Fictions of Consciousness: Mill, Newman, and the Reading of Victorian Prose

by Jonathan Loesberg

The post-Romantic and Victorian eras: Self-consciousness was the quality that John Stuart Mill identified, in 1838, as the daemon of the men of genius of our time. Introspection was inevitable in the literature of an immediately Post-Romantic period, and the age itself was as prone to self-analysis as were its individual authors. Carlyle’s choice of the novel form and the book’s humour, generic flexibility, and political engagement point forward to distinctive characteristics of Victorian literature. Early Victorian literature: the age of the novel. Several major figures of English Romanticism lived on into this period. Coleridge died in 1834, De Quincey in 1859.