



Roads to Ruin: The Shocking History of Social Reform (Faber Find)

E. S. Turner

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'It is a salutary thing to look back at some of the reforms which have long been an accepted part of our life, and to examine the opposition, usually bitter and often bizarre, sometimes dishonest but all too often honest, which had to be countered by the restless advocates of 'grandmotherly' legislation...'

Contemporary readers of a progressive bent may like to think it elementary that certain inhumane practices in which Britons indulged pre-1800 came to be abolished. But as E.S. Turner reveals, our history is littered with Colonel Blimp figures, of a mind that 'reforms are all right as long as they don't change anything.'
'*Roads to Ruin* still entertains and appals. It chronicles the disgraceful rearguard action of the upper classes against the introduction of the Plimsoll line, the abolition of child chimney sweeps and the repeal of laws under which convicted criminals could be hung, drawn and quartered...' Jonathan Sale, *Guardian*

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