scientific thought, socialism and religion. Mill was one of the few to receive Darwin's Origin of the Species very enthusiastically. Mill was no scientist or naturalist but he had the kind of open mind which some of them have. Upon a first reading of the book he wrote in 1860: "It far surpasses my expectation. Though he cannot be said to have proved the truth of his doctrine, he does seem to have proved that it may be true, which I take to be as great a triumph as knowledge and ingenuity could possibly achieve on such a question. Certainly nothing can be at first sight more entirely un-plausible than his theory, and yet after beginning by thinking it impossible, one arrives at something like an actual belief in it, and one certainly does not relapse into complete disbelief." 12

During this period Mill also made a reexamination of socialism. He thinks about what the working class might do with their newly found powers of voting and going on strikes. Armed with the powers of vote and the strike-weapon, they may very quickly achieve enormous political power in a very short period. Mill believed with other classical economists that strikes would affect productivity and bring down drastically the margin of profit in industries. If workers went on strike unwisely, economic progress would be greatly affected. If the working class came to power too quickly, there were less chances of their acting in a mature way. Therefore, what could be done to educate the leaders of the working classes to use their power wisely and moderately? This and other related questions occupied him seriously. Four completed chapters of Mill's rethinking on
socialism were published in Morley's *Fortnightly Review* in 1879. These chapters constitute one of the foundations of Fabian socialism. In these writings Mill urges that private property and private enterprise must be made abuse-free. He also suggests experimenting with socialistic or communistic ownership (or control) over industry and trade. He also advocates that workers must be educated at the expense of the State and made to cooperate in local and national government. They must also be made to cooperate in running public enterprises of an official character. If these are not done, he fears that Britain might have to face a long and bitter class struggle.

In retirement Mill also wrote a long essay on theism. This and two other essays on religion which he was writing at the time of his marriage were published after his death as *Three Essays on Religion* in 1874. In the last essay Mill makes a tentative attempt to put forward grounds for believing in an after-life and in the existence of a finite God. This should be taken as evidence of Mill's desire and ability to always reexamine and reconsider any opinion afresh. In other words, it is not a weakness in Mill that he comes to entertain the possibility of the existence of a God and an after-life. It is evidence of his having an open mind on all matters—a thesis he not only strongly advocates throughout his *On Liberty* and other writings, but also puts into practice in his own thinking.

Mill died of a local fever in May, 1873.