The Napoleonic Wars were fought between the French Empire and various European coalitions. Britain went once again to war with France after ending the short-lived Treaty of Amiens.

The California Gold Rush (1848–1855) was a significant milestone in the expansion of the United States in the nineteenth century—rapid migration had a lasting effect on both the geography and history of California.

The Indian Revolt preceded the transfer of British power in India, from 'Company Rule' to the British Raj.

The left-wing Paris Commune held Paris from 18 March to 28 May 1871, under a revolutionary and radical government.
GREY LITERATURE, FLYERS, AND BROADSHEETS

Part IV also captures hard-to-reach formats such as plans and pamphlets. This technically challenging material is now surfacing and offering original study resources to researchers. Grey literature, private publications, flyers, broadsheets and ephemera are the focus of much modern scholarship precisely because it is non-mainstream, hard to find in libraries, physically vulnerable to damage, lost and mis-filing, and of huge value.

The ease of producing and circulating these short-form publications mean key subjects of debate of the day are well-represented in collections such as this. New voices, such as those of women writers and radical activists were also able to use the platform of print to spread their views.

Examples of topics in the archive highlight some of the many social changes and challenges that came hand in hand with the ‘golden age of capitalism.’

POLITICS AND THE WORKING CLASSES

The large number of printed lectures and sermons in the collection can give an insight into the interest and involvement of working class and illiterate groups in political issues of the day. Those that were printed had the opportunity to reach a wider sphere. Interest in theories of socialism and communism are reflected here, as well as labour conditions, working hours, general education and the co-operative movement.

TEMPERANCE

The Temperance movement was vocal and widespread in the 19th century, with the appearance of many Temperance societies and campaigners, all publishing material in support of their cause. The connection of alcohol with all manner of ill was widely discussed, and this collection showcases campaigners on both sides of the debate.

POVERTY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The nineteenth century saw great strides in public health as new medicines and methods such as inoculation were developed, but it was also a time of cholera, typhoid and other diseases, with slum housing leading to terrible sanitary conditions in booming towns. This archive holds material illustrating medical research, public health initiatives and education, and political measures, such as the unpopular Contagious Diseases Acts of the 1860s, which gave police the right to test any woman they suspected of prostitution for venereal disease.

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