

Pandaemonium 1660-1886: The Coming of the Machine as Seen by Contemporary Observers

Humphrey Jennings



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Collecting texts taken from letters, diaries, literature, scientific journals and reports, Pandæmonium gathers a beguiling narrative as it traces the development of the machine age in Britain.

Covering the years between 1660 and 1886, it offers a rich tapestry of human experience, from eyewitness reports of the Luddite Riots and the Peterloo Massacre to more intimate accounts of child labour, Utopian communities, the desecration of the natural world, ground-breaking scientific experiments, and the coming of the railways.

Humphrey Jennings, co-founder of the Mass Observation movement of the 1930s and acclaimed documentary film-maker, assembled an enthralling narrative of this key period in Britain's national consciousness. The result is a highly original artistic achievement in its own right.

Thanks to the efforts of his daughter, Marie-Louise Jennings, Pandæmonium was originally published in 1985, and in 2012 it was the inspiration behind Danny Boyle's electrifying Opening Ceremony for the London Olympic Games. Frank Cottrell Boyce, who wrote the scenario for the ceremony, contributes a revealing new foreword for this edition.

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