

Edexcel GCE

History

Advanced Subsidiary

Unit 2

Option B: British Political History in the 19th Century

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Sources Insert

Paper Reference

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Choose EITHER B1 (Question 1) OR B2 (Question 2) for which you have been prepared.

B1 – Britain, 1830–85: Representation and Reform

Sources for use with Question 1 (a)

SOURCE 1

(From the opening paragraphs of the People's Charter, drafted by Francis Place and William Lovett in 1837, and published in *The Chartist Circular* in 1839)

1 To insure, in as far as it is best possible, the just government of the people, it is necessary to make those who have the power of making laws responsible to those whose duty it is to obey them when made. And this responsibility is best enforced through a body that is itself responsible to the whole people, and which
5 completely represents their feelings and their interests through fair and Equal Representation.

SOURCE 2

(From a speech made at a Chartist meeting in Salford in 1838 by Joseph Rayner Stephens, a radical Methodist minister and Chartist sympathiser)

Chartism is not a political movement, where the main purpose is getting the ballot. The question of universal suffrage is a knife and fork question, after all, a bread and cheese question. If any man asks me what I mean by universal suffrage, I would
10 answer that every working man in the land has a right to have a good coat to his back, a comfortable place for him and his family to live, and a good dinner upon his table.

SOURCE 3

(From an 'explanatory dialogue' published by the London Working Men's Association in *The Chartist Circular* in 1841, to explain the movement's aims)

Q: What are the benefits you expect from the adoption of the Charter?

15 A: The repeal of bad laws and the making of good laws in their place. A reduction of taxation. The abolition of the enormous abuses of the civil and criminal law, which amount to an utter denial of justice to the poor; and a large and liberal system of National Education, without reference to religious creed.

Sources for use with Question 1 (b) (i)

SOURCE 4

(From Norman Gash, *The Age of Peel*, published 1968)

What happened between 1834 and 1841 was the emergence of two great political parties, rooted in the struggle for constitutional reform surrounding the 1832
20 Reform Act. Stiffened by a rapid growth of central and constituency organisation, to which the 1832 Reform Act itself had unwittingly contributed, they were clearly defined by social, economic and regional characteristics. Peel's fall in 1846 brought a period of adjustment, and a fresh stimulus was later injected by the 1867 Reform Act, but substantially, the foundations of the Victorian Conservative and Liberal
25 parties were laid in the decade 1830–40.

SOURCE 5

(From W. Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, published 1867)

The spirit of the country is quiet but reasonable, suspicious of sweeping innovations and equally opposed to the old Tory way of keeping everything which is, because it is. The moderate members of both political parties represent this spirit very well. At a recent election a poor voter was heard to say that both candidates were very
30 nice gentlemen, but that he could see very little difference between them.

SOURCE 6

(From Anthony Wood, *Nineteenth Century Britain, 1815–1914*, published 1960)

In 1867 the size of the electorate almost doubled, bringing a remarkable transformation of electoral campaigns. Rousing speeches would take the place of bribery, and efficient local party organisation replaced 'Septennial Ale'*. This coincided with the exit of the two party leaders – Lord Russell and Lord Derby. Both
35 men had belonged to the world of the eighteenth-century aristocracy, remote from the spirit of the new times. Gladstone and Disraeli, both middle-class in origin and both essentially nineteenth-century men, emerged at the head of the two parties, whose struggle forms the main theme of political life in the later years of Victoria's reign.

* 'Septennial Ale' – the practice of buying drinks for voters at General Elections, usually held every seven years at that time.

Sources for use with Question 1 (b) (ii)

SOURCE 7

(From Paul Adelman, *Gladstone, Disraeli and Later Victorian Politics*, published 1970)

40 To many contemporaries, both of the Left and the Right, the Second Reform Act seemed to be an essentially democratic measure, giving effective political power to the working class. Nearly a million new voters were added to the electoral list, and in the cities, working-class voters now became a majority. But in the counties the vote was given only to the twelve-pound householders, a deferential
45 group. In addition, boundary changes lopped off suburban areas, adding them to the boroughs. In the countryside, therefore, the old order continued almost undisturbed.

SOURCE 8

(From B. H. Abbott, *Gladstone and Disraeli*, published 1972)

After 1868 the Liberals set out to extend equality and clear up corruption in the electoral system. The Ballot Act of 1872, part of reform programmes for well over
50 a century, ended the brawling and corruption of the hustings. It was opposed by landlords and employers, who feared that voters would be able to act independently. Deference did not disappear overnight, and there were still opportunities for the corrupt politician to buy votes. However, the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883, followed rapidly by the Franchise Act of 1884 and the Redistribution Act of 1885,
55 transformed political practice. Achieved despite Conservative opposition in the Lords, these later changes were perhaps the last, but by no means the least achievement of Gladstonian Liberalism.

SOURCE 9

(From a speech made by Joseph Chamberlain in his Birmingham constituency in January 1885)

We stand tonight at the commencement of a new era. Nearly two million of your fellow-workers in factory and in field will enter for the first time into the
60 full enjoyment of their political rights. It is a revolution, peacefully and silently accomplished. The centre of power has shifted and the old order is giving place to the new.

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Choose EITHER B1 (Question 1) OR B2 (Question 2) for which you have been prepared.

B2 – Poverty, Public Health and the Growth of Government in Britain, 1830–75

Sources for use with Question 2 (a)

SOURCE 10

(From a report given to members of the Leeds Board of Health by the District Surgeon, Robert Baker, in January 1833)

1 The first case of pure cholera appeared in Blue Bell Fold, a small, dirty cul-de-sac inhabited by poor families on the north of the river. The spread of the disease may relate to the waste material created by persons labouring under its effects. If the Board will refer to the map, which accompanies this report, they will see how
5 exceedingly the disease has prevailed in those parts of the town where there is often an entire lack of sewerage, drainage and paving.

SOURCE 11

(From Edwin Chadwick, *Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population*, published 1842)

The various forms of epidemic disease amongst the labouring classes are caused by atmospheric impurities produced by decomposing animal and vegetable substances, damp and filth, and close and overcrowded dwellings. The annual
10 loss of life from filth and bad ventilation is greater than any loss from wars in which the country has been engaged in modern times. Measures to deal with this are drainage, the removal of all refuse from houses, streets and roads, and the improvement of supplies of water.

SOURCE 12

(From an article published in *Punch* magazine in 1848, ridiculing the establishment of the Central Board of Health by the 1848 Public Health Act)

We suggest that, to facilitate the work of a General Board of Health, a Sanitary
15 Police force should at once be organised. They might be empowered to order the stagnant pool to move on, and should have instructions to seize unlawful assemblies of large vegetables without any further warrant. Large crowds of persons in small houses or single rooms could be declared illegal, while anything in the shape of a pestilential vapour should be arrested.

Sources for use with Question 2 (b) (i)

SOURCE 13

(From evidence given by Langham Rokesby Esq., Chairman of the Market Harborough Poor Law Union, to the Poor Law Commissioners in 1836)

20 So far as I can judge from my enquiries, I would say that the measure is working very satisfactorily. The great body of the labouring poor throughout the union have become reconciled to it. The workhouse is held in great dread, there is greater willingness to seek for employment, and very few complaints of misbehaviour. Cases of bastardy are on the decline.

SOURCE 14

(From Rosemary Rees, *Poverty and Public Health, 1815–1948*, published 2001)

25 Two important planks of Poor Law policy after 1834 were not fully implemented. Outdoor relief for the able-bodied continued to be granted and 'non-resident relief', which ignored the Settlement Laws, was still being paid to around 80,000 paupers in 1846. In other ways, the Poor Law Amendment Act was implemented unevenly and was interpreted in different ways by different boards of guardians in
30 different parts of England and Wales. By the 1870s the vast majority of parishes had been incorporated into Poor Law Unions. Fear of the workhouse stood as an awful symbol of deterrence for the most vulnerable members of Victorian society, but across the country provision was neither uniform nor, necessarily, cost-effective.

SOURCE 15

(Figures showing the provision of indoor and outdoor relief in the later nineteenth century, taken from the 31st Annual Report of the Local Government Board, compiled and published 1901–02)

Year	Indoor paupers – % of population		Outdoor paupers – % of population	
1850	123,004	0.77%	885,696	5%
1855	121,400	0.65%	776,286	4.8%
1860	113,507	0.58%	731,126	3.7%
1865	131,312	0.63%	820,586	3.9%
1870	156,800	0.71%	876,000	4%
1875	146,800	0.62%	654,114	2.8%

Sources for use with Question 2 (b) (ii)

SOURCE 16

(From an editorial in the *Methodist Magazine*, 1832, describing the impact of the first cholera epidemic)

To see a number of our fellow creatures, in a good state of health and the full
35 possession of their normal strength, suddenly seized with the most violent spasms,
and in a few hours laid in their grave, will shake the firmest nerves and inspire fear
in the strongest heart.

SOURCE 17

(From David Thomson, *England in the Nineteenth Century*, published 1950)

The great interest in the improvement of public health in the years 1848–75 sprang
from two very dynamic forces – the cholera and dedicated individuals. However,
40 these reforms reflected a constant interplay between the development of social-
welfare legislation and the progress of parliamentary reform. Social improvement
made possible the extension of the franchise and the extension of the franchise
led to fresh programmes of social improvement. The two best examples of this
interplay are public health and education.

SOURCE 18

(From *The Medical Revolution*, published for the Schools Council in 1976)

45 Changes in public health did not spring up, ready-made, from shocking experiences
like cholera. They came, above all, from the steady and unspectacular growth of
scientific thinking. In the 1870s new knowledge about the cause and spread of
disease transformed the attitude of local and central government to public health.
However, since the 1840s, new and important information about disease had been
50 gradually gained by the study of medical statistics. From 1836 onwards, all births
and deaths had to be registered, and by the 1860s the statistics proved beyond any
doubt that bad living conditions and disease were closely connected.

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