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Perilous Question: Reform or Revolution? Britain on the Brink, 1832

By Lady Antonia Fraser

PublicAffairs, United States, 2014. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Reprint. 224 x 146 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Antonia Fraser's *Perilous Question* is a dazzling re-creation of the tempestuous two-year period in Britain's history leading up to the passing of the Great Reform Bill in 1832, a narrative which at times reads like a political thriller. The era, beginning with the accession of William IV, is evoked in the novels of Trollope and Thackeray, and described by the young Charles Dickens as a cub reporter. It is lit with notable characters. The reforming heroes are the Whig aristocrats led by Lord Grey, members of the richest and most landed cabinet in history yet determined to bring liberty, which would whittle away their own power, to the country. The all-too-conservative opposition was headed by the Duke of Wellington, supported by the intransigent Queen Adelaide, with hereditary memories of the French Revolution. Finally, there were revolutionaries, like William Cobbett, the author of *Rural Rides*, the radical tailor Francis Place, and Thomas Attwood of Birmingham, the charismatic orator. The contest often grew violent. There were urban riots put down by soldiers and agricultural riots led by the mythical Captain Swing....



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